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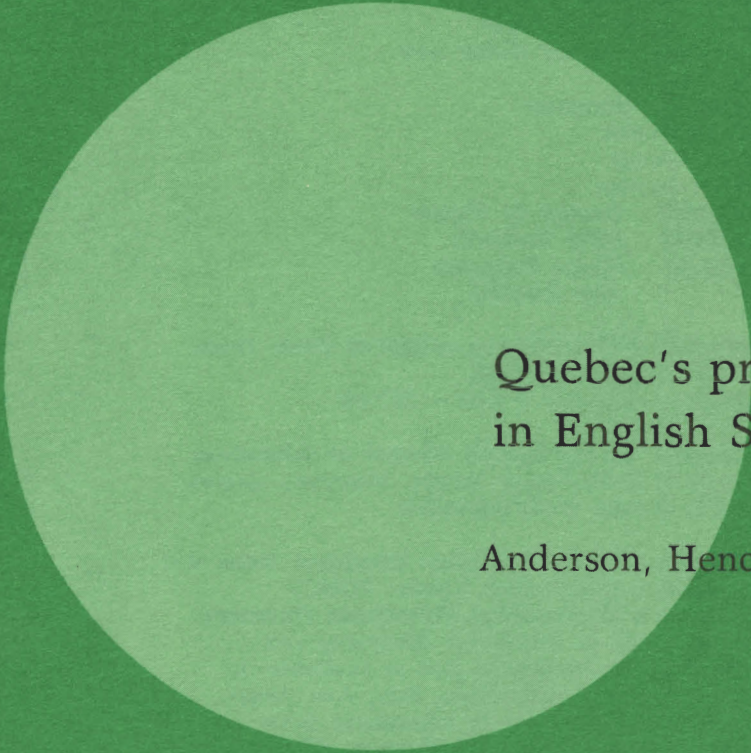
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Quebec's projet éducatif
in English Schools

Anderson, Henchey, and others

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MJE

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Season on Durocher

Discovered once in May an apartment
in the McGill student ghetto,
its occupants needing plants watered
while away for six weeks in Quebec City.

Accustomed to new space, sifted through
several books and pamphlets on anarchism,
by mid-June settling for works by Blake
to mend holes in my preparation.

There was a night when the campus
became Lambeth, and on a stroll
I saw Orc and Urizen locked
in combat, with Orc

in bluejeans and Urizen
in robes of a classics professor.
Though only an imagining
triggered by Blake,

henceforth during these weeks
I trod the ground more cautiously,
trying to avoid Nobodaddy,
preparing to see Jerusalem.

David Lawson

A possibly magna Carta

One becomes heartily tired sometimes of the childish style in which adults habitually conduct their quarrels over the treatment to be accorded to children at the hands of the state. For whatever the reason - some association perhaps with the naive hatreds and fears that once characterised a speaker's own experience with schools - and under whatever rhetorical disguises, the pronouncements of public individuals and of public bodies on issues of education under controversy rarely consist of more than ill-concealed expressions of self-assertion, anxiety, suspicion, and resentment: expressions characteristic of immaturity and showing only glimpses of that dispassionate exercise of judgment which level-headed people might display. For those who have lived in Quebec these past two decades, these existing tendencies in any social polity have been sadly accentuated by differences of language and race.

The articles that follow in this issue are unusual for the "MJE", as they are written entirely by members of the Faculty of education at McGill, its parent institution. Some three years ago the effort was undertaken to examine to what degree actual, contemporary, living enterprise, by people working in schools in Quebec, corresponded to blueprints being developed by the Ministry of Education for the kind of ideal enterprise that it envisaged under the title of Educational Projects. That the real enterprises selected were being conducted in English-speaking schools, whereas the blue prints were emerging from a bureaucratic machine almost exclusively French, threatened to render the subject touchy. But all matters of education, taken seriously, are potentially touchy; and it is the business of a Faculty of Education to attempt dispassionate judgments. So now the MJE is at pains to give a somewhat wider circulation to this report that ensued, with its cases and commentaries, than it received when it first appeared last year - in the conviction that examples of dispassionate judgment are

surely needed in the current climate of discussion about the future of education in Quebec.

That current climate has been soured by the recent (though quite traditional) manhandling of teachers by a government which treats them as clerical employees, and it has been politicised by a Ministry bill that seeks to rationalise its system by treating school boards as once did kings their over-mighty barons. Both king and barons are claiming to represent the best interests of the humble population of client school children, while playing games with the feelings of the voting population that includes their parents.

Accordingly these articles, conceived together, should be read together, from the several unassuming accounts of simple-seeming events - occurring on a scale in everyday schools - to the scholarly analysis establishing first the framework to which those accounts respond, and then concluding not only by raising questions but also by raising our sights. Those simple-seeming events have clearly made all the difference to the kinds of place their schools are for those who inhabit them. These things are so obviously right, one has to ask why they can't happen all the time, in every school? Do such states of positive participation need exceptional, "charismatic" people to bring them about? The answer seems to be that, yes, in existing circumstances, perhaps they do. One can therefore understand an idealistic government wanting to make blueprints, if that will help.

It is a picture in which individuals in schools have taken initiatives; school boards, those cumbrous manifestations of democracy lost in bureaucracy, have played very little but belated, facilitating roles. If we ask whether the Ministry in Quebec really means it when it talks about "Educational Projects"; and whether it really means it when it talks about devolving powers to local schools from school boards; at least we may concede that there is a consistency about these two ground-breaking proposals that may indeed have the best interests of the humble population at heart. A strong king at least has the ability to make things happen. Whereas barons left to themselves are regrettably likely, as history recites, to fall back on sneering at each other and playing other baronial games. How many centuries did it take before Magna Carta touched the common man?

J.K.H.

The Educational Project: from policy to practice

In Quebec, the reform movements of the early 1960's precipitated dramatic changes throughout the educational system: the regrouping of schools into larger districts, the evolution of the comprehensive secondary school, the introduction of the CEGEP level, and the expansion of the university system. Control of the system has shifted from such institutions as the Church to such groups as elected commissioners, professional unions, and a centralized government bureaucracy. Curriculum has not only expanded into new levels and content areas, but is under continuing revision. Not entirely satisfied with these major reforms, the MEQ (Ministère de l'Éducation du Québec) has developed the concept of the Educational Project. What is the Educational Project and what is its relevance within English-speaking communities in Quebec?

It is our assumption that the concept, though explicit in its intention to situate the school more firmly within its milieu, has been subjected to varying interpretations and remains ambiguous in its application. Additionally, there exists a need for interpreting educational policies primarily intended for francophone schools to the context of English language school systems. While much of the language associated with the Educational Project (i.e. transparence, cohérence, proche du vécu de l'élève) can perhaps be translated, it remains uncertain whether such notions of policy are easily assimilated within the context of educational thought as it currently exists in the English language community.

While it is difficult to establish the exact origin of most educational ideas, the concept of the Educational Project undoubtedly originated from the MEQ.⁽¹⁾ First referred to in the Green Paper as an "educational plan" (MEQ, 1978), its

introduction in a document stressing strong central control and school uniformity suggests that the educational plan may have been the result of opposing forces. A possible inference is that the MEQ was attempting, in its concept of an educational plan, to achieve equilibrium between patterns of centralization in matters of curriculum and external pressures resisting these centralization policies and wishing to maintain school and board-based autonomy.

The message of a strong centralized decision-making power runs through much of the Green Paper; it was perhaps felt that there was a need to through much of the Green Paper and it was perhaps felt that signal that certain forms of decentralized decision-making were still to be encouraged. Within this same context of concern for the balance of power affecting educational matters, the Educational Project has also been viewed as a means for effecting a shift of decision-making power away from school boards and down to the level of individual schools. Since much policy control exists at the level of the MEQ, such a shift would have as major consequence a further reduction in the amount of educational control that school boards can maintain.

An alternative view of the rationale behind the development of the concept is related to the broader issues of school excellence. The Educational Project may represent an attempt to capture for the public school system those qualities which seem to be attracting a considerable number of parents to private schools. Private schools are often associated with three major features: competent educational services, rapport with parent groups, and a high degree of visibility (or "transparence") associated with the school's underlying philosophy. If competent educational services are to be ensured by the development of a centralized control over curriculum matters, could the two remaining features be developed for individual schools through the concept of an Educational Project?

While all of this analysis is speculative, there is a suggestion that, from its inception, the Educational Project, or Plan as it was then called, was intended as a tool to allow schools, under increasing pressure for conformity, to expand beyond the dictates imposed by MEQ policy. The questions remain: was the Educational Plan meant as an instrument to further MEQ policy; as a palliative to allow reluctant educators to cope with the new policies; or, as a policy designed simply to increase individual school excellence?

The far from enthusiastic response given to the Educational Plan suggests serious misgivings on the part of many educators and parents. Many could not see in what domains the school was to be allowed to take charge of its destiny, or what limits were to be placed on school initiatives. There was also considerable public concern over the new responsibilities of professional educators, now required to support and develop an



Educational Plan. While the MEQ took great pains to consult widely on the concept, it is equally true that the concept presented for consultation was a product of the central power, and was perhaps inevitably greeted with suspicion by school authorities feeling a simultaneous incursion on a range of financial and educational jurisdictional matters.

From "plan" to "project" - a question of definition

Following public response to the "educational plan" proposal of the Green Paper, Ministry terminology changed, reflecting a shift of emphasis from the notion of a plan with its necessary operational steps, to a notion of a **process**, a notion which has become crucial to current MEQ definitions of what is now called an "Educational Project".

All of those definitions share a common weakness, if our concern is to describe what the Educational Project is and to guide school agents in the creation of such a project. They identify the attributes of the Educational Project more clearly than they define its nature. We are led to a position whereby all schools might be viewed as Educational Projects in the making; most schools would subscribe to the values inherent in the concept, to wit the need to link philosophy to practice (**coherence**), the desirability of having a well-understood rationale (**transparence**), and the need to provide students with school experiences relevant to their lives (**proché du vecu**). Such a position leaves us only with the task of measuring the degree to which any given school exhibits these characteristics, but it avoids the issue of **how** a school appropriates the concept and transforms educational philosophy into a set of concrete operational plans.

While elements stand out and the underlying philosophy is explicit (decentralization, accountability from school to community, participation, and relevance within the community) the Educational Project, as a tool or a policy to adopt, remains elusive. This ambiguity may be inevitable at this stage, since the concern which prompted the development of the Educational Project was always made more explicit than the product it was meant to define.

Despite continuing controversy over the process-product issues of definition, efforts to reduce the ambiguity and provide an analytic framework do exist. We take the position of refraining from confirming any one type of definition at this time, in the hope that the case studies reported will be suggestive of what elements a definition must include. Nevertheless we have made use here of a set of criteria which apply both to the Educational Project as a product and to the Educational Project as a process.

Given the elusive nature of a definition, there have been attempts to pin down criteria which can be applied analytically

to the study of any Educational Project. The MEQ publication, "Le projet éducatif de l'école: working document", and working documents of the Equipe Permanente sur le Projet Educatif (EPPE) illustrate these efforts. For example, the former document refers to a school which "defines its specific objectives, prepares and carries out a plan of action, and revises the plan periodically with the participation of the students, the parents and the staff of the school and school board" (MEQ, 1980(b), p. 2). The documents go on to explain the meaning of several of the key terms:

1.1 A Dynamic Initiative

A school's educational project commits that school to a process which has an objective to improve the efficiency of the school's actions and thus provide a better education for students.

1.2 A Plan of Action

The educational project infers a plan of action. Such a plan is prepared with local needs in mind, after reflection, observation, analysis and consultation on the part of the educational agents. Objectives are pursued according to the means available to the school or to those the school can provide for itself. (MEQ, 1980(b), p. 2)

In its work, EPPE has developed a series of indicators which are intended to guide identification of the Educational Project activities of a school. The team sought to clarify the concept and provide key issues for discussion within schools and school systems. Could the concept be operationalized in a manner that would permit evaluation of an existing Educational Project? Could it also provide a framework for school-based initiation? A list of eleven such indicators of the Educational Project is under development and these are reported here:

- respects diversity
- provides a meaningful role for the participants
- establishes logical and consistent links between ideology and practice
- is "transparent" to all, or a school whose orientation and philosophy has been made explicit and is understood by the entire community
- reflects the reality of the child, which is concerned with establishing meaningful links between school life and life within the broader community context
- demonstrates adaptive capacity
- is integrated with its community
- is linked to other units of the educational system
- represents a collective project, in which concerted action leads to consensus

- . facilitates the development of each participant (EPPE, 1981)

It is clear that these indicators provide a valuable tool for analysis or initiation of an Educational Project. They lend weight to the assumption that the Educational Project will mean many different things depending on the setting in which it occurs. These indicators also reinforce a notion of process, rather than product, as a crucial element of the Educational Project. It is clear that not all indicators may be present in a specific school; it may be that some become more relevant than others depending upon the context. It is also clear that, while these indicators may each represent desirable features of an Educational Project, a great deal of variance is to be expected in terms of the degree to which any one school demonstrates each of the features at any given time.

In our attempt to clarify the concept we consider it essential to make explicit both the product and process dimensions, and have done so in the discussion which follows.

Product criteria

The types of activities and endeavours considered to be an educational project can take place at many levels within the educational system, though the focus is on the school as the central unit. At the level of a whole school the educational project would normally cut across subject matter disciplines, grade levels, and other traditional divisions within the school. In our work an attempt will be made to feature this school level of analysis. However, it should be made clear that it is possible to have activities take place for a part of the school at least while a school-wide initiative is emerging. By the same token, activities could also be at the level of the whole school system, though we feel that the concept of the educational project is most clear when it is considered to be an activity of the single school and its surrounding community.

We would suggest a minimal, but important, product dimension. We find a certain intuitive appeal to the notion of **plan** as the central element for an Educational Project. Thus, we propose that a necessary condition for an Educational Project is that it includes a plan designating some area for development in the educational system. It is not sufficient for any one person to unveil a plan. Rather it must be developed by the whole school community and have required process characteristics. We add, as well, that we are using the term plan to include an action phase. It becomes cyclical, as initial process leads to a plan which also includes more process dimensions.

Process criteria

We propose five process criteria which we consider necessary and sufficient for an Educational Project.

1. Initiated from within

An important attribute of an Educational Project is that it be initiated from within. The initiation of action comes from within the school, sometimes in response to changing external circumstances, but, whatever the cause, the Educational Project represents a concerted effort on the part of the school to change and improve its educational service and could not be prescribed externally. The school initiates the action and launches a course of activity which is unique to that school and that milieu. This quality of taking charge of one's destiny is crucial to the concept of an educational project.

2. Reflecting consensus

An Educational Project should be developed within the context of school-community consultation and participation. The achievement of consensus may either be an effect of having an Educational Project or the condition precipitating its development. In either case, the important feature is that participants are engaged in the kind of work which helps clarify the role of the school in such a way that divergent opinions can somehow be reconciled and fruitfully contribute to the formation of a clear school identity.

3. Facilitating the development of participants

An Educational Project is undertaken to make the school more responsive to its milieu and as such, the project must be one which serves the learning and development needs of its participants, either individually or as members of a group. It is assumed that an Educational Project would facilitate this development both as a result of increased dialogue between groups such as parents and teachers, and more directly in terms of the kind of services the project has set in motion.

4. Evolving through adaptation

The Educational Project is based on the notion of the school adapting to its community, and of the community in turn adapting to the nature of the school. There are several aspects to this notion of adaptation. First, it is assumed that the school reflects whatever diversity exists within its milieu and is capable of responding to changes in needs and resources. Secondly, the implicit assumption is that existing or developing

communication systems provide the necessary source of information for such adaptation to occur.

Thirdly, it should be stressed that adaptation does not necessarily mean the adoption of avant-garde positions. The project need not be a dramatic departure from current pedagogical practices. If maintenance of current techniques is, in fact, considered desirable, such a reaffirmation must follow adequate community consultation and involvement in clarifying the nature of the school and its values.

5. Known about and understood

This quality is closely related to the notion of **transparency**. The school's Educational Project should be one which has been widely discussed within the community. Though it may vary in scope, either across grade levels, curriculum areas, or pupil service programs, the participants should be capable of defining its purpose and nature.

