

Teacher

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Government change spells opportunity for education

by Elaine Decker

The government in Victoria has changed. After 16 years of Social Credit, British Columbians have elected an NDP government. The anticipation of change creates electricity. "What now?" go many staffroom conversations. After all, governments have changed before. Ministers of Education have changed during the term of a single government. Educational practice has changed with, and without government involvement.



Some things aren't different today, after the election of a new government. Teachers in the classrooms of British Columbia are still working to meet the needs of every individual child; teachers in their staffrooms and locals are still working as colleagues to strengthen the teaching profession; teachers in their communities are still working as advocates for public education.

The BCTF hasn't changed. For 75

years, the federation has vigorously pursued its original goals: to foster and promote the cause of teaching, to raise the status of teaching as a profession, and to promote the welfare of teachers.

What *has* changed, for teachers and for their federation is that today we have a government that will work *with* us, not *against* us, to provide the quality of education B.C.'s children deserve.

See "Government" page 2

Teacher leaders have always worked with government. (From top, clockwise): Eileen Dailly, Min. of Ed. '73-75; Patrick Clarke, BCTF Pres. '84-86; Hilda Cryderman, BCTF Pres. '54-55; Mike Harcourt, Premier-elect, '91 and Ken Novakowski, BCTF Pres.; Brian Smith, Min. of Ed. '79-82. (Inset) Jim MacFarlan, BCTF Pres. '73-75.

BCTF archives photos

Close-captioned videos

I note with interest Sue Ferguson's letter concerning close captioned videos.

All new videos for which provincial rights are purchased are close-captioned prior to duplication for school use. This policy has been in place since the introduction of the new Primary Program resources in 1990.

Videos are now purchased from Image Media Services. The Provincial Education Media Centre (PEMC) has been incorporated into the Learning Resources Branch, which recommends print, video, and software resources for school use.

Annotations on newly available video print and software resources for the early intermediate level have just been released to schools. Funding for purchase of the new resources will be sent to districts in July.

Cynthia Williams
Ministry of Education
Learning Resources Branch

Homophobia articles insightful

We thank and congratulate the BCTF *Teacher* newsmagazine for printing two insightful articles, "Facing Homophobia," April/May 1991, and "A Day Without Homophobia," June 1991. As gay and lesbian educators, we are well aware of the day-to-day problems and injustices gay and lesbian students, teachers, and parents face in an intolerant society. These problems and injustices are the result of ignorance and institutionalized fear. We also know that to see the end of homophobia, we must educate the public, and to do this, we must first educate the educators. Both articles will do a great deal in creating a more supportive and understanding climate for lesbians and gays in our society.

We are pleased to see not only the problems being addressed but also solutions being proposed.

A day without homophobia can be realized in the near future, and we are pleased to see the BCTF being instrumental in this realization.

GALE-BC
Gay and Lesbian Educators of B.C.

Statistics don't add up

As a long-time local bargainer, I have always nurtured a healthy degree of scepticism with regard to statistics, whether emanating from Victoria, the BCSTA, or the "building on Burrard." Furthermore, as a science and (sometimes) math teacher, I get rather irritated when inappropriate or non-sensical conclusions are drawn from a set of numbers. It appears to me that such a situation occurred in the September issue of *Teacher*.

I refer specifically to the article entitled, "Feeling a Squeeze? B.C. Enrollment up by 17,500." Since the total enrollment increase claimed for the districts listed is about 17,500, one is led to conclude that the total projected increase for the remaining 56 districts is virtually zero! In any event, my reading of the ministry figures shows that the 17,500 figure represents total projected enrollment for these 19 districts, and not projected enrollment increases. It also shows a total increase for B.C. of 12, 064 and a total increase for these districts of minus 9!

Now to the dollar figures quoted. The figure of \$122 million for the combined 1991-92 grants to these 19 districts

appears to be reasonably accurate (my figure is \$125,985,600), but I simply cannot fathom the reasoning behind comparing that figure to the \$200 million (my figure \$182,820,503) of new money made available province-wide. I would really like to know what possible conclusions one can draw from the difference between two unrelated figures, as the article seems to do.

While there are no doubt many legitimate reasons for questioning the provincial government's commitment to public education, I am afraid that the misuse or distortion of statistics, whether out of malice, carelessness, or ignorance, does nothing but harm to whatever case our profession might make for improved support of the system.

Darrell Cursors
Nechako

Peace River North says "Thanks, colleagues."

On behalf of the teachers of Peace River North, thank you to teachers around the province who extended their support during our strike. The support we received was exceptional. Executive members and local presidents from around the province joined our members on the picket lines with words of encouragement; messages of support appeared daily in the strike office and in the *Picket Line News*; donuts from Peace River South and Fort Nelson kept us well fed; and the financial contributions from teachers around the province reaffirmed we were not alone in our determination to achieve a fair collective agreement.

Donations from locals were matched by a grant from the BCTF. In addition to strike pay, each teacher received \$1700 in support.

Our members appreciated the efforts of BCTF staff: Kit Krieger in getting our message out and of Shirley Cox in getting our strike-pay cheques to us.

Jim Caldwell was here on May 7, when we said "No more!" and he was still here supporting us 102 days later when we settled. His support, ideas, and determination encouraged us to persevere.

Teachers in Peace River North have a much deeper understanding of the strength of a union. To each of you we extend our thanks.

Ellen Ellis
PRNTA President

BCTF president applauds members' election efforts

On behalf of the Executive Committee, I want to congratulate all BCTF members who took up the call to become involved in the election campaign. I believe the extent of teacher involvement in this campaign will help significantly to enhance the influence of teachers in the months and years ahead. It is appropriate that in this the year of our 75th anniversary as an organization of public school teachers in B.C. that we have achieved a potential situation in which public education will be able to develop in a healthy and positive climate.

I look forward to working with the new government to build a climate of trust and respect. I look forward to stability in our public school system.

Thank you again for acting as citizens working in the interests of public education.

tion. A special thank you to all those teachers who accepted the added challenge to run as candidates, and congratulations to those who were successful and who will be MLAs in the new legislature. I know you will be advocates for a strong and healthy public education system.

Ken Novakowski
BCTF President

We should have known better . . .

Two items slipped by five pairs of eyes, as wrong names appeared in the September issue of *Teacher*. Our apologies to CUSO for its invented title as "Canadian University Students Overseas" (CUSO is its official name). Also to Sylvia McCleay for giving her the surname Rayer in the caption on Page 20. Of course, regrets to S. Rayer as well.

Letters to the editor

Letters to Readers write (*Teacher* Newsmagazine, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9) may be edited for reasons of legality, taste, brevity, and clarity. To be considered for publication, they must be signed, and include the writer's home address, school district, and a telephone number (which will not be published) so authorship may be verified.

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Government from page 1

According to BCTF President Ken Novakowski, "Teachers have been trying to forge a social contract for education, one in which teachers pledge high standards of professional practice, and society promises sufficient resources and autonomy to permit the profession to meet those standards. The previous government kept its demands high and its support low. Teacher morale and public education really suffered."

Novakowski said the BCTF looks forward to meeting with the new government at the earliest opportunity. Rebuilding quality public education after years of restraint, confrontation, and chaos isn't an overnight job, but Novakowski is optimistic.

"We know that we share expectations for public education. The NDP mandate for education, and our own goal statement 9.A.01 are compatible. The NDP campaign platform includes the restoration of the authority of local school boards, fair and stable funding on a multi-year basis, reasonable timelines and adequate resources for educational change, and full consultation with parents and teachers. We look forward to hearing the details of those promises."

"I expect a lot less teacher bashing."

Jim Swanson

Novakowski said he looks forward to working with a government that recognizes teachers' professional expertise and commitment. "Teachers have a lot to offer. In their daily work, and in more formal discussions, such as the province-wide deliberations we had about the Royal Commission report, teachers focus on educational improvement. B.C. teachers have been involved in education policy analysis, action research, alternative models of school organization, curriculum development, in-service education. We want to contribute this experience and knowledge."

BCTF representatives will meet with the government at the first opportunity. "We'll reaffirm our belief in consultation among education stakeholders, and we'll co-operate on plans for incremental, effective educational change. We'll seek a speedy repeal of Bill 82 and an end to referendum financing. We want to discuss the Royal Commission's Recommendation 6.11, which recognizes teachers' professional autonomy, giving them control of their own professional development. The governance and decision-making structure needs to be reviewed so that it lives up to the Royal Commission's expectations for democratic representation and appropriate consultation. Assessment is a topic for lengthy discussion, as is the future of the Year 2000 initiatives."

And what will change in the classroom? Jim Swanson, an intermediate teacher at Winchelsea Elementary School in Parksville, says, "There will be peace. Now there will be a chance for a regular

"When they restore my collective bargaining rights, they will also reinstall the feeling of professional integrity that Bill 82 took away."

Bev Kolson

classroom teacher like me to get on with the job. I can scarcely remember a year when my teaching hasn't been plagued by contentious issues, by negative press. I expect a lot less teacher bashing."

Bev Kolson, teacher-librarian at Bayview Community School, in Vancouver, agrees. "I expect this government to make good on its promises and repeal Bill 82 so I can be guaranteed the salary that

"When we work together — the ministry, the school boards, the BCTF, the teachers' associations, the real beneficiaries will be the students."

Donna Bulmar

I stood on strike for. When they restore my collective bargaining rights, they will also reinstall the feeling of professional integrity that Bill 82 took away, just as surely as it took away my salary."

Donna Bulmar teaches at Robert Ogilvie Elementary School, in Peace River North, a district with the dubious distinction of having had the province's longest teacher strike. Bulmar, who knows about conflict, admits to feeling thrilled about a change of government because of the potential for co-operation. "It will be so beneficial to have a government that supports education and teachers," she said. "When we work together — the ministry, the school boards, the BCTF, the teachers' associations, the real beneficiaries will be the students. In my classroom I will go about my job with a new sense of security; when a student needs some special help, the odds are good that the help will be available."

"I'm sure this government will be more willing to listen to the practitioners. We'll do a better job of educational change, because teachers will take the lead."

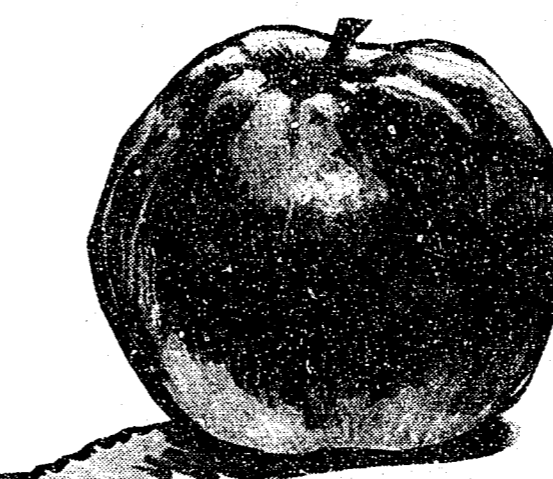
Marie Skinner

Marie Skinner, teacher-librarian at Baker Elementary School, in Quesnel, is also her local's professional development chairperson. Skinner laughingly comments, "First, we'll kiss Bill 82 goodbye. Then we'll work to implement the better parts of the Year 2000. I'm sure this government will be more willing to listen to the practitioners. We'll do a better job of educational change, because teachers will take the lead."

Teachers expressed the hope that the change in government will mean stability, fairness, greater respect for teachers, and the resources they need to do their jobs well.

For Keith Lindstrom, of Periticton Secondary School, the change was overdue. "As I watched the results come in, I said to myself, 'Finally, finally, finally...'"

Elaine Decker is the BCTF Communications Officer.



Facing facts on the current education system

Students

- Estimated FTE population of B.C. public schools (September '91) 520,000.
- Percentage of students entering Grade 12 but not graduating 24%.
- Percentage of First Nations students entering Grade 12 but not graduating 50%.
- Percentage of students enrolling in Grade 8 but not reaching Grade 12 13%.

Unemployment

- Unemployment rate for people with less than Grade 12 completion 15.4%.
- Unemployment rate for Grade 12 graduates 8.9%.

School facilities

- Percentage of B.C. school facilities more than 30 years old 44.7%.
- Percentage of B.C. school facilities less than 10 years old 5.7%.

Teachers

- Percentage of teachers who are female (September '90) 61.1%.
- Average salary of a female teacher (September '90) \$40,870.
- Average salary of a male teacher (September '90) \$45,743.

Administrators

- Percentage of school-based administrators who are female (September '90) 22.3%.

Salary

- Average salary of a regular classroom teacher (September '82) \$32,176.
- Average salary of a regular classroom teacher (September '90) \$42,031.
- Net change in average salary since 1982 (4.2%).

New teachers

- Number of new teachers needed in B.C. between now and the year 2000 27,000.
- Percentage of new teachers who leave the profession within five years 44%.

Professional development

- Fiscal framework funding earmarked for teacher professional development (curriculum implementation and in-service education) 1990-91 \$15.3 million.
- Professional development funding per teacher 1990-91 \$539.

Enrolment growth

- Overall enrolment growth 1987-88 to 1990-91 6.6%.
- Enrolment growth in special education 1987-88 to 1990-91 29.3%.
- Enrolment growth in English as a second language 1987-88 to 1990-91 117.6%.

Racial tolerance satisfaction

- Percentage of B.C. population satisfied with the job schools are doing to promote racial tolerance 67%.
- Percentage of B.C. population of non-European origin satisfied with the job schools are doing to promote racial tolerance 53%.

Expenditure

- Per student school expenditure for 1986-87 \$4,110.
- Per student school expenditure for 1991-92 in 1986-87 dollars \$4,316.
- B.C.'s per student spending lag behind the national average in 1991-92 (12.7%).
- Average annual rate of per-student real spending growth since 1986-87 1%.

Source: B.C. Ministry of Education, *Standard Reports, Annual Reports*, press releases, unpublished survey on teacher retention, school district budget data; Statistics Canada, *Employment, Earnings and Hours, Consumer Prices Index, Advance Statistics of Education*.



Chronicles of Pride

On August 28, the BCTF hosted a celebration marking the release of the teachers' guide to accompany *Chronicles of Pride*.

Chronicles of Pride is a series of 31 paintings by portrait artist Patricia Richardson Logie. The subjects of the portraits are leaders of Canada's First Nations communities, but Logie says the paintings "deal with the concepts of awareness and of role modelling; of personal pride and human dignity; of the rewards of open communication and knowledge of other cultures." A book by the same title

includes colored reproductions of the paintings.

At the book launch, President Ken Novakowski said, "The BCTF is committed to better understanding of First Nations culture, and to improving the quality of public education for First Nations students. Publicizing this resource guide is one way we can move towards these goals."

The book and resource guide are available from Detselig Enterprises Ltd., P.O. Box 399, Calgary, Alberta, (403) 283-0900.

What's up in your local?

Cowichan

The Cowichan District Teachers' Association got started early this fall. An all-day executive meeting at the end of August produced a list of goals and objectives for 1991-92. Urging teachers to become involved in the fall election was the first goal, followed by increased awareness of grievance and contract issues and support for staff reps.

Three weeks later, the local's professional development committee had a morning co-ordinating its workload. It spent the afternoon meeting with PD reps to approve plans and to examine issues affecting individual schools.

An objective for Cowichan teachers is to support teachers new to the district, especially teachers new to the profession. PD reps are taking colleagues under their wing, ensuring that they know about the PD opportunities: local and provincial specialist association and district activities. First-time teachers in Cowichan benefit from an extra five paid days in the local agreement for their particular use: for observing of colleagues' classes, for in-service education, for planning, or simply for catching their breath during their first experience of report writing.

Delta

Delta teachers worked in the election campaign while maintaining a high degree of involvement in professional development. All stakeholders worked together to offer the best possible professional development to district teachers.

Participants in PD activities, jointly sponsored by the Delta Teachers' Association, the BCTF, and Delta School Board, in September and October said, "Best workshop I can recall in a 20-year teaching career!" "We were challenged and given the opportunity to stretch and accomplish something!" "My mind is full — I'll be reflecting forever!"

