



UNIVERSITY OF  
REGINA

---

# *POLICY AND PRACTICE* **IN EDUCATION**

A JOURNAL ADDRESSING  
ISSUES, RESEARCH AND PRACTICE  
IN THE EDUCATION OF TEACHERS

---

VOLUME 13

NUMBERS 1,2

2007



---

---

## POLICY AND PRACTICE IN EDUCATION

The editorial board welcomes contributions on most aspects of the education of those who teach. Whether this teaching occurs in elementary, secondary, or postsecondary institutions, which is our primary focus, or in other institutions, such as business and industry, government, or the military, the board is interested in exploring how people become teachers, how their practice matures, what issues and challenges they face, and how the public policy context shapes their practice. The board especially wishes to encourage two kinds of manuscripts: (a) those in which are illuminated the complexities of teaching through established and emerging theories and programs of research, and (b) those in which matters preoccupying contemporary debates about teaching and the public policy context of teaching are critically examined. Manuscripts should be written in an accessible and rigorous style, which communicates to specialist and nonspecialists. *Policy and Practice in Education* is published by the Faculty of Education, at the University of Regina, Regina, SK, Canada.

### EDITORIAL BOARD

Patrick Lewis, Co-Editor  
[Patrick.Lewis@uregina.ca](mailto:Patrick.Lewis@uregina.ca)  
Phone: (306) 585-4608

James McNinch, Co-Editor  
Phone: (306) 585-5353  
[James.McNinch@uregina.ca](mailto:James.McNinch@uregina.ca)

#### Associate Editors

Warren Wessel  
Phone: (306) 585-4555  
[Warren.Wessel@uregina.ca](mailto:Warren.Wessel@uregina.ca)

Ann Kipling Brown  
Phone: (306) 585-4525  
[Ann.Kipling.Brown@uregina.ca](mailto:Ann.Kipling.Brown@uregina.ca)

Valerie Mulholland  
Phone: (306) 585-4618  
[Val.Mulholland@uregina.ca](mailto:Val.Mulholland@uregina.ca)

Juanita Modeland, Editorial Assistant  
Phone: (306) 585-5142  
[Juanita.Duncan@uregina.ca](mailto:Juanita.Duncan@uregina.ca)

All correspondence should be addressed to Juanita Modeland, Editorial Assistant, ED Room 220.4, Faculty of Education, University of Regina, Regina, SK S4S 0A2. Telephone: (306) 585-5142; Facsimile: (306) 585-4880.

Copyright ©December 2007. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be photocopied or reproduced, or stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted electronically or mechanically without written permission of the copyright holder.

ISSN 1708-2749

*Policy and Practice in Education: A Journal Addressing Issues, Research and Practice in the Education of Teachers*

Previous title, *Journal of Professional Studies*, Vol. 1(1), December 1993 to Vol. 9(2), June 2002

Back issues are available in microform from:

Micromedia Limited, 20 Victoria Street, Toronto, ON M5C 2N8  
Toll free: 1-800-387-2689 Phone: (416) 362-5211 Fax: (416) 362-6161

---

---

## **ADVISORY BOARD**

Cathy Campbell  
Faculty of Education, University of Lethbridge, AB

Galen Erickson  
Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia, BC

Fernand Gervais  
Faculté des sciences de l'éducation, Université Laval, PQ

Jeff Orr  
Department of Education, St. Francis Xavier University, NS

Renate Schulz  
Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, MB

Catherine Sinclair  
Faculty of Education, University of Western Sydney, Australia

Jack Whitehead  
School of Education, University of Bath, United Kingdom

---

---

## CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACTS</b> .....	3
<b>EDITORIAL</b> .....	5
Patrick Lewis and James McNinch	
<b>ARTICLES</b>	
<i>Apprenticeships in Critical Literacy: Conversations With     Preservice Teachers</i> .....	8
Angela Ward and Sara Ann Beach	
<i>Special Educators' Experiences Implementing a "Scientifically     Based" Remedial Reading Program: All That Glitters     Is Not Gold</i> .....	25
Arlene Grierson, Tiffany Gallagher, Vera Woloshyn	
<i>Reflections on Situated Knowledge and Education of Self:     Implications for Researching Practice and Policy</i> .....	46
Carolyn Fleiger	
<i>The Prediction of Teacher Autonomy from Levels of Stress, Work     Satisfaction, Empowerment and Professionalism</i> .....	65
Carolyn Pearson, John Burgin, Sharon Richardson, William Moomaw	
<b>REVIEWS</b>	
Ismael, S. (2006). <i>Child poverty and the Canadian welfare state:     From entitlement to charity</i> . Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press. Reviewed by Enid Elliot.....	84
James, C. E. (2005). <i>Race in play: Understanding the socio-     cultural worlds of student athletes</i> . Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press. Reviewed by Larena Hoeber .....	87
Noonan, B., Hallman, D., & Scharf, M. (2006) <i>A history of     education in Saskatchewan: Selected readings</i> . Regina, SK: University of Regina, Canadian Plains Research Centre. Reviewed by Michael Cappello.....	92
Subscription Application .....	96
Notes to Contributors .....	inside back cover

---

---

## ABSTRACTS

PAGE 8

***Apprenticeships in Critical Literacy: Conversations With Preservice Teachers***

Teacher educators are called on to generate a spirit of inquiry and reflection in future teachers, but there has been little exploration of how this actually happens. In this qualitative study, Angela Ward and Sara Ann Beach explore three preservice teachers' understandings and life-long experiences of critical literacy and critical thinking. The extended conversational interviews provide insight into the participants' apprenticeships with critical literacy, both accidental and deliberate.

PAGE 25

***Special Educators' Experiences Implementing a "Scientifically Based" Remedial Reading Program: All That Glitters Is Not Gold***

In this article, special education teachers' experiences implementing a "scientifically based" remedial reading program are explored. Arlene Grierson, Tiffany Gallagher, and Vera Woloshyn examine participants' decision-making processes in the selection and use of the intervention. Findings include teachers' unquestioned trust in perceived "expert" knowledge, benefits of scripted lessons, and the use of professional knowledge and judgment in decision-making. The importance of teachers' thoughtfully adaptive use of professional knowledge and incomplete understandings of "scientifically-based" reading research are also discussed.

PAGE 46

***Reflections on Situated Knowledge and Education of Self: Implications for Researching Practice and Policy***

Carolyn Fleiger's article is a critical tracking of two forms of knowledge. The first supported her past 10 years as a resource

---

teacher in a public school system that stipulated regular classroom placement for all students. The second emerged from her doctoral studies program and raised questions about the attitudes and beliefs that she carried into her daily teaching practices. She describes how disability studies and Foucauldian research opened new spaces to reconsider and reframe practices and policies of inclusive education, as well as particularities of student subjectivity. Such ways of knowing illuminated how various discourses are embedded, but often elusively situated, within contexts of inclusive education practice and the language of inclusive education policy.

PAGE 65

***The Prediction of Teacher Autonomy from Levels of Stress, Work Satisfaction, Empowerment and Professionalism***

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between teacher autonomy and on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. Carolyn Pearson, John Burgin, Sharon Richardson, and William Moomaw used reliable, valid scores from a measure of curriculum autonomy and general teaching autonomy (TAS). It was found that as curriculum autonomy increased, on-the-job stress decreased, but there was not as strong an association between curriculum autonomy and job satisfaction. Also, as general teacher autonomy increased, so did empowerment and professionalism. Canonical correlation revealed that the first canonical variate was defined by on-the-job stress and professionalism, which predicted general teaching autonomy; the second canonical variate was defined by on-the-job stress, professionalism, and, to a lesser degree, job satisfaction, which predicted curriculum autonomy.

---

## EDITORIAL

*Patrick Lewis and James McNinch*

This issue of *Policy and Practice in Education* marks another transition period in the life of our young journal. Drs. James McNinch and Patrick Lewis have taken on the roles of Co-Editors, with Dr. Warren Wessel, Dr. Ann Kipling Brown, and Dr. Valerie Mulholland on the Editorial Board. After this issue (Volume 13, No. 1/2), we will become a digital, paperless journal, available to anyone with access to the Web. The journal will remain peer reviewed and broadly focused on issues of interest and concern in education.

This decision was based on a number of considerations. In publishing research, the intent is to reach as wide an audience as possible; however, publication costs have become insupportable and competition is growing. We considered using the management and distribution services of a commercial publishing house, such as Francis & Taylor or Elsevier or Sage, however the notion of making knowledge more easily and broadly accessible suggested we look at open access publishing. As you are no doubt aware, there is a rapidly growing movement to make research and information publicly accessible, which is reflected in the proliferation of free and/or collaborative web-based resources.

This is a significant change for our journal but, we believe, a much needed one. The consequence of this transformation will be that considerably more people will have access to the articles we publish, and that seems to us the most important responsibility of a journal.

*Policy and Practice in Education* will continue to address issues, research and practice in the education of teachers. However, we intend to augment the latitude and significance of what that might mean. Consequently, we are inviting articles and reviews of works that not only investigate “good practice” in teacher education, but also transcend and critique accepted notions of such practice.

It is fitting that the four articles in this last paper issue cut across a wide set of interests in teacher education. The authors demonstrate the multifaceted complexity that is called *teaching*. That is to say, teaching is neither a technical operation shaped and influenced by science and psychology nor is it an art that only a few can master. Teaching is messy; all the competing ideas in curriculum and practice (both in and out of the field), coupled with

---

the politics of public education, stimulate an earnest and energetic conversation. In teacher education pre-service and in-service teachers might learn to live well with the messiness that is teaching.

In *Apprenticeships in Critical Literacy: Conversations with Preservice Teachers*, the authors explore one of the many contested areas of education that falls under the ever-widening aegis of *literacy*. They begin with the question (and assumption), how do teacher educators inspire a “spirit of inquiry and reflection” through critical literacy and critical thinking” in pre-service teachers? Through a series of conversational interviews with several pre-service teachers, the authors bring to light some of the complexities of teaching and learning. As with much qualitative work, the authors raise thoughtful questions through the reflective process but, at the same time, offer other possible ways of “doing” teacher education. Perhaps, more importantly, they attend to the “tension” experienced by so many pre-service teachers between the “reality of school settings” and the “precepts of college learning”. Often teacher educators and the institutions in which we work fail to help new teachers hold that tension and live the challenges of asking critically difficult or uncomfortable questions.

The second article, *Special Educators’ Experiences Implementing a “Scientifically Based” Remedial Reading Program: All That Glitters Is Not Gold*, explores another facet of literacy. In light of the preceding article, this work further demonstrates the difficulties teachers may experience in becoming critically reflective practitioners rather than accepting “expert knowledge” and assumptions around “scientifically based” reading programs. The authors try to unpack the practice, perceptions, and politics of the five special educators who participated in the field study of the implementation of a reading program for special education students. Through their exploration, the authors experience both “concern and optimism” with the practices and decisions of the participating teachers, and suggest possibilities for attending to some of the concerns identified.

Carolyn Fleiger’s article, *Reflections on Situated Knowledge and Education of Self-Implications for Researching Practice and Policy*, examines notions of “situated knowledge,” through her practice of inclusive education as a special education teacher; and emerging “theoretical knowledge,” drawn from her graduate studies experience. She uses recent work in disability studies to decentre herself from 20 years of taken-for-granted “best practice” to

---



---

“illuminate how various discourses are embedded, ... elusively situated” and may propagate the “disabled” label in perpetuity marginalizing, if not oppressing, a significant group of persons. Wrestling with the abled/disabled binary and using Foucauldian analysis, she has us travel across the landscape of her emergent understandings of the hegemonic machinations of ableism. Fleiger offers us an awareness of her own place of privilege as an “abled” practitioner in disability education and all that may entail.

Finally, in *The Prediction of Teacher Autonomy from Levels of Stress, Work Satisfaction, Empowerment and Professionalism*, the authors explore another realm of the complexity of being a teacher: professional autonomy and its relationship to various mental-health issues such as stress, empowerment and work satisfaction. The authors’ suggestion, albeit only partially supported through their findings, is congruent with many others: There is a strong correspondence between a teacher’s sense of professional autonomy and stress level, work satisfaction, feelings of empowerment, motivation and professionalism. For those who are or have been classroom teachers this will come as no surprise. The authors use a quantitative study to highlight a number of recent trends and practices among policy makers and administrators that seem to be contributing to the increasing number of “new teachers” who leave the profession or do not enter it at all.

Teaching is indeed a multifaceted, challenging, and ‘yes,’ messy affair. However, this sampling of the work of teacher educators exemplifies the perseverance of the *spirit of teaching* to continue the conversation about how we might live well with the tensions, difficulties, challenges and joys of teaching.



## Apprenticeships in Critical Literacy: Conversations With Preservice Teachers

*Angela Ward*

University of Saskatchewan, Saskatoon, SK Canada

*Sara Ann Beach*

The University of Oklahoma, Norman, OK USA

### First Words

If challenged to articulate the goals of education, many of us would concur with Pithers and Soden's (2000) view that "there seems to be consensus that it (education) should help students think well and to think for themselves" (p. 237). However, it is much less clear how students learn to do this and what the role of teachers might be in supporting critical thinking. Although removed from the classroom, teacher educators are called on to generate a spirit of inquiry and reflection in future teachers, presumably to increase the likelihood of encouraging 'good thinkers' in school. Teachers are asked, at least in curriculum documents,

to develop individuals who value knowledge, learning and the creative process, who can and will think for themselves, yet recognize the limits of individual reflection and the need to contribute to and build upon mutual understandings of social situations. (Saskatchewan Education, 1988)

These are lofty goals, reaching beyond classrooms "to develop students who work towards the creation of greater social justice, exercise the right to dissent responsibly, and act in accordance with an ethical framework which reflects qualities such as honesty, integrity and compassion" (n. p.). At a more pragmatic level, the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation (2002) expects teachers to "use a variety of instructional strategies to encourage students' development of critical thinking."

---

This paper reports on a study of preservice teachers' understandings and experiences of critical literacy. The authors met as volunteer teacher educators selected to participate in the Reading and Writing for Critical Thinking (RWCT) project designed to provide teacher in-service in more than 20 countries and, in response to more open, democratic social practices, to support teachers as their instructional practices evolved. These experiences challenged us to think differently about our own educational contexts. On one memorable occasion, a teacher from Central Asia asked us how we encouraged the development of critical thinking among teachers and students in North America. This conversation sparked questions that were difficult to answer and prompted us to carry out a study of students' experiences with critical literacy in Canada, the United States, and Kazakhstan (Ward, Beach, & Mirseitova, 2004). This paper reports on one part of the study - in-depth interviews carried out with three university students (two in Saskatchewan, and one in Oklahoma) - and explores their experiences with critical literacy as learners and preservice teachers.

### **A Larger Conversation: The Research Literature**

Critical literacy involves understanding and reflecting on texts, approaching them in an analytical way, and using linguistic resources to understand the author's intent and how the structures are used (Green, 2001). Critical thinking is the same process, but not necessarily initiated through encounters with text. Critical literacy is, in effect, a subset of critical thinking. Klooster (2001) describes critical thinking as independent thinking that begins with information taken from any source, using recognized patterns of argument and higher level questioning to reach a reasoned conclusion or to ask further questions. Literacy research currently draws on many disciplines to study how literate practices occur in a wide range of contexts, not only in schools. In the following sections we briefly review the literature on critical literacy within classrooms, introduce the concept of apprenticeship in critical thinking, and consider the relationship between critical thinking and democracy.

---

### Critical Literacy and Teaching

Research on critical thinking and critical literacy in education, including university classrooms, has tended to focus on explicit teaching of skills such as effective argumentation and reflective thinking, or making appropriate inferences (e.g., Kuhn, 1991), or creating an open classroom climate where various opinions might be comfortably voiced and critical inquiry encouraged (Edelsky, 1999). In its broadest sense, critical literacy also requires that particular texts be considered within a social context. The association between democracy and critical thinking is most evident in discussions of critical inquiry approaches in classrooms, where social justice and equity issues are explicit aims. Teachers who use critical pedagogy take account of critical perspectives and plan instruction that encourages students to go beyond thoughtful reading to identify social injustice and, in some cases, to act on their findings.

Edelsky (2004) makes a strong connection between 'living democracy' in classrooms and consequent full, informed participation of citizens in public spheres. This transformational approach to teaching about and through democracy requires a spirit of inquiry and liberatory action. Such approaches are exemplified in the work of Busching and Slesinger (2002) in an extended study of the Holocaust with middle school students. However, according to Evans (2006), in Canadian classrooms transformative approaches to education are observed more in rhetoric than in reality. He noted that teachers' learning goals in citizenship education were lofty, but that their pedagogical practice was narrowed to acquiring content knowledge about democratic practices rather than encouraging civic action.

Fecho, Price, and Read (2004) 'followed' teachers from their education program into their first year of teaching and described the tensions they experienced while trying to implement the inquiry approaches in which they had participated as university students. A critical approach to teaching "highlights the efforts of educators to bridge the rift between critical or social justice theories and classroom practices" (Damico & Riddle, 2004, p. 37). In this view, open classrooms, where more voices are heard, are considered to be microcosms of democratic practice. Critical literacy and critical thinking are tools for inquiry with the potential to support individuals to assume social responsibility. There is division in the field between those who advocate teaching critical thinking as a set

---

of autonomous skills (Paul, 1990) that should be incorporated into content areas, and the sociological perspective taken by educators such as Edelsky (1994).

Clearly, the literature suggests that both formal and informal exposure to critical thinking and critical literacy influence students' potential as critical thinkers. Hill (2000) captures a common thread, suggesting that many teachers are 'schooled' rather than educated and need support in developing their own critical inquiry skills. Descriptions of critical thinking and literacy programs applied at the college level may focus on specific strategies, as did many studies of school classroom programs in the 1980s and 1990s. Other recent studies describe programs in professional colleges that use case studies or problem-based learning (Shulman, 1992) or classroom contexts that emphasize dialogue (Darling-Hammond, 2000), but few that invite students to reflect on their life-long experiences with critical literacy.

### **Apprenticeships in Thinking**

Within sociocultural perspectives on learning, there are several ways to understand how critical thinking is learned. Gee's (1996) work on Discourses explains the techniques and dispositions to examine texts and the world, critically, as a secondary Discourse, closely connected with the language and participation patterns of schooling. Secondary Discourses are explicitly taught and learned and, in the case of critical thinking, are most obviously acquired through school and university experiences. Rogoff (1990) conceives of learning as a 'cognitive apprenticeship': that we take on patterns of thinking through involvement with particular cultural and subcultural groups. These patterns of thinking are demonstrated in discussions, events and practices. As Rogoff notes, "Shared problem solving - with an active learner participating in culturally organized activity with a more skilled partner - is central to the process of learning in apprenticeship" (p. 39). The social interactions and cultural values of the group strongly influence the particular activities and approaches taken by the novice or young learner. While specific activities may be tailored to the needs of an individual child, participation in social activities with adults will be shaped by their community's valued skills. In middle-class North America, many families will inculcate, tacitly and explicitly, skills congruent with those expected in schools, such as literate communication, or scientific reasoning, or skills of critical thinking

---

as we have described them. These particular problem-solving approaches may not be perceived as relevant and useful in all communities.

### **Critical Literacy and Democracy**

Dewey (1938) clearly related discussion to the development of democratic thinking. "Is it not the reason for our preference (for democracy) that we believe that mutual consultation and convictions reached through persuasion, make possible a better quality of experience than can otherwise be provided on any wide scale?" (p. 34). In 2004, concerns about the democratic process in the United States were behind calls for explicit teaching of democracy in schools, to address inherent tensions between equality and individualism in democratic societies (Edelsky, 2004). Shannon (2004) suggested, "The remaking of democracy in our classrooms might begin with our engagement in democratic practices" (p. 24). In this more radical view, the challenge to colleges of education is to prepare novice teachers to "help new generations reinvent democracy" (p. 25). Our study began by exploring preservice teachers' understandings of their role as educators in a democracy. Our focus on critical literacy in its narrower sense as a subset of critical thinking strategies is a direct outcome of the work we did in the RWCT project. In response to the politically delicate contexts of countries emerging from the Soviet Union, RWCT began with practical, concrete teaching strategies, rather than with the ideals of democratic participation. The conversations that led to this research were focused on classroom activities with text, rather than on the transformational aspects of critical literacy. Our unspoken assumption in the RWCT project was that implementing such strategies had the potential to change social interactions in an increasingly open civil society.

### **The Conversational Interviews**

There are similarities in the two social and educational contexts in which this research took place. The populations of both Oklahoma and Saskatchewan include indigenous peoples, as well as descendants of agrarian settlers and more recent migrants from around the world. However, a high percentage of teacher candidates in education programs at both authors' universities were women from small towns or suburban environments, with limited exposure to cultural diversity. We invited study volunteers from teacher

---

education classes in our own institutions. Those who volunteered were women raised in suburban or rural environments, and all were in their early 20s. Helen and Jasmine, the Canadian women, were in a secondary English program, while Erica, from the United States, was in elementary education.

The research focus was to discover our selected students' school and university experiences with critical literacy, both formal and informal, as well as the influence of their family backgrounds. (The interview protocol is appended.) We interviewed the women, using the protocol to guide our extended conversations, but not following it rigidly. The questions were given to the women ahead of time; two brought notes to the interview. We began by asking all three women about their early literacy experiences, then focused on their development as critical thinkers and readers, as well as their understandings of democracy. Each interview lasted between 1 and 2 hours, and was audiotaped and transcribed. Shorter, follow-up conversations allowed participants to discuss their transcripts, which they were free to amend. Only minor editorial changes were made.