A final process matter which must be mentioned concerns the Orientation Committee as a consultation system, suggested in MEQ documents. While recognizing the important role given this committee in MEQ literature, we do not consider the existence of an Orientation Committee to be a pre-requisite of an Educational Project. There are several reasons for this position: first, it would appear as though some of the resistance to the MEQ Educational Project policy is in fact resistance to the establishment of Orientation Committees, whose role is seen as a source of possible conflict among different groups; secondly, schools may well have established efficient mechanisms for carrying out an Educational Project already.

What are the assumptions and the constraints?

As noted earlier, there are conflicting views about both the desirability and the feasibility of the Educational Project. Some of the major assumptions are that

schools do in fact represent homogeneous communities, and are not as pluralistic as the larger social context. While this might be true in some areas, there are a number of urban schools, both French and English, where such an assumption is unevaluated

schools can achieve efficient balance between pressure for adaptability and a need for stability

a significant participatory role can be found in spite of the need for maintaining power at higher levels for certain

kinds of decisions

the intended participants are indeed available to engage in the suggested processes.

Whether these assumptions are in fact necessary conditions for success, and the extent to which success may be achieved without them, can only be verified in the light of experience in the field.

Much of what has been said so far suggests that by having an Educational Project the school can transform itself into whatever it wishes to be as long as the process criteria are met. Unfortunately such latitude is not permitted. Several constraints are placed on the specific nature of the Educational Project as it will evolve in a given school. Among the major constraints are

- the régime pédagogique of the province
- lack of financial support from the MEQ for Educational Project work at the local level
- lack of available personnel and financial support at the board level
- conflicting responsibilities and priorities at the local school level
- the constraints imposed by settlements regarding the working conditions of school employees
- decline in enrolments and resources
- diversity within communities.

There seem to be two positions which can be adopted with regard to these constraints. The first would suggest that such constraints are inevitable aspects of any context in which action is being planned, that constraints exist in all decision-making situations, and that they are no more than problems for which solutions can and should be found. A position such as this would no doubt sit well with any MEQ concern to prevent schools from developing expectations for support beyond that which the MEQ is willing to provide. The second position suggests that these constraints are in some cases of such a scope as to prevent the implementation of an Educational Project, at least in terms of certain essential features. What remains clear is that schools developing Educational Projects must in fact engage in numerous negotiations and deal with these issues at a variety of levels.

What promise does it offer?

Given the ambiguities in definition and a lack of resolution of the issues of central versus local educational control, what promise does the Educational Project offer? Public concern about the quality of education has rarely been greater. There

are cries for higher standards and increased effectiveness, pressure to humanize school environments, and attempts to make schools more relevant to the 1980's. The major question is whether the Educational Project can help individual schools resolve conflicting priorities and thereby increase their educational excellence.

Our analysis suggests that the concept of the Educational Project may be based on an invalid premise, that one can legislate educational individuality and excellence.

Accommodating the uniqueness of a school's clientele should perhaps not be done by legislating a process for it. Such a process relies on means that are to be found in the school community rather than in the Ministry's good intentions.

Thoughtful and adaptive educators have always tried to meet local needs; those who have not have remained static, not because of any misunderstanding of requirements or lack of knowledge of the means, but rather because of a lack of will. Those who have possessed the requisite leadership have understood the process to be interactive; means and ends have evolved with the changing situation. Such an educational leader who has succeeded has, through his or her success, attracted a new clientele who have sought out that school because of its project, and have in turn brought their own perspectives to its continual evolution.

In summary, our analysis of the Educational Project leaves us in the somewhat uncomfortable position of being unable to specify any differences to be expected between a school which has adopted an "Educational Project" and one which, for reasons which may have nothing to do with such official formulations, respects differences, accommodates the needs of its participants, seeks appropriate solutions to its problems, and consults effectively with its members. An Educational Project, were it to entail the provision of support in the form of additional resources and high quality leadership, might well help transform a troubled school into a more effective one; but it is unclear what the adoption of an Educational Project could change in a school which currently functions effectively.

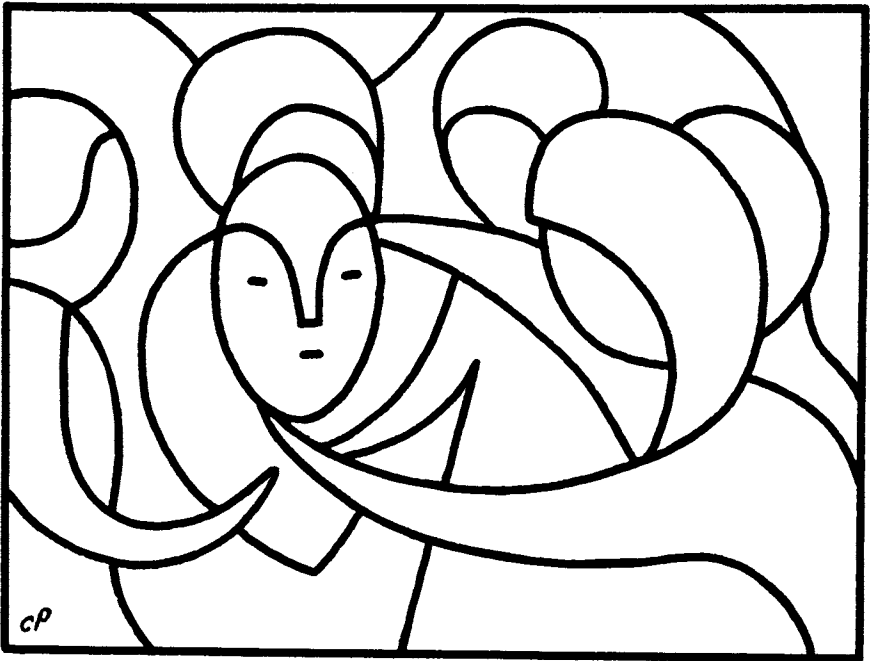
Since its stress is so heavily on process descriptions, the Educational Project might serve best as a formula for rating school excellence, rather than as a policy for effecting school improvement. And it is in this sense that the work which has surrounded the Educational Project is most valuable, since it has succeeded in defining important dimensions of a school's responsibility to its participants and the community which it serves.

NOTE

1. For a detailed analysis of the historical context surrounding the concept as well as a review of the current status of the concept, the reader is referred to Ambroise and Ouellet, 1981.

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Courtland Park Elementary School

As one turns from rue Pont Briand onto Wolfe, a typical elementary school comes into view. Nothing about its external appearance distinguishes Courtland Park from many other elementary schools. The first indication that something very interesting is happening occurs as one enters the brightly coloured corridor on the ground floor.

The Courtland Park Educational Project has developed naturally over the past nine years as the identity of the school evolved. This identity, reflected in the comments of interviewees, is composed of a community orientation, planned active learning, and an open and warm atmosphere. It was through grass-roots initiatives, enthusiasm, and hard work that it all evolved and gradually became formalized as an educational project.

The emergent and development phases

The educational project at Courtland Park can be traced in part to an active School Committee which has functioned effectively since 1972. The ground was fertile for parent involvement, since the community had a high interest in education and the teaching staff was open, enthusiastic, and hardworking. These conditions precipitated community participation and made the first steps of the project an easy beginning.

In 1974, three teachers, encouraged by government regulations, the school board and principals, were busy obtaining their Special Education Diplomas. During the clinical stages of that program, they became interested in participatory learning and the development of a resource room. These teachers formed a committee to plan such a room to be housed in

Courtland Park School. They petitioned the board to remove the wall between two rooms to supply the necessary space.

The Board did not act immediately. It took three additional years of more detailed planning and negotiations to achieve the desired results. During this waiting period, the Special Education teacher at Courtland Park, June Rosevear, was already using her special education room as a free-flow room in the afternoons to which children came for remedial help. The free-flow room was activity oriented, so in 1977 when the board at last agreed to eliminate the designated wall, it was removed between her classroom and the next. Her free-flow area expanded into the extra space, and the "activity room" was born.

Afraid of the term "resource room", which in many settings is often reduced to a storage cupboard, she chose the name "activity room", and then collected and organized pertinent, interesting teaching material and solicited community volunteers to help. It was at this point that the project began to form. Community interest and teacher enthusiasm had taken focus. A portion of the curriculum was beginning to involve parents, teachers and students in a common effort.

At present, the school houses 230 children from Kindergarten to grade six and operates as a single-track system. The children come from a wide range of backgrounds and there is a certain fixed turnover of students, as approximately one-third of those attending Courtland Park come from the St. Hubert Air Force Base. Of the ten educational staff, one acts as head teacher and carries on the daily administrative functions as well as some teaching.

The principal visits twice per week, and a physical education specialist on three-quarter-time teaches all the grades during his Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays in the school. A full-time secretary is the only non-teaching person other than the nurse, who visits the first three Mondays of each month. Additional facilities run by the school (e.g. the library) function under the direction of a large core of parent volunteers who are in the school on a regular basis each week.

By 1977, June Rosevear had taken on the organizational responsibility for the activity room and was delegating to teachers the planning of some of the activity centres. The parent volunteers were actively participating in helping children at the centres, and were beginning to collect easily accessible resources that were pertinent to the areas of study. Board members who visited the room were impressed and gave the necessary support. The board requested that some videotaping be done while the room was in session, underlining its tacit approval.

"Any such action of the school necessarily involves all of those who are directly concerned: students, parents, teachers, non-teaching personnel and the school administration. With the

help and co-operation of the school board, they assume joint responsibility for the educational project. Together they reach a number of decisions that determine the direction the school will take, so that its development is no longer a matter of chance but the result of real choice." (MEQ, p.2) Courtland Park School had reached this stage in the development of its project.

Maintenance and adaptation: the activity room re-shaped

The beginning of the maintenance phase was a gradual re-shaping of the activity room.

"The evaluation can be done at various times. . . evaluation is built into the various activities so that it is an ongoing process. Whatever the method, evaluation is essential to the development and adaptation of the project." (MEQ, p.30)

What had begun as a series of loosely-connected activity centres for all children, staffed rather informally by volunteers, now evolved into a thematic approach to the curriculum. The teachers became able to initiate or expand appropriate learning for the particular grade levels in their classrooms. Then, in the activity room either prior to or after the classroom learning, the children became actively engaged in tasks which developed concepts and skills related to the theme, within the umbrella areas of science, cooking, and the arts.

Under the direction of June Rosevear, the teachers would agree on a theme that was meaningful for all the children from kindergarten through grade 6. Then, during an approximately three-week planning and preparation period, activities were prepared. Community resources were tapped, and volunteers had an instructional session where they were shown how to operate the centres and guide the children in their tasks. In addition, the volunteers were encouraged to share experiences and expertise pertinent to the activities at the centres.

Themes have now been systematized into three per year for a period of seven weeks per theme. This amount of time evolved as being realistic, given the time required for planning and preparation. One and one-half days per week are set aside for the activity room. Each class visits the room once per week for a forty-minute period. There are always seven centres so that each class has the opportunity to work at every centre. The volunteers and teachers who operate the centres rotate through the centres during the seven-week period to avoid the monotony of repeating information to the many groups. All centres offer activities that engage the children in something visual and something auditory. The work they do results in a product.

For each theme a "surprise centre" is created. The centre is enclosed and its contents remain unknown to the pupils until their group begins work at the centre. There has been an overwhelmingly enthusiastic response to the surprise centre from all grade levels.

In order that the materials and tasks meet the various ability levels across the grades, they are prepared with appropriate cut-off points or with parallel activities. This allows all children to participate at every centre, and involves the entire school in a common curricular area of study. As in the classrooms, the library becomes a spin-off point for the current theme. It is not unusual to see books displayed featuring topics related to those at the centres. The volunteers who run the library find themselves peripherally involved, answering questions and book requests which are generated from the theme.

During the current year the themes have been "know yourself", "know your neighbour", "know your community". These were chosen because they had the potential of interesting all the children and because they would help the students learn more about each other's background as well as familiarize them with their immediate environment, St. Bruno.

Wider and wider involvement

Although the activity room has been the pivot point throughout the development of this project, it alone does not constitute the educational project at Courtland Park School. It facilitated continuity in involvement and provided a focus for participation school-wide.

With the passage of Bill 71, the members of the educational community realized that Courtland Park School already had an orientation. The task before them was to clarify its focus and make it better known to the community.

The impetus for the formation of an Orientation Committee came from the teachers and the School Committee, who approached the school board in June 1980. The committee was formed in September of the same year with the usual composition of three parents, two teachers, one administrator (the present head teacher), a non-teaching member (the school secretary), and a board representative. The main function of the Committee to date has been to consolidate its orientation and to isolate areas of development which will extend and re-shape the educational project.

The first step in re-shaping was the formulation of a questionnaire which was distributed to the parents with the hopes of engaging them in a "paper dialogue" about the various aspects of the school plant and its functioning. The results of the data were tabulated, and from these the committee produced the following statement, which formalizes the school's orientation and operational areas of its project (Courtland Park, 1981):

"Orientation of Courtland Park School

In addition to providing a sound academic base, Courtland Park

School will continue to facilitate and encourage the enrichment of student life through a positive interaction with the community.

The Educational Project

The Courtland Park Educational Project will emphasize the development of sound intellectual, physical, emotional and social growth through:

- 1) the continued development of the Activity Room and the encouragement of an inquiring mind
- 2) exposure to as many facets of human knowledge as possible
- 3) the appreciation and preservation of the environment
- 4) the development of an open-minded and tolerant attitude.

In implementing this project, priority shall be given to the further development of an Art and Music program."

In 1981, during the year of this study, a Student Committee was formed composed of eight representatives from grades 4 through 6. This group was formed to involve the students more actively in the planning and decision-making, by acting on suggestions from the general student body (obtained by a "suggestion box") and presenting proposals to the head teacher.

At the end of the 1981 school year a questionnaire was sent to parents by the orientation committee asking them for their input about the workings of the school. The results of these questionnaires indicated that parents were generally pleased with their school and were very much in support of the activity room. One suggestion that emanated from several sources was that the school should put more of an emphasis on the creative arts. As a result, the theme for the following year was the creative arts, and the material developed for the activity room had this as its focus.

Other kinds of community involvement have also evolved. Each year there is an annual Junior Olympics Day, and community expertise is utilized for hobby instruction during noon hours. These sessions were initiated by the teaching staff as a result of student requests.

The focus of the educational project, the communicative structures of the orientation committee and the student committee, and the ongoing community involvement make this educational community very much in tune with itself and very receptive to new ideas and change.

The visible identity

At Courtland Park School the corridors and rooms reflect an atmosphere of congeniality. There is a hominess and enthusiasm as children's laughter is heard and teachers give a

friendly hello to a visitor in the school. The united efforts of children, staff, and parents are visible in current products displayed throughout the school. The staffroom is filled with animated people conversing over coffee during break time. What at first glance seem to be teachers turn out to be an undefinable group of parents and teachers, interacting happily. This friendly atmosphere, which attests to the unity within the school, is only one visible facet of its orientation. The other dimensions of its identity can probably best be summarized in the spontaneous comments of various members of the school community.

Secretary:

"The school is friendly, it has a good atmosphere. There is a nice attitude with the kids. . ."

Parent Librarian:

"There is always active parent involvement. The atmosphere is fairly free yet controlled. The community is a part of the school. The unique feature is the activity room. It is broadening in terms of the individual child and the outside world."

A teacher of 16 years:

"There is a warmth and caringness. There is a strong relationship with the community because of the active school committee."

Teacher of 5 years:

"There is a school identity. It is reflected in the friendliness and involvement."

Substitute teacher:

"I like coming to this school. The atmosphere is open. The substitutes and volunteers feel an equality with the teachers. The activity room is unique. The children learn a lot and are motivated to continue learning."

Student Committee

(grades 4-6):

"It is a good school. It's friendly. It is interesting because of the activities. In the activity room it is not boring, we get to do things. We learn a lot from parents. The teachers are open, they tell what's happening before it happens. We get individual help. We have a good library. We have lots of assemblies. We are getting a new playground."

Kindergarten children:

"School is fun. I like school. The activity room is fun. . ."