The BCTF's Curriculum Services and Professional Opportunities program provided two workshops: a team-building session for Delta teacher consultants by BCTF PD staff member Dale Kelly, and a two-day leadership and facilitation skills workshop for teachers from five school districts, jointly sponsored by the local association and the school board. A third workshop, paid for by the local association and led by the PD chairperson and BCTF staff, was a day-long immersion for school-based PD contact persons.

Teachers continue to pursue professional development in addition to working on the election campaign. They participate in many BCTF-sponsored activities, including PSA conferences, school-based workshops, and district workshops for PD leaders.

Howe Sound Secondary

Anyone who teaches in a secondary school knows how "far-flung" a staff can become. Decision making by these large groups is unwieldy at best, frustrating and soul-destroying at worst. But a recent

See "What's up?" page 4

What's up? from page 3

experience at Howe Sound Secondary School in Squamish proved (perhaps even to the surprise of those taking part) that even large diverse groups *can* reach consensus. And they found a bonus: a heightened sense of collegiality.

How did this come about? Not by accident. The staff of 60 (48 teachers and 12 teaching assistants) got off to a start last fall in Year 2000 response groups. The school district embarked on a program of early dismissal on Wednesdays. So, from 14:00 to 15:00 two Wednesdays a month, homogeneous groups met to discuss a response to that document. From those working groups arose the need and desire to address other staff-development topics.

Anne Davies, of Victoria, gave us a leg up. She came to Howe Sound last February to conduct a needs assessment. The power of the Wednesday work groups emerged. Our having six months' experience working in small, manageable groups made tackling the practical problems identified by the needs assessment child's play, relatively speaking.

Staff members moved out of their Year 2000 groups into larger groups of their choice, groups that would address a single topic related to staff development. The larger groups, like the smaller ones before, represented a cross-section of departments and personal philosophies. The six months of working in the response groups had helped dismantle the barriers (real or imagined) that impede effective school-wide communication and co-operation.

By the end of May, the larger groups were able to report to the entire staff their respective findings and recommendations. The diverse results reflected many hours of research. Some of the projects to emerge from the working groups were creating a staff handbook, devising a more flexible timetable, drawing up plans and recommendations for projected renovations to the physical plant, and planning to improve both internal and external communications. Some of the groups tackled projects that quickly showed results (the staff handbook will be issued next month). For other groups, the progress will take more time.

But we all know how easy it is to lose momentum over an extended vacation. So to help keep the enthusiasm alive, Anne Davies returned. She and the staff held a one-day-and-a-half retreat in Whistler, September 12 and 13. The retreat was a huge success. Rarely does a staff that size find itself in an informal setting. We spent Thursday evening playing "The Change Game," a board game that leads its players through the mire of what is required to change effectively the attitudes and practices of any group of people. Friday, we got down to business.

In addition to updating the school's mission statement, we established the priorities in staff development: becoming aware of the features of the district and the school itself that would both help and hinder the causes at hand. By the end of the day, everyone was clear as to the staff-development priorities for the year.

To you, these might seem like everyday procedures for accomplishing tasks at hand. Yet, often our time, energy, and commitment get sucked up into a huge void. We can devote hours to meetings and discussions only to have money, enthusiasm, or support dry up, and we are left with an increasingly unsatisfactory status quo.

At Howe Sound that isn't likely to happen. The work is in manageable pieces, and participants are no longer starry-eyed, waiting for the earth to move.

— Patti McLaughlin

Compiled by members of Teacher work-group and advisory board. Newsy items about people and events in your local are invited by phone, mail, or Solinet.

College of Teachers elections set for late fall

While the provincial election captured teachers' attention in September and October, preparations were also under way for another election of some significance to teachers — the selection of councillors to the college. All 15 elected positions will be decided later this fall.

Local associations have been conducting endorsement meetings and votes to confirm the teacher candidates for these positions. In every zone at least one teacher has sought this endorsement. Candidates endorsed through this process will ensure that BCTF policies on the college are followed and implemented.

The change of government makes achieving BCTF policy a possibility for the first time since the college was imposed on teachers in 1987.

The most significant policy, adopted without dissent by the Representative Assembly, calls for the BCTF to seek legislative changes that would:

a. Limit the functions of the College of Teachers to certification, certification

review and decertification, and related teacher education and disciplinary matters.

b. Eliminate the duplicate membership structure.

c. Provide for a governing council with a 75% majority of BCTF representatives.

d. Provide full funding from government for the college.

The election of teacher candidates to the college council will assist the achievement of teachers' view of the appropriate structures and role for the college.

Nominations closed on October 15. The following teacher candidates have received BCTF endorsement:

East Kootenay
Joyce McLeod (Windermere)

West Kootenay
Bob Jackson (Trail)

Okanagan
Wes Nickel (Penticton)

Mainline Cariboo*
John Kooistra (Shuswap)

— Ray Worley

Note: * candidates face elections.

Teachers consider joining the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC)

by Mavis Lowry

The question of whether the BCTF should join the CLC will be debated in various forums by teachers this school year, before they vote after the 1992 AGM.

● In May 1989, a BCTF Task Force on Affiliation was struck to investigate the range of affiliation options.

● The 1989 AGM asked that information be sent to members, about affiliation with all labour centrals, for wide membership discussion before the 1991 AGM.

● In January 1991, the task force recommended that the debate become more focussed, joining a labour central other than the CLC was deemed to offer no

advantages. The task force recommended that more time be taken to give all teachers an opportunity for study, discussion, and debate on whether teachers should affiliate with the Canadian Labour Congress.

● In November 1991, discussion and debate will begin in locals. Members of the task force are prepared to speak in locals, to lead the discussions.

● The task force has produced a draft brochure and a video about the CLC. The task force will continue to gather feedback from teachers who attend local meetings, so that it can make a recommendation to the BCTF Executive in January 1992.

Sisulu, African National Congress, visits BCTF

Walter Sisulu, the deputy president of African National Congress, spent 25 years in prison, along with Nelson Mandela, for his oppositions to apartheid. He was in Canada recently to thank Canadians who have supported the struggle against apartheid. Sisulu emphasized that "the education system in South Africa has collapsed" and that continued support is necessary if apartheid is really to end.



Bored meetings?

Most interesting meetings:

- included brainstorming
- followed specific themes
- demonstrated techniques
- interpreted results
- updated relevant news
- discussed changes in policy

Least interesting meetings:

- relayed information that could have been carried in a memo
- rehashed old problems or turned into gripe sessions
- addressed subjects affecting few people at the meeting
- allowed a few to monopolize
- had no written agenda.

Source: *Communication*, National Association of Elementary School Principals, Alexandria, VA.



Wes Knapp, BCTF staffer, has set up office in the Faculty of Education at the University of British Columbia. Through seminars and individual meetings like this one with student Jeanne Crouse, Knapp aims to build bridges between teacher education and the profession.

UBC photo

Federation goes to campus

This year the BCTF and UBC have teamed up on a unique on-campus project ... a pilot program to orient student teachers to the profession.

An estimated 25,000 new BCTF members will have joined the profession by the year 2000. This assumes an attrition rate of 2500 teachers per year, a figure cited in the 1988 Royal Commission on Education report and borne out during the past two years. The entire profession will have renewed itself within the next 15 years.

Eight hundred and fifty students entered teacher education this year, selected from more than 2000 applicants. Their average age is 27 and the vast majority have at least one academic degree. That's quite a change.

Wes Knapp, assistant director of the BCTF's Bargaining Division, is working full time in the Faculty of Education on this program aimed at building bridges between student teachers and the teachers' federation.

Student teachers typically have had little understanding of the issues they will face in teaching or of the purposes of a teachers' organization. Moreover, they have had little knowledge of the federation's growth as a union of professionals.

Student teachers need an opportunity to interact with the BCTF, PSAs, and local teachers' associations about such matters as current educational issues, teachers' rights in collective agreements, benefits and salaries, learning and working conditions, provincial specialist association services, and Lesson Aids.

Knapp is conducting sessions on the BCTF as part of existing courses within the Faculty of Education. In addition, he is available to assist students individually on such matters as job resumes, professional resources, collective agreements, and TQS requirements.

Going back to school

by Carol Orom

What are you doing now?" I'm asked this several times a week by people I've not seen for a long time. Sometimes I say that I'm doing graduate work, but often I reply, "Oh, I'm back at school."

Two years ago, when I quit teaching and began doing undergraduate courses in anthropology, that choice of phrasing was natural to me but uncomfortable. I felt frustrated that I appeared like the irresponsible adult who couldn't make it so went back to school. Without a nice concise summary of what I wanted to be "when I grew up," the best reaction I could expect was, "Um, that sounds interesting!" End of conversation. Some would ask, "Well, what exactly do you want to do when you are finished?" Some would start making plans for me when I did finish. Their flurry of proposals usually left me convinced that I would never be able to finish. Nevertheless, I appreciated the interest, however short-lived.

The pride I also felt, was much more secret. I would hold it close to me. I was finally taking steps to do what I actually give myself the freedom to choose, to decide, to direct my public life.

On rare occasions, I would meet someone living their life in the same way. The conversation and the reflections became closer to a truth, closer to my reality. The conversations were usually interrupted or snatched away because both of us were so busy getting on with the doing. But the gems of truth rang through. "Don't ever listen to your biological clock!" "I know now that I'm capable of learning whatever I want to." "Let's meet again for coffee. This is lonely."

Was I going back to school? It seemed like it. Feelings arose in me that ripped me backward into my years of high school. I felt 17; confused, powerless, immature. I had to remind myself over and over that I had recently left a career where I had enormous responsibility, was respected by the community, was expected to be professional, had indeed fought to be more professional than a system was willing to accept, had earned money. I had been a teacher. But the threads of this reasoning were gossamer thin. The actual days I spent as a student easily rubbed out my efforts to prop myself up.

At other times I would feel propelled, secretly happy with my adventure, delighted with the intellectual gymnastics I was performing. I would quietly tell my family of my latest success. They were genuinely glad for me. I would more reluctantly tell them of my latest failure. They would tell me in their good sense, that it was only a temporary roadblock.

Was I going back to school? Was I really going back over some used ground? Was I in a cycle of going back to school because I could think of no other way to release self?

Later, being accepted into graduate school was more reassuring, some kind of landmark. This was a place I had never been. Surely this was not going back. Must I not be grown up now? I quit saying that I was "going back to school." I said instead that I was "doing graduate work." It had a much better ring to it, in my ears anyway. But suangely, people asked the same questions. Sometimes I would go into an elaborate explanation, especially if on that day I was reasonably sure of what I was doing. This would usually be met with the glazed eye. But more often I would be vague, deflecting the question with some joke.

Leaving teaching to return to school is a journey of discovery and re-discovery for each of us. Somehow it does not feel like going back, but forward.

Recently though, the words *going back to school* do not have an authenticity to me. They are jarring. What is it about this phrase? The problem is *going back*. I cannot fit myself into this notion. Am I then going ahead? Every time I reach for a new idea and manage to integrate it into my own patterns of thinking and viewing, I do sense a kind of going ahead. But what is going ahead? Does this concept imply some kind of perfect state for the human? Can we assume such divinity in ourselves? Or do I perceive of going ahead in some linear trajectory because of the constructs conditioned into me by a culture pinned onto the frame of evolution?

Should I try to view what is happening to me within the metaphor of expansion? Maybe my boundaries are spreading outward in a circular fashion: me or self at the centre seeing more and more around me as I turn. Maybe I am not going back to school but I am *re-turning* to sift through again the ideas, values, and perceptions harbored there to elicit a deeper and more authentic understanding of my life. With this returning, I bring my own unique lived experiences to be spread out and reflected against the school. So I am not going back to school to redo something that didn't work the first time. I'm returning to school to nourish and deepen self.

Carol Orom is an MA candidate at UVic in Curriculum Studies.

QUOTE OF NOTE

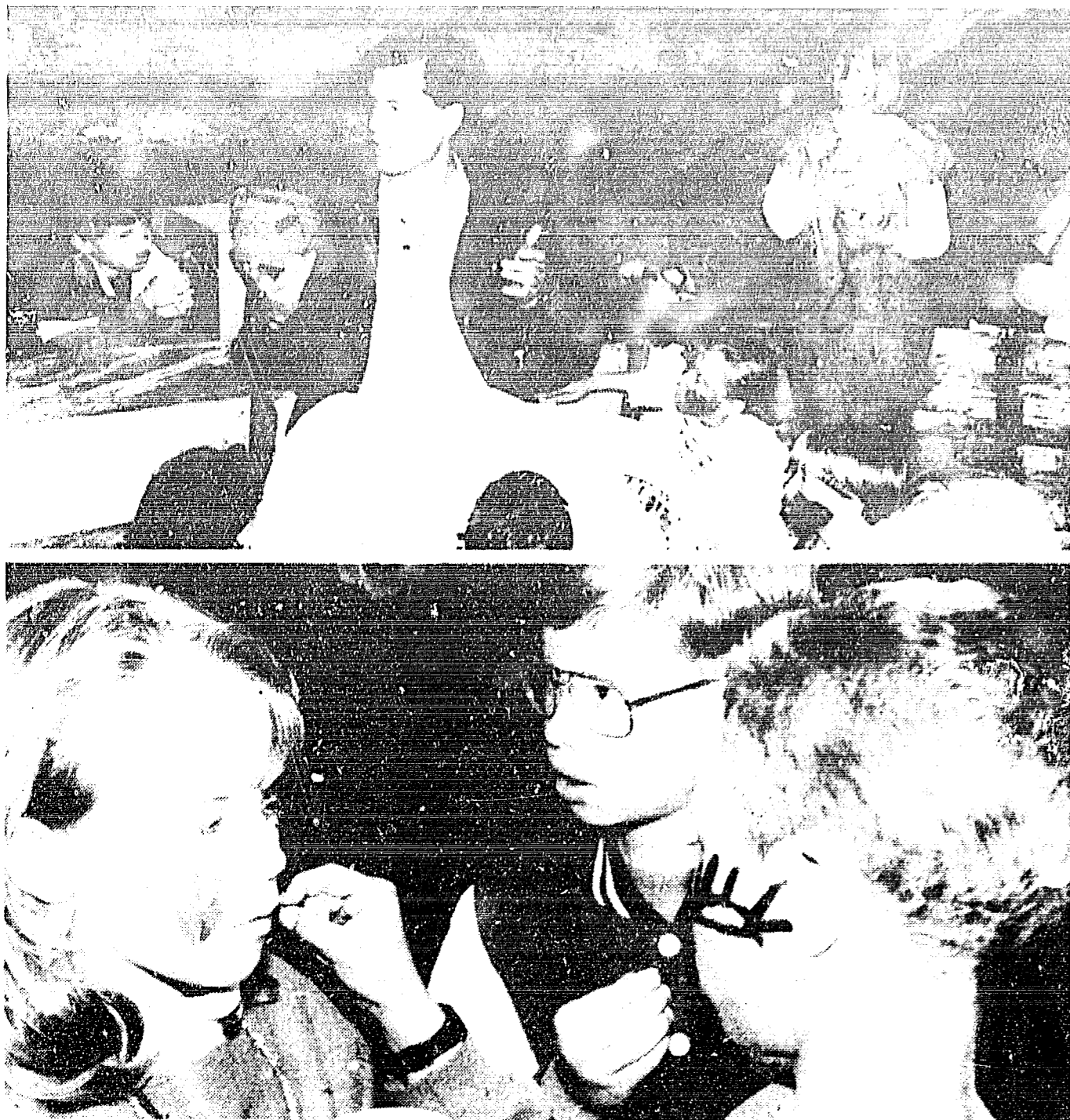
Teacher education

"In the majority of teacher education classes, professors *talk* about interactive learning. They tell prospective teachers about the effectiveness of hands-on teaching. Students *listen* to professors tell them not to dominate a class with teacher talk. Is it not obvious to the designers of these programs that we are being taught how to teach in the very manner in which we are *not* supposed to teach? This leaves us in the same predicament we were in when we started this process — wondering what we do when we finally are allowed in the classroom."

— A teacher writing in Basic Education. "Good teachers fulfill the paradox of giving unselfishly in the selfish knowledge they are doing something important."

