ONE WORLD
in Dialogue

SOCIAL STUDIES COUNCIL of the ALBERTA TEACHERS' ASSOCIATION

Social Studies Council Contact Information

President
   Jennifer Williams
   Bus 403-948-3800
   jenwilliamsata@gmail.com

Journal Editor
   Craig Harding
   Bus 403-777-7870
   jcharding@shaw.ca *or*
   jcharding@cbe.ab.ca

ATA Staff Advisor
   Dave Matson
   780-447-9420
   david.matson@ata.ab.ca

A Message from the Editor

Craig Harding

"We must mend what has been torn apart, make justice imaginable again in a world so obviously unjust, give happiness a meaning once more."
—Albert Camus

To sin by silence, when we should protest, makes cowards out of men.
—Ella Wheeler Wilcox

The articles in this edition of *One World* were written in a tumultuous context, reflecting potentially massive disruptive changes at provincial, national and global levels. While much has been written about these disruptions in the midst of these unsettling times, the conclusion and staying power, obviously, is yet to unfold. Our authors in this edition have offered insights into what could be done or should be considered for social studies— how we can *mend* the subject—or the world, for that matter.

Misinformation, conspiracies, populism and even COVID-19 have highlighted the need to invigorate critical thinking in schools to address the meteoric rise of anti-intellectualism as a response to the perceived failure of traditional experts. In the media we see and hear of individual anecdotal experiences, even from some political "leaders," as a counter to reasoned and informed advice from the field of medicine. The need to build community is apparent, as ruptured societies at provincial, national and global levels seemed to emerge, and populists, claiming to have direct access to popular will, sought to exert their provocative political perspective and offered up a new notion of "common sense" that often questioned commonly understood concepts such as *justice* and *voice*. Leaders in many countries and provinces, elected by a minority of voters, spoke as if only their voice represented the will of the people.

While social justice movements gained a greater voice, individual teachers must consider the extent to which they must make changes in how they address pluralism, citizenship and identity. To be silent, according to Wilcox, is to make us cowards. It is difficult to simply use the hegemony of the heroic past as a way to legitimize political identities in a way that empowers the establishment's regressive policies—in fact, this approach has to be confronted. Not only must curriculum meaningfully incorporate the voices and experiences of all citizens in an authentic manner, it must do so in a way that builds the capacity of students to acquire enduring understandings that have implications and application beyond the classroom. Reflecting on the above quote by Camus, the disruptions of the past year should encourage teachers to question how these social changes will influence what and how they teach, who is their real audience, and what sort of society we want as we recover from and adapt to these disruptions. Seeking to mend, as Camus urges, requires teachers to take an informed and ethical stand. Silence is not an option. This edition of *One World* encourages readers to reflect on what rebuilding and recovering should look like. And while we have a lot of work to do on a lot of different fronts,

there are things we can do in our classrooms to ame-liorate the disruptions of the recent past.

This edition starts with a thoughtful consideration of the past and potential trajectory of social studies in Alberta. Framing it, in short, as somewhat of a culture war, University of Calgary professor Dave Scott investigates the often polarized views on the future of social studies in the province by exploring the rich, progressive heritage of Alberta social studies, long seen as a global leader in the subject, and juxta-posing it with the current re-storied government proposal. As Scott zooms out to take a mile-high look at the curriculum, it is a compelling starting point for all teachers to consider what they want social studies, writ large, to look like. The article is certain to be a discussion provocation for social studies, provincewide.

While Dave Scott's article established the context for rethinking, or reaffirming, social studies, Jacqui Kusnick zooms in a bit closer to consider the purpose of education, and social studies in particular. Kusnick, a vice-principal in a rural Manitoba middle school, argues it is time for educators to examine, or re-ex-amine, their moral purpose. She challenges us to consider what is our "why." Kusnick argues that the response of "to help our students grow" is insufficient. The usual responses must be reimagined to determine if the current approach to social studies must be re-conceptualized or dismantled—she wonders if tinker-ing is enough to address the needs of students, or if social studies needs to be torn down and resurrected in a different form. Dave Scott's article provides the context for considering Kusnick's exhortation that we must be thoughtful and informed when reimagining what is our "why."

Subsequent articles zoom in even closer. Matthew Etherington, of Trinity Western University, offers insights on the need for teachers to reconsider critical thinking. While he addresses critical thinking in teacher education, his article has relevance to class-room teachers who think that they must abandon "old ways of thinking" as he argues for a more inclusive approach to critical thinking that includes nonscien-tific ways of pursuing knowledge and truth. This idea is particularly relevant for Alberta teachers, where nearly a quarter of the students in some school dis-tricts are English language learners. Instead of smash-ing down these old ways, he argues, we must unite and include traditional perspectives because diverse perspectives and inclusive communities are ideal for nurturing creativity and innovation that a single cul-ture would never have considered.

Former Calgary teacher Tim Skuce and his Brandon University colleague Shannon Moore ex-plore how our disruptive times are exposing the vulnerability and fragility of human understanding. The consequence of this is that predictability in the classroom has been lost. As a remedy for—or an ap-proach to Camus' mending—this, Skuce and Moore argue that educators must adopt an approach more attuned to uncertainty by creating a dialogic space where discussion and learning emerge organically rather than by the use of preplanned instructional strategies. This approach, they argue, recognizes that the uniqueness of our current milieu is characterized by student vulnerability, classroom ambiguity and the unfinishedness of the subject matter.

The final article, by Alberta artist Anasthasia Filion More, argues for greater recognition of the role of creativity in social studies. While creativity has historically been considered secondary to critical thinking, at least in social studies, Filion More argues that for students to become better critical thinkers, creativity must be explicitly developed. To accomplish this, she seeks to clarify the definitions and attributes of both creative and critical thinking to illustrate how they are used in both personal and social activities. A richly conceived and progressive social studies curriculum is seen as playing a crucial role in devel-oping these attributes.

My hope in bringing forward these articles is that they encourage you to reflect upon your perspectives about what you do—and, especially, to reconceive the why and how. As well, consider how you would reconceive social studies given the changes we are experiencing: What needs to be mended? How should it be mended? And most important, How will you use your voice to give *happiness* (in social studies) *a meaning once more*?

References

Camus, A. 1968. *Lyrical and Critical Essays.* Ed P Thody. Trans E C Kennedy. New York: Knopf.

Wilcox, E W. 1970. "Protest." In *Poems of Problems: Wilcox, Ella Wheeler, 1850-1919.* Available at https://archive.org/details/poemsproblems00wilcrich/page/n157/mode/2up (accessed January 5, 2021). (Orig pub Conkey 1914.)

A Meditation on Current and Future Trajectories for Elementary Social Studies in Alberta

David Scott

As many readers of this journal will know, drafts of a proposed Alberta kindergarten to Grade 4 program for social studies were leaked to the CBC in late October of 2020 (French 2020c). The leaked documents offered an opportunity to pull back the curtain on the curriculum development work of an advisory panel handpicked by the current government of Alberta, led by C P Champion. The leaked documents included ongoing commentary on the competency-based social studies program that had been created by the previous government (Curriculum Advisory Group [CAG] 2020a), as well as a revised K–4 program offering a radically different vision for social studies in the province (CAG 2020b).

Of note, the leaked documents suggested that the study of the history of residential schools "can probably best be saved for later when learners are more mature and are less emotionally vulnerable to traumatic material" (CAG 2020a, 16). Whole sections of grade-level procedural and conceptual knowledge were additionally crossed out, including any references to "equity," which was deemed "a politically partisan and charged buzzword" (CAG 2020a, 5). Pointing to the kind of pedagogy that should be promoted in Alberta elementary classrooms, the opening preamble involved a long discussion about the importance of children "retaining a significant body of information that grows into a coherent and broadminded knowledge base" (CAG 2020b, 2).

Pointing to the intimate connection between the creation of official curriculum documents and struggles over what kind of values and ideological commitments should guide educational decision making, the advisory panel's recommendations struck a deep emotional chord among educators and the public more generally. Immediately after the release of the documents, a storm of commentary ensued via social media, radio talk shows, and numerous news articles and op-ed columns. Within two days, the hashtag #abed was trending on Twitter in Canada, and multiple national news outlets had picked up the story, including the *Globe and Mail* (Keller and Kirkup 2020) and the satirical online publication *The Beaverton* (2020).

It was clear that the widespread negative public response to the advisory panel's recommendations had an impact. Soon after the curriculum documents were leaked, the minister of education, Adriana LaGrange, claimed that the curriculum had not been finalized yet and went on to publicly reject some aspects of the advisory panel's recommendations (Bench 2020). The minister asserted that the government was "absolutely committed" to truth and reconciliation and would ensure that the topic of residential schools would be present in any forthcoming social studies program (Bench 2020, para 9). A group of 350 teachers and educational stakeholders who had provided advice on the creation of the social studies program under the previous government was subsequently disbanded. School boards, Indigenous groups and private schools were then given one week to nominate teachers and representatives to serve on a

new working group to provide feedback on an updated K–6 social program, which the government promised to release for public feedback by early 2021 and then pilot in schools later in the year (French 2020a).

In what follows, I want to engage in a kind of extended meditation on the various discourses and commentary both shaping and surrounding the advisory panel's recommendations for the K–4 social studies program. Seeking to bring a heightened sense of historical consciousness to this discussion (Smith 2006), I begin by demonstrating how the forces of "authoritarian populism" (Norris 2016) and the accompanying culture wars have influenced and shaped the advisory panel's recommendations. Providing further insight into the world view of the advisory panel, moreover, I situate their vision for the K–4 program within the wider history of social studies education in North America.

Drawing on insights from people who publicly spoke out against the leaked program, including curriculum scholars (for example, Aukerman 2020; Donald 2020; Peck 2020) and Senator Murray Sinclair, the former chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (Keller and Kirkup 2020), I then highlight the profound limitations of the advisory panel's vision for social studies. Guided by this same body of literature, I conclude by outlining the kind of social studies program we as educators, whether in K–12 contexts or in postsecondary institutions, should be publicly advocating for when updated curriculum documents are released for public feedback by current and future governments.

How Current Conditions Came into Being

Social Studies as a Site of the Culture Wars

Smith (2006) has written that in order to think about the future, "it is best to work backwards, tracing trajectories to the present moment, carefully working out the lineages that brought current conditions into being. Only then can thoughts of 'what is to be done' be meaningful" (p 83). Attuned to this insight, a significant reason why social studies curriculum documents in Alberta have become such a flashpoint in our current historical moment can be at least partially attributed to the rise of what Norris (2016) calls "authoritarian populism," involving a cultural

backlash against ongoing cultural changes taking place in western societies. Norris (2016) argues that western societies are becoming gradually more liberal—especially among younger generations and the well-educated urban middle class—on a host of social issues, including egalitarian attitudes toward gender roles and increasing acceptance of diversity and fluid gender identities. This shift in attitudes has been accompanied by calls for justice from historically minoritized groups and demands for reconciliation and decolonization from Indigenous peoples who have leveraged the power of social media to speak out and advocate for their political aims (Anderson et al 2018; Raynauld, Richez and Morris 2018).

Norris (2016) contended that these developments have led to fears among those in society who have been historically advantaged and hold more traditional cultural values and beliefs that they are "becoming marginalized and left behind in their own countries" (para 18). Research in Canada suggests that, from a demographic perspective, what Norris terms *traditionalists* trend towards being older, white, working class and situated in rural contexts (Coombs 2017). This dynamic has given rise to the so-called culture wars involving a struggle about whose and what values society will ultimately be organized around.

Controversies over the current and future direction of K–12 schooling have become a key site of this struggle in the United States (Perry 2015), as well as here in Canada, including in the province of Ontario, where the sexual health curriculum became a major area of contention (Cohn 2015). In Alberta, ongoing vociferous debate between the previous and current governments over the future direction of education, and social studies curriculum and pedagogy in particular, has been an ongoing part of the political landscape over the last five years.

Soon after the previous government came to power, in 2015 they announced they would begin a dramatic overhaul of the arts, language arts, mathematics, sciences, wellness and social studies programs of study. As part of this effort, they promised $64 million to support the rewriting of these six key subject areas simultaneously across all grade levels in both English and French. The education minister at the time, David Eggen, asserted that the new programs would be organized around teaching eight key competencies, including critical thinking, communication and global citizenship, and would, moreover, focus on "climate change, the history of Indigenous

people and residential schools, and gender identity" (CBC News 2016, para 6).

After a 13-page draft of proposed changes to the social studies program was released by the previous government, in 2017, Jason Kenney, who was campaigning to become premier at the time, stated that the document was "riddled with politically correct themes" going on to say:

> How do you get into the history of Métis settlements in a general outline but no reference to the First or Second World War? I'm sorry, I'm not buying it. I think we've caught them trying to prepare a really distorted social studies curriculum. (Zabjek 2019, para 28)

At a policy convention in Red Deer in May of 2018, Kenney declared to thunderous applause that if the government "tries to smuggle more of their politics into the classroom through their curriculum, we will put that curriculum through the shredder and go right back to the drawing board" (Zabjek 2019, para 1). Decrying "failed pedagogical fads" and "political agendas in the classroom," he went on to denounce the curriculum rewriting process as secretive and possessing a clear socialist agenda (Zabjek 2019, para 3). During the buildup to the 2019 provincial election, Jason Kenney subsequently made educational reform one of his party's central policy platforms.

Soon after coming to power, in July of 2020 the current government followed through on this promise. They named historian C P Champion, a former aide to the current premier, as the subject area specialist who would lead an advisory panel tasked with reviewing drafts of the K–4 program social studies program put forth by the previous government. The appointment of Champion to lead this advisory panel was met by strong opposition in many quarters, due to views he had previously expressed about a variety of educational issues (French 2020b). In an article in the *Dorchester Review*, of which he is the founding editor, Champion asserted that curricular directives to engage with First Nations perspectives is an "ongoing fad" and that the Kairos blanket exercise—an activity used to teach participants about the effects of European settlement on Indigenous people—"brainwashes children into thinking of themselves as settlers 'stealing' the land" (Champion 2019, 105). He also decried the contemporary focus on thematic approaches to history and civics, which he argued was ideally suited "to transmitting left wing dogma" and should therefore be replaced with a sequential

narrative that can equip students with "the great stories and give them a key life-skill by the end of high school: the capacity to think critically about men and ideas and their place in history, as opposed to imposing sterile doctrines of race and 'gender'" (Champion 2019, 105).

The Recommendations of the Advisory Panel

Champion's views on social studies were reflected in drafts of a proposed Alberta K–4 program for social studies that were leaked to the CBC in late October of 2020 (French 2020c). A document involving the advisory panel's criticism of the previous government's proposed K–4 program included the assertion that children in Grade 3 should not be taught about the ugliness of residential schools, which could be best saved for later years when students were "less emotionally vulnerable to traumatic material" (CAG 2020a, 16). Along with crossing out any reference to "equity," which was deemed "a politically partisan and charged buzzword" (CAG 2020a, 5), various explicit knowledge outcomes were also deleted, including a Grade 4 section entitled "The Land Sustains Everything," based on the comment that it "sounds like mysticism" (CAG 2020a, 10). In the advisory panel's revised K–4 social studies program, students in Grade 1 would become familiar with Bible and First Nations verses about creation as poetry (CAG 2020b), as well as learn to recognize "the sound of the chimes of Big Ben (Westminster)" (CAG 2020b). Students in Grade 2 would, moreover, develop an appreciation that "Canada's ruler is The Queen … her Majesty, Elizabeth II, and she lives in Buckingham Palace in England" (CAG 2020b).

Emphasizing the need for children to retain a significant and core body of knowledge, starting in Grade 2, students would be accordingly mandated to "memorize four dates in Canadian and Albertan history, in Grade 3 … 14 new dates and in Grade 4 a further 18 dates, for a total of 36 by the end of Grade 4" (CAG 2020b, 2). Some of the historical dates that students would be asked to memorize included 1497, when John Cabot crossed the ocean from England on the *Matthew*, as well as 1535, when Jacques Cartier sailed up the St Lawrence River from France on the *Grande Hermine* (CAG 2020b, 18). The advisory panel noted, however, that students "do not need to understand fully the significance of these dates, just memorize them as building blocks for later" as they "will be very happy to possess this

knowledge when they start learning history later" (CAG 2020b, 18).

Seen within the context of the rise of authoritarian populism, the advisory panel's various recommendations reflect a belief that societal values are trending in the wrong direction, and the K–4 program can be used as a tool to reinstate what are perceived as traditional values and beliefs. Specifically, the advisory panel's desire to excise from the K–4 program any reference to Indian residential schools, notions of equity and an ecological world view can be seen as an attempt to ensure that children will not be exposed to histories, values and beliefs they associated with left-wing ideologies. Seen through this same lens, the advisory panel's recommendation that students need to memorize a particular and common body of historical facts points to fears that society is losing the authority of a legitimizing historical narrative that has sustained Canadian society in the past, which social studies has a mission to re-establish.

The world view, values and beliefs that informed the advisory panel's vision for social studies marked a radical departure from those that guided the current social studies program in Alberta (Alberta Education 2005). Considered one of the most forward-thinking social studies programs of its time when it was first rolled out in 2005 (Thompson 2004; Woytuck 2007), the program is organized around a potentially transformative notion of citizenship, directing teachers to help students become "engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and world" (Alberta Education 2005, 1). To give this vision for citizenship life and purpose, the program states that students "construct meaning in the context of their lived experience through active inquiry and engagement with their school and community, [where] … the infusion of current events, issues and concerns is an essential component of social studies" (Alberta Education 2005, 5). Notably, teachers are additionally directed to help students see contemporary issues of concern, along with specific grade level concepts, through the lens of multiple perspectives including First Nations, Inuit and Métis, as well as francophone perspectives and experiences. Moreover, there is a strong emphasis in helping students engage with disciplinary ways of knowing, including historical and geographic thinking.

Social Studies as Social Initiation

While the advisory panel's proposed K–4 program stood in stark contrast to the current program in Alberta, it is important to understand that, rather than an aberration in the history of social studies, their vision for the subject is part of a long tradition that has appeared and reappeared, in an almost cyclical fashion, throughout the history of modern schooling. Seeking to foster loyalty to one's country through an anchor of common values and beliefs, the advisory panel's proposed program aligns with what Clark and Case (2008) termed the *social initiation* model of citizenship.

Arguing that the social initiation model of citizenship has been the most common and enduring tradition in social studies education in North America, Clark and Case (2008) contend that this approach dominated schooling practices throughout the 19th and the early part of the 20th century through the teaching of patriotism and character training. Social studies as social initiation was also evident throughout the 1930s and 1940s, when schools in English-speaking Canada promoted allegiance to Britain and the British Empire (Gereluk and Scott 2014). This vision for social studies then re-emerged in the 1970s alongside the back-to-the-basics movement in education calling for students to leave high school with a common body of core knowledge (Morgan and Robinson 1976). More recent proponents of the social initiation model of citizenship in Canada (Granatstein 2007; Dominion Institute 2009) have called for a shared understanding of a national past that emphasizes teaching about the people and events central to the formation of the country.

Seen through the lens of the social initiation project, the advisory panel's emphasis on having children learn that Canada's ruler is Queen Elizabeth II reflects an attempt to re-establish allegiances to the British monarchy and the Commonwealth that were prominent within Canadian social studies curricula during the pre-World War II era. Understanding the commitments of the social initiation project also helps clarify that the topic of residential schools was not taken out of the program because the panel felt young children were too emotionally vulnerable to learn about this difficult topic: it was removed from the K–4 program because it held the potential of disrupting and challenging the history of the "great stories of the men" central to the formation of the country (Champion 2019, 105). This claim can be supported by the fact that while the topic of residential schools was taken out of the K–4 program, the

panel simultaneously recommended that children should be taught about the equally difficult topic of "Slavery in the Ottoman Empire," in which it was noted that "enslavement of 'Slavs' by the Turks gives us the modern term 'Slave'" (CAG 2020b, 21).

The Response from Curriculum Experts

The Erasure of Indigenous Memory and Experiences

The flood of commentary that ensued via social media, radio talk shows, blog posts and op-ed columns immediately after the drafts of the proposed program were leaked to the CBC (French 2020c) pointed to the deep limitations of the advisory panel's vision for social studies. One of the strongest points of opposition concerned the advisory panel's decision to exclude the teaching of the histories of residential schools in the K–4 program. In a blog post that gained significant attention on social media, Carla Peck (2020), a history and social studies education specialist at the University of Alberta, highlighted specific commentary that demonstrated a desire on the part of the advisory panel to deny the serious and lasting impacts of the residential school system in Canada.

> The ugliness of Dickensian schooling, boarding schools, 19th century discipline methods, and Residential schooling that applied to some Indigenous kids, can probably best be saved for later … For example, there could be a Grade 9 unit about benign vs. harsh schooling in the past, inclusive of all cultures not only Indigenous, but with regard to the particular problematic of Residential schooling even if it applied only to a minority of Indigenous children. (CAG 2020, 16)

Noting the minimizing language like "even if it applied only to a minority of Indigenous children," Peck (2020) contended that lumping the history of residential schools together with other examples of what the author termed "harsh schooling in the past" is a "tactic used to erase or minimize that history of Residential Schools by combining it with other histories" (para 17).

Senator Murray Sinclair, the former chair of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, was one of the most prominent figures to speak out against the advisory panel's recommendation to take out the teaching of residential schools in the K–4 program. In an article in the *Globe and Mail*, Senator Sinclair maintained that there was a need to "call it what it is and we should fight it when we can," namely that the introduction of this program would be a "continuation of the white supremacy which the residential schools and the public schools have historically perpetrated against the Indigenous people of this country" (Keller and Kirkup 2020, para 4). Senator Sinclair additionally asserted that waiting to introduce the difficult topic of residential schools until children are older "will perpetuate a wall of mythology about Indigenous people and their history that will be next to impossible to undo" (Keller and Kirkup 2020, para 2).

Senator Sinclair contended that young children are able to handle the difficult topic of residential schools if it is done in a way that is age appropriate (Keller and Kirkup 2020). This view was supported by Maren Aukerman (2020), a literacy specialist at the University of Calgary, who argued in an op-ed piece in the *Edmonton Journal* that deciding if the teaching of residential schools was appropriate to teach children should not be left to the "gut feelings" of curriculum advisors but, rather, should be based on high-quality research on children's development (para 4). Aukerman highlighted research from the American context by Lewison et al (2001) that has shown that "controversial books" provide viable and age-appropriate ways for young children to engage in rich dialogue about topics related to diversity and difference, including issues of racism, class conflict and violence (p 215). While such topics often remain outside the realm of elementary classrooms, findings from this study suggest that using story books to have conversations about difficult topics with children has the power to "breathe new life and democracy into the curriculum by allowing students to bring their life texts to school" (Lewison et al 2001, 224).

The Decline of Francophone Perspectives and Histories

Noting that the current social studies program in Alberta includes the directive to engage with francophone perspectives and experiences (Alberta Education 2005), there was a considerable amount of commentary within the French-language media in Alberta about the leaked documents. In an interview with Radio Cité (2020), Raphaël Gani, a doctoral candidate at the Université d'Ottawa, highlighted the significant differences between how

francophone people were positioned in the program put forth by the previous government compared to how they are positioned within the one proposed by the current government. Instead of exploring the links, contributions and integration of francophone people in Alberta and Canadian society, Gani asserted that there is a diminished and more superficial focus on events and celebrations held by francophone people (Radio Cité 2020). Further remarking on the significant decline in the history and contemporary realities of francophone peoples and communities in the advisory panel's proposed program, in an interview with Radio-Canada, Peck contended that the proposed program does not give students the chance to le arn about francophone culture or francophone people who, along with Indigenous peoples, are one of the three peoples fundamental to the establishment of Alberta and Canada (Kadjo 2020, para 4).[1]

The Limitations of Focusing on Memorizing Disconnected Facts

While much of the public commentary about the proposed K–4 program focused on curriculum concerns involving what was and was not included, there was also a significant amount of criticism centred on the program's pedagogical vision. As both Peck (2020) and Aukerman (2020) pointed out, the advisory panel's recommendations that children should memorize an increasing number of facts and dates as they progress through elementary school goes against a long and established body of literature on how children learn. Peck (2020) similarly stated that "rather than memorize dates, names, and landmarks that hold little meaning for students and will soon be forgotten, a purposeful and powerful Social Studies curriculum focuses on building students' capacity to connect and apply knowledge through meaningful learning experiences" (para 13).

This assertion was supported by Aukerman (2020), who maintained that an approach to social studies that "fetishizes disconnected facts does not promote deep learning" (para 4). Aukerman argued that the research clearly shows us that children learn knowledge deeply through connecting to coherent themes and important questions. Specifically, as outlined in a recent study (Scott et al 2018), a significant body of research suggests that deep and meaningful learning occurs when young people have the opportunity to (a) engage in learning tasks involving the original application of knowledge and skills, rather than just the routine use of facts and procedures; (b) take part in disciplined inquiry into issues and problems; and (c) create products and presentations that have meaning and value beyond success in school (Newmann, Bryk and Nagaoka 2001, 14).

Donald (2020), a curriculum scholar at the University of Alberta who is a descendent of the amiskwaciwiyiniwak (Beaver Hills people) and the Papaschase Cree, offered further insights into the problem with the advisory panel's pedagogical and curricular stance. In an article in the *Conversation*, Donald (2020) argued that the focus on memorizing historical events and dates frames Indigenous topics and themes in the past—"as though we as Indigenous Peoples don't exist in the present" (para 7). Highlighting that this positioning of Indigenous peoples devalues and marginalizes the significance and importance of Indigenous knowledges, experiences and histories, Donald (2020) called for a "focus on leading students to understand relationships with each other, with Indigenous communities and with the world in qualitatively different ways" (para 8).

A Lack of Genuine Dialogue

Educators publicly speaking out against the proposed K–4 program additionally voiced deep concerns with the curriculum-writing process itself. Alison Van Rosendaal (2020), a curriculum specialist and PhD student at the University of Calgary, for example, posted on an open letter on Twitter highlighting the fact that during the curriculum-writing process for the current social studies program (Alberta Education 2005), the former Progressive Conservative Government undertook an "in-depth, research-supported, community-engaged process of curriculum development" involving hundreds of teachers, academics and community stakeholders who worked together over the course of four years (para 9). However, Van Rosendaal (2020) noted that, in contrast, the current review process involved only 12 people, hand-picked by the current government, who had a very limited period of time to set the future direction of social studies in Alberta for potentially decades to come. This criticism of the curriculum-making process was shared by Aukerman (2020), who argued that decisions about what and how social studies will be taught must involve "genuine dialogue with the people of Alberta, not dictated by a single individual or even a hand-picked group" (para 7).

Re-Storying Social Studies in Alberta

The Importance of Advocacy

In this final section, I would like to bring together the two main threads of this paper to consider the opening provocation by Smith (2006)—the question of "what is to be done" (p 83). One of the key lessons from how the saga of the proposed K–4 program played out is that engaging in public criticism and commentary is crucially important, as it has had an impact on government decision making. As noted in the introduction, after the fallout from the leaked curriculum documents, the minister asserted that the government was "absolutely committed" to truth and reconciliation and promised that the topic of residential schools would be included in all forthcoming social studies programs (Bench 2020, para 9). The minister further promised to release an updated K–6 program for public feedback in early 2021 (French 2020a).

