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**Poverty and Inner City Education: Community Economic Development at the Local
School Level**

University of Manitoba

**Doctoral thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of requirements for Ph. D. Program
in Educational Administration**

Department of Educational Administration, Foundations, and Psychology

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**POVERTY AND INNER CITY EDUCATION: COMMUNITY ECONOMIC
DEVELOPMENT AT THE LOCAL SCHOOL LEVEL**

BY

HEATHER HUNTER

**A Thesis/Practicum submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies of The University
of Manitoba in partial fulfillment of the requirements of the degree
of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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And, thank you to my family, to Steve and Stepheny.

But, especially, thanks to Ben.

Abstract

Poverty is a root problem in public education. When primary needs of children are not met due to root causes of poverty, children experience difficulty in school. This is most notable in inner city communities where poverty rates are highest. In the face of poverty, inner city schools appear unsuccessful with efforts to make the processes of schooling work as well for poor children as for those who are not poor. This study of poverty and inner city education asks what can an inner city school do to counter the negative effects of poverty on learning? Given that poverty is systemic, to what extent can education be an instrument for social and economic change?

The first part of this study is a conceptual analysis of inner city education. Political economy provides the theoretical framework for understanding the structural role of schools in sustaining unequal social and economic conditions. Stemming from this analysis, critical theory is applied to the notion that community economic development might occur at the local school is considered. Community-based schooling is conceived as alternate educational practice to counter poverty effects through structural change at the local school and neighbourhood levels.

Identified within this analysis is the role for critical educational leadership to meet the challenge of finding ways to make a difference in the lives of children. Through formal

research and practical inquiry, evidence of this difference could then be shared so others might be more encouraged to join in transforming practice in inner city communities.

The latter part of this study is an account of how this critical perspective was applied to practice efforts at William Whyte Community School located in Winnipeg's inner city. In this section, community-based schooling is described as alternative educational practice that recognize and supports both individual and capacities in order to create and sustain opportunities for individual growth and community development.

The study concludes with consideration of the research and policy implications for inner city education if community economic development strategies are to be implemented at the local school level through the practice of community-based schooling.

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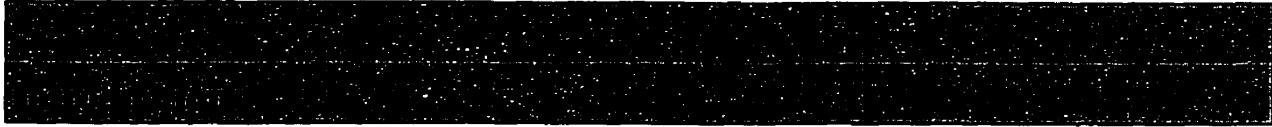
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“This House...seek(s) to achieve the goal of eliminating poverty among Canadian children by the year 2000.”

**Unanimously passed resolution of the Canadian House of Commons,
November 24, 1989**

Nearly a decade later, ONE IN FIVE children in Canada lives in poverty - an increase of 564,000 children since 1998.

National Report Card 1998: Campaign 2000.

Toronto Family Service Association, 1998

The majority of Canadians believe the country's poor became that way through no fault of their own, and that governments are not doing enough to help them . . . 51 per cent of Canadians believe people become poor because of circumstances beyond their control.

“Poor Get Shortchanged, Canadians Tell Poll”

The Globe and Mail, December 18, 1999

Poverty and Schooling

Poverty is a fundamental problem in public education. In Winnipeg's inner city, schools encounter abject poverty that presents daunting challenges and barriers to teaching and learning. Working and learning together at the local school level, teachers are to educate children, to extend learning experiences to include families, to build on rich diversity, to respect both the cultural and the community contexts of inner city neighbourhood life. Notable among those working in inner city schools is a willingness to go beyond the mandate of public education to contribute in whatever ways may be helpful to family and community life. But always poverty has an opposite effect whereby the things we wanted most from education are least likely to be found where people are the poorest (Levin, 1995).

Despite determination on the part of teachers and parents, conditions of poverty have worsened in Winnipeg and continue to impact in negative ways on school and life experiences for children. Manitoba has one of the highest rates of child poverty in Canada. Babies born to poor families have twice the rate of infant mortality and disability as children living in affluent families. In Manitoba, the child mortality rate in the Aboriginal population is several times higher than that in the population as a whole. According to Statistics Canada, the rate of child poverty grew in Manitoba from 21.2% in 1989 to 26.6% in 1996. This gives Manitoba a rate of child poverty that is the highest in Canada at 5.5 percentage points higher than the national average (Chernomas, 1999; Canadian Centre For Policy Alternatives, 1999; Silver, 2000).

Poor people face severe deprivation that is not of their making. "Assets of the world's leading 358 billionaires exceed the combined annual incomes of approximately half the population of the globe. The war on poverty has given way to the war on the poverty-stricken -- a war that is about as mean-spirited as it gets" (McLaren, 1997, 3). Contrary to assumptions held by some, the poor are not to blame (Ryan, 1972; Freire, 1995; Barlow and Robertson, 1994).

Poverty understood this way allows for common sense reaction -- there should be a job for schools to help out, to challenge and change, in some ways, conditions that so affect children's lives and learning. For instance, while economic and social structures other than schools are influential in either increasing or diminishing poverty, Levin states that schools can do some things to counteract their influences. Students can be successful in school despite the odds against if emphasis is placed on improved instruction, pre-school education, and school linkages with parents and community (Levin, 1995). Epstein claims that when schools, families, and communities work together, students' chances for success increase (Epstein, 1997).

Ziegler cites early intervention efforts at the preschool and kindergarten levels have resulted in children making significantly higher learning gains. These gains diminish through the school years if interventions are not sustained and supported through the grades (Ziegler, 1999). Ziegler credits the long-term follow-up done in the Perry Preschool and the Abecedarian program, as the reason for sustained positive results for children who participated in these programs. Early intervention programs that do not go beyond the preschool experience and kindergarten/grade one years show that, a few years after the intervention, performance rates are indistinguishable between the children who had participated in a program and the children who had not. Ziegler uses the findings

from Headstart by way of example:

The Headstart preschool program, which has involved and continues to involve millions of children, has had mixed success. It typically produces significant learning progress while children attend, and these learning gains are maintained for at least the first year of school. After that, they gradually but continuously diminish, until by grade 3 or 4 the Headstart children are indistinguishable, academically, from children like themselves who were not involved in Headstart.

(Ziegler, 1999, 6)

Walker and Hackmann argue teachers and administrators know that children's basic health and social service needs must first be resolved before the learning needs of high risk children may be addressed successfully. They cite the need for school officials to reach out to other agencies that serve children and actively seek ways to collaborate and share resources (Walker and Hackmann, 1999). Maeroff claims that current efforts on behalf of children in need are distinguished from compensatory education of earlier times when these efforts confront disadvantage on a wider, more comprehensive front (Maeroff, 1998).

In particular, Maeroff highlights early intervention programs with extended follow-up as being more comprehensive in approach. This seems to influence improved results:

The Headstart results, which have been common knowledge for many years, clearly indicate the necessity of follow-up in the primary grades at least, in order to sustain academic gains of preschool programs. Elementary school programs designed to support early learning gains in at-risk children can include all children

in a neighbourhood school, and this has been particularly important in inner city and other disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

(Ziegler, 1999, 6)

These findings are encouraging, of course, yet they lead to difficult questions. Why has there been so little ground gained in helping children from poor families to experience academic success in ways consistent with those who are not poor? What else needs to change? How can the theoretical constructs relevant to the study of schooling be expanded to challenge existing structures of power and economic arrangements and to change unequal conditions that directly affect children's lives?

Statistics continue to confirm what is obvious to those who live and work in the inner city. With poverty increasing, a change in strategy, an alternate approach appears to be needed. Such alternate strategies for schools could well include the construction of solutions to poverty issues as they may be considered to be economic problems. These initiatives, or tactics, would then broaden the usual social context for poverty issues to reflect a political economic context.

These approaches to poverty and inner city education would be influenced by the belief that people should participate in their own development and that education is for empowerment (Horton and Freire, 1990). Such alternate approaches realistically would not suggest revolutionary change but could very well imply evolutionary strategy. School change at the local level to involve individuals in their own development upholds the notion of the individual within the social being:

. . . real liberation is achieved through popular participation. Participation in turn is realized through an educational practice that itself is both liberatory and participatory, that simultaneously creates a new society and involves the people themselves in the creation of their own knowledge.

(Horton and Freire, 1990, xxx)

While inner city schools respond to individual learner needs, these initiatives are in reaction to the obligations for educational practice in the short term. Even though poverty is commonly acknowledged as a concerning problem, most school improvement initiatives target student achievement in terms of attainment of curriculum outcomes. Examples of school-based initiatives include “quality schools” (Barlosky and Lawton, 1994), “blueprint for schools that work” (Darling-Hammond, 1997), and “best practice” (Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde, 1993). These innovations generally focus on improving the existing school organization or modifying instructional practice to benefit the student.

Macedo describes curriculum-based efforts such as instrumental literacy programs for the poor as characterized by competency-based skills approaches with meaningless drills and exercises. He argues that these initiatives are very comparable to opportunities for advantaged students in universities in that they both prevent the development of critical thinking. He claims that schools are not failing when the majority of people are not meant to have access to political and economic spheres (Macedo, 1996).

When conventional schooling structures remain in place, any transformation resulting from these initiatives is at the student level and change is of the individual, not collective,

sort. Long-term commitments to social change could position inner city schools to address structural problems as well as supplying personal solutions. With this dimension missing from educational practice, the issues and concerns of economically disadvantaged communities remain unresolved. The harsh economic realities faced by families in the inner city stay as a root problem.

Examined in this study is the potential for the local school to make a positive difference in the lives of children and families living in poverty in the inner city of Winnipeg. In inner city education, community-based schooling is conceived as an approach to school change that could challenge existing unequal economic arrangements by employing alternate strategies at the local school level. Underpinning this challenge, of course, is the larger will to change the world to fit our vision of how it should be rather than accept what is (Whitehead, 1929).

Poverty is not just a matter of hard luck or misfortune. Poverty is a result of existing economic arrangements. Social institutions like schools are structured in ways that contribute to maintaining unequal circumstances. Yet, this structural role that schools have suggests that schools might well be positive sites, used differently, to redress systemic problems of poverty.

Poverty Underperceived

It seems that poverty goes unnoticed, unrecognized in much of the discussion of school improvement and change. Media headlines call attention to the places where inner city

children and families live using labels such as “hell’s half acre” or “the war zone”.

Poverty is like a bomb being dropped. In the absence of crisis response, the day to day realities represent social fallout that hurts children and families in lasting ways.