What has evolved at Courtland Park School appears to have occurred naturally and easily, perhaps in part facilitated

because it is a small school. However, hard work and dedication are apparent in all aspects of the school's functioning.

In the school's community, knowledge of the school and a consensus about its identity are very apparent. This positive consensus will change and grow through time, with plateaus, peaks, frustrations, and rewards. The ingredients are present, the mechanisms are in operation; what remains is the continued commitment of all the people concerned.

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Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School

Leaving the old, both worlds they view
that stand upon the threshold of the new

Edmund Waller

Its overwhelming size consumes a whole city block in Montreal North. It looks like one of those mammoth new comprehensive secondary schools rather than a junior high school, its officially designated hybrid status. On the first entry, One thinks the obvious: how can the bigness of the plant defer to these young inhabitants, a mass of varying sizes, needs, and interests?

Episode I:
10:15 a.m.
April, 1981

The cafeteria is a lively and bustling hub of activity and a din of animated chatter. These students do not look alienated, plagued with self-doubt, nor addicted to extreme fads. There is even a distinctive warm, friendly ethos and humane character about this institution.

Two of these "early" adolescents approach me with a deliberate forthrightness and inquire about the nature of my business. A look of disappointment registers on their faces when I reveal that I am not a "sub." I follow my willing guides upstairs to the second floor, impressed by their self-assurance and the ease with which they engage in conversation with an adult.

Someone guards the entrance to the front hallway. She looks physically older than her twelve years. Her sophistication and poise continue to dispel the idea that bigness may be

noxious. There is a sense of personal responsibility about her. Socially confident and aware of her powers, she takes her \$1.20 a day monitor position seriously.

Three of her peers race up the stairs and come to an abrupt halt in her presence. One seems like Shakespeare's "schoolboy with shining face", the other "bearded like the pard".

Monitor:

Where are you going?

Student 1:

I need to see Mr. Dion about the variety show.

Student 2:

Je veux aller a la bibliotheque.

Student 3:

Ai visto Marco?

Monitor:

Where is your pass?

Student 2:

(turning to me) Do you know how heavy a killer whale shark is, Miss?

Student 3:

About the same size as me (he stands about 5'7").

Student 1:

Ugh. One of you is bad enough.

Student 2:

Yeah, well you.

The monitor interrupts this banter and delegates one of them to lead me to the conference room next to the Principal's office.

Episode 2:

10:45 a.m.

Eleven department heads and the guidance counselor await the principal in the conference room.

He enters. He has a way of talking and a decided presence. I understand why the impetus for the idea of this junior high school arose in him. He asks the assembled group, "How are we going to arrange core for the next year?"(1) I have the school's written statement of purpose in front of me. I notice individuals are forewarned that "persons seeking a static situation will not feel at ease in this school", and that "teachers interested in working in the school should have a love of people and hence be prepared to see their students first as persons and secondly as students."

The conversation switches to the teacher surplus situation next year. He informs the group that twenty-four teachers will be leaving the school this year. "It's important how we arrange ourselves. Do we need to change our priorities?"

He talks about the practicalities of implementing core in terms of the number of sections, minutes, periods and the new

teacher contract. He asks, "Can we provide teachers with examples of possible combinations?" The Math Department Head asserts, "It is easier to have an English teacher teach Math than a Math teacher teach English." Someone disagrees. Another department head interjects that to his surprise his teachers actually enjoy teaching the core program. Another expresses concern if they are going to have to teach more than three subjects. She queries, "How competent can any one teacher be in three diverse areas like French, Geography, and English?" The Principal says, "We may have a problem with core; next year, History and Science will be half-year courses. How can we work out a teacher workload, preserve core, and retain the integrity of the discipline?"

He suspends the interchange again to take a phone call. He returns muttering; "The difficulty of finding and retraining teachers for junior high school cannot be minimized." They resume the process of reflecting and clarifying the curriculum for next year.

The principal and the school

The quest for core curriculum in this conference room is of utmost importance in the process of clarifying and evaluating the school's objectives and adapting to changing circumstances. They seem to have come full circle. The issues center on the aims and purposes of a junior high, its curricular and internal organization, the role and competence of teachers, and the means of establishing continuity between junior and senior high school.

The problem is both pedagogical and administrative: how to obtain a balanced team of teachers for the specific purposes of the school? The resolution of this dilemma falls upon the principal, Kevin Quinn.

The school is Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School, a Catholic School housing 1,125 grade 7 and 8 students, mostly of Italian background. Approximately 550 new students from eight elementary schools feed into Sir Wilfrid Laurier from the Montreal North and Rivière des Prairies areas, and 560 students leave this junior high school within the Province of Quebec or within the Commission des Ecoles Catholiques de Montréal. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a **very** large Catholic Junior High School.

The three stages in the evolution of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's educational plan as presented in Figure 1 should be conceptualized as a circular ongoing process, of a single school formulating and reformulating its own identity.

Figure I**THE EVOLUTION OF SIR WILFRID LAURIER
JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL****EMERGENT PHASE:**

- 1975 Lacordaire High School, an existing secondary school annex of Pius IX High School (Secondary 1,2,3)
- 1974-1975 Reorganization of Montreal Catholic School Commission schools into Regions A & B. Lacordaire to close.
- Early 1975 Principal, Lacordaire, unveils statement of purpose for proposed junior high school

DEVELOPMENT PHASE:

- Spring 1975 Principal's plan of action and planning.
- September 1975 Sir Wilfrid Laurier opens as a junior high school
- 1975-1978 Development of core program and core teachers

**MAINTENANCE, ADAPTATION,
AND EVALUATION PHASE:**

- 1978 Beginning of loss of staff; school closings
- 1979-1980 Development and integration of new staff into core programs.
- 1981 Core program and school philosophy re-evaluated in light of school closings, teacher surplus, and regime Pedagogique. Development of House system.

**An Interview:
10:30 a.m.
June, 1981**

The scene is the office of the Principal, Kevin Quinn. Two teachers enter; they are remarkably similar in appearance and in age. The only notable difference is that one (Teacher A) is quite relaxed, having been with the school since its inception as a junior high school, while the other (Teacher B), a transfer teacher from a comprehensive secondary school who is about to be interviewed by the principal, appears nervous about the situation at hand. Quinn opens with the traditional social amenities and his favourite leit motif on not becoming a dinosaur in the teaching profession.

Quinn:

How flexible are you in what you can and want to teach?

Teacher B:

I've been teaching senior high history, geography, and economics for the last eight years. I've had some experience teaching children with special problems. I'm also interested in wood-working as a hobby.

The transfer teacher allows Quinn to begin his reportage of how this school came into being. Teacher A, a Department Head, has heard the chronicle before. Quinn states that the school evolved as a junior high school largely in response to the specific situation in which he found himself in 1973 as Principal of Lacordaire High School, one of the two annexes physically severed from Pius IX, a larger secondary school.

Quinn:

We housed younger kids (Secondary 1, 2, 3) in a rented industrial building near the Metropolitan Boulevard. Although I was glad not to be plagued with the usual constraints of a senior high, like rigid timetabling, graduation, year books, examinations, I felt the need for some changes in the organization and orientation of the school. Look, the average total number of teachers encountered by a child during the first six years of schooling is ten or twelve. Yet the structure of this school was going to expose students to an average of thirty teachers during the first two years of high school. I deliberately solicited teachers who would be willing to teach a minimum of two subjects, such as maths and English, and scheduled those subjects concurrently or in block times. Because we were housed in a former senior high school and had some unusual resources like shops, science labs, and an amphitheatre, I introduced a fine arts core of art, music, and drama, and a practical arts core of wood-working, sheet metal, and electricity.

Teacher B:

The sharp lines between disciplines seem to have been reduced to favour a more human relationship with the individual, but how were these changes accepted by the staff?

Teacher A:

They were accepted by our staff for the most part, largely out of curiosity, although if left on our own we probably would not have **experimented** with core programs. We did feel flexible to teach subjects separately or to correlate two or more subjects.

Quinn:

(interjects) Yes, I was concerned with developing a humane school. During 1975, I also had several conversations with Roy Bailley, Principal of Vincent Massey Junior High School, about how to make this transition from elementary to secondary high. During this year, seven schools within CECM were scheduled for reorganization both in structure and in personnel.(2) Because this proposed reorganization meant that in theory these schools did not exist, I envisioned this situation as a unique opportunity to develop a junior high school with a strong element of **choice** with respect to both school philosophy and teacher selection.

Teacher B:

I hear that twenty-two transfer teachers will be coming to this school next year. Are you planning to interview them all as you are doing today?

Quinn:

(Nods) I want all teachers to know beforehand what they are getting into. I don't think a mere written statement of purpose or of orientation of a school is enough to ensure that a school will make any progress. It's easier to change the designation of a school than to change its teachers.

Teacher A:

One third of this staff changes every year, and we have lost a number of key people who were integral to the development of this school.

Quinn hands Teacher B the statement of purpose and states that all information sheets are published in English, French, and Italian.

Teacher A:

I think that you will find reflected in this pink sheet that all learning activities need to be uniquely keyed to each child in this school.

Teacher B:

What does this **really** mean?

Quinn:

What this really means is that children in this school are liked and can approach adults. I would like my teachers to do things in this school with good grace. Flexibility. I like to think that for any child who has a problem modifications can be made. For example, this year we have five visually-handicapped children and one hearing-impaired child who are mainstreamed for part of the time into our core programs, and we are also following the progress of twelve children with special problems through our Multi-Disciplinary Team.(3) We attempt to solve the problems because of the effect on other kids.

Teacher B:

I notice some older-looking students in the hallway; they seem to belong more in the senior high.

Quinn:

(Hands Teacher B the information sheets on the Retention Program mailed to parents). We have a Retention Program for high risk kids who are not likely to succeed in Secondary 3. Some are fifteen years old and are functionally disabled, or behind two years in basic skills like English and Math. Most kids of this type drop out of school by grade 9. If we can buy them a successful academic year, we can ensure that they get into a long vocational program, and they might complete senior high school. These students come under Special Education norms.

Teacher A:

Some of these children are also helped by means of our Tutorials, which are scheduled as part of a teacher's workload. These are designed to help a student in one particular subject area for a tri-semester (12 weeks). Twelve weeks seem more like a natural break.

Teacher B:

How did you get all this through the Commission and accepted by the parents?

Quinn:

Each region received a copy and approved the statement of purpose. I then wrote to the eight parent school committees of our feeder schools and invited parents to an organizational meeting to examine the statement of purpose, and to ascertain their views on the general orientation of the school. I then instituted a school committee of parents, which then approved the statement of purpose.

Teacher B:

Do you mean that you had a school and a school committee before you had, in fact, a staff?

Quinn:

Exactly. The next step was to choose a school name. Sir Wilfrid Laurier was chosen to reflect the harmonious relations that should exist between the two founding peoples of Canada. After visiting the children of the eight feeder schools and soliciting their written opinions, the name of the school was presented to and approved by the School Commission on July 10th, 1975. I seized the opportunity to organize a staff from the grass roots. I interviewed all the 97 teachers who applied for the 55 available posts, as well as additional teachers because of the tri-semester core program in the practical arts.

Teacher A:

You should mention that at these scheduled meetings you emphasized that coming to Sir Wilfrid Laurier meant an increased workload.

Quinn:

Yes. To ensure a secure pattern of teacher-child relationships, I proposed smaller classes and more teaching periods, but I was still within the norms of the collective agreement. I have less leeway now.

Department Heads were appointed and a staff council formed. This new crop of young teachers were ready to exploit the school's notion of flexibility. Teacher A can describe the different ways we tried to group kids and experimented with team teaching, tri-semester (grade 7) programs, and half-year courses.

Teacher A:

In Cycle I (Grade 7) we organized core programs around subject combinations like English/History and Math/Sciences. In Cycle II (Grade 8) we organized ourselves with particular teacher-subject combinations of cores, depending on the competence and interest of the teachers. Next year, we will organize core programs by a House System and experiment with "coring" within the House. A House will consist of six teachers who will be assigned to four classes. This system may provide for both generalization and specialization within the core.

Teacher B:

This school seems unusually clean. Can you tell me about discipline in the school?

Teacher A:

The kids seem to take pride in this school and by and large respect school property. We suffer little from chronic vandalism and absenteeism, unlike the large comprehensive high schools, yet we are as large in student population; although this year we have experienced some incidents of destructive behaviour.

Our administrative agent says it's partly due to the nature of

the school itself, the monitor system, and the advisory system. Perhaps it's really because they have a chance to be themselves "in these in-between years." Some of the pressures of the senior high have been removed. While there is probably no universally right age of transfer for all students, the ages of 11, 12, 13 seem too early for important decisions to be made about the future education of these students. The Principal himself is interested in the building. It is not unusual to find him repairing a light switch after hours.

Teacher B:

You both have spent a good portion of this interview emphasizing the philosophy of this school, which I take it is at heart concerned with the individual child. How do these core programs fit into this school's philosophy and facilities?

Quinn:

Perhaps a tour of the school itself will clarify this.

Beauty and the Beast: the criteria and the threat

Five process criteria have been proposed in the first article of this issue as necessary and sufficient for an educational project. Analyzing the Sir Wilfrid Laurier project in terms of these criteria raises a number of questions about the future of English confessional education within this province. That a single school can transform itself into whatever it wishes as long as these five criteria are met is not as simple nor inevitable as it might seem.

This case study demonstrates that the process by which a single school defines itself does not stop once the product has been created. If its character and survival are to be determined solely within the constraints of the teachers' collective agreement or the Régime Pédagogique, there are inherent dangers to an educational project like Sir Wilfrid Laurier. The obvious danger in the successful evolution of a project like this one is the decline in freedom of a school to develop its own curriculum and deploy its teachers appropriately.

Initiated from within

The success of this project results largely from the impetus of a principal, known for his drive and commitment to quality education. In the development phase this principal spent much time on curriculum decisions and teacher selection. He admits, in the interview with the transfer teacher, that he has less leeway now, with a shrinking system and teacher surplus, to build a stable, competent and appropriately deployed staff.

The success of a project like Sir Wilfrid Laurier depended very much on the attitude of teachers and on individual teacher competence; it required dedicated teachers with a wide range of skills and interests. This first process criterion demands

something of the educational milieu for which it has not been particularly noted: unity and cooperation. The problem will continue to be how to avoid a fragmented staff and school. How can something initiated from within withstand conflicting external pressures like teacher relocation, school closings, rapidly changing curricula, technological and social change?

Reflecting consensus

The successful evolution of a venture like Sir Wilfrid Laurier also depended on the full cooperation of its teachers, parents, students, and administrators. The rationale for this school as a Catholic Junior High School is explicit; the school philosophy is known to the whole community as a result of a process of description, clarification, and negotiation. In this respect, it reached consensus in its developmental phase.

From a parent's point of view, the peculiar nature of the junior high with its two-year program seems to militate against direct and continuous involvement of parents. If an educational project takes time to evolve, and if it is difficult to develop lasting relationships with parents, how direct can parents' involvement realistically be in a junior high? Is there a danger that a formalized structure like an Orientation Council may hinder or prevent the actual decision-making process?

The traditional dividing lines which exist between elementary and secondary school also exist between parent school committees. In a time when school closings and staff upheavals prevail, might we look for a new relationship between parent committees in the elementary and secondary schools of a community?

The existing pattern of small children attending small schools, early adolescents middle-sized schools, and senior adolescents larger schools might warrant a more careful differentiation between social growth and social pressures. What are the differences in students' self-image as a result of being involved in elementary, junior and senior high schools? What are the dangers of stratifying student populations by age?

Fostering the development of participants

Whether there is really a greater concern for students and greater humanization of their educational program in this school, as opposed to other junior or senior high schools, is difficult to answer. However, it may be said that there has been a genuine attempt on the part of the administrators, teachers, and parents in this school to organize teaching and learning so that it can be effective, meaningful, and enjoyable for individuals.

The opening up of timetabling, space allocation, and core curriculum content affords both teachers and students opportunities for choices to be made. It provides students with varying learning situations and teachers with a repertoire of teaching styles, and opportunity for both to participate authentically in the life of this school. Thus the attempt at the centrality of the teacher-student relationship is perhaps the

most critical component of this school's project.