### **What the Students Said**

The conversations are summarized below and are organized into categories (self as reader, family influences, classroom experiences, self as thinker, democracy and citizenship) suggested by the types of questions we asked.

**Self as reader.** All three women had positive life-long experiences with reading. Erica and Helen viewed themselves as consumers of popular fiction and children's literature, while Jasmine read more 'literary' books. Erica disliked television, so reading became a positive alternative for her. As an adult, her reading included popular novels (e.g., John Grisham) and Christian literature. Although Erica didn't consider herself a reader in elementary or middle school, her work in preservice education made her an avid reader of children's books.

Helen remembered using the public libraries, as well as the school's, and reading many Disney books at home, as well as many Babysitters' Club series of books. When she got a little older, she read V. C. Andrews. In the summer, she often borrows children's books, such as the Harry Potter series by J. K. Rowling, from the public library. Jasmine remembered being a voracious reader as a child, given free rein to wander off and collect books in the library. The change in Jasmine's reading as a child and her reading as a

---

young adult began when she encountered texts of a higher vocabulary load, so that she had to read more slowly. The subsequent satisfaction she experienced irrevocably changed her as a reader. She also believed that writing throughout her school career affected her ability to engage with text. In Grade 4 she began a 'commonplace book' (i.e., a collection of notes and readings): "I have notes taken from books that I would read because I would like a passage... or I would write notes on a character." Jasmine connected her love for words with "a love for patterns in things – I see that in music, I see that in movement."

**Family influences.** The participants grew up in families that encouraged literacy and involved them in discussions about current events or religious topics. Erica's early home-literacy experiences encompassed Bible reading, she practiced writing under her father's tutelage, and read some series books, such as Nancy Drew. She didn't have strong recollections of reading for pleasure and, as she grew older, she emulated her mother's reading choices. Newspapers and magazines were available in her home, but were peripheral to her main reading choices. Erica described her father as an important figure in her intellectual development: "He'll listen to my opinion; he's a really spiritual guy, and so he'll always back his opinion up with scripture."

Helen usually took out a whole pile of library books, but was never able to finish them all by the time they were due. Every night at suppertime, when she was a teenager, her family held discussions. Jasmine remembered spending a lot of time with books when she was young. She doesn't remember the process of learning to read, but didn't think she could read before she went to school. Although Jasmine recalled that she could recognize words, her mother reminded her that as a young child she preferred to sit and listen to stories, rather than reading for herself. Jasmine liked listening to adult conversation, but was not a TV watcher, except as a 6-year-old watching soap operas with her grandma.

**Classroom experiences.** None of the participants had clear memories of their elementary learning experiences; it's almost as if they were 'transparent.' Early memories were difficult to recall in detail; however, all three women had positive memories of particular high school teachers, and Helen noted it was an English teacher who gave her the impetus to become a teacher herself.

Erica did not have vivid memories of her elementary school literacy experiences, either. She recalled teacher-directed, structured activities such as round-robin reading during her early

---



years, although in upper elementary school her involvement seemed a response to literature activities (i.e., creating physical representations of book settings during novel studies). Erica recalled that most teachers, with few exceptions, required the regurgitation of teacher-provided information from their students.

Erica's experience of group work in public schools was mixed. In some activities the students could authentically share ideas and participate in joint projects, but on other occasions tasks were ill-structured. Sometimes the groups neither listened to each other nor respected each others' ideas. Again in university there were many classes where students, to be successful, had to know what the teacher wanted. Erica noted that some teacher education instructors lectured too much, with few challenging questions. However, there was one particular instructor who helped them challenge ideas and make connections and involved them in problem solving. She enjoyed participating in reflection activities if there was a combination of talk and writing, and if the reflection had a specific focus.

Helen, as the other women in the study, had few memories of her elementary school education. She chose to major in English because a high school English teacher "treated her students not like children, but like equals with her." Helen loved reading Shakespeare in class, but had no special memory of critical inquiry activities. In fact, she remembered a lot of reading aloud around the class, and there was also some discussion. Helen felt comfortable participating in class discussions in her small school, "We all knew each other, so we were really close," and their English teacher "always accepted everything you said." Helen remembered being encouraged to consider both sides of a question in history classes, too. Students were encouraged to use a variety of resources: "You always had to use 10 resources," but weren't given much guidance in their evaluation. Describing her humanities classes at university, Helen noted that if a student gave one perspective, then the professor might present a different perspective and try to encourage discussion on alternative viewpoints.

Jasmine's memories of elementary school included research, note taking, and some group work. Her switch to a more critical approach to reading came from reading texts that she wouldn't have known about or attempted to read on her own. In junior high school, Jasmine was in an integrated program that led to some unexpected outcomes: "I don't even know how I ended up doing this, but I studied "sewage treatment in our town. I looked at the

---

environmental impact.” Jasmine also had a social studies teacher who used role-play activities to help her class understand different perspectives on historical moments. Jasmine was quite critical of how politically correct thinking had affected discussion in university classrooms.

***Self as thinker.*** Erica and Helen were reluctant to identify themselves as critical thinkers; in fact they were quite nervous about discussing the topic. They had times when they resisted challenging the educational system in any way. Erica hoped she was a critical thinker but was unsure. Her definition of a critical thinker was someone who didn’t take ideas at face value but came up with his/her own ideas about the truth or validity of a text. Erica, especially, felt like a critical thinker when she read something that challenged her own beliefs or was a “shocking piece.”

Helen reflected, “I just think I don’t question enough.” However, in thinking about the required cross-cultural course she had taken at university, she noted that on the topic of equity issues: “No one really talked very much...it’s hard to express opinions in that kind of context, because it’s hard to know the right thing to say.... you don’t want to offend anyone.” Later, she tried to describe the constraints she had experienced: “I do think critically. I think often in class when discussion is going on, I do think and hold my own opinions, but I often don’t voice them.”

Helen believed there was an emphasis on thinking critically in her education courses, along with an emphasis on making sure, as preservice teachers, they learned enough to encourage critical thinking in their own students. She regarded herself as somewhat of a critical thinker, but not to the extent of other students in her class who seemed to question everything. In thinking about her peers’ responses, she wondered why she didn’t question things as much. She felt nervous about being able to support her opinion articulately in public.

Jasmine noted that learning to be a critical thinker was not just a matter of hearing someone else’s point of view, but it also involved imagination and compassion. Within her education courses Jasmine found that too often

We’re taught there are two polar views - it makes me cringe in our college ... With some of the perspectives I’ve been introduced to, for example anti-colonialist literature, it becomes easy to look for only those points in a text. So you’re no longer open to

---

anything that the text might have in it, you're just looking for particular markers.

***Democracy and citizenship.*** The responses to our questions about democracy indicated the participants had not thought in depth about the relationship between critical thinking, critical literacy, and democracy. Erica defined *democracy* as the group "choosing their own leader to act as the voice that speaks for them all." A good citizen follows the law, functions in society, and can survive in the culture. Literacy is important to citizenship because to make informed decisions we need to read and evaluate. Expressing opinions is important so that everyone's views are heard and those ideas and their potential effects can be evaluated. This supports thoughtful decision-making.

In discussing democracy, Helen noted: "It's important to know the history of the different cultures around you in order to understand them." When asked about critical thinking and democracy, Jasmine replied: "Your question reminds me of when John Ralston Saul was speaking at the university, and said that democracy absolutely depends on critical thinking. True democracy means always questioning our ideals and arguing amongst each other." Ironically, or perhaps not, Jasmine wasn't sure she wanted to go into education, because she was concerned there were too many constraints on teaching the way she dreamed of doing.

### **What We Learned From the Conversations**

The women in our study had developed as thinkers through participating in many communities of practice (Wenger, 1998), during a long cognitive apprenticeship (Rogoff, 1990). Their experiences at home, in elementary and high schools, and at university, had prepared them as critical thinkers and future teachers. In their work on the development of preservice teachers, Ritchie and Wilson (2000) consider apprenticeships to be *accidental* or *deliberate*. Future teachers have experienced a long "accidental apprenticeship" into teaching through observing their own teachers for 13,000 hours (as calculated by Lortie, 1975) and through informal exposure to cultural ideas about schools and teachers through family experiences and various media. Deliberate apprenticeship to teaching comes through formal instruction in colleges of education.

---

### **Dual Apprenticeships as Critical Thinkers**

The metaphor of apprenticeship can also be applied to the development of critical thinkers. The women we interviewed experienced literacy and critical thinking in both formal and informal learning environments and had incorporated these experiences into their current understandings of themselves as critical thinkers.

### **Accidental Apprenticeships**

The women's understandings and practice of critical literacy were influenced by social values demonstrated by the adults in their homes and schools, as they actively negotiated and managed everyday issues and problems. The tacit nature of the apprenticeships did not make them less powerful. Families' and communities' expectations of appropriate responses from young people in discussions, behaviour in school, and at mealtimes are important in shaping young people's social roles. In this case, gender likely played into the compliant behaviours the participants described. Family interactions were an important component of the participants' literacy development. All three mentioned conversations, either around the family dinner table, or more especially with fathers, as contributing to their ability to think more critically about the world. Critical response to text seemed somewhat incidental, except in Erica's case, where there was more frequent reference to the Christian bible as an authoritative source. There was also some discussion of newspaper and media coverage of current events in all three families. It would have been illuminating to talk with family members, parents in particular, about whether they deliberately set out to have their children develop as critical thinkers. One might speculate that issues of power and authority versus independence, would surface in families at least as much as in schools. For Erica, her family's Christianity was an important ingredient in moderating their discussions, but religion was not mentioned by the other two women.

An accidental apprenticeship into critical literacy was evident in participants' comments on types of interactions encouraged by teachers, including their own sense of comfort in contributing to dialogue. All three were aware that peer pressure sometimes limited their participation in classroom activities, especially at the high school level. This led to a compliance even greater than one might have expected from white, middle-class women. Jasmine noted that some classes in education seemed to suppress genuine

---

discussion because of the instructor's perceived emphasis on political correctness or on one particular interpretative lens (e.g., postcolonial theory). The students in this study were accidentally inhibited from using the Discourse of critical literacy in many classrooms. Ironically, this was most likely the reverse of their teachers' intentions.

Many of the participants' examples of critical thinking and critical literacy referred to group discussions rather than to individual behaviours. Clearly the Discourse of critical thinking, or sounding like a critical thinker, happened most evidently in interactions with others. When asked, Helen and Erica provided conventional views of democracy and its relationship to critical thinking in a way that indicated they hadn't given it a great deal of thought. Jasmine's response was more thoughtful, but not elaborated in detail.

### **Deliberate Apprenticeships in School and University**

The participants' memories of deliberate efforts by teachers to encourage or explicitly teach aspects of critical thinking were varied. Erica had experienced many classrooms, including those in university, as places where teachers rewarded those who voiced opinions close to their own. All three women referred to group work as a potential site for critical literacy and thinking, although they were often doubtful as to its efficacy, largely because of inappropriate peer interactions. Helen and Jasmine remembered doing social studies projects that demanded critical thinking, but noted they were given very little assistance in evaluating textual resources for these projects. Some university professors had attempted dialogue that incorporated various points of view, but none of the women in the study saw themselves as participating comfortably in these large group discussions.

### **Conclusion: The Role of Preservice Education in Developing Critical Literacy**

Home, peer influences, watching teachers, as well as participating in more formal classroom activities designed to promote critical literacy, all contributed to the participants' identities as critical thinkers. Literature with a focus on explicit classroom practice has identified barriers to critical literacy that were echoed by the women in this study (e.g., issues raised include lack of teaching time or fear of community resistance to challenging

---

ideas). The women we interviewed identified a reluctance, even within their university classes, for professors and students to discuss issues frankly. This echoes some current societal constraints in North America in voicing unpopular opinions.

The research has underemphasized the power of informal learning, probably because of the difficulties involved in studying complex social settings. Ritchie and Wilson (2000) suggest that preservice education, if its aim is to change schools, must take account of students' long accidental apprenticeships. Hill (2000) describes the task in this way: "Attitudes and beliefs are complex, subtle, and multifaceted. Only an intervention process of similar order of complexity is likely to succeed" (p. 58). Ritchie and Wilson's solution is to engage preservice teachers in examining their assumptions and life histories through interrogating narratives of experience.

Questions about our practice as teacher educators emerge from this study. How do we inhibit, albeit unintentionally, some students from participating in discussions? What do we intend students to learn from their participation in small group activities in our classes? How could we make critical literacy and problem-solving approaches more central to preservice education? Potential practical responses to these questions might include inviting speakers who hold varying educational perspectives to our classrooms and encouraging students to ask thoughtful questions of them. For example, in language and literacy education most college teachers hold a constructivist view of learning to read and are reluctant to endorse reading programs that focus on synthetic phonics. But what if these programs really work best for some children? What is *balanced literacy* in reality? It's important to model critical thinking by asking uncomfortable questions of ourselves as educators. The tension between the precepts of college learning and the pragmatic reality of school settings is disturbing for preservice teachers, and we do them a disservice by not addressing it fully.

Although most of our students are inexperienced as teachers, they are talented adults who should be allowed voice and choice in our classrooms. Small group activities can be structured so that students connect the assigned task with their own experiences as learners and beginning teachers. For example, group members could work together on developing a one-page, bulleted list to help them remember what to say to a parent who needs an explanation of phonemic awareness. Or students could be asked to share one

---

theoretical insight gained in their textbook reading with others in their group, with all group members taking responsibility for writing a paragraph on theory-practice connections in the chapter.

Task structures for group work need to be carefully examined by teacher educators as well. It is not enough to provide opportunities to work in groups. The tasks must demand discussion and participation by all learners and be open-ended enough to encourage multiple ways to respond. Explicit briefing and debriefing by the teacher educator is also important in developing critical awareness. It is difficult to participate in an activity and at the same time understand its underlying purpose and structure. Therefore, teacher educators may need to name the learning strategy to help students develop declarative knowledge of procedures that support critical thinking. Explicit sharing of the purpose of the activity is also necessary to help them know why they, as future teachers, might choose to use the activity in their own future classrooms. Finally, debriefing is key: Debriefing is not only about what the students learned about the content under study, but it is also a reflection on how they learned that content, and how this understanding of learning processes might inform their future teaching practice.

Jasmine aptly describes the invisibility of North American approaches to educating teachers for their role in a democratic society: “I don’t feel we question how we contribute to democracy enough. Because it exists, we consider it just like the post office. It’s there, it functions.” If teacher educators seriously intend to contribute to an increasingly critical stance in the teaching profession, then there needs to be a deeper exploration of how communities guide children’s apprenticeships into thinking and a better understanding of the inherent tensions and difficulties in recreating university classrooms as contexts for critical dialogue.

## **Endnotes**

### **Student Interview Questions on Critical Literacy and Critical Thinking**

#### **Students’ Backgrounds**

I’m interested in finding out about your experiences in school and as a reader.

- What have you enjoyed/or not enjoyed about your schooling?
  - Do you remember when you learned to read? Was it easy for you?
  - How did your family support you in learning to read?
-

- Tell me what you remember about your early instruction in reading.
- Did you read for pleasure (i.e., beyond what was required for school) when you were younger?
- Do you think of yourself as an avid reader? What kinds of things do you read now?
- Do you view yourself as a critical thinker?

#### **Experiences with Critical Literacy**

I'd like to ask next about different ways in which you have been challenged to think and ask questions about your reading and about the world.

- Does your family discuss news events, world issues? How/where does this happen? (e.g., at mealtimes, when reading newspapers or watching TV)
- Thinking back over your educational experiences, can you remember activities where you were encouraged to work with other students? Please tell me about these activities in detail, if you can.
- How did teachers encourage you to express your opinion? How did you learn to support your opinion with evidence? Do you think teachers were interested in what you had to say? How do you know? Was a variety of opinions encouraged?
- In your current classes, what examples can you give of being asked to think beyond the text, or to challenge its ideas? Tell me about this.
- Do your teachers help you make connections across subject areas? How do they do this?
- Is there time for reflection in your classes? Tell me about it. Do you wish there was more time for reflection? Why/why not?
- Do you have the opportunity to use different resources to find the answers to questions? Describe the resources and how you use them.
- Have your teachers taught you how to evaluate different resources (books, the internet, TV, movies)? How did they do that?
- What has been most helpful to you in learning how to be a critical thinker?

#### **Questions about Democracy and Citizenship**

- Tell me what you know about democracy.
  - Could you describe a "good citizen"?
  - How important do you think being able to read carefully and evaluate what you read is to being a good citizen?
  - I'm going to list some critical literacy skills. Tell me how you think they are important in sustaining democracy:
    - expressing opinions
    - making choices
    - using multiple sources of information
    - thinking beyond what you read
    - evaluating ideas
    - finding evidence
    - taking other people's viewpoints.
-



---

### References

- Busching, B., & Slesinger, B. (2002). *"It's our world too": Socially responsive learners in middle school language arts*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Damico, J., & Riddle, R. L. (2004). From answers to questions: A beginning teacher learns to teach for social justice. *Language Arts, 82*(1), 36-46.
- Darling-Hammond, L. (2000). How teacher education matters. *Journal of Teacher Education, 51*(3), 166-173.
- Dewey, J. (1938). *Experience and education*. New York: Macmillan.
- Edelsky, C. (1994). Education for democracy. *Language Arts, 71*(1), 252-257.
- Edelsky, C. (1999). *Making social justice our project: Teachers working toward critical whole language practice*. Urbana, IL: National Council of Teachers of English.
- Edelsky, C. (2004). Democracy in the balance. *Language Arts, 82*(1), 8-15.
- Evans, M. (2006). Educating for citizenship: What teachers say and what teachers do. *Canadian Journal of Education, 29*(2), 410-435.
- Fecho, B., Price, K., & Read, C. (2004). From Tununak to Beaufort: Taking a critical inquiry stance as a first year teacher. *English Education, 36*(4), 263-288.
- Gee, J. P. (1996). *Social linguistics and literacies: Ideology in Discourses* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). London: Taylor & Francis.
- Green, P. (2001). Critical literacy revisited. In H. Fehring & P. Green (Eds.), *Critical literacy: A collection of articles from the Australian Literacy Educators' Association* (pp. 7-14). Newark, DE: International Reading Association.
- Hill, L. (2000). What does it take to change minds? Intellectual development of preservice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education, 51*(1), 50-62.
- Klooster, D. (2001). What is critical thinking? *Thinking Classroom, 4*, 36-37.
- Kuhn, D. (1991). *The skills of argument*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation. (2002). *Oklahoma general competencies for teacher licensure and certification*. Oklahoma City, OK: Author.
- Paul, R. (1990). *Critical thinking: What every person needs to survive in a rapidly changing world*. Rohnert Park, CA: Sonoma State University, Center for Critical Thinking and Moral Critique.
- Pithers, R. T., & Soden, R. (2000). Critical thinking in education: A review. *Educational Research, 42*(3), 237-249.
- Ritchie, J. S., & Wilson, D. E. (2000). *Teacher narrative as critical inquiry*. New York: Teachers College Press.
-

- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Saskatchewan Education. (1988). *Understanding the Common Essential Learnings: A handbook for teachers*. Retrieved July 20, 2005 from <http://www.sasklearning.gov.sk.ca/docs/policy/cels/el4.html#e12e7>
- Shannon, P. (2004). The practice of democracy and Dewey's challenge. *Language Arts, 82*(1), 16-25.
- Shulman, J. H. (1992). *Case methods in teacher education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Ward, A., Beach, S., & Mirseitova, S. (2004). Teachers' understandings of critical literacy: An exploratory international study. *Thinking Classroom, 5*(3), 15-22.
- Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice: Learning, meaning and identity*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

---

Angela Ward [angela.ward@usask.ca](mailto:angela.ward@usask.ca) teaches graduate and undergraduate courses in language and literacy at the University of Saskatchewan, Canada. Her current interests are in education for a multicultural society and in literacy engagement.

Sara Ann Beach [sbeach@ou.edu](mailto:sbeach@ou.edu), a former elementary teacher and reading specialist, is coordinator of the reading and elementary education programs at the University of Oklahoma, United States. Her present research interests include the role of critical literacy in democratic education and the development of children's sense of being literate in different contexts.



# Special Educators' Experiences Implementing a “Scientifically Based” Remedial Reading Program: All That Glitters Is Not Gold

*Arlene Grierson*

Nipissing University, North Bay, ON Canada

*Tiffany Gallagher and Vera Woloshyn*

Brock University, St. Catharines, ON Canada

## **Introduction**

The role of the special educator is complex and multifaceted (Bauer, Johnson & Sapona, 2004; Minke, Bear, Deemer & Griffin, 1996). This is especially true for those who work with students experiencing reading difficulties (Chard, 2004). To provide these students with effective programming, special educators must possess strong understandings of the reading process, the factors that affect the process, and the constitution of effective reading programs. Furthermore, these teachers need to possess knowledge of the strategies and skills that characterize efficient readers and how these can be incorporated into remedial programming (National Reading Panel, 2000; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003, 2005). These educators must then use their cumulative knowledge and experiences to select and implement relevant programs (Chard; Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005).

The purpose of this paper is to share insights about the decision-making processes of four special educators who field tested a recently developed, self-purported, “scientifically based” remedial reading program. Specifically, we explore their rationales for program selection and document how they navigate instructional decisions. First, an overview of relevant reading policies and practices is provided, with emphasis on remedial programming. This is followed by a description of the research context,

---

methodology, and findings. Finally, we support our position that this investigation revealed these educators' incomplete understandings of what constitutes a scientifically based reading intervention program, as well as their abilities to exercise professional judgment when they possessed relevant knowledge.