Some scholarly work is drawing attention to these concerns. Greene challenges what she refers to as an institutional response of schools to poverty-related issues. She claims that while we cannot negate the fact of power, “we can undertake a resistance, a reaching out towards becoming persons among other persons, for all the talk of human resources, for all the orienting of education to the economy” (Greene, 1996, 29).

Apple claims that school do work, for some, and he stresses that curriculum issues need to be recognized and confronted as they are ideologically grounded (Apple, 1990).

I cannot accept a society in which one out of every five children is born in poverty, a condition worsening everyday. Nor can I accept as legitimate a definition of education in which our tasks is to prepare children to function easily in the “business” of that society. A nation is not a firm. A school is not part of that firm efficiently churning out “human capital” required to run it. We do damage to the very sense of common good to even think of the human drama in these terms. It is demeaning to teachers and creates a schooling process that remains unconnected to the lives of so many children.

(Apple, 1990, xiv)

Chambers characterizes poverty as underperceived when outsiders, those not living in

poverty, hold biases against contact with and learning from poorer people. With outsiders holding much in common by virtue of being relatively better off, Chambers questions why, as a class, the better off do not do more to help those who are poor.

The puzzle is that we, the people of this class, do not do more. If any of us had a sick or starving child in the room with us, we imagine that we would do something about it. A child crying from pain or hunger in a room is hard to shut out; it pins responsibility onto those present and demands, impels, action. Yet we live in a world where millions of children cry from avoidable hunger and pain every day, where we can do something about it, and where for the most part we do little. There are some exceptions: they include those who live with, work with, and learn with the poorer rural people. A very few have chosen to reject the privileges of our class for themselves and their children and live lives which reflect their convictions. Yet most of us manage to evade those choices. What is the difference between the room and the world? Why do we do so much less than we could?

(Chambers, 1983,3)

Poverty is concentrated in the inner city in areas that can be avoided by most of the people in political or corporate positions to make a difference through policy or practice. "But account has to be taken of the age-old motive for human action, *fear of involvement*. Time does not change human behavior so very much, and still today what might be unpleasant or personally demanding but is not actually seen, is often ignored " (Haswell, 1975, 214, italics in original text).

Whether it is that poverty is unperceived or a result of structural inequality, or both, there is growing recognition that education plays a role in sustaining the gap between rich and poor. In education, ideas concerning class and culture extend beyond curriculum inquiry to acknowledge a revolution of values and a building knowledge base resulting from critical educational research (Gitlin, 1994; hooks, 1996).

What is written here intends to affirm the ideas into actions taken by many people with whom I have shared the struggle to find ways to reduce the negative impact of poverty on human lives. In Winnipeg's inner city, the hard work of so many educators goes relatively unnoticed. Like poverty itself, in absence of experience, it easily goes unrecognized.

Poverty Effects on Learning

For the most part, there is common ground amongst academics and practitioners around the notion that poverty negatively affects learning (Coleman, 1969; Cole 1997; Kozol, 1991). There is extensive educational research on the impact of poverty on schooling particularly as referenced to issues of race, of gender, and class (Fine, 1994; hooks, 1994; Apple, 1990).

Cited below are research findings from a 1999 study on poverty conducted by the Canadian School Boards' Association:

The effects of poverty on education include:

- food deprivation that influences daily concentration and learning
- inadequate nutrition that can affect the long-term development of the child
- inadequate adult supervision and child-care arrangements that limit learning experiences
- difficult behaviour in students
- low self-esteem and self-confidence due to feelings of lack of control, failure, discrimination, autocratic parenting styles, and lack of hygiene and material goods
- less stimulation resulting in less motivation to learn and delayed cognitive development
- illiteracy and lower achievement in school
- less participation in extracurricular activities
- streaming into basic and vocational classes
- interrupted school attendance, dropping out of high school, and lower university attendance.

Poverty Intervention Profile: Partners in Action

Canadian School Boards' Association, 1999

This list of outcomes is useful in that it highlights the extreme nature of poverty-related problems in educational terms. Yet, focusing attention only on that which is happening for the learner tends to describe poverty effects in simplistic terms to do with the good things poor children are not doing and the not good things that they are doing. It implies an abrogation of parental responsibility and leaves a vague sense that poor people are accountable for their lack of social and scholastic accomplishment.

Other educational research usefully distinguishes the connections between poverty and

lower rates of student achievement as linked to family income:

To help determine the impact of family income on outcomes for children, the Canadian Council in Social Development related 1994 incomes on two-parent families to outcomes measured on 27 health and achievement factors. Results showed definite gradients for annual incomes up to \$30,000.000, the lower the income the worse the outcome. For families above \$30,000.00 the trends were less consistent, but children from families with incomes exceeding \$80,000.00 generally fared best. Substantially worse behavioural outcomes were reported for children of single mothers.

(Chance, 2000, 5)

In the Montreal-Longitudinal Study of Preventative Intervention on Disruptive Kindergarten Boys, although demographics which considered economic criteria were not a factor for inclusion of participants in the study, findings related to the demographic information are significant in that the link between school readiness and family income is made clear. This kind of data expands the potential for study of outcomes beyond those that can be assigned to the learner. For example, from this data comes the question as to whether or not professional positions and salaries should continue to be increased. In the effort to respond to poverty-related circumstances for children, it appears that if this money were to be redirected to increase the economic advantage of poor families, there might be larger benefits (for this discussion, refer to Chapter 2):

The three groups of disruptive boys were compared with a population-based random sample of kindergarten boys in French public schools in the province of

Quebec, Canada in 1986-1987 (N=1000). Families participating in this study were found to be significantly more socioeconomically disadvantaged than the representative sample of their same sex peers, as the occupational socioeconomic status (SES) and level of education of both parents were consistently lower. Moreover, they were consistently younger at the birth of their son, and the total family income was lower. The average family income was between \$20,000 and \$25,000 for families of the disruptive boys compared with \$30,000 and \$35,000 for families from the population-based random sample.

(Tremblay and Pagani-Kurtz, 1995, 562)

Numerous examples of poverty effects on learning are found in the research conducted through the Centre for Positive Behaviour Support (Scott and Sugai, 1999). In these studies, poverty is cited as a major factor, along with below grade level skills, and a history of problem behaviours dating to pre-school. Scott and Sugai's study of children from families of differing income levels reveals that children from upper income families enter school having already been exposed to over 1000 hours of print experience. In comparison, children from lower income families have had only 40 hours of such exposure. This represents a ratio of 25:1 difference in children's experience in reading readiness prior to school entry in favour of those children coming from higher socioeconomic circumstances (Scott and Sugai, 1999). Also from the Centre for Positive Behavior a similar study shows there is a meaningful difference in the everyday experiences of children across socio-economic circumstances, across race, and across urban vs. rural life experience. Findings reveal that lower income families have fewer verbal exchanges. Communication that does occur between family members is usually shorter, using simpler or smaller words. Children from lower income families enter

school less ready for schooling and this creates difficulties that may be compounded in cases where the teachers are from middle or upper income family situations (Scott and Sugai, 1999).

Further, the common response to address the readiness needs of learners tend to be “booster shot” programs that target entry level programs, such as kindergarten, to enrich resources for literacy. Initiatives such as Headstart and Reading Recovery either fail to recognize or are without sufficient resources to provide the kind of learning needs related to poverty that requires ongoing and consistent attention throughout the grades. Inner city schools should be positioned to provide supports similar to the ways in which schools support special education students. A continuum of services and programs are appropriate since the differing circumstances of poverty continue for children throughout their preschool and school years and into young adult life (Scott and Sugai, 1999; Ziegler, 1999).

I asked four inner-city school principals how things in their school were different from schools in the wealthier districts in the city. They looked at each other, laughed for a moment, then began talking non-stop, frequently interrupting each other. In their schools the kids often came to school hungry. A great many were poorly dressed. In the winter few had adequate warm clothing. Many suffered severe emotional stress. There were no field trips. They couldn't afford to belong to the community leagues. No movies, no going to see hockey games. There were no computers in their homes. Few books. Some kids even came to school not knowing what a book is. In the summer there was no place to go. By

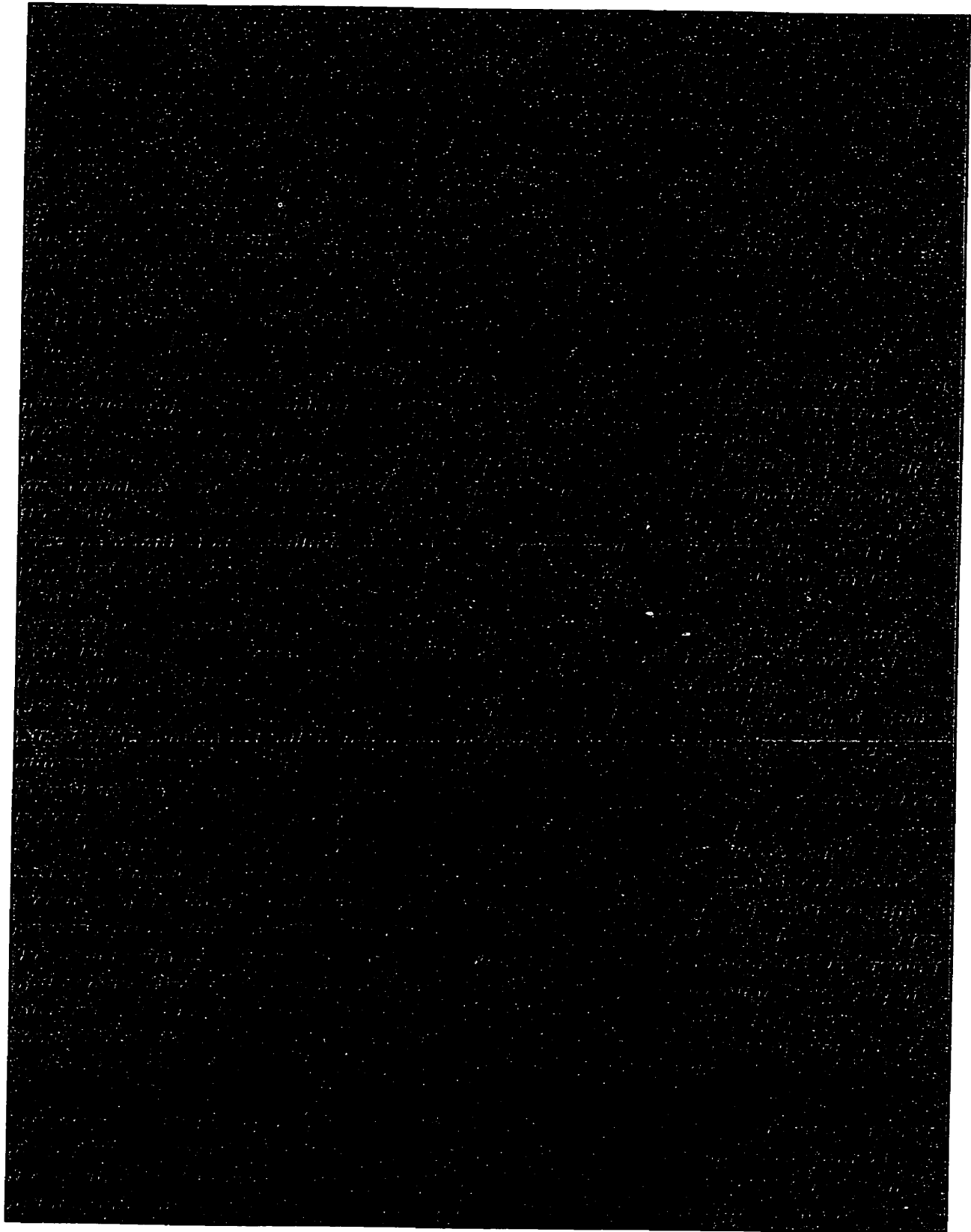
mid-June many of the children became distressed; without the school lunch program, what would they eat? The list went on and on. After about half an hour I asked them how many kids they had in their school, and how many played organized hockey. They answered quickly, one after the other: "240-none". "220-none". "306-one". "198-none".