Evolving through adaptation

It is interesting that Sir Wilfrid Laurier Junior High School evolved during a time of change and reorganization within CECM. The development of a House system for next year demonstrates that this junior high school does not seem to have lost its exploratory function.

The concept of a junior high school received official public recognition and support with CECM in 1974. Although recent conversations with central office administrators suggest that there is every indication of their strong desire to maintain the junior high school, there are constraints which may impinge on their good intentions. A pressing dilemma is how to continue to preserve the existence of these junior high schools and smaller schools as the costs of operating the senior comprehensive high schools become increasingly prohibitive.

Should a school commission continue to maintain mammoth secondary schools with their superior facilities and close down the smaller schools? or,

Should these larger schools be closed and the smaller neighbourhood schools be preserved?

If they continue to maintain the larger schools and physically separate the junior high students in certain designated areas of the plant, can a school like Sir Wilfrid Laurier be moved in one piece and still retain its distinctive character and ethos? Is there not then a danger of the junior high school becoming a miniature departmentalized senior high school, or an endangered species? What would be the role of the department head if a House system were set up in such an organization?

In a shrinking system, can a neighbourhood school housing grades 1-11 be envisioned as a future model of school organization?

Known about and understood

This school appears to have established a logical and consistent link between its educational ideology and its practice. Although no measurable results are available for this case study, it appears that staff, students, and administrators, when closely queried, are consistent in their perceptions of the function and purpose of this school.

The metaphor of core, a feature of this school's curriculum, suggests a basic, essential, enduring part. It would seem that the participants in this school's project are not asking whether there should be a core, but they are still in search of it. What subjects fit easily and naturally together and contribute usefully and meaningfully to an integrated core? Is there a danger that the metaphor of a core might lead participants to think of it as a finite product rather than as a continuous process?

Many questions remain unanswered with respect to the complexity of early adolescents, their growth in knowledge,

language, and personality, and the teacher's role in facilitating this development. The Plowden Report about the British Middle School experiments best describes the dilemma:

"If the middle school is to be a new and progressive force, it must develop further curriculum methods, attitudes. . . It must move forward into what is now regarded as secondary school work, but it must not move so far away that it loses the best of primary education as we know it." (1967, p. 383)



NOTES

1. Core programs, usually taught by a single teacher or a team of teachers, may be organized with a particular curriculum emphasis such as a fine arts core of music, art and drama, or by interdisciplinary approach, cutting across the boundaries of separate subjects taught in the secondary school, in which a particular learning unit is central and occupies the learner's time.
2. In 1975 - 77 schools in regions A and B within CECM (the Montreal Catholic School Commission) were scheduled for reorganization. The School Commission's plan for reorganization was the following:
 - a) John F. Kennedy High was to become a Comprehensive Senior High School
 - b) Papineau was to become a Junior High School
 - c) Holy Names was to become a Senior High with an academic emphasis and no shops
 - d) Pius IX was to become Lester B. Pearson
 - e) Lacordaire was to close
 - f) Pius X was the only school to be untouched by reorganization.
3. Multi-Disciplinary Teams exist in all CECM schools. They consist of the Principal, Vice-Principal, Guidance Counsellor, Supervisor of Students, Social Worker, Attendance Officer, Nurse, and Chaplain.

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Keith School

It appears to be a rather ordinary class, this sixth grade. The children are gathered around a student teacher; most be on the floor. They are discussing yesterday's field trip. Suddenly, strange grunts are heard coming from a child in a wheelchair. She is making thrashing movements with the upper part of her body. She has something to add to the discussion. The boy sitting closest to her opens a looseleaf binder.(1) She points to specific words as her assistant reads them out one by one. The student teacher repeats the girl's sentence as a more cohesive whole; the discussion continues.

This part of the lesson over, the children go off to different areas of the room to work on an assignment. The girl in the wheelchair is pushed to her desk. She begins, at once, to type.

In the afternoon the children line up for gym class. Another girl begins to cry. A friend offers comfort and notifies the teacher. The rest of the children talk in hushed voices. It is the last day in school for this girl. The following week she is scheduled to have an operation on her hips. The children are attempting to understand what will happen, speculating on the outcome.

In gym class, the teacher explains some rules and points about the game of badminton. All the children try their skills in volleying the shuttlecocks back and forth. The four children in wheelchairs aren't having much success; the teacher tries a series of alternative measures. A successful adaptation is achieved by using sponge balls and rolling them along the floor from one child to the other. There is never a lack of willing partners to play this modified game of badminton with these four children.

The class described is one of sixteen classes in Keith School in LaSalle. The Educational Project at this school

involves the mainstreaming of physically handicapped children. The principal is Miss Diane Brooks, her staff assistant, Sheila Canci; there are nineteen teachers in all this year, including one free flow teacher, a gym teacher, and two French specialists.

The school serves a working class population. The families are mixed with respect to their ethnic origins: about 83 percent of the children are of Canadian anglophone parents, another 15 percent are children of West Indian background, and children from Greek, Italian, Chinese, and Japanese families comprise the remainder. In all 338 children attend the school.

The single-storey building was constructed in 1968. Its plan is open, although it has a few self-contained classrooms. In the first three grades, family grouping is in operation. Several teachers have flexible team-teaching arrangements; other teachers make effective use of learning centres. It is a place where teachers feel comfortable trying new ideas, working in innovative ways.

Although most parents attend the open house in the fall and meet with teachers during evaluation conferences, the Home and School Committee does not have many active supporters. A high proportion, 30 percent, of the families are single parent; even in two-parent homes, many of the mothers work.

The inception of the project: a transition class

In 1978 Karen Hulme was making telephone calls to a number of schools, seeking places for some of the children at the MacKay Centre, a school for the handicapped. A teacher at MacKay for a number of years, she was responsible for integrating non-handicapped children into the special classes at MacKay, but she felt that some of the children at the Centre were ready for a more normal educational program in a regular school setting. She appealed to Diane Brooks and the teachers at Keith to consider taking these children into the school. Pansy Drury, a grade four teacher, and Marco Fraticelli, a grade five teacher, volunteered to teach handicapped children along with their regular students.

In the last months of 1978, one child on crutches joined the grade 4 class. He made such a successful adjustment that he was enrolled as a full-time student at Keith. Then two children in wheelchairs began attending grade 5 on a trial basis for one morning per week, and the teacher planned lessons from which he felt the children in his class and the two handicapped children would benefit. This arrangement proved so successful that the teacher and Karen Hulme began to discuss the possibilities of a fuller mainstreaming program.

Karen presented a plan to the teachers at Keith in the spring of 1979 for establishing a transition class. She outlined the particular problems of all the children being considered for the mainstreaming program. The objectives of the plan were

discussed, as well as the ways in which the program would be implemented. The teachers were encouraged to express their feelings either in writing or through informal discussions about the proposal, and to offer any suggestions. There was a certain amount of trepidation on the part of the staff, but they were all extremely interested in the idea and gave their support. The proposal was also submitted to the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal and the Ministry of Education.

Several teachers from Keith visited the MacKay Centre to increase their own awareness of the demands of working with these children. A floor hockey game was planned with a group of children from the Centre and another from Keith School. Karen Hulme gave slide presentations. The nurse at Keith School discussed possible problems, helping teachers become aware for instance of the procedures to follow should one of the children have a seizure.

The principal sent a letter home with fourth graders toward the end of the school year asking parents how they would feel about having their child educated in a class with handicapped children. Many parents reacted positively to this plan for the transition class. Ten Keith children were then selected from the list of students whose parents had given approval, and five handicapped children were chosen after careful evaluation by the staff at the MacKay Centre. Their parents were contacted individually, and the idea of the transition class was discussed fully with them.

A wooden ramp was built to enable children in wheelchairs to go down the three steps to the gymnasium. A staff bathroom was altered to accommodate these children. Ramps leading down the steps to the play yard were installed by the Board. The Home and School Committee paid for the materials for a ramp to the lunch room, and the grandfather of one of the students constructed it.

It was arranged for the handicapped students to attend Keith School for three full days and two half days per week, the rest of the time being spent at the MacKay Centre making use of the rehabilitation services: physiotherapy, communication skills, and swimming. The MacKay Centre was to be responsible for any special equipment as well as educational supplies. A bus from the Protestant School Board of Greater Montreal was provided initially for the students' transportation.

The original proposal had suggested that this group of five students from MacKay would remain at Keith for a three-month trial period, whereupon other students from the Centre might then be selected for this mainstreaming program. Because of the successful adjustment and integration of the students chosen initially, their period was extended for the remainder of the school year.

Integration: the handicapped children arrive

In the first weeks of the school year an assembly was held for all the Keith students, at which the principal announced that handicapped children would be coming to Keith. The grade 5 teacher explained the purpose of the ramps and suggested ways in which Keith students might be able to help the children in wheelchairs. Parents not directly involved in the transition class were informed of the mainstreaming project during a "Meet-the-Teacher" night that fall. The project had also been outlined to the Keith School Committee, and the members' comments sought. The parents of the handicapped children came to visit the school one evening before the term began, and then were asked back to observe their children in the transition class. They were encouraged to discuss any concerns they had.

Then, on September 10, 1979, the five children arrived in grade 5. The free flow teacher assisted in administering Stanford Diagnostic tests, which showed that in many academic areas, such as reading, the children were well behind their expected level of performance; several had spent a considerable amount of time in hospital and had missed a lot of schooling. Appropriate educational programs were developed for each child. A team teacher provided considerable support, assuming control of both classes when the teacher had to leave to tend to an emergency. Additional work on specific skills to meet individual needs was provided by numerous people, including teachers, the staff assistant, and a grade 6 student who volunteered to feed one of the quadriplegic children at lunch time.

The grade 5 teacher organized a special reading group for four of the five students. He found that these students were extremely diligent in their work; had been selected because of their desire to be integrated into the mainstream. In spite of this strong motivation, however, they still had a considerable adjustment to make. At the MacKay Centre they had become accustomed to low student-teacher ratios, permissive disciplinary regulations, and individual attention. Peer pressure now encouraged the children to modify their behaviour, to develop more patience and understanding, and to become more adjusted socially. They gained increasing confidence as they became more able to handle themselves in this educational environment with the rest of the children.

The classroom teacher also became aware of ways in which his ten regular children were changing. These children were extremely supportive of the five students, helping them with academic matters, organizing their activities and work, and assisting them to adapt to the school environment. In giving this help to the handicapped children, moreover, the behaviour and work habits of the ten regular students improved noticeably. He feels that these ten children became "completely sensitized" to the handicapped in ways in which most people will never be. In addition, the two groups of children became very close, very

attached to each other. Several special friendships have developed.

Changes in the ethos of the school

The presence of these five children seemed to alter the behaviour of all the students in the school. The children no longer seemed as impelled to run in the halls, aware perhaps of the difficulty they might cause should they upset one of the students in wheelchairs. Any child within the proximity of a handicapped child was always willing to assist in any possible way. At first, several of the younger children had the idea that the handicap, as well as the wheelchair, was temporary; that these children would shed their problems as readily as a child with a broken arm gets rid of its cast. Their understanding of the problems of the handicapped increased tremendously through discussions in their own classrooms. Many teachers have shown films on handicapped people, available through the National Film Board.

Among students and staff alike, the handicapped children have generated an attitude of compassion. For the most part, there is an unspoken, positive feeling throughout the school. It seems as if the inclusion of this group of children has brought out the best in the entire Keith community. Many barriers have been broken. The handicapped children have been very open with respect to how they feel about themselves, and how they wish to be treated. One boy, being quite explicit about his feelings, felt the handicapped children should be treated the same way as non-handicapped children because they are the same except for their ability to walk. "We are human, too," he said. "Yes, we need help, but everybody does." A girl described the MacKay Centre as having a "hospitalized environment": at the Centre, when all around her were in wheelchairs or on crutches, her own state of physical disability seemed to be emphasized. At Keith School, in contrast, she was able to compete on fairly equal terms with all the rest of the children. No one prevented her from attempting new feats; her own handicap no longer seemed overwhelming. She, like the rest of these children, all seemed to sense an enormous accomplishment in learning how to cope in a regular school setting.

The handicapped children also thought that the academic work was more demanding at Keith. Several of these children depend upon typewriters for their written work; others have been given special instruction in tasks such as handwriting. All the children, handicapped or not, were given assignments to complete within a set time. Academically, they have done very well. The Stanford Achievement tests, with the criteria for evaluation the same as for the non-handicapped except in the area of fine-motor coordination, indicated that they have made extraordinary gains. A few children have developed particular areas of strength, and have been involved in a program for the gifted.

Looking ahead

In 1980-1981, eleven children from MacKay Centre were enrolled in four different classes at Keith School. The school was hopeful that twelve children would be mainstreamed in the 1981-1982 school year, though of course the number of children that come from MacKay depends upon the decisions of the teachers at the Centre, who only recommend children for the mainstreaming program that they feel will make a successful transition. The parents of the handicapped children must also be in favour of this change. The final decision to have this project continue rests each year with the Board.

Keith School remains willing and able.

Karen Hulme attributes the enormous success of the mainstreaming project to Diane Brooks and the staff at Keith School. Without the special support they have all received, the handicapped children could not have made such a successful transition. Similarly, the principal values the role Karen Hulme has played in the project. As the liaison person with MacKay Centre, she comes to the school whenever she is called no matter how small the problem. She has also contacted countless sources for financial donations. Her support and encouragement have been greatly appreciated by everyone at Keith School.

The principal and teachers involved are convinced that the integration project is a complete success; many of the difficulties that Diane Brooks anticipated have failed to materialize. No child from the MacKay Centre has failed to make a satisfactory adjustment. While everyone was initially very cautious, they are now very comfortable with the entire situation. Every teacher in the school has expressed a willingness to work with any handicapped child that the MacKay Centre feels is ready to make the transition. Problems are handled as they arise. The confidence of the entire staff in working with these children has increased tremendously.

There has been a shortage of financial support. Equipment that has broken - for instance the communicator on one of the children's wheelchairs - has often gone unrepaired. Teachers involved with the handicapped children have become very inventive and adaptive in meeting some special needs. Nevertheless an aide, part or full time, would help considerably, and Karen Hulme has made a request to the Board (as of 1981).

As the children do not live in the Keith School area and must travel long distances, the biggest problem was transportation. At first, one bus was provided, but the bus was often late. After considerable effort, two station wagons were also allocated for the children with less serious handicaps.

Meeting the criteria

Does the inclusion of physically handicapped children in Keith School constitute an Educational Project? In the initial conversations with Diane Brooks, it was apparent that she had not, to that date, considered it in such formal terms. Mainstreaming physically handicapped children was seen as an effort, embraced initially by only a few teachers, to provide an education in a regular school setting to children normally denied this access.

In terms of product dimensions, an Educational Project normally cuts across such traditional divisions as subject matter disciplines and grade levels. At present the mainstreaming effort directly involves only four classes at Keith School. If current proposals came about, more classes will have included physically handicapped children in the following school year. Every teacher in the school had expressed a willingness to work with these children. Yet one must conclude that, at present, although the mainstreamed children have certainly had some effect on the whole school, the involvement of the whole school could easily be increased.

Includes a plan

Another product common to all Educational Projects is a plan designating an educational area for development. Keith's mainstreaming effort has had, as a central element, a well-defined plan. Initially, discussions of the idea were verbal in nature, but soon they were formalized in the Proposal for a Transition Class in April, 1979. The plan has continually evolved to meet the needs of the children and the staff.

Initiated from within

The mainstreaming effort at Keith does not fully meet the process criterion that the project be initiated from within. Karen Hulme, from the MacKay Centre, proposed the idea to the Keith staff. She has been present for purposes of consultation at every stage. There is, however, a considerable effort on the part of the entire school population to assure that the handicapped children are successfully integrated.

Reflecting consensus

An Educational Project should involve elements of the community in the process of consultation and participation. The project at Keith does not fully meet this criterion: the handicapped children, with one exception, live beyond the boundaries of Keith School, and the consultation with parents in the school community has been limited to explaining the plan and seeking their approval. Their direct participation in the actual mainstreaming effort has not been required.