### **Background**

Over the past 2 decades, educators have witnessed radical and sometimes contentious change to instructional policies and practices associated with reading (Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Pearson, 2004; Snow, Burns & Griffin, 1998). In an effort to identify valid instructional practices - otherwise referred to as scientifically or evidence-based programs - the National Reading Panel (NRP, 2000) conducted a meta-analysis of effective reading instruction (Pearson). The NRP report profoundly affected reading policies (e.g., *No Child Left Behind, Reading First*), with 'scientific evidence' becoming the 'gold standard' for policy implementation (Pearson). The NRP report also affected educational research and practice, placing the demonstration of scientifically or evidence-based practices high on researchers' and educators' agendas (Foorman & Torgeson).

*Scientifically based reading research* is defined as that which employs systematic empirical methods, involves rigorous data analyses and is replicable and peer reviewed (Pearson, 2004). Only research that meets all these criteria should be considered scientifically based (Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). As a result, there is heightened awareness of the importance of enhancing educators' understandings of scientifically based research and the nature of effective reading instruction (Allington, 2002; Chard, 2004; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005; Pearson; Snow et al., 1998).

Briefly, the NRP and subsequent documents (e.g., *Early Reading Strategy: The Report of the Expert Panel on Early Reading in Ontario*, Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003) identify phonemic awareness, phonics, vocabulary, fluency, and reading comprehension as critical components of reading instruction (Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003, 2005; Pearson, 2004). These reports also provide validity for small group and/or one-on-one explicit remedial reading instruction that focuses on specific learning needs, qualifying that such instruction can produce learning gains beyond those acquired in regular

---

classroom programs. Using effective assessment tools and continually collecting student data are also recognized as critical components of on-going programming (Earl, 2003; Paris & Hoffman, 2004). Finally, synchronizing instructional programming delivered by classroom teachers and special educators is especially important when working with students with reading and other learning difficulties as these learners typically fail to generalize effective strategic processes across learning environments (Foorman & Torgeson; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005; Snow et al., 1998).

To implement appropriate remedial programs, educators must possess the capacity to critically review and appraise programs (Chard, 2004; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; National Reading Panel, 2000; Pearson, 2004). Evaluating claims of scientifically based evidence requires educators to possess a shared understanding of the term *scientifically based evidence* and its associated implications. Pearson highlighted potential pitfalls associated with naïve conceptions of this term that include oversimplifying research conclusions, using findings selectively, and/or unquestioned acceptance of the credibility of “research” claims. Pearson also emphasized the importance of enhancing practitioners’ understandings of the parameters associated with specific instructional programs (i.e., “why,” “with whom,” and “under what conditions”). To this effect, teachers’ knowledge can be considered a more critical factor for student learning than program elements per se (Chard; Guskey, 2002; Pearson).

It is important to enhance teachers’ abilities to be thoughtfully adaptive and use “knowledge in practice” while making decisions about instruction (Chard, 2004; Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Dufour & Eaker, 1998). Such decision making involves critical reflection about the relations between professional knowledge, current practices and student learning. Educators must seek to modify their teaching practices to improve students’ learning (Cochran-Smith & Lytle; Duffy & Hoffman; Dufour & Eaker; Guskey, 2002). Yet, the ways in which special education teachers construct these understandings and engage in instructional decision making are not well understood (Chard).

## Method

### Research Design

In order to understand each educator’s unique experiences with the remedial reading program described here, a case-study method

---

was adopted. Case studies are frequently undertaken when researchers want to better understand a particularly unique or unusual phenomenon (Creswell, 2002; Merriam, 2001; Yin, 2003). We believed this methodology would illustrate best the complexity and interconnectedness among the educators who field tested this program.

### **Context and Participants**

This qualitative study took place within a moderate-sized school board that serviced predominately European-Canadian students. The five educators who participated in the selection and 1-year field test of the remedial program were invited to participate in this study; four agreed. All participants were experienced educators with between 5 and 15 years of teaching experience in special education settings. Participants included Kris<sup>1</sup>, the central-office special education resource teacher, who coordinated the field test, and Maureen, Angela, and Judy - three school-based special education teachers who implemented the program. Maureen and Angela provided withdrawal support to students of varying abilities placed in regular education classrooms (i.e., they withdrew selected students from their regular class placements to provide remedial resource room programming as required). Judy taught a congregated special education class of 16 students of average cognitive abilities, all with special education needs. She provided her students with in-class remedial programming as required.

These school-based teachers were selected to participate in the field test, based on their students' needs and the central-office resource teacher's perception that they would adhere to the program guidelines. "People [field test teachers] were chosen because of their students' needs and their willingness to try new things ... but also they would not try to fiddle with the program too much either. They would really do what was asked of them" (Kris, Interview). Prior to implementing the remedial program, participants took part in board-wide, professional development initiatives that emphasized the components of effective reading programs (i.e., phonemic awareness, decoding, fluency, vocabulary, and comprehension).

---

<sup>1</sup> Pseudonyms were assigned to all participants.

---

---

**Remedial Reading Program**

Promotional materials for the remedial reading intervention (hereafter referred to as the *remedial program*) describe it as a scientifically based intervention for the remediation of phonological awareness deficits, language learning disabilities, and dyslexia. The program consists of 85 scripted lessons that follow a cumulative, multisensory format. Each 60-minute lesson is divided into several segments including review, phonics, blending and segmenting, sound manipulation, reading words in isolation and reading controlled vocabulary text, with each segment ranging from 2 to 10 minutes. All required materials are provided, except the controlled vocabulary text, for which a list of recommended selections is provided.

Program guidelines underscore the importance of evaluating students' assessment/screening results, qualifying that such analyses should enable teachers to understand students' strengths and needs. Program guidelines also stipulate that all students begin with the initial lessons, irrespective of their age or skill level. Assessments included with the program include the *IOTA Reading Test* developed by Monroe in 1932 (as cited in Remedial Program Testing Manual, 2002), as well as author-developed, criterion-referenced spelling (*CRST*) and phoneme recognition tests. Program guidelines recommend that the *IOTA* and *CRST* assessments be administered following completion of each 24-lesson unit. An observation template is also provided for recording students' fluency and confidence in decoding controlled text. Promotional materials state that students who participated in the pilot research achieved a "100% success rate."

A pilot program ... evaluated the results of the program on reading and spelling delayed and dyslexic students over a two-year period. There was a 100% success rate, with students improving two or three grade levels in reading and spelling in as little as 24 lessons. In 48-60 sessions, the students gain mastery over their problems. (Remedial Program Promotional Booklet, 2004)

**Data Collection**

To facilitate the triangulation of evidence (Creswell, 1998, 2002; Yin, 2003), multiple sources of data were collected, including artefacts (remedial program curriculum, assessments, promotional materials), participant surveys, and interviews. Data were collected

---

at the end of the 1-year field test, allowing participants to reflect holistically on their program experiences.

A 22-item survey was used to collect preliminary data about participants' program experiences. The survey consisted of Likert scale and open-ended questions addressing the nature of the students supported with this intervention, the components of effective reading assessment and instructional programs, and participants' experiences implementing this program. Participants completed the surveys at their leisure.

Educators then participated in interviews where their experiences using the remedial reading program were further explored. As part of these in-depth discussions, teachers were asked to elaborate on their survey responses, with particular attention to their evolving perceptions of the remedial program and their implementation experiences over the course of the 1-year field test. Interview questions probed their rationales for the program selection, implementation of instructional and assessment protocols, students' learning gains, and extensions to students' regular classroom programming. Interviews ranged between 45 and 90 minutes and were audiorecorded for subsequent transcription. Participants were provided with a copy of their transcripts and with any conclusions that were based on them, so they could qualify or clarify this information accordingly.

### **Data Analyses**

Data analyses consisted of coding and categorizing as described by Bogdan and Biklen (1998), Creswell (1998, 2002), and Merriam (2001). We independently reviewed the transcripts for themes, then met to present our interpretations and arrive at a shared understanding. Following this process, three themes emerged:

1. unquestioned trust in "expert" knowledge
2. benefits of scripted, recursive lessons
3. professional knowledge and decision making.

The latter theme was further divided into several subthemes, including (a) student participants, (b) curriculum lessons and materials, (c) assessment, (d) synchronized programming and (e) program discharge (i.e., discontinuation of student participation in the program). A detailed description of each theme and subtheme follows.

---



## **Findings**

### **Unquestioned Trust in Expert Knowledge**

Teachers decided to implement this program because they believed it had the potential to enhance student learning. Kris, the special education resource teacher who selected this intervention and coordinated the field test was impressed with the program's claim to meet the learning needs of diverse students.

We were blown away by the fact that it [the program] had been proven successful not just with LD [learning disability] students, but also with MID [mild intellectual deficit] students and ESL [English as a Second Language] students, and with adult learners and older teenagers... A lot of the other programs are very age specific or grade specific. (Kris, Interview)

Participants' perceptions of the program's potential were partially based on their unquestioned trust in the claims and recommendations of experts or individuals they believed possessed relevant knowledge about remedial-reading interventions. For example, the central-office resource teacher accepted the credibility of the results as outlined in promotional materials and as presented by the program author.

By the end of it [the presentation] anybody who sat in that room that day was pretty blown away by the results of the program...The research was conducted through her [the author's] clinic but that research went on to be validated by the Canadian Government's Scientific Research and Economic Development Program ... lots of people say, "this program is good or that program is good" ... but this one was actually scientifically proven to work. (Kris, Interview)

[This] is the ONLY program of its kind recognized by the Canadian Government's Scientific Research and Economic Development program as research-based, scientifically-valid and effective. (Remedial Program Marketing Presentation, 2004)

In turn, the school-based, special education teachers extended similar credit or trust in the abilities of their school-board personnel to select appropriate programs.

---

I think it was either our speech and language pathologist or central-office special education resource teacher who became aware of this program ...they were impressed enough with the results that they felt that it [the program] was something that demonstrated enough promise to pilot. (Judy, Interview)

There are a lot of good programs out there, so why this one, I'm not sure...a speech pathologist had used it and really liked it. (Angela, Interview)

All participants held high regard for what they perceived to be expert knowledge. At no point did any individual appear to evaluate whether the criteria for scientifically based research were fulfilled.

### **Benefits of Scripted, Recursive Lessons**

Participants' initial reactions to the remedial program were mixed. While these teachers were optimistic about the program's potential to help struggling students acquire and develop reading skills, they were also apprehensive about its prescriptive structure.

When I first saw the program I thought, oh no, I'm not going to like this because it is too structured. It states what the teacher says, what the student says and it [the program] wouldn't be variable enough for the different needs of the students that I was working with. (Angela, Interview)

The first challenge was to convince myself that I could follow a prescribed program without using my own ideas. (Maureen, Survey)

After using the program for several months, however, participants appeared to adopt a more positive orientation to the program's nature. They came to perceive the scripted, sequential lessons as advantageous. Participants elaborated that students benefited from the briskly paced, predictable, and cumulative lesson format. This was especially true for students with memory or attention difficulties.

It [the program] is in such short bursts [that for] a lot of kids, especially those having ADD [attention deficit disorder], this is perfect. (Judy, Interview)

---

I think the sequencing ... this puts it all together in a systematic format where you are building from one lesson to the next. (Angela, Interview)

I think he [student] started to embrace a lot of these sounds because of the repetition. He has memory weaknesses and one of the ways that he can solidify concepts is through repetition. (Judy, Interview)

Teachers were especially positive about the multisensory (oral, visual and kinaesthetic) nature of the program and believed this aspect facilitated students' acquisition of target skills.

I saw kids finally feel like they were putting the puzzle pieces together. The phonemic awareness work I had been doing [with other programs] consisted of oral work....they [students] never made the connection to print. (Angela, Interview)

It gives them [students] the opportunity to self-correct on their fingers [finger-spelling] before they write anything down in the book. I think that it is very powerful for kids to be able to spell correctly the first time they print a word. (Judy, Interview)

Printing the words using finger spelling gave students confidence with print and the first perfect spelling test many of these students [have] ever had. (Angela, Survey)

Teachers also came to believe that students' mastery of the skills acquired through their participation in this program positively affected their motivation to continue with the program. This, in turn, enhanced teachers' commitment to using the scripted program.

They [students] seem to be excited about the work. They don't find it difficult because they are building little by little. You don't have the "I just don't get it." If they enjoy it, I [the teacher] enjoy doing it. (Angela, Interview)

They [students] can see the results and it helps to build their self-confidence...it can become boring and tedious for the teacher, but the success of the students makes up for that. (Judy, Survey)

---

Although teachers acknowledged that the instructional components of this program did not differ from remedial reading interventions previously used, the minimal teacher preparation required to use these scripted lessons was perceived as beneficial. For example, Maureen elaborated that nonteaching personnel could implement the program based on its prescriptive, scripted nature.

Lots of individual components were not anything new but it was the way in which it was packaged, presented and scripted. (Kris, Interview)

Give it [the program] to us in a nutshell...because if I have to spend too much time thinking about it or too much time putting it all together... it's not going to happen...there aren't enough hours in the day. (Judy, Interview)

It is a program that could be transferable to a really strong volunteer or retired teacher because it is so consistent. (Maureen, Interview)

There is no preparation time for teachers. (Remedial Program Promotional Material, 2004)

Finally, teachers acknowledged that use of these scripted lessons enhanced and heightened their awareness of areas in which their professional knowledge was lacking. These voids were predominantly with respect to formal spelling rules.

A lot of the rules [in the lesson scripts] are ones that readers and writers don't know, they just follow them automatically, like the 'ffsszll rule.' The ffsszll rule says that if you have a short word with a short vowel that ends in F, S, Z or L then you have to double the final consonant. Most students and teachers don't know that. (Angela, Interview)

### **Professional Knowledge and Decision Making**

Throughout the implementation of this intervention, participants used their professional knowledge and experience to make programming decisions. Teachers used their professional expertise to select student participants, modify lessons and materials, appraise assessment tools, coordinate remedial and regular classroom programming, and establish criteria for program discharge.

---

***Student participants.*** After accepting the invitation to participate in the intervention project, the school-based special education teachers were responsible for selecting the students with whom they would field test the remedial program. After considering the program structure and components, participants selected students of varying cognitive abilities who had specific decoding needs, seemingly not met by other interventions. Participants recognized that this intervention was appropriate for students with decoding rather than comprehension needs.

I had got them [students] to a certain point and we didn't go any further - I wasn't sure what else to do. I picked students for whom I didn't know what else to do to help them. (Angela, Interview)

I felt that choosing the correct child was more important than the correct kit. The program was exactly what the child I chose needed. (Maureen, Interview)

By the end of the year-long field test, teachers were more definitive about the criteria for student selection. Specifically, the school-based teachers concurred the program was best suited for students with average or above-average cognitive abilities who demonstrated specific decoding challenges. This conclusion represented a shift in their original perspective that the program was suitable for students of varying cognitive abilities, as outlined in promotional material.

The work is scientifically generic, in other words, students of any age or any language problem will reach unparalleled reading, spelling, and handwriting enhancements. Mastery of all concepts is guaranteed. (Remedial Program Promotional Material, 2004)

I think that [a student should possess] an average [cognitive] ability in order to make the most of the program. There are some decoding skills that it can remediate for these students. (Maureen, Interview)

[The program requires] your LD [learned disabled] child [for whom] ...the understanding is there but the reading isn't...not a cognitively low student. (Angela, Interview)

---

***Curriculum lessons and materials.*** While all participants found the scripted lessons beneficial, they also deviated from these lessons over time. These teachers used their professional knowledge and experience working with students in determining how to alter the prescribed program. For example, Judy explained that she questioned whether her students understood the words they decoded in isolation. This inspired her to include vocabulary-related discussions as part of her lessons in order to develop her students' vocabulary and enhance their comprehension of text. Another teacher, Angela, often excluded reading from controlled vocabulary text and sent unfinished activities home for completion.

You are able to read students' expressions when they say the word but think "what the heck is that [word meaning]"? I'll say "do you know what the word means"? I am helping them to develop comprehension and their vocabulary. (Judy, Interview)

I modified it and altered it a whole lot. I found it was very difficult to get the lesson done in the time span that was allotted...The pacing I couldn't get it...I quite often didn't get to the reading component which I wasn't happy about but we had 40 minute periods and it [the program] is set up for a 60 minute [lesson] time. I couldn't arrange to have kids for 60 minutes. What I ended up doing was sending the worksheets and the bingo games home for homework. (Angela, Interview)

Teachers also substituted the controlled phonics-based readers with authentic text they believed would facilitate the development of students' comprehension skills and be engaging, age appropriate, and motivating.

The program comes with a list of suggested controlled vocabulary readers. Some of the books were absolutely ancient. I think that is part of the problem. If you have a twelve or thirteen year old who can't read, a controlled reader is not beneficial. They [students] might start to feel good about themselves... and you put a five-page book in front of them and ... it falls apart. (Kris, Interview)

The [controlled vocabulary phonics-based] books are horrible. There is no content. It's not for a child who doesn't understand things because there is nothing to understand. This program doesn't emphasize comprehension. (Angela, Interview)

---

Originally, [I] used controlled [vocabulary phonics-based] text but I switched to [trade] books at the students' [independent] reading level. The age of the students necessitated something at a higher [interest] level. (Judy, Survey)

Over time, participants also chose to provide small-group, rather than the recommended one-on-one instruction. The teachers who provided withdrawal support to students in regular education classrooms felt responsible for maximizing the number of students they supported each day. As a result, they modified this program for use with small groups.

I started off working one-on-one . . . I quickly realized that as an LRT [school-based special education resource teacher] you can't work with kids one-on-one all day, you don't have enough time. (Angela, Interview)

**Assessment.** Teachers were aware that some aspects of this program were incongruent with previously advocated reading practices. This was especially true with respect to program assessment tools. Although teachers administered the program assessments as prescribed, they qualified that the results provided few insights for subsequent instruction. Additionally, they questioned the correspondence between students' scores on these assessments and their scores on related curriculum-based reading measures.

The [program] assessments do not guide instruction whereas other [assessment] models do guide instruction and provide areas for remediation. (Kris, Survey)

The tests are very old...it wouldn't correlate very well... I found that the [program prescribed] testing placed him much higher than we might score him [on curriculum-based assessments]. (Angela, Interview)

Growth was measured using the two tests that are part of the program: the *IOTA* and the *CRST*. They don't correlate at all to grade levels, so you [need to] use caution...there was no test of comprehension... it was growth over time but knowing those grade levels don't correlate to the Ontario curriculum. (Kris, Interview)

---

Although these teachers recognized the program assessments were neither current nor linked to the provincial curricula, they did not adopt alternative assessment tools to measure students' growth. In part, this decision was attributed to the program stipulation that all students begin at the first lessons.

I didn't need to know what he was doing on a different [curriculum-based] test. I would just redo the same [program prescribed] tests that were done. (Maureen, Interview)

Because they [program authors] really stress that you start at the same spot regardless of what your [program prescribed] testing says, they want you to start at lesson one. (Angela, Interview)

We use the system day in and day out in our practice with wide varieties of students, young and old, we have discovered that no matter what the age or grade of the student, we must start at the beginning of the curriculum. (Remedial Program Testing Manual, 2002)

***Synchronized programming.*** This program was not aligned or integrated with other instructional programs. Resources previously recommended by the school board for use with struggling readers were not linked to this remedial program, and there were no bridges to regular classroom programming for students who were provided with withdrawal support. While all participants recognized the uniqueness of such isolated programming, they responded differently to the situation. For instance, while Maureen acknowledged this incongruity, Angela substituted program materials with the phonics visual cues used by the primary-grade teachers and informed the regular classroom teachers of the phonics rules that were being taught in the remedial program.

For the purposes of the pilot we needed to follow the remedial program script. So there were no direct links [with regular or other reading withdrawal programming]. (Kris, Interview)

I generally would work very closely with the [classroom] teachers and this program was a "stand alone" ... I didn't attempt to make the teacher a part of it and yet if I do other things I do [involve the classroom teacher]. (Maureen, Interview)

---



With the little ones I try to use the classroom phonics program cues more than I use the remedial program cues...Again, I think that as long as they [students] have a cue they know that helps them understand that sound and say the sound correctly, it doesn't really matter which one it is. (Angela, Interview)

I made a list of all the rules in the first binder because that is as far as I go with most of the kids. It [the list] gave a little explanation of it [the rules] and I gave that list to the teachers of the kids that I am working with so that when they [students] were talking about those [rules] they [teachers] knew them. (Angela, Interview)

**Program discharge.** All participants discharged students from the remedial program earlier than the 85-lesson completion point the publisher advocated. In fact, none of the 16 students who participated in the field test completed more than half the program, and only one continued with the remedial program the following school year. Additionally, 4 of the initial 16 students were discharged midway through the field-test year. Discharge decisions were based on teachers' perceptions of students' enhanced abilities to take part in regular classroom programming or, conversely, their lack of continued progress in the remedial program. In some cases it was the regular classroom teacher who suggested the withdrawal support be discontinued (because students had demonstrated significant progress in acquiring the decoding skills) and in other cases it was the special education teachers (based on student's limited progress as evidenced by the results on the program-prescribed assessments).

The program is 85 lessons if they go right to the end. We have had a couple students who took part in the program and the regular classroom teacher said, 'Stop taking him. I want him here now because he's with everyone else.' (Kris, Interview)

When the [program assessment] results hit a plateau, I increased the amount of time for reading [texts] and began to stray from the prescribed program. (Maureen, Survey)

Thus, while participants were willing to implement this program, they were also willing to deviate from it in response to their students' needs, interests, and unique growth trajectories:

---

I believe that children grow in different areas... when you hit the wall in this area [decoding skills taught through this program] then you're growing in another area [of reading development], so let them go and learn where they are going. (Maureen, Interview)

### **Discussion**

These educators' experiences in the selection and implementation of this remedial program illustrate some of the challenges associated with the changing lexicon of reading instruction and reinforce the importance of teachers' professional knowledge (Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; National Reading Panel, 2000; Pearson, 2004). Encouragingly, the claim of scientific evidence was a strong selling feature in these participants' decision to adopt this remedial intervention. Participants recognized the importance of providing students with empirically validated programming (National Reading Panel; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005; Pearson). However, such recognition alone may be insufficient to enhance educators' abilities to implement evidence-based practices (Pearson).