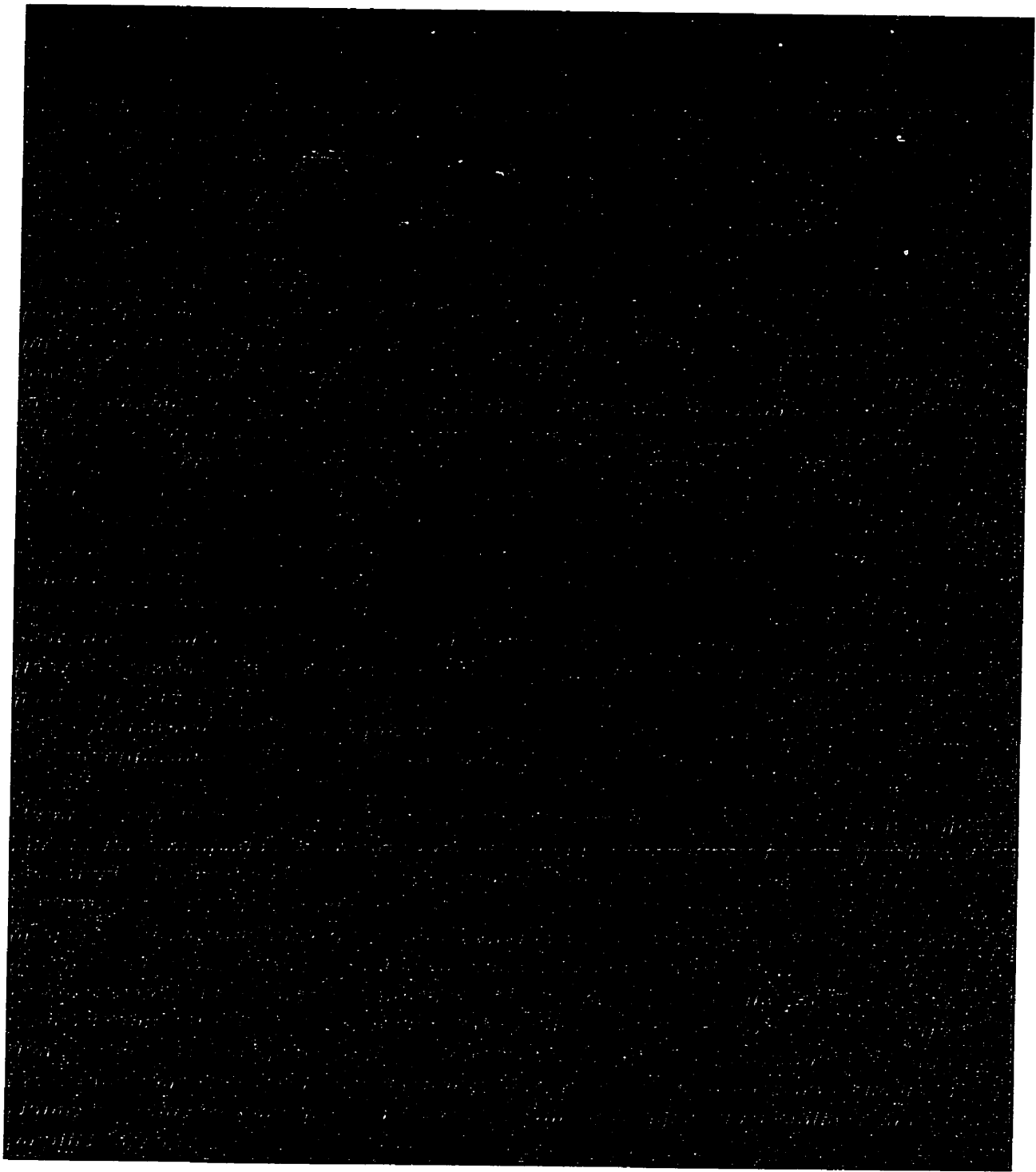
(Hurtig, 1999, 25)

The case made here is that for schools most affected by problems of poverty, it is helpful to consider alternate community-based economic solutions to support individual learner growth, and to strengthen family and community life in inner city neighbourhoods. The research goes beyond the conventional approaches to dealing with poverty (a review of these approaches is in Chapter 2), to consider how efforts at the local school may be organized to offset the barriers created by poverty.

Much of the discussion about the effects of poverty on the education of children gets stuck at the problem definition stage. Consider the potential, if the concern is about the role for inner city schools to counter these impacts, to use this debate as a takeoff point. Given that poverty presents problems that come largely from outside the school, what can the local school do?

When the question is asked in this way, it broadens our perspective to create solutions that are not school-based but community-based. It encourages a point of view that considers the capacity of the community to support healthy child, family, and neighbourhood life.





Nature of the Study

At the time this study began, the context for research was current and practical given that I was a principal of an inner city school attempting to bring about change of this sort. The work I entered into at William Whyte was not undertaken as a research project. This study began and continued as it was always intended as a conceptual analysis of poverty and inner city education. Over time I had learned that such scholarly inquiry can assist my educational leadership particularly in schools and neighbourhoods where the work in the community was challenged by severe social and economic disadvantage. In my experience as an educator, I often became frustrated and angered with the degree to which inequity and social injustice framed not only the present day reality for children and families living in the inner city but also predicted their future. Through academic and practical inquiry, I moved from a state of being critical to being able to think critically, and to act in critical ways, on the conditions of poverty causing community concern. The William Whyte School experience is described in this study as the experience of working to transfer theory into practice at the local school level.

Every study begins with a question, or set of questions. Initially the question for this study was straightforward in its focus on poverty and inner city education. Just about anyone living or working in an inner city community notices the gap between rich and poor and the differences this gap makes especially on the lives of children. So the emergent question asked simply what things can an inner city school do to counter the

negative effects that poverty have on learning? As the study began to unfold, however, I realized that while the foregoing was an essential question to ask, there were other related and more fundamental questions to consider.

Consequently, my research efforts broadened to identify several theoretical strands from outside of educational administration that come together with theory from the field to influence leadership practice in inner city education. Different questions began to direct my thinking that had to do with building an understanding of poverty that might go beyond school walls. Since it is the case that poverty is, first of all, an economic condition, what are the structures that sustain poverty? Are they linked to education and schooling? How are poverty effects on learning understood in political economic terms? Does this understanding become clearer when inner city education is looked at through the lens of class analysis? How are poverty-related issues addressed in educational administration as a field of study? What theory and research methods are useful to educational leadership in inner city schools? How can an inner city school work with its community to offset the problems of poverty for the purposes of teaching and learning? Is it possible that community-based schooling processes can achieve outcomes of increased learner participation, retention, and achievement as indicators of increased equity and social justice in inner city schools linked directly to community economic development at the local level?

While thinking through these questions, it became clear that the initial question I had identified, that being, what can an inner city school do to offset the negative effects of poverty so that inner city children will learn, although a necessary question to ask, is very broad. I then extended this thinking to consider a more critical and more useful question “to what extent can education be an instrument for social and economic change?” This,

too, is a very large question. Nevertheless, it was within this broad scope for study that I began with these interconnected questions as my focus.

As the study went along, I realized that these questions were too big. I began to understand that my research was not positioning me to find answers to the foregoing questions but, through this inquiry, I began to sharpen my research question. The things that I was learning about poverty and inner city education were really shedding some light on more fundamental questions.

At the conceptual level, the question for this study became “can a coherent argument be framed to support a broader role for schools in the development of individuals and community?” And, a further question for practical application and of relevance for this study became “what might inner city schooling look like if it is to support community economic development?” Given that this research is conceptual in nature, I considered the first question to be the essential one and answers to it are explored in the subsequent chapters of this study.

While inquiry into what inner city schooling could look like if it was to support community economic development is not completely addressed, Chapter Six does give a practical account of community-based schooling taking place at one school, William Whyte Community School, located in the inner city of Winnipeg.

Most research on poverty tends to study a particular symptom or symptoms of poverty. Given the nature and kinds of demands placed on inner city education and given that all schools are part of a larger social order which reflect similar patterns of inequities, it is not surprising that educational research has had little impact on structuring schooling for

greater equality. In general, there are two options for solving poverty-related problems in education -- fix the student or fix the system. Efforts to fix the student direct change at individual solutions and, as such, have limited value. The other option, that is, strategies to fix the system, involves alteration of the existing system as opposed to structural transforming change.

To move toward structural change, it is appropriate to conduct research differently, to stop studying poverty and education as questions and start studying answers. Critical theory upholds the notion that solutions do exist to problems that have systemic roots (Silver, 2000). It is timely to consider schooling efforts in terms of critical stance and the traditions of critical participatory action research which serve as a guide for this work (McLaren, 1995; Gitlen, 1994; Fine, 1994).

The central question is not how researchers of different orientations can learn to get along so that we can maintain the discipline and continue doing research in accustomed ways, but how the whole enterprise of research, both qualitative and quantitative, can be reconceptualized so that it can powerfully act on some of the most persistent and important problems of our schools, namely those surrounding issues of race, class, and gender.

(Gitlin, 1994, 2)

Richardson suggests two forms of research exist in practice: formal research and practical inquiry. Formal research undertaken by researchers and practitioners contributes to an established and general knowledge base. Practical inquiry is undertaken by practitioners

to improve practice (Richardson, 1994). William Tierney understands the task of research is to create contexts from the dialogues that frame our lives, to be able to come to terms with our identities, and, in so doing, create transformative communities of difference. "Our research efforts ought to enable our readers to reflect on their own lives and to help us envision lives for ourselves and our students that exist within communities of difference and hope" (Tierney, 1994, 97). The telling of stories contributes to the building of solidarity "constructed out of the little pieces, rather than found already waiting, in the form of ur-language which all of us recognize when we hear it" (Rorty, 1990, 94).