This development only partially satisfies concerns by Van Rosendaal (2020) and Aukerman (2020) about the lack of input from stakeholders in the curriculum-writing process. The fact that the current government hand-picked C P Champion to lead this process makes it likely that any curriculum document the government ultimately chooses to approve will have a number of significant continuities with the advisory panel's vision for social studies.

Understanding the historical conditions and educational traditions that have shaped the curriculum-writing process to date offers insights into how these continuities might become manifest, in both overt and nuanced ways, in any future curriculum documents. Scholars and leaders who spoke out publicly against the proposed changes to the program offer guidance into the kind of social studies program we as educators, whether in K–12 contexts or in postsecondary institutions, should be advocating for when engaging in public dialogue and commentary about any future curriculum documents released by the government.

Rejecting White Anglophone Supremacy

Understanding the commitments of the social initiation project, as well as insights from Peck (2020), helps us appreciate that even if the topic of residential schools is taken up in any future curriculum documents, it will probably be done so in ways that seek to minimize the impact of this system on Indigenous people. It is also likely that no connections will be made between the histories and realities of the residential school system and ongoing colonial processes in the present, including land theft and ongoing Treaty violations. To counter this tendency, there is a need to heed the call of Senator Sinclair to name such omissions in any future curriculum documents, which can only perpetuate a "wall of mythology" about Indigenous peoples and their histories (Keller and Kirkup 2020, para 2).

While Senator Sinclair saw the advisory panel's decision to erase the topic of residential schools from the K–4 program as a manifestation of white supremacy, the significant weakening of francophone histories, culture and linguistic traditions within the proposed program (Kadjo 2020; Radio Cité 2020) suggests that the curriculum-writing process to date may be better described as an attempt to reassert white *anglophone* supremacy. Specifically, the erasure of francophone perspectives, alongside Indigenous memory and experiences, from the proposed program reflected an attempt by an advisory panel dominated by descendants of English-speaking settlers from the British Isles (that is, anglophones) to impose their language, culture and historical memory on a diverse population (Kymlicka 2007, 61).

Aligned with this project, it is likely that minoritized identities will be integrated into any future curriculum documents in ways that either adopt what Banks (1989) termed a *contribution approach*, focusing on their contribution and service to the nation, or an approach that promotes a superficial focus on cultural practices such as festivals and celebrations, as was the case with francophone culture (Radio Cité 2020). Noting the emphasis in the curriculum-writing process to date on having students remember a long list of historical events and dates, there will also be a strong probability that, within the context of the historical narratives, minoritized identities will be integrated into an already established anglocentric "grand narrative" (Stanley 2007). Mirroring the view of history promoted by C P Champion, Stanley (2007) outlined the major counters of this narrative as follows:

First, history proper begins with the arrival of Europeans, currently most often with Leif Ericsson and the Vikings. Second, [the] grand narrative almost completely disregards non-Europeans, and focuses on the progress of European resettlement, emphasizing "nation building" by far-seeing "great men" and, even today, the occasional "great

women." The Confederation of four British North American colonies in 1867 is taken as its major turning point. (p 34)

A Call for a Perspectival Approach to Social Studies

While a single authoritative anglocentric interpretation of the past or view of Canadian identity, as promoted by the advisory panel, aligns well with an authoritarian political culture, this view of Canadian identity is not appropriate for the democratic and multinational realities of Canada. To counter this dynamic, there is a pressing need to advocate for spaces within any future social studies curriculum that retain what could be called a perspectival approach, seen in the current Alberta social studies program (Alberta Education 2005). Although many social studies programs across North America direct teachers to help students engage with multiple perspectives, one of the elements that made the current social studies program in Alberta (Alberta Education 2005) unique is that it specifically named francophone and First Nation, Métis and Inuit nations as the perspectives that should be engaged.[2]

In contrast with the view of the country expressed by the advisory panel, the territory known as Canada has always been one of deep diversity that has included the ongoing presence of francophones and First Nation, Métis and Inuit nations who possess collective rights enshrined in the Canadian Constitution. In the case of francophone groups in Canada, the *Official Languages Act* of 1969, made Canada a fully bilingual country, whereby French was given equal status to English in all federal institutions. In the case of First Nations, such as the Blackfoot and Plains Cree, Treaty rights guarantee these nations the right to self-government, as well as control over education and resource development on their traditional territories. In this way, the Canadian federation has never been organized around the European-derived monolithic Westphalia model of the nation-state predicated on uniformity of sovereignty, historical memory, culture and language (Abbott 2014, 78).

Through honouring this reality, future social studies curricula in Alberta can offer opportunities for young people to encounter ways of seeing the past and the nature of the country that exists outside the horizons of the "Anglo-Canadian Grand Narrative" (den Heyer and Abbott 2011). For instance, recent empirical studies have documented the ways large number of francophone adolescents and adults possess understandings of the past and present that differ from their nonfrancophone counterparts (Gani and Scott 2017). According to this research, when francophone people are asked to tell the story of their community, the majority of participants draw on a *la survivance* (survival) narrative template. With this understanding of the past, the British conquest of New France in 1759 or the deportation of Acadians by the British from New Brunswick in 1755 set off a long struggle by francophone peoples to preserve and protect their unique language, culture, religion and identity against the continual incursions of the greater anglophone community, who sought to assimilate them into an anglo-dominated Canadian state (Lévesque, Croteau and Gani 2015).

Differing understandings of the past in relation to the founding of the country are particularly prominent in Indigenous understandings of Treaty relationships. According to Gaudry, a Métis scholar, within the context of the Plains, Indigenous histories of Treaties tell a story in which the newcomers "were invited into pre-existing territories as treaty partners, as brothers and sisters to share in the bounty of the land, to live peacefully with one another and to envision relationships where we all benefitted," which he asserted runs counter to what actually occurred, namely "a settler colonial dynamic where Canadians have benefitted largely at the expense of Indigenous peoples, our territory and the value that our territory generated, which comes with monetary wealth" (as cited in UAlberta, 2017, para 11).

Insights from Aukerman (2020) and Lewison et al (2001) point to how controversial books can advance a perspectival approach to teaching social studies in ways that centre the voice of minoritized peoples in their own words and on their own terms. With the support of books like *The Water Walker*, by Anishinaabe author and activist Joanne Robertson, and *Speaking Our Truth*, by Cree and Lakota writer Monique Gray Smith, for example, complex conversations about Indigenous environmental activism and the ongoing destructive legacies of the residential school system can become possible in the elementary social studies classroom. Paralleling recent research in elementary contexts in the United States (Keenan 2019), such an approach offers the possibility of presenting elementary-aged students with "counterstories" that can be used as a pedagogical tool for challenging taken-for-granted dominant stories of those in power that have become a natural part of societal discourses (p 5).

The Need to Foster Deep Learning

Turning to the kinds of pedagogy the government is likely to introduce in future social studies curriculum documents, it is highly likely there will be a strong emphasis on having children learn core facts and knowledge. Noting that the advisory panel's recommendations included a particular focus on having children memorize an increasing number of historical events and dates, this pedagogical approach would return social studies to a time over half a century ago when a "bland consensus version of history" dominated classroom practice that, moreover, failed to help students make connections between the past and present (Hodgetts 1968, 24). As outlined by Aukerman (2020) and Peck (2020), such a pedagogical stance runs counter to an established body of research that has revealed that knowledge learned in this way is soon forgotten. This body of research has shown that deep learning, in contrast, occurs when students have the opportunity to deliberate on questions, problems and issues that exist in the community and the world beyond the school, and engage in rich tasks that are worthy of their time and attention (Friesen 2009; Scott et al 2018).

Adopting a Relational and Storied Approach to Curriculum

Offering further insights into the overall curricular vision that could animate the creation of deep learning experiences, Donald (2020) points to a need to advocate for a future social studies program that provides guidance for the key issues of our times, including climate change, systematic racism, wellness and economic sustainability. In providing space in social studies for the young to engage with these issues, Donald (2020) asserts, "we need stories that teach how humans can relate to each other and to all life forms rather than reinforcing inherited colonial divides" (para 10). In contrast to an informational approach to curriculum and pedagogy, this more storied and dialogical approach offers a way to uphold the significance and importance of Indigenous knowledges, experiences and histories (Donald 2020). This vision for social studies also offers a way to counter the tendency of curriculum documents in Canada to either ignore Indigenous participation and presence in Canadian society or, when included, to present Indigenous peoples as frozen in the past as if they are no longer living in the present (Clark 2007; Donald 2009; Francis 1992; Manitoba Indian Brotherhood 1974).

Seen through the lens of the need to promote more storied approaches to curriculum and pedagogy to help young people to learn how they can relate to one another and the ecological systems that sustain and give us life in more sustainable and ethical ways, the advisory panel's recommendation to teach Bible and First Nations creation stories might actually be unexpectedly helpful (CAG 2020b). The productive possibilities opened up by engaging with such stories can be seen in the work of King (2003), who contrasted the Biblical creation story of Genesis with the Wendat (Huron) and Haudenosaunee (Iroquois) creation story of the "Women Who Fell from the Sky" (p 10). Because each of these stories recounts the creation of the world and how humans came into being, King argued that a theologian might claim that these two creation stories are basically the same. However, he asserted that from the perspective of a storyteller, these two stories are significantly different in that they each convey distinct messages regarding the nature of the world and the kinds of values that should guide life and living. King (2003) wrote in this regard that "elements in Genesis create a particular universe governed by a series of hierarchies … that celebrate law, order, and good government," while in the Indigenous story, in contrast, "the universe is governed by a series of co-operations … that celebrate equality and balance" (p 23–24).

Conclusion

The inspiration for writing this article stemmed from a noon-hour CBC News (2020) discussion I was invited to participate in; members of the public had the opportunity to phone in to discuss their questions and concerns about the proposed changes to the K–4 social studies program in Alberta. One of the things that struck me during this conversation was how passionate and engaged people were about this topic. While the work of curriculum development is often seen as dull and of little relevance to people's lives, it was clear that people cared deeply about the fate of social studies in Alberta.

One of the significant gifts that has thus emerged out of this saga is a renewed public interest and debate about the future of social studies in Alberta. In politically polarized times, these debates, however, cannot be ultimately resolved through appeals to research, because they are fundamentally about competing beliefs and values about who *we* are and what *we* wish to become as a community. Ongoing debates about

the future of social studies in Alberta thus require sustained public deliberations about the curriculum question of what the purpose of social studies should be in our contemporary times or, to put it another way, what stories we believe it is vital to tell the young about what it means to be citizens on this land (Donald 2020).

Notes

1. Paraphrased from the original French: Cela ne donne pas la chance aux élèves d'en apprendre sur la culture francophone ou le peuple francophone qui est un des trois peuples fondamentaux à l'établissement de l'Alberta ou du Canada, dont les peuples autochtones.

2. Interestingly, the program does not name the dominant (white/Eurocentric) perspective on which these two new perspectives are to be added (den Heyer and Abbott 2011).

References

Abbott, L. 2014. "Interstitial Encounters with Curriculum: Attending to the Relationship Between Teachers' Subjectivities and the Language of Social Studies." PhD dissertation, University of Alberta.

Alberta Education. 2005. *Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12*. Program of studies. Available at https://education.alberta.ca/media/159594/program-of-studies-k-3.pdf (accessed February 3, 2021).

Anderson, M, S Toor, L Rainie and A Smith. 2018. "Activism in the Social Media Age." *Pew Research Center: Internet, Science and Tech.* Available at www.pewresearch.org/internet/2018/07/11/activism-in-the-social-media-age/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

Aukerman, M. 2020. "Opinion: Social Studies Curriculum Should Be Based on Research." *Edmonton Journal*, October 28. Available at https://edmontonjournal.com/opinion/columnists/opinion-social-studies-curriculum-proposals-are-a-conceptual-mess?fbclid=IwAR1QKLY95A-kYHy0Jo-P-Wymlf9dz1rrS_VNC3JgrH1Hi27hQK-9XuaqtDI (accessed February 3, 2021).

Banks, J. 1989. "Integrating the Curriculum with Ethnic Content: Approaches and Guidelines." In *Multicultural Education: Issues and Perspectives*, ed J Banks and C Banks, 189–207. Boston, Mass: Allyn and Bacon.

Bench, A. 2020. "UCP Under Fire for K–4 Curriculum Plans That Suggest Leaving Out Residential Schools." *Globalnews.ca.* October 21. Available at https://globalnews.ca/news/7410812/alberta-curriculum-education-residential-schools/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

CBC News. 2016. "Alberta Begins Six-Year Overhaul of Education Curriculum." June 15. Available at www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-begins-six-year-overhaul-of-education-curriculum-1.3636519 (accessed February 3, 2021).

CBC Radio. 2020. "Proposed Curriculum Changes in Alberta." *Alberta at Noon with Judy Aldous*, October 22. Available at www.cbc.ca/listen/live-radio/1-1-alberta-at-noon/

clip/15804653-proposed-curriculum-changes-alberta (accessed February 3, 2021).

Champion, C P. 2019. "Alberta's Little History War." *Dorchester Review* spring/summer: 104–5.

Clark, P. 2007. "Representations of Aboriginal People in English Canadian History Textbooks: Toward Reconciliation." In *Teaching the Violent Past: History Education and Reconciliation*, ed E Cole, 81–119. Lanham, Md: Rowman & Littlefield.

Clark, P, and R Case. 2008. "Four Defining Purposes Of Citizenship Education." In *The Anthology Of Social Studies: Issues And Strategies For Secondary Teachers*, ed R Case and P Clark, 18–29. Vancouver, BC: Pacific Educational.

Cohn, M. 2015. "What Sex-Ed Protests Tell Us About Culture Wars." *Thestar.com*, June 10. Available at www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2015/06/10/what-sex-ed-protests-tell-us-about-culture-wars-cohn.html (accessed February 3, 2021).

Coombs, A. 2017. "The Conservative Working Class in Canada." *Active History*, April 6. Available at https://activehistory.ca/2017/04/the-conservative-working-class-in-canada/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

Curriculum Advisory Group. 2020a. *Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 4 Curriculum: Comments*. Available at https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/7273495/Social-Studies-Grade-3-4-Champion-PDF.pdf (accessed February 3, 2021).

———. 2020b. *Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 4 Curriculum: Revised*. Available at https://assets.documentcloud.org/documents/7273491/2020-07-31-Social-Studies-K-to-2-Champion.pdf (accessed February 3, 2021).

den Heyer, K, and L Abbott. 2011. "Reverberating Echoes: Challenging Teacher Candidates to Tell and Learn from Entwined Narrations of Canadian History." *Curriculum Theory* 41, no 5: 610–35.

Dominion Institute. 2009. "The Canadian History Report Card: Curriculum Analysis of High Schools in Canada." News release. June 15. Available at www.dominion.ca/release15062009.pdf (accessed February 4, 2021).

Donald, D. 2009. "Forts, Curriculum, and Indigenous Métissage: Imagining Decolonization of Aboriginal–Canadian Relations in Educational Contexts." *First Nations Perspectives: The Journal of the Manitoba First Nations Education Resource Centre* 2: 1–24. Available at www.mfnerc.org/resources/fnp/volume-2-2009/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

———. 2020. "Leaked Alberta School Curriculum in Urgent Need of Guidance from Indigenous Wisdom Teachings." *Conversation*. Available at http://theconversation.com/leaked-alberta-school-curriculum-in-urgent-need-of-guidance-from-indigenous-wisdom-teachings-148611 (accessed February 3, 2021).

Francis, D. 1992. *The Imaginary Indian*. Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp.

French, J. 2020a. "Alberta Government Rapidly Appointing New Teacher Groups to Review Curriculum." *CBC News*, November 17. Available at www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/government-curriculum-review-appointments-1.5804528 (accessed February 3, 2021).

—————. 2020b. "Alberta Social Studies Curriculum Adviser Calls Inclusion of First Nations Perspectives a Fad." *CBC News*, August 18. Available at https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/alberta-social-studies-curriculum-adviser-calls-inclusion-of-first-nations-perspectives-a-fad-1.5690187 (accessed February 3, 2021).

—————. 2020c. "Education Experts Slam Leaked Alberta Curriculum Proposals." *CBC News*, October 21. Available at www.cbc.ca/news/canada/edmonton/education-experts-slam-leaked-alberta-curriculum-proposals-1.5766570 (accessed February 3, 2021).

Friesen, S. 2009. *What Did You Do in School Today? Teaching Effectiveness: A Framework and Rubric*. Toronto: Canadian Education Association. Available at www.galileo.org/cea-2009-wdydist-teaching.pdf (accessed February 3, 2021).

Gani, R, and D Scott. 2017. "Social Studies Teachers' Resistance to Teaching Francophone Perspectives in Alberta." *International Journal of Historical Learning, Teaching and Research* 15, no 1: 34–48. Available at www.history.org.uk/publications/categories/304/resource/9280/the-international-journal-volume-15-number-1.

Gereluk, D, and D Scott. 2014. "Citizenship Education and the Construction of Identity in Canada." In *Citizenship Education Around the World: Local Contexts and Global Possibilities*, ed J E Petrovic and A M Kuntz, 128–49. New York: Routledge.

Granatstein, J. 2007. *Who Killed Canadian History?* Rev ed. Toronto: Harper Perennial.

Hodgetts, A B. 1968. *What Culture? What Heritage? A Study of Civic Education in Canada*. Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.

Kadjo, D. 2020. « Un recul! »: Des Franco-Albertains s'indignent de la refonte du programme scolaire. *Radio-Canada.ca*, October 22. https://ici.radio-canada.ca/nouvelle/1743046/franco-albertain-nouveau-programme-scolaire-francophones-autochtones-alberta (accessed February 3, 2021).

Keenan, H B. 2019. "Visiting Chutchui: The Making of a Colonial Counterstory on an Elementary School Field Trip. *Theory and Research in Social Education* 47, no 1: 52–75.

Keller, J, and K Kirkup. 2020. "Sen. Murray Sinclair: Alberta's Leaked Curriculum Plan Around Residential Schools Would Be 'Terrible Mistake.'" *Globe and Mail*, October 21. Available at www.theglobeandmail.com/canada/alberta/article-senator-criticizes-alberta-proposal-to-shield-younger-students-from/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

King, T. 2003. *The Truth About Stories: A Native Narrative*. Toronto: House of Anansi.

Kymlicka, W. 2007. *Multicultural Odysseys: Navigating the New International Politics of Diversity*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Lévesque, S, J-P Croteau and R Gani. 2015. « Conscience historique des jeunes francophones d'Ottawa: Sentiment d'appartenance franco-ontarienne et récit du passé. » *Revue du Nouvel-Ontario* 40: 177–229.

Lewison, M, C Leland, A S Flint and K J Moller. 2002. "Dangerous Discourses: Using Controversial Books to Support Engagement, Diversity, and Democracy." *New Advocate* 15, no 3: 215–26.

Manitoba Indian Brotherhood. 1974. *The Shocking Truth About Indians in Textbooks*. Winnipeg, Man: The Brotherhood.

Morgan, M T, and N Robinson. 1976. "The 'Back to the Basics' Movement in Education." *Canadian Journal of Education / Revue Canadienne de l'éducation* 1, no 2: 1–11.

Newmann, F M, A S Bryk and J K Nagaoka. 2001. *Authentic Intellectual Work and Standardized Tests: Conflict or Coexistence?* Chicago, Ill: Consortium on Chicago School Research. Available at https://consortium.uchicago.edu/publications/authentic-intellectual-work-and-standardized-tests-conflict-or-coexistence (accessed February 3, 2021).

Norris, P. 2016. "It's Not Just Trump. Authoritarian Populism Is Rising Across the West. Here's Why." *Washington Post*, March 11. Available at www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2016/03/11/its-not-just-trump-authoritarian-populism-is-rising-across-the-west-heres-why/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

Peck, C. 2020. "Repulsive, Regressive, and Racist: The 3Rs of Alberta Social Studies Under the UCP." *Carla L Peck, PhD*, October 21. Available at https://carlapeck.wordpress.com/2020/10/21/repulsive-regressive-and-racist-the-3rs-of-alberta-social-studies-under-the-ucp/ (accessed February 3, 2021).

Perry, J. 2015. "Education and the Culture Wars." *Philosophy Talk*, August 26. Available at www.philosophytalk.org/blog/education-and-culture-wars (accessed February 4, 2021).

Radio Cité. 2020. « Le gouvernement Kenny hautement critiqué pour sa réforme scolaire. » *Réécoutez +*, October 23. Available at https://radiocitefm.ca/actualites/le-gouvernement-kenny-hautement-critique-pour-sa-reforme-scolaire/ (accessed February 4, 2021).

Raynauld, V, E Richez and K B Morris. 2018. "Canada Is #IdleNoMore: Exploring Dynamics of Indigenous Political and Civic Protest in the Twitterverse." *Information, Communication and Society* 21, no 4: 626–42.

Robertson, J. 2019. *Nibi Emosaawdang/The Water Walker*. Trans S Williams and I Toulouse. Toronto: Second Story.

Scott, D, C Smith, M Chu and S Friesen. 2018. "Examining the Efficacy of Inquiry-Based Approaches to Education." *Alberta Journal of Educational Research* 64, no 1: 35–54. Available at https://ajer.journalhosting.ucalgary.ca/index.php/ajer/article/view/2006 (accessed February 4, 2021).

Smith, D. 2006. *Trying to Teach in a Season of Great Untruth: Globalization, Empire, and the Crises of Pedagogy*. Rotterdam: Sense.

Smith, M G. 2017. *Speaking Our Truth*. Vancouver, BC: Orca.

Stanley, T. 2007. "Whose Public? Whose Memory? Racisms, Grand Narratives, and Canadian History." In *To the Past: History Education, Public Memory and Citizenship in Canada*, ed R M Sandwell, 32–49. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

The Beaverton. 2020. "Alberta Removes Education from Curriculum." *The Beaverton*, October 24. Available at www.thebeaverton.com/2020/10/alberta-removes-education-from-curriculum/ (accessed February 4, 2021).

Thompson, L. 2004. "Identity and the Forthcoming Alberta Social Studies Curriculum: A Postcolonial Reading." *Canadian Social Studies* 38, no 3: 1–11.

UAlberta. 2017. *Resisting 150*. Available at https://medium.com/ualberta2017/resisting-150-f14c5e0939b4 (accessed February 4, 2021).

Van Rosendaal, A (@NetworkVibrio). 2020. "I've written an open letter about curriculum development processes in Alberta—this is a conversation that urgently requires all of us to participate." Twitter, October 21. Available at https://twitter.com/networkvibrio/status/1319047150777425920?lang=en (accessed February 4, 2021).

Woytuck, W. 2007. "Multiple Perspectives." *Social Studies Explorations* 2, no 1: 1–2. https://arpdcresources.ca/resources/ssnewsletters/multiple_perspectives.pdf (accessed April 23, 2021).

Zabjek, A. 2019. "Jason Kenney's Vision for K–12: Turning Back the Clock." *Alberta Views* April. Available at https://albertaviews.ca/jason-kenney-vision-k-12/ (accessed February 4, 2021).

David Scott, PhD, is an associate professor at the Werklund School of Education, University of Calgary, in the area of curriculum and learning. He can be reached at scottd@ucalgary.ca.

Reimagining Schools to Be Places of Deeper Learning

Jacqui Kusnick

To achieve cohesion within a system, argues Sinek (2009), among others, there must be a purpose beyond addressing the objectives of our courses. With never-ending calls for education reform from various stakeholders and diminishing faith in the system as a whole, it is time for educators to examine, or re-examine, their moral purpose. What is our *why*? Do our practices align with our purpose? Are we helping our students to grow, and in which areas? While we might wish it safe to assume that, within our schools, all students are given opportunities to succeed at learning and to develop the necessary skills to be successful outside of school, is this reality? Do our schools prepare students to take responsibility for their own learning and to take that learning beyond the classroom out into the world? With calls for school reform from stakeholders in education, it is time to consider the various changes necessary within the current system to support our true educational purpose, or if the system as a whole needs to be dismantled and reconceptualized.

The Development of Compulsory Education and Its Role in the Culture of Compliance

While the compulsory education system has (arguably) shifted from its original purpose and model, or the First Way, to its current purpose and model—the Third Way (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009), many of the changes made have been surface changes and not foundational ones. Examining the history of compulsory education, therefore, offers insight into our current "Third Way" system as it is today, and assists us in moving forward to a potential "Fourth Way" of inspired education.

Compulsory school began as a place to occupy and monitor children during the day, when parents were at work, in a time when mass migration to cities required a mechanism to instill order. Migrants, who made up a large, unskilled workforce at the time, needed to be sorted and managed. Schools were—and arguably continue to be, as evidenced by recent suspension of classes during the global pandemic—shaped by the ideas of scientific management (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). Scientific management, as a philosophy, stated that "the best way to organize human activity was to break down complex work into small, repetitive and routine tasks, with external incentives to ensure adequate execution of the work. Mass compulsory schooling was an invention that responded to the needs of the industrial revolution …" (Rincón-Gallardo 2019, 1). Consequently, the design of compulsory education became based on scientific management principles, including breaking down activities into simple, repetitive tasks that don't require a high level of skill and using externally imposed punishments and rewards to build compliance.

Schools have traditionally been well organized to address three social roles: custody, control and distribution of merit. "School work has become … a series of tasks to get done for compliance, good grades, and certificates" (Rincón-Gallardo 2019, 2). Scientific management served, and continues to serve,

as the foundation upon which the education system was built. The ideas of sorting students into grade groups based on their age, breaking the school day into discrete blocks of time dedicated to the study of a single, discrete subject and rewarding students who demonstrated appropriate behaviour with grades remain key defining features of schools passed down from the theorists of scientific management (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). This system served to manage large numbers of students, and continues to serve this purpose. During the development of compulsory education, the purpose of school was not to develop critical thinkers, but to produce compliant workers for the assembly line jobs of the time.

In *Dumbing Us Down*, Gatto (2017) explains that, inherently, schools teach or reinforce confusion, indifference, deference to authority, emotional and intellectual dependency, and acceptance of constant surveillance and criticism.[1] While these features may not intentionally be taught, they are embedded in the culture of the education system and deeply entrenched in "how we do things." Without upsetting the system in a significant way, these ideals will continue to be embedded in what we teach and how we teach children, despite these things being in opposition to our values and the true intended purpose of education.

The persistent culture of compliance and inherent hierarchy that permeates the education system is deeply entrenched, and has proven difficult, even impossible, to change. This conservative hierarchical system, with adults at the top and students at the bottom, reinforces systems and traditional rules that have been in place since the beginning of compulsory school. Shifting this system to one with a focus on democratic values seems a distant goal. "Our culture has already dictated that school entails a timeless, existential battle between the tasks and rules adults impose on the one hand, and students' efforts to preserve their own souls without getting thrown out, on the other hand" (Westheimer 2015, 6).