— Rae McKee, U.S. National Teacher of the Year 1991.

Source: *Education USA*, April 15, 1991.



Kelowna intermediate students descend into a B.C. interior Salish Kekuli (winter home) and reconnect with Planet Earth. Carol Taylor photos

Reflections from a Kekuli

by Carol Taylor

B lustry weather gives way to driving rain. I wait behind the last of the 10-year-olds who carefully descend a notched pole jutting from atop the traditional Kekuli, a semi-subterranean winter dwelling of B.C.'s Interior Salish Indians.

Surrounding this small acreage, still in its wild, natural state, is the frantic development of new roads and modern homes. Cement-truck drivers, one after another, gear down to make the steep grade leading to a new housing development just a

few hundred metres from us. I turn my back to the scarred hillside and watch the children lower themselves into the earth. Our Indian costumes are soaked through, and a chill wind whips across Okanagan Lake. The last few students disappear into the top opening of the grassy dome covering the winter dwelling. I am the last to embrace the thick cedar

pole and climb four metres down into the darkness of this Kekuli reconstruction.

Students call out to me as I reach the earth floor. For a few seconds, I cannot distinguish faces. Light comes from the narrow opening through which we've just descended. I glance away from this single ray of light, curtained by rain, and move toward children making room for me on the earth ledge along the perimeter.

After a few minutes, I'm able to count the 21 students. Most huddle near the museum teacher; others scatter along the eight-metre diameter base. There is light enough to distinguish the red and black designs painted on each face.

As soon as the students settle into this very different environment, the museum teacher shows us artifacts from early days, "before the white man arrived," he says.

One student gently interjects to offer a gender-neutral term white people. Others chime in with Europeans or non-Indians. "I stand corrected," responds the young man from the museum. He smiles and glances toward me.

We smell pine-needle and birchbark baskets and the smoked hides. We run our hands over the rawhide bindings that join support beams framing the shelter of this Kekuli. Stone and bone tools pass from student to student. Carefully we touch the sharp, fragile edges of basalt and obsidian arrowheads.

When the war hammer passes, some students pantomime the gore of knocking another's brains out. I'm relieved when the war hammer is put to rest.

The museum teacher explains how indigenous families worked together to survive, and how greatly valued each family member was. These First Peoples were stewards of the land, air, and water. First Peoples lived in harmony with nature, wasting nothing.

At the end of 40 minutes, the rain lessens. Students on either side of me radiate

enough warmth that I no longer feel the cold.

After all the artifacts have been collected, we mark time for the rain to stop. Rather than hurry to begin another activity, we enjoy the natural hush within the cosy warmth of this Kekuli. Children who find rocks along the earthen floor

Deep within this earth lodge, listening to the rhythmic pounding, I close my eyes and succumb to a pleasant drowsiness. Time, this rare luxury of time.

begin a rhythmic pounding of stone on stone — their activity is not a distraction. They continue with a singular focus on shaping their rocks.

Some of the children make Indian-village models from the earthen floor. They scoop out places for the cooking pits, sweat houses, and Kekuli. A couple of students turn out their hand-sewn medicine bags and mix new-growth tips from the Douglas fir with their store-bought nuts and seeds. They compare notes about edible plants of the Okanagan, claiming Douglas-fir tips make their snacks tastier and more nutritious.

The rhythmic rock pounding continues. "I wish we could stay here forever," whispers a 10-year-old next to me.

I know that once we climb out of the Kekuli, we are to hike up the back trails to play games called Ugly Face, Spear Through the Hoop, and Tug 'o War. The finale of our special Indian Days will be a drum dance with chanting to thank the Great Spirit for Planet Earth. At day's end, we'll return to the school by bus.

Deep within this earthlodge, listening to the rhythmic pounding, I close my eyes and succumb to a pleasant drowsiness. Time, this rare luxury of time.

I start when someone announces that the rain has stopped. Time is tightly scheduled, and I must organize our ascent.

Loose sand from the students' earth models creates a haze in the beacon of light. One boy makes a replica of the war hammer from a larger rock. With the jute cord from his medicine bag, he attaches the stone to a stick handle. He enacts a kill, and his victim dramatizes a slow death. This provides some entertainment for children sitting nearby. They lose interest when the stone falls off the stick.

I survey this gathering and connect it to earlier days. In my fake suede dress, sitting high on the dirt ledge, I am the matriarch, and for mutual survival, I care that the children learn to value Earth and each other.

Within a few hundred metres of this underground dwelling, the modern world is knotted in conflict. These children have an awareness of the planet's fragility, and some struggle with personal fragility. The basic goals for a life of quality haven't changed in the last 300 years; who could argue everyone's need for a healthy, loving life? But the mission to save the planet and ourselves overwhelms me. I, too, wish we could remain here forever in the warmth and security of the Kekuli.

I'm the last to leave the earth lodge. Climbing the pole, I hear excited voices overhead; the children tell me to hurry so that I won't miss it. Looking up, I see children standing in shafts of sunlight and I know the promise of a rainbow.

Carol Taylor, an intermediate teacher in Kelowna, serves as the Status of Women contact person and as an executive member of the Central Okanagan Teachers' Association.



Staff rep, AO's peer

by Kit Krieger

How did your school's staff representative get the job? Was he/she elected in a spirited contest among teachers anxious to play a leadership role in the school? Probably not. If your school is typical, your staff rep was a reluctant volunteer — maybe a teacher new to the district who was persuaded to accept the role after being assured that "there's nothing to it but attending a few meetings." Or maybe the job fell to someone who didn't make it to the meeting and couldn't protest the appointment.

The staff rep has always been an important person in the school. But when teachers unionized in 1987, the importance of the role increased.

With unionization, the relationship between teachers and their school board employers changed. The relationship became more formal and, for the first time, subject to the terms of a collective agreement, terms that define an unprecedented array of conditions of employment for teachers.

Both parties to the collective agreement, the teachers' association and the school board, have *agents* in the school. The board's agents are the administrative officers. The union's agent is the staff representative. As the agents of the signatories of the collective agreement, *staff representative and the administrative officers in your school are peers*. No other teacher enjoys the peer status afforded the staff representative.

TQS proposes fairer criteria

by Phil Rexin

If you are from outside B.C. or if you are considering upgrading your Teacher Qualification Service (TQS) category, read on.

If an *accord* is reached between the BCTF and the B.C. School Trustees Association, fairer criteria for determining TQS salary categories for B.C. teachers will be established. (The new accord must be examined and ratified by both the BCTF and the BCSTA before the present regulations can be changed. Both parties can veto any proposed amendments. Should no final agreement on the exact language be achieved by March 1992, the implementation date of August 15, 1992, may be abandoned.)

If you completed your teacher-education training in Quebec, Newfoundland, or Ontario, the accord may make you eligible to have your salary category upgraded upon application as of September 1, 1992. Upgrades would not be retroactive. In the past, some teachers were deducted a pay category because the secondary school system where they matriculated was not identical to B.C.'s. The accord would establish a *national standard* that evaluates all teachers according to the quality of their post-secondary academic and professional preparation.

Phil Rexin, a teacher at Chase Secondary School, is a BCTF representative on the Teacher Qualification Board, and a member of the BCTF Teacher Education Committee.

This peer status is asserted in most collective agreements. Wherever the contract expresses the rights of the union in the school, it means the right of the staff representative. These rights include the right to convene union meetings and use school facilities.

Among the most important rights our contracts provide is the right of union representation. This right, articulated with varying degrees of strength in local collective agreements, allows teachers to have a union representative present at meetings with administrative officers.

Ideally, the right to union representation is unqualified and can be exercised at the discretion of the member. Many locals have achieved this model language. In a number of collective agreements, this right is limited to grievances, discipline, suspension, or dismissal of the employee.

Teachers should never hesitate to use union representation. Before a meeting, the teacher and the staff rep should plan the conduct of the meeting; who will speak, who will take notes, etc. The staff rep's presence will, in many cases, change the tone and the outcome of the meeting.

Staff-representative training sessions, held in nearly every local, focus on developing advocacy skills and increasing understanding of the collective agreement. After they get over the shock of learning that they are the peers to the AO, staff reps are eager to assert their status and work on behalf of their colleagues.

So, at the annual meeting where your staff selects the staff committee, the social chairperson, the PD chair, and the rest, give special care to the election of your staff representative. You should probably give his or her selection the same concern you would give the selection of a new administrative officer. After all, they are peers!

Kit Krieger, a BCTF staff member, co-ordinates the BCTF Staff Rep Training Program.

What is the price for this accord? A beginning teacher, after August 1996, will be required to complete a four-year-degree program before being awarded a Category 4 (PC). Under existing TQS policies, Category 4 may be awarded to those holding standard certificates who have completed four years university but have not completed a university degree.

In addition, after August 15, 1992, integrated program upgrades will not be permitted, although those who begin such upgrades by next summer will have 10 years to complete their program.

It should be noted that TQS and the College of Teachers are separate institutions with separate functions. TQS examines teachers' credentials for the purpose of establishing salary categories, whereas, the College of Teachers examines credentials for certification purposes.

Starting January 1, 1992, the College of Teachers will require a minimum of four years preparation (non-degree) for a standard certificate. Degree completion is required for a professional certificate.

For a closer look at the proposals and their rationale, contact your local association president or local association representative, or ask for a copy of the TQS Review Committee's White Paper.

Phil Rexin, a teacher at Chase Secondary School, is a BCTF representative on the Teacher Qualification Board, and a member of the BCTF Teacher Education Committee.

Opinion

The problem with social studies

by Patrick Clarke

How could something so important be so marginalized? How can a subject rich in opportunities for inquiry, debate, and involvement be so consistently maligned by students and dismissed as "boring"? How do educators respond to student observations recently reported in the B.C. Ministry of Education's annual report? Students feel they are adequately served by schools in communications, science, math, and technology, but they see their social education as lacking.

Today, the social studies of capes, bays, and dead men is about as pertinent as learning to make buggy whips.

I have worked in social education in B.C. schools since 1973 and I am discouraged when I consider our approach to social issues. Let me be blunt. On issues like environmental degradation, racism, international co-operation, and global concerns in general, our students are too often ill served.

Once upon a time, we could persuade the generation we were teaching that what seemed dull and irrelevant was a foundation of learning and the starting point for a complete and liberal education. Today, however, the social studies of capes, bays, and dead men is about as pertinent as learning to make buggy whips.

This generation sees recurring famine, world-wide daily political change, a global environmental crisis, persistent economic convulsions, and its nation on the verge of disintegration. Yet, all of these *current affairs* are rarely considered or discussed in most classrooms.

We are bogged down in a daily routine devoted to history or physical geography that is almost never related to any current concern.

We have before us a generation of students who sense they have particular needs determined by new and critical global factors. Yet we remain tied to a content driven curriculum that is virtually the same as that delivered to their parents. Few institutions or programs have changed so little as what we call *social studies*. Yet, without question, social change has occurred dramatically and rapidly. When I peruse the current social-studies-curriculum guides, I have the same feeling I have when I enter a gothic cathedral: timeless, unchanging, remote.

The prescribed curriculum and content for social studies is my concern. Teachers are constrained by the tools they have to work with, specifically, curriculum guides and assigned textbooks. The 1989 ministry social studies assessment team concluded: "... many teachers would welcome shifts in content emphasis within

the curriculum, for example, increased attention to global awareness, current events, and environmental studies at all grades ... In particular, curriculum guides need extensive clarification and content needs to be integrated with skills and attitudes."

The assessment team has hit on the critical weakness with B.C.'s social education. It isn't *connected*. It is content in search of meaning. As long as that orientation remains, social education will continue to be of marginal value and effectiveness, and students will question its relevance.

Refocusing social education in B.C. schools should be a critical concern for education in the '90s. That means carefully considering what we are doing and, more important, why we are doing it.

Time is an issue. We don't have the usual decade or so usually required to make the changes needed in social studies. The past process of curriculum revision or change in this area is not encouraging. I recall my dismay on beginning my first year teaching social studies using the same mouldering texts that had been inflicted on me as a student almost 10 years previous. And those texts were still around five years later.

The needs of students we teach now are urgent. They certainly do not have the option of passivity or blissful ignorance. There is no question of the importance of a global perspective holds for them. They need a social education that will give them an awareness of global interdependence and global connections. They must accept and thrive with cultural diversity and view social responsibility in global terms. They face some of the most difficult ethical and moral choices any humans have ever faced.

When I peruse the current social studies curriculum guides, I have the same feeling I have when I enter a gothic cathedral: timeless, unchanging, remote.

We must re-evaluate the adequacy of our approach to social education on the basis of those needs. As educators, we must take the lead in making changes. The central issue is relevance. To be relevant in social studies, we must provide a global perspective and a broad concept of global citizenship. The 1989 social studies assessment is sub-titled *more than a good idea*. Effective, meaningful social education is more than a good idea or a matter of theoretical value. It has become for our students a matter of survival.

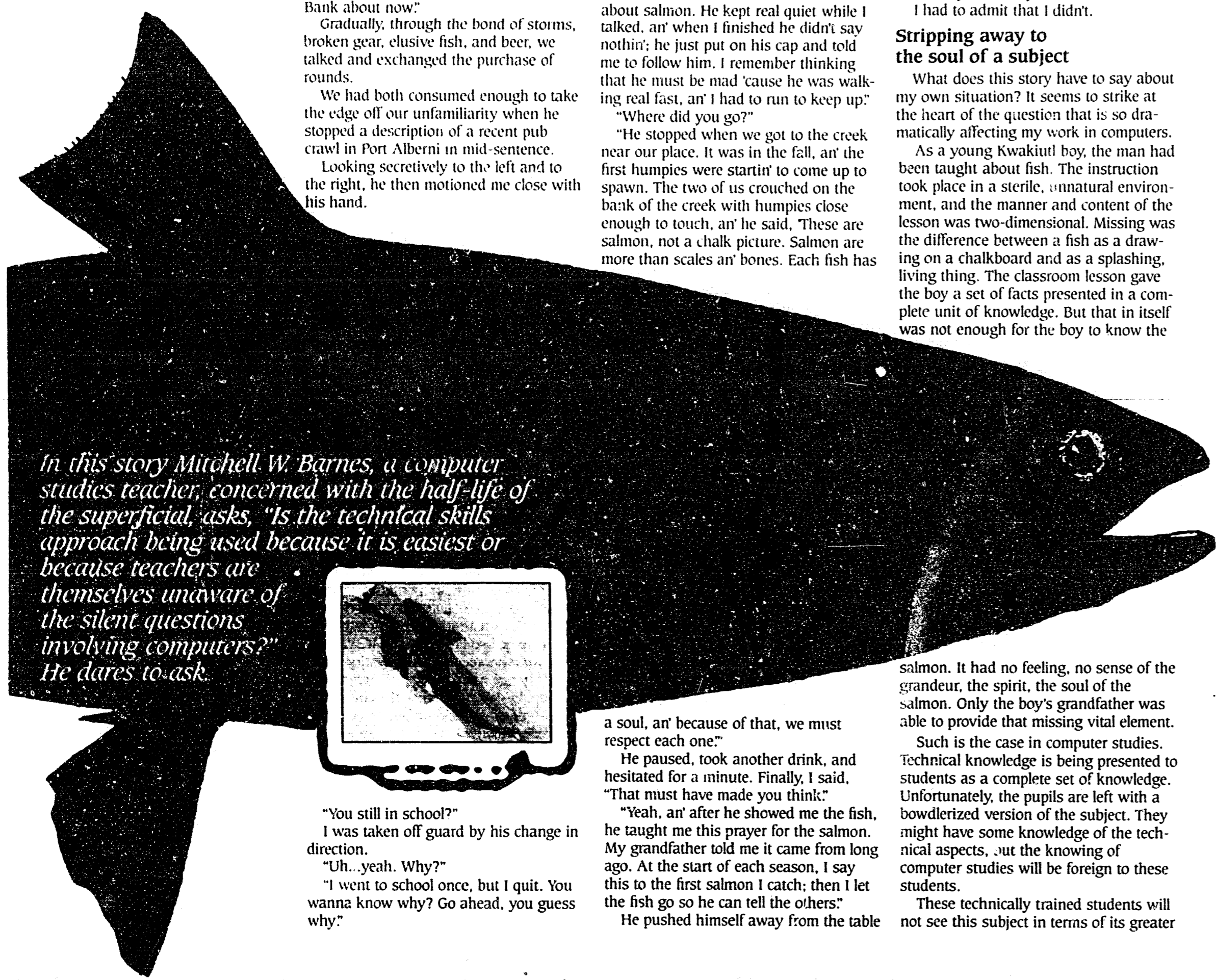
Patrick Clarke, the B.C. Global Education Project co-ordinator, is a secondary school social studies teacher, seconded from SD41 (Burnaby).