Practical inquiry, the use of narrative, the telling of stories, dialogical conversations about practice, and the writing of journals are considered useful for teacher research (Connelly and Clandinin, 1988). Narrative is a way of characterizing the phenomena of human experience and its study (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990). A review of the educational study of experience aligns narrative with qualitatively oriented educational researchers working with experiential philosophy, psychology, critical theory, curriculum studies, and anthropology (Eisner, 1988). Narrative as a research strategy is a form of empirical study where data can be collected from sources such as field notes of shared experiences, interviews, story telling, autobiographies and biographical writing, and other various sources such as newsletters, rules and principles, metaphors and personal philosophies (Connelly and Clandinin, 1990).

Clandinin and Connelly use the metaphor of a landscape where teachers move from the safe place of their classrooms to insecure spaces in the more public sphere. "When teachers leave their classrooms and move into another place on the professional knowledge landscape, they leave the safe secrecy of the classroom and enter a public

place on the landscape. Walking out of the classroom is walking into a dramatically different epistemological and moral place on the landscape . . . this place is not always a hospitable place for telling stories . . . as teachers cross the boundaries between a safe place for living the secret stories of teaching to a place of moral persuasion and of abstract knowledge, they move across a boundary separating markedly different epistemological and moral parts of the landscape” (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995, 14). Rather than share what really matters about classroom practice, educators tend to keep this information as a secret story. In forums such as board meetings and for media, the public story is told. In other forums such as staff meetings and academic seminars, the sacred story is upheld as teachers learn from academic training and professional development to talk about lesson plans, assessment and evaluation, in abstract ways disconnected from teaching situations and practical concerns (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995).

With practical inquiry, there is some opportunity for "real talk" (Hogan, 1995) or "plain talk" (hooks, 1989, Weiss and Fine, 1993). As hooks argues, if people do not speak in a language that can be understood, then there is little chance for dialogue. She cites the issue of language as a central contradiction for radical intellectuals, particularly for those who are members of oppressed groups. "One of the clear and present dangers that exists when we move outside our class of origin, our collective ethnic experience, and enter hierarchical institutions which daily reinforce domination by race, sex, and class, is that we gradually assume a mindset similar to those who dominate and oppress, that we lose critical consciousness because it is not reinforced or reaffirmed by the environment” (hooks, 1989, 78).

The approach taken in this study has been to combine a conceptual analysis of inner city

education and community-based schooling with a description a community-based initiative that took place from 1992 to 1999 at William Whyte Community School. The nature of the study is that of formal research combined with practical inquiry in the form of personal reflections, as sidebars to the main text, and newspaper articles and reports, in chronological order appearing at the end of each chapter. This material is not to be interpreted as data because no data was collected for this study. The analysis, articles, stories, and account of the William Whyte experience are reflective of my “professional landscape” (Clandinin and Connelly, 1995). The main text tells the sacred story, the news articles and description of change efforts at William Whyte chronicle the public story, and the personal reflections represent a part of the secret story.

The combination of formal research and practical inquiry addresses the dialectic between conceptual thinking and practice in the field (Schon, 1983). In a way, it is like Horton describes as seeing two different things simultaneously:

I like to think that I have two different eyes that I don't have to use in the same way . . .

I don't separate these two ways of looking, I don't say that I'm going to look at where people are today and where they can be tomorrow. I look at people with both eyes simultaneously, all the time, and as they develop and grow I still look at them that way because I've got to remind myself constantly that they're not all they can be . . .

(Horton, 1990, 131-132)

Potential for Community-Based Solutions

Individuals and systems could potentially benefit from change that comes with application of community-based solutions to poverty-related issues in education. In a study of inclusive practice, the Canadian Association of School Administrators and the Canadian School Boards' Association emphasize the need for systemic change as a coordinated approach to support learning:

The student must have the resources to be ready to learn and to enjoy the conditions in the home and the community to be able to pursue learning. This includes the basic needs such as food, housing, clothing, transportation, security, health, and well-being. It also includes sufficient social support and stimulation for learning in the community such as access to libraries, technology, recreation and other services that facilitate learning outside of school hours. It also includes adequate health, social, employment and other public services being available to children and families and being delivered in an integrated and coordinated manner in cooperation with school systems.

(Canadian Association of School Administrators and
Canadian School Boards' Association, 1994, 17)

In New Zealand, the Ministry of Education has identified that poor health, stressful family environment, and poverty have a strong correlation with poor education outcomes for children. The New Zealand “Strengthening Families” strategy sets as a goal to improve life outcomes for children by addressing the wider social and family influences:

Research tells us that there are risk factors associated with poor outcomes. Those factors include: persistent low income; family disruption; poor parental health, including mental health; poor parental educational attainment; long-term unemployment; high residential mobility; and poor housing.

(New Zealand Ministry of Education, 1999)

“Strengthening Families” is founded on two basic assumptions both based on research about families: that what goes on in families has a profound impact on outcomes for children; and, that a collaborative approach across sectors is more effective than separate interventions.

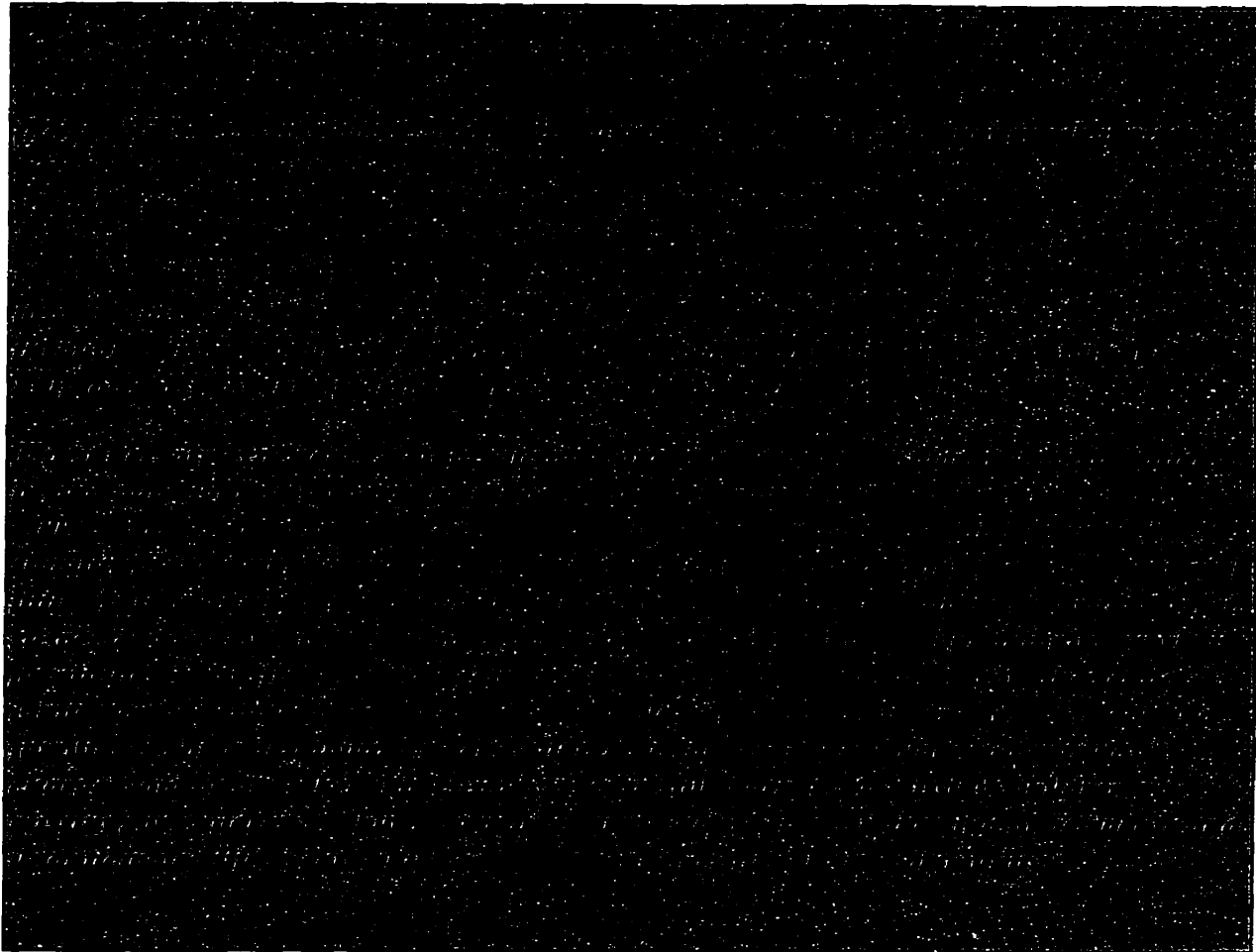
The potential for comprehensive community-based solutions to address complex problems of poverty is also being studied in the Together We Can Initiative - a partnership between the Institute for Educational Leadership, Washington, D.C., California Tomorrow in San Francisco, CA, Child and Family Policy Center in Des Moines, IA, and the Center for Community Problem-Solving, also Washington, D.C. Established as a national leadership development and capacity building initiative to strengthen children, youth, families, and communities, its findings show the potential of

comprehensive undertakings is especially great in areas where people, organizations, and agendas can be connected together to promote community change:

. . . experiments in community decision-making and comprehensive service delivery are still in their infancy. Linkages among initiatives in the same community are the exception, not the rule. Most efforts continue to maintain a distinctly categorical focus. . . (w)hat unites these efforts is their commitment to a shared set of principles. All are committed to making measurable improvements in the well-being of children and families. They recognize that interventions must be made on a scale large enough to turn whole neighbourhoods around. And they understand that the only way to do this is by helping communities identify their own assets and needs, set goals, and design comprehensive strategies to help children and families succeed.

(Blank, 1996, 3)





Outline of Contents

Research cited here points to the fact that schools are being asked to carry out many of the roles in the lives of children that were previously the responsibility of the family or the community or were simply not done at all. When the primary needs of children are not being met due to root causes of poverty, children experience difficulty in school. To remove barriers to learning, children need supports and resources that take into account their economic life circumstances. The home, the family, the community, and the school

on an individual basis, and in combination, influence student achievement.

In Chapter 1, "Introduction," the issues of poverty and schooling have been presented. Highlighted in this chapter is the notion that problems of poverty should be considered in social and economic contexts with the suggestion that the issues of poverty and inner city education might be better met through the construction of economic solutions.