Facilitating the development of participants

An Educational Project must serve to support the

development of those involved. The handicapped children, the regular Keith children, and the teachers have all been very positively affected by the mainstreaming effort.

Evolving through adaptation

An Educational Project adapts to the changing needs of the school and the people it serves. Throughout the course of the mainstreaming effort, the processes of adaptation have been taken into consideration. Initially three handicapped children were integrated into two classes for part of a morning, once a week. At present, the integration involves ten children and four classes. There is every indication that this involvement will increase.

Known about and understood

A quality of **transparence** should be a feature of an Educational Project. The visual signs of the mainstreaming effort at Keith are ever present. These include the ramps, the larger desks, many with typewriters, and, of course, the children in wheelchairs. The effect this project has had on students and teachers alike becomes evident as soon as one engages in conversation with any of the people in the school. Furthermore, the effort at Keith has become known throughout the immediate school community and beyond; visitors, other administrators and teachers, frequently come to the school to see the plan in operation. Many educators have come to consider the integration of the physically handicapped at Keith School to be a model project.

To summarize, the project at Keith School has a limited interaction with its surrounding community. At present, not all teachers are directly involved. On these two counts the mainstreaming effort does not meet the criteria for an Educational Project. Yet one must consider the commitment that is evident on the part of the school population, the developing nature of the involvement with the handicapped children, and the changes in attitude that have gradually pervaded the entire school environment. The strength of these dimensions lends credence in designating the Keith effort an Educational Project.

NOTE

1. In the binder is a Bliss board, a symbolic system for communication used by people who are unable to speak. The system consists of 500 colour elements. Variations in position and number permit an extensive language production. The Bliss board is a grid of these symbols, as well as the words they represent. The user points to the symbol and the translator reads the word so all may understand.

Wilder Penfield School

This study differs from others in this issue in that it involves three endeavours and is complex, demonstrating that educational reform often follows mixed patterns of development and not a linear uni-dimensional model. The common link between the three activities is the manner in which the school has responded to the expressed needs and interests of the community. This response exhibits considerable leadership commitment, and care amongst those involved.

Wilder Penfield School is one of nine elementary schools serving approximately 3,368 English students in the Baldwin-Cartier system, a school commission which serves both French and English Catholics. Located in the then fast-growing community of Dollard des Ormeaux, it was built over a decade ago to accommodate approximately 600 English elementary children. The school's name reveals its aspirations, "to inspire all students to strive for the excellence and greatness which the name suggests". While the school is organized along traditional lines, innovation is stressed. Although many changes, both internal and external, have occurred since the school opened, its reputation and involvement with the community remain at a high level.

As of September 1980 this school had incorporated the children from the neighbouring St. Luke's School into the various programs at all grade levels, K-6. A declining student population and the 1976 introduction of Bill 101 have been the major external changes with which Wilder Penfield has had to contend. Now, following the merger of the two schools, the student population approximates once again a total of 600 children. It is expected that this number will remain stable within the foreseeable future.

The staff includes Mr. E. Samoluk, Principal, Mr. G. Neville, Vice-Principal, and a teaching staff of thirty, many of

whom are specialists in different areas. Non-teaching personnel include a full-time bilingual secretary, and the school nurse who visits for one and a half days each week. A most efficient, friendly and capable group of parent volunteers operates the school library.

The three different programs are the French program and its various options, extra-curricular activities, and a parent-training program.

The French program

Given that this is a board-wide program it may not be correct to define it as an Educational Project. The M.E.Q. has defined such an endeavour "a school which is involved and moving towards establishing its own distinctive ethos."

Since one of the most important objectives of this particular Second Language Program is a greater degree of curriculum uniformity, it is difficult to see prospects for diversification. However, individuality and teacher input are maintained in terms of their choice of classroom strategies and use of materials. Teachers involved in this program state a definite preference for this flexibility and make use of their choices when they are developing instructional strategies.

In May 1977 a preliminary report on Second Language instruction was issued by the French Program Committee of the Board, after a year's work. As many groups as possible were consulted during the next two months. Parent Committees, Teacher Associations, the Association of Administrators, teachers, parents, and the Quebec Personal Guidance Association were all contacted and asked to participate at public meetings, where not only the rationale for change but recommendations would be presented and then debated. In addition, a special brochure was sent to the parents of 8,774 students. This pamphlet outlined the committee's recommendations and also included a survey form and questionnaire which parents were requested to complete and return to the committee. Replies were received from 2,791 parents, a 31.4% return rate.

Finally, in February, 1978, the Committee presented the double objectives of providing quality education in English and providing the opportunity for graduates to be competent in French. Many divergent views were then explored through debate and discussion; the entire issue became as emotional as it was pedagogical. Final recommendations emerged, having been subjected to intense scrutiny. Granting all parents freedom of choice, the following programs were presented for their children:

- Early Partial French Immersion
- Extended Regular French Program
- Late Total French Immersion Program (Grade 6)

Teachers were encouraged to make use of French informally. Some extra-curricular activities should be offered in French to facilitate informal contact with the French-speaking community.

Since September 1978 Wilder Penfield has been very much involved with all three French Immersion Programs. Primary Teachers have had a great deal to say in terms of the proposed original curriculum and changes they felt to be necessary and crucial. They have made and selected materials they consider to be more appropriate than those originally available. There are now some excellent materials designed by them and the French Language Consultants are available for any interested teacher. Teachers remain free to select their own instructional strategies, and some report their preference for the use of learning stations while others prefer a more structured approach.

Classroom teachers meet twice a year with colleagues who share similar teaching situations. These meetings provide an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of programs at particular grade levels. These sessions also allow teachers to share materials and discuss effective teaching strategies.

At Wilder Penfield, certain aspects of the initial curriculum and certain curriculum materials were found to be inappropriate. Discussions and lobbying led to a six-month release for one teacher to plan and design more appropriate curriculum and materials. It is the program's flexibility and the ease with which it appears to accommodate the views of all involved, whether teacher, parent, child, administrator, or consultant, that constitute to some measure the success and positive feeling that this particular program promulgates.

Extra-curricular activities

As many children are bussed to school, these sessions usually take place during the lunch hour. Clubs meet for an hour once or twice a week. Most of the clubs are for Grades 3-6 students.

Every year new clubs are formed and others disbanded. Towards the end of each academic year, current student interests are explored and discussed with the teachers and the administration. A potential list of clubs for the following year emerges. The clubs are intended to satisfy curiosity, develop interest and intellect, and provide enjoyment for the student. A variety of activities, lectures, and presentations by outside experts form the core program of a club.

In 1981 the Math Club, then in its second year of operation, met during lunchtime twice a week. A student may participate at one of three different levels. For example, Tuesday was the weekly remediation session, and three teachers helped out with this group. The regular and above-average students met on Thursdays to improve and expand their skills

and play Math games. On Friday afternoon, after school, an accelerated group of gifted children participated in Math skill acquisition in order to compete in the Quebec Math competition. In 1980, this group won the top prize in the province, and the Quebec Math Teachers' Award was proudly displayed in the school library. Students and teachers alike enjoyed the many varied opportunities for development that this particular club offers. Total enrolment for all sessions was approximately 125 students.

"The Mad Scientists", a group of twenty-five grade 5 students, met once a week over lunch to discuss their interests in science. This club was created that year by the Vice-Principal. Quite a large number of students showed up. A list of potential areas to be explored was discussed. The following topics had been on the agenda: orienteering, forensic science, working with carnivorous plants, and electronics. Projects on volcanoes and acid rain were designed and developed, and were displayed at the Parents' Open House.

There was also a Running Club directed by the Physical Education teacher. Club members met twice a week to jog. Students involved in this did so for enjoyment, though some might have been doing initial training for fun-run marathons outside the school. There were also two sports clubs that year. One was the grade 6 Basketball Club which met once a week at lunch-time to play and practice in order to compete with other schools. This team was going to a Mt. Bruno School in June to compete against a similar team in a South Shore community.

The Journal Club involved Grade 4 children in journal writing. These children were exchanging journals on a regular basis with another Grade 4 class at Valois Park School, serving the Lakeshore School Board. In June 1981 both groups actually met one another for the first time after having corresponded for the past academic year.

The evaluation of such clubs was not formal, whereas the French Programs had to be looked at with greater seriousness for obvious reason. Yet plans were being made for the future - in terms of which clubs to maintain, which to terminate, and which to begin.

For the next year, the Principal had agreed to organize a chess club for Grades 3-6. The group would meet once a week to play chess and learn new strategies. Some members would work diligently so that they might compete in intramural or perhaps even provincial tournaments. As there is also a high interest in drama and acting in this school, a Drama and Creative Writing Club was planned. This group would, for its annual project, write, act and produce "Alice in Wonderland" for the Wilder Penfield School Community. A Netball Club would also be started.

The commitment and financial support of the School Committee would make possible the purchase of any necessary uniforms and equipment for these clubs. The parents obviously felt very much a part of the school - they appreciated the time

and interest that this dynamic staff and administration donated to these lunch-time clubs. The children involved learn much and enjoy their club experiences.

The S.T.E.P. program (Systematic Training for Effective Parenting)

S.T.E.P. is a program that evolved because of growing parent concern about their children. Many parents had expressed concerns about their families and looked to the school for answers. In 1981, the principal and vice-principal decided in collaboration with the School Committee to organize and implement a program. A nominal fee was charged to parents; the remainder of the expenses were carried by the School Parents' Committee. The school decided the program would be more effective if an outside professional ran it. The School Parents' Committee agreed.

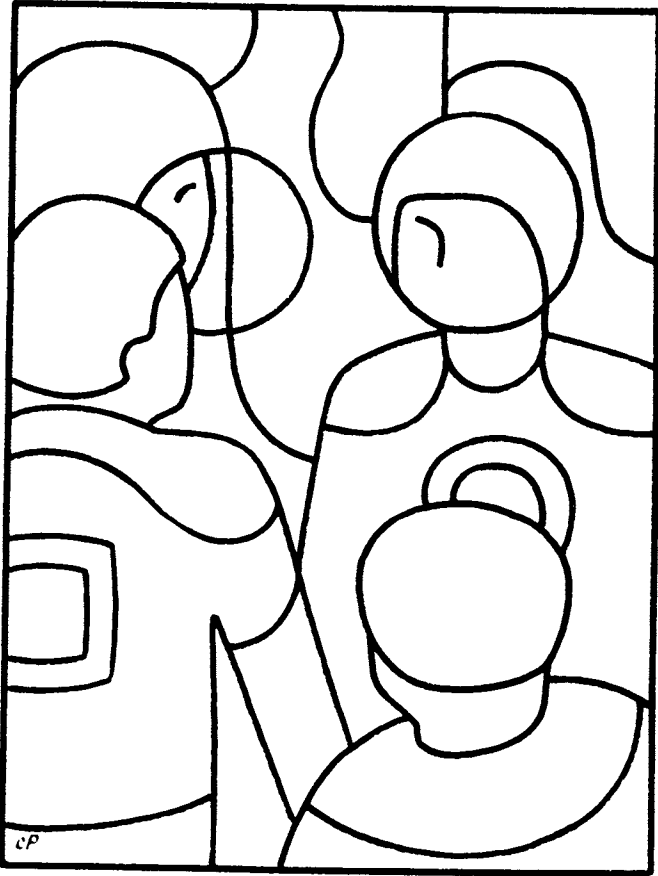
The leader's role is not to answer questions as such. This program involves reading, discussion, and exercises reflecting typical concerns, as well as encouragement of and by the participants. Parents then attempt to put these newly-learned principles and techniques into practice in their own families. The leader facilitates discussion of the materials, keeps the group on task, leads the exercises, and makes assignments drawn from the S.T.E.P. Parents' Handbook.

Once again Wilder Penfield School had shown, through its concern, commitment, and initiative, that it is responding to community needs. This particular time it was the parents who received the extra attention.

Although, as originally stated, there is no official Educational Project in action, there are many things that occur in this school that further the developmental bond between school and community, notwithstanding that this school has stood for and maintained its excellence for fifteen years.

The school has reacted to specific community concerns and interests through its S.T.E.P. program and extra-curricular clubs. While the traditional mode of teaching prevails, commitment, care, and initiative on the part of the Wilder Penfield staff all contribute to the community perception that this is a warm, inviting, and invigorating environment in which their children may participate.

If this school were in business, it would be a successful company.



Learning French in the Townships

April 6, 1981. Over one hundred parents and others are gathered in the gymnasium of the Lennoxville Elementary School. They have come to find out more about the program of instruction in French as a Second Language which the Lennoxville District School Board has been running since September 1979. The children of some of them are already in the program, while others will expect to enter it at the beginning of the next school year.

The evening begins with a brief introduction by Hugh Auger, the Board's Director General, and by Marguerite Knapp, its chairperson. A slide-tape presentation follows, explaining the main elements of the program and illustrating in a graphic way how the program actually works in the classroom. The tone of the presentation is understandably upbeat and positive. Next, two professors from McGill University tell the audience how the research they have conducted has helped to monitor the progress of the program and, in general, to show that it has been successful. The evening finishes with a panel discussion in which questions from the audience are addressed.

The questions which the parents ask are of themselves instructive, since they illustrate the concerns which some of the parents feel:

Did the intensity of instruction in French in the Lennoxville program mean that other aspects of the curriculum were shortchanged?

The level of French of the children shown in the slide-tape presentation seemed very high. For how long had they been in the program?

Did the obvious enthusiasm for French which the children in kindergarten exhibit persist into grades 1 and 2?

More important, what will happen later? Will the children really be able to function bilingually? Will they perhaps lose

their French in high school if no comparable program exists there?

The answers to these and to other questions will become apparent. At this stage it is the questions themselves that are of interest. A program such as that being run by the Lennoxville School Board can only be completely successful if it has full parental support. The program came into being in the first place because it seemed to meet a need which parents had themselves expressed. They wanted their children to "be English, but **speak** French." It is clearly important that they should feel at all times that the program is continuing to achieve that objective.

The event described above touches on the dynamics of curriculum innovation. As a system is changed in order to achieve a particular set of goals, new problems are created. The overall success of a curriculum innovation such as the one described here depends on the degree to which such problems can be resolved so as to satisfy the community which the school serves. Parents are noticeably sensitive about the success of experiments on their own children; their questions indicate those areas where they are most in need of reassurance.

The Eastern Townships in change

The Eastern Townships is one of the few rural areas of Quebec in which English people have traditionally been a numerical majority. It is only within fairly recent memory that the Eastern Townships have lost their predominantly "English" character, as French-speaking people have become more numerous and have spread across the social and economic spectrum. Increasingly the English language community has come to feel the need to bolster a culture which it believes is beleaguered.

The English-language educational system of the Eastern Townships exists in a context of declining enrolments and of competition in some cases from its French-language counterpart. The educational component of the Official Language Act (Bill 101) has effectively barred French-speaking children and the children of many immigrants from attending English-language schools, while demographic changes have reduced the total numbers of potential pupils. The problems of English language educational institutions are compounded by the fact that many parents decided during the 1970's that their children were more likely to become bilingual by attending French-language schools.

The Lennoxville District School Board came into being in 1972 with the union of four smaller school boards, those of Lennoxville, Sherbrooke, Stanstead, and Compton. It now administers nine elementary schools in Sherbrooke, Lennoxville, North Hatley, Ayer's Cliff, Magog, Rock Island, Cookshire, Sawyerville, and Bury. Each of these schools had espoused different approaches towards French as a Second Language. On

the one hand, North Hatley Elementary School provided an acceptable bilingual program in which one-half of the total instruction was in French and one-half in English. On the other hand, the Rock Island school provided very little French instruction. The norm for the other schools was 30 or fewer minutes of instruction per day, and in all cases except Lennoxville this was provided by non-specialist teachers who set up their own program of studies. It was apparent that some form of coordination would be necessary, and in 1975 a committee composed of teachers, parents, and administrators was struck to evaluate existing programs and to make recommendations for change.

From the outset, the committee recognized growing pressure from parents to improve the quality of French instruction, for they realized that if their children wished to stay in the region and to obtain jobs there, they would have to be competent in the French language. The call for some kind of action was spearheaded by a few articulate parents in the Lennoxville area, many of whom were themselves teachers in the Alexander Galt Regional High School, Champlain Regional College, or Bishop's University. These were parents who knew of change elsewhere in the province and in particular of the well-publicised full immersion programs of the Montreal metropolitan area. In their own local school, the Lennoxville Elementary School, they had supported the establishment of a "Six Plus" program in which pupils remained in elementary school for one further year before high school in order to participate in a partial immersion experience.