Knowledge and knowing: reclaiming the soul of the subjects we teach

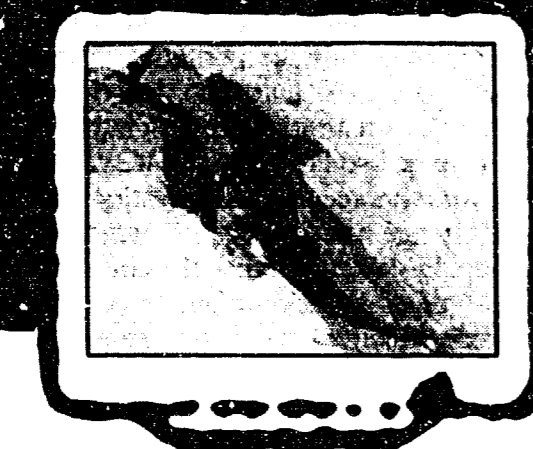
by Mitchell Barnes

In the last Friday of the month, the Rod and Reel was jammed, a consequence of pay cheques for the loggers and mill workers and a sudden fierce southwesterly storm off Barkley Sound that had sent the trolling fleet into harbor. My hair, hands, and grey Stanfield top were caked with scales and humpy blood, and the wind and weather had, over time, taken the color from my jeans, but the Rod and Reel was a working man's bar and my dishevelment was acceptable uniform.

ANOTHER IN OUR SERIES: NARRATIVES OF TEACHING



In this story Mitchell W. Barnes, a computer studies teacher, concerned with the half-life of the superficial, asks, "Is the technical skills approach being used because it is easiest or because teachers are themselves unaware of the silent questions involving computers?" He dares to ask.



"You still in school?"
I was taken off guard by his change in direction.
"Uh...yeah. Why?"
"I went to school once, but I quit. You wanna know why? Go ahead, you guess why?"

Waiting a moment as I fought to adjust to the smoky twilight inside, I could soon see that a chair, any chair, would be at a premium in the place. I was seriously considering returning to the boat, when nearby, two mountains in overalls and heavy boots decided to try their unsteady hands at darts. I edged past them as they moved like a landslide through the crowd and parked myself in a recently vacated chair.

Into the other chair dropped another patron, whose line-cut hands and similarly filthy uniform identified him as another fisherman. His wind-blasted face revealed both the fine qualities of his Kwakiutl heritage, and the scars earned from drinking.

"Hi!"
"Uh...Hi!"

Both of us looked around uncomfortably, hoping that the barmaid would meet our thirsty stares.

The obligation our proximity created made us both try another attempt at talking.

"So...you get caught in that storm?"
"No," he replied with the rasp peculiar to hard-drinking Kwakiutl. "Me and my decky managed to run in 'fore it really hit."

"Good thing," I replied, "Betcha it's blowin' like stink out on the Goose Island Bank about now."

Gradually, through the bond of storms, broken gear, elusive fish, and beer, we talked and exchanged the purchase of rounds.

We had both consumed enough to take the edge off our unfamiliarity when he stopped a description of a recent pub crawl in Port Alberni in mid-sentence.

Looking secretively to the left and to the right, he then motioned me close with his hand.

I sipped on my beer to stall for time. My first instinct was to say, "Too tough for you, eh?" but I didn't know how he'd take that. So I just took another drink and replied, "Oh, I don't know...it interfered with your social life?"

He laughed, and his eyes disappeared in a toothy squint.

"Naw, and it wasn't because I was dumb either. It was them!"

"Who?"
"Them, my teachers. They were stupid!"

"Oh yeah?! How so?"

He leaned back in his chair until the legs creaked. He seemed to be stretching his body and mind as he tried to call up an image from the back of his brain.

"You know fish?" he said at last.

"Well, I catch 'em."

"Yeah, but do you know fish? My teachers thought they knew fish. I remember sitting in class, and they taught us kids all about the way salmon swim an' what's inside 'em an' how they go up the river to spawn an' die an' all that shit. There we were, sittin' in rows looking at a chalkboard picture of a salmon and writin' down notes about what the teacher said."

"Yeah, I remember something like that." He took another drink and continued.

"Well, I went home, an' my grandfather said, 'What did you learn in school?' So I told him all about what the teacher said about salmon. He kept real quiet while I talked, an' when I finished he didn't say nothin'; he just put on his cap and told me to follow him. I remember thinking that he must be mad 'cause he was walkin' real fast, an' I had to run to keep up."

"Where did you go?"

"He stopped when we got to the creek near our place. It was in the fall, an' the first humpies were startin' to come up to spawn. The two of us crouched on the bank of the creek with humpies close enough to touch, an' he said, 'These are salmon, not a chalk picture. Salmon are more than scales an' bones. Each fish has

a soul, an' because of that, we must respect each one."

He paused, took another drink, and hesitated for a minute. Finally, I said, "That must have made you think."

"Yeah, an' after he showed me the fish, he taught me this prayer for the salmon. My grandfather told me it came from long ago. At the start of each season, I say this to the first salmon I catch; then I let the fish go so he can tell the others."

He pushed himself away from the table

slightly, placed both hands flat on the table, and closed his eyes. His chin lifted, and his voice came out clear and strong.

"We have come to meet alive, Swimmer. Do not feel wrong about what I

Have done to you, friend Swimmer, for that

is the reason why you come and that I may speak you,

that I may eat you, Supernatural One, you,

Long-Life-Giver, you swimmer. Now protect us, me and my wife,

That we may keep well, that nothing may be difficult for us

That we wish to get from you, Rich-Maker-Woman.

Now call after you your father and your mother and

uncles and aunts and elder brothers and sisters to

come to me also, You, Swimmers, You Satisfiers."

He remained in his position, eyes closed and a slight smile now on his face. I didn't know what to do or say.

A logger standing at the bar turned to the bartender.

"Christ, can't someone shut that dumb Indian up? I'm trying to watch the TV?"

But my table companion ignored the anger from the bar. He just looked at me.

"Now, you think you know salmon?" I had to admit that I didn't.

Stripping away to the soul of a subject

What does this story have to say about my own situation? It seems to strike at the heart of the question that is so dramatically affecting my work in computers.

As a young Kwakiutl boy, the man had been taught about fish. The instruction took place in a sterile, unnatural environment, and the manner and content of the lesson was two-dimensional. Missing was the difference between a fish as a drawing on a chalkboard and as a splashing, living thing. The classroom lesson gave the boy a set of facts presented in a complete unit of knowledge. But that in itself was not enough for the boy to know the

subject.

So where does all of this lead me? When I was recollecting the story, "Knowledge and Knowing," I was driven by a strong desire to say something about the narrow, tunnel-vision view of computers in some schools. The desire was pushed by the dual engines of frustration and anger about what I was witnessing.

The story began with memories of an angry storm, but as I wrote, I found myself smiling with hope. The Kwakiutl fisherman bore scars from his life and experience but still possessed the ability to reach within himself for peace and a greater knowing despite surrounding hostility.

I hope I may attain that goal myself. I want to know the salmon.

Mitchell Barnes, teacher at Strawberry Vale Elementary School, Victoria, last year received a Northern Telecom National Institute award for excellence in teaching using technology. He and his students worked with the Fisheries Technology Project (sponsored jointly by the B.C. Ministry of Environment and the Greater Victoria SD). His students developed a computer program for use in B.C. hatcheries. He will speak on this project next month at two conferences in Vancouver.

These technically trained students will not see this subject in terms of its greater

impact on the world, on other subjects, and on ways of thinking. The students' concepts of this subject will be apparently quite detailed, but like the chalk drawing, will have no depth. The Kwakiutl boy was in danger of losing a vital part of his cultural heritage with regard to the salmon. In computer studies, we risk masking or even omitting the growing part of our students' social heritage that is being formed in part by computers.

The title "Knowledge and Knowing" reflects the fundamental difference between what is being presented in computer studies and what makes for a greater understanding of the subject.

If we go to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, we notice an interesting difference in the definitions of the word *knowledge* and *knowing*. According to Oxford, *knowledge* is defined as "What one knows of a subject, facts, or person." *Knowing*, on the other hand, is described as "Being aware of or having information about."

It is this greater awareness that we teachers should be striving to develop in our students. This greater awareness permits the child to see the raw information presented in class in a more holistic sense. The lessons that gave the Kwakiutl boy a knowledge and a knowing of the salmon stayed with him into adult life. The lesson's content did not remain as *information* in some notebook. The *knowing* resulted from an experience that would influence his life, lifestyle, and culture.

Today, efforts are being made to avoid the shallowness of two-dimensional education, but still we must attempt to understand why so much of education has been this way. Such understanding may permit me to better understand the resistance to an integrated and non-technical approach to computer studies.

At this point, I cannot presume to have the answers to this question. On the contrary, this question simply raises more questions: "Do teachers fear the potential of the computer?" "Is the technical-skills approach being used because it is easiest or because those teaching are themselves unaware of the hidden questions around computers?" and finally, "What kind of cultural/social message am I transmitting by my advocacy of the non-technical approach to computers?"

These are just some of the many, many questions that arise when I contemplate computers in the schools. Perhaps, the unanswered questions force schools to cling tenaciously to the technical skills approach. It provides a safe, though shallow harbor amid a storm of unanswered questions and questionable approaches in the subject.

How do we name our schools, and what do school names tell us about the people who name them?

With nearly 2000 schools in the province, I couldn't research all of them. I accepted that a study of Vancouver schools, numbering almost 100, would provide a representative sample. My study includes a slight margin of error, given that I have no idea who some of the schools are named after. But, as a former history teacher, I know most of them.

Here are my findings: 58 schools are named for men and 10 for women. Of the ten female schools, four are named for women whose achievement was being born a princess (Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Alexandra, and Queen-for-a-Day). Four Vancouver schools are named after First Nations persons, a number that seems a tad inadequate given that all 100 schools were constructed on their land. Ten schools are named for politicians; seven for soldiers; eight for persons whose first name was Lord or Sir; six for doctors (three GPs, two surgeons and one proctologist), and three for artists or writers.

A handful of schools are named for explorers, and a like number for neighborhoods. I confess not to know whether Ecole Bilingue was named after a Monsieur or Madame Bilingue. I also have not allowed for the possibility that the people were named after the school, rather than the other way around.

What can we conclude? Your chances of having a school named after you increase dramatically if you are a white male who has killed lots of folks, expropriated lots of land, or inherited a great fortune. A surprising number of people for whom Vancouver schools were named had credentials in more than one of these categories.

Is there a remedy for the omission and under-representation of women, visible minorities, humanists, baseball players, and people whose hands got dirty when they went to work? From my experience with Winston Churchill and Harry Truman I found that it is no easy feat to get a school to change its name. Whether they have a strong bias toward men in suits or are reluctant to spend money to change letterhead, the powers that be will resist such change.

I suggest we start naming portables after members of the unrepresented groups. With the number of portables around the province, the imbalance could quickly be redressed. Each portable is its own building, often distant from the main school. It certainly qualifies for its own name. It would give a sense of pride and identity to teachers and children who are otherwise consigned to inhospitable environs.

With so many portables, we need lots of names. Here are some of my choices: Ginger Goodwin, Margaret Sanger, Bertha Wilson, Nina and Sasha (my kids), Roberta Bondar, Ovide Mercredi, Bill Wilson, Mickey Mouse (no schools are named after cartoon characters, and it would be a good name for the portable that serves as an enrichment centre), Alice Munroe, Margaret Atwood, Harvey Milk, Harry Jerome, K.D. Laing, Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Jeanne Sauve, Louis LeBerge, Louis Riel, Nellie McClung, Sandy Wilson, Judith Marcuse, Jackie Robinson, Lillian Allen, Alice Walker, Joy Kogawa, David Suzuki, Diane Jones, Konhiowski, Leona Boyd, Karen Kain, Buffy St. Marie, Rosemary Brown, Dr. Emily Stowe, Judith Foster, Grace MacInnes...

T. Evers-Chance, a former teacher, currently works for a major teachers' organization.

Do you have lots of anonymous portables in your district? Send your names (you can't nominate yourself) to "The Light Side", Teacher newsmagazine.

THE LIGHT SIDE

A school by any other name

by T. Evers-Chance

The first time I thought anything about the names of schools, I had learned that my mother was a proud alumna of PS 79, in New York City. With patriotism a staple of the American diet, and so many American heroes to choose from (mine then was Davey Crockett), I couldn't understand why the Big Apple named its school after footnotes to correspondence and numbers.

Years passed, and I next thought about the subject when, in 1965, Sir Winston Churchill expired. You see, I was then a student at Sir Winston Churchill Secondary School, in Vancouver. The day after Churchill died, my school closed for the day. I rushed to the corner store that passed for a shopping mall in those days, ready to celebrate Churchill's passing with my pals from Magee and Hamber, only to discover that those schools were open, because their namesakes were long dead.

On returning to my school the next day, I began a petition to rename Churchill school to honor former U.S. President Harry Truman. I was banking on Truman's dying before my graduation, affording another holiday. Always willing to seize the opportunity to give a lesson in the political process, the school administration confiscated the petition and suspended me for three days. I gave up the struggle, but took some consolation in Truman's living another seven years, well beyond my graduation.

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With nearly 2000 schools in the province, I couldn't research all of them. I accepted that a study of Vancouver schools, numbering almost 100, would provide a representative sample. My study includes a slight margin of error, given that I have no idea who some of the schools are named after. But, as a former history teacher, I know most of them.

Here are my findings: 58 schools are named for men and 10 for women. Of the ten female schools, four are named for women whose achievement was being born a princess (Queen Mary, Queen Elizabeth, Princess Alexandra, and Queen-for-a-Day). Four Vancouver schools are named after First Nations persons, a number that seems a tad inadequate given that all 100 schools were constructed on their land. Ten schools are named for politicians; seven for soldiers; eight for persons whose first name was Lord or Sir; six for doctors (three GPs, two surgeons and one proctologist), and three for artists or writers.

A handful of schools are named for explorers, and a like number for neighborhoods. I confess not to know whether Ecole Bilingue was named after a Monsieur or Madame Bilingue. I also have not allowed for the possibility that the people were named after the school, rather than the other way around.

What can we conclude? Your chances of having a school named after you increase dramatically if you are a white male who has killed lots of folks, expropriated lots of land, or inherited a great fortune. A surprising number of people for whom Vancouver schools were named had credentials in more than one of these categories.

Is there a remedy for the omission and under-representation of women, visible minorities, humanists, baseball players, and people whose hands got dirty when they went to work? From my experience with Winston Churchill and Harry Truman I found that it is no easy feat to get a school to change its name. Whether they have a strong bias toward men in suits or are reluctant to spend money to change letterhead, the powers that be will resist such change.

I suggest we start naming portables after members of the unrepresented groups. With the number of portables around the province, the imbalance could quickly be redressed. Each portable is its own building, often distant from the main school. It certainly qualifies for its own name. It would give a sense of pride and identity to teachers and children who are otherwise consigned to inhospitable environs.

With so many portables, we need lots of names. Here are some of my choices: Ginger Goodwin, Margaret Sanger, Bertha Wilson, Nina and Sasha (my kids), Roberta Bondar, Ovide Mercredi, Bill Wilson, Mickey Mouse (no schools are named after cartoon characters, and it would be a good name for the portable that serves as an enrichment centre), Alice Munroe, Margaret Atwood, Harvey Milk, Harry Jerome, K.D. Laing, Desmond Tutu, Nelson Mandela, Jeanne Sauve, Louis LeBerge, Louis Riel, Nellie McClung, Sandy Wilson, Judith Marcuse, Jackie Robinson, Lillian Allen, Alice Walker, Joy Kogawa, David Suzuki, Diane Jones, Konhiowski, Leona Boyd, Karen Kain, Buffy St. Marie, Rosemary Brown, Dr. Emily Stowe, Judith Foster, Grace MacInnes...