These educators were impressed with the glitter of a program that claimed to be scientifically based. Yet, they did not appear to critically evaluate the nature of the credibility or the quality of the evidence underlying this gold-standard claim or whether the criteria associated with third party, peer review were fulfilled (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Pearson, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Instead, these participants trusted the judgment of those perceived to be experts, seemingly unaware of either the importance of evaluating these claims or the methods to do so (American Federation of Teachers, 1999; Pearson; U.S. Department of Education).

More positively, these teachers used their professional knowledge of effective reading practices to alter the delivery of this program - despite program guidelines and having been selected as field-test participants based on the coordinator's perception they would adhere to the program protocols, without alteration. Although some elements of this remedial program were consistent with scientifically based reading practices (phonemic awareness, phonics), instructional methods (multisensory) and materials (scripted lessons), other integral elements (assessment) appeared to be inconsistent (National Reading Panel, 2000; Ontario Ministry of

---

Education, 2005; Pearson, 2004; U.S. Department of Education, 2002). Participants were thoughtfully adaptive and used their professional knowledge to alter the program to meet their students' needs. For instance, participants integrated authentic text into the lessons to foster students' vocabulary, comprehension, and reading motivation. In this manner, teachers acted on their knowledge and beliefs that the ability to derive meaning from text is as important as the ability to decode it. Additionally, one participant attempted to integrate instruction across the remedial program and students' regular classrooms by substituting the program's visual phonics cues with the ones used by her students' homeroom teachers.

Teachers also exercised professional judgment when admitting students into the program. While the school board's selection of the program was reflective, in part, of its claim to meet the needs of students with a plethora of reading needs and cognitive abilities, the school-based teachers came to believe it best served students of average or above-average cognitive abilities with specific decoding needs. The development of this student profile was indicative of participants' understandings that there is no, "one-size-fits-all" approach to remedial reading instruction (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005; Snow et al., 1998).

Teachers, however, did not always adjust their instructional practices to be consistent with their beliefs about the nature of effective programming. In order to provide targeted responsive programming, students' needs must be assessed and evaluated regularly (Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Earl, 2003; Foorman & Torgeson, 2001; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005; Paris & Hoffman, 2004). Although these teachers indicated that the assessments contained in this program did not inform or direct their instruction, per se, they neither deviated from the program protocols that stipulated all students begin with the first lessons, nor did they use complementary assessments to monitor or evaluate students' learning gains. In this manner, participants appeared to predominantly rely on summative assessment of learning, unaware of the importance of using diagnostic and formative assessment for learning (Earl). These behaviours are consistent with the position that teachers' instructional knowledge frequently exceeds their assessment knowledge, with lack of assessment competencies affecting their instructional decision making (Black & Wiliam, 1998; Earl; Paris & Hoffman).

---

Despite identifying the program's limitations, all participants remained committed to its use, using their knowledge to exercise professional judgment about student inception, lessons and materials, program synchronization, and discharge. Consistent with Guskey's (2002) position that teachers continue to use programs based on their ability to attribute students' learning gains to corresponding instructional modifications, the participants here justified their continued use of the program based on their perceptions of students' learning gains and program enjoyment.

Collectively, this case study illustrated the importance of educators' professional knowledge, with participants demonstrating the ability to modify their practices when they possessed relevant, professional knowledge. Participants' understandings of the components of evidence-based reading programs were fostered through participating in a long-term, board-wide professional development initiative. This study indicates the need for in-service initiatives designed to enhance educators' understandings of reading assessment and the criteria for evaluating claims of scientific evidence (Chard, 2004; Earl, 2003; Guskey, 2002; Paris & Hoffman, 2004; Pearson, 2004). In order to navigate instructional decisions, educators must be provided with opportunities to develop requisite professional knowledge (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1999; Dufour & Eaker, 1998, Guskey). Such opportunities initially create awareness of practices, a requisite first stage in the process of teacher change (Guskey). To move beyond awareness to implementation, however, teachers must reflect critically about the relation between their professional knowledge, educational practices and student learning, with professional learning communities and action research groups identified as effective forums to develop such critical abilities (Bartelheim & Evans, 1993; Black & Wiliam, 1998; Chard; Cochran-Smith & Lytle; Dufour & Eaker; Ontario Ministry of Education, 2005).

### **Concluding Comments**

To reiterate, special education teachers have a pivotal role in enhancing exceptional students' potential for success (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003, 2005). To fulfill this mandate, educators need support in developing their abilities to critically evaluate the scientifically based claim and implement responsive reading assessment practices (Chard, 2004; Duffy & Hoffman, 1999; Earl, 2003; Pearson, 2004). The insights gained through the

---

exploration of these teachers' experiences provided reason for both concern and optimism – concern with respect to seemingly unquestioned trust in the claims of 'experts,' but optimism with respect to the participants' willingness and abilities to modify the program protocols to meet their students' learning needs when they possessed relevant professional knowledge.

### References

- Allington, R. (2002). *Big brother and the national reading curriculum: How ideology triumphed evidence*. Portsmouth, NH: Heinemann.
- American Federation of Teachers. (1999). *Building on the best, learning from what works: Five promising remedial reading programs*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Bartelheim, F., & Evans, S. (1993). The presence of reflective practice indicators in special education resource teachers' instructional decision making. *The Journal of Special Education, 27*(3), 338-347.
- Bauer, A., Johnson, L., & Sapona, R. (2004). Reflections on 20 years of preparing special education teachers. *Exceptionality, 12*(4), 239-246.
- Black, P., & Wiliam, D. (1998). Inside the black box: Raising standards through classroom assessment. *Phi Delta Kappan, 80*(2), 139-144.
- Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K., (1998). *Qualitative research for education*. Needham Heights, MA: Allyn and Bacon.
- Chard, D. (2004). Towards a science of teacher professional development in early reading. *Exceptionality 12*(3), 175-191.
- Cochran-Smith, M., & Lytle, S. L. (1999). Relationships of knowledge and practice: Teacher learning communities. *Review of Research in Education, 24*, 249-305.
- Creswell, J. W. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Creswell, J. W. (2002). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Merrill Prentice Hall.
- Duffy, G. G., & Hoffman, J. F. (1999). In pursuit of an illusion: The flawed search for a perfect method. *The Reading Teacher 53*(1), 10-16.
- Dufour, R., & Eaker, R. (1998). *Professional learning communities at work: Best practices for enhancing student achievement*. Bloomington, IN: National Educational Service.
- Earl, L. M. (2003). *Assessment as learning: Using classroom assessment to maximize student learning*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Forman, B. R. & Torgeson, J. (2001). Critical elements of classroom and small-group instruction promote reading success in all children. *Learning Disabilities Research & Practice, 16*(4), 203-212.
- Guskey, T. R. (2002). Professional development and teacher change. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice, 8*(3/4), 381-391.
- Merriam, S. B. (2001). *Qualitative research and case study applications in*

- 
- education. Revised and expanded from case study research in education* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- Minke, K. M., Bear, G. G., Deemer, S. A., & Griffin, S. M. (1996). Teachers' experiences with inclusive classrooms: Implications for special education reform. *The Journal of Special Education, 30*(2), 152-186.
- National Reading Panel. (2000). *Teaching children to read: An evidence-based assessment of the scientific research literature on reading and its implications for reading instruction*. Washington, DC: National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, and Department of Education.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2003). *Early reading strategy: The report of the expert panel on early reading in Ontario*. Toronto, ON: Author.
- Ontario Ministry of Education. (2005). *Education for all: The report of the expert panel on literacy and numeracy instruction for students with special education needs, kindergarten to Grade 6*, Toronto, ON: Author.
- Paris, S., & Hoffman, J. (2004). Reading assessments in kindergarten through third grade: Findings from the center for the improvement of early reading achievement. *The Elementary School Journal, 105*(2), 199-217.
- Pearson, P. D. (2004). The reading wars. *Educational Policy, 18*(1), 216-252.
- Snow, C. E., Burns, M. S., & Griffin, P. (Eds.). (1998). *Preventing reading difficulties in young children*. Washington, DC: National Academy Press.
- U.S. Department of Education. (2002). *Guidance for the reading first program*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research: Design and methods* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

---

Arlene L. Grierson [arleneg@nipissingu.ca](mailto:arleneg@nipissingu.ca) is a faculty member at the Brantford Campus of Nipissing University where she teaches courses in curriculum methods. She is also a PhD candidate at Brock University. Arlene's research interests include models and systems of professional learning, with a specific focus on the processes through which teachers construct their understandings and modify their literacy practices and associated beliefs.

Tiffany L. Gallagher [tiffany.gallagher@brocku.ca](mailto:tiffany.gallagher@brocku.ca) is a faculty member in the Pre-Service Department of the Brock University Faculty of Education. She teaches courses in educational psychology and assessment and evaluation. Tiffany's current research interests include literacy assessment, reading and writing strategy instruction, the role of the in-school resource teacher, and teachers with learning disabilities.

---

Vera E. Woloshyn [woloshyn@brocku.ca](mailto:woloshyn@brocku.ca) is Director of the Reading Clinic at Brock University and a member of the Graduate and Undergraduate Department of the Faculty of Education. She teaches courses in reading, reading assessment, cognition and language arts. Her research interests include promoting the use of effective learning strategies and instructional techniques, especially for students who struggle with the reading process.



## Reflections on Situated Knowledge and Education of Self: Implications for Researching Practice and Policy

*Carolyn Fleiger*

University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, NB Canada

This paper traces the convergence of two forms of my educational knowledge, situated and theoretical. My situated knowledge is defined as comprehension guiding my 20-year professional practice as a Grades 1 through 8 resource teacher (i.e., one who collaborates with classroom teachers to develop educational accommodations for a diverse range of learners). In my Canadian provincial jurisdiction such understanding is guided by a model of inclusion specifying provision of education appropriate for *all children*, with a particular emphasis on all children's placement in regular classrooms in local schools.<sup>1</sup>

I acknowledge that the conceptual underpinnings of inclusive education concern broader notions of democracy and acceptance (Arnesen, Mietola & Lahelma, 2007), and thus encompass a wide spectrum of identities such as gender, race and class. While not eliminating the possibility for these identity issues to enter into my daily work activities, the social and cultural dynamic of my school greatly minimized their presence, leaving most of my attention directed toward students identified with disabilities. Pivotal to this work, my knowledge of disability was framed in relation to my able-bodied standpoint, my understanding of scientific orthodoxy referencing an individual's deviation from normative standards in terms of disorder and/or dysfunction, and my ensuing uptake of teaching methods to coordinate inclusive education practices.

The second form of knowledge, loosely termed in this paper as theoretical, has opened up with much vibrancy over the past 4 years through my graduate studies in education. While I had some exposure to curriculum and pedagogical theory in my undergraduate degree work, my graduate courses and independent study allowed for the advancement of theoretical inquiry across such fields as qualitative research methodologies, sociological

---



paradigms, literary criticism, and disability studies. Also, I had a critical forum to discuss the mergence of such theory with my teaching experiences in the context of the inclusive classroom. This article is an extension of these forums where I directed attention to the curious alignment of theory emanating from the interdisciplinary field of disability studies<sup>2</sup> with my situated resource teacher knowledge.

Generally, scholarship emanating from disability studies has challenged my situated knowledge that disability is an inherent condition of the individual. Rather, disability theory poses that *disability* is a complex set of socially and culturally constructed phenomena that serves to oppress significant numbers of people in terms of discrimination, poverty and unemployment. Equally disturbing is how disability theory has been applied to public schooling contexts, where it has been suggested the legacy of special education perpetuates disability as individualistic deficit through research, policy and practice (Allan, 2006; Benjamin, 2002; Brantlinger, 1997; Danforth & Gabel, 2006; Rogers, 2003; Slee & Allan, 2001; Vlachou, 2004).

Such knowledge is significant to my doctoral research where I intend to explore the relations between inclusive education practices and discourses of disability. Four critical insights emerge from this blending of knowledge. First, as I engage in the dynamic of research, is how this juncture of knowledge supports issues of reflexivity. Second is how knowledge framed from a disability studies perspective has disrupted my assumptions of ability/disability and made me critically aware of the language that had guided my schooling practices. Third is how a Foucauldian perspective adds to the depth and trajectory of this new mindfulness. And fourth is the suggestion that inclusive classrooms require new conceptual underpinnings and expanded parameters for understanding difference.

### **Reflecting on Self: Reflecting on Knowing**

Foremost, the intersection of knowledge described in this paper has been in reflexive preparation for my doctoral research where I shall explore the ways that discourses of disability are bound up in contexts of inclusive education. Because my knowledge of disability has been framed through my able-bodied lived experiences, and further contained in the context of inclusive classrooms, largely dominated by other able-bodied persons, I wanted to explore my

---

values and attitudes about disability and what forms of knowledge might extend my line of vision. Eyre (1992) reminds us that self-reflexivity is fundamental to value-based research because it brings front and center such matters as “the researcher’s personal investment in the study and . . . the assumptions that guide the research” (p. 6).

Literature emanating from a critical disability perspective (mainly the narratives and analyses of persons who embody and unveil disability in terms of its social, cultural and economic effects [Charlton, 2000; Linton, 1998; Thomson, 1997]) led me to realize that although I had worked diligently and empathically for many years with students identified as exceptional, I had little knowledge of disability outside this professional frame. Thus, I held a scarce appreciation of *disability* either as a lived experience that must be negotiated on a year-round, daily and nightly basis or as it plays out in a larger socioeconomic sphere, including a limited understanding of disability self-advocacy.

I could trace my situated knowledge of disability to a traditional undergraduate degree in education and a mandatory concentration of special education courses generally based on the empiricism of case study and statistical methodologies. In large, their starting point was the pathology of various medical conditions. While these courses provided helpful instructional and/or behavioural strategies to support differentiated learning styles, they were largely disassociated from, if not silent about, the historical legacy of special education practices; the force of special education’s ideology to frame meaning about how these students are considered in the present; and the connection of this knowledge to matters of subjectivity and oppression in the future, such as poverty and unemployment for persons with disabilities.

As I became more accustomed to thinking, talking and writing about disability from this altered perspective, I was compelled to explore how my local teaching practices might be involved in these critical narratives. The term *critical*, as used in this paper, should not be interpreted as a negative undertaking, but rather as a leverage point for exploring relations and/or effects of privilege, power and knowledge. Shifting to a disability studies perspective, I attended more closely to my situated practices associating the medical condition of the body with the language of special education and/or associations of deficit. The document, *Special Education Plan* (SEP), also known as the *Individual Education Plan* (IEP) in other jurisdictions, structured my collaborative work with classroom

---

teachers. For each identified student, the plan records demographic data, pertinent medical information, academic subjects requiring support, periodic evaluation of progress and specific program adjustments.

Prominent on SEP's front cover is space to insert relevant medical information. While this information is an integral aspect of educational planning, its direct link to the term *special education*, and its attendant historical practices of exclusion, was now discomfiting. It seemed that SEP worked as a shorthand reference to various medical conditions and/or other descriptors of student identity such as *exceptional, needy, really struggling, delayed, or slow*. In this way, language associated with the medical condition was bound up in a deficit discourse that came to be normalized and naturalized in the school, ultimately residing *in the student*, rather than with larger systemic institutional issues, such as scarcity of personnel and/or resources. I considered this discourse and its implications for subjectivity within a wider cultural context that savors competition, evident in rigorous standards set for scholastic, athletic, and social competence (Harter, 1993). Not surprisingly, in light of my emerging disability theory knowledge, some critical questions emerged.

From a critical disability perspective, what themes would be central to support a shift from my situated knowledge as a resource teacher to a researcher who grapples with issues of reflexivity? What insights would help me understand how I embody situated knowledge, particularly my use of able-bodied language? Could I bring a level of abstraction to the pragmatics of my resource teacher knowledge that would allow a critical analysis of inclusive education practices and policies? And, if so, what tools would add visibility to the workings of power and/or knowledge? Moving outside my researcher standpoint, what is the relevance for merging a critical disability standpoint with analyses of inclusive education policies and practices?

### **Disability Studies: Extending My Ways of Knowing**

The central insight of the disability studies research is that disability is not solely a medical condition but a complex social experience, one centered around the physical realities of the minority of individuals with disabilities but one constructed as an experience of difference by the majority of individuals without disabilities. (Barton, 2001, p. 170)

---

In considering my first question, I suggest that the voice and perspective of activists, or persons with disabilities, expand the lens through which I had come to *know* disability - primarily my able-bodied outlook on the world and my rather localized, scientifically regulated situated knowledge. As Fine (1998) writes, “much of qualitative research has reproduced, if contradiction-filled, a colonizing discourse of the ‘Other’ ” (p. 130). Fine sees processes such as “scientific neutrality, universal truths, and researcher dispassion” (p. 131), as separating qualitative research from lived reality. To help bridge the gap between my adult, able posture and a young subject identified as disabled, framed in a position of need, a viable research project would heed Fine’s advice to “work the hyphen” (p. 135). In this project, I am made aware of the space privileging the able way I have come to know the world. Disability literature allows me to encapsulate and consider the multiple layers of meaning embedded in my able subjectivity, as well as the normalized language of my daily practice such as *educational delay*. Approaching the research project fully aware of the cultural and social space associated with the hyphen (in my case, the divided space of ability/disability), Fine suggests that I am sensitized to the influence of “Master Narratives . . . [determining] whose lives get displayed and whose lives get protected by social science” (p. 136).

While the thematic range of disability literature covers wide epistemological distinctions, I withdrew two strands of theoretical knowledge pertinent to my standpoint: (a) the presence of ableism in cultural and educational life, and (b) the working of language in the constitution of disability discourse.

### **Ableism**

[Ableism is] a pervasive system of discrimination and exclusion [stemming from] deeply rooted beliefs about health, productivity, beauty, and the value of human life, perpetuated by the public and private media, [which] combine to create an environment that is often hostile to those whose physical, mental, cognitive, and sensory abilities . . . fall out of the scope of what is currently defined as socially acceptable. (Hehir, 2002, p. 3)

Hehir (2007) has done much to vocalize the presence of ableism in mainstream education literature. However, it was not until I had explored personal narratives of living with a disability (Fries, 2003, 2007; Johnson, 2006; Linton, 2006) that I had a personalized

---

framework within which to situate my ablest understanding. From the perspective of one who has experienced the lived reality of disability, such as noted disability theorist Simi Linton (1998), ableism can be compared to the force of Whiteness in relation to issues of color. Linton sees both Whiteness and ableism as “under theorized . . . [and] . . . veiled” (p. 14). Just as “White cannot be said quite out loud” (Haraway in Linton, p. 14), so too the presence of ‘ablism’ is invisible. Thus, I argue that disability scholarship has highlighted the lived effects of ableism, replete with its constructions of disability as a condition of personal tragedy, dependency, and need, to my acute level of consciousness.

In his writing, Hehir does not disparage attempts to accommodate people identified as having disabilities in regular educational settings; however, he cautions about a highly focused mindset of service providers to change or overcome disability which, in effect, translates to the subject “that disability [is] negative and tragic and that ‘overcoming’ disability [is] the only valued result” (p. 4). Hehir (2003) examples ableism in the assignment of “full-time aides to children with multiple disabilities rather than teaching them to be independent” (p. 37). Acknowledging that support personnel are important for the everyday running of an inclusive classroom, Hehir warns they may intrude on the integrity of the student to function without support for much of the time in the classroom.

Indeed this cautionary note of dependency is sounded within traditional analyses of special education, where the metaphor of Velcro® has come to signal the danger of attachment/dependency in an education model predicated on social interaction (Gerschel, 2005; Giangreco, Yuan, McKenzie, Cameron, & Fialka, 2005). A critical disability standpoint, while not ignoring the rhetoric of care and needs embedded in this practice, would direct attention to the historical legacy of dependency (Barton, 1989; Ware, 2002) and the notion of disability activism, linking such schooling practices with direct implications for subjectivity in terms of agency and autonomy. In contesting notions of helplessness and deficit, attention to a critical disability perspective would also enable the student to articulate the times when assistance is required.

As I grew in understanding of ableism through a disability studies lens, I was interested in exploring its material effect as a marker of social worth in North American society. Thus I looked at how ableism and my situated schooling practices are inexorably bound up in the sociopolitical context of a neoliberal order. Olssen (2003)

---

explains that in a neoliberal order, the state is active in creating necessary markets, seeking, “to create an individual that is an enterprising and competitive entrepreneur” (p. 199). Also, the subject created by the state is continually encouraged to be responsive to the change in market dynamics. It is not that the subject of the liberal order is done away with, but:

In an age of universal welfare the perceived possibilities of slothful indolence create necessities for new forms of vigilance, surveillance, performance appraisal and of forms of control generally. In this new model, the state has taken it upon itself to keep all up to the mark. (Olssen, 2003, pp. 199-200)

Tikly (2003) adds how collective responsibility toward social risk has shifted to individual ownership for “moderating their burden of risk” (p. 164). Tikly describes the “responsibilization” (p. 164) process as one of fluidity, depending on the risk involved and the perceived status of the risk population, cited as “active citizens’ (capable of managing their own risk) and ‘targeted populations’ (disadvantaged groups, the ‘at risk,’ the ‘high risk,’ etc.)” (p. 164). This responsibility plays out, Tikly notes, as governments are faced with new contexts of economic globalization and ways to “reform the conduct of individuals to make them more competitive and efficient” (p. 164).