Chapter 2, "Poverty and Inner City Education," reviews how issues of poverty have been addressed through educational practice. This section provides a critique of current attempts at school reform that address poverty-related problems with compensatory programs based on a deficit-thinking model. Chapter 2 further explores some of the thinking as to why educational change efforts have had diminished results despite the infusion of additional resources and why there seems to be structured into mainstream institutions, such as schools, the means for systems to maintain unequal conditions.

In Chapter 3, "Political Economy and Schooling," theoretical constructs from political economy provide a framework for understanding how issues of poverty and inner city education are linked to the structures of schooling. Consideration is given to the ways in which concepts of class and critical consciousness provide a useful context for collective action in community-based practice. It is shown how these ideas provide a foundation for the practical applications that emanate from this way of thinking about and acting on problems of poverty and education.

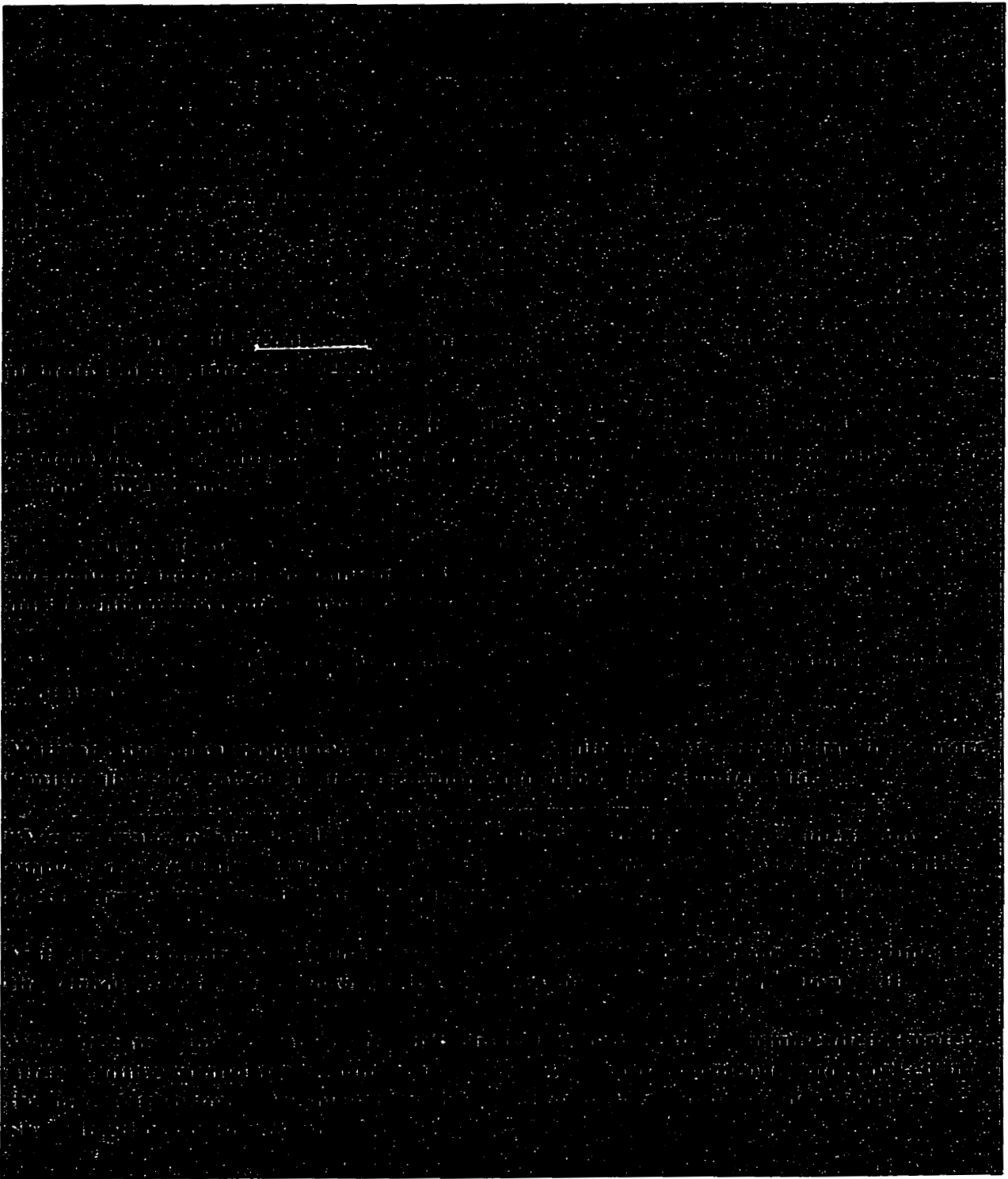
In Chapter 4, "Leadership in Inner City Education," critical theory as it applies to participatory research and alternative educational practice is considered. While a critical perspective may not yet be representative of mainstream thinking in the education field, it

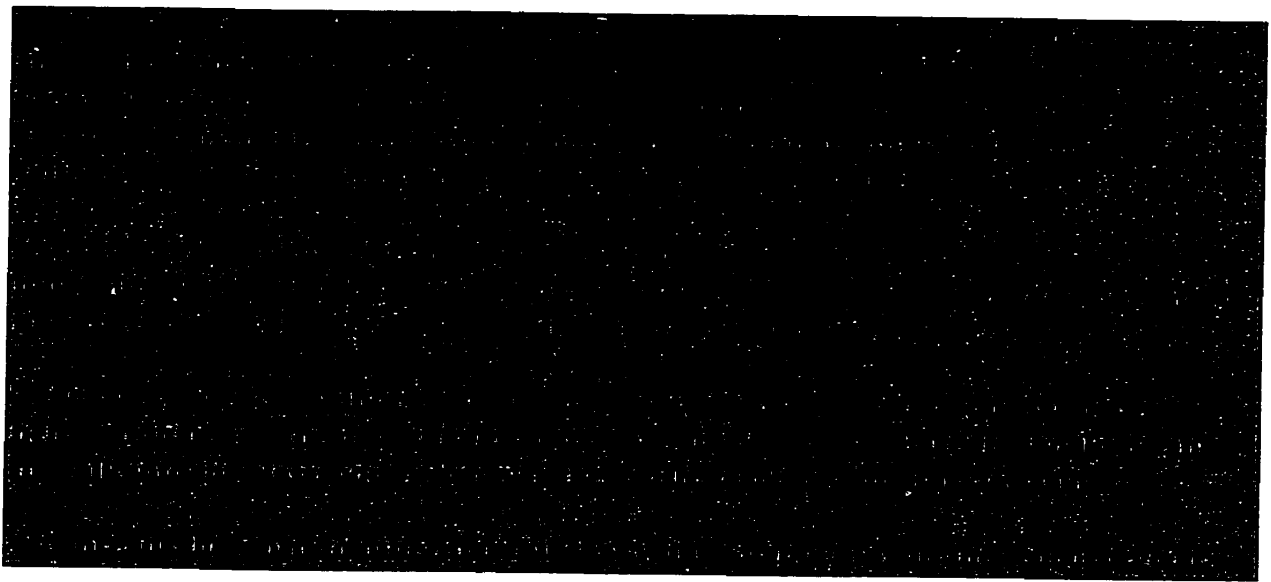
is the point of view which can influence thinking about the leadership that is needed in inner city education. Because educational leadership provides direction for school practice, the latter part of this chapter looks specifically at critical theory as it applies to educational administration.

In Chapter 5, "Education and Community Economic Development," the concept of community-based schooling as alternative educational practice is examined. Strategies from community economic development are applied to educational practice in ways which shift the capacity of schooling processes at the local school level from being systems-maintaining, as is the present case, towards becoming systems-transforming. Transformational schooling processes as possibilities for educational practice are located in community economic development theories from rural, third world, participatory, and local economic development.

Chapter 6, "Community-Based Schooling at William Whyte," gives an account of community-based schooling as a result of solution-based critical participatory actions at William Whyte Community School. Located in Winnipeg's inner city, the school implemented community economic development activities and community-based educational practices over a period of seven years.

Chapter 7, "Conclusion," is a review of how alternate ways of thinking about education, in relation to a broadened understanding of poverty, might lead to school improvement efforts that reside within the context of the inner city experience. Community-based schooling initiatives are mostly of a practical nature, and most just seem to make good common sense, but the theoretical underpinning for such an approach is complex and rooted in the political economy of educational practice.