Parental opinions are well illustrated by a questionnaire which the Board administered in 1975. Of respondents, 58 percent felt it was "very important" for their children to learn French, and 88 percent would encourage their children to participate in activities that would improve their use of French in the home and the community. However, 70 percent were opposed to **all** subjects being taught in French in some grades, and 66 percent did not even want **some** subjects taught in French if this implied any deterioration of the English curriculum. This would seem to indicate that there was not at that time a strong area of support for true immersion programs, which would among other things have required costly and time-consuming bussing of children to those schools offering the immersion option.

The committee was also concerned about the relationship between the Board and its existing teachers. A position paper from the Director General which had formed part of the committee's mandate (Auger, 1975) had clearly indicated the need for at least one fluently French-speaking teacher in each of the Board's schools, and that, moreover, this teacher might have responsibility for teaching in subject areas other than French as a Second Language. The fact that English-speaking teachers felt their positions threatened by the expansion of French instruction had already been demonstrated dramatically

in a teachers' walkout at the Lennoxville Elementary School in May 1974. Teachers wanted reassurance that new programs would not place their positions in jeopardy.

In general, the view of ETAT (Eastern Townships Association of Teachers) as expressed by its president was that, while its members recognized that some change was in order, they felt that it should be evolutionary. Above all, teachers should be involved in consultation, and should not have imposed upon them programs which would either require a complete change in their day-to-day professional activities or put their jobs at risk. It was the task of the committee, then, to steer a course between extreme positions, and to produce recommendations which would satisfy both parents and teachers.

In its final submission, the committee recommended that in addition to the existing thirty minutes each day of French as a second language, a minimum of a further thirty minutes of instruction be provided in French each day in not more than two subject areas. In the program that was eventually implemented, the fundamental change was made that this minimum of sixty minutes each day be devoted **exclusively** to teaching French as a Second Language.

It is worth considering why this change was made, since it has strong implications for the implementation of the program and indeed can be seen as its dominant characteristic. Primarily, it was argued by the Director-General and accepted by others that materials structured according to the logic of instruction in the second language rather than to that of some other subject were likely to have a much stronger impact. Also, separating instruction in French as a Second Language from instruction in other subjects should both be less threatening to non-bilingual teachers already employed by the Board, and would avoid the necessity of engaging French specialists with competence in other subject areas. Thus, this one element resulted in the programs meeting the objectives of both parents and teachers.

The program in a nutshell: implementing it

The objectives of the program are concrete. They are that, at the end of elementary school, each child should understand spoken and written French; speak French fluently and colloquially; and write French at a basic level. The means by which these objectives are to be achieved are uncommon in Quebec, and consist of two major elements. First, a full-time bilingual kindergarten is available, which all pupils in the system attend. Second, during each year of the elementary school in grades 1 through 6, pupils spend a full sixty minutes each day, or a total of five hours each week, in an intensive French program.

The question of the implementation of any curriculum innovation is invariably of most interest. In the case of the

Lennoxville Board's French as a Second Language program, three elements were involved in implementation, namely (i) staffing and financial arrangements, (ii) the provision of instructional materials and facilities and of appropriate changes of scheduling, and (iii) testing and evaluation.

Staffing problems had two major dimensions. In the first place, there was an insufficient number of suitably qualified people on the existing staffs to mount the program. It would, therefore, be necessary to provide opportunities for staff to be trained, and for new staff to be engaged. Recognizing that the final success of the program would depend upon the quality of its instructors, the Board decreed in May 1979 that all teachers of French in the kindergarten, and of French as a Second Language at all grades of the elementary school, must have a specialist diploma in Teaching French as a Second Language. In order to upgrade the competence of existing teachers, an arrangement was made by which the Ministry of Education of Quebec (MEQ) reimbursed the Board for the salaries of teachers released for further training. A number of teachers were given leaves under this arrangement and, in addition, McGill University mounted appropriate courses in Lennoxville. As a consequence, 21 teachers obtained their specialist diplomas between 1975 and 1981, 14 of them in May 1981. In addition, new staff were needed in order to provide sufficient teachers both for the full day kindergarten and for the more intensive approach, and lower pupil-teacher ratios, of the other grades.

Clearly, these problems could not have been solved without unusual support from the Ministry of Education in Quebec. The MEQ provides funds to each school board on the basis of a ratio common to all schools in Quebec. Additional funding would evidently be required to provide for pupil-teacher ratios below this provincial norm in the elementary grades, and to provide also for teachers for the full-time kindergarten. In addition, since the board saw the desirability of monitoring the program, funds were requested for ongoing research and for the preparation of instructional materials. It was seen as being especially important that this research be done by an impartial outside agency rather than by the Board's own officers.

Preparation of instructional materials required additional expenditures. For the kindergarten the program was in the past based upon materials produced by the Ottawa Separate School Board, but considerable adaptation was required to meet local circumstance. For Cycle I, new materials were specifically designed for the Lennoxville program. For Cycle II, which also moved to a sixty-minute-per-day program, materials were acquired from the Lauroval School Board to be used until new original materials should be prepared. Photocopying and the preparation of overhead transparencies and 35 mm slides demanded an expenditure both on materials and on additional support staff.

According to the program plan it was recommended that each school set aside a separate classroom for the teaching of

French as a Second Language. Since most of the schools at one time contained a higher school population, there was no lack of space to provide a separate classroom. The expense of furnishings and equipment have restricted some kindergarten classes to one room for both English and French instruction. However, all schools have separate French classrooms for all French instruction for grades 1 through 6.

Most schools have now implemented the one-half day French Kindergarten and the 60 minutes per day in the other grades. Two exceptions to this are to be found in North Hatley and Rock Island. North Hatley uses the basic program, but has retained from its bilingual program an additional 30 minutes per day of French instruction in a specific subject area. Rock Island, on the other hand, has reduced the 60 minutes per week to 40 minutes per week for their regular grades 1 through 6 students, in order to provide some French instruction to the Special Education classes in the school.

An important part of the program has been the schedule of tests administered under contract by McGill University's Office of Research on Educational Policy. The objectives of the testing program have been to measure the progress made by pupils in their acquisition of the French language and to measure also their general linguistic and cognitive development. Since details of the testing program are published elsewhere (OREP, Nov. 1980), it would be inappropriate to recapitulate them here. However, the general conclusions are worth repeating. First, as might be expected, the children showed considerable gains in their knowledge and use of French; secondly, they also showed an improvement in skills and competences not explicitly included in the program.

Is this an Educational Project?

It remains to be seen whether Lennoxville's new French as a Second Language program may correctly be described as an "Educational Project" in the way that this term has been defined by the MEQ.

Clearly, the program which this article has described contains an important element which may distinguish it from other Educational Projects, namely, that it has been implemented in a number of schools rather than in one single school. If the *sine qua non* of the Educational Project is that it be the means by which a **single** school moves towards establishing its own distinctive ethos, then the Lennoxville program is not one. An important result of the program, indeed, was that it should produce a greater degree of uniformity among the Board's different schools than existed before.

However, this may be a mere point of semantics. The Lennoxville Board administers nine schools, it is true, but it could be argued that these nine schools constitute a unit for

educational purposes and that geographical separation is irrelevant. For the Lennoxville Board, the major aim has been to "situate in its milieu" this entire unit, making it increasingly responsive to the use of the French language in the Eastern Townships, to new patterns of social interaction and of vocational opportunity which these had brought about, and to the expressed desire of its own clientele to accommodate more effectively to these changes.

Initiated from within

No curriculum innovation stands completely alone. Lennoxville's French as a Second Language program draws out of the professional experiences of its major promoters as well as from models provided from elsewhere. With this caveat, however, it has to be recognized that the essential nature of the program grew out of needs perceived within the area and interpreted and translated into specific instructional strategies by the Board's own personnel. As far as individual schools are concerned, they were, of course, required to accept a program indeed "imposed from above".

Reflecting consensus

The imposition, if such it was, seems on the whole to have been received willingly. Complete consensus is a rare commodity, but within reasonable limits of tolerance Lennoxville's program seems to have been accommodated to meet most potential sources of conflict, at least for the time being. Grants above the staffing norms have calmed the fears of English-speaking teachers that the program would put their jobs at risk, although the fact that these grants have to be applied for on a year-to-year basis is a source of continuing concern. So far, however, the quality of instruction in regular classes has, if anything, been improved by the generally lower pupil-teacher ratios. These grants have made smaller classes possible, and teachers have all benefited by gaining more time for preparation and remediation. Correspondingly, the conflicting desires of parents that their children become both fluently bilingual and at the same time lose nothing from their existing curriculum seem on the whole to have been resolved.

Facilitating the development of participants

The Lennoxville program contributes to the development of its participants at a number of levels. Parents would certainly appear to feel more directly involved in a process which has implications beyond the school. They hope not only that the program will prepare their children more adequately for social and vocational involvement in Quebec society, but that by extension they themselves may perhaps be less confined to their own linguistic community. According to those involved in the program, the attitudes of many parents towards their French-speaking neighbours have been changed simply by virtue of their own children speaking and understanding French - and,

perhaps for the first time, having a French-speaking teacher.

For teachers also the program has provided the opportunity for development, in both a formal and an informal sense. In-service training has provided the opportunity to obtain a French specialist diploma: at the same time the influx of French-speaking teachers has increased other teachers' awareness of French language and culture. In all the schools they visited the authors noted the frequency with which French was used in staffrooms, although they also noted that this could produce feelings of isolation among the incorrigibly unilingual.

Evolving through adaptation

It is, of course, too early to say with confidence whether the Lennoxville program will be truly adaptive to changing circumstances, or to predict the kind of circumstances which would make such adaptation necessary. One of the problems of basing curriculum development and dissemination upon instructional packages is that the investment of time, effort, and money which has been put into their preparation discourages change and individual initiative. There is always the danger of placing the emphasis on "product" rather than "process". So far, however, frequent workshops have maintained a high degree of involvement from teachers, and the program has been found to be sufficiently flexible that individual teachers may place their stamp on materials produced at Board level.

Known about and understood

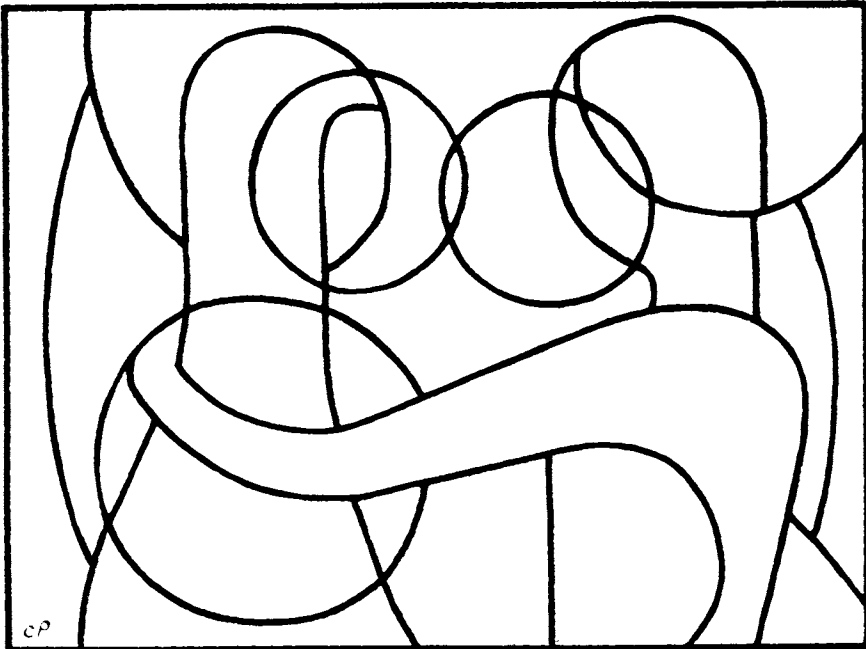
A program of parent sensitization operated with the assistance of McGill University staff, the preparation of the slide-tape presentation referred to earlier, and good publicity both in the local and in the Montreal press have helped to assure that the program will be as well known as possible. The dispersed nature of the region's population presents problems, however, and it is inevitable that the more peripheral communities will feel a less direct involvement in the program and will know less about it than those at the centre. This problem is exacerbated by the fact that the Lennoxville town community, with its higher proportion of professional people, has a higher intrinsic level of interest in the educational enterprise than the other outlying rural communities. An important task for those involved in the program may well be that of maintaining the level of interest and involvement of parents as well in these communities as in Lennoxville itself.

In summary, the Lennoxville experiment contains two elements which are of general interest. First, it provides a potential alternative model to full immersion programs and, if it were to be found to result in a comparable level of second-language competence, might indeed be considered in some ways superior to full immersion. Secondly, from the theoretical point of view it lends a new dimension to the definition of the Educational Project. The most interesting aspect of the

Lennoxville program is that it is applied across all the schools of a particular board rather than to a single school.

Education in the Province of Quebec is delivered by "systems": in common parlance, the term is used to refer to the entire educational enterprise or to a particular administrative unit. In fact, the educational enterprise comprises a single system consisting of a number of sub-systems, some overlapping and most occupying a niche in a rather complex hierarchy. Where the limits of a system and of a sub-system are drawn is always, let it be remembered, a matter of methodological convenience, since "systems", like beauty, exist largely in the eye of the beholder. With regard to the Educational Project, the sub-system in question may be defined as that part of the total educational system which is open to those influences from the milieu which call the project into being.

For many Educational Projects, the appropriate sub-system may indeed be the individual school as suggested by the MEQ. For others, however, it may consist of groups of linked schools - the "consortia" which exist for some British School Council projects. For yet others, as for the program described in this article, the most appropriate sub-system might be a school board.



The Educational Project: a convival tool?

Can you legislate individuality and initiative and an *esprit de corps*? Can you help such things into being by regulation or with Ministerial guidelines? To summarize this study, Norman Henchey reviews the stories of these not altogether unusual schools, and discovers in them characteristics common in English language education that show some affinity for the criteria and intentions of the "Educational Project", foreign as its technological manifestations may seem to the pragmatic pluralism of English schools. He notes the illusions that have been arising in Quebec in face of the apparent contradictions in recent Ministerial initiatives. But looking forward, he points to a remarkable list of transformations in the educational scene that would arise from such a successful implementation as the Ministry intends (provided that that intention is not itself an illusion), under the guiding concept of the Educational Project.

As we reflect on these case studies, three questions arise. Do these schools provide illustrations of Educational Projects to any degree? What is the status of Educational Projects in English-language education in Quebec at the present time? What are the implications of Educational Projects for the future? The short answers are "Yes", "Ambivalent", and "Radical".

The schools which are described in the case studies are not necessarily the best in Quebec, nor are they different or "alternative" schools, nor are they specially privileged; nor are they, on the other hand, typical of all schools. They do provide illustrations of what was happening in schools, in Quebec, in 1981. They represent, to some degree at least, the diversity that is found among English-language schools.

They also illustrate some of the important issues in education at the present time. Keith is an open-space school that has been attempting to mainstream physically-handicapped

children, in collaboration with the MacKay Centre for handicapped children in Montreal. Wilder Penfield is a more "traditional" elementary school in which three different projects have been evolving: a board-wide French program, a set of lunchtime special-interest clubs for pupils, and a "parenting" program for the parents of the community. Courtland Park is the school that perhaps comes closest to the model of the Educational Project, with a tradition of parent and community involvement, a formal Orientation Council, an application of special education techniques to the individualization of learning for all pupils, and a stress on pupil activity; in a way, it is the "activist" school recommended by the Parent Report.

The Lennoxville School District is involved in a board-wide project to coordinate the teaching of French as a second language among its nine elementary schools, through a program of full-day bilingual kindergartens and an hour-per-day second language program through all six years of the elementary school system. Sir Wilfrid Laurier is a secondary school specializing in cycle one (grades 7 and 8) which is following a definite plan for the development of "core" programs of general education, and an approach to school life that is personalized and student-centred. These schools are doing different things, in different ways, in different contexts. The question is: Do the case studies reveal common patterns among the schools and, if so, do these common patterns suggest any relationship to what may be defined as an Educational Project?