Cognizant of this socioeconomic dynamic, I determine that the Special Education Plan plays a vital role in the subjectivity of students identified with various disabilities. Indeed, marking a stake of responsibility for these students within a context of neoliberalism, many school districts across Canada and the United States in the past 10 years have moved toward active student engagement with their educational plans (Martin, Dycke, Christensen, Greene, Gardner, & Lovett, 2006; Test, Mason, Hughes, Konrad, Neale, & Wood, 2004; Torgerson, Miner & Shen, 2004). While my local inclusive education policy also stipulates the involvement of students in formulating their SEP, I determine that a critical disability perspective would add much force and relevancy to the language and strategies guiding this process. Brought to the fore would be the immediacy of issues such as poverty and unemployment for persons with disabilities (McColl, James, Boyce & Shortt, 2006), or the oppressive legacy of historical institutional practices (Trent, 1994), and the requirement for contemporary

---

---

contexts of inclusive education to foster strategies for independence and agency.

### Language of Disability

Why are norms taken for granted as objective? What restricted image of “the ideal citizen” do norms for development embody? How might this devalue those excluded from such images? Toward what broader purposes are the construction of norms and deviations directed? (Baker, 2002, p. 688)

My self-reflexive work that started with an awareness of ableism moved to a personal, embodied level as I focused on my second query about language and disability. Here, I attend to how a critical disability perspective has been applied to schooling contexts across international landscapes, with particular emphasis on the relationship between disability language and the concept of normativity.

From a US perspective, Baker (2002) considers the effect of classifying and dividing school populations based on notions of disability as an ontological issue. Baker acknowledges categorization of disability is pragmatically tied to policy language and funding. She also accedes there has been no closure in the disability literature as to unilateral evaluations of labelling and service-provision models. Baker suggests the ever-expanding range of conditions that professionals consider *disabling* constitutes “a hunt for disability” (p. 663) in that the language works to “reinvest [s] eugenic discourse” (p. 663) within current educational practice. Baker indicates institutions, in the accentuation of achievement, tend to set “rigid expectations for what counts as timely performance” (p. 685). Impediments to learning are deemed as *existing in* persons and bypass strategic epistemological and ontological questions, as succinctly stated in Baker’s quotation above.

Davis (1995) reinforces how the concept of the *norm* infuses North American education contexts. Davis asserts that language is rife with the “hegemony of normalcy” (p. 49) as it is bound up with “the predisposition of philosophy and thought to contain within them reified elements of Enlightenment doctrines—doctrines that postulate the benefits of wholeness, of the ideal, of the totality of systems” (p. 15). Moreover, Davis argues, based on the normal/abnormal totality, the ambiguity of terms such as *special*

---

*education or children with exceptionalities*, allows for the vagaries of partisan interpretation.

From a UK perspective, Wilson (2000) writes that the vagueness of such terms “leaves it open to us to import our own prejudices and values into terminology . . . guide [ing] our thought and behaviour (and our research) in many different ways” (p. 818). An example of how this ambiguity may play out in social contexts is provided by Christensen (1996). Christensen explains that England and Wales, under the Warnock Commission (1978), established the term *students with special needs* to identify the responsibility of the school to meet the needs of all students. What occurred, writes Christensen, is “teachers and administrators identified the child as ‘special needs’ and therefore inadequate” (p. 74). Similarly, from this same context, Corbett (1996) analyses the language used for the identification of *special needs* to locate a discourse of oppression. Corbett suggests that when the term *special* is used in this sense, it does not invariably equate with good; rather, when *special* is linked to *need* it implies “dependency, inadequacy and unworthiness” (p. 3).

Asserting that special education practitioners have not rethought their use of language, Slee (1997) writes of the connection between “dominant disabling discourses . . . [and] those [beneficiaries] with an interest in traditional special educational practice, an unreconstructed school system, and the bureaucratic and political imperative of education policy-makers” (p. 407). Slee cites examples of linguistic appropriations such as *Individual Education Plans*, *most appropriate setting*, or *least restrictive environment* constituting this discourse. He explains how “the language . . . remains discordant, a thin veneer stretched over conceptual reductions and contradictions . . . the submersion of special education interest within the distractive discursive noises . . . of integration and latterly inclusion” (p. 407). Slee calls for a retheorizing of special education within the sociology of disablement, whereby professional knowledge problematizes the “assumptions about disability from which special educational practice proceeds [using] poststructural theories from a range of disciplines” (p. 415).

Overall, this literature behooves educators schooled in traditional epistemologies of special education to probe how perceptions and ideas related to normality, inculcated by ablest society and language, are not only embedded in institutional language, but also how their universal presence tends to fix

---



disability as a naturalized absolute category. Initial steps in this probing must (a) recognize ableism as a component of marginalization across social, cultural, medical, legal, and media contexts and (b) locate the language of disability in accordance with a view of social justice that Young (1990) describes as centered on “respect for group differences without oppression” (p. 47).

### **Foucauldian Analysis**

This form of power applies itself to immediate everyday life that categorizes the individual, marks him by his own individuality, attaches him to his own identity, imposes a law of truth on him which he must recognize and which others have to recognize in him. It is a form of power that makes individuals subjects. (Foucault, 1982 in Allan, 1996, p. 222)

While heightening my awareness of ableism and disability language are helpful standpoints, I am led to my third query about recognizing more subtle forms of “truth” production related to disability and to the tools that may help dismantle the working of power and/or knowledge maintaining such truths. While there are many strategies about how discourse may be located across educational settings (Rogers, 2004), I argue that studies developed around the work of Michel Foucault add considerable insight as to how certain subjects are *constituted* according to institutional rituals. It is particularly how Foucault’s work had been applied to special education practice and policy analyses that was relevant for my research preparedness.

From the UK, Allan (1996) engages Foucault’s methodological strategies of archaeology and genealogy as a “box of tools” (p. 220) for understanding the complex experiences of children identified as having special educational needs. Allan shows how surveillance techniques - hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement, and the examination - work in a particular way within the context of special education. For example, the continual surveillance of children in special education, while enabling teachers to enter into supportive relationships with students, also works as a power dynamic to render these students as subjects.

Also from the UK, Armstrong’s (2002) Foucauldian genealogy shows how traditional histories of special education tend to omit “the profusion of entangled events’ which have a bearing on the struggles surrounding issues of disability and exclusion in

---

education” (p. 441). Armstrong’s account maps personal experience and values within an historical frame, *digging out* as per an archaeological or genealogical excavation the absences and silences that have been rendered in more traditional histories of special education as “‘doing good’ to disabled children” (p. 441). Armstrong shows how discourses can be traced through the development of special education to contemporary special education practice in England and France. While many present inclusive education models may differ from either of these contexts, Allan and Armstrong’s analyses help to point out how our present ideas about students identified as requiring special education provision have been historically shaped.

What is particularly illuminating in Armstrong’s (2002) analysis is her tracing of discourses of social usefulness, discipline and productivity that emerge from the 18<sup>th</sup> century workhouse, a facility that not only housed disabled children, but also served in the capacity of poor relief and incarceration. Thus, certain associations made about people confined to the workhouse have filtered through to present-institutional contexts. Armstrong explains how the rationality of such a facility was perpetuated through the building’s design, using hierarchical observation, one of Foucault’s foremost cited disciplinary techniques. Armstrong’s genealogy of special education shows that underpinning today’s needs discourses and concerns are outlooks toward disability based on “fear and distrust” (p. 454). Importantly, these outlooks originate as a matter of historical convergence, rather than as a *unified truth* about subjectivity. The value in using Foucault’s work is to unsettle my complacency with everyday inclusionary practice and acknowledge how remnants of older forms of knowledge have relocated in contemporary policy and practice in spite benevolent intentions for reform.

Two American scholars, Skirtic (1995) and Danforth (2000), engage the work of Foucault toward a restructuring of special education. Taking a global view of special education, Skirtic explains how special education has been confined to the “subjective knowledge” (p. 20) of science, pointing out the historical frame of reference in which special education was constructed. He believes that special education has not kept pace with the implications of poststructuralist discourses evident in other social sciences. Exemplifying how this may play out in daily practice, Danforth shows how knowledge about individuals under the umbrella of special education is subjugated to the power of science. In his

---

article, he opens by reenacting a professional conference concerning the welfare of *Fred*, who is agreed to be “defective, inferior, flawed, impaired, substandard” (p. 364). Conference contributors are split along the lines of professionals who “hold a report that defines Fred’s identity in numbers and words” (p. 364) and staff and family who tell stories about Fred that are “interesting, provocative, heartwarming, hopeful and tragic . . . barely audible in the meeting [presenting as] small and insignificant” (p. 364).

Danforth likens this type of subjugated knowledge to a social trap in which an individual is “devalued, objectified, known in a dominating ‘truth’ and disciplined into submission” (p. 368). He reckons that an insurrection of subjugated knowledge is required to put Fred at the table, to reduce professional authority, and to recognize the integral contributions to Fred’s life by his family and helpers. Danforth’s provocation prompts me to ask how I am influenced to conform with similar instances of institutional practice.

### **Policy as Discourse**

I determined that a large measure of my situated knowledge as a resource teacher had been derived and legitimated through the language of my local inclusive education policy. The authority vested in policy language had the potential to influence how I came to understand students under the governance of inclusive education and, ultimately, how these students may come to understand themselves. As Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997) explain, when policy is seen as a textual representation of institutional practice, it can be opened up as a site of meaning and effect.

The opening prompted by Ball’s (1990a, 1990b, 1994) work has been an important avenue to explore the dynamic of this insight. As Ball (1994) explains, “words are ordered and combined in particular ways and other combinations are displaced or excluded . . . we are spoken by policies, we take up the positions constructed for us within policies” (p. 22). Gale (1999) describes policy as containing “physical codes . . . that carry meanings representative of the struggle and conflict of their production” (p. 394). Adding to the relevance of the policy-as-discourse discussion, Bacchi (2000) explains that, within policy, “issues get represented in ways which mystify power relations and often create individuals responsible for their own ‘failures,’ drawing attention away from the structures creating unequal outcomes” (p. 46).

---

I see this form of analysis as having potential for understanding how policy is implicated in the discursive production of a disability-related identity. Fulcher's (1989) study shows how disability as set down in the language of policy constitutes an "object constructed by discourses" (p. 25). Fulcher predicates her analysis on the notion of discourse as an "instrument of power [utilizing] various themes, styles of statements and inherently different objectives" (p. 4).

### **Policy Archaeology**

Using Foucault's theory, Scheurich (1994) develops a form of policy analysis, termed *policy archaeology*, as a methodology to incorporate the circumstances and assumptions that constitute the *naming of a problem*. As Scheurich contends, policy archaeology allows for the insertion of "numerous, complex strands and traces of social problems [and] seek[s] to critically probe why and how these strands and traces congeal (become visible) into what is thereafter labeled as a particular social problem" (p. 300). In the past, I have gleaned much insight from the interdisciplinary application of policy archaeology (Ferguson, 2001; Mawhinney, 1995; Olssen, Codd & O'Neill, 2004; Spencer, 2001), and have determined this form of analysis as particularly applicable to disability-related policy texts, given their salience to historical and sociocultural influences (Fleiger, 2005).

Policy archaeology opens historical space within the text to examine how the politics behind policy processes cut deeply into the human condition, forming regimes of discourse and practice (Mawhinney, 1995). By raising questions about how the language of policy plays out in relation to the subjectivity of students, possibilities are opened for resistance and social change.

### **Conclusion**

The pursuit of my questions posed in the introduction of this paper has formed the ontological and epistemological starting point for my intended research design. Recognizing inclusive education practitioner research is encouraged by the academy, (Rose, 2002), and considering the implications of the reflexive turn in qualitative research (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005), the injection of a critical disability perspective alerts me to the hegemony of ableism, while also calling for the framing of disability-related research in a way that avoids historical practices of oppression (Linton, 1998).

---

Through such prompting, I hope to avoid succumbing to a hubris of *an inflated able academic self*, where I could inadvertently disregard how my knowledge production might further disadvantage an already Othered subject.

A critical disability perspective moves me to be continually reflexive about my knowledge of *disorder* and *dysfunction* that have been naturalized and normalized through my situated schooling knowledge. It informs me of the discursive associations of deficit associated with disability, and how these associations are inscribed across institutional contexts, including the public school setting where I have located a rich field of research data. It invokes me to be cautious as I approach this site, examining how my attitudes and values might shape how it is I speak and write about my research design. I argue the *acknowledgement* of the tenuous interplay between researcher and researched lays a vital foundation for the remainder of my academic studies.

An important element in this groundwork was initially recognizing how policy language legitimated and guided my situated knowledge, and then shifting from a traditional stance that views inclusive education policy as an inherent *truth* - a reality that is rational - to one that considers matters of meaning and effect inherent in the language of policy (Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard & Henry, 1997). Policy archaeology, as a methodological framework for policy analysis, opened historical space within the text. Rather than accepting subjects of policy as a natural and normal occurrence, policy archaeology directed attention to how discursive practices have historically found their way into policy language with profound implications for the legitimation, regulation, and circulation of knowledge.

Attending to my last query about the wider relevance of merging a critical disability theoretical perspective with my situated knowledge of inclusive education, I consider the effect of our current neo-liberal climate of standards and accountability on the direction of education reform (Apple, 2005). Here, increasingly conservative forms of governance and a globalized, competitive marketplace directs educators' attention to overt markers of performance such as standardized test results. Some would argue this push for standards and the valorization of competition are part of a discourse of hyperindividualism. Noted historian of disability, Paul Longmore (1995), writes that hyperindividualism contributes to a crisis of values preventing human connection and corroding notions of community, a situation Longmore contends is dangerous for

---

everyone. Scholarly work emanating from the field of disability studies has allowed me to stand back from this knowledge, “risk the personal” (Ware, 2002, p.143), probe my *teacher self*, and hold suspect the normalized and naturalized assumptions I had located through my resource teacher practices. Like Ware, I am wary about how my situated knowledge serves to thwart a full articulation of community - the essence of an inclusive education model. If inclusive classrooms can be understood as a public statement of community, the injection of a critical disability theoretical perspective within the field of teacher education is fundamental. Such a move serves to disrupt conventional paradigms of knowledge that have allowed ableism to flourish because it simultaneously brings issues of disability rights and disability identity to the arena of public schooling. I argue disability studies holds much importance for expanding educators’ thinking about human variation and for living with a sense of community built around equality and respect. The merging of a disability studies perspective within the project of inclusive education is a transformative and dynamic undertaking. It serves to open new ways of understanding and articulating difference and human diversity, both within the school and the larger society.

### Endnotes

1. For in-depth discussion of debates around the concept of inclusive education see Gallagher (2001); Vlachou, A. (2004). For application to international contexts see Armstrong, Armstrong & Barton (2000).
2. Disability scholarship extends analyses over wide social and cultural arenas. For recent discussions see Barnes, C., Oliver, M., Barton, L. (Eds.). (2002); Pothier, D. & Devlin, R. (Eds.). (2006); Synder, S. Brueggemann, B. & Garland-Thomson, R. (Eds.). (2002). For the application of disability studies to education see Danforth, S. & Gabel, S. (2006).

### References

- Allan, J. (1996). Foucault and special educational needs: A ‘box of tools’ for analyzing children’s experiences of mainstreaming. *Disability & Society*, 11(2), 219-233.
- Allan, J. (2006). The repetition of exclusion. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 10(3), 121-133.
- Apple, M. (2005). Doing things the ‘right’ way: legitimating educational equalities in conservative time. *Educational Review*, 57(1), 271-293.
-

- 
- Armstrong, F. (2002). The historical development of special education: Humanitarian rationality or 'wild profusion of entangled events?' *History of Education, 31*(5), 437-456.
- Armstrong, F., Armstrong, D., & Barton, L. (Eds.). (2000). *Inclusive education: Policy, contexts and comparative perspectives*. London: David Fulton.
- Arnesen, A., Mietola, R., & Lahelma, E. (2007). Language of inclusion and diversity: Policy discourses and social practices in Finnish and Norwegian schools. *International Journal of Inclusive Education, 11*(1), 97-110.
- Bacchi, C. (2000). Policy as discourse: What does it mean? Where does it get us? *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education, 21*(1), 45-57.
- Baker, B. (2002). The hunt for disability: The new eugenics and the normalization of school children. *Teachers College Record, 104*(4), 663-703. Retrieved March 15, 2004, from <http://www.tcrecord.org>
- Ball, S. (Ed.). (1990a). *Foucault and education: Disciplines and knowledge*. New York: Routledge.
- Ball, S. (1990b). *Politics and policy-making in education: Explorations in policy sociology*. New York: Routledge.
- Ball, S. (1994). *Education reform: A critical and post-structural approach*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Barnes, C., Oliver, M., & Barton, L. (Eds.). (2002). *Disability studies today*. Malden, MA: Polity.
- Barton, L. (Ed.). (1989). *Disability and dependency*. New York: The Falmer Press.
- Barton, E. (2001). Textual practices of erasure: Representations of disability and the founding of the united way. In J. Wilson & C. Lewiecki-Wilson (Eds.), *Embodied rhetorics: Disability in language and culture* (pp. 169-199). Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Benjamin, S. (2002). *The micropolitics of inclusive education*. Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Brantlinger, E. (1997). Cases of nonrecognition of the politics of research and practice in special education. *Review of Educational Research, 67*(4), 425-459.
- Charlton, J. (2000). *Nothing about us without us: Disability oppression and empowerment*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Christensen, C. (1996). Disabled, handicapped or disordered: 'What's in a name?'. In C. Christensen & F. Rizvi (Eds.), *Disability and the dilemmas of education and justice* (pp. 63-78). Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Corbett, J. (1996). *Bad-mouthing: The language of special needs*. Washington, DC: Falmer Press.
- Danforth, S. (2000). What can the field of developmental disabilities learn from Michel Foucault? *Mental Retardation, 38*(4), 364-369.
-

- 
- Danforth, S., & Gabel, S. (Eds.). (2006). *Vital questions facing disability studies in education*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Davis, L. (1995). *Enforcing normalcy: Disability, deafness, and the body*. New York: Verso.
- Denzin, N., & Lincoln, Y. (2005). Introduction: The discipline and practice of qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.) (pp. 1-32). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Eyre, L. (1992). *The social construction of gender in the practical arts*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of British Columbia, Vancouver, BC, Canada.
- Ferguson, R. (2001). *We know who we are: A history of the blind in challenging education and social constructed policies: A study in policy archaeology*. San Francisco: Caddo Gap Press.
- Fine, M. (1998). Working the hyphens: Reinventing self and other in qualitative research. In N. Denzin & Y. Lincoln (Eds.), *The landscape of qualitative research: Theories and issues* (pp. 130-155). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Fleiger, C. (2005). *Inclusive education policy in New Brunswick: A Foucauldian (re)presentation*. Unpublished master's thesis, University of New Brunswick, Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada.
- Fries, K. (2003). *Body, remember: A memoir*. Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press.
- Fries, K. (2007). *The history of my shoes and the evolution of Darwin's theory*. New York: Carroll & Graff.
- Fulcher, G. (1989). *Disabling policies? A comparative approach to education policy and disability*. New York: The Falmer Press.
- Gale, T. (1999). Policy trajectories: Treading the discursive path of policy analysis. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 20(3), 393-407.
- Gallagher, D. (2001). Neutrality as a moral standpoint, conceptual confusion and the full inclusion debate. *Disability & Society*, 16(5), 637-654.
- Gerschel, L. (2005). The special educational needs coordinator's role in managing teaching assistants: The Greenwich perspective. *Support for Learning*, 20(2), 69-76.
- Giangreco, M., Yuan, S., McKenzie, B., Cameron, P., & Fialka, J. (2005). "Be careful what you wish for . . .": Five reasons to be concerned about the assignment of individual paraprofessionals. *Council for Exceptional Children*, May/June, 28-34.
- Harter, S. (1993). Causes and consequences of low self-esteem in children and adolescents. In R. Baumeister (Ed.), *Self-esteem: The puzzle of low self-regard* (pp. 83-108). New York: Plenum Press.
- Hehir, T. (2002). Eliminating ableism in education. *Harvard Educational Review*, 72(1), 1-32.
- Hehir, T. (2003). Beyond inclusion. *The School Administrator*, 6(3), 36-39.
-



- Hehir, T. (2007). Confronting ablism. *Educational Leadership*, 64(5), 9-14.
- Johnson, H. M. (2006). *Too late to die young: Nearly true tales from a life*. New York: Henry Holt.
- Linton, S. (1998). *Claiming disability: Knowledge and identity*. New York: New York University Press.
- Linton, S. (2006). *My body politic: A memoir*. Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.
- Longmore, P. (1995). The second phase: From disability rights to disability culture. *Disability Rag & Resource*, Sept./Oct. Retrieved June 9, 2006, from <http://www.independentliving.org/docs3/longm95.html>
- Martin, J., Dycke, J., Christensen, W., Greene, B., Gardner, J., & Lovett, D. (2006). Increasing student participation in IEP meetings: Establishing the self-directed IEP as an evidenced-based practice. *Exceptional Children*, 72(3), 299-316.
- Mawhinney, H. (1995). Towards an archaeology of policy that challenges conventional framing of the problem of violence in schools. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*. Retrieved April 6, 2005 from <http://www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/articles/mawhinney.html>
- McColl, M., James, A., Boyce, W., & Shortt, S. (2006). Disability policy making: Evaluating the evidence base. In D. Pothier & R. Devlin (Eds.), *Critical disability theory: Essays in philosophy, politics, policy, and law* (pp. 25-43). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Olssen, M. (2003). Structuralism, post-structuralism, neo-liberalism: Assessing Foucault's legacy. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 18(2), 189-202.
- Olssen, M., Codd, J., & O'Neill, A. (2004). *Education policy: Globalization, citizenship and democracy*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Pothier, D., & Devlin, R. (Eds.). (2006). *Critical disability theory: Essays in philosophy, politics, policy and law*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.
- Rogers, R. (2003). A critical discourse analysis of the special education referral process: A case study. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 24(2), 139-158.
- Rogers, R. (2004). *An introduction to critical discourse analysis in education*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Rose, R. (2002). Teaching as a 'research-based profession': encouraging practitioner research in special education. *British Journal of Special Education*, 29(1), 44-48.
- Scheurich, J. (1994). Policy archaeology: A new policy studies methodology. *Journal of Educational Policy*, 9(4), 297-316.
- Skirtic, T. (Ed.). (1995). *Disability and democracy: Reconstructing (special) education for postmodernity*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Slee, R. (1997). Imported or important theory? Sociological interrogations of disablement and special education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, 18(3), 401-420.