This system of scientific management, as exemplified by diplomas, certificates and grades, tells us nothing about whether graduates are prepared for the world, to be contributing citizens in democracies and to change the world for the better. Yet, in education, we perpetuate this system of credentialization when we focus our energies on standardized assessments. "Current school reform policies and many classroom practices too often reduce teaching and learning to exactly the kind of mindless rule-following that makes students unable to make principled stands that have long been associated with democracy" (Westheimer 2015, 18). Increased standardization of curriculum and teaching practices, and movement toward increasing accountability mean that teachers feel they have lost their professional judgment, freedom and ability to be creative (things we should value in our democratic societies), and that students are not receiving as many or as rich learning opportunities (Ritchhart 2015). "When education reforms turn away from an emphasis on supporting positive conditions of practice and move toward technocratic strategies for 'compliance,' the profession suffers and so do the students" (Westheimer 2015, 21). Education has the potential to change the world in positive ways, through social movements—but not if it continues to be done for compliance, good grades and certificates (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). "We need to scream and argue about this school thing until it is fixed or broken beyond repair, one or the other" (Gatto 2019, 26). With all the evidence that schools and the education system are rigged to fail our children, there are still surprisingly few arguments for whole-system reforms.

Indictments of the Education System and Its Inability to Change

Many Canadian educational theorists, of whom Michael Fullan might be considered the leader, focus significant attention on changing and improving the education system. These attempts at making change take several shapes, including examinations of effective teaching and teacher training programs, for example, but often constitute merely tinkering within the system. As a theorist focused on creating lasting change within the education system, Fullan is not alone in his belief that, in order to make changes to education, the system as a whole needs to fundamentally change. "… (W)e have an educational system which is fundamentally conservative. The way that teachers are trained, the way that schools are organized, the way that the educational hierarchy operates, and the way that education is treated by political decision-makers results in a system that is more likely to retain the status quo than to change" (Fullan 1993, 3).

Proponents of education reform talk of improving teaching and learning by focusing on teacher qualifications and training, or teacher effectiveness (Sahlberg 2015). They believe that by focusing on teacher effectiveness, the effects of increasing class size, lower funding and other pressures on the

education system can be mitigated. Sahlberg's research indicates that this belief is based on the fallacy that mitigation can be accomplished through three apparent solutions: recruitment policies—but without corresponding respect for and trust in teachers; improved individual teacher efficacy—but without a supportive culture and time for collective practice; and a singular focus on the impact of teachers on learning—but without a focus on the many other factors that influence learning. Reform that focuses only on these three purported solutions without providing the corresponding supports will not lead to lasting change, but will lead to increased pressures on individual teachers.

While improving teacher efficacy can lead to improved learning, the deeply embedded issues within the education system are not centred on individual teacher efficacy. "The problem is not lack of knowledge about teaching and learning. It is the distracters in the system that divert teachers from the core purposes and proven practices that support and sustain their capacity to teach well. Mandated targets, endless testing, scripted programs, a tsunami of spreadsheets, profusions of standards, banks of rubrics, and overwhelming emphases on basics—these are the things that drive teachers to distraction" (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, 87). Many of the core components of the education system, as well as the systems of accountability imposed on teachers by proponents of reform, stand in the way of student learning and are not effective to create lasting change. Increased standardization of curriculum and teaching practices, as well as increasing pressures on teachers, are supporting technocratic, neoliberal practices in schools.

Many theorists, including Hargreaves and Shirley for example, have joined Fullan in his critique of the purpose of the system, as well as its ability to change and improve. "It's time for a change that is disruptive, not incremental. It's time to bring the magic and wonder back into teaching. It's time to recover the missionary spirit and deep moral purpose of engaging and inspiring all our students" (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, 45). Hargreaves and Shirley paint a more hopeful picture than many other education critics, one that credits the education system with having once had a missionary spirit and deep moral purpose. Gatto (2017), on the other hand, states that "…we need to realize that the school institution 'schools' very well, though it does not 'educate'—that's inherent in the design of the thing. It's not the fault of bad teachers or too little money spent. It's just impossible for education and schooling ever to be the same thing" (p 21).

Rincón-Gallardo (2019), a contemporary of Fullan's, claims, "Not only were schools not designed to foster learning; they can get in the way of learning. They do this, sometimes unintentionally, other times deliberately, through prioritizing compliance, compartmentalizing knowledge, creating fear of failure, and concentrating control in the hands of adults" (p 5). Littky (2004) argues that societies have shifted from the industrial to the information age, but schools have not kept up. "Today, as yesterday, a traditional school is a building that isolates large groups of young people from adults and the resources and experiences of the real world, then expects them to emerge at age 18 knowing how to be adult, how to work, and how to live in the real world … *The world is changing – schools are not*" (Littky 2004, 31–32, emphasis in original).

Society has unrealistic views of what schools can do, so we cannot add more to the plates of teachers, administrators and school systems. We need to redefine our job and reconceptualize how we will do it to accomplish our goals, which need to be clearly defined (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). Clearly defining the role and purpose of education, and aligning our practice with our purpose, rests at the core of the change movement—having a moral purpose and practices that align with it is a good first step.

The Education System Is Not a Learning Community

Traditional schools believe their structure is conducive to creating an interdependent community. Recent theories, however, have reconceptualized the notion of schools as communities, suggesting that they are a long way from ideal. "It is a fact generally ignored when considering the communal nature of institutional families like schools, large corporations, colleges … that they are not real communities at all, but are networks" (Gatto 2017, 47). Real communities are places were people share their humanity, for good and bad. Communities promote engagement and genuine participation. The interactions of the various community members are rich and complex, and are not competitive in nature, but cooperative. In networks, though, people are only allowed to associate within a narrowly confined structure that contributes to the network. All interactions are narrowly focused, and competition is the norm. Gatto (2017) argues that "Networks like schools are not communities, just as school training is not education. By pre-empting fifty

percent of the total time of the young, by locking young people up with other young people exactly their own age, by ringing bells to start and stop work, by asking people to think about the same thing at the same time in the same way, by grading people the way we grade vegetables—and in a dozen other vile and stupid ways—network schools steal the vitality of community and replace it with an ugly mechanism" (p 49). By espousing network principles of competition, grading and compliance, schools position themselves as networks without any of the vital characteristics of learning communities.

A shift toward making schools into true learning communities should focus on building social capital in all members. Social capital can be grown in communities with shared common vision and goals, as well as embedded norms of civic engagement and reciprocity (Putnam 2001). Building social capital, along with social and civic engagement, leads to members within the community trusting each other ("not perfect and unconditional trust, of course, which is why lawyers and courts [are] needed [Putnam 2001, 29]). Successful communities are those who work together for the common good; rather than focusing on individual rights, they are focused on creating reciprocal relationships built on trust. The values upon which the community is built benefit all members, even those who are traditionally marginalized. "Our schools are the social embryos of humanity—those institutions that we establish to promote our highest collective values. They should be the embodiment of norms of reciprocity, active trust, and democratic deliberation" (Hargreaves and Shirley 2009, 99).

Changing the Education System Through Social Movements

Recently, researchers and proponents of educational change have been interested in examining, and changing, the relationship between educator and learner in the learning process. Currently, the relationship between educator and learner is hierarchical: the educator exercises power over the learner. "There is a clear vertical division between who determines what is to be done and who is expected to follow the instructions of the one above. Looked at from this perspective, conventional schooling is not only a disservice to learning, but also to democracy" (Rincón-Gallardo 2019, 8). Liberated learning promotes horizontal learning relationships between teachers and learners based on open dialogue—characteristic of relationships in communities rather than those found in networks, which would describe traditional teacher/student relationships. Our education systems can offer deeper learning, joy in learning, and the skills and strategies to help our students make the world a better place—if we can navigate past the restrictions placed by scientific management principles (Rincón-Gallardo 2019).

"It is time that we squarely face the fact that institutional schoolteaching is destructive to children … The method is deeply and profoundly anti-educational. No tinkering will fix it" (Gatto 2017, 15–16). The solution is to provide choice in education that suits children, give them voice and agency over their learning, and destructure schools. Gatto argues that it is the structure of the school system, its dependence on scientific management principles, and the structure of power upon which teacher and student relationships are based, that are anti-educational and do nothing to support democratic principles.

Gatto is not alone in his conclusion that students have little to no voice in their education (Sears, Peck and Herriot 2014; Raby 2012; Littky 2004). Littky also contends that students have "zero say in their school: no voice in how it's run, the rules, the curriculum, the way they're treated, where the money is spent, and how they spend their time or who they spend it with" (Littky 2004, 51). Littky and also Sears, Peck and Herriot (2014) argue that it's no wonder that students do not engage in our democratic process when they leave school, as they have no say in anything that directly affects them during their school days. Students across Canada feel disempowered, and thus disengaged from school. This is also the case in Alberta—"…students in Alberta feel a pervasive sense of voicelessness in terms of society generally and their schools in particular. In some ways they are … cynical about student government and schools as democratic communities" (Sears, Peck and Herriot 2014, 7). Students need real control over their lives, and for that, they need to be engaged in a true democratic process within a democratic environment.

In a Liberal Democracy, What Do Students Really Need to Learn in School?

Schools are full of implicit lessons about what it means to be a good citizen. The criticism is that these

implicit lessons fit better with an authoritarian mind-set than a democratic one. Students spend lots of time in schools learning *citizenship skills*—how to get along with others, fulfill our responsibilities and follow rules, but little to no time participating in genuine democratic practices. Teachers do not spend much time talking or teaching about, never mind engaging students in, independent thinking, decision making, improving their communities, cooperation, critical thinking, asking challenging questions, challenging widespread cultural assumptions and traditions, and thoughtful dialogue when we have competing ideas—the values of democratic participation (Westheimer 2015). "Even without specific classes in citizenship, government, character, or life skills, how the classroom is organized, the architecture of the school, the daily schedule, as well as the procedures and rules all have embedded lessons about how one should best behave in order to be a good community member, classmate, student, and so on" (Westheimer 2015, 37). These lessons centre on narrow definitions of what modern citizenship means, and fail to promote democratic dispositions among students, never mind educating students to be participatory citizens in the democratic process or citizens who are social justice oriented.

Westheimer (2015) describes three types of democratic citizens: the personally responsible citizen, the participatory citizen and the social justice-oriented citizen. The current structure of schools can promote the development of socially responsible citizens (that is, those citizens who act responsibly in the community, pay their taxes, obey laws and generally have good character). School rules and structures do support the teaching of social responsibility. Where schools lack is in teaching students to be participatory citizens and, particularly, social justice-oriented citizens. With very few exceptions, schools fail to allow students to participate in any form of a democratic system within their walls (Raby 2012; Sears, Peck and Herriot 2014), thereby missing the opportunity to teach democratic ideals in a genuine way. Schools virtually across the board fail to engage students in democracy and the development of school rules and expectations; rather, these are imposed on them (Raby 2012). While students may learn how democracy works, they are not often, if at all, afforded opportunities to practise it, actively participate, or effect changes within the school system.

Even the most well-intentioned and progressive schools who teach democracy through citizenship classes and programs fail to instill a social justice orientation in students. Students who are socially justice oriented are able to analyze social, political and/or economic problems, isolate the root causes of the problem and create social movements to effect systemic changes in the areas of injustice (Westheimer 2015). They are politically literate. Teaching this kind of citizen requires giving students voice over their lives and communities and teaching them about ways to effect systemic change at the root causes of the social justice issues under examination. As teachers working in a democratic society, we tend to assume that our education system is set up to support the democratic process by teaching our children to be participants in the democratic system. Democratic participation of citizens requires actively challenging the status quo by being literate and critical, and thus being able to enact change when necessary. "Teaching and learning in democratic societies has specific requirements. Chief among these are that students know how to think critically, ask questions, evaluate policy, and work with others toward change that moves democracy forward" (Westheimer 2015, 99). While school programs have attempted to promote democratic citizenship, they usually address ideas like volunteerism, obedience or listening to authority, and being nice to one's neighbours, and don't promote participation in debate, critical thinking and analysis, social justice, and responsibility (Westheimer 2015). Our education system severely lacks opportunities for students to participate genuinely in their learning in democratic ways.

Citizenship education as taught in many schools may lead to indoctrination of our students. Students are taught to ignore the validity of evidence, view issues in black and white and oversimplify problems, rather than to be critical of information and sources. Students are taught to believe the media and put down those with differing views, rather than approach problems with a critical open mind (Carr and Thesee 2008). Students fail to see injustices done to others, understand the root causes of these injustices and recognize how they can effect change. Schools in democracies need to teach all students to be politically literate, as "(c)ritical, political literacy can become an indispensable tool for citizens" (Carr and Thesee 2008, 173).

Teachers need to challenge their own assumptions that, within the traditional school system, they help students learn to be more critical, challenge the status quo, analyze problems and engage democratically in society. "Teaching and learning—in both public and independent schools—do not always conform to

democratic goals and ideas" (Westheimer 2015, 13). In fact, intentionally or otherwise, many of the teachings that occur do not support the development of democratic principles and processes within schools and among students. "If being a good democratic citizen requires thinking critically about important social assumptions, then that foundation of citizenship is at odds with recent trends in education policy" (Westheimer 2015, 13).

Creating Cultures of Thinking and Democratic Participation in Alberta Schools

Given the current curriculum revisions we are experiencing in Alberta, we find ourselves at a critical juncture in society and education. With social movements like Black Lives Matter protesting the treatment of minorities in both the United States and Canada, and colliding forces in education reform pushing for greater accountability and standardization, teachers need to consider how best to teach students to participate in society and become justice-oriented citizens (Westheimer 2015). "…(T)here are many deficiencies in the new and enhanced interpretation of the role of education in the twenty-first century, and it is increasingly questionable how the liberal hegemony (and schools which situate themselves within the liberal hegemony) will provide for social justice and democracy during and after the formal education experience" (Carr and Thesee 2008, 179). Many may consider the Black Lives Matter movement as proof that students benefit from citizenship education and are able to be participatory citizens. Yet, we need to question whether advocates of the Black Lives Matter movement can critically assess social, political and economic structures that lead to inequality, racism and oppression; explore strategies for change that address the root cause of racism and inequality; effect systemic change through social movements; and seek out and address injustices (Westheimer 2015). These criteria define a social justice-oriented citizen—one who can effect permanent systemic change.

While teachers in Alberta agree to a substantial degree that the goal of developing active and engaged citizens of a democratic society is important (93 per cent strongly agreed or agreed in a 2016 survey of social studies teachers conducted by the Alberta Teachers' Association [ATA]), social studies classrooms continue to be teacher focused, with instruction targeting the multiple outcomes of the provincial curriculum rather than the dispositions required of democratic citizens. Many Alberta teachers continue to struggle to integrate critical thinking, inquiry and deeper learning into their daily practice (ATA 2016). While this is certainly not a problem unique to social studies teachers, the subject matter of the social studies curriculum lends itself well to the instruction of critical thinking, inquiry and deeper learning, as well as democratic citizenship ideals within a culture of thinking. "Social studies curricula across the country stress the education of critical and engaged citizens with the knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to positively shape their communities, provinces, nations and, indeed, the world … the role of social studies in Alberta is to develop 'the key values and attitudes, knowledge and understanding, and skills and processes necessary for students to become active and responsible citizens, engaged in the democratic process and aware of their capacity to effect change in their communities, society and world'" (Sears, Peck and Herriot 2014, 6). Yet, students in Alberta continue to feel voiceless and without agency over their learning.

While social studies teachers felt that they had a "great deal of freedom" (ATA 2016, 23), their opinions were divided on the role that acquisition of knowledge, versus higher-order thinking, plays in their classrooms. A majority of teachers felt that there was generally not enough time to explore interesting topics in depth, as there were too many discrete outcomes in the curriculum to cover. While teachers felt confident in how to deal with controversial issues in current events, many felt there was insufficient time to delve into these topics to engage in deeper, more meaningful learning through discussion. Instead, some felt that there was an over-emphasis on testing (ATA 2016).

Dialectic Forces Tied to Our System, and Liberation

Mass education is currently structured to support conformity, obedience and compliance—the characteristics of networks, not communities. Mass education supports the belief that the way it is, is the way it should be, by focusing on neoliberal values such as competition, oppression, suppression of different ideas, and dominance. A shift needs to occur toward community values like equity, justice, creativity, imagination and the belief that we can move beyond one rigid view of our purpose.

In order to truly transform schools into learning communities, we need to change the way we interact with knowledge in schools toward deep and powerful learning. Deep learning involves focusing learning on core outcomes through higher-order thinking. While most of the content that students learn in schools is taught through lower-order thinking (Ritchhart 2015), proponents of deeper learning seek to teach students through the use of rich learning experiences and build students' ability to use meta-cognitive skills to understand learning dispositions. All that we do in schools, including our policies and pedagogies, needs to support deeper learning. To create this change, we need teachers to change the system from within by creating social movements to radically redefine our schools and systems.

Paired with a focus on deeper, more meaningful learning is a focus on learning rather than on tasks. Rather than focusing on the completion of often isolated, disconnected tasks, teachers and students focus first on the intended learning. Learning occurs as a community, through engaging conversations and negotiations. When students are asked to demonstrate their learning, they are given choices of tasks, and are encouraged to demonstrate their learning in a way that is meaningful for them. Their learning is linked to students' contexts and real worlds; it is practical and applicable. Teachers learn alongside students, modelling a focus on their metacognitive strategies. Teachers listen for opportunities to deepen students' learning—what we call "teachable moments." Mistakes are not shamed, but rather welcomed as learning opportunities. Teachers provide formative feedback for learning, rather than summative judgements of performance on tasks (Ritchhart 2015).

Inherent in liberated, thinking-oriented classrooms is a distinction between teaching and learning for understanding versus for knowledge. Teaching for knowledge requires students to demonstrate low-level recall skills, while teaching for understanding "requires knowledge, but goes beyond it. Understanding depends on richly integrated and connected knowledge" (Ritchhart 2015, 47) and requires higher-level thinking. Understanding also requires the application of learning to real-world concepts and contexts. "In many classrooms, to reach this kind of understanding—that is, an understanding that stresses exploring a topic from many angles, building connections, challenging long-held assumptions, looking for applications, and producing what is for the learner a novel outcome—represents a new, different, and sometimes even radical agenda. Teaching for understanding is not school as usual" (Ritchhart 2015, 48), but it is school as it should be.

Learning can be a liberating act when we learn at our own pace with control over how we learn and make meaning of new information. This can be accomplished through dialogue between teachers and learners, and by examination of current conditions that oppress students. We can use the examination of oppressive conditions to develop policy that facilitates building horizontal relationships, which should result in a shift toward liberated learning conditions in schools and school systems (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). For example, engaging students in dialogue about the Black Lives Matter movement, wherein students share their lived experiences within a supportive community of learners with the teacher alongside, could lead to greater political literacy. Ignoring the controversy and the underlying factors that support oppression because it is a difficult topic to address in schools leads to greater disengagement and continued belief that our society is "colour blind"—a dangerous notion that supports various systems of oppression in schools and in society.

Providing opportunities for students to participate democratically in schools is antithetical to the way things are and have been done (Rincón-Gallardo 2019). By changing the culture of schools to serve our students, and changing the relationship between students and teachers so that power is more equally distributed, we can develop true learning communities where the focus shifts from merit, competition, custody and control to purposeful learning, developing mastery, and increasing autonomy and connectedness. These changes can occur effectively only through widespread cultural changes in the classroom and the whole system. The changes must then permeate the system in three arenas: the pedagogical, the social and the political (Rincón-Gallardo 2019).

Examples of schools that have embraced deeper and liberated learning exist, but are, unfortunately, isolated examples rather than the norm. Since they are isolated, they don't create permanent and lasting change on the education system, but rather only give glimpses of what liberated learning can look like. Examples like The Met School, developed by Littky, provide choice and agency to students, while focusing learning on foundational skills that help students grow into adults with skills like critical thinking, problem solving, communication, collaboration, compassion and self-regulation (Littky 2004). As these schools are labelled by the mainstream as "alternative schools," they sit on the fringe of the education

system. Until we stop viewing such school models as alternative, and embrace the idea of systemwide changes to embrace democratic ideals, little real progress will be made toward a liberated and democratic educational purpose.

Ensouling Our Schools

If we bring a spiritual (but not religious) "soul" to our instructional practices, students' perceptions of learning can shift from learning as a compulsory, teacher-focused process to one of opportunity and developing a joy of learning. Learning focused on creating equity, eliminating poverty and increasing social mobility promotes democratic ideals (Katz 2018). Katz cites Jones, Haenfler, and Johnson (2011), who describe seven foundations that should be taught in democratic schools: fairness, peace, sustainability, community, simplicity, justice and democracy. These should be the goals of education in the democratic world. "While many schools and government policies cite visions that align with these foundations, research shows there is rarely time dedicated to them, and often curricula, assessment practices, teaching methods, and school rules are not well aligned" (Katz 2018, 7). These limitations align with those identified in the Alberta Teachers' Association survey of social studies teachers conducted in 2016. There, researchers identified issues of time for inquiry, heavy outcomes-centred curricula and assessment practices (including the influence of standardized testing, lack of teacher judgment, importance of using authentic assessment methods, and taking learners and learning seriously) as barriers to ideal classrooms.

Katz (2018), a Canadian researcher and proponent of inclusive education, has developed a three-block model of universal design, based on the seven foundations of democratic schools, to be implemented in schools. She describes the benefits of using this model of universal design (which examines systems and structures, inclusive instructional practice, and social/emotional learning and well-being) as engaging students in deep, higher-order thinking and learning; helping students to take charge of their learning; and encouraging students to learn for its own sake, take risks, and become leaders and team players. Her model supports the development of a democratic classroom through practices that allow students to use their voices to create classroom expectations/rules and to critically analyze the way the classroom operates, building their understanding of community and

democracy through classroom meetings; to examine issues of equity by challenging the status quo when it does not work for everyone in the classroom community; and to create necessary changes to the classroom community when the goals of justice, fairness and peace are not met within the classroom. This is accomplished by distributing leadership, focusing on collaborative practices, designing the curriculum to support diversity, creating flexible learning environments, creating student choice and autonomy, teaching and modelling self-regulation, using the inquiry and problem-based models of learning, helping students develop their self-concept, and employing a democratic classroom management model. Katz contends that by following the three-block model, schools can ensoul themselves through their practices, and thus ensoul students and liberate learning.

Schools alienate students by limiting their control over their own learning, the relevance of their learning and the engagement they experience. "Academic alienation occurs when students lack meaningful connection to their studies, when they see little relevance in the course content, and often, when they are effectively disconnected from other students …" (Katz 2018, 14). Students' ability to learn is affected by their sense of safety in the classroom, and safety is created when students are involved in their learning, are motivated by the learning and experience positive cooperative learning with their peers. A spiritual education, "challenges students to build critical understanding of their presence in the world and helps them acquire knowledge and resources to engage in social activism" (Katz 2018, 17) and leads to liberated learning in schools.

Democratic classrooms are a vital ingredient of a liberated school. In a democratic classroom, students work cooperatively as a group and with the teacher to develop the classroom rules and consequences. They talk together about what being a community member means, and students learn to actively participate in this community by using their voice. Students have some autonomy over their learning, and therefore take ownership over it. They are given choice. This helps them to be engaged in their learning. Students are active participants in the decisions that truly matter within the classroom community. Students also learn to work together to make their community a positive place to be. Democratic classrooms promote democratic principles because in these classrooms, "Students learn how to consider the needs of others, voice their own needs in appropriate ways, and find solutions that are mutually acceptable. Empowered

students are motivated to assume a degree of social responsibility, as they recognize how their contributions, either positive or negative, affect others in their community" (Katz 2018, 104).

"Schools in democracies must teach students how to ask challenging questions, entertain multiple perspectives, engage in democratic dialogue, discuss different viewpoints, challenge widely held assumptions, challenge the status quo and work for equity and social justice" (Westheimer 2015, 12–13). Using the model of ensouling our classrooms by having students practise democratic principles, rather than just learning about them through teacher instruction, and allowing students agency over their environment allows teachers to teach how to engage in the democratic practice and create change in communities; as Sears, Peck and Herriot (2014) say, we are not just here to teach about democracy, but to allow students to participate in it.

Katz (2018) calls for teachers' roles to change from "workers" to "professionals." The distinction between a worker, who is expected to conform to the role given to them by their superiors, and a professional, who has shared leadership opportunities, choice and voice, and agency over the decisions that need to be made, is an important one. The characteristics of teacher agency, voice and shared leadership are those of learning communities. If teachers are to help children develop their democratic skills and deeper learning, they must also be able to practise these skills in their workplace and model them for students. In order for changes to the education system to be permanently successful, the teachers and leaders within the system need to initiate and support the change.

Initiating Change to Create Learning Communities

While there is a lot of evidence that schools are not learning communities, but rather ones that impede and damage children's experience of learning, all hope should not be lost. Models of liberated learning encourage students to learn for the sake of learning, deepening their breadth of knowledge and their joy in learning, while practising democratic principles. While examples of truly liberated learning are few, they are powerful examples of a system that all schools can aspire to—one where students are taught to truly engage in their learning communities and to develop and practise democratic ideals. So, while we are not yet a learning community, we certainly can

be with significant adjustments to the core of our system. This will be hard work, but it is not impossible.

What we currently do in education does not, unfortunately, align with our moral purpose: to give students the skills they need to flourish in school and beyond the years they spend there, to be advocates for equity and justice, to be change agents when change is called for, to be truly engaged in their community, and to flourish. As social studies teachers, we embrace the "goals of social studies as outlined in the front matter of the Alberta program: active citizenship, appreciating diversity and identity, the importance of Aboriginal perspectives and history, and a commitment to inquiry and disciplinary approaches in teaching and learning" (ATA 2016, 46)—yet we know there are incredible challenges to aligning our actual daily practice with our beliefs. We can create alignment by examining our assumptions about our system, and working for whole-system change from within.

Students can develop a sense of purpose in their learning when they have a voice in what they are learning, and have choice (Katz 2018; Littky 2004). Students can learn to be advocates who can use these skills to make meaningful changes in the democratic world. When students are shown ways to be meaningfully engaged, they can participate in their community and develop important skills that are truly of value in our democratic society. Their learning goes beyond compliance and obedience to deeper learning in which they are passionately engaged. This is the joy of learning. Schools are devoid of joy when they are focused on achievement, accountability and rigour. Schools can bring joy to learning by focusing more on intellectual engagement in deeper learning, creativity and debate. We also learn better when we are happy—that's just brain science.

Note

1. Gatto believes that schools inherently teach and reinforce the following features: 1. Confusion—concepts are taught in a predetermined order or curriculum, rather than contextually. 2. Class position or deference to authority—children learn their place and not to question it; that their only hope to change their class position is by succumbing to current economic pressures. 3. Indifference—children are taught not to care about their learning through the enforcement of bell schedules, which serve to start and stop learning randomly. 4. Emotional dependency—teachers are in control of all aspects of kids, and children are expected to follow the chain of command. 5. Intellectual dependency—children are

taught what to think and made to repeat it for rewards. 6. Provisional self-esteem—because their every action is evaluated and judged, students' self-esteem becomes dependent on adult approval. 7. Acceptance of constant surveillance—children are taught to accept being observed, managed and critiqued at all times.

Bibliography

Alberta Teachers' Association (ATA). 2012. *A Great School for All: Transforming Education in Alberta.* Available at www.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/ATA/Publications/Research/PD-86-26%20A%20Great%20School%20for%20All-Transforming%20Education%20in%20Alberta.pdf (accessed December 2, 2020).

———. 2016. *The Future of Social Studies: The Voices of Alberta Teachers.* Available at https://ssc.teachers.ab.ca/SiteCollectionDocuments/Future%20of%20Social%20Studies/Full%20Doc%20The%20Future%20of%20Social%20Studies.pdf#search=principles%20of%20a%20democratic%20classroom (accessed December 2, 2020).