A unifying attitude, charisma, and informality

There are, indeed, a number of common elements. First, each school has an identity, a character, an ethos; there is some unifying activity or attitude that brings a coherence to the institution, that characterizes it as different from other schools. In Keith, the integration of a small number of handicapped children into a few classes raises the sensitivity of the whole school community to the handicapped, and eliminates boundaries between persons. In Wilder Penfield there is a kind of school-as-service attitude that is expressed both through the clubs for the children and through the parenting program for the adults. In Courtland Park it is an attitude that all education is special education because every child is special, an attitude widely shared in the school community.

In the Lennoxville District the unifying principle that binds different schools together is a sense of search, looking for a reasonable and balanced way of helping the English-speaking children of the different communities communicate easily and effectively in French and at the same time preserving a fragile English culture in the region. In Sir Wilfrid Laurier it is a concept of "core", a centering both in the heart of the curriculum and on the person of the early adolescent learner. In each case a project, however limited its origins, spreads to

become an identifying characteristic of the school (or in the case of Lennoxville, a set of schools). In the age of the photocopier, these schools are originals.

A second characteristic is the presence of charismatic leadership. In every instance there are one or two persons -- a special education teacher, a director general, a principal, a vice-principal, two teachers willing to try something, a teacher of the handicapped -- people prepared to take a risk, to follow an idea, to do extra work, to develop new relationships with others. These are the people who develop, articulate, and sustain the projects (and through the projects, the institutions); they provide the leadership that stimulates others to become involved. In all cases, the leadership came from professional educators, and in most instances the central person was an administrator, seeming to confirm the widely-held belief that educational leadership should, and does, come from creative and dynamic administrators.

Third, there is a general focus on a need to be served and a task to be done. Structures, processes, and mechanisms seem to be considered secondary, and there is a general preference for using informal and changing arrangements to organize projects and to consult the interested parties. In some cases (Lennoxville, Sir Wilfrid Laurier) there is a written plan or statement of purpose, but in other cases this does not seem to be considered necessary. There is a general impression that the success of the various projects rests more on person-to-person contacts than on formal groupings and meetings. Only in the case of Sir Wilfrid Laurier does there seem to have been a good deal of thought given to the goals of the school as a whole; in the other cases, the attention was on a particular need or project, and it was as a consequence of commitment to this project that the goals or character of the school may have been altered.

Fourth, in all cases stability and continuity are necessary for the ongoing development of the projects. This is implicit in the reliance on personal leadership and informal structures. In no case does it appear that the change in the character of the school has been "institutionalized" in a way independent of the people and the relationships among them, that a mechanism or structure of continuity has been assured.

Finally, except in the case of the Lennoxville second language project, there is little evidence of systematic evaluation of the activity beyond informal and impressionistic indications of success or, more commonly, the satisfaction of the participants. For the most part these are not seen as "scientific" programs that can, or should, be monitored to determine their effectiveness.

We are looking, then, at activities that (1) touch the identity of the school as a whole, (2) are inspired by charismatic leadership, (3) rely more on informal patterns of interaction than on formal structures, (4) depend on a degree of continuity and stability in the community, and (5) do not use

formal mechanisms of evaluation of effectiveness. Furthermore, these activities are **educational** in goal and content; they are also **professional**, in the dominant role played by administrators and teachers, and the more or less supportive role assumed by parents and other groups.

Do they meet the criteria, and does it matter?

But are these Educational Projects, in capital letters? Do they match the definitions of process and product? Do they meet the criteria?

To label these projects as Projects is to do little more than to ratify what already exists. And the projects do not meet all of the criteria that may be suggested; a community is not always clearly identified, and various groups, especially parents, are not always actively involved, though they may be generally supportive of the initiative; some projects are centered within the individual school while others are in important ways external to a school or common to a number of schools.

On the other hand, the concept of an Educational Project (as found in various government documents) is external to the reality of an individual school, a construct which is created and developed. Its power to provide norms by which individual projects in individual schools are judged better or worse, closer or further away, needs to be examined critically. We must ask to what degree it is necessary or useful to have a set of theoretical criteria by which projects are to be evaluated. We must also return to the question raised in Chapter I, the issue of process versus product: is the Project an activity in which to engage, or a plan to develop?

It may be more important to think of the Educational Project as a set of guidelines and suggestions to assist persons and groups who may not have available the kind of leader or the support system from which the schools in the case studies so often benefited. In this sense, the theory of Educational Projects is not so much concerned with criteria for judgement as with a catalyst for the kind of "chemistry" that gets people working together for a common goal. It does not matter a great deal if these case-studies meet the criteria; what is more important is that they do reflect a philosophy of learning and development, a spirit of involvement, and a sensitivity to the ecology of the school and its community.

To the question "Is the Project a process or a product?" the answer that a student of Zen would give is "Yes". There is no distinction between product and process, because the Project must be an organic unity, the whole greater than the sum of the parts.

An affinity nevertheless

Whether we think of Educational Projects as helpful guidelines or as normative criteria, the concept has not yet captured the imagination of the English-language educational community of Quebec. The more common reactions have been lack of knowledge, indifference, and suspicion. It is only recently that materials on the Project have been available in English. Furthermore, the community has been preoccupied with other concerns that are pressing, worrisome, and highly visible: declining enrolments and their implications for closing schools and declaring teachers redundant; a blizzard of pressures, proposals and programs; and a more general anxiety about the health and survival of English-language culture, organizations, and institutions in Quebec. Finally, there has been a certain suspicion that the proposal for Educational Projects was essentially a cosmetic operation to mask the true face of government control, centralization, and standardization.

There is, however, a deeper issue here. It is the distance between a concept that is expressed in philosophical terms and a community that is philosophically casual in its pluralism and pragmatism, a distance that needs to be surveyed if it is to be bridged. The pluralist character of the English-language community of Quebec - and it would, perhaps, be more accurate to speak of communities - is the result of many factors: the mixing of British and American educational ideas, teaching materials, and personnel; the different social and religious traditions of English-Catholic, English-Protestant, and English-Jewish populations; the growing ethnic diversity and the growing consciousness of ethnic identity; the continuous geographic mobility of this community, into Quebec, within Quebec, out of Quebec, and often back to Quebec.

This pluralism in the communities is reflected in the schools, and a number of important characteristics result from it:

- a general lack of educational ideology
- a tendency to rely on traditional practices
- a pragmatic view of the process of education which is increasingly open to various innovations
- a reliance on the leadership of key individuals rather than of key concepts or key structures
- a focus on administrators, teachers' associations and, in the Protestant sector, on school boards, more than on individual schools or the provincial government.

This pluralism and pragmatism have tended to be mutually reinforcing, pluralist needs being met with pragmatic strategies and this pragmatism leading to more pluralism, as individual schools and teachers in the freedom of the sixties and seventies developed their own objectives, adapted the programs, selected and often created their teaching materials, and used many

criteria to evaluate the learning and development of pupils.

Because this community is inclined to the plural and the practical, it is uncomfortable with the singular and the theoretical. It is more at home with notions of planning, innovations, programs, committees, and educational projects of all sorts, and learns from their descriptions; it is not used to a Plan of Action, the reform, the regime pédagogique, encadrement, the Orientation Committee, and the Educational Project, and it is not touched by their definitions.

It is not so much a matter of translation or tactic of communication, nor is it simply another episode in the ongoing struggle of an "English" group to preserve its independence and privilege. It is both epistemology and politics, a certain lack of interest in "the" concept and a certain skepticism about "the" solution - especially if the authors of the concept and the advocates of the solution are in a Ministry of Education whose policies this community sometimes finds threatening and in whose activities it finds little expression of its own orientations.

In short, the Educational Project is a concept that is foreign to the English-language educational community. It is a policy which this community has had little hand in shaping, and one whose value for the development of high quality English-language education remains, for many, ambiguous. Yet the approach to change, participation, and innovation, as well as the overall goal of vital, dynamic schools responding to their environment, are all part of the natural life of English-language education; they are ideas with which many educators and parents are quite comfortable. If the structures are less formal, the procedures more *ad hoc*, and the plans less scrupulously articulated, there is nevertheless a certain affinity between English-language education and the underlying philosophy of Educational Projects. What is not yet too clear is the potential contribution Educational Projects can make to the future development of education, French and English, in Quebec, a subject worth some further reflection.

An anomaly: the technological management of individuality

In the context of the present reorganization of Quebec education, the Educational Project is an anomaly wrapped in illusions. The major thrust of the Green Paper, the Plan D'Action, the Régime Pédagogique, the new curricula, and the proposals for evaluation is in the direction of the scientific and technological management of education. This is the educational philosophy which values standardization of timetables, terminal behavioral objectives, detailed curriculum guidelines, systematic and objective evaluation. It is a worldview based on rationality, coherence, consistency, and systems; it is an orientation not peculiar to Quebec, but one which reflects a general trend to

go "back to basics", to stress accountability, and to favour competency-based approaches to learning; and it is found throughout North America. It is a thoroughly modern system of education.

The Ministry promoting this structure is also promoting the idea that individual schools must reflect the diversity of their own communities, that each school should develop its own character, style, dominant values, and orientation, that all the participants in the life of a school should share in the creation of this distinctive character, and that mechanisms are being made available, in legislation, to enable schools to pursue this goal. Along with the social science and technology which inspire the Régime Pédagogique and the curriculum guidelines, the arts and humanities are to be represented in the Educational Project of each school. It may be an attempt to fuse the two cultures of C.P. Snow, but it does look more like an anomaly, something inconsistent, a piece that does not quite fit, a question.

Because it is a question that does not yet have an answer, it invites speculations and, lacking facts, we turn to illusions. One illusion, shared by many not only in the English-speaking community, is that the Project is a smokescreen for the powerful centralizing, technocratic, and statist character of the educational reforms. Those who hold to this illusion may or may not attribute Machiavellian motives to the Ministry, but they do believe that the proposals for the creation of Projects are too vague, too feeble, and too poorly thought out to serve as counterbalance to crisp, systematic, and thoroughly researched government plans for school organization, curriculum, and evaluation.

A second illusion, that seems to be cultivated by many of the advocates of the Project, is that there is no contradiction between this proposal and other aspects of the educational redirection taking place. The Educational Project with its emphasis on participation and school initiative is to them a natural extension of Regulation Number One and the later formation of school committees, and it complements the minimum standards and common guidelines, by inviting schools to adapt them to their own style and to go beyond them in order to address local needs.

A third illusion may be suggested: the possibility or, as some would phrase it, the promise that the Educational Project may be taken seriously and that it may lead to a radical reshaping of the pattern of educational decision-making in Quebec. This view is based on the belief that the motives behind the original proposal are irrelevant. It suggests that the popularization, creation, and development of Educational Projects, far from being complementary to existing structures and proposed regimes, would challenge those structures and lead to a new definition of the role of the school, and to a new pattern of relationships with school boards and government.

A challenge to policies and board structures

If the parents, administrators, teachers, students, non-teaching personnel, and other interested groups in a community begin to come together, in some form or other, to develop an Educational Project and to create a school "with character", they will begin to think of the school as "their" school. Already we see this happening in many places where various committees, sometimes parents, sometimes teachers, sometimes administrators, achieve consensus on such issues as the religious or moral character of the school, the kind of conduct that is to be promoted among pupils (and teachers), the way in which learning is to be approached and organized, the development of a curriculum focus, or the particular interrelationship which should exist between the school and the community. Private schools and so-called alternative schools in the public sector are fairly clear examples of this process of developing school character, but many other elementary schools and often units within secondary schools are heading in the same direction. The case studies which have been presented show both variety of content and approach and similarity of general orientation.

But these trends, far from being complementary to existing policies and structures, present a challenge to them. Schools which have distinctive identities rooted in a community also have distinctive needs; they may not need greater financial resources than the system normally allocates, but they do need acknowledgement, integrity, continuity, and self-direction. Although there are enabling and facilitating mechanisms available, educational projects are still fragile because they do not fit. Schools with Educational Projects cannot "belong" to school boards, in the way we now think of schools as units of boards and school policies as extensions of board policies.

Schools with Projects are certainly going to be more difficult to close by board administrators using board criteria. Schools with Projects will soon cease to accept the assignment of administrators (especially principals) and teachers into and out of the school by school-board decisions for board purposes or collective agreement clauses. Schools with Orientation Councils are soon going to insist on a veto or at least a strong influence on the appointment of new teachers, wanting to make sure these teachers are congruent with the "orientation". Schools with Projects will want more control over the school budget and spending priorities. Schools with Projects will be adopting curriculum innovations and learning designs that may not fit too well with board regulations or government guidelines. Schools with Projects will in many places begin to attract pupils away from other schools without Projects, or with Projects that parents find uncongenial. Finally, schools with Projects will start developing networks to include other schools, within the same board or in other boards, that share the same goals and interests.

Transformations not without strain

The illusion in all this is that the different ideas of Educational Projects and the different approaches to them will be successfully promoted in the educational systems, that schools will be encouraged and aided to develop their own Projects, and that enough of these Projects will be vigorous and healthy and develop their own dynamic. If this is an illusion, then the reality will be a very centralized, unitary, and increasingly brittle school system, and an exciting opportunity will have been lost for Quebec.

On the other hand, every project implies a projection, and if dozens or even hundreds of successful Educational Projects are developed, what effects will this have on the educational system? First, schools become more autonomous, and there is greater diversity in goal and style among schools. Second, schools with good Projects become recognized for their quality and become successful in their ability to attract students. Third, successful schools are preoccupied with preserving their continuity and acquire the final say over the key area of selection and preservation of personnel. Fourth, in systems with declining enrolments, new tenure policies have to be negotiated and new policies for the assignment of staff worked out. Fifth, school closings and redundant teachers become more and more a matter of supply and demand, consequences of the "market value" of their Educational Projects.

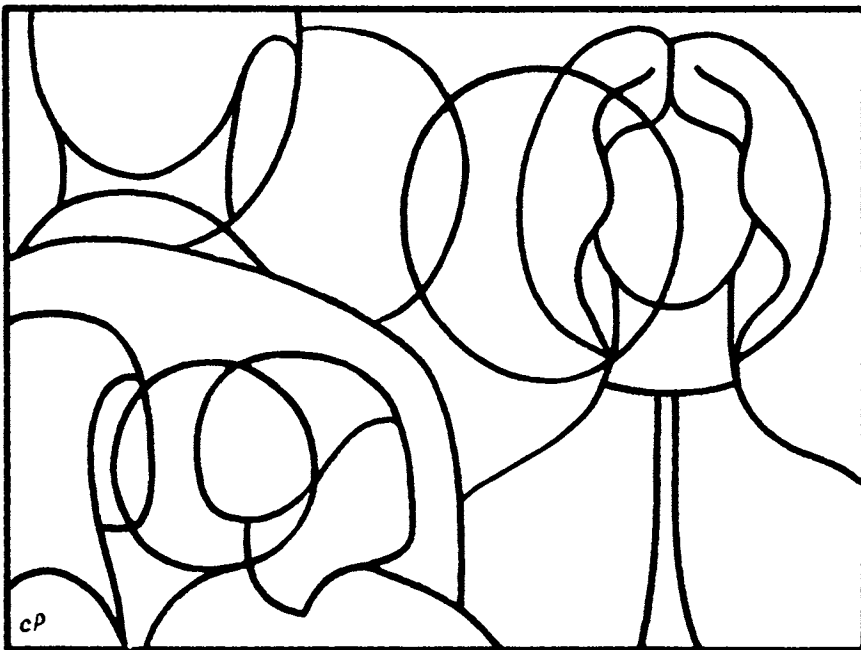
Sixth, the importance of school boards declines, if they continue to exist at all, as they become coordinators of services to schools. Seventh, private schools become progressively incorporated into the public system, each with its own Educational Project. Eighth, some system of "vouchers" is introduced as a means of ensuring access to a wide range of choice in schools and an overall system of "client protection" is developed, probably by the government. Ninth, linguistic, cultural, ethnic, and religious diversity is accommodated both by Projects that have a particular focus (trilingual Jewish elementary schools) and by those that have different options within the same school (multiconfessional humanistic programs).