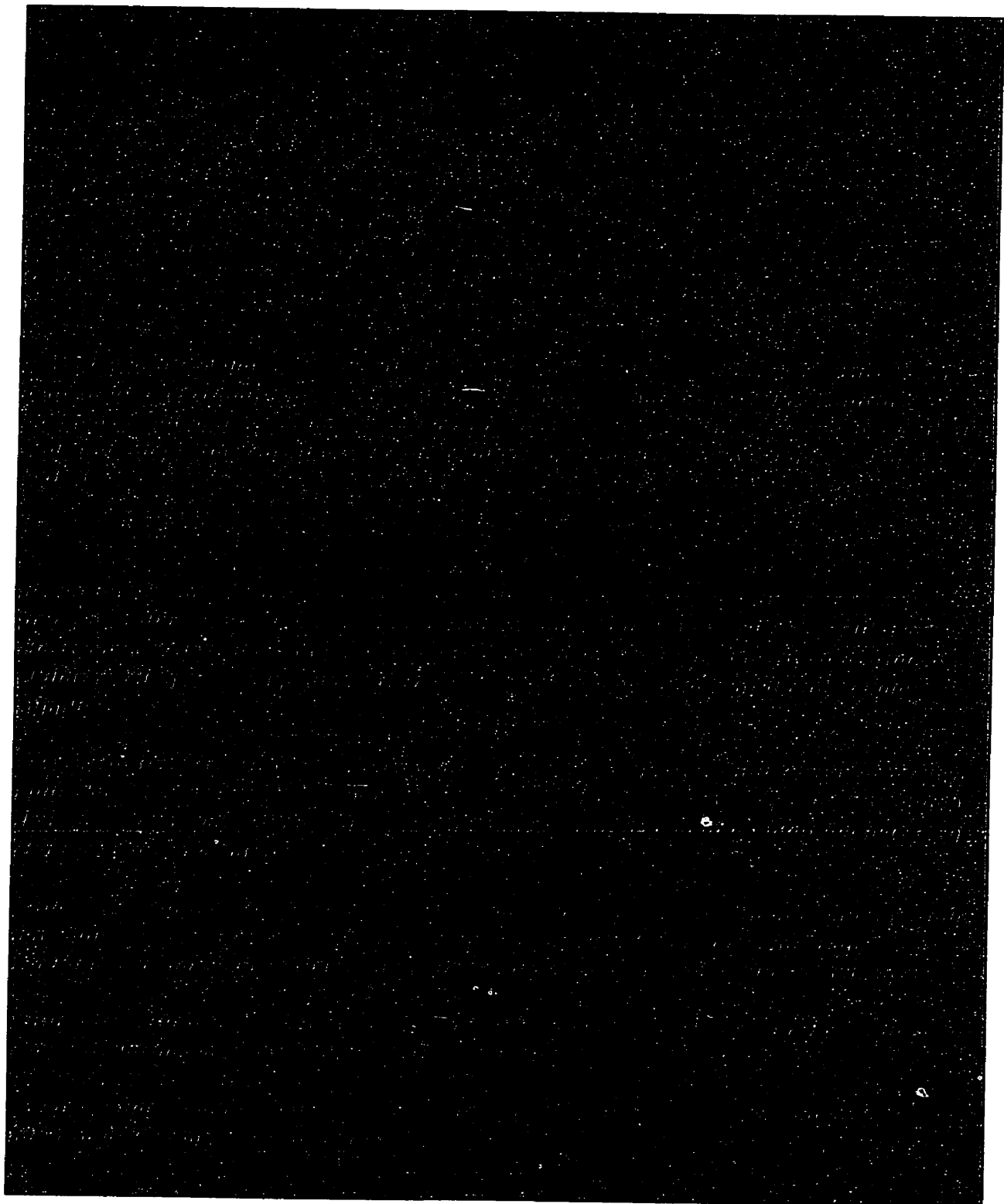
Introduction

Looking directly at the issues of poverty and education, are there steps an inner city school can take to address the surrounding issues of poverty and education? This chapter examines issues of poverty as they are addressed in educational practice. It begins with a critique of current attempts at school reform to address poverty-related problems. In particular, the notion of compensatory programs rooted in deficit-thinking models is explored. It further examines why educational change efforts in the inner city continue to have diminished results despite the infusion of additional resources.

There is a tendency on the part of schools to rely on immediate, quick fix, short-term educational approaches which are largely curriculum-based. These solutions concentrate on changing schooling processes such as how we teach and measure learning. Such approaches to changing teaching and learning could include 'best practice' classroom strategies, differentiated instruction to accommodate high needs learners, or curriculum inquiry to contextualize learning to be meaningful for disengaged students (Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde, 1993; Boomer, Lester, Onore, and Cook, 1992; Darling-Hammond, 1997). Other solutions such as high stakes testing and the 'quality' schools movement focus on learner-based outcomes outside of a poverty context. A most recent result of this overlooking of poverty issues in educational practice is apparent in the province-wide standards testing conducted by Manitoba Education from 1995 to 1999. This innovation

represents the kind of evaluation practice which ensures children are situated along a continuum of weakest to strongest without regard for the negative effects of poverty on student learning.

For the urban poor in Winnipeg, solutions to poverty can be described as temporary and partial. Residents of the urban core meet with harsh realities in their community. Children are most severely affected by this reality. They spend their childhood in substandard housing where heat, light, and water may be absent. They often are not adequately clothed and are often cold. They face scarcity of food. They do not have safe recreation opportunities, sports equipment, music lessons, fun clubs like Brownies and Cubs, or community club facilities, community hockey, soccer, or baseball leagues. They adjust to the cyclical life events of having money and not having money, of having food and having none left, of having a safe place to live and having it turn unsafe. What is exceptional is that these children and families living in poverty for the most part have the abilities to survive the challenges of their community life. And, they bring this knowledge with them to school when they come for their education. Too often these skill sets are overlooked and the presenting noncompliant or nonacademic student behaviours overly influence educational practice. Schools incorrectly interpret the problems children bring in to the school as pathology in the individual, or in families, or in the culture of the community. An alternative perspective understands these problems as a class experience (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978; see Chapter 3). Schools tend to overlook the remarkable strength of families, and in particular, the knowledge base and skill sets needed to endure living in poverty.



Educational Reform Efforts

Usually, governments have allowed economic imperatives to supersede those concerned with social good (Piven and Cloward, 1982). The parts of educational debate that respond to economic concerns receive the strongest support in government. Most often, political interest directs key questions about schooling. What is meant by “schools doing a good job?” How much public spending should be appropriated to this end? Heard less often are questions of concern for inner city schools. Questions like what experience should schools provide in a community severely affected by conditions of economic disadvantage? What educational reform could support the kind of change required by children and families living in poverty?

Educational reform efforts tend to respond to poverty-related issues in the absence of ideological understanding of education and schooling. Instead, a position of neutrality accepts the status quo and directs policy accordingly. For example, the notion that open education might restore a democratic and liberating character to schooling lent support for schools without walls and free schools. The distinction between schools as institutions and education as a lifelong process freely determined by the individual led to a way of thinking that advocated the disestablishment of compulsory schooling (Illich and Verne, 1976).

Many students, especially those who are poor, intuitively know what the schools do for them. They school to confuse process and substance. Once these become blurred, a new logic is assumed: the more treatment

there is, the better are the results; or, escalation leads to success. The pupil is thereby “schooled” to confuse teaching with learning, grade advancement with education, a diploma with competence, and fluency with the ability to say something new. His imagination is “schooled” to accept service in place of value. Medical treatment is mistaken for health care, social work for the improvement of community life, police protection for safety, military poise for national security, the rat race for productive work. Health, learning, dignity, independence, and creative endeavor are defined as little more than the performance of the institutions which claim to serve these ends, and their improvement is made to depend on allocating more resources to the management of hospitals, schools, and other agencies in question.

(Illich, 1970, 1)

Different from “deschooling” society, notions of meritocracy and equality of schooling increasingly support selectivity in education and inequality of rewards in the economy. Such educational reform relies heavily on standardization of student assessment, testing, and curricula whereby measures of student achievement continue to be interpreted as a measure of the effectiveness of educational programs. Other reform approaches claim that being knowledgeable about the school change process, itself, may be both the best defense and the best offense in achieving substantial education reform (Fullan and Miles, 1992). These approaches situate change as a focus in itself with little or no direction or indication of what it was that needed changing.

Studying school improvement by considering just the school itself or education policy as a stand-alone action reduces the potential for long term solutions. Yet, most education

research takes this narrow focus for studying schools and change. An example of this is found in the work of Leithwood, Fullan, and Head-Taylor:

Working with change is paradoxical. The reasons why some attempts fail and others succeed are eminently clear -- for example, poor vs. good quality materials, episodic vs. ongoing inservice, principal neglect vs. active support, board level inattention vs. follow through after an innovation is adopted, having a vague notion of progress vs. gathering and using information to address implementation needs and to assess impact.

We recommend that planned educational change be organized around five main phases:

1. Preparing for School Improvement.
2. Determining Special Goals for School Improvement.
3. Selecting or Developing the Solution(s).
4. Implementing the Solution(s).
5. Institutionalizing the Solution(s).

(Leithwood, Fullan, and Head-Taylor, 1987)

The processes for change suggested above are very likely to be effective but the substance of the change might well be concerning as it may hold little meaningful consequence for the larger issues of poverty and education. To have a better understanding of how school reform efforts could address poverty at the local school level, it is useful to consider the current practice of supplying responses that are partial solutions to problems of poverty.

Apple describes how in the rush for excellence in education, people do not give critical consideration to what schools really do. We need consciously to bracket what we take for granted about how our schools, media, government, and economic institutions work to ask who benefits from current relations in and among these institutions (Apple, 1982). Labeling of problems in schools as social problems helps to defuse them for it tends to diffuse responsibility for their existence and continuance and leads to a search for solutions which do not affect the existing distribution of wealth, income, and power (George and Wilding, 1976).

So called social problems of poverty are political. The suggestion that these political conflicts can somehow be resolved apolitically, through the dispassionate intervention of experts instead of through political action paves the way for the imposition of partisan measures in the guise of non-political solutions to social problems (Apple, 1982).

Partial Solutions to Poverty

What are examples of partial solutions to dealing with poverty? In general terms, inner city schools, like other agencies and institutions, respond in social ways having to do with health, family services, housing, and recreation. If children come to school hungry, nutrition programs to provide breakfast and snacks are of benefit. If children are not adequately dressed for school, readily available used clothing that is clean and of good quality is useful. Government, corporations and community partnerships with inner city schools create educational and recreational activities to enhance and extend the school

day and support summer programs. A survey of current writing and research activity reveals an abundance of initiatives specific to educational concerns related to issues of poverty. Much of this research material simply confirms the obvious -- that poverty presents significant barriers to learning. Examples highlighted here hold potential for practical application but have a common limitation in that they represent social responses to poverty issues, and, as such, they are partial solutions.

These examples are found in the research on pre-school learning experiences, class size and learning, enhanced learning through parent involvement, strong home-school connections, and community-linked services at the local school level. For instance, the evaluation of the High/Scope Perry Pre-School Project shows that pre-school programs can have long-lasting positive effects on school achievement. These findings suggest expansion of pre-school initiatives linked to school entry (Schweinhart, Barnes, and Weikart, 1993; Ziegler, 1999). In another instance, a study conducted as a student/teacher achievement ratio class size experiment shows classes of 15-18 outscore their counterparts in classes of 22-25. These findings suggest reduced class sizes (Finn, 1998). Findings from the Ontario Children's Secretariat Early Years Study (1999) study show all families and children, in all economic circumstance, can benefit from early child development and parenting programs. Early school interventions, sensitive to local community needs, can be more cost-effective than those paying for remediation through treatment programs and support services for problems that are not rooted in poor early development (McCain and Mustard, 1999). A Saskatchewan Education study (1996) emphasizes the importance of connection between school and community recognizing that the difficulties students face are often a result of circumstances that originate in the home or community. It cites that solutions to the problems faced by these students require a comprehensive range of supports. It puts forward suggested best practices to

enable students to learn; teachers to focus on creating innovative, relevant, and challenging programs; and schools to work together with parents and community:

- high quality learning programs which are community and culturally-referenced;
- comprehensive student supports and services with extra-curricular programs within the school or linked to it;
- full involvement and partnership with parents and community members;
- a dynamic mechanism for program planning, evaluation, and renewal within the school;
- development of safe, caring and respectful school culture and climate; and
- heightened emphasis on the responsibility of the school to develop and strengthen community

(Saskatchewan Education, 1996).

Within the partial approaches to community schools falls the concept of “it takes a village to educate a single child.” This well-intentioned metaphor has become something of a rallying cry used to engender increased collaboration and partnerships to address the complex needs of children and families. What does not get taken into account with this approach is that an inner city neighbourhood is not a village. In order for an inner city neighbourhood to become such a thing, to match the metaphor, it could require significant commitment to community development and capacity building. This is still not clearly articulated in the resurgence of interest in “community” schools:

Every community school is a working partnership, but there is no single, cookie-cutter shape or size. Each community school is unique - a "homegrown" match between a community's strengths and its needs. What community schools have in common is a focus on creating tangible and interrelated results. They directly advocate the core mission of public schools by creating an environment that helps young people to learn and achieve at high standards throughout their years of schooling. This necessitates that school facilities be available after hours, on weekends, and during the summer months, and that a broad network of community groups and agencies work in a holistic and coordinated way to support the school and their students.