Carr, P R, and G Thesee. 2008. "The Quest for Political (Il)Literacy: Responding to, and Attempting to Counter, the Neoliberal Agenda." In *The Destructive Path of Neoliberalism: An International Examination of Education*, ed B Porfilio and C Malott, 173–94. Rotterdam: Sense.

Conference Board of Canada. 2020. "Employability Skills." Available at www.conferenceboard.ca/(X(1)S(aya1paskn4bbkzldqnllqqms))/edu/employability-skills.aspx?AspxAutoDetectCookieSupport=1 (accessed December 2, 2020).

Dobozy, E. 2007. "Effective Learning of Civic Skills: Democratic Schools Succeed in Nurturing the Critical Capacities of Students." *Educational Studies* 33, no 2: 115–28.

Fullan, M. 1993. *Change Forces: Probing the Depths of Educational Reform.* Levittown, Pa: Falmer.

Fullan, M, J McEachen and J Quinn. 2017. *Toward District Wide Deep Learning: A Cross Case Study.* Deep Learning Series 2. New Pedagogies for Deep Learning: A Global Partnership.

Gatto, J T. 2017. *Dumbing Us Down: The Hidden Curriculum of Compulsory Schooling.* 25th anniversary ed. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society.

Greene, P. 2010. "The New Path to a Revolution in Education." Review of *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change* by Andy Hargreaves and Dennis L Shirley. *Educational Forum* 75, no 1: 90–91.

Hargreaves, A, and D Shirley. 2009. *The Fourth Way: The Inspiring Future for Educational Change.* Thousand Oaks, Calif: Corwin.

Jones, E, R Haenfler and B Johnson. 2001. *The Better World Handbook: From Good Intentions to Everyday Actions.* Gabriola Island, BC: New Society.

Katz, J. 2018. *Ensouling Our Schools: A Universally Designed Framework for Mental Health, Well-Being, and Reconciliation.* Winnipeg, Man: Portage & Main.

Littky, D. 2004. *The Big Picture: Education Is Everyone's Business.* Alexandria, Va: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Putnam, R D. 2001. "What Makes Democracy Work?" In *The Last Best Hope: A Democracy Reader*, ed S J Goodlad, 25–32. San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-Bass.

Raby, R. 2012. *School Rules: Obedience, Discipline, and Elusive Democracy.* Toronto, Ont: University of Toronto Press.

Rincón-Gallardo, S. 2019. *Liberating Learning: Educational Change as Social Movement.* New York: Routledge.

Ritchhart, R. 2015. *Creating Cultures of Thinking: The 8 Forces We Must Master to Truly Transform Our Schools.* San Francisco, Calif: Jossey-Bass.

Sahlberg, P. 2015. "Myth: You Can Do More with Less." *ATA Magazine* 95, no 4. Available at www.teachers.ab.ca/News%20Room/ata%20magazine/Volume%2095%202014-15/Number-4/Pages/Myth-Pasi-Sahlberg.aspx (accessed December 2, 2020).

Sears, A, C Peck and L Herriot. 2014. "We're Here to Teach About Democracy Not Practise It. The Missed Potential of Schools as Democratic Spaces." *One World in Dialogue* 3, no 1: 5–13.

Sinek, S. 2009. *Start with Why: How Great Leaders Inspire Everyone to Take Action.* New York: Penguin.

Westheimer, J. 2015. *What Kind of Citizen? Educating Our Children for the Common Good.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Jacqui Kusnick has taught middle school and high school for 18 years in three provinces, and has been an alternative education and resource teacher. She is currently vice-principal of Emerado Centennial School, in Winkler, Manitoba.

Smashing Down "Old" Ways of Thinking: Uncritical Critical Thinking in Teacher Education

Matthew Etherington

A version of this article was originally published as "Uncritical Thinking in Teaching and Learning: Smashing Down 'Old' Ways of Thinking," in What Teachers Need to Know: Topics in Diversity and Inclusion, *ed Etherington; Wipf and Stock 2017. Used with permission from Wipf and Stock Publishers: www.wipfandstock.com. Minor amendments have been made in accordance with ATA style.*

Abstract

The application of critical thinking in teacher education today enjoys universal approval at most levels of learning and unites educators. However, there is one view of critical thinking that is grounded in a progressive notion of education that perceives traditions, that is, nonscientific ways of knowing, as an impediment to learning. The educator's role is to encourage an abandonment of "old ways of thinking" and adopt a pragmatic interpretation of critical thinking. The author recounts an example of this and then argues for an inclusive perspective of critical thinking that includes all traditions.

Introduction

At a recent conference of teacher-educators, participants had the opportunity to hear—in one double session—different understandings of critical thinking integration in teacher education. The first pair of presenters, both education professors, described in detail an approach by which student teachers were taught to integrate critical thinking based on the following definition. "Critical thinking" they said, "is the smashing down of old ways of thinking" (personal communication, May 2014) and "the purpose [of critical thinking] is to always rock their boat" (personal communication, May 2014).

In the question-and-answer time, the professors clarified their definition as "utilizing new and innovative ideas and not previous [old] knowledge or values from a bygone era" (personal communication, May 2014). While their original definition of "smashing down old ways of thinking" remained, in the question time they spoke about their ultimate objective to advance critical thinking skills by steering their education students toward reason, logic and scientific evidence. No one present in the room (except the author of this paper) showed any surprise that education professors would choose to use the phrase "smashing down old ways of thinking" in relation to critical thinking.

This lack of surprise and the experience itself is worth labouring over. The professors' definition of critical thinking disregards learners who value so-called "old knowledge," which has in many cases been passed down from family, community and Elders. Second, their definition tacitly promotes the view that knowledge from the past is simplistic and an impediment for thinking effectively (abstractly). If such a definition were acted upon, the diverse epistemologies

that Indigenous and non-Indigenous learners bring with them to the classroom would be ignored. Moreover, a homogenous ideal of critical thinking would dominate and, finally, current educational policy that encourages diverse ways of thinking would be abandoned. Last of all, a false dichotomy would be established between "old ways of thinking," which is perceived as traditions lacking logic, reason and evidence (Widdowson 2010), and so-called new ways of thinking, which are assumed to be logical, reasonable and evidence based (Egan 2002).

Professors have been entrusted with the welfare and education of all learners, and with this responsibility a learning environment that perceives critical thinking as the "smashing down of old ways of thinking" not only overlooks the holistic nature of knowledge and knowing but fails to generate a safe place for all students to learn. The "smashing down of old ways of thinking" in education is not consistent with promoting cultural inclusiveness for Indigenous learners and their families set within a growing multicultural society (Samuels 2010).

So, can education students retain their "old ways of thinking" and still be capable of thinking critically, or should they first agree to criteria by which education faculty determine when "old ways of thinking" interfere with critical thinking and cannot enter the fray? In the central sections of this paper, the author considers this principal question in light of the insights of John Dewey's pragmatic views of thinking critically, advocates of critical thinking and the possibility of making space for living traditions within the classroom. Some suggestions are then raised to consider the prospect that "old ways of thinking" and other ways of thinking can peacefully coexist in any critical thinking model for teacher education students.

Background and Influences

The phrase "smashing down of old ways of thinking" is a progressive rational feature of education, which is consistent with two unfortunate features of Western ways of thinking about education today: the rampant pragmatism and the concomitant devaluation of nonscientific traditions.[1] In the context of higher education, pragmatism is understood as "every situation learners encounter is in some sense unique" (Biesta and Burbules 2003, 13). Pragmatic critical thinking does not necessarily draw on knowledge from the past, but has a dialectical progressive

future-oriented approach to creating new knowledge. Traditional education that includes traditional ways of knowing is then portrayed as old knowledge and considered to make students passive recipients of other's ideas (Egan 2002).

Although progressivist standards have a long history in education, progressivism as an educational ideal is often associated with the Eurocentric views of Herbert Spencer in the 1850s and advanced by John Dewey, who made progressivist principles and democracy in education increasingly popular (Egan, 2002). In T*he School and Society*, which began as a series of lectures given to parents, professionals and others, Dewey (1956) mobilizes this approach as he imagines a pragmatic application of critical inquiry drawing from the ideas of an individual and never those of another man (sic) (Fallace 2010). One of the central ways of achieving this for Dewey was through the scientific method, which he considered the most reliable process for understanding reality and locating truth (Gribov 2001). Dewey's pragmatic philosophy is important for inclusion in this discussion because it echoes the interpretations of critical thinking held by education instructors who publicly announce that critical thinking can only be achieved by the "smashing down [of] old ways of thinking."

Although Dewey's philosophy of education has much to offer teaching and learning today, he did not "recognize the world's culturally diverse knowledge systems, or how different knowledge systems are based on intergenerational knowledge and inform people's lives meaningfully" (Bowers 2005, 17). Dewey did not understand that nonscientific traditions are not necessarily an obstruction to scientific ways of thinking critically (Bowers 2011), but instead give meaning and attentiveness to the culture and worldview in which people are embedded (Groome 2001; Valk 2007).

A further misunderstanding can be seen in *School and Society*, in which Dewey (1956) wrote, "Many anthropologists have told us there are certain identities in the child's interests with those of primitive life … There is a sort of natural recurrence of the child mind to the typical activities of primitive peoples" (p 48). Because Dewey understood the social world of learning as a series of developmental linear steps from simple to advanced, it is not surprising that Dewey disparaged traditional perspectives of learning and thinking in colleges and universities and advocated the superiority of a progressive "scientific definition of mission and identity" (Johnson 2010, 23). Dewey assumed that including traditional knowledge or

perspectives to examine concepts, ideas or topics other than the scientific method would make the pupil a mere passive recipient of others ideas—a slave—an affair of telling and being told (Egan 2002; Fallace 2010), leading to "old ways of thinking."

Unfortunately, the view that traditional ways of thinking lead to passive thinking and that to be a visionary and forward thinker requires educators to "smash down old ways of thinking" offers a narrow, simplistic and unhelpful dualistic approach to knowledge in general and critical thinking in particular. All knowledge is passed down within a particular tradition. Second, it simply does not follow that just because a learner incorporates their tradition to analyze an issue, concept or event, they are inevitably passive thinkers. Since the 1960s the academy and contemporary teacher education have recognized, at least in theory, that a multiplicity of epistemologies are valuable for understanding reality, especially important within diverse Western societies today (Government of British Columbia 2015; Peters, 1967).

Well over ten years ago, Marsden (1997) argued that there was a growing world view perspective in education informed by advocates of John Dewey's pragmatic beliefs about learning that should be recognized because of its antagonism towards traditions and traditional thinking. Marsden (1997) explains

> This philosophy is found in the spiritual descendants of John Dewey where the tendency has been to absolutize the pragmatic method in education. Absolutized liberal pragmatism has little tolerance for different perspectives and in particular groups that hold to traditional ways of thinking that might challenge the pragmatic absolutes. (p 26)

What it means to think critically is then wedded to a rational orderly methodology drawn from "rigorous scientific evidence" and emphasized over opinion-based and subjective decision making. The key point is that, comparable with scientific pragmatism, "effective" pedagogy should not include traditional epistemologies that are "unscientific". In fact, no one understood this better than John Dewey (Spears and Loomis 2009).

The author suggests that the source that entails one to conclude that critical thinking requires the "smashing down of old ways of thinking" is rooted in the pragmatic philosophy and advocates of John Dewey. This forceful progressivist Eurocentric notion of learning promotes a shift from the locus of authority reflected in the local community and family to that of the "enlightened" modern pragmatic institution. As a consequence, rather than draw upon the perspectives offered by both traditional and pragmatic ways of critical thinking, the precepts that inform learners with traditional epistemologies are largely discounted as irrelevant—knowledge to be "smashed down."

From the Is to the Ought

It is suggested that if critical thinking really entails the "smashing down [of] old ways of thinking," learners are left with a narrow and discriminatory epistemology devoid of other ways of thinking and knowing. The phrase fails to include the subjective and the intuitive voice of all learners, leaving students ignorant of other realities. It also presents a false dichotomy of choosing between traditional [and] scientific thinking. Hurley and Hurley (2013) suggest that setting up false dichotomies like this could require the teacher to identify her students with a strong adherence to social convention and submission to traditions and authorities, and describe them as displaying a skills deficit (see also Widdowson 2010). Contemporary ideas and methods, Egan (2002) notes, "present learning as some kind of binary moral choice between the traditional, passive, forced, and vicious and the progressive, active, reliable and rational" (p 45).

The concerns levelled against an adherence to social conventions are an abuse of critical thinking that was precisely the criticism Socrates launched against the Sophists and their teachings. Certainly some beliefs or values are unhelpful and could be even harmful for critical thinking, but the "smashing down of old ways of thinking" is far removed from this perspective and as such has moved away from the intellectual virtues—in particular the virtue of intellectual humility (Bowell and Kemp, 2002). Similarly, Portelli and Hare (1996) argue that critical thinking essentially requires the learner to reflect humility and a commitment to learn from others. In the spirit of humility, one would be better served to reflect upon a sensitive or controversial issue within its context, where there are supporters and detractors on both sides, and then attempt to understand the thinking of another person. Critical thinkers could then examine and evaluate the details—scientifically and nonscientifically for the reasons offered. This would confirm to learners that there are other ways of knowing besides only a scientific approach. In fact, Smoker and Groff (1996) list three categories of legitimate knowledge in the world in addition to

scientific knowledge that could be included as critical thinking. These comprise the mystical/spiritual, knowledge from Indigenous peoples and organized religion, and knowledge from fundamental traditions and beliefs.

The challenge here is that some educators do not see the value of traditional knowledge in the same way as traditional groups do (Tanaka 2009). Knowledge is important only for what it can *do*. Knowledge is supposedly important only if it is useful, and what is measured as useful is obvious only to those who share progressivist principles, which render traditional knowledge as simple and scientific knowledge as complex (Egan 2002). This view presupposes a narrow and timeworn perspective of legitimate knowledge from a bygone era of the 1930s, that is, logical positivism.[2]

If we accept a privileging of scientific knowledge in the academy, we would have to also discard the traditions of art, literature, music, history, mathematics and many other fields of human endeavour that are essential aspects of the modern world but are grounded in traditions that do not depend on the scientific method for validation (Bailey 2014). Furthermore, no scientific endeavour could even begin without some set of received nonscientific beliefs, since science itself operates within traditional frameworks of assumption that cannot be empirically verified on scientific grounds (Kuhn 1962).

Critical thinking does not have to be understood in this way. The inclusive educator can offer a more comprehensive epistemology for consideration. Rather than ask the learner to adopt *the* critical view on an issue, which might assume that there is only one way to think, the teacher and learner take account of alternate stories and competing points of view while not jumping to judgment. The freeing of minds to think critically about issues would occur at the same time for developing awareness of the traditions in which all minds are embedded. Unfortunately, a posture that evaluates anything outside of the logic and rationality of science as being uncritical and even deceptive (Widdowson 2010) leads to instructors thinking that their role really is to "smash down old ways of thinking".

If scientific knowledge is only one epistemology, then critical thinkers should not be expected to draw merely on scientific knowledge.[3] The scientific bases, "while not superficial, do represent only a surface level of a complete understanding of the subject" (Bransford, Brown and Cocking 1999, 14). Also, as previously noted, to compartmentalize knowledge as scientific or not is to fail to recognize knowledge holistically, interwoven and interdependent. The obvious problem with compartmentalizing knowledge must be considered if critical thinking does not fall further into an epistemological prejudice of colonialism, where a Eurocentric education system has taught learners to distrust traditional–spiritual knowledge structures (Widdowson 2010).

Critical thinking should not require the learner to divorce themselves from their traditional beliefs but rather [to] be free to share their views and be prepared to dialogue within the public domain of education and schooling. The often neglected question asks if a pragmatic application of critical thinking divorced from received traditions and values should be expected from a learner who values their traditions to make sense of the world. This should be decided by individuals who embrace a living tradition and not by those who do not. What a learner values and the knowledge they extract from their traditions should not comprise a "smashing down of old ways of thinking" but a humility that seeks to understand why a learner adopts the knowledge and values they do.

The Importance of Living Traditions

For thousands of years, traditions and intergenerational knowledge have been fundamental to how people have lived in societies and cultures. Today, living traditions provide a family-flourishing and family-preserving reality integral to identity formation. Kroeker and Norris (2013) note that "to be raised in a particular tradition provides a necessary sense of identity and stable moral environment from which to explore the world" (p 310).

A living tradition adopts not only factual propositions but, more important, value claims (Vaidya 2013) and so is often linked to a person's identity—their core being. Critical thinkers should be encouraged to retain their traditional epistemologies because traditions provide knowledge, context and value (Pelikan 1992). However, if traditional beliefs or practices prevent the forces of innovation and individual emancipation for thinking (Bowers 2011), then educators would have a compelling reason to encourage the adoption of pragmatic scientific practices of critical thinking and discourage nonscientific epistemologies, although this would have to be discussed and informed by all stakeholders. Nonscientific traditions are not in opposition to

scientific ways of thinking critically, but rather provide an awareness of the culture and world view in which one is embedded and shared (Bowers 2011; Groome,2001; Valk 2007).

Traditions are important for critical thinking because they are owned by people and are part of their story; consequently, the educator role is to be a "mediator between the young person and their tradition" (Huebner 1999, 383). Having a traditional frame of reference also makes a difference in how the data of human experience are seen and understood. Traditions are vital for critical thinking because they offer students some further questions to be answered, some additional theories to be examined and some alternate projects to be undertaken, all of which should be of interest to a comprehensive education (Porath 2013).

Traditions are carried and embodied in people and communities located in people and in the present (Huebner 1999). If traditions are anything that is handed down from the past to the present and are a way for people to determine what is real and valuable, then educators ought to be gracious hosts and include traditions in the learning process, whether it be public or private institutions of learning. There must be public spaces available in higher education for the conflicts that young people have with the knowledge, reality and values that higher education advances.

We can take an example of the importance of traditions and how they are understood within community from the traditional Māori people of New Zealand. In traditional Māori belief, there is something beyond the cramped world of everyday empirical experience. They do not live in a closed system where what we see is all there is (Barlow 1994). The traditional principle of interconnectedness and intergenerational knowledge is important and meaningful to the Māori people.[4] Their living tradition includes not only the physical world but beyond the physical—the metaphysical or spiritual—with intergenerational knowledge passed down as truth from one generation to the next. For the Māori people to think effectively entails the inclusion of their traditions.

No one creates their own reality from scratch, because we are all embedded in traditions. Traditions provide a normative force that holds a society together (Shills 1981). They provide remembered stories that "render a community or culture capable of ordering their new experience in a manner consistent with the story" (Hauerwas 1981, 54, cited in Fernhout 1997, 86). Traditions are re-enacted and shared as knowledge between past generations and a younger one.

They are a core feature of being human in community with likeminded people. Traditions are accumulated understanding and provide a pattern of thinking that guides action. All societies, including Western societies, have been guided by both scientific and nonscientific traditions. Those who suggest that critical thinking can happen only when one discards their nonscientific or traditional beliefs (Widdowson 2010) is described by Bowers (2011) as antitraditional traditionalists. Scientific thinking is itself rooted in a long-held tradition.

Education is also embedded in a tradition, and so Wineberg (2008) argues [that] education can be open to other views of reality and by doing so becomes a gift of hospitality. Educators act as good hosts, inviting young people into an open space of community and life together. Community life has a commitment to traditions and education acts hospitably to make room for the young person in the life of the community.

The Waning of Traditions in Education

It was evident that the waning of traditions in education gained momentum in the 1970s and 1980s. Nash (1988) argued that in the 1970s and 1980s there was already a prevailing view in higher education that we had arrived at a stage of civilization at which the family is irresponsible or incompetent, parents cannot be expected to raise their children properly, and education must step in and make the best of a bad job.

In the late 1980s, Tyson-Bernstein claimed that we had an education system that celebrates progress in the new and up-to-date over the old or "irrelevant" (Tyson-Bernstein 1987). Also in the late 1980s, Bowers (1987) anticipated an exclusive practice in higher education becoming widespread that was hostile to traditions or nonscientific ways of thinking. He suggested it had justification in the assumption of an inherent pragmatic view of change—that is, the rational process is the only way of knowing and the individual is the ultimate source of authority.

A privileging of the rational scientific method in education also reflects the views of Levinson (1999) over ten years later, who maintained that critical inquiry and reason should *not* have to respect the beliefs or intergenerational traditions of a child's family, home or community, but in fact focus on achieving autonomy *from* the parents' beliefs and

home community. Critical thinking was advantageous simply because it could "liberate" students from unquestionably accepting what others try and persuade them of—namely nonscientific traditions (Bowell and Kemp 2002). As critical thinking is student-centred learning, it was even lauded that it could be used to "evaluate people" (Duron, Limbach and Waugh 2006, 1).

The waning of traditions presents students with perspectives of the world and their role in it. Far from being neutral, the waning of traditional ways of thinking critically in education essentially says to its future generations, this is how we would like you to be and how we would like you to think. With such an inherent bias, one might naturally ask if all learners can see themselves represented at all in the teaching and learning.

Why Critique Critical Thinking at All?

Critical thinking is identified by the Partnership for 21st Century Skills (Lai 2011) as a skill necessary for postsecondary education and the workforce. There is nothing new here, as educational instruction in critical thinking geared with the workforce in mind has been practised in several countries for over a hundred years (Hirsch 1996, 136). However, less attention has been paid to the historical roots or advocates of critical thinking or even *why* critical thinking is so important that it enjoys status on most education documents.

The fact that learners in teacher education are encouraged to think critically is significant; however, it does not imply that they *ought* to think critically or, more importantly, that thinking critically should privilege some beliefs at the exclusion of other beliefs (Vaidya 2013). For example, Widdowson (2010), in her article "Critical Thinking, Secularism and Mount Royal University: Is 100 Years of Progress Under Threat?" assumes that critical thinking and traditions with no scientific evidence such as religion, spirituality and Indigenous spirituality are incompatible. In a similar vein to other voices, Widdowson champions critical thinking, but only within the confines of scientific investigation, describing science as evidence based and reliable while holding the view that other nonscientific belief traditions are antiprogressive. She argues that because of the "mandate of postsecondary institutions to encourage critical thinking" (p 2), "allowing other beliefs to enter higher education such as spirituality into Aboriginal programs and services, should be a concern for all people who value the promotion of critical thinking in educational institutions" (p 6). Nonscientific beliefs have no credibility because they apparently produce a lack of critical thinking. Widdowson is of the view that scientific thinking is the only way one can think critically.

Rational intuition does inform most of us why it is better to be a critical thinker rather than a noncritical thinker. As Nord (2010) argues, if students are not encouraged to question or think seriously about particular issues we would not describe their education as comprehensive, but rather indoctrination; so a correct practice of critical thinking is clearly important. Nevertheless, Howard Gardner (1993) points out that critical thinking understood or applied as a universal concept is deeply flawed. A common confusion, Gardner suggests, is that critical thinking is often described in a broad general sense in which a person is trained to be "*a* critical thinker," yet this is not helpful. Particular domains of learning require their own particular brand of thinking critically (Bailin 2002; Willingham 2007). For example, a car mechanic's diagnosis of car trouble is more credible than a doctor's. Gardner goes on to list musicians, biologists and historians, all of whom value critical thinking but do so very differently. In the end, researchers and practitioners cannot agree if critical thinking is general or subject specific (Lai 2011).

Naturally, the same would apply to nonscientific intergenerational traditions. How do people with traditions understand and apply critical thinking to reality? What types of knowledge inform their cosmology? How would, for example, a learner's indigeneity inform their values about the purpose of education and schooling? For Indigenous people, the goal of education might be to sustain the wisdom and teachings of Elders and intergenerational knowledge, spiritual perspectives and understanding. Critical thinking would then entail an investigation for finding the most meaningful enduring method to transfer Indigenous perspectives and knowledge to the young.

An Uncritical View of Critical Thinking

Critical thinking is perceived to be important for educators and students because of the enhanced satisfaction, understanding and advanced memory it

brings. Paul (1993) maintains that one gains the satisfaction of increased knowledge and understanding *only* through critical thinking. Cultural critic bell hooks (2013) supports critical thinking as a practice of freedom to fulfill our mandate as educators to be of compassionate service to students as whole people.

And yet an education that does not include other beliefs, world views and cultural understandings is implicitly fragmented and hostile to learners who hold other beliefs and intergenerational traditions (Groome 1998; Kanu 2011). Regrettably, within institutes of education there are minimal attempts to offer educators or teachers an understanding of intergenerational traditions beside the scientific pragmatic one (Nord 2010). Because instructors are products of an education system that taught them fragmented bits of meaning and were never encouraged to connect those meanings, they are oblivious to the pros and cons of the philosophies that guide their practice and as a consequence are uncritical of Dewey's scientific pragmatism as an absolute (Gatto 2010). The sociologist Lori Beaman (2006) offers an explanation from a Canadian perspective:

> In Canada our strong roots in Marxist sociology has given us a rich critical tradition, but has also resulted in a simplistic dismissal of traditions such as religion as unimportant to the study of society, an approach with which Marx himself surely would have disagreed. (p 2)

Beaman highlights that Canada is currently being realized through immigration and those who are coming to the country often bring with them intergenerational traditions, or what might be called nonscientific ways of understanding the world as outside of or on the margins of those traditionally dominant in Canada. In a country that touts multiculturalism and diversity as symbolic markers of our civility, Western educators are clueless how to think about or include other ways of knowing in any deep or purposeful way. Western intellectual traditions have repeatedly dismissed traditional knowledge types, such as Aboriginal, spiritual or religious, as inconsequential and unfounded, which only serves to decrease Canada's funds of knowledge (Gonzalez, Moll and Amanti 2005). Moreover, the refusal to "access the knowledge and wisdom of others produces self-fragmentation in us all" (Kanu 2011, 15).

Dewey's relationship to Marxism can offer some explanation regarding the authority that pragmatism has over the form and content of critical thinking in education today (Brooks 1994). Similar to Marxism, John Dewey stressed the production rather than the passive receipt of knowledge. What one considers a "passive receipt of knowledge" in Western education can be described as an "old way of thinking" (personal communication, May 2014), or by Indigenous, cultural and religious groups as living sacred intergenerational knowledge (Bowers 2011; Kanu 2011; Valk 2007).

Yet Dewey confirms his scientific views regarding traditions when he confessed that, "routine traditions are unthinking habits and enslave us as they reproduce no intelligence" and that knowledge of the past is like a photograph and that is all (Bowers 2011, 62). On another occasion he confessed that "we ought to make an effort … to omit the useless and antiquated and to get the best and most useful as soon as possible" (Egan 2002, 28). Dewey seems to imply Plato's definition of the slave (Brooks 1994) maintains that traditional epistemologies are "routine traditions and unthinking habits." According to Fallace (2010), Dewey was a linear historicist {p 472}. This is a belief that "all the societies and cultures of the world could be placed on a single continuum of social progress leading through the stages of savagery, barbarianism, and civilization and that the earlier childlike forms still existed in the world among primitive tribes." Dewey and his collaborators held these beliefs. (Fallace 2010).

The philosophy that informs what it is to be a critical thinker, as expressed by the "smashing down of old ways of thinking" statement, is comparable to the progressive views of learning given by John Dewey—science is the only reliable source of knowledge, and Western ideals of progress the only constant truth in life.