T. Evers-Chance, a former teacher, currently works for a major teachers' organization.

Do you have lots of anonymous portables in your district? Send your names (you can't nominate yourself) to "The Light Side", Teacher newsmagazine.

Wiped out? Fight fatigue with food

Feeling fatigued, but not sure why? No zip in the mornings? Suffering from the afternoon blahs? One hint to possible causes of fatigue is the time of day in which it is experienced.

Morning fatigue

If you wake up wishing you could keep sleeping or you feel tired throughout the morning, you have morning fatigue.

Although inadequate sleep or overexercising could be factors, you may wish to examine nutritional reasons and solutions. You may not have eaten enough food for fuel the night before. In future, try to ensure that your last meal of the day is rich in complex carbohydrates such as rice, pasta, whole-grain breads, or beans. Too much sugar in your diet, and especially late at night, may leave you feeling sluggish in the morning from low blood sugar. Try to reduce all refined sugars, honey, and alcohol in your diet, and replace them with starches.

People who don't eat regular meals or who eat foods high in sugar often experience afternoon fatigue. Eating too many sugars or not eating often enough may cause a low-blood-sugar response. Try not to skip meals. Reduce your sugar intake, and eat a little bit of food every few hours. Have a complex carbohydrate snack half an hour or so before the time fatigue usually sets in.

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THE INVISIBLE WOMAN

by Constance Rulka

I have small patience, really, with the pedantic feminism that agonizes over a substitute for every male-oriented noun and pronoun in the English language. We could argue long over *humanity*. Surely we do not want *huwomany*; and, if we go back to Latin roots, the equivalent of *homo* is *mulier*; so do we replace *humanity* by *mulierity*, since *femininity* already has its own connotations? Of course, we could always go the *people* route, and take the Latin *gens* to produce *gentility* — but we all know what a misnomer that would be.

Similarly, I would rather have a *chairman* (of whatever gender) conduct a meeting than address my remarks to an inanimate object of wood, chrome, or plastic called *the chair*.

By now, most teachers have also been made aware of their unconscious tendency to let boys dominate a classroom, giving them more question/answer time and judging student performance on two somewhat different levels — to produce the stereotypes of the boy as the aggressively original thinker and the girl as the politely quiet, neat worker with decorative value.

That snake-in-the-grass, the biased textbook, has also been hauled out into the light. Students have been made aware that, while their brave pioneer forefathers were opening up a new land, felling trees, raising log cabins, and ploughing land, women were around somewhere (though certainly not in the textbook illustrations) cooking and sewing, caring for the children and the sick, and giving birth between times.

I came all the way through school, four universities, and 40 years of teaching without realizing that a cloak of invisibility had been thrown over the women in all my areas of study — and that cloak is still in place. Of course, I learned about Joan of Arc and Jane Austen, Marie Curie, and Florence Nightingale, but I got the impression that these were very brief flashes in the pan of solid masculine achievement.

Worse still, I knew of the exploits of some famous men, without knowing of the women who were there, alongside or ahead of them: Lief Eriksson landed in Newfoundland in 950, but it was the two women, Gudrid and Freydis, who wintered there. Cartier sailed up the St. Lawrence, but it was Marguerite de Roberval's three years' sojourn on the Ile des Démones there that convinced Champlain that settlement of the area was possible. Eli Whitney is credited with giving the Agrarian Revolution a boost through the cotton gin, but the machine was the invention of his landlady, Katherine Green, who, as a woman, lacked the legal right to patent it. St. Patrick is said to have rid Ireland of snakes as he converted the country to Christianity, but St. Brigid produced just as many converts. David Livingstone opened up the continent of Darkest Africa, but it was his wife, Mary, who gave birth to their fifth child under a thorn tree in the jungle

out there. Everybody knows that King Alfred the Great of Wessex preserved the Anglo-Saxon culture by paying the Danes *danegeid* to stay out of his territory, but fewer people know about his daughter, Ethelfleda, who drove out the Danes by conquering them at the Battle of Derby in the year 900.

I came all the way through school, four universities, and 40 years of teaching without realizing that a cloak of invisibility had been thrown over the women in all my areas of study — and that cloak is still in place.

Those are isolated cases, but why are students not made aware of the part women played right through the history of certain movements and disciplines in our culture?

In medicine

Women were practising medicine as early as 3,000 B.C. in Egypt, where the Kuhn medical papyri of 2,500 B.C. establishes that women specialists dealt with all branches of gynaecology.

Agnodice, in the 4th century B.C., after attending Greek medical classes, practised gynaecology disguised as a man, until she was accused of seducing one of her patients. In court, she had to reveal her sex and was acquitted. She became the first woman gynaecologist whose name we know.

Fabiola, a Roman who died in A.D. 399, established a hospital, where she worked as both nurse and doctor, and became the first *known* woman surgeon.

Trotula of Salerno, in the 11th century, wrote a book, *The Diseases of Women*, in which she made the revolutionary suggestion that infertility could be attributed equally to the male or female partner. The book was, of course, later attributed to her husband.

From 1389 to 1497, 15 licensed women doctors were practising in Frankfurt alone. Of these, three were Jewish, specializing in ophthalmology.

Dorothea Bocchi, in the 14th century, succeeded her father as professor of medicine and moral philosophy at the University of Bologna.

Marie Colinet, in the 16th century, in Berne, Switzerland, used a magnet to remove a piece of metal from a patient's eye. Her husband got the credit, although he was recording the proceedings while she did the operation.

In business

Faustilla of Pompeii is recorded as having been a money-lender who charged 45% interest per annum, so women's business instincts go back a long way past Helena Rubinstein and Coco Chanel.

Chaucer's wife of Bath was a forerunner of the real-life character Alice Chester, who, in 1500, traded in wool, iron, and oil with Flanders and Spain, making enough profit from her business to endow a church.

Mary Reibey, in 1790, was transported to Australia, charged with stealing a horse. She was then 13 years old. Later, she became a grain-trader and shipping magnate and Australia's most successful business woman.

In writing

Many mythologies show women not only inventing language but also creating the writing skills: Carmenta is supposed to have created Latin from Greek. Medusa gave the alphabet to Hercules; whereas Isis gave it to the Egyptians, and Kali invented the Sanskrit alphabet.

Sappho of Lesbos, a much maligned wife and mother, was hailed as the *tenth muse* in her own day, and Eurydice, grandmother of Alexander the Great, had a monument erected to show her joy in having learned to read and write.

Wei-fu-jen, of the 3rd century A.D., is still honored as China's greatest calligrapher and the founder of the whole school of writing there.

Lady Murasaki, of Japan, wrote *The Tale of Genji*, that country's great classic, in A.D. 1000, at the same time Hrotsvitha of Gandersheim was writing drama, to become the first German poet and playwright.

Christine de Pisan, an early feminist who lived from 1365 to 1430, wrote *The Book of the City of Ladies* to examine why women were held in such low esteem.

Aphra Behn, in 1680, was one of the very first English novelists, as well as a spy and an explorer in South America. She had 10 plays produced in London, and wrote five novels.

More familiar names to us, of course, are Mme de Staël, Mary Wollstonecraft, Jane Austen, George Eliot, and the Brontës.

In teaching

Cleopatra, the *alchemist of Alexandria*, in the 3rd century A.D. wrote the *Chrysopeia*, a text on the art of making

Why are students not made aware of the part women played right through the history of certain movements and disciplines in our culture?

gold, which was still being used in the Middle Ages.

Hypatia, born in A.D. 370, taught geometry, algebra, and astronomy at the University of Alexandria. She was killed in 415 by a terrorist mob incited by the patriarch, Cyril.

Aristoclea, a woman mathematician, taught Pythagoras, who married another mathematician, Theano, by whom he had a daughter, Dano, who also became a mathematician and wrote about women's rights.

Aspatia of Miletos taught Socrates and championed the education of women.

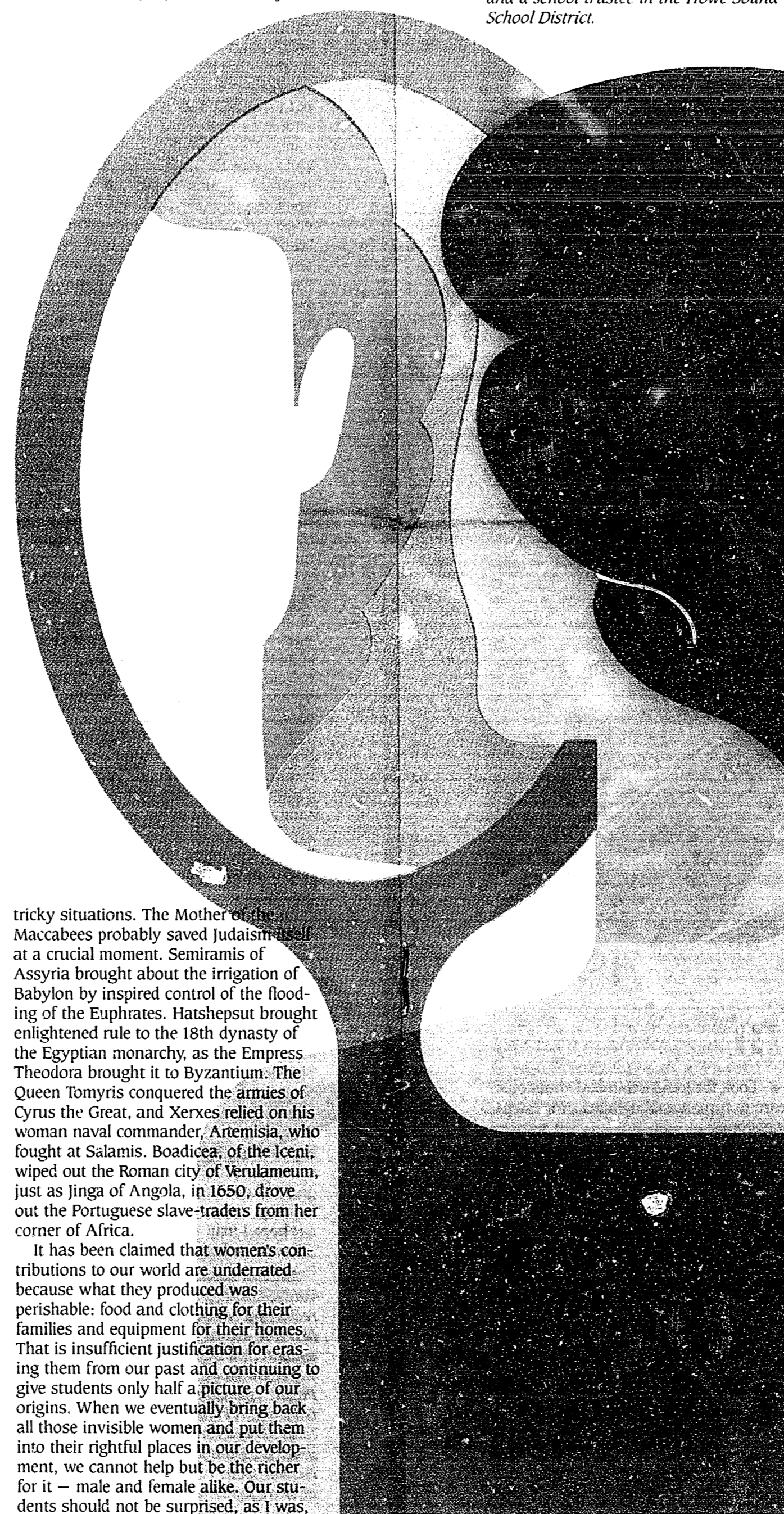
Aspasia, whose intelligence was praised by Plato and who was the mistress of Pericles, ran a school for the Greek hetaera.

It is more likely that students have heard about women warriors and rulers

of the past, because history tends to glorify dynasties and battles, but, even there, it is surprising how the female figures fade into the background. In the Old Testament, Deborah, Jael, Judith, and Esther saved the chosen people in some very

during retirement years, to find that there was a whole world of women out there that teachers, for some mysterious reason, forgot.

Constance Rulka is a retired teacher and a school trustee in the Howe Sound School District.



What should teachers be doing to improve the learning opportunities for teen women?

A CAPPELLA, a report on the realities, concerns, expectations, and barriers experienced by adolescent women in Canada (Canadian Teachers' Federation, November, 1990) states:

"(Female) students emphasized the need for relevance in subjects they study in school . . . don't talk to us about stuff that is not meaningful, that doesn't impact our lives . . ."

"(and) . . . feelings of a lack of control, lack of power were expressed in relation to the girls' interactions with parents, teachers, and the judicial system . . ."



schools are failing miserably to meet the needs of young women. There has been little or no discussion to assess their needs.

We teachers should be working diligently and consistently to provide a meaningful education that will affect the lives of teen women. There are many areas of concern: teen pregnancy, the rapidly rising number of women in the workforce, the place of women in a technological society, wage inequity, and the likelihood that many women will be forced to live and raise their children in poverty.

We must strive to secure language within our collective agreements that will result in powerful and meaningful Women's Studies curricula in every secondary school in this province. We must develop a program of studies that will deal with finance, parenting, the challenges of relationships, and a myriad of other problems.

Educators must also find ways to keep more of our young women in school long enough to finish their education — long enough to acquire the skills to function in the workforce and in a technological society. On-site daycare and more relevant and accessible curricula are only two of the ways schools might retain adolescent women.

Last, we must find a way to impress upon our female students the *reality* of life, to convince them that soap operas are only for television, and that they, and they alone, are responsible for their lives. These young women should be encouraged to seek leadership roles in student government, to form extra-curricular women's-studies groups, and to participate in peer-helping programs.

Teachers must accept responsibility for the damning accusations in *A Cappella*.
Isobel Colebrook
Kitimat



e should try to establish a counselling relationship that will help their problems come to the surface so they can be helped.

Dhavinder Tiwari
Peace River North



e must encourage these teen women had as elementary pupils. Using carefully developed teaching objectives and working to design strategies consistent with these goals, we will be able to improve the learning opportunities for these students. For teachers to reduce gender bias, we will need co-ordinated staff development. If we assume an affirmative-action plan to remove the barriers preventing teen women from all learning opportunities, we will indeed have come a long way.

Diane Turner
Vancouver



Leslie Wright
Alberni



BRITISH COLUMBIA
TEACHERS' FEDERATION

Her-story A women and history quiz

Questions

1. A day to commemorate, October 18 marks *Person's Day*, the day:
a. 14 women were murdered in Montreal.
b. Canadian women legally became persons.
c. Women garment workers in New York City marched to protest working conditions.
d. Canadian women were granted the vote.
2. What percentage of BCTF members are women? (a) 31% (b) 51% (c) 61%
3. In B.C., what percentage of math teachers at the secondary level are women? (a) 21% (b) 31% (c) 51%
4. The salary difference between the average male teacher and the average female teacher is about: (a) \$0000 (b) \$2300 (c) \$4500 (d) \$6700
5. The salary difference between the average male principal and the average female principal is about: (a) \$0000 (b) \$2300 (c) \$3200 (d) \$4500
6. For every dollar a male wage earner in B.C. makes, a female worker earns: (a) 50 cents (b) 64 cents (c) 81 cents (d) a dollar
7. Recent research on classrooms indicated that teachers gave (males/females) more attention and more time to talk in class.
8. Out of any ten girls in your classroom, how many will (match these numbers 1 - 2 - 6 - 8 - 9):
____Marry?
____Have children?
____Have to hold a paying job?
____Head a single-parent family?
____Be widowed before age 50?
9. Who is responsible for this quote?
"When I grow up a rich man will fall in love with me and marry me and take care of me" (a) a Grade 11 student (b) Cinderella (c) a Grade 1 student (d) both a and c.
10. As the first female MP for B.C., and a B.C. MLA, she was passionate in her defense of women's right to safe, legal abortion, consumer rights, low income housing, and women's equality. (a) Agnes MacPhail (b) Grace MacInnes (c) Marila Morris.
11. How much would a single parent with two children have to earn per hour to escape poverty living in Vancouver? (a) minimum wage (b) \$8.26 (c) \$12.44
12. A resolution calling for "equal pay for equal work, with equal privileges for women" was first introduced at a BCTF AGM in: (a) 1918 (b) 1946 (c) 1973 (d) 1989

Answers

- (b) 21 (c) 11 (d)
(d) (p) 6 1 - 2 - 9 - 8 - 6 - 8 a) a) 1
(d) 9 (d) 5 (c) 4 (d) 5 (c) 2 (d) 1

Corporate support for education: YES OR NO?

by Margot Gibb-Clark

It used to be that students at Nova Scotia's Pugwash District High School pretended they went to school elsewhere. Morale was bad and Pugwash District had some of the lowest achievement test scores in the province.