- Slee, R., & Allan, J. (2001). Excluding the included: A reconsideration of inclusive education. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 11(2), 173-191.
- Snyder, S., Brueggemann, B., & Garland-Thomson, R. (Eds.). (2002). *Disability studies: Enabling the humanities*. New York: Modern Language Association.
- Spencer, B. (2001). *The seduction of the subject/citizen: Governmentality and school governance policy*. Paper presented at the 2001 Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association. Seattle, WA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 454 585)
- Taylor, S., Rizvi, F., Lingard, B., & Henry, M. (1997). *Education policy and politics of change*. New York: Routledge.
- Test, D., Mason, C., Hughes, C., Konrad, M., Neale, M., & Wood, W. (2004). Student involvement in individualized education program meetings. *Exceptional Children*, 70(4), 391-412.
- Thomson, R. G. (1997). *Extraordinary bodies: Figuring physical disability in American culture and literature*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Tikly, L. (2003). Governmentality and the study of education policy in South Africa. *Journal of Education Policy*, 18(2), 161-174.
- Torgerson, C., Miner, C., & Shen, H. (2004). Developing student competence in self-directed IEPs. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 39(3), 162-167.
- Trent, J. (1994). *Inventing the feeble mind: A history of mental retardation in the United States*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.
- Vlachou, A. (2004). Education and inclusive policy-making: Implications for research and practice. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 8(1), 3-21.
- Ware, L. (2002). A moral conversation on disability: Risking the personal in educational contexts [electronic version]. *Hypatia*, 17(3), 143-172.
- Wilson, J. (2000). 'Learning difficulties,' 'disability' and 'special needs': Some problems of partisan conceptualisation. *Disability & Society*, 15(5), 817-824.
- Young, I. M. (1990). *Justice and the politics of difference*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

---

Carolyn Fleiger [b789@unb.ca](mailto:b789@unb.ca) is in the 2<sup>nd</sup> year of her doctoral studies program in Education, as well as holding a GRA/GTA assistantship, at the University of New Brunswick. She taught in regular classrooms in the public school system, but most of her 20 years of experience was as a special education/inclusive education teacher in British Columbia, Alberta, and New Brunswick.



---

## The Prediction of Teacher Autonomy From Levels of Stress, Work Satisfaction, Empowerment and Professionalism

*Carolyn Pearson, John Burgin, Sharon Richardson*  
University of Arkansas at Little Rock, AR USA

*William Moomaw*  
University of West Florida, Pensacola, FL USA

Teacher autonomy is a common link that sometimes appears when examining teacher motivation, job satisfaction, stress (burnout), professionalism, and empowerment (Brunetti, 2001; Kim & Loadman, 1994; Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996). Much of the research about these constructs and their relationships has revealed one commonality: the need for teachers to have autonomy (Erpelding, 1999; Jones, 2000; Wilson, 1993). Autonomy seems to emerge as a key variable when examining American educational reform in American initiatives such as 'No Child Left Behind' or its predecessor, 'Goals 2000,' and some argue that granting autonomy and empowering teachers is an appropriate place to begin in solving the problems of today's schools (Melenyzer, 1990; Short, 1994).

Recognizing teaching as a profession and developing professional teachers has also been proposed as a possible solution to problems in today's schools. If teachers are to be empowered and exalted as professionals, then, as other professionals, teachers must have the freedom to prescribe the best plan for their students' learning, just as doctors/lawyers prescribe the best treatment for their patients/clients. The freedom to do such has been defined by some as *teacher autonomy*. Although the link to the aforementioned constructs has sometimes been demonstrated (Brunetti, 2001; Kim & Loadman, 1994; Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996), identifying the underlying theoretical dimensions of teacher autonomy has met with varied results. This is because studies that directly pertain to teacher autonomy are few in number (particularly when developing appropriate measures) as autonomy

---

is difficult to operationalize (e.g., Pearson, 1995, 1998; Pearson & Hall, 1993; Pearson & Moomaw, 2006).

### **Constructs Related to Teacher Autonomy**

A plethora of research has examined the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation of teachers. Intrinsic factors include the desire to help students achieve, to make a difference in society, as well as the sense of accomplishment in seeing a student learn. Extrinsic factors include pay, nonmonetary fringe benefits, and recognition of performance (Ashbaugh, 1982; DeJesus, 1991; Dinham & Scott, 1996; Farrar, 1981; Firestone & Pennell, 1993; Picard, 1986; Porter, 1993; Swanson & Koonce, 1986). Overall, "Intrinsic rewards are much more powerful for motivating teachers than are extrinsic rewards, such as merit pay" (National Institute of Education, 1981, p. 2) and the body of research tends to support this. Brown (1996) found three major reasons (all intrinsic) why teachers leave the profession: the need for personal growth, the desire for a philosophy of education, and a perceived lack of respect for their efforts. In contrast, Sarafoglu (1997) also found intrinsic reasons why teachers stay in the profession: a love of learning, a love of children, resilience, collegiality, and reflectivity. While the majority of research supports the use of intrinsic rewards to motivate teachers, both teachers and principals felt their greatest need deficiencies were security and autonomy (Nero, 1985).

Autonomy is one facet of teacher motivation (Khmelkov, 2000; Losos, 2000; White, 1992); therefore, a presentation of the related motivational factor of teacher job satisfaction is essential. The National Center for Education Statistics (Ingersoll, 1997a) and several other studies have demonstrated that the degree of autonomy that teachers perceive is indicative of current job satisfaction (Charters, 1976; Franklin, 1988; Gnecco, 1983; Hall, Villeme, & Phillippy, 1989; Pearson & Hall, 1993), and a majority of more recent literature supports this ideology (Brunetti, 2001; Kim & Loadman, 1994; Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996). A report on job satisfaction among American teachers (Perie & Baker, 1997) identified the working conditions associated with higher teacher satisfaction as: the need for more administrative support and leadership, good student behavior, a positive school climate, and teacher autonomy. Working conditions were more related to satisfaction than to background variables such as sex, age, and years of experience. Although satisfaction with participatory

---

management indicates that teachers differ in their desire to participate in school management (Frase & Sorenson, 1992), more concur about retaining autonomy in the classroom, an influential factor in their decision to remain in teaching (Brunetti).

Job dissatisfaction leads to stress and ultimately to burnout, if allowed to continue unabated. According to Kyriacou (1989),

Teacher stress refers to the experience by teachers of unpleasant emotions such as anger, tension, frustration, anxiety, depression and nervousness, resulting from the aspect of their work as teachers . . . Teacher burnout refers to a state of mental, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion in teachers which results from a prolonged experience of stress. (p. 27)

Prior research (Davis & Wilson; 2000; Pearson & Hall, 1993) reveals that teacher motivation and autonomy are related to both job satisfaction and job stress. The more intrinsically motivated, the more satisfied teachers were in their jobs and the less stress they experienced (Davis & Wilson). Subsequently, other studies have found that constraints on autonomy - perceived lack of control and a sense of powerlessness - are related to tension, frustration, and anxiety among teachers (Bacharach, Bauer, & Conley, 1986; Blasé & Matthews, 1984; Cedoline, 1982; Dinham & Scott, 1996; Dworkin, Haney, Dworkin, & Telschow, 1990; Evers, 1987; Lortie, 1975; Natale, 1993; Woods, 1989; Yee, 1990).

Some researchers have tried to determine how autonomy is incorporated into professionalism. Part of the findings on American teachers in *A Nation at Risk* (National Commission on Excellence in Education, 1983) was that the professional working life of teachers is, on the whole, unacceptable, a finding that began a long-standing argument on teaching as a profession. From *A Nation at Risk* came seven recommendations intended to improve the preparation of teachers or to make teaching a more rewarding, respected profession. Ever since, *teacher professionalism* – the movement to upgrade the status, training, and working conditions of teachers – has received a great deal of interest (Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997). Ingersoll (1997a) included teacher authority as a traditional characteristic that distinguished professional occupations from other occupations. *Authority* was defined as “the extent to which teachers influence school decisions concerned with key educational issues” (p. x). This definition was later broadened to include “the degree of individual autonomy exercised by teachers over planning

---

and teaching within the classroom” (Ingersoll & Alsalam, p. vii). The emphasis to address both aspects of teacher authority is best summarized as follows.

Advocates of increases in faculty influence and increases in teacher autonomy argue that teachers will not only make better informed decisions about educational issues than district or state officials, but that top-down decision making often fails precisely because it lacks the support of those whose are responsible for the implementation and success of the decision. (Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997, p. 7)

Others (e.g., Firestone & Bader, 1992) agree that teachers and principals must have authority concerning key decisions about the services they render; any top-down imposition of change is counter to the development of professionalism. Teacher authority has been linked to teacher commitment and teacher professionalism (Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997), and autonomy is a key factor in novice teachers’ use of professional practices (Khmelkov, 2000). Whether one agrees or disagrees that teaching is a regulated profession (as medicine), there is little argument that autonomy is a key element of a true profession (Blasé & Kirby, 2000; Ingersoll, 1997b; Ingersoll & Alsalam; Khmelkov).

Teacher empowerment is another construct that many educational reformers consider essential in school restructuring and optimum teacher development. Teacher autonomy has been empirically derived as one dimension of teacher empowerment (Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Short & Rinehart, 1992), yet empowered teachers are not generally found in American public schools structured as they are today (Corwin & Borman, 1988; Hanson, 1991), and this fact continues to hold true despite research that reflects the importance of teacher empowerment and autonomy (Fay, 1990; Klecker, 1998). A survey conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, asked a nationally representative sample of teachers to rate their influence on a variety of classroom and school-wide issues. The results indicated that teachers’ perception of their influence on a variety of classroom and school-wide issues has remained stable over the past few years (Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997; Shen, 1998). Teachers perceived their influence as primarily confined to classroom issues such as selecting textbooks and teaching strategies; collaborative autonomy was observed in schools where

---

teachers had opportunities to work with administrators in making decisions pertaining to curriculum, instruction, and scheduling (Willner, 1990).

### **Teacher Autonomy**

The definition of *teacher autonomy* is ambiguous in the literature, but has been defined as “the perception that teachers have regarding whether they control themselves and their work environment” (Pearson & Hall, 1993, p. 173), which is the definition used throughout this study (e.g., Pearson, 1995, 1998; Pearson & Hall; Pearson & Moomaw, 2006). What one teacher views as autonomy, another may view as isolation; what one views as a means to gain substantial freedom from interference or supervision, another may view as the freedom to develop collegial relationships and accomplish tasks that extend beyond the classroom. While some teachers thrive on autonomy, others may perceive it as a means for principals to avoid their duties (Frase & Sorenson, 1992). Throughout the literature related to teachers and autonomy, however, there is considerable evidence to support the concept that teacher autonomy has changed considerably over the years and continues to evolve.

Willner (1990) distinguishes between an earlier concept of teacher autonomy - based on independence through isolation and alienation - and a more recent concept - based on collaborative decision making and the freedom to make prescriptive, professional choices concerning the services rendered to students. Other studies concur with Willner’s notion of a new sense of teacher autonomy in that “alienation is not autonomy” (Franklin, 1988, p. 13), and “to be isolated in a classroom without collegial interaction or meaningful feedback is not the intended spirit of autonomy” (Frase & Sorenson, 1992, p. 40). Many would agree that for teachers to realize a new sense of professional autonomy, the traditional American bureaucratic governance models can no longer exist. Teachers must have authority in the ‘substance’ of school (Fay, 1990). The most pertinent substance is how the instructional process is manifested and viewed by teachers in the following ways (Franklin; Hanson, 1991). Teachers feel they are qualified authorities in the instructional process because they have considerable expertise in specialized fields; they have a right to organize the learning process to their own choosing; and the network of impersonal school rules stops at the classroom door because teachers formulate their own,

---

personalized, flexible rules, which allow them to operate in their classrooms as they see fit.

Although teachers leave the teaching profession for various reasons, most often it is because of the lack of professionalism, lack of recognition, or lack of autonomy afforded them (Natale, 1993; Pearson & Hall, 1993). Teacher autonomy, or the lack thereof, seems to be a critical component that motivates teachers to stay in or leave the teaching profession. The degree of autonomy perceived by new teachers is indicative of current job satisfaction and a positive reaction to teaching. Teachers with higher autonomy scores expressed a willingness, if faced with the decision, to reenter the teaching profession (Pearson & Hall). Perceptions of autonomy relate to various factors already discussed, which are mainly factors within the work environment, but not factors such as academic ability, quality of prior training, or years of experience.

### **Purpose**

Although the link between teacher autonomy and several aforementioned constructs has been examined, there needs to be a stable, well-defined measure of teacher autonomy to aid researchers who examine various school-reform initiatives and teacher attitudes and perceptions. A prior measure was developed that yielded reliable, valid scores that included curriculum autonomy and general teaching autonomy dimensions and underlying theoretical aspects of teacher autonomy supported by the literature (Teaching Autonomy Scale, Pearson & Hall, 1993). A more recent examination of the instrument, via confirmatory factor analysis, indicates that the same two dimensions emerged and were internally consistent ( $\alpha = .80$  for both), indicating the scores were reliable and valid for research purposes (Pearson & Moomaw, 2006).

The purpose of this study is to explore on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, professionalism, and teacher autonomy to better establish the relationship between these constructs to provide insight for future research. The specific intent is to identify and assess the strength of the relationships between these variables and autonomy by determining the best linear combination of the variables that predict teacher autonomy.

### **Participants and Procedure**

The target population for this study consisted of 300 teachers who worked in three neighbouring school districts/counties in

---



Florida. To ensure full geographic and grade-level representation, two schools each from elementary, middle, and high schools were selected from each of three counties ( $n = 67, 52, 52$ , respectively). A cover letter explaining the study and an accompanying survey, comprised of the variables discussed, were sent to a random sample of teachers. Of the 300 teachers sampled, complete data were obtained from 171 teachers, for a response rate of 57%. Of the 171 respondents, 37 (21%) were elementary teachers, 88 (52%) were middle school teachers, and 46 (27%) were high school teachers. Fourteen was the mean for years of teaching experience, ranging from 1 to 37 years. The majority held a bachelor's degree ( $n = 111$ ); the remainder, a master's. All represented a variety of academic and nonacademic subjects.

### **Instrumentation**

To describe the sample, demographic variables of interest were included on a cover sheet. The next section presented 18 items of the Teaching Autonomy Scale (TAS), designed to elicit the degree that teachers perceived autonomy in (a) selection of activities and materials, (b) classroom standards of conduct, (c) instructional planning and sequencing, and (d) personal on-the-job decision making. Eleven items reflected high autonomy (e.g., I am free to be creative in my teaching approach), and the remainder reflected low autonomy (e.g., In my situation I have little say over the content and skills that are selected for teaching). The 4-point Likert-type scale, which ranged from 1 (*definitely false*) to 4 (*definitely true*), was designed to eliminate a neutral response. Positively stated items were recoded to reflect high scores on the attribute.

Because the exploratory standard for instrument development is often noted as .70 (Nunnally, cited in Henson, 2001), and .80 is often accepted as adequate for general research purposes (Loo, 2001), the reliability of TAS scores was determined as adequate. A prior study of TAS (Pearson & Hall, 1993), which used exploratory factor analysis, yielded an instrument with internal consistency reliability overall ( $\alpha = .80$ ) with two factors, curriculum autonomy and general teaching autonomy (Items 7 and 11, respectively). Curriculum autonomy was defined by adding the items that measured selection of activities and materials and instructional planning and sequencing (scores ranged from 7 to 28). General teaching autonomy was defined by adding items that measured classroom standards of conduct and personal on-the-job decision making (scores ranged from 11 to 44). A recent study (Pearson &

Moomaw, 2006) of TAS, which used confirmatory factor analysis, yielded a stable factor structure with improved internal consistency reliability for the overall scores ( $\alpha = .83$ ) and internal consistency reliability for the curriculum and general autonomy subscales ( $\alpha = .80$  for both).

For the purpose of this study, another section of the survey inquired about on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism. All scales were a 5-point Likert-type that ranged from 1 to 5 (e.g., *very dissatisfied* to *very satisfied*, *very heavy* to *very light*, *never* to *always*, etc.), and the scales were expanded to enhance reliability due to the low number of items. On-the-job stress was measured by three items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of their current instructional load, paper-work load, and the stress of the work environment (scores ranged from 3 to 15). Work satisfaction was measured by two items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of their satisfaction with their current salary and employment (scores ranged from 2 to 10). Empowerment was measured by three items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of the administration in (a) considering their opinions on matters that directly affected them, (b) involving them in developing school policies that affected their work, and (c) taking their concerns, and how often, into account in administrative decisions (scores ranged from 3 to 15). Professionalism was measured by three items that inquired about (a) teachers' perceptions of recognition for high performance, (b) openness and accessibility of the administration, and (c) activity on school-level committees (scores ranged 3 to 15). Cronbach alpha internal consistency reliability was determined for general teaching autonomy, curriculum autonomy, stress, satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism ( $\alpha = .80, .80, .72, .34, .91, .61$ ; respectively). The reliability of the scores was deemed adequate for the investigative purposes of this study, with the exception of the satisfaction scale. The low reliability of the satisfaction scale was probably because this variable was measured by only two items; however, it was included because of its prior link to autonomy.

### **Data Analysis**

It was stated earlier that the purpose of this study was to explore the relationships between the aforementioned constructs and teacher autonomy to better establish and understand the relationship between them, to provide insight for future research. For the purpose of this study, *teacher autonomy* is teachers'

---

perceptions of whether they control themselves and their work environment. It was hypothesized that more autonomous teachers would demonstrate less on-the-job stress, greater work satisfaction, perceived empowerment, and a high degree of professionalism. These relationships were examined using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Specifically, it was hypothesized that curriculum autonomy would demonstrate stronger relationships with on-the-job stress and work satisfaction because these variables relate directly to the instructional process. It was hypothesized that general teaching autonomy would demonstrate stronger relationships with perceived empowerment and professionalism because these variables relate more to personal on-the-job decision making. Perceptions of autonomy have been found to be related to the various factors already discussed, but not to demographic variables such as academic ability or quality of prior training (Pearson & Hall, 1993). After examining the correlation matrix, an additional exploratory analysis via canonical correlation was performed using the aforementioned variables as independent variables, with curriculum and teaching autonomy as dependent variables. Could linear relationships be established between the two sets of constructs and provide further insight into how these constructs relate one to the other?

### **Results**

As indicated by the means in Table 1, teachers reported moderate levels of curriculum autonomy and general teaching autonomy, a fairly high level of stress, were generally satisfied with their current employment, and perceived a moderate degree of empowerment and professionalism. All correlations were significant ( $p < .05$ ) between the constructs. As hypothesized, curriculum autonomy demonstrated association with on-the-job stress and, as curriculum autonomy increased, on-the-job stress decreased. Nevertheless, the strength of the relationship between general autonomy and job satisfaction was somewhat lower than curriculum autonomy. Also hypothesized, general teaching autonomy demonstrated an association with perceived empowerment and professionalism: As general teaching autonomy increased, so did empowerment and professionalism.

It was also revealed that as job satisfaction, perceived empowerment, and professionalism increased, on-the-job stress decreased; and greater job satisfaction was associated with a higher

---

degree of professionalism and empowerment. Surprisingly, the highest correlation was between perceived empowerment and professionalism: Empowered teachers perceived a higher degree of professionalism.

Table 1

*Correlations, Means, and Standard Deviations of Related Constructs with Autonomy*

	CA <sup>a</sup>	GA <sup>b</sup>	Stress	S <sup>c</sup>	E <sup>d</sup>	P <sup>e</sup>
Curriculum Autonomy	-					
General Autonomy	.47 <sup>g</sup>	-				
Stress	-.30 <sup>g</sup>	-.25 <sup>g</sup>	-			
Satisfaction	.18 <sup>f</sup>	.16 <sup>f</sup>	-.25 <sup>g</sup>	-		
Empowerment	.16 <sup>f</sup>	.31 <sup>g</sup>	-.30 <sup>g</sup>	.30 <sup>g</sup>	-	
Professionalism	.15 <sup>g</sup>	.35 <sup>g</sup>	-.27 <sup>g</sup>	.33 <sup>g</sup>	.77 <sup>g</sup>	-
Raw Means	18.84	41.64	12.54	6.72	11.14	9.48
Raw SD	4.21	5.05	1.93	1.59	2.66	1.98
Scale Mean	2.69	3.20	4.18	3.36	3.71	3.16
Scale SD	0.60	0.39	0.64	0.80	0.88	0.66

<sup>a</sup>Curriculum Autonomy. <sup>b</sup>General Autonomy. <sup>c</sup>Satisfaction. <sup>d</sup>Empowerment. <sup>e</sup>Professionalism.