(Tirozzi, 1999, 2)

While the work of Tirozzi and others encourages and helps to promote school and community linkages, there appears an absence of a political economic analysis that could explain why the needs of children are so great. Poverty becomes the given which predetermines a range of "problems" for which partial solutions are constructed.

This is not a new problem. Dewey (1938) claimed that for education to accomplish its ends both for the individual learner and for society it needed a philosophy of education based on a coherent theory of experience. This philosophy could give positive direction to the selection and organization of appropriate educational methods and materials and, as a result, could provide new direction to the work of schools.

To imposition from above is opposed expression and cultivation of individuality; to external discipline is opposed free activity; to learning from texts and teachers, learning through experience; to acquisition of isolated skills and techniques by

drill, is opposed acquisition of them as means of attaining ends which make direct vital appeal; to preparation for a more or less remote future is opposed making the most of opportunities of present life; to static aims and materials is opposed acquaintance with a changing world.

(Dewey, 1938, 20)

From a study of middle schools, conducted over ten years, comes the view that the 'best' schools for children are also the best for the adults who work in them and visit them. "With assistance from outside and by drawing on resources from within, educators constructed new meanings and strategies that shaped both their goals and their practices. In this way, they married the means of education to the ends of education" (Oakes, Hunter Quartz, Ryan, and Lipton, 2000, 575).

Deficit Thinking and Compensatory Approaches

The deficit model is a way of thinking in education advanced to explain school failure, particularly among economically disadvantaged, marginalized students. Deficit thinking results from a traditional mind-set and establishes a tendency to approach poverty-related problems in education with ways of thinking that are imputational, top down, and paternalistic.

Compensatory programs have mainly supplemented the hegemonic curriculum,

adding extra activities or small group instruction in core areas of conventional teaching - principally, mathematics and language skills. Add-on programs do not change the main patterns of teaching and learning in the school. A strategy that takes curriculum change seriously would base itself on another approach found in compensatory programs. the whole-school change approach, which uses compensatory funds to redesign the major activities of the school.

(Connell, 1993, 141)

Anyon's study of urban schooling shows the negative impact that acceptance of the status quo has on the lives of children in the urban core. This is most evident when she describes the constraining effects on student achievement. The factors Anyon identifies as having negative effects are extreme urban bureaucratization, low expectations for student achievement, with underlying ideologies to justify poor learner performance, and frequent staff changes (Anyon, 1997). These factors require broader thinking outside the realm of conventional educational theory.

Conventional explanations for school failure focus on the individual student and move from the genetic explanation, to the notion of cultural deprivation, to the conception of cultural disadvantage, to the now commonly held notion of "at risk" students.

The popular "at risk" construct, now entrenched in educational circles, views poor and working class children and their families (typically of colour) as being predominantly responsible for school failure, while frequently holding structural inequality blameless.

(Valencia, 1997, ix)

Critical theorists as proponents of anti-deficit thinking approaches are skeptical of the term 'at risk'. It is viewed as just another way to mask the inequities of the school system similar to terms such as 'cultural disadvantage' and 'cultural deprivation' that are situated in a context of blaming the victim (Ryan, 1972; Fine, 1990; Valencia, 1997). Reaching back three decades, Ryan's critique transcended deficit thinking in education to cover social programs in general.

In education, we have programs of "compensatory education" to build up the skills and attitudes of the ghetto child, rather than structural changes in the schools. In race relations, we have social engineers who think up ways of "strengthening" the Negro family, rather than methods of eradicating racism. In health care, we develop new programs to provide health information (to correct the supposed ignorance of the poor) and to reach out and discover cases of untreated illness and disability (to compensate for their supposed unwillingness to seek treatment). Meanwhile, the gross inequalities of our medical care delivery systems are left completely unchanged. As we might expect, the logical outcome of analyzing social problems in terms of the deficiencies of the victim is the development of programs aimed at correcting those deficiencies. The formula for action becomes extraordinarily simple: change the victim.

(Ryan, 1976, 8)

In the approach taken of blaming the victim, there are four steps to the process described

as happening so smoothly, it seems “downright rational”(Ryan, 1976, 8). The approach took shape in four stages:

First, social problems were identified (by victim-blamers). Second, a study was done in order to find out how the disadvantaged and advantaged were different. Third, once the differences were identified, they were defined as the causes of the social problem. Fourth, governmental intervention was set in play to correct the differences (i.e., deficiencies). The great appeal of deficit thinking as a model of social reform in the 1960s and early 1970s lay in the framework’s appearance of soundness.

(Valencia, 1997, 3)

Most people think about core area neighbourhoods as problems. Poverty related issues are responded to by traditional needs-oriented solutions:

This view is accepted by most elected officials who codify and program this perspective through deficiency-oriented policies and programs. . . human service systems - often supported by foundations and universities - translate the problem into local activities that teach people the nature of their problems, and the value of services as the answer to their problem. As a result, many low-income urban neighbourhoods are now environments of service where behaviors are affected because residents come to believe that their well-being depends upon

being a client. They see themselves as people with special needs to be met by outsiders. And gradually, they become mainly consumers of services with no incentive to become producers.

(McKnight, 1990, 1-2)

Much current educational reform still reflects this approach situating the problems of poverty and education with the individual and the school rather than within the broader economy. The prescriptive approach to dealing with learners in urban core schools whose students are targeted as low and underachieving populations still predominates. In the social sciences, this approach is criticized as being responsible for creating the “culture of poverty.”

In education, similar concerns are being raised about the “pedagogy of poverty.” Connell explains the “pedagogy of poverty” as teaching practices reduced to emphasizing basic skills with teacher success measured by the extent to which they achieve student compliance. He claims the lack of other emphasis is, in part, because the research shows that achievement test scores of poor and minority children are affected primarily by their socioeconomic class; affected somewhat by pre-education supports and by strong school leadership; and affected almost not at all by the quality of their teachers. The rewards for teachers’ not changing are more clearly achievable particularly when expectations are kept low and self-contained in the separate domains of teachers, administrators, students, and parents. Connell cites the need to establish a common ground to move education from being a matter of importance to become a matter of life and death both for society and for individuals themselves (Connell, 1993). As attitudes and beliefs about the poor are changed, democratic education presents an alternative to deficit thinking requiring

changes in schooling in areas of curriculum, participation, rights and understanding of equality.

Democratization means expanding the agency of those normally overwhelmed by the agency of others or immobilized by current structures. Good teaching does this in an immediate, local way . . . where the teacher is problem-solver and critical dialogue replaces teacher talk. An agenda for change must concern itself with how this local effect can be generated.

(Connell, 1993,143)

McKnight uses the example of the half-full or half-empty glass to illustrate that the raw material for community-building is the capacity of its individual members:

It is clear that every individual has needs or deficiencies. It is also clear that every individual has gifts and capacities. . . .(u)nfortunately, in some communities local residents have come to mistakenly believe they can build their community by an inventory of deficiencies. The common name for the deficiency inventory is a “needs survey.” It is basically an effort to count up the emptiness in an individual or neighbourhood. The problem is that this information is not useful for community-building because it deals with people as potential clients and consumers. To be powerful, community must have people who are citizens and producers.

(McKnight, 1993, 10)

Partial Solutions Result from Absence of Power

In one respect, most initiatives that could be categorized as responses to poverty have in common that they are neutral or non-economic responses to economic problems. At least, such initiatives do not respond to the economic needs of inner city residents. In another respect, these initiatives do respond to the economic needs of people other than inner city residents. A welfare state economy uses the education system to meet the needs of those supplying services and the economies, outside of the inner city, that these individuals support.

Some twenty-five years ago, Illich and McKnight (1977), among others, began to raise troublesome questions about the political reality stemming from a seemingly apolitical schooling system. Why, with increased resources being put in to schools, were we getting out the very opposite of what the system is intended to produce? With so many resources directed at education, why do inner city children continue to not do well?

Within this framework, the client is less a person in need than a person who is needed. In business terms, the client is less the consumer than the raw material for the servicing system. In management terms, the client becomes both the output and the input. his essential function is to meet the needs of servicers, the servicing system and the national economy. The central political issue becomes the servicers' capacity to manufacture needs in order to expand the economy of the servicing system.

(McKnight, 1977, 75)

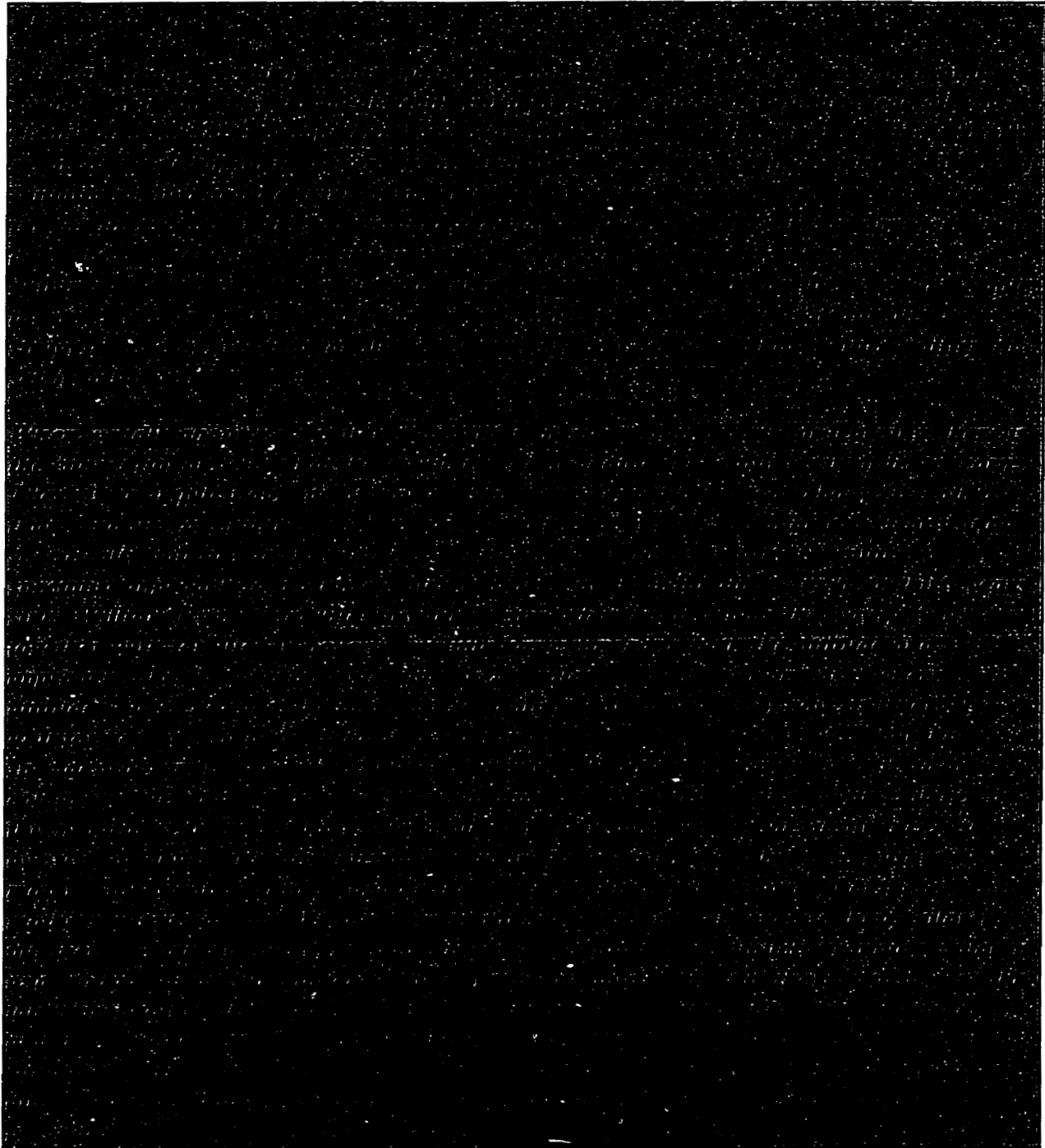
Partial solutions are common responses to the problems experienced by children and families living in poverty because of the absence of power for residents in the inner city. This absence of power is evidenced by conditions of unemployment, welfare, crime, and violence that dictate lifestyles and life chances. On one level, the realities of being poor can be seen to reduce severely opportunities for individuals. On another level, with such a high number of Aboriginal families living as urban poor, the realities of being Aboriginal in a class society presents further barriers to individual achievement (Adams, 1975; Hull, 1979; Ponting and Gibbons, 1980). In political economic terms, schools primarily represent yet another form of institutionalized oppression. And while there is great strength to be derived from membership in a First Nation or Metis community, ongoing hardships of racism and prejudice remain to be endured.