It is a dangerous illusion to believe that this would be accomplished without strain and without transformations taking place in what we call the education system. Creative thinking is required, to determine the kinds of decisions that are properly the responsibility of public bodies such as governments and parents' committees, and those that are the responsibility of professional bodies of educators. There should be public debate on the range of tolerance for educational diversity: What must be taught in **all** schools regardless of the Educational Project, and what kinds of learning and projects, if any, should be forbidden? We have to find new ways of allocating resources, money, and people among schools, and also find ways to preserve certain learning, teaching, and curriculum models which

are important, even precious, but which may be temporarily out of fashion. This is an obligation of a democratic Ministry of Education.

Among the models of learning, teaching, and curriculum which "are important, even precious, but which may be temporarily out of fashion" is English-language education. If the Educational Project, as philosophical and singular concept, has not yet appealed to the pragmatism and pluralism of the English-language educational community, it may nevertheless be a pragmatic method of preserving and enriching the diversity of the education of the Catholic, Protestant, Jew, and non-believer; of the Anglo-Saxon, Greek, Irish, Scot and Italian; of the child in Beaconsfield and the child in Blanc Sablon, through a network of English-language Educational Projects.

And in the coming age of information overload, megastructures, pocket calculators, videotex, global problematiques, general systems theory, and biotechnologies, it may be that the idea of a school serving a community, with many participants pursuing a sense of identity and belonging through an Educational Project, will become what Ivan Illich would call a "convivial tool" for all Quebecers.



Book Review

Brian Sutton-Smith.

A HISTORY OF CHILDREN'S PLAY:

The New Zealand Playground 1840-1950.

U.S.A.: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1981.

331 pp. \$20.00.

"While children themselves can know little of the political and economic backdrop to the stage on which they will produce their playful account for us, they are nevertheless mightily affected by it."

This history delineates through a documentation of personal narrative the movement of children's play in New Zealand from the days of pioneer life to an era of modern and mechanized leisure consumption. To this end, an entertaining and enlightening account unfolds.

In Section One, "The Control of Children at School 1840-1890", Sutton-Smith allows the reader to meander through a memory of the earliest New Zealand playground. Reminiscent of rural life characterized by long hours of labour, the wildness of the bush, and the lack of formal sport and games, such seasonal pastimes as hoops, Shinty, Fly the Garter, bows and arrows, Rounders, Shanghais, and King of the Castle, to name only a few, are vividly recalled.

In the author's second section, "The Control of Children's Leisure", an overview is presented of immense philosophical and technological change as it impacted upon both the overall concept of childhood development and the specific 'play'-ground. Emphasized here is the notion that what was once chiefly the child's domain had become increasingly managed by adults. Sports, in particular rugby, were beginning to take hold, and both church and school were extending their recreation function beyond traditional areas.

In his concluding statement, "A Personal Epilogue", the author assesses the relative consequence and merit of this control. Interestingly, he speculates upon two hypotheses:

- 1) That the movement in the modern state toward a monopoly over violence, together with a shift in the locus of control from parochial to national organizations, has served to domesticate or 'zooify' children's play, and
- 2) That the change from a manual way of life to a symbolic one has fostered the growth and development of a highly sophisticated playground.

Sutton-Smith suggests that in reducing the violent and oftentimes barbaric components in play and games, control has been beneficial. Further, that in the evidence we see of the emphasis upon organization, technical competence, and mass leisure, control of children's play by adults has produced competent and capable members of the increasingly diverse and growing "global village".

However the author also points out that undoubtedly fewer play spaces belonging solely to children have resulted and less freedom to just **be**. Characteristic of this century's preoccupation with empiricism, the play and games of New Zealand children show little spontaneity and self-reliance.

For those who wish to review an historical and careful treatment of children's play as it was and how it has become, Sutton-Smith's book is an excellent choice. Much of the narrative and many of the ideas expressed are both entertaining and thought provoking.

Andrea Mann
McMaster University

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Résumés

The Educational Project: from policy to practice Gary J. Anderson 94
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Au Québec les mouvements réformistes du début des années 1960 ont précipité des changements spectaculaires dans tout le système d'enseignement. Regroupement d'écoles en districts plus importants, évolution du cycle secondaire complet, adoption du niveau CEGEP et expansion du système universitaire. Le contrôle du système qui était exercé en grande partie par l'Eglise est passé entre les mains de groupes tels que des commissaires élus, des syndicats professionnels et une bureaucratie gouvernementale centralisée. Les programmes d'études n'ont pas seulement été simplement élargis mais ils font l'objet de remaniements constants. Pas entièrement satisfait de ces réformes majeures, le ministère de l'Éducation du Québec a élaboré le concept du projet d'enseignement. Qu'est-ce que ce projet d'enseignement et quel intérêt présente-t-il pour la communauté anglophone du Québec?

Nous estimons que ce concept, même si son intention d'asseoir l'école plus fermement dans son milieu est explicite, a fait l'objet de diverses interprétations et qu'il demeure ambigu dans son application. De plus, il est nécessaire d'interpréter les politiques éducatives qui visent avant tout les écoles francophones par rapport au contexte du système des écoles anglophones. Même si une bonne partie de la phraséologie de ce projet d'enseignement (transparence, cohérence, proche du vécu de l'élève) peut sans doute être traduit, il n'est pas certain que ces notions de politique soient facilement assimilables dans le contexte de la pensée éducative telle qu'elle s'exprime actuellement dans la communauté anglophone.

**The Educational Project:
a convivial tool?**

Norman Henchey

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Peut-on légiférer l'individualité et l'initiative ainsi qu'un esprit de corps? Doit-on faire naître ces phénomènes au moyen de règlements ou directives ministériels? Pour résumer cette étude, Norman Henchey analyse l'histoire de ces écoles pas tout à fait insolites et y décode des caractéristiques communes à l'enseignement de l'anglais qui font preuve d'une certaine affinité pour les critères et les intentions du projet d'enseignement, aussi étrangères que ces manifestations technologiques puissent paraître au pluralisme pragmatique des écoles anglaises. Il constate les illusions qui sont nées au Québec devant les contradictions apparentes des récentes initiatives ministérielles. Mais se tournant vers l'avenir, il signale une liste de transformations remarquables dans le milieu de l'enseignement qui proviendront du succès de l'exécution du projet que prévoit le Ministère (pourvu que ces prévisions ne soient pas en soi une illusion née du concept directeur du projet d'enseignement).

COLLABORATEURS

Gary Anderson se spécialise dans le domaine de l'évaluation et de la recherche en matière de politique scolaire. Dans le cadre des systèmes scolaires québécois, il a étudié le phénomène des abandons scolaires et de l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde; au niveau international, il a étudié la planification et l'évaluation du développement des ressources dans diverses parties de l'Afrique et des Caraïbes. (Directeur du bureau de recherche en politique scolaire O.R.E.P. et professeur agrégé au département d'administration et de politiques scolaires.)

Howard Barber, originaire de l'Alberta, a été étudiant en maîtrise à l'université McGill et a terminé sa thèse sur le rôle du conseil académique dans les cégeps. Il travaille actuellement en Ontario.

Les travaux de **Lynn Butler-Kisber** portent sur le développement précoce du langage et la gestion des classes d'arts linguistiques. (Directeur du programme de B.Ed. et du programme de diplôme en enseignement primaire; membre du département d'enseignement primaire.)

Au nombre des intérêts de **Norman Henchey**, mentionnons la théorie des programmes, l'éducation au Québec, les politiques pédagogiques et l'étude des perspectives d'avenir. (Président désigné du département d'administration et de politiques scolaires.)

David Lawson est à la fois éducateur, poète et romancier. Certains de ses poèmes récents ont été publiés dans **McGill News, Poetry Canada Review** et **Poet and Critic**. Sa nouvelle "Rusty at McClintock's" fait partie du recueil des Editions Quadrant intitulé **Saturday Night at the Forum**.

Ayant déjà enseigné l'anglais à l'école secondaire, **Mary Maguire** porte un intérêt constant au développement de la langue, de l'écriture et de la lecture et a occupé des postes au sein de nombreuses organisations poursuivant les mêmes buts. Elle est présidente de la conférence du Canadian Conference of Teachers of English qui aura lieu à Montréal au mois de mai. (Directrice des stages d'enseignement et membre du département de l'enseignement secondaire.)

Les recherches actuelles de **Martha Nixon** portent sur les travaux pratiques en multiculturalisme pour les classes primaires. Elle est expert conseil auprès du ministère de l'Éducation du Québec en matière de travaux sur le terrain et de recherches communautaires. (Professeur agrégé au département d'éducation pré-scolaire et d'enseignement primaire.)

Jayne M. Rahming poursuit des études sur les processus cognitifs dans l'apprentissage d'une langue seconde et le bilinguisme. Elle a participé dans le département d'Administration scolaire à de nombreux travaux et recherches menés soit au Québec soit ailleurs. Elle est étudiante en doctorat au département de Psychopédagogie de l'Université McGill.

Judith Slaughter enseigne aux étudiants de premier cycle et de cycles supérieurs à la lecture et les arts linguistiques au programme d'études primaires et d'éducation pré-scolaire. Elle enseigne également la rédaction. Elle est diplômée de Duke University. (Professeur agrégé au département d'éducation pré-scolaire et d'enseignement primaire.)

Les travaux de recherche et les publications de **John Wolforth** ont porté principalement sur le développement économique et social du Grand Nord canadien, sur l'urbanisme, les problèmes d'enseignement de la géographie et les études du milieu. (Directeur, bureau des études supérieures et membre du département d'enseignement secondaire.)

CONTRIBUTORS

Gary Anderson specialises in policy research and evaluation. He has been studying in Quebec school systems such things as school dropouts and second-language learning, and in the international sphere such things as planning and evaluating resource development in various parts of Africa and the Caribbean. (Director of the Office of Research on Educational Policy -O.R.E.P.- and Associate Professor in the Department of Administration and Policy Studies in Education.)

Howard Barber, a native of Alberta was a Master's student at McGill University and completed a thesis on the role of the academic council in CEGEPS. He is currently working in Ontario.

Lynn Butler-Kisber works on early language development and the classroom management of the Language arts. (Program Director for the B.Ed. and McGill Diploma in Elementary Education, and a member of the Department of Elementary Education.)

Norman Henchey's interests "include" (as if they weren't enough) curriculum theory, education in Quebec, educational policy, and the study of the future. (Chairman-elect of the Department of Administration and Policy Studies.)

David Lawson is an educator, poet, and fiction writer. Some of his recent poetry has appeared in **Poetry Canada Review**, **Poet and Critic**, and **McGill News**. A short story of his appears in the Quadrant Editions collection called **Saturday Night at the Forum**.

As a former teacher of English in high school, **Mary Maguire** has an abiding interest in the development of language and literacy, and has held positions in several organizations pursuing those concerns. She is co-chairman of this year's conference of the Canadian Conference of Teachers of English being held in Montreal in May. (Director of Student Teaching, and a member of the Department of Secondary Education.)

Martha Nixon's current work is on field projects in multi-culturalism for elementary classrooms; she is a consultant of the Ministry of Education in Quebec on field trips and community investigations. (Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education.)

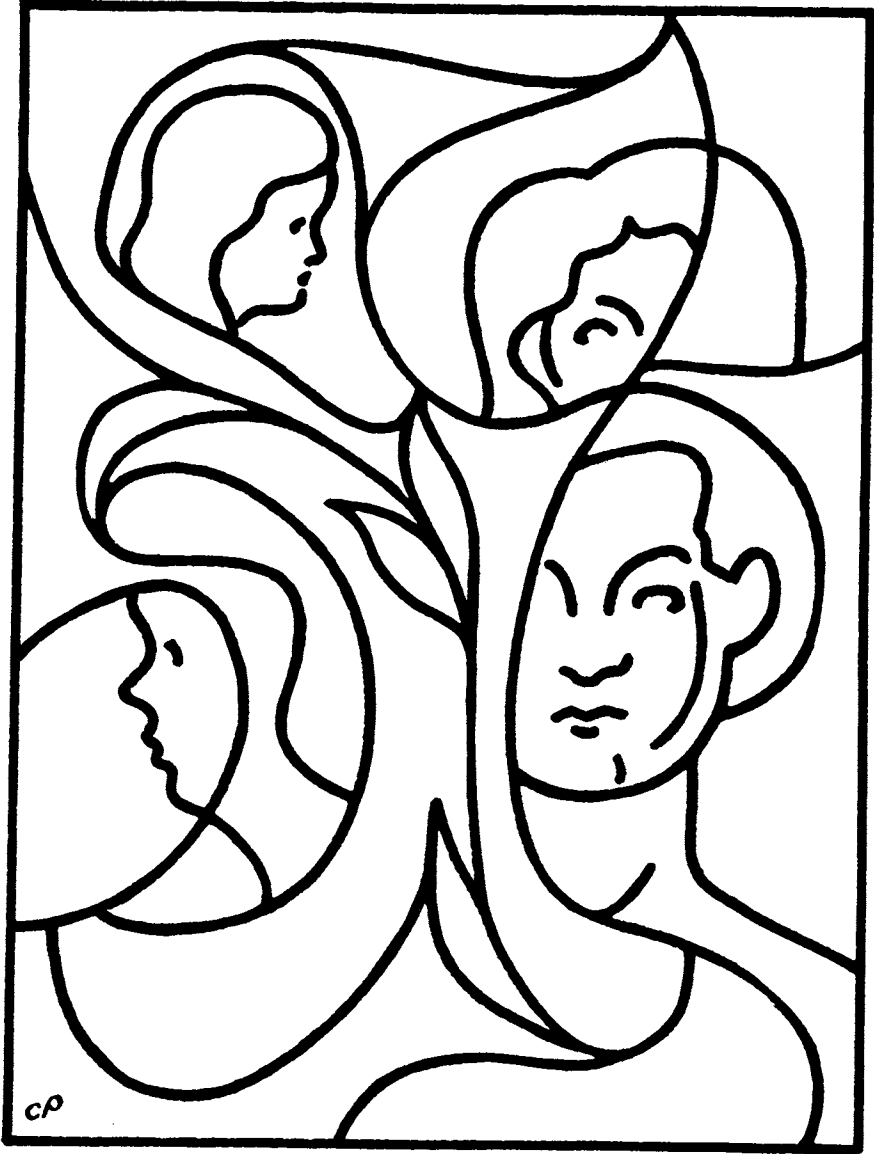
Jayne M. Rahming studies the cognitive processes involved in bilingualism and second-language learning, and has been involved in educational policy studies on a wide range of topics both within and outside Quebec. (Doctoral student in the Department of Educational Psychology at McGill University.)

Judith Slaughter teaches graduate and undergraduate students of reading and the language arts in elementary curriculum and early childhood education. She also teaches effective writing. She is a graduate of Duke University. (Associate Professor in the Department of Early Childhood and Elementary Education.)

John Wolforth's research and published writings have mainly been focused on the social and economic development of the Canadian North, on urbanism, and on the problems of education in geography and in environmental studies. (Director, Office of Graduate Studies, and a member of the Department of Secondary Education.)

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Les futurs auteurs doivent comprendre que les lecteurs du **Journal** dépassent largement le groupe de spécialistes et de professionnels de l'enseignement dont font partie les auteurs. Bien que le contenu d'un article doive être en mesure de supporter l'examen des spécialistes dans le domaine - au cours de l'étape de révision précédent l'acceptation du texte destiné à la publication - la langue et le ton **ne** devraient **pas** suivre les règles de la rédaction savante au point d'être hermétique aux non spécialistes. (A moins qu'ils ne soient d'une limpidité exceptionnelle, le **Journal** n'accepte normalement pas d'articles destinés à un auditoire composé uniquement de spécialistes.) La terminologie utilisée doit être accessible aux lecteurs intelligents mais profanes; les notes, tableaux et autres éléments en retrait du texte doivent être omis ou du moins réduits au minimum pour répondre à l'intérêt du lecteur. En d'autres termes, le Journal demande aux auteurs de faire preuve de la lucidité qui est un trait propre aux spécialistes.

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