The historian Stephen Prothero (2008) maintains that many graduates of Western higher educational institutes are illiterate of the traditions that so many people embrace and so "we need better education and not because it is wonderful to be multicultural but because the world's religious traditions are no longer quarantined in the nations of their birth, they now live and move among us" (p 3). Integration of all traditions in education is thus a necessary and respectful means for understanding and learning and requires full participation for all learners in society.

The Foundation for Critical Thinking is an educational nonprofit organization committed to change in education and society through the cultivation of critical thinking. As a representative of the foundation, Paul (1993) outlines the concern they have with the critical thinking movement in contemporary higher education. The foundation maintains that although

more people are being taught critical thinking skills today, many are still unable to enter and consider viewpoints with which they are unfamiliar or disagree. They uphold that by promoting logical thinkers and fostering critical thinking abilities in others, one must first develop particular virtues. The foundation offers a list to consider which Paul (1993) summarizes as fair-mindedness, intellectual humility, intellectual perseverance, intellectual courage, intellectual empathy, intellectual autonomy, intellectual integrity and, finally, confidence in reason (Paul 1993).

In other words, critical thinking is more than just skills. It requires a certain disposition, an intellectual humility and hospitality to other epistemologies. Critical thinking could then embrace pragmatic and nonpragmatic ways of knowing, reality and value. It would honour every aspect of being human and that includes different types of knowledge and interpretations of the world. Groome (1998) suggests that educators should be in regular conversation and partnership with communities and their traditions. Schools and higher education cannot be out of touch with "human feelings and emotions, productivity and creativity, the personal and social, the individual and relational, the spiritual and ethical, corporeality and sexuality, memory and imagination, as well as reason" (Groome 1998, 285).

Although it would be a mistake to suggest that the education system is intentionally hostile to nonscientific traditional ways of knowing and understanding, the organization of higher education is reinforced to expect the student to learn as an objective observer of an external world. Representations of everyday reality are decontextualized and reinterpreted by scientific ways of knowing (Bai 2006). Change and progress is understood as inherently linear by individuals such as John Dewey (Fallace 2010) and educators who profess to the "smashing down of old ways of thinking" (personal communication, May 2014), and to be a critical thinker one must adhere to a constant quest for the new and innovative (Groome 1998). The problem is that with all the gains of the new and innovative comes a loss of traditions. The importance is given to teaching the subject, while the person becomes the object. This is evident in the language that educators use to talk about what they do (Groome 1998, 289). For example, when teacher-educators are asked, "What subjects do you teach?" Groome notes they refer to the "thing" being taught as "the subject." This implies that the students are the "objects" of education— abstract entities without context—things to be worked on.

Critical Thinking as Liberation? Some Other Ideas from the Field

Various commentaries on critical thinking rarely question or scrutinize the concept or practice (Browne and Freeman 2000). In the literature, critical thinking is discussed from either the philosophical or the cognitive–psychological perspective. In the philosophical, the portrait of the ideal critical thinker is "someone who is inquisitive in nature, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded, has a desire to be well-informed, understands diverse viewpoints, and is willing to both suspend judgment and to consider other perspectives" (Facione 1990, cited in Lai 2011, 5). In the cognitive–psychological, critical thinking is the type of actions, strategies, behaviours or list of skills or procedures a person can do (Lewis and Smith 1993). The educational approach to critical thinking represents itself in the work of Benjamin Bloom, comprising the three levels of analysis, synthesis, and evaluation (Kennedy, Fisher and Ennis 1991).

Halx and Reybold (2005) wrote the following: "Reilly, a professor in the humanities, views critical thinking as an epistemology of knowing, claiming that 'students must abandon their [old] ways of thinking'" (p 302). Back in the late 1980s, Glenn (1988) argued that the reason public education had been promoting critical thinking in schools so actively was to "liberate individuals from intermediate traditions and loyalties, in the interest of progress" (p 236). Similarly, Boghossian, a professor who teaches critical thinking at the university level, promotes an education that entails what he describes as a "critical thinking revolution," which, he argues, would require the more "rational" pragmatic thinkers to use interventionist strategies to "liberate" those who are not as "rational" as themselves, such as those who retain to nonscientific ways of knowing and interpreting the world (Boghossian 2012).

Similarly, the goal and process of undergraduate education, Mentkowski et al (2000) contend, should be set within a liberal education that encourages development from "a conformist to a post-conventional way of being in the world" (p 105). Brighouse (2000), who speaks of traditions as religions, describes them as "inferior and repressive" (p 71). Brighouse argues that critical thinking must be liberated from any form of tradition, which tends to limit rationality and critical thinking skills (see also Widdowson 2010).

In a study noting the emphasis that university faculty place on critical thinking, Paul, Elder and Bartell (2004), cited in Halx and Reybold (2005), offer some reasons why critical thinking should be encouraged. They maintain that without critical thinking human beings naturally gravitate towards "prejudice, over-generalization, common fallacies, self-deception, rigidity, and narrowness" (p 296). To end self-deception, Mill (2013) suggests that critical thinking in education should reflect a modernist or scientific standard. Learners should be taught to trust a person's claims only based on repeatability, experience and accuracy. Mill then recommends to move forward with advancing critical thinking in education drawing on science for answers. Mill suggests that educators should consider "the vast body of research in social psychology examining persuasion and attitude change" (p 409).

Although critical thinking is sometimes discussed as a "consideration of other perspectives" (Halx and Reybold 2005, 296), research by Halx and Reybold also gained the following from an interview with a university professor sharing their practice of critical thinking in the classroom:

It takes a faculty member then—and also other students—to hold that spouter's feet to the fire and challenge [that individual]—one of the things I do is pull students out of their chairs and force them to engage with me—students must be shown how to manipulate and dismantle information. (Halx and Reybold 2005, 304)

Similarly, Widdowson (2010) argues that action should be taken by universities against any tradition that relies on unjustified claims about reality or knowledge. Widdowson maintains that "superstition and irrationality" as opposed to "reason and logic" should not be given any public space (p 4). All religions' traditions, including Indigenous traditions, are based on "superstition and irrationality, and asserting these traditions as legitimate knowledge is an educational disservice" (Widdowson 2010, 6).

In a similar vein to Widdowson (2010), Henderson and Hurley (2013) present a caricature of "noncritical" thinkers who live by their nonscientific traditions by describing them as "right-wing authoritarians" (p 248) and also "traditionalists, intellectually conservative, docile, fearful, suspicious, and egocentric" (p 250–51). They further outline two other "typical" traits, such as having a "strong adherence to social convention" and "submissive to authorities" (p 249). They claim that submissive "attitudes hinder the development of critical thinking skills in the classroom because they inhibit the students' ability to consider other worldviews" (Hurley and Hurley 2013, 249). Although Geertsen (2003) maintains that one characteristic necessary to foster higher-level thinking is a respect for others' views, Geertsen (2003) and French and Rhoder (1992) then imply that students who refuse to reexamine their nonscientific traditional views ultimately have a defective psychological disposition.

However, Paul, Elder and Bartell (2004, cited in Halx and Reybold, 2005, 296) argue that we can and should learn from minority perspectives that have been excluded or silenced. They later suggest that without a careful application of critical thinking, human beings naturally "gravitate towards prejudice, self-deception, and narrowness" (p 296). A more comprehensive view of critical thinking is offered by Pazmino (1994), who argues that receptivity is required to voices forgotten or rarely heard.

The traditional knowledge that a student owns is criticized, ignored and deconstructed. Vaidya (2013) asks if students and instructors are really cognizant of other methods of investigation besides a scientific analysis. She highlights skepticism and credulity as two other approaches to knowledge acquisition. Skepticism is not committed to one reality on a matter, and credulity is a belief that the majority of experts, for example, priests, popes, PhDs, Elders or knowledge keepers as termed by Indigenous groups, are correct. Kuhn (1999) notes that credulity is one way people can know what is true "either through direct apprehension or the opinion of experts" (p 22). These two other methods of knowing are rarely noted as options.

Surely in Western society no one world view should dominate how critical thinking is to be understood or practised in education (Valk 2007). Critical thinking should clearly draw on the traditions and epistemologies of all learners and "nurture and give reverence to the necessary space for mystery, awe, surprise and honour the place of excluded knowledge that must be recovered to make us whole" (Pazmino 1994, 103).

Critical thinking should undergo a criteria [sic] for use. We should not be critically assessing the values and traditional beliefs that people hold to about life, but rather ideas embedded in poems, debugging a computer program, categorizing different animal species and so forth all are appropriate subjects to critically analyze (Gardner 1993). Moreover, there are cases in which critical thinking is not epistemically responsible; for example, in the case of medical diagnosis it is epistemically irresponsible to

self-diagnose, and so a responsible critical thinking model would have the resources to instruct learners at those times when it is not responsible (Vaidya 2013).

Epistemically responsible critical thinking could promote tolerance and freedom to which the West is already deeply wedded. Dialogical reasoning is a type of Socratic thinking and questioning that requires learners to focus on solutions from the perspectives of others (Paul 1985). For example, "How would tradition A, B, C analyze this situation?" A responsible critical thinking model might ask how a "Marxist, free market capitalist, feminist, religious-ethical, postcolonial, or critical race theory perspective might understand this publicly debated and controversial issue" (Vaidya 2013, 552). This is taking a critical stance, not on the personal values, freedoms or traditions that a person holds, but gaining a critical enlightenment about controversial issues from particular perspectives that inform people's decisions and actions.

Suggestive Conclusions

The author has argued that a comprehensive critical thinking model should assist students to be inquisitive in nature, humble in approach, open-minded, flexible, fair-minded, have a desire to be well-informed, and able to understand diverse viewpoints, traditions and perspectives (Facione 1990, cited in Lai 2007, 5; Portelli 2001). The "smashing down of old ways of thinking" simply lacks this comprehensiveness.

Society is diverse and therefore critical thinkers need to reflect this diversity with their thinking. They must be incarnational and transformational, and exhibit self-sacrifice to learn in order to welcome the Other with open hands in an act of respect. Education is relational, requiring meaningful inclusion, and so critical thinkers must be open to the problems that a narrow perspective of critical thinking can have on learners with traditions outside of the scientific pragmatic model advanced by a Dewey model and the "smashing down [of] old ways of thinking." This is because, like any pedagogical practice, critical thinking can be used as an instrument of emancipation or tool of oppression. When Dewey said that the task of the educator was to "emancipate the young from the need of dwelling in an outgrown past" (Gould 1977, 73, cited in Egan 2002, 28), he, similar to the educators who stated that old ways of thinking should be broken so "real thinking" can occur, did not

understand that education itself is always embedded in and under the influence of a tradition.

Critical thinking should not require the student to choose either science or their traditions for investigation; rather, both can inform one another. As the educator van Manen (1991) has said, "we need to be neither iconoclasts who only rebel and tear down traditions, nor iconolators who blindly submit to the monuments of traditions" (p 16). For learners and educators to gain a deep inside perspective of other types of knowledge, reality and value, so important in today's multicultural classrooms, an inclusive practice of critical thinking is needed. In the words of philosopher Emmanuel Levinas, education ought to be an unconditional responsibility *to* the Other. Levinas understood the Other to be "what I myself are not" (Egea-Kuehne 2008, 30).

If education is to be a human flourishing and hospitable activity, then higher education and teacher education must practise the art of critical thinking in ways that abandon the expectation of homogeneity and move toward a genuine celebration of difference and heteronomy. To contribute to our diverse knowledge systems, a responsible approach to critical thinking should actively reach out to include learners with all traditions such as feminist, Indigenous, scientific, cultural, moral or religious. This is necessary because all people are embedded in traditions and as such can learn from one another, and critical thinking itself is the result of cultural situatedness. Consequently, traditions themselves will and should play a significant and natural role in the development and application of critical thinking (Pithers and Soden 2000).

Although traditions can never serve as a substitute for truth, "the authority of a tradition should always be directed to the point which people see for themselves that something is true or not" (Newbigin 1989, 48, cited in Fernhout 1997, 91). Embracing traditions through critical thinking does not mean "embracing conservatism or a retreat from progressive education"; rather, a hospitable education reflects conservative and progressive traditions—a synthesis of the two (Wineberg 2008, 100).

Critical thinking could be practised alongside people and not *on* people. It could entail an insider's perspective, which requires relationship, community and hospitality (Portelli 2001). The purpose would then be to develop knowledge and understanding, but also to advance an insider's perspective about the traditions that shape an individual's thinking and values about life. Bernard of Clairvaux (1987) offers a view of critical thinking and learning that welcomes

an insider's perspective by a focus on what Others help us see; a humility practised that "is a virtue by which a man [sic] recognizes his own unworthiness because he really knows himself" (p 103). This requires learning from and about the Other. Critical thinkers should reflect this openness to other ways of knowing rather than the view that individuals in higher education who hold to nonscientific traditions have never examined their assumptions (Widdowson 2010). Under a more expansive conception of critical thinking we embrace the idea of "individuals forming a *critical identity* and having a *point of view* that derives from adopting a concern for specific values" (Vaidya 2013, 553).

A person can still be a critical thinker and accept nonscientific ways of [pursuing] knowledge and truth. One can locate historians, Indigenous thinkers, logicians and mathematicians throughout history who have thought critically and utilized methodology that was not contingent on the scientific method. An inclusive critical thinking model must honour the diversity of other knowledge systems since the scientific-pragmatic model of critical thinking, while important, is not the only valid epistemological approach. Knowledge can be increased by quantitative and qualitative means. A broader practice of critical thinking can be advantageous for learners to understand the subjective and objective reasons people hold to their traditions for making sense of motives and perceptions. Sensitivity to these ideas can facilitate a deeper and more profound practice of critical thinking in higher education (Pithers and Soden 2000).

A critical thinker is now transformed as someone with the freedom to "consider seriously other points of view than one's own" (Ennis 1979, 5–6). Such a comprehensive education would encourage critical thinking and open-mindedness by drawing on the perspective of another (Valk 2007). This is not easy but it is a virtue of being human in the community of a classroom that critical thinking practices must include and practice (Gardner 1993). It will always be the case that "reasonable people differ on basic matters of the ultimate good; some of their starting points are religious, some philosophical" (Nussbaum 2002, 516–17).

In the end, if education faculty desire their students to be well informed, they must demonstrate a "respect for and willingness to entertain diverse viewpoints" (Lai 2011, 42). They must, in the end, not "smash down old ways of thinking," but unite, include and promote the importance of traditional ways of thinking so that students are informed and well educated for the rich diversity that abounds in classrooms in particular and Western society in general.

Notes

1. By nonscientific traditions, the author includes the religious, cultural and Indigenous traditions that have been handed down from one generation to the next for at least a minimum of three generations and inform people about what is real, what knowledge is important to have and what is of value. The traditions act as a grid [through] which epistemological, axiological and metaphysical claims are filtered. Although the traditions are not devoid of an empirical reality, I use the term nonscientific simply to make the distinction between scientific knowledge and other types of valid knowledge such as intergenerational, personal, religious and/or cultural ways of knowing. Of course, it is entirely possible that some traditions neglect, abuse or exploit by permitting inappropriate, damaging, unhealthy or immoral behaviour. But in this case, we know that the tradition is perverted and we place the term "tradition" in quotation marks since the very meaning of tradition is at issue here.

2. According to the logical positivists of the 1920s to 1950, there are only two sources of knowledge: logical reasoning and empirical experience. Nonscientific statements, those outside of science, are not empirically verifiable and are thus forbidden: they are meaningless. Today theorists of knowledge understand that science is just one type of knowledge, and there are other credible types of knowledge that can enjoy warrant. This needs to be factored in when discussing how a person comes to know something.

3. Widdowson (2010) claims that knowledge such as faith traditions and spiritual claims of any type is actually an obstacle to the acquisition of knowledge, that is, scientific knowledge (p 2). Widdowson assumes that other nonscientific claims to knowledge are static and old, and refuse to pursue questions to their conclusion. This is patently false. As Indigenous authors Battiste, Kanu and others have argued, traditional knowledge is living knowledge because it pursues truth and reality, and always follows the evidence where it leads. Kanu (2011) suggests that criticisms like those of Widdowson are "inaccurate characterizations of the 'other' and their truth, knowledge and histories" (p 47).

4 . Living traditions in Canada include First Nations spiritual rituals; the religious practices of Chinese and Japanese immigrants; and the long history of traditions and presence in Canada of Sikhs, Christians, Muslims and Hindus.

References

Bai, H. 2006. "Philosophy for Education: Towards Human Agency." *Paideusis* 15, no 1: 7–19.

Bailey, D H. 2014. "What is 'Scientific Materialism' and How Does It Enter into the Science-Religion Discussion?" Retrieved from www.sciencemeetsreligion.org/theology/scientific-materialism.php.

Bailin, S. 2002. "Critical Thinking and Science Education." *Science and Education* 11, no 4: 361–75.

Barlow, C. 1994. *Tikanga Whakaaro: Key Concepts in Māori Culture*. Auckland: Oxford University Press.

Battiste, M. 2013. *Decolonizing Education: Nourishing the Learning Spirit*. Saskatoon: Purich.

Beaman, L G. 2006. *Religion and Canadian Society: Traditions, Transitions, and Innovations*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Bernard of Clairvaux. 1987. *Selected Works*. Tr G R Evans. New York: Paulist Press.

Biesta, G J J, and N Burbules. 2003. *Pragmatism and Educational Research*. New York: Rowman and Littlefield.

Boghossian, P. 2012. *Critical Thinking Crash Course*. Video. Retrieved from www.youtube.com/watch?v=A7zbEiNnY5M.

Bowell, T, and G Kemp. 2002. *Critical Thinking: A Concise Guide*. London: Routledge.

Bowers, C A. 1987. *Elements of a Post-Liberal Theory of Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.

———. 2005. *The False Promises of Constructivist Theories of Learning. A Global and Ecological Critique*. New York: Lang.

———. 2011. *University Reform in an Era of Global Warming*. Eugene, Ore: Eco-Justice.

Bransford, J D, A L Brown and R R Cocking, eds. 1999. *How People Learn: Brain, Mind, Experience and School*. Washington, DC: National Academy.

Brighouse, H. 2000. *School Choice and Social Justice*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Brooks, W. 1994. "Was Dewey a Marxist?" Journal of the St. Lawrence Institute 13. Retrieved from www.stlawrenceinstitute.org/vol13brk.html.

Browne, M N, and K Freeman. 2000. "Distinguishing Features of Critical Thinking Classrooms." *Teaching in Higher Education* 5, no 3: 301–9.

Dewey, J. 1956. *The Child and the Curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Orig pub 1902.

———. 1956. *The School and Society*. 2nd ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. Orig pub 1899.

———. 1976. "The School and Society." In *The Middle Works of John Dewey, 1899-1924*, ed J A Boydston, 1–112. Carbondale, Ill: Southern Illinois University Press.

Duron, R, B Limbach and W Waugh. 2006. "Critical Thinking Framework for Any Discipline." *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 17, no 2: 160–66.

Egan, K. 2002. *Getting It Wrong from the Beginning. Our Progressivist Inheritance from Herbert Spencer, John Dewey, and Jean Piaget*. London: Yale University Press.

Egea-Kuehne, D. 2008. *Levinas and Education: At the Intersection of Faith and Reason*. New York: Routledge Taylor and Francis.

Ennis, R. 1979. "Logic, Rational Thinking, and Education." *Philosophy of Education 1979: Proceedings of the Thirty-Fifth Annual Meeting of the Philosophy of Education Society*, ed J Coombs.

Fallace, D T. 2010. "Was John Dewey Ethnocentric? Reevaluating the Philosopher's Early Views on Culture and Race." *Educational Researcher* 39, no 6: 471–77.

Fernhout, H. 1997. "Christian Schooling: Telling a Worldview Story." In *The Crumbling Walls of Certainty*, ed I Lambert and S Mitchell, 75–98. Sydney: Center for the Study of Australian Christianity.

Gatto, J T. 2010. *Weapons of Mass Instruction: A Schoolteacher's Journey Through the Dark World of Compulsory Schooling*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society.

Geersten, H R. 2003. "Rethinking Thinking About Higher-Level Thinking." *Teaching Sociology* 31, no 1: 1–19.

Glenn, C L. 1988. *The Myth of the Common School*. Amherst, Mass: University of Massachusets Press.

Gonzalez, N, L Moll and C Amanti. 2005. *Funds of Knowledge: Theorizing Practices in Households, Communities, and Classrooms*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Government of British Columbia. 2015. *Focus on Learning*. Retrieved from www.bcedplan.ca.

Gribov, S. 2001. "John Dewey's Pragmatism and Moral Education." In *Philosophy of Education* 2001, ed S Rice, 373–80. Edwardsville, Ill: Philosophy of Education Society.

Groome, T. 2001. *Educating for Life: A Spiritual Journey for Every Teacher and Parent*. New York: Crossroad.

French, J, and C Rhoder. 1992. *Teaching Thinking Skills: Theory and Practice*. New York: Garland.

Halx, M D, and L E Reybold. 2005. "A Pedagogy of Force: Faculty Perspectives of Critical Thinking Capacity in Undergraduate Students." *Journal of General Education* 54, no 4: 293–315.

Hirsch, E D. 1996. *The Schools We Need: Why We Don't Have Them*. New York: Doubleday.

hooks, bell. 2013. *Teaching Critical Thinking: Practical Wisdom*. New York: Routledge.

Huebner, D E. 1999. "Teaching as Vocation." In *The Lure of the Transcendent: Collected Essays,* ed V Hills, 379–87. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Hurley, M H, and D Hurley. 2013. "Enhancing Critical Thinking Skills Among Authoritarian Students." *International Journal of Teaching and Learning in Higher Education* 25, no 2: 248–61.

Johnson, E. 2010. *Psychology and Christianity*. Downers Grove, Ill: IVP Academic.

Kanu, Y. 2011. *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into the School Curriculum: Purposes, Possibilities, and Challenges*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Kennedy, M, M B Fisher and R H Ennis. 1991. "Critical Thinking: Literature Review and Needed Research." In *Educational Values and Cognitive Instruction: Implications for Reform*, ed L Idol and B F Jones, 11–40. Hillsdale, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Kroeker, F M, and S P Norris. 2013. "An Unwarranted Fear of Religious Schooling." In *Philosophy of Education: Introductory Readings*, 4th ed, ed W Hare and J Portelli, 307–25. Toronto: Brush Education.

Kuhn, D. 1999. "A Developmental Model of Critical Thinking. *Educational Researcher*, 28(2), 16-26.

Kuhn, T. 1962. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Lai, E R. 2011. *Critical Thinking: A Literature Review*. Research Report. Pearson. Partnership for 21st Century Skills. Retrieved from www.p21.org/about-us/p21-framework/260.

Levinson, M. 1999. *The Demands of Liberal Education*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Lewis, A, and D Smith. 1993. "Defining Higher Order Thinking." *Theory into Practice* 32, no 3: 131–37.

Marsden, G. 1997. *The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship*. Oxford, UK: Oxford University Press.

Mentkowski, M, G Rogers, A Doherty, G Loacker, J Reisetter Hart, W Rickards, K O'Brien et al. 2000. *Learning That Lasts: Integrating Learning, Development, and Performance in College and Beyond*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Mill, C. 2013. "Knowing When to Doubt: Developing a Critical Stance When Learning from Others." *Developmental Psychology* 49, no 3: 404–18.

Nash, H R. 1988. *Faith and Reason: Searching for a Rational Faith*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Zondervan.

Nord, W. 2010. *Taking God Seriously in Our Schools and Universities*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Nussbaum, M. 2002. "Moral Expertise? Constitutional Narratives and Philosophical Argument." *Metaphilosophy* 33, no 5: 502–20.

Paul, R. 1993. *Critical Thinking: How to Prepare Students for a Rapidly Changing World*. Santa Rosa, Calif: Foundation for Critical Thinking.

Paul, R W. 1985. "The Critical Thinking Movement: A Historical Perspective." *National Forum* 65, no 1: 2–3, 32.

Pazmino, R W. 1994. *By What Authority Do We Teach? Sources for Empowering Christian Educators*. Michigan: Baker Books.

Pelikan, J. 1992. *The Idea of the University: A Reexamination*. New Haven, Conn: Yale University Press.

Peters, R S. 1967. *What Is an Educational Process? The Concept of Education*. London, UK: Routledge and Keagan Paul.

Pithers, R T, and R Soden. 2000. "Critical Thinking in Education: A Review." *Educational Research* 42, no 3: 237–50.

Porath, J R. 1997. "The Outrageous Idea of Christian Scholarship, by George Marsden." *Journal of Catholic Education* 1, no 2. Retrieved from http://digitalcommons.lmu.edu/ce/vol1/iss2/11.

Portelli, J P. 2001. "Democracy in Education: Beyond the Conservative and Progressivist Stances." In *Philosophy of Education: Introductory Readings*, ed W Hare and J P Portelli, 275–78. Calgary, Alta: Detselig.

Portelli, J P, and W Hare, eds. 1996. *Philosophy of Education: Introductory Readings*. 2nd ed. Calgary, Alta: Temeron Books.

Prothero, S. 2007. *Religious Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know—And Doesn't*. New York: Harper Collins.

Samuels, D R. 2010. "Faculty Preparedness to Build Cultural Inclusiveness." PhD dissertation, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs. Retrieved from www.proquest.com/en-US/products/dissertations/individuals.shtml.

Shills, E. 1981. *Traditions*. Chicago, Ill: University of Chicago Press.

Smoker, P, and L Groff, L. 1996. "Spirituality, Religion, Culture, and Peace: Exploring the Foundations for Inner-Outer Peace in the Twenty-First Century." *The International Journal of Peace Studies* 1, no 1. Retrieved from www.gmu.edu/programs/icar/ijps/vol1_1/smoker.html.

Spears, P D, and S R Loomis. 2009. *Education for Human Flourishing*. Illinois: IVP Academic.

Tanaka, M T D. 2009. *Transforming Perspectives: The Immersion of Student Teachers in Indigenous Ways of Knowing*. Available at http://dspace.library.uvic.ca/handle/1828/1664.

Tyson-Bernstein, H. 1987. "The Values Vacuum." *American Educator* 11, no 3: 14–21.

Vaidya, A J. 2013. "Epistemic Responsibility and Critical Thinking." *Metaphilosophy* 44, no 4: 533–56.

Valk, J. 2007. "Plural Public Schooling: Religion, Worldviews and Moral Education." *British Journal of Religious Education* 29, no 3: 273–85.

van Manen, M. 1991. *The Tact of Teaching: The Meaning of Pedagogical Thoughtfulness*. London, Ont: Althouse.

Widdowson, F. 2010. *Critical Thinking, Secularism and Mount Royal University: Is 100 Years of Progress Under Threat?* Retrieved from http://blogs.mtroyal.ca/fwiddowson/files/2010/10/Secularism-Critical-Thinking-and-MRU-Frances-Widdowson.pdf.

Willingham, D T. 2007. "Critical Thinking: Why Is It So Hard to Teach?" Retrieved from www.aft.org/sites/default/files/periodicals/Crit_Thinking.pdf.

Wineberg, T W. 2008. *Professional Care and Vocation. Cultivating Ethical Sensibilities in Teaching*. Rotterdam: Sense.

Matthew Etherington, PhD, is a professor in the School of Education at Trinity Western University, in British Columbia, and is the director of the Institute of Indigenous Issues and Perspectives.