*Note.* <sup>f</sup> $p < .05$ . <sup>g</sup> $p < .001$ . Curriculum and General Autonomy scaled 1-4; stress, satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism scaled 1-5.

The results of the canonical correlation analysis using curriculum and general teacher autonomy (dependent variables), and on-the-job stress, work satisfaction, empowerment, and professionalism (independent variables) are provided in Table 2.

As Stevens (2002) indicated, "For a more moderate population canonical correlation (.50), a sample size of 100 is needed to detect it about 67% of the time" (p. 475); therefore, the sample size was adequate for this study. The first and second canonical correlation was significant ( $\chi^2 = .80$ ,  $df = 326$ ,  $p < .001$ ;  $\chi^2 = .95$ ,  $df = 164$ ,  $p < .05$ ; respectively), with a moderate correlation coefficient found between the two canonical variate sets ( $R_c = .40$  and  $.22$ , respectively), which explained the 16% and 5% variance between the two linear combinations of the variables ( $R_c^2$ ).

Table 2

*Canonical Correlations and Standardized Coefficients for Stress, Satisfaction, Empowerment, and Professionalism with Curriculum and General Teacher Autonomy*

	1 <sup>st</sup> Canonical Variate			2 <sup>nd</sup> Canonical Variate		
	S <sup>a</sup>	F <sup>b</sup>	S Sq <sup>c</sup> (%)	S <sup>a</sup>	F <sup>b</sup>	S Sq <sup>c</sup> (%)
Related Constructs						
On-the-job Stress	-.73	-.51	53.32	.60	.74	36.05
Work Satisfaction	.47	.12	21.86	-.30	-.39	8.57
Empowerment	.75	.11	56.07	.33	.03	10.92
Professionalism	.84	.58	71.10	.52	.83	27.47
Adequacy			50.59			20.75
Rc <sup>d</sup>			.40			.22
Rc <sup>2e</sup>			16.00			5.00
Rd <sup>f</sup>			8.07			1.03
Autonomy						
Curriculum	.69	.16	48.66	-.72	-1.09	51.34
General	.96	.89	98.35	.13	.87	1.66
Adequacy			73.51			26.50
Rd			11.74			1.31

<sup>a</sup>Structure. <sup>b</sup>Function. <sup>c</sup>Squared.

*Note.* Adequacy represents how the scores on a function reproduce variance in a set of variables. <sup>d</sup> represents the canonical correlation. <sup>e</sup> represents the explained variance. <sup>f</sup> represents the redundancy (adequacy coefficient multiplied by explained variance)

Examination of the correlations between the related constructs and their canonical variables (unstandardized canonical coefficients) for the first canonical variate revealed high loadings for stress, empowerment, and professionalism and for the second canonical variate, stress and professionalism. To determine the redundant variables, the standardized coefficients were examined and supported the related constructs as primarily defined by stress and professionalism for the first canonical variate; and stress, professionalism and, to a lesser degree, satisfaction, for the second canonical variate.

Examination of the correlations between the autonomy constructs and their canonical variables (unstandardized canonical

coefficients) for the first canonical variate revealed high loadings for both curriculum and general autonomy and for the second canonical variate, curriculum autonomy. Again, to determine the redundant variables, the standardized coefficients were examined and supported the autonomy set as primarily defined by general autonomy for the first canonical variate and curriculum autonomy for the second canonical variate. Overall, the first canonical variate was defined by a decrease in stress and an increase in professionalism for general autonomy. The second canonical variate was defined by an increase in stress, an increase in professionalism and, to a lesser degree, a decrease in satisfaction for curriculum autonomy.

### **Conclusions**

It was hypothesized that autonomous teachers would demonstrate less on-the-job stress, greater work satisfaction, perceived empowerment, and a higher degree of professionalism. In this study, as curriculum autonomy increased, on-the-job stress moderately decreased; there was not a strong association between curriculum autonomy and job satisfaction, although the relationship was statistically significant. Also, it was demonstrated that as general teacher autonomy increased so did empowerment and professionalism, although again the relationships were moderate. Also, as job satisfaction, perceived empowerment, and professionalism increased, on-the-job stress somewhat decreased; greater job satisfaction was associated with a higher degree of professionalism and empowerment. A strong relationship was found between perceived empowerment and professionalism, which suggests that teachers who perceive themselves as empowered also view their occupation as a true profession.

The link between several constructs and teacher autonomy has been demonstrated (e.g., motivation, job satisfaction, stress/burnout, professionalism, and empowerment) (Brunetti, 2001; Kim & Loadman, 1994; Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996), and several of the relationships were somewhat supported in this study. Although research indicates that teacher autonomy is one of the working conditions associated with teacher job satisfaction (Perie & Baker, 1997), the correlations found in this study did not provide much support for the relationships between curriculum autonomy and general autonomy and job satisfaction; however, several hypotheses may explain this result.

---

Autonomy may not be one of the primary factors affected by job satisfaction or vice versa the effects of greater or lesser autonomy may depend on the personality of individuals, or the factors which reduce or increase autonomy may be pivotal. For example, American reform efforts such as the 'Reading First' initiative require a standardized curriculum that provides teachers with extensive professional development and access to a coach who models techniques and provides explicit feedback for teachers. While this type of program may reduce teacher autonomy, job satisfaction for many teachers may well increase because the job expectations are clear and the administration provides adequate support for the changes required. Conversely, many administrators require teachers to alter their curriculum to address the demands of high-stakes tests and, therefore, autonomy may again be reduced. Unfortunately, the many factors that affect the results of high-stakes tests are out of teachers' control; consequently, job satisfaction may decrease. In both cases, in an effort to meet the demands of reform, autonomy may be reduced but the type of demand produced may yield a differential result.

Research also indicates that teacher autonomy is related to the various factors already discussed, but is not related to demographic factors such as academic ability, quality of prior training, or years of experience (Pearson & Hall, 1993). As demonstrated by the canonical correlation analysis, general teaching autonomy is logically consistent with the need for teachers to have control over their work environment and personal, on-the-job decision-making authority, especially if they are to stay committed to the profession. In this study the first canonical variate was defined by on-the-job stress and professionalism, which predicted general teaching autonomy. Stress was measured by items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of their current instructional load, their paper-work load, and the stress of the work environment. Professionalism was measured by items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of recognition for high performance, openness and accessibility of the administration, and activity on school-level committees. It was not surprising, therefore, that stress and professionalism would predict general autonomy because these variables relate to the environment and decision-making authority, although the relationships were moderate at best. A measure of general teacher autonomy could provide those who hire teachers the insight to identify those who are more satisfied with their jobs and

---

professional identify and thus more apt to stay (Blasé & Kirby, 2000; Ingersoll, 1997b; Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997; Khmelkov, 2000).

Also demonstrated by the canonical correlation analysis, curriculum autonomy is logically consistent with teachers' identifying themselves with the profession (Blasé & Kirby, 2000; Ingersoll, 1997b; Ingersoll & Alsalam, 1997; Khmelkov, 2000), particularly having authority in decisions about selection of activities/materials and instructional planning and sequencing, and in relieving on-the-job stress. The second canonical variate was defined by stress, professionalism, and job satisfaction, which predicted curriculum autonomy. On-the-job stress was measured by items that inquired about teachers' perceptions of their current instructional load, paper-work load, and the stress of the work environment. Again, it was not surprising that these types of stress would be lower in teachers who perceive they have control over their curriculum, although, again, the relationships are moderate at best. Flexibility in such activities is critical when elevating teaching to professional status and autonomy is a determinant of novice teachers' use of such practices (Khmelkov, 2000). Curriculum autonomy is also logically consistent with the examination of educational reform initiatives (Melenyzer, 1990; Short, 1994), especially because many argue that teacher autonomy, one dimension of empowerment (Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Short & Rinehart, 1992), is critical to any initiative's implementation and success (Ingersoll, 1997a, 1997b).

One limitation of this study is the response rate and sample size obtained. Although the response rate was slightly higher in this study than in the original study that examined the construct validity of the TAS (57% and 55%, respectively), the sample was smaller (171 and 204, respectively). In future research that examines the autonomy construct, effort will be made to obtain larger samples to enhance the generalizability of the results. Also, future studies will further examine the relationships between autonomy and its related constructs more multivariately, to better define the nomological network, rather than examining bivariate relationships as has been done in much of the past research.

It would be interesting to explore autonomy and its related constructs in the context of schools as a social system. It was stated that for teachers to realize a new sense of professional autonomy, traditional bureaucratic governance models would have to cease to exist so teachers could have authority in the substance of schools (Fay, 1990) and, as these models change, perceptions related to

---



these constructs should also change. It is important to identify systemic factors essential to interpreting teachers' perceptions of autonomy and, of particular interest, the context of expanding school reform and state-wide standardized testing initiatives. One particular study we plan to undertake is to examine the perceptions of autonomy as it relates to attitudes towards high- or low-stakes state-wide testing. Research in the area of autonomy is still in the early stages, but examination of this construct should continue to prove useful in exploring the success of reform initiatives.

### References

- Ashbaugh, C. R. (1982). What is job satisfaction? *Planning and Changing - A Journal for School Administrators*, 14, 195-203.
- Bacharach, S. B., Bauer, S. C., & Conley, S. (1986). Organizational analysis of stress: The case of elementary and secondary schools. *Work and Occupations*, 13, 7-32.
- Blasé, J. J., & Kirby, P. C. (2000). *Bringing out the best in teachers: What effective principals do* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.
- Blasé, J. J., & Matthews, K. (1984). How principals stress teachers. *The Canadian School Executive*, 4, 8-11.
- Brown, J. R. (1996). *Why do teachers leave?* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Toronto, Toronto, ON, Canada. (Dissertation Abstracts International, 35-01, ADGMM12577)
- Brunetti, G. J. (2001). Why do they teach? A study of job satisfaction among long-term high school teachers. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 28(3), 49-74.
- Cedoline, A. J. (1982). *Job burnout in public education: Symptoms, causes, and survival skills*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Charters, W. W. (1976). *Sense of teacher work autonomy: Measurement and finding*. Eugene, OR: Center for Educational Policy and Management. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 166 840)
- Corwin, R. G., & Borman, K. M. (1998). School as workplace: Structural constraints on administration. In N. J. Boyan (Ed.), *Handbook of research on educational administration* (pp. 209-234). White Plains, NY: Longman.
- Davis, J., & Wilson, S. M. (2000). Principals' efforts to empower teachers: Effects on teacher motivation and job satisfaction and stress. *The Clearing House*, 73(6), 349-357.
- DeJesus, S. N. (1991, October). *Intrinsic and extrinsic motivational objects in teachers and future teachers*. Paper presented at the International School of Psychology Colloquium, Portugal. (EDRS Availability: Microfiche, ED 400 233)
- Dinham, S., & Scott, C. (1996). *Teacher satisfaction, motivation and health: Phase one of the teacher 2000 project*. Paper presented at the

- 
- Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, New York, NY. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED405295)
- Dworkin, A. G., Haney, C. A., Dworkin, R. J., & Telschow, R. L. (1990). Stress and illness behaviour among urban public school teachers. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, 26, 60-72.
- Erpelding, C. J. (1999). *School vision, teacher autonomy, school climate, and student achievement in elementary schools*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Northern Iowa.
- Evers, T. B. (1987, April). *Factors affecting teacher job satisfaction in a number of high schools in Michigan*. Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Annual Meeting, Washington, DC.
- Farrar, S. M. (1981, April). *Teacher performance*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Research Association, Los Angeles, CA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 275 677)
- Fay, C. (1990). *Teaching and leading: The teacher's voice*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association, Boston, MA. (ERIC Document Reproduction Services No. ED 206 096)
- Firestone, W. A., & Bader, B. D. (1992). *Redesigning teaching: Professionalism or bureaucracy?* Albany, NY: SUNY Press.
- Firestone, W. A., & Pennell, J. R. (1993). Teacher commitment, working conditions, and differential incentive policies. *Review of Educational Research*, 63, 489-525.
- Franklin, H. L. (1988). *Principle consideration and its relationship to teacher sense of autonomy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oregon.
- Frase, L. E., & Sorenson, L. (1992). Teacher motivation and satisfaction: Impact on participatory management. *NASSP Bulletin*, 76(540), 37-43.
- Gnecco, D. R. (1983). *The perception of autonomy and job satisfaction among elementary teachers in southern Maine*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN.
- Hall, B. W., Villeme, M. G., & Phillippy, S. W. (1989, February). *Perceptions of autonomy within the beginning teacher's work environment*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Education, St. Louis, MO.
- Hanson, E. M. (1991). *Educational administration and organizational behavior* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Boston: Allyn and Bacon.
- Henson, R. K. (2001). Understanding internal consistency reliability estimates: A conceptual primer of coefficient alpha. *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development*, 34, 177-189.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (1997a). *The status of teaching as a profession: 1990-91. Statistical analysis report*. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES Report 97-104). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Ingersoll, R. M. (1997b). *Teacher professionalization and teacher commitment: A multilevel analysis*. National Center for Education
-

- 
- Statistics (NCES Report 97-069). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Ingersoll, R., & Alsalam, N. (1997). *Teacher professionalization and teacher commitment: A multilevel analysis*. National Center for Education Statistics (NCES Report 97-069). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Jones, L. (2000). *Supervisory beliefs and behaviors associated with veteran teacher motivation*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Oklahoma. (Dissertation Abstracts International 61[02], 441) (UMI Microform AAT 9962960)
- Khmelkov, V. T. (2000). *Developing professionalism: Effects of school workplace organization on novice teachers' sense of responsibility and efficacy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Notre Dame, Notre Dame, IN. (Dissertation Abstracts International 61[04], 1639) (UMI Microform AAT 9967316)
- Kim, I., & Loadman, W. (1994). *Predicting teacher job satisfaction*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 383 707)
- Klecker, B. J. (1998). Defining and measuring the dimensions of teacher empowerment in restructuring public schools. *Education, 118*(3), 358 – 370.
- Klecker, B. J., & Loadman, W. (1996). *Exploring the relationship between teacher empowerment and teacher job satisfaction*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 400 254)
- Kyriacou, C. (1989). The nature and prevalence of teacher stress. In M. Cole & S. Walker (Eds.), *Teaching and stress* (pp. 27-33). Philadelphia, PA: Open University Press.
- Loo, R. (2001). Motivational orientations toward work: An evaluation of the work preference inventory (student form). *Measurement and Evaluation in Counseling and Development, 33*, 222-233.
- Lortie, D. C. (1975). *Schoolteacher: A sociological study*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Losos, L. W. (2000). *Comparing the motivation levels of public, private and parochial high school teachers*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Saint Louis University, St. Louis, MO. (UMI Microform 9973372)
- Melenyzer, B. J. (1990, November). *Teacher empowerment: The discourse, meaning, and social actions of teachers*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the National Council on States on Inservice Education, Orlando, FL.
- Natale, J. A. (1993, July). Why teachers leave. *The Executive Educator, 14*-18.
- National Commission on Excellence in Education. (1983). *A nation at risk: The imperative for educational reform*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- National Institute of Education. (1981). *Education, productivity and the national economy*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 229 513)
-

- 
- Nero, A. B. (1985). *Intrinsic/Extrinsic motivational factors and perceived need deficiencies as a function of job level in an urban school district*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Memphis State University, Memphis, TN.
- Pearson, L. C. (1995). A discriminant analysis of teacher autonomy. *Journal of Research in Education, 5*(1), 14-19.
- Pearson, L. C. (1998). The prediction of teacher autonomy. *Educational Research Quarterly, 22*(1), 33-46.
- Pearson, L. C., & Hall, B. C. (1993). Initial construct validation of the teaching autonomy scale. *Journal of Educational Research, 86*(3), 172-177.
- Pearson, L. C., & Moomaw, W. (2006). Continuing validation of the teaching autonomy scale. *Journal of Educational Research, 100*(1), 44-51.
- Perie, M., & Baker, D. P. (1997). *Job satisfaction among America's teachers: Effects of workplace conditions, background characteristics, and teacher compensation* (NCES Report 97-471). Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education.
- Picard, B. H. (1986). *Teacher motivation: Perceptions of teachers and school officials* (satisfaction, intrinsic considerations, financial, merit, recognition). Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE. (Dissertation Abstracts International, 47-04, AAI8614470)
- Porter, J. E. (1993). *An investigation of secondary teachers' motivation orientation and their attitudes about extrinsic incentives*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The University of Nebraska-Lincoln, Lincoln, NE. (Dissertation Abstracts International, 54-12, AAI9412210)
- Sarafoglu, M. K. (1997). *A study of teachers: Their commitment and motivation to remain in the profession*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, New York, NY. (Dissertation Abstracts International, 58-04, ADG9729608)
- Shen, J. (1998). Do teachers feel empowered? *Educational Leadership, 65*(7), 35-36.
- Short, P. M. (1994). Defining teacher empowerment. *Education, 114*(4), 488-493.
- Short, P. M., & Rinehart, J. S. (1992). School participant empowerment scale: Assessment of level of empowerment within the school environment. *Educational and Psychological Measurement, 52*, 951-961.
- Stevens, J. (2002). *Applied multivariate statistics for the social sciences* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Swanson, B. B., & Koonce, P. M. (1986). Teacher incentives: Is merit pay enough? *Action in Teacher Education, 8*, 87-90.
- Ulriksen, J. J. (1996). *Perceptions of secondary school teachers and principals concerning factors related to job satisfaction and job dissatisfaction*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 424 684)
-

- White, P. A. (1992). Teacher empowerment under "Ideal" school-site autonomy. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 14(1), 69-82.
- Willner, R. G. (1990). *Images of the future now: Autonomy, professionalism, and efficacy*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Fordham University, New York, NY.
- Wilson, S. M. (1993). The self-empowerment index: A measure of internally and externally expressed teacher autonomy. *Educational and Psychological Measurement*, 53, 727-737.
- Woods, P. (1989). Stress and the teacher role. In M. Cole & S. Walker (Eds.), *Teaching and stress*. Buckingham, England: Open University Press.
- Yee, S. M. (1990). *Careers in the classroom: When teaching is more than a job*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- 

L. Carolyn Pearson [lcpearson@ualr.edu](mailto:lcpearson@ualr.edu) is a Professor of Educational Foundations whose research interests include perceptions of teacher autonomy, high-stakes testing, and evaluation of college instruction. She serves as an editorial board member of *The Journal of Educational Research* and continues to stay active with the American Educational Research Association.

John S. Burgin [jsburgin@ualr.edu](mailto:jsburgin@ualr.edu) is an Assistant Professor of Early Childhood Education and Reading. His research interests include performance assessment and literacy. Previously, he served as a K-3 Reading Specialist in the public schools.

Sharon A. Richardson [sarichardson@ualr.edu](mailto:sarichardson@ualr.edu) is currently an Assistant Professor of Education Administration and Supervision at the University of Arkansas Little Rock in Little Rock. Her research interests include parental involvement and multicultural education. She is a member of the National Association of Secondary School Principals and a life member of the National Alliance of Black School Educators and serves on the Parent Involvement Commission.

Colonel William "Bill" Moomaw [william.moomaw.ctr@eglin.af.mil](mailto:william.moomaw.ctr@eglin.af.mil) retired from the United States Air Force in 1993 after 26 years of active service. He holds a Doctorate of Education in Educational Leadership from the University of West Florida (UWF) and is currently President of Priority One Services, Inc., providing logistics support to the Air Force Research Laboratory Munitions Directorate at Eglin AFB, FL.



## Child Poverty and the Canadian Welfare State: From Entitlement to Charity

*Shereen Ismael*

REVIEWED BY *Enid Elliot*  
University of Victoria, BC Canada

In 1989 there was a call to end child poverty in Canada by the year 2000. Anyone who works with families and children is aware that the call went unanswered and many children in Canada still live below the poverty level today. In *Child Poverty and the Canadian Welfare State: From Entitlement to Charity*, Ismael offers some answers for the child poverty levels remaining the same or higher. Through an analysis of the growth and decline of the welfare state she suggests that 1989 was a turning point for Canada's welfare state. In her preface she laments the demise of social policy that was aimed at reducing some of the social injustices created by income inequality.

As an early childhood educator this book led me through a discussion of social policy and the accompanying discourses that was intriguing, if somewhat unfamiliar. Reminding us that facts are not neutral and discourses shape attitudes towards an issue, Ismael's subtitle *From Entitlement to Charity* articulates her view of the switch in public attitude towards people living with poverty. Leading the reader through a discussion of the changing policies and shifting attitudes towards poverty from the time of the Great Depression and the aftermath of World War II to the present she grounds her analysis in an intellectual history of the welfare state.

The very phrase *child poverty* narrows and shifts our attention away from poverty as an issue that affects more than children; poverty affects whole families and communities and their ability to care for their children. Ismael takes us from the earlier discourse that structures poverty as a "systemic problem of income distribution" to the present discourse of "deprived children". The welfare state that created the Family Allowance Act of 1944 and the

---

Old Age Security Act of 1951 becomes the residual state that shifts the responsibility for social programs to the provinces and launches the Voluntary Sector Initiative, in order to encourage voluntarism in place of the social safety net. As Ismael says “The welfare state was born in the mid twentieth century as an instrument of social reform to make capitalism more humane...now social policy is an instrument for increasing labour force participation” (p. ix).