Then, in 1987, the school got involved in a partnership with a local company, Seagull Pewterers & Silversmiths Ltd. Seagull has done everything from buying computer equipment to donating a bus so that students could travel more easily and learn about surrounding communities.

It also promoted a stay-in-school program that incorporates counselling on better study skills, and encouraged its own employees to take night courses offered by the school board.

Now, four years later, test scores are up and the school reports that people in this tourist and fishing region on the province's north shore are feeling less the victims of destiny.

The venture is also one of the provincial winners in the Conference Board of Canada's first annual contest for excellence in business-education partnerships sponsored by Telecom Canada.

The Pugwash partnership is an example of how business support for education can be much more than largesse, said Michael Bloom, a research associate with the non-profit research group.

"Corporate support for education should be part of human resource planning rather than simply donations," he said in an interview. Such co-operation is in a company's own interest because it helps develop the pool of highly skilled workers Canada will need in coming years, he said.

Statistics Canada predicts that 55% of new jobs that are created in this country in the '90s will require at least a high school education, said Florence Campbell, a conference board vice-president and director of its new National Business and Education Centre. Yet Canada still faces a 30% dropout rate from secondary school.

Two years ago, the conference board started hearing from chief executives that one of their prime concerns was education, she said. The board questions chief executive officers from member companies twice a year about what they see as key emerging issues affecting business.

Interest in education was great enough to lead to establishment last fall of the new centre, which is designed to encourage dialogue between the two groups to do research and disseminate the findings.

The centre also aims to help member companies become involved in education in a way that will ensure Canada has a well-educated work force to enhance its international competitiveness, Campbell said. Today's 30% dropout rate is a considerable improvement from the '50s, when 70% of Canadians did not make it through high school, Bloom said, but it is not good enough. "In an age of global competition, other countries like Germany and Japan are performing better."

He is currently studying 30 partnerships between companies and education institutions, which are directed at keeping students in school. Partnerships with that aim and others are becoming increasingly common. A recent study on human resources policies at larger Canadian companies done by Sedgwick James Consulting Group showed that almost half had some kind of joint initiative under way with school boards, colleges, or universities.

And most of the organizations using them rated them as extremely successful, particularly as a way to recruit staff.

Other regional winners in the Conference Board-Telecom contest range from a Manitoba school division, which has set up a program for community members to acquire the skills to work in health care, to one at Watson Lake Secondary School in the Yukon.

Watson Lake students run a convenience store accountable to a board of directors with business and student members. A local hotel and construction company and a branch of the Canadian Imperial Bank of Commerce and the town are involved. Students learn to apply theory they have been taught in the school's business education program.

In the eastern townships region of Quebec, two local school boards, one Protestant and one Catholic, have combined with about 60 local companies. Together, they have set up a centre that provides state-of-the-art technological training designed to meet the labour needs of local industry.

There are certain areas where business should *not* be in education, Campbell said. "Educators are the experts in curriculum and how to teach."

Business might be able to help with advice on how to keep up with technology. Business has also gained a lot of experience recently in managing change, she added.

I wouldn't want to suggest that management in school is the same as in business. Schools and business are different entities, but the process can be shared.

"We are trying to help the groups come together and understand the complexities of each others' environment. We are finding enormous willingness on both sides."

Margot Gibb-Clark is a reporter/writer with The Globe & Mail.

Source: The Globe & Mail, April 23, 1991.



Enjoying life less?

Try the power of optimism

Did you know that optimists:

- Enjoy better health?
- Make more money?
- Excel in school?
- Establish long and happy marriages?

These are some of the research findings cited by Dr. Alan Loy McGinnis in his new book, *The Power of Optimism*. And, according to the author, an optimistic attitude is acquired — not inherited — and most people can achieve it.

Optimists, he says, "know how to keep themselves motivated and approach their problems with a can-do philosophy."

He has identified 12 characteristics of what he calls "tough-minded optimists." Among other things, they:

- Are seldom surprised by trouble.
- Believe they have control over their futures.
- Use their imaginations to rehearse success.

- Accept what cannot be changed.
- Believe that they have an almost unlimited capacity for stretching — that their personal best is yet to be.

The book outlines step-by-step techniques for developing an optimistic attitude. Here is a sampling of its recommendations designed to help readers maintain a balanced approach to trouble:

- Think of yourself as a problem solver. People who adopt this attitude excel in stressful situations.
- Look for multiple options. With this technique, you'll simply move on to another option when one approach fails.
- Anticipate problems. Be aware that things can go wrong and ask such questions as Is there a way this will backfire? Where could we get cheated in this deal?

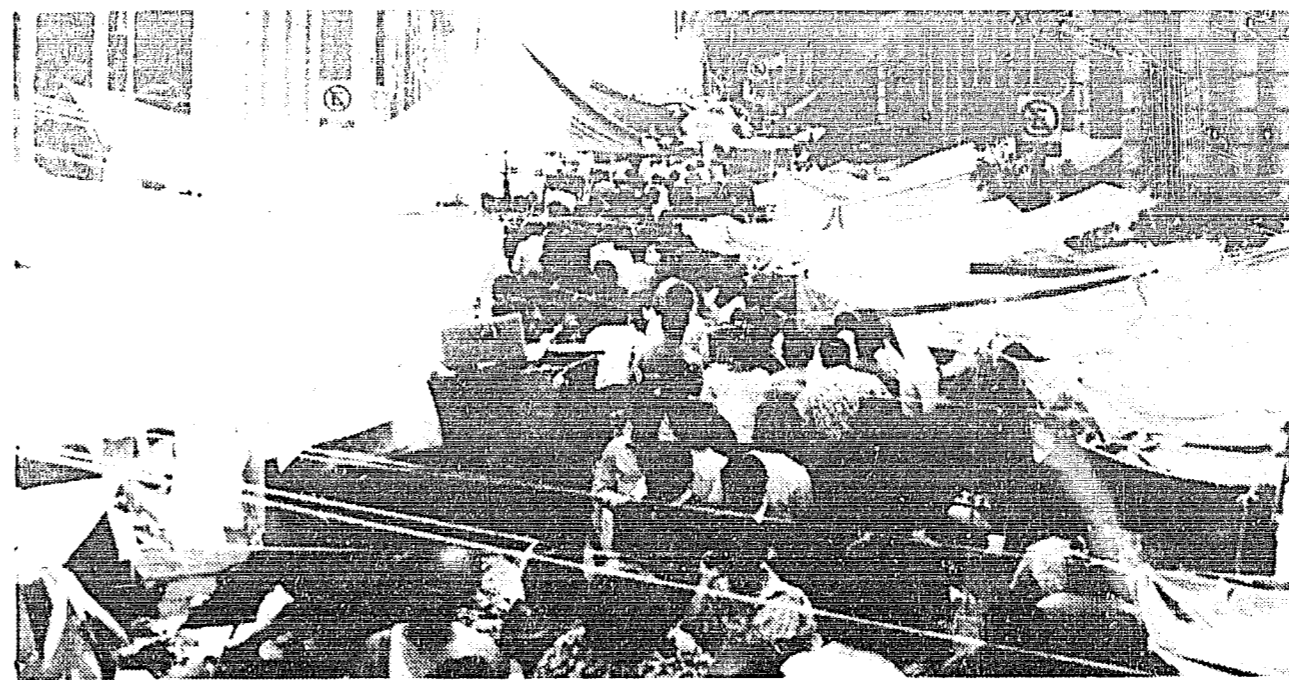
- Look for the good in bad situations. Learn to turn stumbling blocks into stepping stones.

• Avoid phoney pep talks. "Successful people," the author says, "do not talk about how wonderful things are when, in fact, they're bad."

- Monitor your automatic negative thoughts. Keep a log of them as they occur. You'll soon slow them down and make them less automatic.

- Avoid jumping to wild generalizations. Don't see setbacks as personal deficits that will plague you forever. See them as mistakes that can be remedied.

Source: *The Power of Optimism*, Dr. Alan Loy McGinnis, Harper & Row, 10 East 53rd Street, New York, NY 10022 — \$16.95. Reprinted from *Communication Briefings*, December 1990.



It is through unified action, like this recent sit-in in Mexico City, that teachers press for higher wages, union democracy, and better conditions for children. Ross McLaren photo

Mexican teachers sit-in for democracy and better education

by Ross McLaren

It was early March, and the tarp city extended for five city blocks in downtown Mexico City. A sea of blue and green plastic stretched into the distance, forming a canopy over the city streets. Under the temporary living quarters, men and women sat awkwardly, faces tired and gaunt. Here and there, groups played cards. Others slept fitfully amid the stench of pollution and the cries of the hawkers pedalling goods up and down the narrow streets.

Pedestrians rushed by, busy with work or pleasure, oblivious of the scene. Like many of them, I took this street as a short cut; unlike many, I stayed when I discovered the reason for the tarp city: In the Santo Domingo Plaza, across from the Ministry of Education, more than 40,000 public school teachers from the National Teacher's Co-ordinating Group (CNTE) had gathered to press for higher wages and union democracy.

After two months of living in a refugee-

camp atmosphere, however, the lack of resources was showing. "We are running out of food, medicine, and water," said Jesus Alfonso Cardenas, a teacher from the state of Oaxaca. In a soup line formed on the left in time for the afternoon meal, men and women shuffled into position to receive their food, a thin soupy gruel, rice, and beans. The faces looked thin, a result of inadequate nutrition and sleep. But the striking teachers were not moving, even though the federal government had issued an ultimatum: leave in two days, or be forcibly evicted. "Nobody is going back," said Juvenal Uriostegui Quiroz, a teacher from Caujiuicuilapa. "Nobody wants to make this salary."

Earning about \$200 a month, public school teachers in Mexico make less than garbage collectors. Out of this pay, teachers must equip the 50 students in class with supplies, according to Alfonso. Extra-curricular activities are non-existent. Alfonso says the government offers extra money for books, but with strings attached. In return for financial aid, teachers are expected to support the government, the Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), and CNTE's parent union, the largest in Latin America, with more than a million members, called the National Teachers' Union (SNTE).

For many in the 250,000-member CNTE, the price is too high. After establishing CNTE's dissident committee in 1979, the two groups have had a turbulent, often violent, relationship. The state-imposed SNTE leadership has tried to eradicate union democracy by stacking union conventions, using intimidation, and, in one case, attempting to kidnap a CNTE union local in Oaxaca. On the extreme, CNTE member Misael Nunez Acosta was assassinated in 1981, allegedly by the union leadership, after trying to link the teachers' struggle with the popular labour movement.

In a country where independent unions are a contradiction in terms, and democracy often translates into stuffing ballot boxes, CNTE's troubles are not surprising. Since the 1920s, the government has tried to co-opt the labour movement. Labour leaders, handpicked by the state, support government policies at the expense of the union membership. In return, the government ignores union corruption and allows labour leaders to become fantastically wealthy through misuse of union funds. Trouble makers are bought off, are jailed, or disappear.

CNTE tries to buck this trend and engages in mass mobilization movements to push for union democracy and higher wages. The results have been satisfying. In 1981, 100,000 teachers marched on Mexico City and occupied the office of the Secretary of Education. After the assassination of Nunez, 40,000 teachers responded with a mass march and work stoppage. In May 1983, a one-day strike saw 200,000 teachers stop work. A month later, 300,000 teachers participated in a one-day work stoppage. About 50,000 teachers joined forces with peasants in 1983 to engage in a national civic strike to protest government austerity measures. And in 1986, 30,000 CNTE members established their first tent city in downtown Mexico City in an attempt to force their union to convene "rate teachers' conventions. The sit-in lasted months. SNTE agreed to the demands but later reneged.

The latest sit-in represents another victory for CNTE. After threatening the teachers with eviction, the government backed down and promised wage increases of from 50 to 100% and new fringe benefits. More important, CNTE's ability to mobilize teachers and press both union and government shows the independent labour movement in Mexico lives.

Ross McLaren is a B.C. freelance writer.

HOPE:

Seeing Our World Through New Eyes is an exhibition on international development at Vancouver's Science World until January 5, 1992. Unusual attractions, designed for participant interaction, bring alive breakthroughs occurring in Africa, Asia and Latin America.

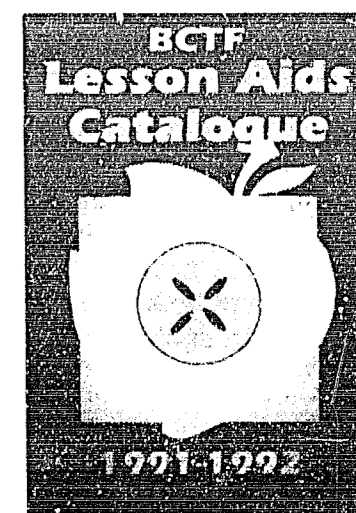
Students can operate a peanut sheller developed in Thailand that uses an old car tire to do the job many times faster than by hand. They can mix and taste an oral rehydration treatment that has the potential to save the lives of millions of children, or they can sit in a real Bangladeshi rickshaw, and find out how its driver has doubled his income through a credit program aimed at the landless.

To obtain a copy of the curriculum kit and to book your class tour, call Science World at 687-8414.



BCTF LESSON AIDS

Paper Pandas ★ Links to Literature
★ Earth Book For Kids ★
Treasure in the Trash ★ Globalchild
Geometry and Art ★ Mice Thoughts
★ Munch a Bunch For Lunch ★
★ A Touch of Japan ★



These are just some of the 64 new lesson aids included in the 1991-92 Lesson Aids catalogue, which has been mailed to all school libraries this fall. In addition to the 84 new titles added last year, the Lesson Aids catalogue is worth consulting for a selection of over 800 different lesson aids for K-12.

To order any of the following new lesson aids, enclose a cheque or money order with your order to BCTF Lesson Aids Service, 2235 Burrard Street, Vancouver, BC V6J 3H9. (Shipping and GST included in prices.)