Responding to the Ravages of COVID-19: Dialogic Encounters in/as Pedagogy in Social Studies

Tim Skuce and Shannon D M Moore

Abstract

The ravages of COVID-19 are demonstrating that human understanding is vulnerable and fragile, and is perpetually overwhelmed and outmanoeuvred by the contingency of events. It also reveals the limits and finitude of our ability to preplan or predict the happenstances of classroom life. Through this paper, we consider the potential of hermeneutic dialogue to embrace this uncertainty, and invite the ethic required in this moment. Drawing on the work of Hans-Georg Gadamer, we propose that educators become increasingly practised at fostering dialogic spaces, ones that are not solely accessible by implementation of particular strategies. Rather, this calls for cultivating a stance in the world that honours the vulnerability, ambiguity and unfinishedness of the subject matter and of ourselves. Through an existential quest, we are called to venture with others as an opportunity to uncover a more ethical, more attuned way of being in the world.

> How can we be fair, kindly and humane toward others, let our maxims be as praiseworthy as they may be, if we lack the capacity to make strange natures genuinely and truly a part of ourselves, appropriate strange situations, make strange feelings our own?
>
> —Friederich Schiller

As the authors write this paper, the world has been thrust into responding to the horrors and uncertainties of the global pandemic, COVID-19. We are reawakened to the vulnerability, susceptibility, fragility and dependencies of human and nonhuman life. Urgent and pressing questions bear down on us. Previous understandings of morality, citizenship, democracy and community have been put into question. We are exposed to the limits of modern science. Each day we must respond to new and emerging situations. As social studies educators,[1] we are confronted with the dislocation from our quotidian lives. The very notion of normalcy has been burst asunder.

The ravages of COVID-19 demonstrate that human thought is vulnerable and fragile and is perpetually overwhelmed and outmanoeuvred by the contingency of events. It also reveals the limits and finitude of our ability to preplan or predict the happenstances of classroom life. To respond to the urgent and pressing burdens posed by the ferocity of this virus, we must creatively and imaginatively adapt to such unknown forces. Acknowledging the precarity and unknowability surrounding this global pandemic, there is no singular pedagogical method or resource that could possibly respond. The magnitude and danger of the COVID-19 pandemic expose the inadequacy of prepackaged pedagogical strategies to respond. Instead, we wonder, how might teachers cultivate a sense of openness and attunement through hermeneutic dialogic encounters? We offer that teacher candidates become increasingly practised at fostering dialogic spaces that are not solely accessible by the implementation of particular strategies. Rather, this calls for

cultivating a stance in the world that honours the vulnerability, contingency and unfinishedness of the subject matter and of ourselves.

Through this paper, we consider the potential of hermeneutic dialogue to embrace uncertainty, and invite the ethic required in this moment. For the sake of this piece, we are relying on the current pandemic; however, our argument is not hinged to this particular moment of precarity, but rather the constancy of these moments; the eventfulness keeps coming. In what follows, we articulate our understanding of hermeneutic dialogue, and outline its pedagogical relevance. We consider first the pervasive discourses in society, education and social studies that might discourage, foreclose and/or dismiss such dialogue. We also consider how these pervasive discourses provide a rationale for a turn to hermeneutic dialogue in the practice of teaching. In dialogic encounters the end is not known; there is no single truth that can be uncovered. Here it may be possible to find our way during these pandemic times—to a future with unknown possibilities.

Theoretical Framework[2]

> To conduct a conversation means to allow oneself to be conducted by the subject matter to which the partners in the dialogue are oriented.
>
> —Gadamer 2004

The authors draw upon Hans-Georg Gadamer's (2004) philosophical hermeneutics as an interpretive frame that explores human understanding. Our inquiry is not simply an esoteric philosophizing, but rather is grounded in the practical affairs of the lived experiences of classroom life. As an opportunity to enlarge one's understanding, we engage Gadamer's notion of experience (*Erfahrung*). For Gadamer, to be and to become experienced is not merely to accumulate verifiable knowledge; rather, it pulls in another direction; it calls for one to venture, to put at risk one's well-worn pathways. Dialogic encounters require an adventure, and adventures are inherently risky. Through dialogue, a space is created where one is always mediating the lifeworld, working through previously held understandings alongside fellow interlocutors. Such encounters bid for one to turn one's care and attention away from amassing definitive knowledge, to creating a space that accentuates coming to an understanding. As Gadamer (2004) suggests, it is through one's venturing that the living topics undergo a "true increase in being" (p 156). Gadamer

refers to this space as "the true locus of hermeneutics" (p 306). Ventures with others are profoundly relational: they require the nurturance of a moral bond that obligates one to hear the voice of the other, to experience the other's claims as true regarding the subject matter; in coming to an understanding with the other, one is confronted with one's interiority, one's prejudices.

Central to Gadamer's hermeneutics is the belief that we are always and already embedded in the ways of the world—in history, culture, language—in our historicity. To Gadamer, historicity influences all human understanding; we are always projecting understanding of a particular time and place, and we can never fully recognize these prejudices. Thus, within an educational context, historicity recognizes that students and teachers are always and already entangled in the very fabric of life we are trying to understand. Topics such as citizenship, democracy, human rights and freedom are living inheritances—full of ancestral voices. In dialogue, each one of us stands in relation—between the past and present; however, each individual student's understanding in their venture is treated as an understanding of the place and not simply of the individual's interiority. Their uniqueness is not an expression from their inner recesses, created *ex nihilo*, but rather through their living in commonplaces. Dialogue provides an opportunity to confront our historicity, our interiority, our prejudices.

It is in and through dialogic encounters that one's expectations are repeatedly thwarted. Encounters with the unfamiliar induce suffering—a suffering that reveals one's limited and finite understanding. However, through suffering one garners insight, which Gadamer (2004) describes as "an escape from something that had deceived us and held us captive" (p 364–65). In moments of breakdown, one gathers insight into the fallibility and contingency of human possibilities. The illumination of "a hitherto concealed experience" (Gadamer 2004, 90) reveals generative possibilities, as new understandings are held in a constellation alongside previously held meanings. The horizon of the present is always changing in light of new knowledge and circumstances. And perhaps each of us may come to an increased appreciation for the unfinishedness of the topic's becoming—its future possibilities not yet known.

Gadamerian hermeneutics resists methodical procedure; however, while there is no method, there is a way. While coming to an understanding with another eludes mastery, it requires perpetual practice in order

to gain tactfulness, to keep things in question, to gain an attunement. In being and becoming experienced in the art of venturing, one accrues wisdom, one becomes "more sensitive to the happenstances that new experiences might bring" (Jardine, Friesen and Clifford 2006, xxv). Thus, we seek to inspire for ourselves and our students to continually foster a stance in the world that lovingly embraces the otherness of the other as an opportunity to render the familiar unfamiliar. What we are advocating for is not new, nor is it completely absent in classrooms. Rather, COVID-19 accentuates the need for social studies educators to make space for dialogic encounters. Following Westheimer (2015), "democratic societies require more than citizens who are fact-full. They require citizens who can think and act in ethically thoughtful ways" (p 23). In order to "to live well with and for others in just institutions" (Ricouer 1992, as cited in Moules et al 2015, 190), we need to recognize hermeneutic dialogue in/as pedagogy.

Context and Rationale

In current society, the culture of school is always already imbued in language, culture, economies and ideologies. In turn, educators are confronted with pervasive understandings about school, curriculum, teachers and subject disciplines. In what follows we outline the way these discourses may reject, resist and occlude hermeneutic dialogue in/as pedagogy. Before suggesting the way, we feel it is important to recognize what might get in the way of it.

Neoliberal Interference

This age supports notions of individual responsibility that tear up social solidarities in devastating ways.

—Giroux 2020

Neoliberalism is the reigning ideology of our time. Neoliberalism relies on the market as the "organizing principle for all political, social, and economic decisions" (Giroux 2005, 2). The pedagogy that emerges naturalizes competitiveness, individualism and hedonism, and discourages ethical considerations; "within this pedagogy, compassion is a weakness, and moral responsibility is scorned because it places human needs over market considerations" (Giroux 2010, 185). By constructing human beings as capital, neoliberalism encourages individualism and competition, eliminates notions of the public good and erodes the

citizenry of a moral or ethical life. As such, neoliberalism forecloses hermeneutic dialogue in as/pedagogy; however, it also exposes the need for such dialogue.

An infection of competition and individualism existed prior to the pandemic. COVID-19 has exposed the resulting breaks in our society; "the great revealer has arrived in the form of a virus, its economic fallout showing almost perfectly the divides between those who are vulnerable and those who are not" (Corak 2020). This virus reveals the way our political and economic systems reinforce this divide, and how neoliberalism rationalizes and encourages leaving people vulnerable. Neoliberalism prevents people from recognizing the way private troubles are connected to broader systemic issues (Giroux 2020). As such, this requires a pedagogic fight "to convince the public to move beyond the culture of privatization and atomization that propels a consumer society and reinforces a politics of single issues detached from broader considerations" (Giroux, 2020, para 30). If not, Brown (2015) warns, "neoliberalism is the rationality through which capitalism finally swallows humanity" (p 44).

As a means to confront the reign of individualism, the erosion of community, and the growing political chasm in society, we need to encourage students to see/hear one another, to see their connections to one another and to see their responsibilities to one another. This requires a dialogic encounter.

Modernist Weights

Against a numbing indifference, despair or withdrawal into the private orbits of the isolated self, there is a need to support educational institutions that enable students to exhibit civic courage, foster the capacity to listen to others, sustain complex thoughts and engage social problems.

—Giroux 2019

While dialogue might unsettle the primacy of neoliberalism, other elements within schools hinder the practice of hermeneutic dialogue. There remain tensions in the field of social studies between subject- and issues-centered curricula, cultural transmission and critical thinking, and centralization and grassroots development (Ross 2006). While there is no unified vision of social studies, provincial curricula across Canada share familiar elements. Many of the provincial curricula promote deeper understandings through discussion, negotiation and debate. For example, the curriculum in our own province calls for

students in K–12 classrooms to engage in "discussion and debate concerning ethical or existential questions to … make learning more personally meaningful" (Government of Manitoba 2003, 6). Social studies invites challenging, complex—even messy—ethical discussions. Although the official curriculum documents recognize and invite emergent, contingent and fluid contexts and understandings, we repeatedly encounter demands for prescriptive approaches to teaching. As social studies educators, our worth is often reduced to the amount of ready-to-use materials that we can offer teacher candidates. This follows Pinar's (2006) observation that teachers are too focused on managing the technical delivery of content:

> If only we can find the right technique, the right modification of classroom organization (small groups, collaborative learning) or teach in the right way, if only we teach according to 'best practices,' if only we have students self-reflect or if only we develop 'standards' or develop 'scientific research', then students will learn what we teach them. (p 109)

This fixation on management, organization and "best practices" results from the pervasive cultural myth that everything depends on the teacher, and that the teacher is the expert (Britzman 2003). Further, the demand for particular methods reflects the pervasive modernist discourses in education that praise rationality, reason and knowledge (Popkewitz 1997). Within these modernist constraints, knowledge is understood as a thing already made, and products are considered artifacts *of* learning (Ellsworth 2005). Such discourses overwhelm the possibilities for education and for teachers. We raise this here to recognize that there are modernist barriers to engaging hermeneutic dialogue in the classroom. Dialogue, without end or artifact, is often not recognizable to students as education.

In our experience as educators, theoretical and philosophical discussions can be met with impatience or perceived as a waste of time. The predominant narratives in education often conceive of time as something to be calculated and managed for optimum efficiency, doled out in fragmented and discordant bits. This manifests in continual frenetic countdowns: "we are running out of time," "we are out of time," "time on task" and the inevitability of the unwelcome intrusion of the sound of a bell that states beyond refute, "time's up." Alternately, dialogic encounters require space to welcome and arrest time, permitting time to tarry, where it is brought to a standstill because it is the topic that needs our love and devotion.

The Discipline of Social Studies

Beyond the modernist weights on education, each discipline also carries expectation. In social studies, it is anticipated that teacher candidates will learn and employ historical thinking, geographic thinking, critical thinking and inquiry. Education's predominant orientation accentuates a technical rational framework. Within such a framework, teaching and learning is often focused on teaching *about* the disciplines.

While there is potential in approaching a discipline, like history, through the practices of a historian, the historical thinking benchmarks could be seen to promote a distanced, practiced, rigorous exploration of history that risks dismissing, even silencing, students' emotional responses, the consequence of which is a "dehumanized form of consciousness" (Davey 2006, 22). Truth cannot be achieved from a detached distance or in an objective way (Gadamer 2004). Moreover, as den Heyer (2011) points out, historical thinking also lacks reflection about the biases (unconscious or otherwise) of the historians who have created the procedures, the political and social context in which "reasoned judgements" are made, and the way particular historical narratives are centred and others marginalized. Methods carry with them a deep historical prejudice against other ways of knowing and understanding: "Will to method is not about method as such, but a manifestation of a deep, taken for granted historical prejudice (Gadamer 1969/1989) against other ways of knowing and understanding" (Moules et al 2015, 56). For this reason, Cutrara (2018) has challenged the primacy of historical thinking in social studies, as it privileges Euro-Canadian knowledge systems and places a settler grammar on the study of history. Davey (2006) refers to this as the "colonizing tendency" of method. What, Gadamer asks, "does the method neglect? Ignore? Suppress? Prevent altogether?" (Moules et al 2015, 56). Any single method or set of criteria is no more desirable than a single narrative of history (Marsh, cited in den Heyer 2011).

Inquiry-based learning is also a celebrated pedagogical approach in social studies. The literature on inquiry-based learning suggests that it recognizes and legitimizes students' interests (Fielding 2012), encourages and develops critical thinking skills (Duran and Dökme 2016; Selwyn 2014), enhances understanding (Scardamalia 2002) and leads to greater student

achievement and motivation (Ryan and Deci 2000). Although inquiry lacks a common procedural approach, often students choose topics of interest and present their findings in varied mediums. In this way, inquiry has the potential to unsettle dominant narratives and recognize diverse modes of expression; however, the promotion of individual student interests risks eroding the community. When individual interests are centred, opportunities for collaborative problem solving lessen, complex community conversations on a shared topic decrease and the relational bonds of learning are ignored. Now, in particular, we need to recognize our interconnectedness, to hear one another and to confront our own prejudices. The individual does not exist outside of the community, and we cannot learn in ways that discourage collective experiences.

Our purpose in outlining the current context of social studies education is not to wholeheartedly dismiss any of these methods, but rather to question the disciplinary elements of method, the perpetuation and mobilization of particular knowledge and ideologies, and the overall cultural consequences. Where, we ask, is the practice of conversation, deliberation and discussion in social studies? Where is the time to tarry? In what follows we consider the potential of hermeneutic dialogue to respond to haphazardness, to foster attunement, to reimagine concepts, to encourage relational thinking and to re-emerge.

The Imposition and Ignorance of Methods

The first COVID-19-related death in Canada has been recorded in B.C.

—Larsen 2020

Gadamer (2004) states that "Understanding begins when something addresses us." COVID-19 has addressed us. The virus, like a question, "presses itself on us; we can no longer avoid it and persist in our accustomed opinion" (Gadamer 2004, 375). The virus is not something we planned for or fully understand; it is where our understanding begins. Much as there is no vaccine or cure, there is no teaching method that could have responded to this moment. Any existing pedagogical strategy ignores the haphazardness of the moment. Methods (understood as technocratic or orthodox empiricism and rationalism) foreclose the play of the topic. Instead, pedagogy should encourage a constant undoing—play without an end in mind

(Ellsworth 2005). If one is to avoid becoming an "overly-dogmatic playmate" (Ellsworth 2005), one requires tact, what Gadamer (2004) describes as "a special sensitivity and sensitiveness to situations and how to behave in them, for which knowledge from general principles does not suffice" (p 16). Method, in its strictest sense is "tact-less," as it often projects "universally applicable" strategies. Tact involves both sense and feeling, but also a kind of knowing: of how to orient ourselves in a situation, which resources to draw upon to make sense of what we encounter, which questions to ask next, when to probe and when to let the silence hang. Following Gadamer (2004), "there is no such thing as a method of learning to ask questions, of learning to see what is questionable" (p 375). Instead, one needs to learn to be attuned to the moment. Tact cannot be acquired in the abstract; it can be learned only in and through experience—that is, by being practised from encounter to encounter, from case to case, from a series of "intentionally frustrated expectations" (Caputo 1987, cited in Moules et al 2015, 60). Each experience is distinctive; however, each interaction helps one gain an attunement and a willingness to dwell, to linger. Shor and Freire (1987) refer to this as the artistry required of teachers. Yet, the practice of conversation is assumed or ignored within many faculties of education, and subsequently in many K–12 classrooms.

One needs to foster a community of discussion and deliberation; the practice is not automatic. In the same way that teachers would not expect the skills of historical or critical thinking to be inherent, neither are those of discussion and deliberation. We cannot expect teacher candidates to foster complex, difficult, messy conversations, filled with long silences and awkwardness, if they are not practised at participating in them: "Becoming experienced calls for teachers to embark on an existential quest with fellow travellers. This journey requires the cultivation of a pedagogical attunement that embraces the otherness of the other" (Skuce 2013, ii). The practice of participating in conversations will encourage teacher candidates to confront their prejudices, recognize varied perspectives and possibly become otherwise. In turn, they will recognize the pedagogic potential of dialogue for their own classroom environments. We use the subsequent sections to elucidate the necessity and potential of hermeneutic dialogue: to negotiate understandings of concepts, like citizenship, in this moment; to confront our own historicity and prejudices; to recognize the other in relation to our own opinion.

Well, Meaning.

A global, novel virus that keeps us contained in our homes—maybe for months—is already reorienting our relationship to government, to the outside world, even to each other.

—*Politico* 2020

Citizenship is a core concept in the provincial social studies curriculum. The curriculum documents offer various interpretations of citizenship, recognizing that it is a fluid, contested concept. We draw again on an example from our own provincial documents: "Citizenship is a fluid concept that changes overtime: its meaning is often contested, and it is subject to interpretation and continuing debate" (Government of Manitoba 2003, 9). The documents impose no fixed, static meaning. Instead, they recognize that citizenship evades ontic certainty—its understandings and enactments must be repeatedly negotiated and renegotiated. The COVID-19 virus has challenged us to reimagine our role as citizens. In order to curb the spread of COVID-19, we are all asked to wear masks and to physically distance to protect the community. Current events demonstrate that there is vocal opposition to government regulation of perceived individual rights. While the concept of citizenship is familiar, the current regulations make it strange; "it is the detailed familiarity of the cases that strikes us; it is the detailed strangeness of the case that surprises us; it is the unfathomable mystery of the case that intrigues us" (Moules et al 2015, 64). Masks in public, once strange, shamed and contested, now familiar. Restrictions on movement, once unfathomable, now the new normal. Low-wage workers risking their lives, once incomprehensible, now essential. Health care workers shrouded in expectations of sacrifice, once ludicrous, now applauded. Economic calculations about the value of particular lives, once deplorable, now mainstream. The emergence of these opinions is evidence of the varied, ever-evolving understandings of citizenship. Although hermeneutic dialogue does not offer a prescriptive method for constructing *a* definition, it requires placing the individual who wants to reopen the economy in conversation with the health care worker who will bear the brunt.

The 3 Rs: Responsive, Relational and Responsible

Please stay home for us. We'll stay here for you.

—Slugoski 2020

By now, many people have seen the photos of healthcare workers standing in the path of antilockdown protestors (McClaran 2020). Wearing scrubs and masks, these health care professionals stand silently in the path of honking vehicles. These images symbolize the demands of hermeneutic dialogue: you must see me in relation to your opinion. Ethics demands attunement toward the demand of the other. In the case of the antilockdown protestors, this requires attentiveness to the health care workers, their experiences and the limits of one's own understanding. This creates an opportunity to act justly as we garner insight into the "multifariousness of voices," and come to recognize circumstances that extend beyond our experiences. In hermeneutics,

the ability to encounter the other, in dialogue, requires modesty and humility, in that we know that our knowledge is limited and in need of revision. It requires courtesy, in that we acknowledge our indebtedness to others, and welcome their capacity to teach us something new. (Moules et al 2015, 59)

The protestors, in their quest for individual freedom, must consider how their actions will impact the other and the collective. As Parker (2005) reminds us, there is no individual separate from the public; "privacy and individual autonomy are entirely dependent on the community" (p 344–45). Any focus on individual responsibility ignores the ways that our lives are deeply interconnected (Giroux 2020). It is not enough to preserve your own position and interests if the society around you is unsafe and unhealthy.

The photo symbolizes another ill in our society: the inability to participate in dialogue at all, never mind with humility and courtesy. Instead, it has become common practice to shout our positions (out the window of trucks, behind protest signs or in 140 characters) and then close our ears to the response. In hermeneutic dialogue, it is not enough to advocate your position; you must recognize how your position impacts the other. This does not entail one to simply acquiesce, but to earnestly hear the voice of the other. The other, through their experiences, has something to say that is true about the subject matter. In this way, understanding "is not merely a matter of putting oneself forward and successfully asserting one's own point of view, but being transformed into a communion in which we do not remain what we are" (Gadamer 2004, 379).

Confronting Ourselves

> An anti-lockdown march in downtown Vancouver nearly spiralled out of control when dozens of protesters surrounded a hospital entrance and began berating frontline healthcare workers.
>
> —*PressProgress* 2020

Through hermeneutic dialogue, teachers and students might unconceal unquestioned prejudices of everyday life. It is not possible to distance ourselves to obtain a place of pure seeing. To seek to escape from our situatedness through our faith in reason and method is a chimera. There is no Archimedean point outside of culture and language, as we are always enmeshed in the ways of the world. However, prejudices, or pre-judgments, do not wall us off as if we are entrapped "behind insurmountable barriers" (Gadamer 2004, xxiii); rather, our prejudices make new understanding possible. To do this, teachers and students must put their pre-understandings at risk, to make them vulnerable to our partners in dialogue. Part of listening to the other, and seeing ourselves in relation, requires that we confront our own prejudices, our own historicity, our own situatedness. This requires that we nurture a moral bond to hear the voice of the other—especially when their thoughts are contrary to our own.

In the case of the antilockdown protestors, the authors recognize our own prejudices. We viewed the US antilockdown protest photo as Canadians, who are privileged to have universal healthcare. We viewed the photo with arrogance, thinking that Canadians would not protest the advice of scientists; as the quote that anchors this section reveals, this arrogance was uninformed and unwarranted. We viewed the photo with empathy for the health care worker who lacks personal protective equipment and consequently faces risks of infection in performing their essential work. We may be inclined to dismiss the acts of the anti-lockdown protestors as selfish, as idiocy or ignorance. And yet, if we listen to the experiences of these protesters, we may hear about economic insecurity, loss and/or fear that complicates our initial feelings. We may consider the systemic inequities that compel their actions; if these protestors had a strong social safety net, would they feel as desperate to "open the economy"?

Hermeneutic dialogue asks that one experience the weight of the other's opinion, to bring out the real strength of their understanding. Thus, it is not the art of arguing (which can make a strong case out of a weak one), but the art of thinking (which can strengthen objections by referring to the subject matter). Dialogic encounters call forth the need for the art of strengthening, a conviviality that lovingly embraces the voice of the other, which may render the familiar strange. This does not render one simply passive, simply surrendering one's prejudices; on the contrary, it is to put one's prejudices at risk, to foster an openness, a readiness, that what the other has to say may dis-position us from our well-travelled paths. To become experienced (*erfahren*) in the art of conversation is to be thrust into an alien position—from the familiarity of an unbroken stream of tradition—our expectations thwarted.

Conclusion

> We don't know if infection with the novel coronavirus confers long-lasting immunity.
>
> —Lessler 2020

In the same way that our knowledge about COVID-19 is incomplete, so is knowledge within hermeneutic dialogue. The practice of hermeneutic dialogue reflects the infinitude of COVID-19. While we continue to research ways to prevent, treat and cure the virus, even when the virus is stopped, the political, social and economic consequences will continue to reverberate. The lives lost, the fears ignited, the social practices gained and lost, the generation born, the virus will continue to impact long after the cure. Just as there is the ongoing eventfulness of their arrival, the conversations we begin in our classrooms do not end. Hermeneutic dialogue recognizes the unfinishedness of pedagogy.

Although there are no definitive pedagogical methods that will ensure our capacity to hear our fellow interlocutors, to permit their presence to interrupt our quotidian lives, there is a practice, a stance, a way of being that provides an opportunity for fractures to surface in our familiar narratives, enlarging understandings. Thus, being and becoming an experienced teacher is not merely stilling the flux of the lifeworld by being able to predict and control the vicissitudes of classroom life; rather, it is being ever more susceptible and vulnerable to the incoming of someone or something other. This calls for an unrelenting effort to foster an attentiveness and thoughtfulness that embraces the ineradicable flow of our life amid unknown and unknowable others.

The global pandemic abounds with personal stories that confront our previous constructs. The narratives that have come to govern our lives are put into

question. Nightly newscasts convey sounds and images of our collective existence being torn asunder as we witness deceased bodies being trolled out to refrigerated trucks set up as makeshift morgues, or harrowing images from Hart Island that reveal mass-grave burials of those whose families could not be located or who could not afford a private funeral. During such times, families cannot gather and partake in rituals and ceremonies to celebrate the living of a life. In order to consider how best to proceed, we will invariably engage in conversation with our fellow citizens as a means to provide opportunities for new possibilities to shine through, to illuminate novel adaptations to a world we once knew. And, perhaps, through dialogic encounters we may come under the influence of new or varied truths, and become bound in solidarity with one another in new communities.

Notes

1. We are using the term *social studies educators* to encapsulate our work as teacher educators in the field of social studies. Until recently, the authors also taught social studies in the K–12 context. While this current piece focuses on teacher education, the plea extends to the social studies context more broadly.

2. The authors recognize the irony of this title, as "Gadamer's treatment of truth recognizes that it cannot be captured within a theoretical framework" (Lawn 2006, 61).

References

Britzman, D P. 2003. *Practice Makes Practice: A Critical Study of Learning to Teach*. Rev ed. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Brown, W. 2015. *Undoing the Demos: Neoliberalism's Stealth Revolution*. New York: Zone Books.

Caputo, J D. 1987. *Radical Hermeneutics*. Bloomington, Ind: Indiana University Press.

Corak, M. 2020. "COVID-19 Is Not the Great Leveller. It's the Great Revealer." *Toronto Star*, April 15. Available at www.thestar.com/opinion/contributors/2020/04/15/covid-19-is-not-the-great-leveller-its-the-great-revealer.html (accessed November 19, 2020).

Cutrara, S. 2018. "The Settler Grammar of Canadian History Curriculum: Why Historical Thinking Is Unable to Respond to the TRC's Calls to Action." *Canadian Journal of Education* 41, no 1: 250–75.

Davey, N. 2006. *Unquiet Understanding: Gadamer's Philosophical Hermeneutics*. SUNY Series in Contemporary Continental Philosophy. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

den Heyer, K. 2011. "History Education as a Disciplinary Ethic of Truths." In *New Possibilities for the Past: Shaping History Education in Canada*, ed P Clark, 154–72. Vancouver: UBC Press.

Duran, M, and İ Dökme. 2016. "The Effect of the Inquiry-Based Learning Approach on Students' Critical-Thinking Skills." *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education* 12, no 12: 2887–2908.