After World War II, the state accepted some responsibility to support people who were less fortunate by providing cushions for social security. Ismael claims there has been a shift from state responsibility to individual responsibility. Poverty has become the fault of the poor who don’t have jobs or, if they do, don’t work hard enough (despite statistics to the contrary). Child poverty is now the focus, making sure that children will be able to become productive members of the labour force, overcoming the obstacle of poverty. Presently we often find child poverty is couched in terms of vulnerability and child development.

Frustrated with the wave of testing for school readiness, I was particularly interested in the link to child development. The reframing of the inequities of child poverty to “vulnerable at-risk children,” unable to compete in labour force, and the subsequent targeting of poor children for intervention programs reflects a trend we see here and in the USA. Rather than providing early childhood services as a necessary public good, as recommended by the OECD review (2001), services are provided for children who are deemed not ready for kindergarten, often another way of saying poor children.

This is an interesting book for anyone interested in social policy and the discourses that justify and support policy decisions. Focused on early childhood, *Child Poverty and the Canadian Welfare State* is also of interest to advocates for early childhood with her examination of the complex relationship between the social problem of child poverty and federal and provincial social policies. I have a hope that we can move beyond the image of children as “at risk and vulnerable” to “entitled” to the supports needed for a full, rich life.

---

Enid Elliot [eelliot@uvic.ca](mailto:eelliot@uvic.ca) has worked as an early childhood educator for many years. Her doctoral work is in infants and toddlers. Her book, *We're Not Robots: The Voices of Daycare Providers*, SUNY Press, came out last year. At present she is

---

working with the School of Child and Youth Care at University of Victoria and doing community work to advocate for a Canadian early childhood system.

*Child Poverty and the Canadian Welfare State:*

*From Entitlement to Charity*

The University of Alberta Press

2006

128 pp.

ISBN: 0-88864-461-26





## **Race in Play: Understanding the Socio-Cultural Worlds of Student Athletes**

*Carl E. James*

REVIEWED BY *Larena Hoerber*  
University of Regina, Regina, SK Canada

The purpose of James' book is to study "the role played by race in the schooling experiences of student athletes in Canadian schools, with particular reference to schools in the metropolitan Toronto area" (p. 2). While race is a primary focus, James highlighted the interconnectedness of race and ethnicity with gender and social class. His book is based on his 20 years of experience of working with and studying racial minorities in Canada and their experiences as students and athletes. He was a neighbourhood youth worker in Toronto, is a parent of a student athlete, and a professor in the Faculty of Education at York University.

This book is intended for an academic audience. Students and researchers in the fields of kinesiology, sociology of sport, physical education, pedagogy, and educational administration would find this book useful. It could be used as a required reading for upper-year undergraduate or graduate courses on race and sport/physical activity, physical education, coaching, pedagogy, teacher training, or policy development for high schools. It could be supplementary reading for introductory courses on sociology of sport and physical activity and physical education.

Excluding the introduction and conclusion, this book consists of seven chapters. The first chapter centres on the influence of sports on the career and educational plans of a group of Grade 8 students in Toronto. In Chapter 2, James explores the role of race and ethnicity on the worlds of high school student athletes. Chapter 3 focuses on the lure of athletic scholarships for universities in the United States for male, Canadian high school basketball players. In Chapter 4, James discusses the schooling experiences of one female athlete (now a professional basketball player). The focus of Chapter

---

5 is on the consequences of unrealized dreams and plans of student athletes, and some of the challenges with their transition in identity after high school. The last two chapters (six and seven) explore the roles that coaches and parents play in the lives of high school student athletes.

The author draws upon a variety of primary and secondary sources to illustrate the social worlds of Canadian high school student athletes. James interviewed - at times with the support of research assistants - elementary and high school student athletes, former high school student athletes, coaches, educators, and parents. He collected newspaper articles written about high school athletes in the Toronto area, and drew from books and magazines, such as *Sports Illustrated*. In addition, he used e-mail communications and individual reflections to develop his arguments. His use of data from a variety of sources provided rich and multiple perspectives of the sociocultural worlds of student athletes. While not a significant concern, most of the chapters rely on different data sets. For example, the chapter on the high school experiences of a female basketball player uses a life history approach. Other chapters, for example Chapters 1 and 3, were based on interviews with groups of high school athletes. This lack of consistency of approaches could be interpreted that the author's use of various data sets was based on convenience, rather than purposeful or unique to the particular aim.

James' book fills a considerable gap in the knowledge of the high school student athletes (Coakley & Donnelly, 2004). Although the social, athletic, and educational lives of student athletes at the university level in the United States have been studied for many years (e.g., Adler & Adler, 1985; Eitzen, 1987; Harrison & Lawrence, 2003, to name a few studies), there has been little research of high school student athletes, particularly in the Canadian context. This is a significant oversight in part because the population of high school student athletes is much larger than at the university level. As well, his discussion of the lives of Canadian high school student athletes draws the reader's attention to the perceived difference in value of Canadian and American university athletic departments. Canadian high school basketball players dream of 'going south,' not staying in Canada, which suggests there are differences in their opportunities and careers, as well as the environments in which they practice, compete and study.

As stated earlier, James' primary objective is to study the relationship between race and school experiences in Canadian high

---

school student athletes. Specifically, he is interested in the schooling experiences, athletic participation and academic achievements of marginalized students (primarily Black students) and dominant students (White students). James does a good job of examining race and ethnicity as it relates to the schooling and athletic experiences of male student athletes within schools. He notes that when he mentioned to others that he was writing a book on race, school and sport, people assumed it was about Black student athletes. While he does investigate the experiences of some White students and some marginalized students of South Asian, Asian, and Indo-Canadian descent, much of his attention is directed towards the lives of Black (African-Canadian and African-Caribbean Canadian) student athletes. I do not fault James for his emphasis on the lives of Black student athletes but, given the multiculturalism of Canadian society, I was expecting a balanced or diverse coverage of the topic. Specifically, with the growing Aboriginal population in many Canadian provinces, I was hoping that James would examine the lives of Aboriginal student athletes in high schools.

Overall, I found this to be an interesting and stimulating book. As a White female who attended an urban, Canadian high school and who participated in high school sports, I can relate to the many themes discussed in the book (e.g., unrealized careers as an athlete; stereotyping of sport participation based on race, ethnicity, and gender; relationships with coaches and parents). As a university professor who teaches an introductory course on sociology of sport and physical activity, I appreciate his critical approach to the study of the lives of high school student athletes. He nicely illustrates the complexity of the lives of these high school student athletes, where race, ethnicity, gender, and social class intersect. I will likely draw upon his book to illustrate race and ethnicity, social class, social mobility within the sports world, and to highlight the relationship between education and sport in my class. Having said that, I have two major concerns with the book. One concern is his conceptualization of race and ethnicity; the second is his discussion of gender relating to student athletes.

The book is centred on race and ethnicity, yet James does not provide a clear distinction between these two concepts. In my introductory course on sociology of sport and physical activity, I spend time discussing the distinction between *race* and *ethnicity*, as well as problematizing the concept of race. It is commonly understood that race is based on biological characteristics (e.g., skin

---

colour, eye shape, hair type), while ethnicity pertains to one's cultural background (e.g., food, dress, music, traditions). This is an important distinction to make because many people use the term *race* to describe lifestyle, traditions, and social groups, when ethnicity is more appropriate. Additionally, the concept of race is problematic in that it is difficult to determine. James often talks about Black student athletes, but when is someone labeled as Black? When is one considered a White student athlete? James appears to be using race most often because of the 'race culture discourse' in which race is highlighted because of its visibility in our society. This is a reasonable explanation; however, given his mandate to illustrate race/ethnicity in a critical light, I was expecting him to discuss the problems using race as a conceptual framework. Without this discussion, it appears that James is falling into the trap of using race because it is an easy and simple way to categorize individuals.

I was disappointed that the majority of the book was on male athletes. There was one chapter devoted to the experiences of a female athlete and he does speak to the experiences of a few other girls / women in the other chapters, but their stories get lost in his discussion of the lives of male high school student athletes. I am particularly surprised by this approach, because it perpetuates the ideas that sports are a man's world and that there are few opportunities for female students to participate in sport. The reality is that in many, if not most, high schools across Canada, girls have similar opportunities to participate in competitive sports. This situation is not reflected in his book.

James challenges the assumption that Black student athletes have a race, while White student athletes do not. However, in his discussion of gender, he implies that female student athletes have a gender and their experiences are gendered, but male student athletes do not. Although the entire book considers the impact of gender (in conjunction with race), yet when specifically focusing on women's experiences, he uses the term 'gendered experience'. The title of this chapter is "the gendered experiences of female students in sports". His lack of discussion of male students implies that they do not have gendered experiences. A poststructuralist feminist, like myself, would argue that while it is important to shed light on the experiences of female student athletes, because they are often overlooked in sports studies, it is equally important to acknowledge the gendered experiences of male student athletes. I also found it curious that in the previous two chapters James uses the term

---

*student athletes* primarily in relation to men. Yet in Chapter 4 on women in sport, he uses the term *students in sport*. Why the difference? Is he emphasizing the student first because women have few opportunities in sports? This may be an oversight on James' part, but it implicitly reinforces assumptions embedded in discourses related to sports and gender.

*Race in Play* provides a critical and insightful look at the experiences of high school student athletes. It illustrates the connectedness of race, ethnicity, gender, social class, and physical ability. I would recommend this book for undergraduate and graduate students in education and kinesiology as many of them would find it as an engaging read and a useful starting point for entering into discussions of sport, race, and education.

### References

- Adler, P., & Adler, P.A. (1985). From idealism to pragmatic detachment: The academic preference of college athletes. *Sociology of Education*, 58, 241-250.
- Coakley, J., & Donnelly, P. (2004). *Sports in society: Issues and controversies* (1<sup>st</sup> Canadian ed.). Toronto, ON: McGraw-Hill Ryerson.
- Eitzen, D.S. (1987). The educational experiences of intercollegiate student-athletes. *Journal of Sport & Social Issues*, 11, 15-30.
- Harrison, C.K., & Lawrence, S.M. (2003). African American student athletes' perceptions of career transition in sport: A qualitative and visual elicitation. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, 6(4), 373-394.

---

Larena Hoerber [larena.hoerber@uregina.ca](mailto:larena.hoerber@uregina.ca) is currently an Associate Professor in the Faculty of Kinesiology and Health Studies at the University of Regina. She teaches in the areas of sport management and sociology of sport. Her research interests include organizational culture and values, gender equity in sport, and amateur sport.

*Race in Play: Understanding the Socio-Cultural Worlds of Student Athletes*  
Canadian Scholars' Press, Toronto, ON  
2005  
244 pp  
ISBN: 1-55130-273-X



---

---

## A History of Education in Saskatchewan: Selected Readings

*Brian Noonan, Dianne Hallman, Murray Scharf*

REVIEWED BY *Mike Cappello*

University of Regina, Regina, SK Canada

*A History of Education in Saskatchewan* (2006) is an edited volume that originated in a series of papers presented at a University of Saskatchewan conference held in 1997 to celebrate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the College of Education. Although it does not pretend to be comprehensive in its presentation of history, the professors, teachers, administrators and activists contributing as authors present different perspectives on the history of schooling in the province, allowing for a wide swath of that history to be made available. This volume addresses a large absence in the published history of Canadian education by including the history of the development of education in Saskatchewan.

It is important to note from the beginning: this is a book where administration and policy are made most prevalent. It is not a history from below; the figures represented are largely governmental or administrative. Three chapters stand out as more local in scope: the creation and success of the Bergthaler Mennonite community's Valley Christian Academy (Chapter 7); Annie Hollis and her work educating/organizing farm women within the Farm Movement (Chapter 9); and a look at the conditions for rural women teachers (an interesting account of interviews with women who taught between the 1920s and the 1940s) (Chapter 12). Exceptions notwithstanding, the volume is largely concerned with following the people who made education policy, the changes to that policy, and the effects of the implementation of change. This is not necessarily a negative, but sheds some light on the choice of topics and the details elaborated on throughout the chapters.

The book is loosely organized around three major themes: Building the State; Education and Culture; and Teachers and Teaching. Section One - Building the State - includes a broad historical overview covering the history of the changing organization of education, a description of the history/necessity of

separate religious schooling in the province, an examination of the reorganization of school divisions from 1935-1950 (prefiguring present day amalgamations), and a chapter on Henry Janzen and his role in the collaborative development of curriculum. Section Two - Education and Culture - is a little wider in scope, offering insight into the connections/tensions between schooling and culture broadly understood. Two of the more critical chapters in the book are here, one looking at the schooling of First Nation and Métis children and one examining the history of Francophone resistance to the hegemony of Anglophone language and culture. The chapters on the Valley Christian Academy and Annie Hollis are also here. Section Three - Teachers and Teaching - includes chapters on the development of the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, two chapters on the contributions and lives of women teachers in the province, and a chapter exploring the history of special education.

Because there is little in print that describes the development of education in Saskatchewan, these chapters represent an important contribution. More than telling untold stories however, there are a number of significant moments that constitute valuable additions to wider conversations in education. Two such contributions merit mention. First, the story of Henry Janzen and his approach to curriculum reform as the province's Director of Curriculum (starting in 1942) is important. The development of his summer courses, where teachers gathered to spend 6 weeks "Reading, thinking, talking about, expanding upon, critiquing and writing curriculum," (55) remains a creative, collaborative and grass-roots example of how teachers in the field might be involved in the development of new initiatives in curricula. Perhaps more significantly, it is recognition of the necessary connection between teachers' involvement in curricula and their own professional development. Rather than merely learning how to use/deliver particular curricular material purchased from afar, it is the teachers themselves, attendant to place and need, who produce meaningful and useful materials. This is the opposite of a teacher proof curriculum. It is important that this volume ends with a chapter looking at the most recent rounds of provincial curriculum reform and the development of the Core Curriculum.

The second contribution builds off the first, and is included as nuance in more than one chapter. The development of the teaching profession in the province, and the relationship of that profession with the various governmental hierarchies comes across as refreshingly mutual. Both sides have a stake in the education of

---

children, and the requirement of mutuality, respect and colabour is apparent. Whether it is the STF's "acceptance of responsibility to serve the public interest as well as its members" (175) or relationships that have emerged between the department of education (now Saskatchewan Learning), the teachers federation and the school boards association, the threads of political partnerships that are woven throughout the book speak to the relatively stable and relatively friendly professional atmosphere that has been created in the province. Given the present climate of governmental relations with teachers across the country, this history of collaboration and mutual involvement represents a refreshing and important model. *A History of Education in Saskatchewan* is to be commended for its engaging readability in bringing these histories to the public mind.

The book itself is quick to point out that it cannot cover the history of education in Saskatchewan in any kind of definitive way. It would be unfair to highlight aspects of history that have been overlooked; however, there is one element that is striking because of its absence. The account of the history of education offered demonstrates a glaring lack of engagement/accounting for the colonial history of the province. The first chapter, offering the most comprehensive historical overview, fails to name and account for both the colonial imperative and the deep ways in which this mentality, this particular view of the world, formed and shaped the foundations of education. This overview is the first chapter of the book and of the section entitled 'Building the State.' In my opinion, it is misleading to refer to 'the state' without necessary and constituent references to the colonial project that underpinned and necessitated its building.

The introduction to the book states that the, "colonial aspects of Canada's educational systems continue to shape contemporary schooling." This important idea is not elaborated on in connection with the historical overview; as the introduction maintains, "the legacy of that colonial approach is best illustrated" in the history of First Nations and Métis education. Thus, Catherine Littlejohn's work (Chapter 6) is made to bear the entire weight of addressing colonialism. The effect here is to present colonialism as a problem for Aboriginal people without any accounting for the concomitant privileging of the White settler society. Colonialism, as policy and worldview, is moved out of consideration as part of state-building and moved into a consideration of education and culture, thus

---



limiting both the scope of its effects and the means through which to address its differential outcomes.

It is unfortunate that even in 2006, leading educational historians in this province seem unwilling to frame the early history of schools within a well-documented colonial framework. Ignoring the colonial history limits the scope of the 'sense-making' that might be made available to practitioners through their reading of this material. The hidden agenda of Whiteness, reified in and through schools remains hidden in the shadows. This lack of criticality may limit the usefulness of the book, especially to educators and administrators who are attempting to deal with the effects of the 'histories' in this volume. Clearly, *A History of Education in Saskatchewan* is an important beginning, offering historical moments for consideration by a broader public. It is also an example of the fixing of particular constructions of history. Although this construction can never be avoided, it is necessary to critically engage with the content and resist simple/obvious readings that might not address issues of dominance.

---

Michael Cappello [cappello@uregina.ca](mailto:cappello@uregina.ca) is a PhD student working in the Faculty of Education at the University of Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada S4S 0A2.

*A History of Education in Saskatchewan: Selected Readings*  
University of Regina, Canadian Plains Research Centre  
2006  
235 pp + viii  
ISBN 0-88977-190-1



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Mailing Address: \_\_\_\_\_

---

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_ Facsimile: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

**In Canada**

Individual Subscription (1 year) \$20.00 (CN) \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Subscription (2 years) \$38.00 (CN) \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Subscription (1 year) \$25.00 (CN) \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Subscription (2 years) \$48.00 (CN) \_\_\_\_\_

**Outside Canada**

Individual Subscription (1 year) \$20.00 (US) \_\_\_\_\_

Individual Subscription (2 years) \$38.00 (US) \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Subscription (1 year) \$25.00 (US) \_\_\_\_\_

Institutional Subscription (2 years) \$48.00 (US) \_\_\_\_\_

Make cheques payable to  
*Policy and Practice in Education*

Back issues are \$20.00 each. Please contact the Editorial Assistant regarding availability.

**Mail to:** *Policy and Practice in Education*  
ED Room 220.4  
Faculty of Education  
University of Regina  
Regina, SK S4S 0A2

Further information may be obtained by contacting the Editorial Assistant, Juanita Duncan <juanita.duncan@uregina.ca>.

---

## Notes to Contributors

Authors are informed when manuscripts and disks are received. Each manuscript is previewed prior to distribution to appropriate reviewers. Manuscripts are anonymously reviewed. Once all reviews are returned, a decision is made and the author is notified. To expedite matters, it is important for authors to provide a complete postal address, office and home phone numbers and, if possible, a facsimile number and e-mail address. The *Journal* reserves the right to make changes in manuscripts to improve clarity, to conform to style, to correct grammar and spelling, and to fit available space. Manuscripts should be original material and should not be currently under consideration by other journals.

- **Copyright.** Accepted manuscripts remain the copyright of the author(s), unless otherwise specifically agreed.
- **Author anonymity in manuscript.** Authors must avoid any reference in the text that may reveal their identity(ies) to our anonymous reviewers.
- **Length.** The manuscript, including all references, tables, charts or figures should be between 15 to 20 pages and must be numbered. Figures should be included, on separate pages, at the end of the text.
- **Typing.** Double-space all text, use 1 inch margins all around, left justify.
- **Style.** For writing and editorial style, follow the *Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association* (2001, 5<sup>th</sup> ed.). References should also follow *APA* style and avoid discriminatory language.
- **Abstract.** In 50 to 75 words, describe the essence of the manuscript. Double-space on a separate sheet, and place it at the beginning of the manuscript. Do not include your name or any other identifying information with the abstract.
- **Cover Page.** Include the following: title of the manuscript, date of submission, author's name, title, mailing address, business and home telephone numbers, facsimile number, and e-mail address. Please provide a brief biographical sketch and acknowledge if the article was presented as a paper or if it reports a funded research project.
- **Multiple-authored manuscripts.** The designated contact will check the Printer's Proof, will do all correspondence, and will receive a copy of the issue in which the manuscript is published.
- **Program Format.** Microsoft Word or .rtf files from an IBM computer.
- **Form.** Hard copies required: 4 hard copies of the manuscript, complete with a cover page, abstract, and biography(ies) mailed to: Juanita Modeland, ED Room 220.4, Faculty of Education, University of Regina, Regina, SK S4S 0A2; Telephone: (306) 585-5142; Fax: (306) 585-4880. As well, a copy of the manuscript can (a) be included on an IBM computer disk **or** (b) e-mailed as a Word .rtf file to <juanita.duncan@uregina.ca>.

## CONTENTS

<b>ABSTRACTS</b> .....	3
<b>EDITORIAL</b> .....	5
Patrick Lewis and James McNinch	
<b>ARTICLES</b>	
<i>Apprenticeships in Critical Literacy: Conversations With Preservice Teachers</i> .....	
Angela Ward and Sara Ann Beach	
<i>Special Educators' Experiences Implementing a "Scientifically Based" Remedial Reading Program: All That Glitters Is Not Gold</i> .....	
Arlene Grierson, Tiffany Gallagher, Vera Woloshyn	
<i>Reflections on Situated Knowledge and Education of Self: Implications for Researching Practice and Policy</i> .....	
Carolyn Fleiger	
<i>The Prediction of Teacher Autonomy from Levels of Stress, Work Satisfaction, Empowerment and Professionalism</i> .....	
Carolyn Pearson, John Burgin, Sharon Richardson, William Moomaw	
<b>REVIEWS</b>	
Ismael, S. (2006). <i>Child poverty and the Canadian welfare state: From entitlement to charity</i> . Edmonton, AB: University of Alberta Press.	
Reviewed by Enid Elliot.....	
James, C. E. (2005). <i>Race in play: Understanding the socio-cultural worlds of student athletes</i> . Toronto, ON: Canadian Scholars' Press.	
Reviewed by Larena Hoeber .....	
Noonan, B., Hallman, D., & Scharf, M. (2006) <i>A history of education in Saskatchewan: Selected readings</i> . Regina, SK: University of Regina, Canadian Plains Research Centre.	
Reviewed by Michael Cappello.....	
Subscription Application .....	96
Notes to Contributors .....	inside back cover

ISSN 1708-2749