ELEMENTARY

8053 Robert Munsch Books: An Integrated Unit for Later Primary by Sandra Holden and Rosemary Anderson, 26 p. 1990. Includes story lesson plans that relate to primary goals. The lessons also contain whole language activities, *Math Their Way* activities, cooperative learning activities, higher thinking skills, a variety of experiences to include all children, and a bibliography with topic reference.\$5.80

8543 Mice Thoughts: An Integrated Unit for Primary by Primary Teachers at McLeod Elementary in Nechako, 77 p. Includes lesson plans that relate to the primary goals. Also, includes whole language activities, *Math Their Way* activities, higher thinking skills, and a variety of experiences to include all children.\$12.65

8316 Let's Get Moving: Sequential Early Primary PE Lessons by Joy Collins, 32 p. 1990. This unit includes 15 PE lessons suitable for multi-age, early primary classrooms for use by teachers with a minimum amount of equipment in a 30-minute PE period.\$3.30

ESL201 I Hate English by Ellen Levine, 32 p. 1991. ©1989. Color illustrations. This book is about an immigrant girl whose story helps children cope with new situations in a new country. It is written with humor and sympathy. Suitable for K-6.\$5.70

EE200 Earth Book for Kids: Activities to Help Heal the Environment by Linda Schwartz and illustrated by Beverly Armstrong, 184 p. 1991. ©1990. Sections include: Energy, Resource and Recycling; Air, Land and Water; Plant and Animal Habitats; More Ways to Make Every Day Earth Day; and Where To Write, and a Glossary. Suitable for elementary.\$16.50

PD111 Our Co-operative Classroom by David W. Johnson, Roger K. Johnson, Judy K. Bartlett and Linda M. Johnson, 92 p. ©1988. This book is written to help students be better co-operators. The activities in this book are designed to assist students to develop a better understanding of, and appreciation for, cooperative learning. As the activities are completed, students will have repeated opportunities to work co-operatively with each other. Elementary.\$16.50

SECONDARY

AE209 Alternative Curriculum: Value Clarification: A Co-operative Thinking, Skills, Discussion and Writing Unit by Patrick O'Neil, 13 p. 1991. This unit outlines how students discuss and write about values and examines how their own values are formed.\$2.00

1059 The Red Pony: A Novel Enrichment Unit by Randy Matheson, 8 p. 1991. Includes critical and creative thinking activities.\$1.20

1060 The Outsiders: A Novel Enrichment Unit by Randy Matheson, 8 p. 1991. Includes critical and creative thinking activities.\$1.65

3035 Explorations in Mathematics 11: Using IBM Math Exploration Toolkit by Lana Chow, Wayne Gately and Peter Kerr, 77 p. 1991. ©1990. This teacher resource book for the B.C. Mathematics 11 course gives specific attention to computer software. Lessons designed for use with IBM Math Exploration Toolkit allow students to discover and explore mathematics concepts.\$14.25

2083 Colonialism in Africa: A Critical Look by Susan Gage, 40 p. 1991. This unit examines the history and structure of colonialism in Africa, and its importance to Africa today. Case studies link African colonialism to the South African scene, to neo-colonialism, and to Canada's native people. Includes activities and resources. Suitable for Grades 8 to 10.\$13.00

RESEARCH

Strategies for reading reflect years of research

Cutting-edge reading research points to what many may think is good sense: reading comprehension is an act of constructing meaning that requires negotiation between teachers and students.

Using this framework, researchers devised a five-part strategy for instruction in reading.

1. Questioning

Students should generate questions about what they read. Comprehension increases when students generate questions, although student-generated questions are not as frequently used as teacher-generated questions.

But students must receive good training and assistance with organization. Otherwise, the questions they ask may make no difference in comprehension.

2. Summarizing

Summaries can be writer-based, focusing on recall of information, or reader-based, emphasizing the audience and the reader. Reader-based summaries are more of a writing assignment than a comprehension strategy, the researchers suggest, but both should be part of reading instruction.

3. Inferring

Students should practise drawing inferences from their reading. Contrary to common belief, inference-drawing instruction should begin as reading instruction begins, not later. Even very simple reading texts require inference skills.

4. Rating importance

Students need to determine importance of ideas, both to the author and to themselves, so they can organize, reconstruct, and remember information.

This strategy includes not only the traditional search for the main idea but also analysis of theme and discussion of author bias and intention. Research has shown that students who can evaluate importance have a significant comprehension advantage over those who can't.

5. Self-monitoring

Students should monitor their own comprehension. Studies of good readers show that those who excel keep an eye on how they're doing, changing comprehension strategies as needed. Poor readers are not as aware of problems and are less capable of fixing them, usually relying on one or two narrow methods of comprehension.

Together, these strategies help readers use their prior knowledge to construct meaning from what they read, let their teacher know what they understand and what they don't, monitor their own growth as readers, and choose among various comprehension strategies as they read.

Source: "Moving from the Old to the New..." Janice Dole, et al., *Review of Educational Research*, Vol. 61, No. 2, Summer 1991, 1200 - 17th St. NW, Washington, DC 20036, (202) 223-9485. Reported in *Education Monitor*, August 27, 1991.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation's *Jump Rope for Heart Program* is a school-based educational program designed to improve cardiovascular fitness through jumping rope. While children jump for the joy of it, they also give from the heart, by collecting pledges for heart and stroke research and education.

If you ask 18-year-old Laurie Toth what sparked her interest in a heart healthy lifestyle, you'll find she answers without hesitation.

"It was the Jump Rope for Heart program we had in our school. It made me realize how much fun physical activity can be. Toth, a Prince George resident, took part in her first jump-off in Grade 9. Now that she's out of school, she keeps fit by doing aerobics.

Jason Maihara is another young athlete who jumped for heart. The 16-year-old North Vancouver student says that jumping rope has helped him improve his footwork and endurance for other sports such as football and hockey.

This year, tens of thousands of children like Laurie and Jason will celebrate Jump Rope for Heart's 10th anniversary by helping to create the nation's longest jump rope.

Teaching practices judged to be most fair by students

Thorkildsen, T.A. *Justice in the classroom: The student's view*. Child Development, 60, 323-334. (1989)

Most students and teachers have been in situations where students complete their work at different rates. This study investigated how students view the fairness of five different ways teachers handle the faster and slower students. Across all ages, the practice of making everyone stop when the faster students have completed their work was viewed as being most unfair, while peer tutoring (having the faster students assist the slower students) was viewed as most fair. Acceleration for faster workers was viewed as more fair as age increased, as did allowing faster workers to do other tasks. Having the faster students sit and wait for everyone to finish was judged to be unfair with increasing age.

Students reported that teachers use giving other tasks to the faster students acceleration, and sitting quietly the most often, and only four percent had experienced the use of peer tutoring. Students' rationales for deciding what practices were fair or unfair were also analyzed. Five levels of justifications were identified: Level 1 — students who indicate that attaining a reward is more important than learning; Level 2 — everyone should do the same amount of work, keep busy, avoid punishment, and obtain rewards; Level 3 — everyone should learn the same thing; Level 4 — all students should work at their own pace and have the same amount of work; and Level 5 — acceleration, peer tutoring, and enrichment are all desirable. With age, children tended to move from Level 1 to Level 5 in their justifications of what they believe to be fair. Surprisingly, even though only four percent of the children had experienced peer tutoring in school, 97% thought this was the most fair method of helping all children to learn.

Source: *Physical Education PSA Newsletter*, Summer 1991.



Every participant will add one kilometre of jump rope to the total. Organizers envision the symbolic rope eventually stretching from the west coast of Vancouver Island to the eastern-most cape of Newfoundland.

Since Jump Rope for Heart's launch in 1981, more than one million students have raised well over \$35 million for heart and stroke research and education.

Vancouver Canucks centre Cliff Ronning is honorary chair of B.C.'s anniversary campaign. The Burnaby hockey player is donating a signed jersey, hockey stick and puck to the child who collects the most pledges. His participation will also be key in encouraging more boys like Jason to participate in the program.

The Heart and Stroke Foundation invites all schools to help celebrate Jump Rope for Heart's 10th anniversary.

Participating schools receive:

- instructional manuals and wall posters
- class set of jump ropes
- ready-made lesson plans for health education and PE
- special 10th anniversary student incentives
- 10th anniversary T-shirt for co-ordinators
- a five percent NET return of event funds raised.

Register now for Jump Rope for Heart and celebrate 10 years of improving our odds against Canada's No. 1 killer. And help your students to healthy hearts.

Retired teachers can help too. The foundation is looking for promoters across the province. Organizers would love to hear from you.

For information, call the Health and Stroke Foundation of B.C. and Yukon at 736-4404. Outside the Lower Mainland, call toll-free 1-800-663-7010.

Teachers remembered

As reported by the Superannuation Commission, the following teachers passed away recently. The last known district in which the member taught is also listed.

Margaret Ahrens, Central Okanagan
Mary Elizabeth Allen, Vancouver
Olivia Backman, Terrace
Florence Battey, Kitimat
Yvonne Briand, Kimberley
Frances Brown, Vancouver
Roderick Butler, Trail
Myrtle Cantrill, Chilliwack
Elsie Carr, Kamloops
Edith Carter, Vancouver
Alan Chalmers, West Vancouver
John Clapperton, Summerland
Evelyn Clark, Vernon
Gladys Clerihew, Vancouver
William Cumming, Delta
James Curr, Vancouver
Robert Cuthbertson, Vancouver
Daisy Dack, Victoria
Jean Davidson, Vancouver
Paul Dyck, Abbotsford
Rufus Earle, Maple Ridge
Philip Elliott, Vancouver
Mary Fairburn, Howe Sound
Theresa Felker
Rolley Ferguson, Maple Ridge
Ruby Fortearth, Prince Rupert
Duncan Fox
Thelma Fraser, Vancouver
Dorothy Frisby, Vancouver
Robert Galloway, Vancouver
Jean Gemmell
Helen Genier, Cariboo-Chilcotin
Ross Gibson, Courtenay
Elizabeth Gildea, Sooke
William Godfrey, Vancouver
Anna Graham, Grand Forks
Jessie Grant, Victoria
Rowland Grant, Victoria
Gladys Harris, Richmond
Amy Henke, Kamloops
Audrey Hole
Mona Horn, Victoria
Hettie Iddins, Langley
Helen Johnson, Central Coast
Viola Johnson, Kamloops
George Kapples, Surrey
Dora Kelley, Central Okanagan
Audrey Kemlo, Victoria

Annie MacGregor, Vancouver
Jean MacLennan, Surrey
John MacLeod, Vancouver
Eileen Makepeace
Gordon Manzini, Victoria
Frederick Marshall, Nanaimo
Margaret Martin, Victoria
Bernard Matthews, Langley
Aethea McAlpine, Quesnel
Thomas McCallum, Courtenay
John McFarland, Terrace
Peter McLellan, Vernon
Lillie McMeekin, Vancouver
Carmene Michell, Victoria
James Minnis, Alberni
John Monroe, Vancouver
John Moore, Burnaby
Clark Morrison, Vancouver
Reta Munro, North Vancouver
Anne Naylor, North Vancouver
David Norman, Burnaby
Florence Pager, Cowichan
Marion Parfitt, Victoria
Percy Parfitt
Gardner Peacock, Mission
Irene Pearson
Phillip Penner
Lester Peterson, Sunshine Coast
Caroline Porteous, Sooke
Kenneth Raison, West Vancouver
Tibor Rittich, Burnaby
Lorne Robb
Agnes Robertson, Nanaimo
Walter Robinson, Hope
Osbert Sanford, Vancouver
William Stene
Daisy Stewart
Victor Stielow, Sunshine Coast
Elsie Tervo, Victoria
Robert Thorburn, Lillooet
Mabel Tomczyk, Qualicum
Hortense Warne, Vancouver
Dorothy Warren, Langley
Grace Watson, Victoria
Charles Webb
Harold Welburn
Herbert Westgate, Campbell River
Carol Wheller, Kettle Valley
Kenneth White, Vancouver
Anna Wilson, Vancouver
Lillian Woodland, Vancouver
Harold Woodward, Vancouver
Donald Woodworth, West Vancouver

Changes to the Employment Standards Act

The provincial government has changed the maternity-leave provisions of the Employment Standards Act to bring them in line with recent changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act's provisions for maternity and parenthood benefits.

The revised Employment Standards Act guarantees 18 weeks of maternity leave, with a possible extension to 24 weeks if medically required. This is not new. However, if you are planning maternity leave, you must now give your employer four weeks' notice of that leave.

A new category called parental/adoption leave has been added. It also requires four weeks' written notice and provides 12 weeks, with an extension of five weeks in special cases. This leave is available to either parent. For the first time, adoptive parents are covered by the Employment Standards Act.

The maximum combined maternity and parental/adoption leave period possible is 32 weeks per birth or arrival in the home. The employer must continue to provide benefits such as medical, dental, and pension during this period, as long as the employee maintains his/her share of the premiums.

Contractual provisions regarding maternity, adoption, or parental leaves take precedence over the Employment Standards Act. Locals should ensure that their collective agreements provide no less protection than the Employment Standards Act in each of these situations, and in many cases, it may wish to provide far more.

BCTF offers low-cost life insurance

The BCTF/Seaboard Voluntary Group Life Insurance Plan offers additional life insurance at the lowest possible costs. If you need extra insurance for yourself, or to insure your spouse, your children, your mortgage, or to cover accidental death and dismemberment, this may be the plan for you.

Information and application forms are available from participating school-board offices. Premiums are paid through payroll deduction, again only with participating employers.

In non-participating districts, additional insurance may be obtained through the BCTF/North American Life Voluntary Group Life Plan (formerly Citadel Insurance). Information and application forms may be obtained from the BCTF Income Security Department.

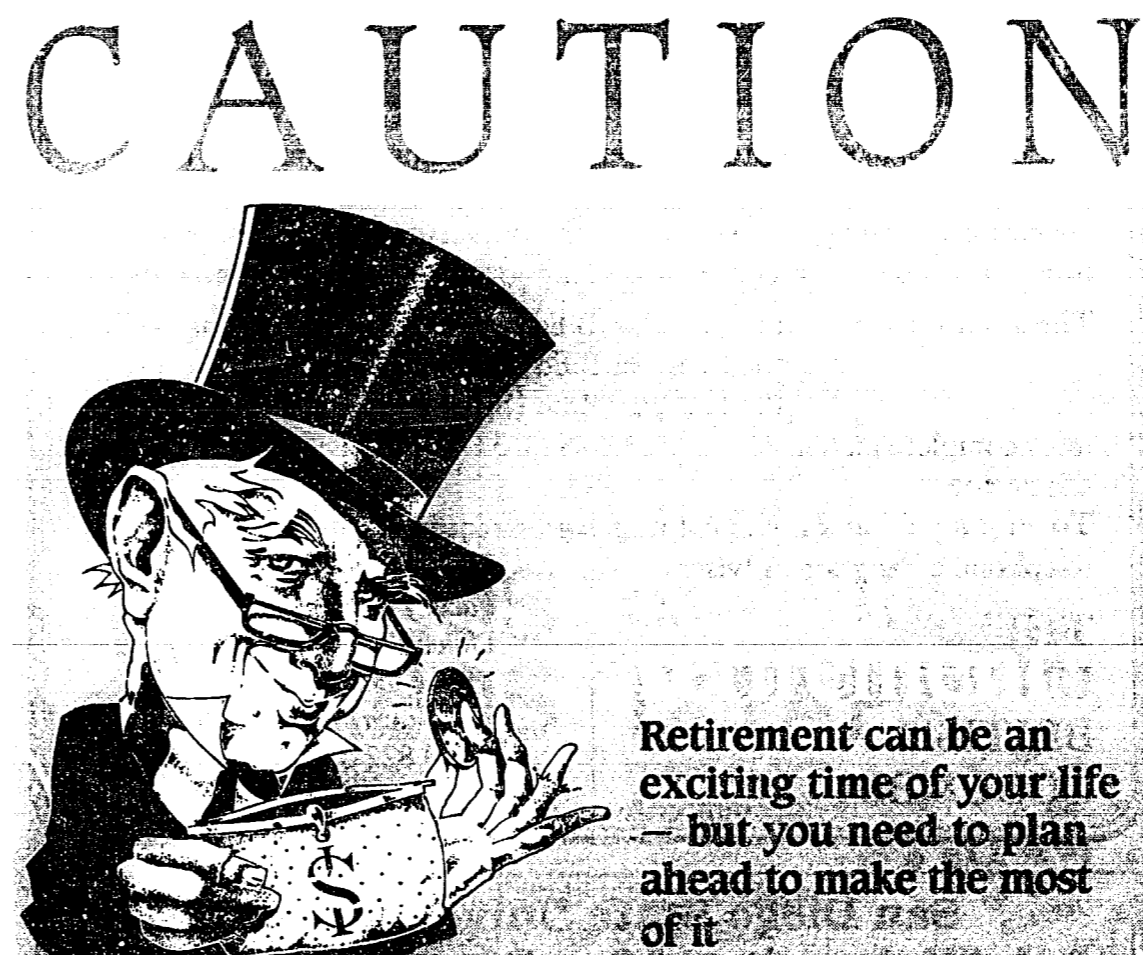
Ken Smith and Karen Harper of the BCTF's Income Security Department, write this column for Teacher.