Ellsworth, E. 2005. *Places of Learning: Media, Architecture, Pedagogy*. New York: Routledge.

Fielding, M. 2012. "Beyond Student Voice: Patterns of Partnership and the Demands of Deep Democracy." *Revista de Educación* 359: 45–65.

Gadamer, H-G. 2004. *Truth and Method*. 2nd rev ed. London, UK: Continuum. (Orig pub 1975.)

Giroux, H A. 2005. "The Terror of Neoliberalism: Rethinking the Significance of Cultural Politics." *College Literature* 32, no 1: 1–19.

———. 2010. "Bare Pedagogy and the Scourge of Neoliberalism: Rethinking Higher Education as a Democratic Public Sphere." *Educational Forum* 74, no 3: 184–96.

———. 2019. "Henry Armand Giroux: Attacking Education Weakens Democracy." *Hamilton Spectator*, July 25. Available at www.thespec.com/opinion/contributors/2019/07/25/henry-armand-giroux-attacking-education-weakens-democracy.html (accessed November 19, 2020).

———. 2020. "The COVID-19 Pandemic Is Exposing the Plague of Neoliberalism." *Truthout*, April 7. Available at https://truthout.org/articles/the-covid-19-pandemic-is-exposing-the-plague-of-neoliberalism/ (accessed November 19, 2020).

Government of Manitoba. 2003. *Kindergarten to Grade 8 Social Studies: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes*. Available at www.edu.gov.mb.ca/k12/cur/socstud/framework/index.html (accessed November 19, 2020).

Jardine, D W, S Friesen and P Clifford. 2006. *Curriculum in Abundance*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum.

Larsen, K. 2020. "1st COVID-19-Related Death in Canada Recorded in B.C." *CBC*, March 9. Available at www.cbc.ca/news/canada/british-columbia/covid19-coronavirus-first-death-bc-canada-1.5483932 (accessed November 19, 2020).

Lawn, C. 2006. *Gadamer: A Guide for the Perplexed*. London: Continuum.

Lessler, J. 2020. "Coronavirus Will Linger After the Pandemic Ends. But It Won't Be as Bad." *Washington Post*, March 13. Available at www.washingtonpost.com/outlook/coronavirus-pandemic-immunity-vaccine/2020/03/12/bbf10996-6485-11ea-acca-80c22bbee96f_story.html (accessed November 19, 2020).

McClaran, A. 2020. "Healthcare workers stand in the street as a counter-protest to those demanding the stay-at-home order be lifted in Denver." Photograph. Available at https://i.guim.co.uk/img/media/a708d0dd701911d400a8ce7faa5302f092366022/0_0_3500_2333/master/3500.jpg?width=1300&quality=45&auto=format&fit=max&dpr=2&s=10b3072b8e113b888fed3c73bfd7ce2c (accessed November 19, 2020).

Moules, N J, G McCaffrey, J C Field and C M Laing. 2015. *Conducting Hermeneutic Research: From Philosophy to Practice*. New York: Lang.

Parker, W C. 2005. "Teaching Against Idiocy." *Phi Delta Kappan* 86, no 5: 344–51.

Pinar, W F. 2006. *The Synoptic Text Today and Other Essays: Curriculum Development After the Reconceptualization.* New York: Lang.

Politico. 2020. "Coronavirus Will Change the World Permanently. Here's How." *Politico*, March 19. Available at www.politico.com/news/magazine/2020/03/19/coronavirus-effect-economy-life-society-analysis-covid-135579 (accessed November 19, 2020).

Popkewitz, T S. 1997. "A Changing Terrain of Knowledge and Power: A Social Epistemology of Educational Research." *Educational Researcher* 26, no 9: 18–29.

PressProgress. 2020. "Anti-Lockdown Protesters Block Ambulance Bay at Vancouver Hospital, Lead Chants Against Healthcare Workers." *PressProgress*, May 11. Available at https://pressprogress.ca/anti-lockdown-protesters-block-ambulance-bay-at-vancouver-hospital-lead-chants-against-healthcare-workers/ (accessed November 19, 2020).

Ricoeur, P. 1992. *Oneself as Another.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

Ross, E W. 2006. *The Social Studies Curriculum: Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities.* 3rd ed. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Ryan, R M, and E L Deci. 2000. "Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivations: Classic Definitions and New Directions." *Contemporary Educational Psychology* 25, no 1: 54–67.

Scardamalia, M. 2002. "Collective Cognitive Responsibility for the Advancement of Knowledge." In *Liberal Education in a Knowledge Society*, ed B Smith, 67–98. Chicago, Ill: Open Court.

Schiller, F. 2012. *On the Aesthetic Education of Man.* Trans R Snell. Mineola, NY; Dover. Orig pub 1795.

Selwyn, D. 2014. "Why Inquiry?" In *The Social Studies Curriculum: Purposes, Problems, and Possibilities*, ed E W Ross, 267–87. Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Shor, I, and P Freire. 1987. "What Is the 'Dialogical Method' of Teaching?" *Journal of Education* 169, no 3: 11–31.

Skuce, N T. 2013. "Being and Becoming an Experienced Teacher." PhD dissertation, University of Calgary.

Slugoski, K. 2020. "'Please Stay Home': Alberta Hospital Workers Plead with Public amid COVID-19 Pandemic." *Global News*, March 26. Available at https://globalnews.ca/news/6738268/coronavirus-alberta-hospital-workers-stay-home/ (accessed November 19, 2020).

Westheimer, J. 2015. *What Kind of Citizen? Educating Our Children for the Common Good.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Tim Skuce, PhD, is an assistant professor of social studies education in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy in the Faculty of Education at Brandon University. His research interests include philosophical hermeneutics, curriculum theory and pedagogy.

Shannon DM Moore, PhD, is an assistant professor of social studies education in the Department of Curriculum, Teaching and Learning in the Faculty of Education, at the University of Manitoba. Her research interests include gender, media education and the impacts of neoliberalism on public education.

The Importance of Bridging Creativity and Critical Thinking

Anasthasia Filion More

We have passed through the age of agriculture, the age of industry and the age of information, and are now said to be entering the age of creativity.

—Cropley 2004

Alberta's program of studies for social studies, kindergarten to Grade 12, defines *critical thinking* as "a process of inquiry, analysis and evaluation resulting in a reasoned judgment [which] promotes the development of democratic citizenship," with skills of critical thinking including "distinguishing fact from opinion; considering the reliability and accuracy of information; determining diverse points of view, perspective and bias; and considering the ethics of decisions and actions" (Alberta Education 2005, 8). The same source defines creative thinking as a process that "occurs when students identify unique connections among ideas and suggest insightful approaches to social studies questions and issues," using this type of thinking to "generate an inventory of possibilities; anticipate outcomes; and combine logical, intuitive and divergent thought" (Alberta Education 2005, 8). The purpose of this article is to inform readers as to the state of creativity and its relationship with critical thinking, and their potential roles in critical studies.

Historically, creativity has been neglected or actively discouraged in educational contexts in an effort to bolster such concepts as critical thinking, which, ironically, may necessitate the development of creativity to develop itself. Therefore, in order to proceed, we should take heed of the definitions and attributes of both creativity and critical thinking, how these constructs develop, and what educational processes might help nurture them further. To formulate an understanding of creativity and critical thinking, we will focus our attention on the psychological approaches that have been undertaken to understand these concepts, since the psychological approaches largely inform the social and educational approaches in these cases. The ultimate purpose is the attainment of a more complete understanding of creativity and critical thinking and how exactly these processes are used in both personal and social human activities.

What Are the Key Research Questions Regarding Creativity and Critical Thinking?

The first and second questions for creativity and critical thinking relate to their definitions and origins in humans: What exactly are creativity and critical thinking? How do these constructs develop? Each field of research brings different approaches toward answering these questions, with different philosophical treatises as bases of explanation. The third question concerns the active natures of creativity and critical thinking: How and when do these activities manifest and what for? Answering this question can help establish not only the uses for creativity and critical thinking but also the conditions under which these activities can develop and thrive. The fourth question is: How can we teach creativity and critical thinking in educational contexts? This question is of pressing importance in education, because society increasingly views creativity as a necessity for a more competitive workforce in the global market, while

critical thinking has classically enjoyed praise and importance—but the apparent success in developing and nourishing it at the educational level has been murky. These questions have found a variety of different answers spanning multiple schools of thought and expertise, including cognitive science, neuroscience, social science, the arts and, of course, education.

It is not surprising that creativity and critical thinking are contested concepts. Consolidating the various definitions and understandings of creativity and critical thinking remains one of the most pressing challenges across the myriad fields that study these constructs. Each field carries its own vocabulary, epistemological protocols and tests, and other important factors when it comes to their fundamental study. Although aspects of creativity and critical thinking from some fields are transferrable to others, this is typically seldom the case and the concepts remain largely isolated within each field. Furthermore, some traditional schools of thought have branded creativity and critical thinking as unrelated activities at best and oppositional cognitive forces at worst, which has frustrated newer contemporary views that these activities should be understood as cooperative and even inseparable. Indeed, it is becoming clear from sociological, educational, psychological and neurological findings, past and contemporary, that creativity and critical thinking are closely intertwined, requiring one another to successfully fulfill their functions.

One field that is believed to focus strongly on critical thinking while omitting creativity is the field of critical studies or critical theory. This field espouses the critical reflection of social and cultural systems, usually with the ultimate goal of addressing imbalances or injustices in our current power structures. In educational contexts, the teaching of critical theory classically focuses on the *critical thinking* aspects of critical studies activities, with scarce mention of creativity. The diminished importance of creativity persists, and arguably worsens, in adult educational circles because of how creativity and imagination are often misunderstood as developmental cognitive activities found in children that are eventually attenuated or lost in adulthood. Such notions are amplified by the aforementioned misconceptions that creativity and critical thinking are cognitive opposites that attenuate one another.

This paper is an attempt to bring creativity into greater relevance for critical studies, particularly as it pertains to education for critical theory and intercultural competence. We will begin by discussing the history and specific misconceptions of creativity, then elaborate on its psychological perspectives and relations with critical thinking. Finally, we will discuss some of the contemporary research on creativity and critical thinking, and avenues for future research we believe would be beneficial for critical theory in educational contexts.

Questions Regarding Creativity

The simple question "What is creativity?" finds its origins in antiquity with Plato's *Ion* (Cropley 2004, 13), and continues to be influential throughout philosophy, religion and the arts well into the modern age (Shaheen 2010, 166). It has been described as the cognitive element that allows for the creation of novelty, particularly in the arts (Cropley 2004, 13). Indeed, creativity has classically been rooted in the realm of visual arts and still today cannot quite break free of its aesthetic shackles (Singer 2011, 22–24). Although prior work in the late 19th and early 20th centuries began to surface with implications of creativity beyond art and aesthetics, the public view that creativity was only for artists truly began to change only in 1957 with the launch of the first artificial satellite, Sputnik 1, by the Soviet Union. This prompted a fundamental rethinking of creativity, seen as something that had been lacking in the American and Western European societies' technological trends, which led to fears they might lose the war of innovation to their Russian rivals (Cropley 2004, 13). The political conclusion was that creativity of a more social kind, rather than classically artistic or aesthetic kind, was needed if Western societies were to survive into the new age (Shaheen 2010, 166).

How creativity develops naturally is another question that lacks a definitive answer, and one that finds its roots in the philosophical treatises and other works of early psychologists such as Sigmund Freud, Jean Piaget, and Lev Vygotsky (Sawyer et al 2003, 30–36). Initially, creativity was seen as something inherent in children and was seldom differentiated from childhood imagination (Gajdamaschko 2006, 36–37). The question was not whether creativity and imagination could develop, but whether these cognitive activities could remain intact into adulthood. This line of thinking originated in the 18th century, being termed the *romantic* view of creativity (Glăveanu 2011, 49), and was inspired by educational romanticism as espoused by Jean-Jaques Rousseau (Hornberg and Reiter-Palmon 2017, 10). This view gave way naturally to

the widely popular *nativist* developmental psychology theories of the time (Vasileva and Balyasnikova 2019, 6), which were traditionally used to explain child prodigies and genius adult creators and rationalized to preclude the nongifted from being capable of creativity (Sternberg and Kaufman 2010, 476). The purpose of these treatises was ultimately to identify and assess gifted individuals so as to allocate the resources required to nourish their creative potential (Moran 2010, 81), doing so with the help of such quantitative measures as the Torrance tests of creative thinking (Makel and Plucker 2010, 52; Zimmerman 2009, 387).

The behaviourist and cultural definitions of creativity would later surface at the opposite end of these philosophical treatises, with these works being initially formulated as responses to the shortcomings and disinterest in romantic and nativist views in explaining creativity in nonprodigy or genius individuals. Historically, the concept of giftedness has been challenged vehemently by Vygotsky, along with more modern scholars such as Maslow (Maslow 1970, in Craft 2003, 114), who suggested that all humans are capable of "a more widespread kind of creativeness." These discourses would begin to change the previous focus on "genius creativity" and giftedness emphasized by Guilford's (1950) "divergent thinking" tests, and the continuation of this focus with Torrance's (1974) experiments and tests for creativity (Craft 2003, 117). This great debate between "nature or nurture" of creativity effectively generated a great schism in creativity research that remains to this day (Hennessey 2010, 355; Glăveanu 2011, 49).

One of the most important questions with regard to creativity is how it manifests as a thought process and productive activity (Craft 2003, 117). Recently, we have begun to see more focus on the individual-level mechanisms governing creativity (Kandler et al 2016, 231). In trait psychology, for instance, there is an increasing trend in the exploration of how the Big Five personality traits—conscientiousness (careful vs careless), agreeableness (compassionate vs callous), neuroticism (sensitive vs resilient), openness to experience (curious vs cautious) and extraversion (outgoing vs solitary) (Sung and Choi 2009, 944–46)—may affect creativity (Sung and Choi 2009, 942), pointing to an emotion-based manifestation (Averill, Chon and Hahn 2001, 174). New-found interest in creativity also led to questions about how we can coax it to manifest itself. For instance, cognitive and trait psychology would dictate that creativity is based on personality traits that formulate the needs, motives and desires

for creation, effectively making creativity an unconscious and spontaneous process (Ayman-Nolley 1992, 29l; Gajdamaschko 2006, 36). Meanwhile, cultural psychology views creativity as externally motivated. Csikszentmihalyi's perspective, for instance, posits that creativity flourishes when a creative individual has access to, or control of, his or her field and domain of creativity, with both being sociocultural concepts external to the individual (Csikszentmihalyi 1997, 2–3). Indeed, Csikszentmihalyi's systems model of creativity, which establishes domains as symbolic culture and fields as social systems (Csikszentmihalyi 2014b, 166–67), is proving useful in casting light on the possible connections between creativity and sociocultural activities such as communication. As well, this systems model may provide alternate avenues of epistemology toward creativity as related to empathy and socially oriented problem solving such as those explicitly addressed in social studies (Sosa 2019, 1–3). A particular area of social studies in which the systems model of creativity could be implemented is as an extension of critical theory, acting as a methodological counterpart to the historically investigative nature of critical studies (Bohman 2019).

The educational questions regarding creativity follow from its social and psychological concepts. Before creativity was considered a social good, it was largely treated as an aesthetic or artistic concept that needed to develop naturally, unimpeded by educators, according to early romantic views (Zimmerman 2009, 384). Piaget proposed that creativity could indeed be developed in educational settings by making the environment as conducive as possible for imagination while attenuating rational thought, which he saw as the natural antagonist of pure creativity (Gajdamaschko 2006, 37). Vygotsky would challenge this notion by positing that creativity requires both imagination and rational thought (Gajdamaschko 2006, 37; Ayman-Nolley 1992, 78). Furthermore, Vygotsky advanced the theory that creativity is not only individualistic in development, but also deeply cultural (Sawyer et al 2003, 17–18).

Early developmental psychologists tackling the problem of creativity were primarily interested in describing and explaining creativity in the form of philosophical treaties in essays and manuscripts. Like many theorists of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, these early pioneers of creativity formulated their theories with intent to explore and test them via empirical studies once the empirical tools for qualitative and quantitative study became available. For developmental psychologists Jean Piaget and Sigmund

Freud, their empirical work beyond theoretical treatise is well established (Beilin 1992, 255) but must also be assessed with caution, as empirical work since their early treatises has shown limitations or falsehoods in their claims (Westen 1998, 362). Even more concerning is that much of Vygotsky's work was left unfinished, even at the theoretical level, due to his untimely death, although empirical work using his treatises was, fortunately, continued by other researchers (Vasileva and Balyasnikova 2019).

Epistemological and instrumental limitations of this era also forced the majority of early works by Piaget and Vygotsky to be qualitative in nature (Toulmin 1977), primarily conducted as case studies by Piaget (Beilin 1992, 192–93) and phenomenology by Vygotsky (Robbins 2003, 306). Indeed, much of their work was observational, nonexperimental and reflective in nature. For instance, Piaget's substantial work began as a case study of his own three children's development, from which he produced his first revolutionary reports (Beilin 1992, 192). A plethora of contemporary qualitative and quantitative work inspired by these early treatises has since surfaced.

For Piaget in particular, the treatment of creativity was done via his concept of psychological schema, which is essentially a module of cognitive or intelligent behaviour, described as "a cohesive, repeatable action sequence possessing component actions that are tightly interconnected and governed by a core meaning" (McLeod 2018). According to Piaget, humans develop schemas through processes of "accommodation and assimilation" of new information encountered in the world around them (Ayman-Nolley 1992, 82). Piaget's schema perspective allowed for the natural development of creativity, rather than assuming that it was something humans were naturally endowed with (Ayman-Nolley 1992, 82). Although he stressed the importance of education in the development of creativity (Stoltz et al 2015, 66), his work included development or counter-development, with realistic thought and rational thinking being specific antagonists to imagination and creativity for the growing child; this has left educators with little in the way of actually helping children develop creativity (Gajdamaschko 2006, 36–37). Piaget also acknowledged but could not adequately explain the potential cultural, social and environmental aspects of creativity development through his highly individualized schema perspective (Gajdamaschko 2006, 36–37).

Vygotsky, drawing upon data from Buhler, Wundt and Ribot (Ayman-Nolley 1992, 78), proposed a more systemic or cultural view of psychological development (Glăveanu 2011, 49) in which the various lower and higher psychological functions of human beings would become interwoven as they developed (Vasileva and Balyasnikova 2019, 6). Vygotsky's work was originally published in Russian; much of his unpublished work was later collected into six volumes (Maidansky 2020, 91). The works are primarily philosophical in nature, with treatise and arguments attempting to explain many dilemmas in developmental psychology at the time. However, it is only within the past 50 years or so that Vygotsky's works were translated from Russian to English and that he then found widespread interest among European and American psychologists, educators and other scholars who felt that contemporary developmental psychology was lacking in explanatory power in some areas (Maidansky 2020, 90).

An important distinction between Vygotsky and Piaget is that while Piaget treated the development of creativity as a constant linear struggle between imagination and rational thought, Vygotsky emphasized both that creativity and rational thought developed together and that the very nature of their development changed as children grew into adolescents and then further into adults (Ayman-Nolley 1992, 82), although Vygotsky would unfortunately pass away before he could finalize his treatises on adult creativity development. Vygotsky was also keenly interested in the influence of culture on the development of literature and creativity (Glăveanu 2011, 57; Sawyer et al 2003, 1–2), and posited that in the development of creativity as a whole, it was futile to attempt to separate that development from social and cultural interactions (Gajdamaschko 2006, 37), for it is through the process of cultural internalization that humans adapt culturally produced knowledge systems (Lantolf 2001, cited in Shabani 2016, 3).

Approaches to Defining Creativity and Critical Thinking—Implications for Social Studies

Vygotsky posited that creativity developed as a compound of both imagination and realistic thought and, indeed, this approach would become one of the imperative first steps in theoretically linking creativity and critical thinking as codependent processes. Vygotsky argued that in order to use creativity, one needed knowledge, which was primarily accrued

from the internalization of sociocultural information systems such as language, educational knowledge and upbringing (Shabani 2016, 2–3). Greater knowledge would in turn fuel the potential reach of imaginative activities, establishing knowledge platforms from which an individual could conduct more meaningful abstract thought processes toward solving problems related to that knowledge. This epistemological creativity process aligns well with the scientific discovery process, which is understood to require "a prior conceptual framework and the ability to interpret and sometimes reinterpret what has been seen or experienced in abstract terms" (Kirschner 2009, 151). Trained scholars working within their domain are able to process observations by using superior knowledge structures and conceptual frameworks for how those knowledge structures interconnect, enabling them to "encode that information at a deeper, more structural level," which is something that is much more difficult to achieve for novice social studies learners that are lacking in those knowledge structures and conceptual frameworks (Kirschner 2009, 151).

Although empirical work could not be completed to show this at the time, Vygotsky's proposed codevelopment process of imagination and rational thought does find modern support in neuroscience, where creativity is found to be reliant on neuronic activity involving both convergent (focused, rational-like) and divergent (unfocused, imaginative) thought (Gabora 2018, 64–65). Critical thinking could be the essential cognitive glue that connects these divergent and convergent thought processes and realistic systems of knowledge to produce sensible abstract knowledge (Babić, Lacković and Matejić 2019, 845). Through these concepts, it is possible that the individual rationalizes what internalized cultural knowledge platform from which to begin their imaginative thought processes, decides on the boundaries of their divergent thought processes and focal points of their convergent processes, then judges whether the attained abstract information is coherent enough with their perceptions and knowledge of reality to be worth keeping and applying. We could rationalize creativity as the engine of abstract knowledge production, and critical thinking as the navigation system used by individuals to help position and direct themselves in their creative journeys. Indeed, successful education in subjects such as social studies, for instance, depends greatly both on the production of abstract knowledge and on critical thinking to learn both social studies and how to process knowledge associated with the subject, which further requires prior knowledge structures

and sound conceptual frameworks to encode observations as sensible information (Kirschner 2009, 146, 150).

More recent psychological work on creativity involves personality trait psychology, which follows a more romantic view of creativity. Trait psychologists have a relatively thorough empirical framework by using the Big Five personality factors model (De Caroli and Sagone 2009, 791; Sung and Choi 2009, 942). This personality model allows for easier categorization of observations as personality effects, along with their quantification. Researchers have found that the Big Five traits can be tied to creative activity and have published several quantitative and qualitative studies with the goal of shining light on this link (Hornberg and Reiter-Palmon 2017; Sung and Choi 2009, 946–47). Personality-based creativity models are also beginning to find links to other important social study concepts such as empathy and social disposition (Dostál, Plháková and Záškodná 2017, 227–28).

Cognitive psychologists have opted to focus on psychological mindedness in tackling creativity, particularly on how open- and close-mindedness affect creativity and innovation. They typically conduct these studies in quantitative approaches, with a notable focus on correlational studies (Ward 2007). Neuroscientists have also become keenly interested in creativity, bringing their own set of powerful quantitative tools such as brain mapping, and using these to conduct correlational studies of creativity with brain functions (Dietrich 2004). Finally, in reaction to all these different fields furthering increasingly different viewpoints of creativity, other psychologists have also advanced work stressing the importance of consolidating the many different definitions of creativity (Gibson 2005; Simonton 2012, 2018).

Critical Thinking, Creativity, Critical Theory and Intercultural Competence

Despite glowing support for critical thinking and its development in educational and critical study contexts, an exact definition of critical thinking is still lacking (Petress 2004; Halonen 1995; Skinner 1971, 373). Broadly, one definition of critical thinking is that it is the cognitive process through which two systems of knowledge are compared. These processes

are often seen as logical, rational and, most important, objective. In this lattermost perceived quality of critical thinking lies a dilemma: How can humans be truly objective in their critical processes? The issue begins with how knowledge is accrued and internalized by humans, which may follow positivist, interpretivist or critical theorist paths of epistemology in individuals (Ryan 2018). Positivist views argue that true knowledge is purely objective and free of bias, while interpretivist views would argue that all internalized knowledge is fundamentally biased due to the beliefs and values of the individuals that inform their interpretations of external information. Critical theory dictates that both individual and greater social power structures play a role in the interpretation of knowledge, and that the individual is inextricably part of those power structures and of the object of inquiry itself. Although historically popular and still widely implemented today in educational curricula, positivist views have been largely superseded in epistemological philosophies and social studies, first by interpretivist and subsequently by critical theory epistemological frameworks (Green 2017).

Understanding critical theory is important because it both establishes the basis of individual internalization of cultural knowledge and hints at the importance of the cultural environment in that internalization process. The individual who is aware of critical theory can better inform themselves on how their cultural environment and predisposed biases and knowledge bases may be affecting their interpretations of new knowledge and social issues (Mattessich 2008). A process of internalized criticism or critical thinking may then be undertaken to understand the processes that led to the individual's interpretation of new information, and thus also formulate understandings of the cultural environment and personal biases that induced these interpretations. Perhaps, then, the attainable truth object of such an epistemology is not the exact interpretation of truth but a true understanding of that interpretation.

However, there is also a need to externalize the products of critical theory, which necessitates moving from descriptive form to prescriptive action, an inherently contradictory process (Cohon 2018). This shift requires a certain acceptance that the fruits of critical theory "are only abstract interpretations of the world" (Murray and Ozanne 2006, 52), and once that understanding is established we can begin to adopt a certain critical imagination to produce the critically informed abstractions (Murray and Ozanne 2006, 53–54) necessary to influence the cultural field. Effective critical

imagination on both the micro and macro levels (Murray and Ozanne 2006, 53–54) requires, among other things, an awareness of one's own cultural positioning and dispositions. Within a multicultural setting, this awareness becomes one of the facets that comprises intercultural competence, an increasingly desirable and necessary skill set in today's globalized society (Dziedziewicz, Gajda and Karwowski 2014, 32–33).

Intercultural competence is described as "a main resource for successful and effective communication and exchange" that incorporates internal and external outcomes mediated by the attitudes, knowledge and skills of both individuals and organizations (Krajewski 2011, 139–40). Despite its importance, intercultural competence is still in a diminished state of development today (Dziedziewicz, Gajda and Karwowski 2014, 32); even an increasingly diverse society such as Canada, which embraces multiculturalism in policy and belief, still suffers the divisional mindset rhetoric of multicultural relations being "about them" rather than "about us" (Winter 2015, cited in Guo 2017, 266; Vezzali et al 2016, 153), which places more emphasis and importance on the dominating Canadian cultural frameworks (Berry 2013, 673). This could be a consequence of Canadians having still insufficient intercultural skill sets, attitudes and competencies. This lack of inclusivity extends from individuals to government entities and policies, with funding of multiculturalism projects and initiatives being sorely lacking as a result (Guo 2017, 264). It is our belief that enriching intercultural competence, in part through teaching and practising critical thinking skills and critical theory to cultivate within students a sense of inexorable inclusivity in their multicultural environments (Dziedziewicz, Gajda and Karwowski 2014, 33), may be a key to addressing those aforementioned problems.

Intercultural competence is but one example bridging critical thinking (both directly and through critical theory) and creativity (both directly and through critical imagination) to positive multicultural experience; there are many other tangential aspects tying creativity and critical thinking with individual attitudes, beliefs and dispositions that find multiculturalism and cultural diversity favourable. For instance, many of the individual attitudes such as openness (withholding judgment), and curiosity and discovery (tolerating ambiguity and uncertainty), so valued in positive multicultural settings and environments (Kashima and Pillai 2011, 728;

Vezzali et al 2016, 155), are also found to be highly influential in creative and critical thinking activities (Dziedziewicz, Gajda and Karwowski 2014, 34; Sobkowiak 2016, 701). One particular individual attribute that is receiving much focus is one's need for cognitive closure, the cognitive disposition that causes lessened ideational generation and prompts individuals to "seize and freeze" on ideas that are thought to bring rapid closure to a question (Chirumbolo et al 2005, 60; Djikic, Oatley and Moldoveanu 2013, 149).

Individuals high in need (versus low) for cognitive closure will generate simpler structures of interpretation with smaller sets of information, impeding the scope and depth of their critical thinking processes (Djikic, Oatley and Moldoveanu 2013, 149). In addition, they will produce less creatively unique products and fewer ideas in general and outside the norm (Djikic, Oatley and Moldoveanu 2013, 149; Ong and Leung 2013, 287), and will even create pressures stanching group creativity (Chirumbolo et al 2005, 60, 74–77; Vezzali et al 2016, 155). However, even individuals high in need (versus low) for cognitive closure can still perform creative processes relatively well when provided with good procedure and structure to account for their cognitive preferences (Wronska et al 2019; Rietzschel, Slijkhuis and Van Yperen 2014), or can be trained to develop a lower need for cognitive closure through creativity and imagination enrichment interventions (Ong and Leung 2013; Djikic, Oatley and Moldoveanu 2013), which may lead to improvements in intercultural competence. Exposing individuals to multicultural situations has also been shown to influence creativity in positive ways (Goclowska, Damian and Mor 2018; Çelik, Storme and Forthmann 2016; Saad et al 2013), supporting a general idea that environmental, cultural and social pressures and experiences greatly influence individual cognitive processes such as creativity and critical thinking; these studies hint at how these latter processes could influence the former fields. These are but some examples that can clarify the social virtues of developing creativity and critical thinking. As we continue to consider all the possible links between creativity, critical thinking, and diversity and multiculturalism, however, we also become aware of creativity and critical thinking as expansive but essentially fractured fields of research.

Mending the Fields of Creativity and Critical Thinking

A significant issue in research of creativity is that researchers tend to favour certain theoretical perspectives of these concepts while excluding others (MacLaren 2012, 160–61). These factors have led to widespread disagreement over accepted definitions and terminology regarding creativity and its characteristics (Craft 2003, 118), as well as disagreement over best practices and acceptable methodologies for its study (Craft 2003, 118) and its relations with other educational concepts (Dietrich 2004, 1020). For critical thinking, there is a wide gap in functional definition between the classical vision of critical thinking as the ability to evaluate statements and arguments "independent of prior beliefs and opinions that one may hold" (Manalo et al 2013, 121–22) and a more contemporary understanding of it being indivisible from the individual's social context (Danvers 2016, 282–83). Here, too, lies a disagreement that makes the ascertainment of effective educational methods for critical thinking more challenging (Manalo et al 2013, 122). Following the disagreements over creativity and critical thinking, it becomes even more difficult to establish agreements about the nature of relationships between these two important cognitive processes (Glassner and Schwarz 2007, 11).

Educational research, which incorporates the treatises of these warring fields of psychology, also tends to incorporate these epistemological biases (Beghetto 2010, 454–56; Gibson 2005). In addition, creativity continues to be antagonized by ingrained educational misconceptions of the "ideal student," extreme convergent teaching in the form of highly scripted curricula, and a severe assessment and accountability culture that discourages risk taking (Beghetto 2010, 450–54; Peterson 1995, 22, 99–101), sometimes in the hope that qualities such as critical thinking may be enhanced (Padget 2013, 54). Such educational barriers are present not only in children's and adolescents' education, but in undergraduate and graduate education as well (Beresin, Balon and Coverdale 2015; Leung and Chiu 2010). This is why educational creativity and critical thinking research conducted with an open mind and good idea receptiveness, especially one that accepts and connects multiple theoretical perspectives of these two concepts, are so important.

Educational researchers continue to use Vygotsky's work on internalization, the processes in which cultural information is assimilated by the individual

(Emerson 1983, 253–54; Padget 2013, 25–26), which draws attention to the importance of social and cultural environment in the development of children (Vygotsky 1980, 130). How a child can develop past their limits in an educational context is also treated by Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, and is considered to be a prototypical form of scaffolding theory (Sanders and Welk 2005, 203). Educational and social studies further make great use of cognitive approaches in assaying student psychological mindedness to describe creative capacity in terms of open- or closed-mindedness (Chirumbolo et al 2005), situated cognition (Van Dijk et al 2019), cognitive style (Beitel, Ferrer and Cecero 2004) and idea receptiveness (Leung and Chiu 2010).

It is important to consider Vygotsky's internalization process as one that invokes creativity and critical thinking, as it necessitates an interpretation of cultural knowledge or, in other words, a re-creation and criticism of external cultural information into internal accepted knowledge (Sawyer et al 2003, 20), which cultural psychologists believe may be mediated by emotion (Sawyer et al 2003, 32). Likewise, we must also attempt to understand how such knowledge can be externalized as physically productive creativity. Engeström (1987, 1996) posited that internalization could become critical self-reflection followed by externalization as a response to dissonance between cultural norms and the individual attempting to abide by those norms in their cultural activities (Engeström, cited in Moran and John-Steiner 2003, 80). One potential avenue for understanding externalization could be found in Csikszentmihalyi's development of flow theory (Norman 1996, 35). Csikszentmihalyi's work is a blend of philosophical treatises and empirical studies, with a particular emphasis on correlational studies (Whalen 1999, 161–65). His research uses the works of many of his predecessors and current contemporaries, including Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (Csikszentmihalyi 2014a, 58). Csikszentmihalyi's flow state is essentially the state that people can find themselves in when they are entirely engrossed in a task.

Csikszentmihalyi describes the person in flow as being inseparable from their task, being driven by the challenge of accomplishing it, feeling fulfilled and truly happy while in this state (Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter 2003), and losing track of time and basic needs (Norman 1996). Csikszentmihalyi is also notable for his lack of distinction between so-called *Big-C* and *little-c* creativity, the novelty-producing and everyday creativities respectively, making only very scarce

mention of these while his prose appears to consider the two to be one and the same (Merrotsy 2013). This unification is important because it gives credence to what may seem to be externally unproductive creativity but which is still essentially productive for the person at an individual level. Studies inspired by flow psychology are relatively novel and tend to use qualitative case studies (Almetev 2019) and a few quantitative correlational studies (Schüler 2007; Bonaluto et al 2016; Csikszentmihalyi and Hunter 2003).

Csikszentmihalyi's theoretical and empirical perspectives find support and inspiration in both romantic and cultural views of creativity. For instance, Csikszentmihalyi's interest in "genius" creativity emphasizes the role of emotional states and personality traits, along with the importance of environment and other external support in maintaining giftedness (Seligman and Csikszentmihalyi 2000, 11). Flow itself requires that the task at hand be slightly more difficult than the skills of the person undertaking it, similar to the way Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (ZPD) theory describes effective learning as someone attempting to understand a concept that is more difficult than the learner's capacities for learning it but who can still understand the concept with a "more knowledgeable other" to help them (Csikszentmihalyi 2014a, 58). Indeed, the concept of Csikszentmihalyi's flow and Vygotsky's ZPD have even been combined into educational practice with success (Basawapatna et al 2013).

Conclusion

Advancing Vygotsky's cultural view of creativity with the incorporation of Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory, taking inspiration from a similar study (Sanders and Welk 2005), may become a crucial avenue toward establishing the exact relationships between creativity and critical thinking. Vygotsky's treatises of creativity establish the scope of the development conditions for creativity along with their generalizability outside of aesthetic and artistic works. Further, Vygotsky also presents us with rationale for the development of creativity requiring a codevelopment of imagination and rational thought, and hints at how critical these processes might be in learning via his concept of internalization. Csikszentmihalyi's flow theory may present a means for teaching externalized creativity with exercises designed to induce flow in learners. Indeed, it may be possible for educators to develop methods that can help learners

internalize knowledge through their ZPD and externalize it by reaching their flow states, furthering their understanding of the psychological, environmental and emotional conditions required for them to achieve and control both processes.

Educators could further enable learners with tools such as critical theory and self-criticism, which could allow them understand how they internalize and externalize information as part of their sociocultural environments, following the need to understand and improve individual intercultural competencies as well as lowering the need for cognitive closure. The overarching processes governing the effectiveness of both internalization and externalization may be creativity and critical thinking. Further, educators must be prepared to consider and incorporate multiple definitions of creativity and critical thinking in order to create an effective educational model for their enrichment in students. This work could contribute to satisfying our growing need for creativity and critical thinking, not only for the sake of innovation as a social good, but also for the sake of socially crucial skill sets such as intercultural competence.

Educational research on creativity and critical thinking is deeply entrenched in psychological work. In response to perceived shortcomings of initial nativist and romantic views of creativity, we have seen other theoretical perspectives, such as Piaget's schematic interpretation and Vygotsky's cultural treatise of creativity, flourish throughout the 20th century. Vygotsky's views have aided in understanding how creativity and critical thinking may be codependent processes. Contemporary blends such as Csikszentmihalyi's incorporative flow theory, which has only begun to bloom as a 21st-century phenomenon, also have some common points with some of Vygotsky's early treatises and may be used to construct a more complete picture of how creativity, critical thinking and sociocultural concepts may be linked. We have also seen cognitive and trait psychology treatises of creativity become increasingly emphasized over the turn of the 20th century. However, I believe it is only through consolidation of all these views that we will reach a full understanding of creativity and critical thinking, and how educators may enrich these in their students. And perhaps with enough concerted effort, we may one day reach an answer to the simple question that has troubled mankind since the age of Plato: What is creativity?

References

Alberta Education. 2005. *Social Studies Kindergarten to Grade 12*. Program of studies. Available at https://education.alberta.ca/media/3273004/social-studies-k-6-pos.pdf (accessed January 8, 2021).

Almetev, Y. 2019. "Case Study of the Theory of Flow." *European Proceedings of Social and Behavioural Sciences*, 670–77. Available at www.futureacademy.org.uk/files/images/upload/IIIPMMIS2019F79.pdf (accessed January 8, 2021).

Averill, J R, K K Chon and D W Hahn. 2001. "Emotions and Creativity, East and West." *Asian Journal of Social Psychology* 4, no 3: 165–83.

Ayman-Nolley, S. 1992. "Vygotsky's Perspective on the Development of Imagination and Creativity." *Creativity Research Journal* 5, no 1: 77–85.

Babić, T, A Lacković and M Matejić. 2019. "Critical Thinking and Creative Thinking – The Self-Assessment of Algebra University College Students." *42nd International Convention on Information and Communication Technology, Electronics, and Microelectronics (MIPRO)*, 843–48.

Basawapatna, A, A Repenning, K H Koh and H Nickerson. 2013. "The Zones of Proximal Flow: Guiding Students Through a Space of Computational Thinking Skills and Challenges." *ICER '13: Proceedings of the Ninth Annual International ACM Conference on International Computing Education Research*, 67–74.

Beghetto, R A. 2010. "Creativity in the Classroom." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, ed J C Kaufman and R J Sternberg, 447–62. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Beilin, H. 1992. "Piaget's Enduring Contribution to Developmental Psychology." *Developmental Psychology* 28, no 2: 191–204.

Beitel, M, E Ferrer and J J Cecero. 2004. "Psychological Mindedness and Cognitive Style." *Journal of Clinical Psychology* 60, no 6: 567–82.

Beresin, E V, R Balon, J H Coverdale and A K Louie. 2015. "This Is Water Revisited: Creativity Lost." *Academic Psychiatry* 39: 472–74.

Berry, J W. 2013. "Research on Multiculturalism in Canada." *International Journal of Intercultural Relations* 37, no 6: 663–75.

Bohman, J. 2019. "Critical Theory." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed E N Zalta. Available at https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/win2019/entries/critical-theory/ (accessed January 11, 2021).

Bonaluto, M, Y Mao, S Roberts, A Psalti, S Ariccio, U G Cancellieri and M Csikszentmihalyi. 2016. "Optimal Experience and Personal Growth: Flow and the Consolidation of Place Identity." *Frontiers in Psychology* 7. Available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC5097910/pdf/fpsyg-07-01654.pdf (accessed January 11, 2021).

Çelik, P, M Storme and B Forthmann. 2016. "A New Perspective on the Link Between Multiculturalism and Creativity: The Relationship Between Core Value Diversity and Divergent Thinking." *Learning and Individual Differences* 52: 188–96.

Chirumbolo, A, L Mannetti, A Pierro, A Areni and A W Kruglanski. 2005. "Motivated Closed-Mindedness and Creativity in Small Groups." *Small Group Research* 36, no 1: 59–82.

Cohon, R. 2018. "Hume's Moral Philosophy." In *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*, ed E N Zalta. Available at https://plato.stanford.edu/archives/fall2018/entries/hume-moral/ (accessed January 11, 2021).

Craft, A. 2003. "The Limits to Creativity in Education: Dilemmas for the Educator." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 51, no 2: 113–27.

Cropley, A. 2004. "Creativity as a Social Phenomenon." In *Creativity and Cultural Diversity*, ed M Fryer, 13–23. Torquay, UK: Creativity Centre Educational Trust.

Csikszentmihalyi, M. 1997. "Creativity: Flow and the Psychology of Discovery and Invention." New York: Harper Perennial. Excerpt available at https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/ac79/c908391b8c01fb998f00b4c7b7b5911efd46.pdf.

———. 2014a. *Applications of Flow in Human Development and Education: The Collected Works of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.* Dordrecht, Neth: Springer.

———. 2014b. *The Systems Model of Creativity: The Collected Works of Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi.* Dordrecht, Neth: Springer.

Csikszentmihalyi, M, and J Hunter. 2003. "Happiness in Everyday Life: The Uses of Experience Sampling." *Journal of Happiness Studies* 4, no 2: 185–99.

Danvers, E C. 2016. "Criticality's Affective Entanglements: Rethinking Emotion and Critical Thinking in Higher Education." *Gender and Education* 28, no 2: 282–97.

De Caroli, M E, and E Sagone. 2009. "Creative Thinking and Big Five Factors of Personality Measured in Italian School Children." *Psychological Reports* 105, no 3: 791–803.

Dietrich, A. 2004. "The Cognitive Neuroscience of Creativity." *Psychonomic Bulletin and Review* 11: 1011–26.

Djikic, M, K Oatley and M C Moldoveanu. 2013. "Opening the Closed Mind: The Effect of Exposure to Literature on the Need for Closure." *Creativity Research Journal* 25, no 2: 149–54.

Dostál, D, A Plháková and T Záškodná. 2017. "Domain-Specific Creativity in Relation to the Level of Empathy and Systemizing." *Journal of Creative Behavior* 51, no 3: 225–39.

Dziedziewicz, D, A Gajda and M Karwowski. 2014. "Developing Children's Intercultural Competence and Creativity." *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 13: 32–42.

Emerson, C. 1983. "The Outer Word and Inner Speech: Bakhtin, Vygotsky, and the Internalization of Language." *Critical Inquiry* 10, no 2: 245–64.

Engeström, Y. 1987. *Learning by Expanding. An Activity-Theoretical Approach to Developmental Research.* Helsinki: Orienta-Konsultit. Cited in Moran and John-Steiner 2003, 80.

———. 1996. "Development as Breaking Away and Opening Up: A Challenge to Vygotsky and Piaget." *Swiss Journal of Psychology* 55: 126–32. Cited in Moran and John-Steiner 2003, 80.

Gabora, L. 2018. "The Neural Basis and Evolution of Divergent and Convergent Thought." In *The Cambridge Handbook of the Neuroscience of Creativity*, ed R E Jung and O Vartanian, 58–70. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Gajdamaschko, N. 2006. "Theoretical Concerns: Vygotsky on Imagination Development." *Educational Perspectives* 39, no 2: 34–40.

Gibson, H. 2005. "What Creativity Isn't: The Presumptions of Instrumental and Individual Justifications for Creativity in Education." *British Journal of Educational Studies* 55, no 2: 148–67.

Glassner, A, and B B Schwarz. 2007. "What Stands and Develops Between Creative and Critical Thinking? Argumentation?" *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 2, no 1: 10–18.

Glǎveanu, V P. 2011. "Creativity as Cultural Participation." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 41, no 1: 48–67.

Goclowska, M A, R I Damian and S Mor. 2018. "The Diversifying Experience Model: Taking a Broader Conceptual View of the Multiculturalism–Creativity Link." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 49, no 2: 303–22.

Green, T L. 2017. "From Positivism to Critical Theory: School-Community Relations Toward Community Equity Literacy." *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education* 30, no 4: 370–87.

Guo, S. 2017. "Foe or Friend of Adult Education? The Paradox of Multicultural Policy for Adult Immigrants in Canada." *Studies in the Education of Adults* 49, no 2: 253–68.

Halonen, J S. 1995. "Demystifying Critical Thinking." *Teaching of Psychology* 22, no 1: 75–81.

Hennessey, B A. 2010. "The Creativity-Motivation Connection." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, ed J C Kaufman and R J Sternberg, 342–65. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Hornberg, J, and R Reiter-Palmon. 2017. "Creativity and the Big Five Personality Traits: Is the Relationship Dependent on the Creativity Measure?" In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity and Personality Research*, ed G J Feist, R Reiter-Palmon and J C Kaufman, 275–93. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Jung, R E, and O Vartanian, eds. 2018. *The Cambridge Handbook of the Neuroscience of Creativity.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kandler, C, R Riemann, A Angleitner, F M Spinath, P Borkenau and L Penke. 2016. "The Nature of Creativity: The Roles of Genetic Factors, Personality Traits, Cognitive Abilities, and Environmental Sources." *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology* 111, no 2: 230–49.

Kashima, E S, and D Pillai. 2011. "Identity Development in Cultural Transition: The Role of Need for Closure." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 42, no 5: 725–39.

Kaufman, J C, and R J Sternberg, eds. 2010. *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity.* Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Kirschner, P A. 2009. "Epistemology or Pedagogy, That Is the Question." In *Constructivist Instruction: Success or Failure?*, ed S Tobias and T M Duffy, 144–57. New York: Taylor & Francis.

Krajewski, S. 2011. "Developing Intercultural Competence in Multilingual and Multicultural Student Groups." *Journal of Research in International Education* 10, no 2: 137–53.

Leung, A K, and C Chiu. 2010. "Multicultural Experience, Idea Receptiveness, and Creativity." *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology* 41, 5-6: 723–41.

MacLaren, I. 2012. "The Contradictions of Policy and Practice: Creativity in Higher Education." *London Review of Education* 10, no 2: 159–72.

Maidansky, A. 2020. "Anton Yasnitsky and René van der Veer (eds): *Revisionist Revolution in Vygotsky Studies*." Book review. *Studies in East European Thought* 72: 89–95.

Makel, M C, and J A Plucker. 2010. "Assessment of Creativity." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, ed J C Kaufman and R J Sternberg, 48–73. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Manalo, E, T Kusumi, M Koyasu, Y Michita and Y Tanaka. 2013. "To What Extent Do Culture-Related Factors Influence University Students' Critical Thinking Use?" *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 10: 121–32.

Maslow, A H. 1970. *Motivation and Personality*. 2nd ed. New York: Harper & Row.

Mattessich, S. 2008. "Self-Critical Theory: Discursive Strategies in an Era of Real Universality." *New Literary History* 39, no 2: 301–20.

McLeod, S. 2018. "Jean Piaget's Theory and Stages of Cognitive Development." *SimplyPsychology.org*. Available at www.simplypsychology.org/piaget.html (accessed June 18, 2020).

Merrotsy, P. 2013. "A Note on Big-C Creativity and Little-c Creativity." *Creativity Research Journal* 25, no 4: 474–76.

Moran, S. 2010. "The Roles of Creativity in Society." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, ed J C Kaufman and R J Sternberg, 74–90. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Moran, S, and V John-Steiner. 2003. "Creativity in the Making: Vygotsky's Contemporary Contribution to the Dialectic of Development and Creativity." In *Creativity and Development* (anthology), 61–90. New York: Oxford University Press. Available at http://lchc.ucsd.edu/MCA/Paper/VygotskyCreativityChaper.pdf (accessed January 12, 2021).

Murray, J B, and J L Ozanne. 2006. "Rethinking the Critical Imagination." In *Handbook of Qualitative Research Methods in Marketing*, ed R W Belk, 46–55. Cheltenham, UK: Elgar.

Norman, D A. 1996. "Optimal Flow." *Arts Education Policy Review* 97, no 4: 35–38.

Ong, L S, and A K Y Leung. 2013. "Opening the Creative Mind of High Need for Cognitive Closure Individuals Through Activation of Uncreative Ideas." *Creativity Research Journal* 25, no 3: 286–92.

Padget, S, ed. 2013. *Creativity and Critical Thinking*. Abingdon, UK: Routledge.

Peterson, A K. 1995. "The Relationship Between Personal Epistemology and Accountability on Critical Thinking Disposition." PhD dissertation, Iowa State University.

Petress, K. 2004. "Critical Thinking: An Extended Definition." *Education* 124, no 3: 461–66.

Rietzschel, E F, J M Slijkhuis and N W Van Yperen. (2014). "Task Structure, Need for Structure, and Creativity." *European Journal of Social Psychology* 44, no 4: 386–99.

Robbins, D. 2003. "Vygotsky's Non-Classical Dialectical Metapsychology." *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour* 33, no 3: 303–12.

Ryan, G. 2018. "Introduction to Positivism, Interpretivism and Critical Theory." *Nurse Researcher* 25, no 4: 41–49.

Saad, C S, R I Damian, V Benet-Martinez, W G Moons and R W Robins. 2013. "Multiculturalism and Creativity: Effects of Cultural Context, Bicultural Identity, and Ideational Fluency." *Social Psychological and Personality Science* 4, no 3: 369–75.

Sanders, D, and D S Welk. 2005. "Strategies to Scaffold Student Learning: Applying Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development." *Nurse Educator* 30, no 5: 203–7.

Sawyer, R K, V John-Steiner, S Moran, S, R J Sternberg, D H Feldman, H Gardner, J Namakura and M Csikszentmihalyi. 2003. *Creativity and Development*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Schüler, J. 2007. "Arousal of Flow Experience in a Learning Setting and Its Effects on Exam Performance and Affect." *Zeitschrift für Pädagogische Psychologie* 21, no 3-4: 217–27.

Seligman, M E P, and M Csikszentmihalyi. 2000. "Positive Psychology: An Introduction." In "Positive Psychology," ed M E P Seligman and M Csikszentmihalyi, special issue, *American Psychologist* 55, no 1: 5–14.

Shabani, K. 2016. "Applications of Vygotsky's Sociocultural Approach for Teachers' Professional Development." *Cogent Education* 3, no 1: npn. Available at www.tandfonline.com/doi/full/10.1080/2331186X.2016.1252177 (accessed January 12, 2021).

Shaheen, R. 2010. "Creativity and Education." *Creative Education* 1, no 3: 166–69.

Simonton, D K. 2012. "Quantifying Creativity: Can Measures Span the Spectrum?" *Dialogues in Clinical Neuroscience* 14, no 1: 100–104.

———. 2018. "Defining Creativity: Don't We Also Need to Define What Is Not Creative?" *Journal of Creative Behavior* 52, no 1: 80–90.

Singer, I. 2011. *Modes of Creativity: Philosophical Perspectives*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.

Skinner, B. 1971. "The Myth of Teaching for Critical Thinking." *Clearing House* 45, no 6: 372–76.

Sobkowiak, P. 2016. "Critical Thinking in the Intercultural Context: Investigating EFL Textbooks." *Studies in Second Language Learning and Teaching* 6, no 4: 697–716.

Sosa, R. 2019. "Teaching (with) Empathy and Creativity in Design." *Proceedings of DRS Learn X Design 2019: Insider Knowledge*, Fifth International Conference for Design Education Researchers, Ankara, Turkey, July 9–12, 154–60.

Sternberg, R J, and J C Kaufman. 2010. "Constraints on Creativity: Obvious and Not So Obvious." In *The Cambridge Handbook of Creativity*, ed J C Kaufman and R J Sternberg, 467–82. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Stoltz, T, F H R Piske, M F Q de Freitas, M S D'Aroz and J M Machado. 2015. "Creativity in Gifted Education:

Contributions from Vygotsky and Piaget." *Creative Education* 6: 64–70.

Sung, S Y, and J N Choi. 2009. "Do Big Five Personality Factors Affect Individual Creativity? The Moderating Role of Extrinsic Motivation." *Social Behavior and Personality* 37, no 7: 941–956.

Torrance, E P. 1974. *Tests of Creative Thinking.* Bensenville, Ill: Scholastic.

Toulmin, S. 1977. "Epistemology and Developmental Psychology." *Noûs* 11, no 1: 51–53.

Van Dijk, M, E H Kroesbergen, E Blom and P P M Leseman. 2019. "Bilingualism and Creativity: Towards a Situated Cognition Approach." *Journal of Creative Behavior* 53, no 2: 178–88.

Vasileva, O, and N Balyasnikova. 2019. "(Re)Introducing Vygotsky's Thought: From Historical Overview to Contemporary Psychology." *Frontiers in Psychology* 10: 1515. Available at www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC6692430/pdf/fpsyg-10-01515.pdf (accessed January 12, 2021).

Vezzali, L, M A Goclowska, R J Crisp and S Stathi. 2016. "On the Relationship Between Cultural Diversity and Creativity in Education: The Moderating Role of Communal Versus Divisional Mindset." *Thinking Skills and Creativity* 21: 152–57.

Vygotsky, L S. 1980. *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes.* Ed M Cole, V John-Steiner, S Scribner and E Souberman. Cambridge, Mass: Harvard University Press. (Orig pub 1978.)

Ward, T B. 2007. "Creative Cognition as a Window on Creativity." *Methods* 42, no 1: 28–37.

Westen, D. 1998. "The Scientific Legacy of Sigmund Freud: Toward a Psychodynamically Informed Psychological Science." *Psychological Bulletin* 124, no 3: 333–71. Available at https://hewittlab.sites.olt.ubc.ca/files/2020/04/Westen-1998.pdf (accessed January 12, 2021).

Whalen, S P. 1999. "Finding Flow at School and at Home: A Conversation with Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi." *Journal of Advanced Academics* 10, no 4: 161–65.

Winter, E. 2015. "Rethinking Multiculturalism After Its 'Retreat': Lessons from Canada." *American Behavioral Scientist* 59, no 6: 637–57. Cited in Guo 2017, *Studies in the Education of Adults* 49, no 2, 266.

Wronska, M K, A Bujacz, M A Goclowska, E F Rietzschel and B A Nijstad. 2019. "Person-Task Fit: Emotional Consequences of Performing Divergent Versus Convergent Thinking Tasks Depend on Need for Cognitive Closure." *Personality and Individual Differences* 142, no 1: 172–78.

Zimmerman, E. 2009. "Reconceptualizing the Role of Creativity in Art Education Theory and Practice." *Studies in Art Education* 50, no 4: 382–99.

Anasthasia Filion Moore received a master of education in adult education from the University of New Brunswick in 2020. She is also an artist, whose art incorporates animal elements and tales inspired by her environment and is driven by storytelling.