Missing persons

Superannuation Commission is trying to locate the following teachers:

Nina Bell, Janet Carlson, Edna Hamilton, Ruth Eleanor Johnson, Ethel Mann, Brita Margarete Park, Tara Teresa Shantz, Victor Verhulst

We ask that these people forward updated addresses and their Social Insurance Numbers to Teachers' Accounts, Superannuation Commission, 548 Michigan Street, Victoria, BC V8V 4R5.



Retirement can be an exciting time of your life — but you need to plan ahead to make the most of it

Retirement seminars, designed to help you (and your spouse) prepare for the next 1/3 of your life, will be held throughout the province.

Penticton, November 16, 1991
Coast Lakeside Resort

Fort St. John, November 30, 1991
Pioneer Inn

Vancouver, February 1, 1992
Holiday Inn Broadway

Surrey, February 8, 1992
Surrey Inn

Richmond, February 15, 1992
Best Western Richmond Inn

Coquitlam, February 22, 1992
Best Western Coquitlam Motor Inn

Langley, March 7, 1992
Sunrise Golf & Racquet Centre

Vernon, March 28, 1992
Village Green Inn

Victoria, April 4, 1992
Victoria Conference Centre

Williams Lake, April 11, 1992
Overlander Motor Inn

Sechelt, April 23, 1992
Driftwood Inn (16:00 - 21:00)

Powell River, April 25, 1992
Beach Garden Resort (16:00 - 21:00)

Powell River, April 25, 1992
Beach Garden Resort (09:00 - 12:00)

Prince George, May 2, 1992
Coast Inn of the North

NOVEMBER

November 1-2 CALGARY

ATESL '91, "Master Keys: Unlocking Potential", Sheraton Cavalier, Calgary, Alberta. Contact Marsha Fehl, Sarcee Postal Outlet, Box 35038, Calgary, AB T3E 7C7, (403) 284-3598.

November SEATTLE

National Council of Teachers of English national conference, Seattle. Contact John F. McGuinness, 12725 56th Avenue, Surrey, BC V3W 1G4, 596-5315.

November 7-9 VANCOUVER

Reflections on Change, Staff Development Council of B.C., Vancouver Trade and Convention Centre. Contact Robin Arden, 869-4891.

November 8 VANCOUVER

The Continuing Legal Education Society of B.C., School Law: "Trends and Issues for the 1990s", Ramada Renaissance. Contact Mary Kingston, 669-3544.

November 8-9 VANCOUVER

Horizons '91, annual conference of Computer-Using Educators of B.C., Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Gord Edmonds, 467-6836 evenings.

November 14-16 TORONTO

Arts Educators' Assembly, organized by OSEA and CSEA, Skyline Hotel, Toronto. Write 3186 Newbound Court, Malton, ON L4T 1R9.

November 20-24 PRINCE GEORGE

Basic Intensive Workshops in Glasser's Control Theory. Contact Lana Caldwell, 562-2131.

November 21-22 PRINCE RUPERT

District convention, "Empowerment and Change", Year 2000, environment, computers. Keynotes: Ruben Nelson and Milt McLaren. Speakers include Sharon Jeroski, John Harker, Susan Close, Alison Preece, Nancy Little, and David Porter. Contact Kathy Fuller, 624-9370, or Craig Fritch, 627-8974, 1500 Ottawa Avenue, Prince Rupert, BC V8J 2Z8.

November 21-23 VANCOUVER

B.C. Science Teachers' Association/National Science Teachers' Association regional conference, Hotel Vancouver and Hyatt Regency Hotel. Contact John O'Connor, 4250 Mahon Avenue, Burnaby, BC V5G 3R2, H: 299-4166, S: 261-7825 or Steve Cardwell, H: 943-8584.

November 25-29 QUESNEL

Basic Intensive Workshop in Glasser's Control Theory. Contact Debra Cullinane, 992-7211.

JANUARY

January 10-11 VANCOUVER

Second National Perinatal Drug Dependency Conference, Coast Plaza at Stanley Park. Contact Continuing Education in the Health Sciences, 105-2194 Health Sciences Mall, Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z3, 822-2626, F: 822-4835.

January 23-24 RICHMOND

B.C. Alternate Education Association Conference, Delta River Inn, Richmond. Contact Bonnie Burgess, S: 859-5141, H: 853-1322.

FEBRUARY

February 6-7 PRINCE GEORGE

Year 2000 Conference: Crossing the Boundaries, Blackburn Elementary School. \$225. Contact Martha Otteson, Crossing the Boundaries, 1894 Ninth Avenue, Prince George, BC V2M 1I7, 963-7898, Fax: 963-7381.

February 6-8 VANCOUVER

B.C. Music Educators' Association conference, "Soundwaves '92", Hotel Vancouver. Contact Curt Jantzen, Curriculum and Instructional Services Centre, 7532 - 134A Street, Surrey, BC V3W 7J1, 590-2255.

February 17 VANCOUVER

An evening with Jim Trelease, author of *The Read-Aloud Handbook*, co-sponsored by the *Vancouver Sun* Newspaper in Education Services, B.C. Conferation of Parent Advisory Councils, the Children's Literature Roundtable, and the Lower Mainland Council of the International Reading Association (LOMCIRA), Hyatt Regency Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Donna McCormick, 261-5919.

February 21-22 NORTH VANCOUVER

B.C. Art Teachers' Association conference and AGM, Carson Graham. Major keynote: Arthur Erickson. Contact Bill MacDonald, 987-6667, F: 987-8967.

February 26-29 EDMONTON

Conference of the Western Canadian Association for Student Teaching, to reflect on past experiences and explore new possibilities in teacher education, University of Alberta, Edmonton. Contact WestCAST '92 Committee, Undergraduate Studies: Field Experiences, Faculty of Education, Rm. 833, Education South, University of Alberta, Edmonton, AB T6G 2G5.

February 27-28 VANCOUVER

B.C. School Counsellors' Association conference, "Focus on Families", Coast Plaza at Stanley Park, Vancouver. Contact Kathi Adams, 1166 West 14th Avenue, Vancouver, BC V6H 1P6, H: 734-2698, S: 738-3191.

February 27-29 VICTORIA

Teachers of Home Economics Specialist Association annual conference, "Perspective '92", Victoria Conference Centre. Contact Mary Soby, 4630 Rocky Point Road, RR2, Victoria, BC V9B 5B4, H: 474-6145, S: 478-5501.

February 27-29 SECHELT

Hospital/Homebound Provincial Specialist Association conference, Sechelt. Contact Hanne Ratzburg, H: 885-9872, S: 886-2204.

February 28-29 RICHMOND

For-Ed '92, "Communities, Forestry, and the Environment", a conference for teachers and Grade 10-12 students, Delta River Inn. Contact Anne Phipps, 661-5385, F: 661-5235.

MARCH

March 3-7 VANCOUVER

TESOL '92, 26th annual convention and exposition of Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages, Inc., "Explore and Discover, Vancouver. Contact TESOL, Inc., 300-1600 Cameron Street, Alexandria, VA 22314, (703) 836-0774, F: (703) 836-7864.

March 12-13 RICHMOND

Special Education Association Conference, "Swimming Together in the Mainstream," a conference for regular education and special education teachers, Delta Pacific Resort Hotel, Richmond. Contact Joyce Pauls, H: 859-3015, S: 859-7820.

March 19-21 CALGARY

11th Annual Conference of the ATA Computer Council, "Synergy '92: People, Ideas, Technology", Paliser Hotel. Contact Bill Leonard, Cambrian Heights Elementary School, 640 Northmount Drive NW, Calgary, AB T2K 3J5, 284-2246.

APRIL

April 2-5 VANCOUVER

12th National Conference of Carl Orff Canada, "Melody/Melodie from Sea to Sea in Potpourri", Waterfront Centre Hotel, Vancouver. Contact Joyce Wallace, 6170 Cypress Street, Vancouver, BC V6M 3S2, H: 261-0420, S: 879-6571.

April 3-5 BRACKENDALE

Environmental Educators' Provincial Specialist Association spring conference, "The Environment as an Integrating Theme", North Vancouver Outdoor School, Brackendale. Contact Roger Hammill, H: 248-5347, S: 248-5721.

April 29 - May 2 CALGARY

25th Anniversary Conference of the Canadian Council of Teachers of English and Language Arts, "Remembering the Past: Remembering the Future", Westin Hotel, Calgary. Contact Patricia M. Harvey, 210 - 39th Avenue SW, Calgary, AB T2S 0W5, (403) 243-1871.

MAY

May 1 BURNABY

BCETA Spring Conference, SFU, Burnaby. Contact Marg Frederickson, 970 Gilroy Crescent, Coquitlam, BC V3J 3T1, H: 939-5781, S: 291-7301.

May 6-9 MONTREAL

Seventh Canadian Symposium on Instructional Technology, Queen Elizabeth Hotel. Contact Alexis MacMillan, 1002 Park Plaza, 10611 - 98th Avenue, Edmonton, AB T5K 2P7, (403) 424-4433, F: (403) 424-4888.

May 13-15 GUELPH

2nd North American Media Education Conference, "Constructing Culture", sponsored by the Association for Media Literacy, University of Guelph, Guelph, ON. Contact Construction Culture, 500 - 10th St. Mary Street, Toronto, ON M4Y 1P9, (416) 923-7271, F: (416) 923-0862.

Compiled by Debby Stagg, BCTF Professional Development.

THE COMMON FUTURE

A conference for educators on teaching a global perspective May 7-9, 1992 at the University of British Columbia Conference Centre

This conference will give teachers, trustees, student teachers and other educators a rare opportunity to explore ideas on teaching the urgent and global issues of today: environment, peace, human rights, sustainable development. How do we approach these issues which are so critical for our students?

Practical ideas on:

Integration of disciplines/subjects and themes; global education in the primary and intermediate grades; teaching controversial issues; global education in subject areas.

Plus:

The World Game: a "keynote" you participate in. Deal firsthand with world issues as a player on the huge World Game map.

And:

Tom Hanley with an inspiring look at the challenges before us as educators and global citizens.

Presentations of student drama, art, and other projects on global themes.

Conference fee: \$100
Early bird registration by December 15: \$75
Accommodation at UBC \$29 per night.
Call for a registration form from Leona Dolan at BCTF 731-8121 or toll free 1-800-663-9163

16 Classified

Travel/Vacation

London flats. Chelsea Bridge/Battersea Park area. One flat accommodates 3-4 persons; the second flat accommodates 5-7 persons. Elegant interiors, fully modernized to a high standard; two-hour maid service Monday Friday. If our properties are fully booked, we recommend and book luxury serviced flats at 26 Queen's Gate, Hyde Park. Also, Folly Farm Cottages, Tetbury, Gloucestershire, two fields from the Prince and Princess of Wales. CAN ARRANGE FOR THEATRE TICKETS. Contact for brochures and photos: Mr. Thomas Moore, 801-393-9120 or P.O. Box 12086, Ogden, Utah 84412 USA, Fax 801-393-3024.

Egypt or Morocco for Christmas. See the pyramids, sail on the Nile, visit village homes, walk in the Sahara desert, explore Marrakesh! Prices from \$2850 CDN including flights, sightseeing, two meals per day and good hotels with ensuite. Also journeys to the Greek Isles, Turkey, Indonesia, Syria/Jordan, Albania, Nepal and Guatemala/Belize. Brochures available. Adventures Abroad, 310 - 1037 West Broadway, Vancouver, BC V6H 1E3. Telephone (604) 732-9922.

Sunny Hong Kong. December 26/91 to January 2/92. Budget-priced tour. Relax in new hotel or shop. \$1495 covers airfare (Cathay Pacific), transfers, bed/breakfast, single supplement \$240. Contact Maggie, Cultural Tours 736-7671.

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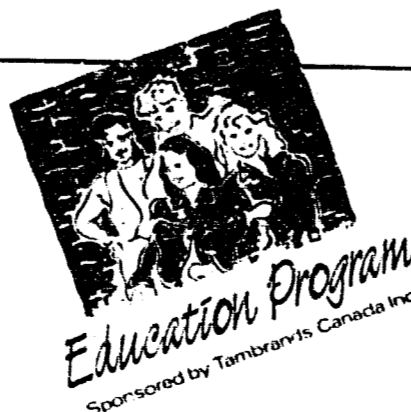
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TECHNOLOGY THE WORLD CALLS ON

Authors meet audience in winning writing project

If a tree falls in the forest, does anyone hear it? When a dancer performs without an audience, is the artistic experience complete? When an author writes a thoughtful, interesting children's story, and it isn't read by any children, is there a payoff?

Surrey teacher David Chudnovsky's Grade 12 Creative Writing students asked that last question when they completed their children's stories and only an adult — their teacher — read them.

Chudnovsky talked over his concerns with two teacher friends. The conversation led to a buddy writing project with payoff indeed — in story writing, editing and publishing, giving feedback, interviewing, and intercultural communications.

Each class developed criteria for good children's stories; learned how to give and receive criticism, practised interviewing, studied the elements of plot and sequence, and examined differences in age groups, social classes, and language and ethnic groups.

Donna Girling was an intermediate teacher at Bridgeview Elementary School, in a socio-economically disadvantaged community, at the time of this project.

Girling had worked with the writing process for several years, but felt that the publishing aspect had been neglected. Her Grade 5 students had been "older buddies" on several occasions, and she thought the younger buddy role would help them learn. The project would be an incentive for her students to work on developing logical and sequential plots in their stories.

Moira MacKenzie teaches primary at Ray Shepherd Elementary School, in an upper middle class neighbourhood. The project captured MacKenzie's interest because her students would meet students from different backgrounds and of different ages. She saw the potential to change outlooks and challenge stereotypes. MacKenzie also wanted to expand on her literature-based reading program by having her students help develop literature that took their interests and opinions into account and was written specifically for them. Like Girling, MacKenzie had worked with mixed-age groupings and buddy pairing.

Surrey students buddy-up to learn about good children's literature and each other, in a secondary/elementary writing project. (Below top) Teacher David Chudnovsky reads a favourite children's story. (Below) Partners groove on reading together.

Tim Pelling photos



The project consisted of the shared writing, editing and proofreading, critiquing, illustrating, and publishing of children's stories. Each Grade 12 student worked with an intermediate or a primary buddy.

Before meeting their buddies and inbetween the classroom exchanges, each class developed criteria for good children's stories, learned how to give and receive criticism, practised interviewing, studied the elements of plot and sequence, and examined different age groups, social classes, and language and ethnic groups.

Buddies were carefully matched. Teachers described their own students and identified potential problems and challenges. Each class discussed stereotypes. The younger children shared what they thought teenagers were like and later compared their preconceptions with reality. The Grade 12s discussed how elementary students differed from them.

Each visit began with one of the teachers' reading aloud a children's story that had particular meaning for them in style,

content, or illustration. This shared quiet experience at the beginning provided a structure that both older and younger students came to expect and depend on, and it set an appropriate tone. The exchange visits also included trust-building exercises.

While the project was directed to producing a book, the interaction between the older and younger children was important in itself. Art activities, worksheets on likes and dislikes, and interviewing were highlights. Students corresponded between visits to express thanks, communicate enthusiasm, or just keep in touch. These exchanges provided continuity and helped to build the relationships.

The primary and secondary buddies completed a book initially written by the older students, critiqued and edited together, and then illustrated by the primary students. The intermediate and secondary buddies each wrote a story and shared the tasks of editing, critiquing, and illustrating.

The project concluded with a celebration with special guests, book signing, refreshments, speeches, and picture taking. Partners received a photo of themselves and a copy of their published work. The teachers concluded that their academic and social learning outcomes had been realized. The work had payoff. Here's what the children said.

"I felt like an egg that hadn't hatched; [whereas] they hatched 10 years ago," Grade 5. "I was nervous, and I felt small, [but] when we packed up to leave, I wasn't scared anymore," Grade 5. "The interviews were the most fun because me and Cindy kept saying the same things," Grade 5. "That was great, sir. Thanks for organizing it," Grade 12. "Before, I thought teenagers were criminals and mean to little kids, but these teenagers were the best I ever met," Grade 1.

— Kit Krieger