Absence of power is further evidenced by the assumption that problems related to urban core development require answers from the outside-in with many resources concentrated on paying for technical support for community development. The strengths and weaknesses of such technical assistance are identified in evaluation of the "Together We Can" initiative (Blank, 1996). Technical assistance draws on broad expertise, emphasizes partnerships, helps to work across social services, education, health, and other systems, provides opportunity for dialogue in the community, and builds local capacity by providing community leaders with the tools and skills necessary to manage their own initiative. On the face of it, these seem to be impressive strengths. Yet, the literature shows that community development benefits from the "roots up" approach (Ross, 1986; Silver, 2000).

Some of the potential weaknesses of outside-in technical assistance are cited in the “Together We Can” report:

- Espouses the principles of community initiatives but does not always incorporate them in their work. Technical assistance providers “talk the talk” but don’t always “walk the walk.”
- Makes it difficult for communities to find the help they need. The technical assistance offered does not always fit community need.
- Attempts to control the process rather than doing what is necessary to meet community goals. Technical assistance providers do not see themselves as stakeholders.
- Does very little to help communities 1) develop programmatic approaches that reach across agencies; 2) remove structural barriers to working together; or 3) identify jurisdictional boundaries that affect their work.
- Fails to encourage grass-roots involvement and are not responsive to diverse groups.
- Seldom works to develop local expertise to provide technical assistance.
- Offers little guidance about how to measure results, either in terms of collaboratives work or the effectiveness of technical assistance in helping initiative meet goal.

(Blank, 1996, 9)





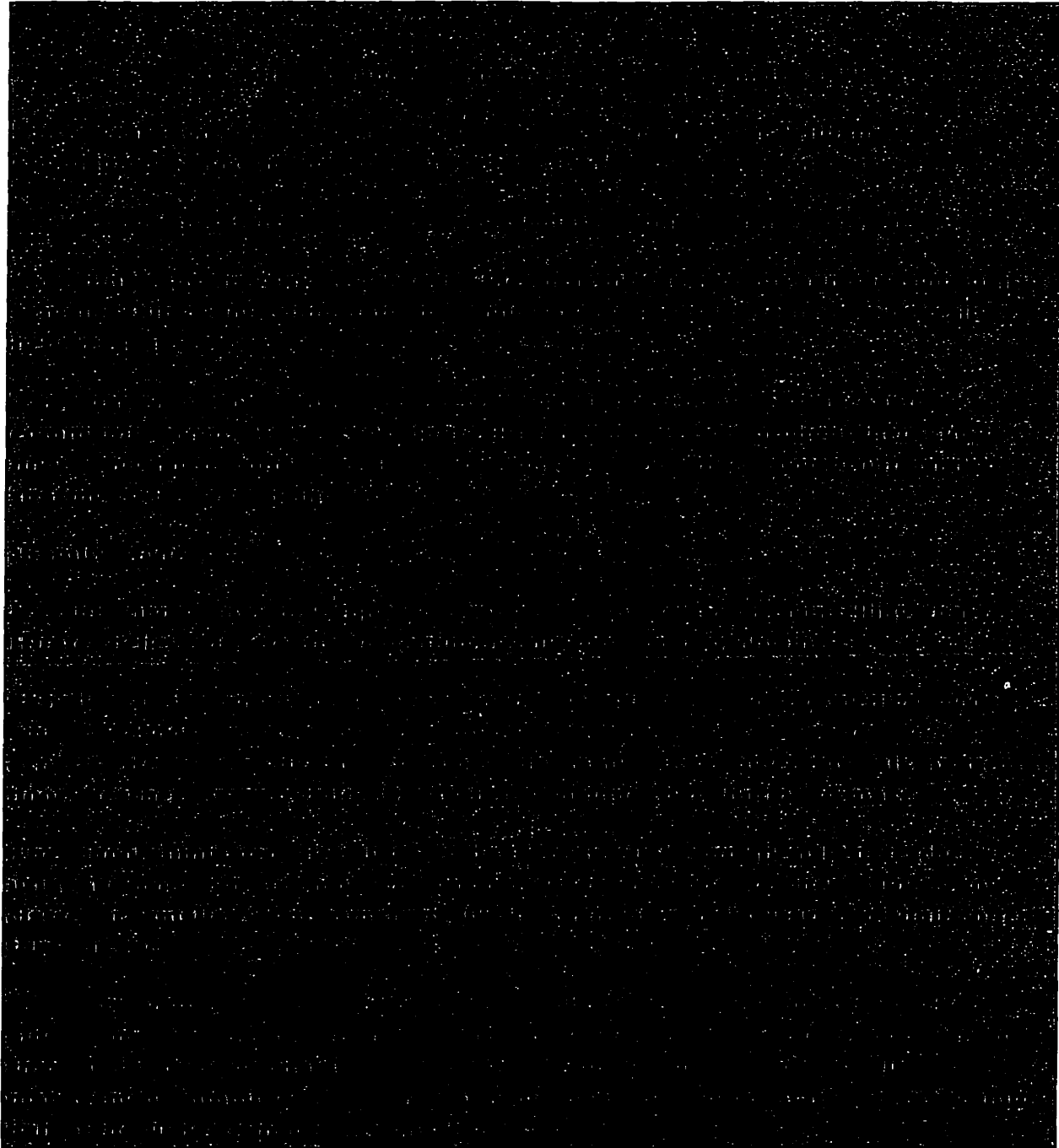
Interventions in schools are usually instrumental or crisis-related with a mechanistic phenomenon arising from this kind of educational practice. The children and families with skills to cope with the existing organizational arrangements of schools benefit from the available support and resources. This is particularly the case for those families who are able to assert themselves and place demands on the system. Other situations go unnoticed as there are few opportunities to engage in preventative or generative practice. Yet, it is precisely this kind of work that is needed if long-term commitment to change is to be an ongoing active dimension of educational practice.

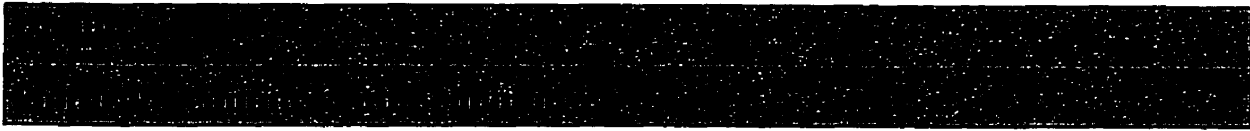
. . . if a situation fails to link a specific and immediate problem with the social dynamics of which it is but one manifestation and if it fails to link the temporary and partial solutions with the larger social transformation that is required for realistic solutions, then it is extremely limited, at best, and deceptive and repressive, at worst.

(Galper, 1980, 11)

Overall, educational reform efforts have not been successful in helping poor children do well in school. This chapter has provided an account of current educational practice as it responds to short term obligations with the delivery of social solutions. In Chapter 3, the notion of poverty as it relates to absence of power is examined in the context of the political economy of education. Consideration is given to the ways issues of poverty and

inner city education are linked to the structures of schooling. Also explored are concepts of class and critical consciousness as a useful context for collective action at the local school level.





There is no such thing as a neutral education process. Education either functions as an instrument which is used to facilitate the integration of the younger generation into the logic of the present system and bring about conformity to it, or it becomes the “practice of freedom,” the means by which men and women deal critically and creatively with reality and discover how to participate in the transformation of their world.

“Foreword” by Richard Shaull, 1970, 15 (italics in original text)

Introduction

Political economy provides a theoretical framework for understanding how community economic development and community-based practice can strengthen the inner city economy for the betterment of children and families. In this work, the position taken is that schools really don't do an adequate job of addressing the needs of those who are most severely economically disadvantaged. Instead, schools actually contribute to

and support disparate economic conditions. Schooling as a systemic mechanism is part of a larger set of social and economic structures that institutionalize inequality. These unjust structures are embedded in our social world.

Political economy establishes the relationship between the economy -- the way production is organized -- and the political and social institutions and processes of society. Education is an institution of the welfare state that, itself, is rooted in contradictions. These contradictions emerge out of the welfare state as it is considered to be both as an agency of repression and as a system for enlarging human needs and mitigating the rigors of the free-market economy (Gough, 1979).

Political economy: A branch of the social sciences that takes as its principal subject of study the interrelationships between political and economic institutions and processes. That is, political economists are interested in analyzing and explaining the ways in which various sorts of government affect the allocation of scarce resources in society through their laws and policies as well as the ways in which the nature of the economic system and the behaviour of people acting on their economic interests affect the form of government and the kinds of laws that get made.


“ A Glossary of Political Economy Terms ”

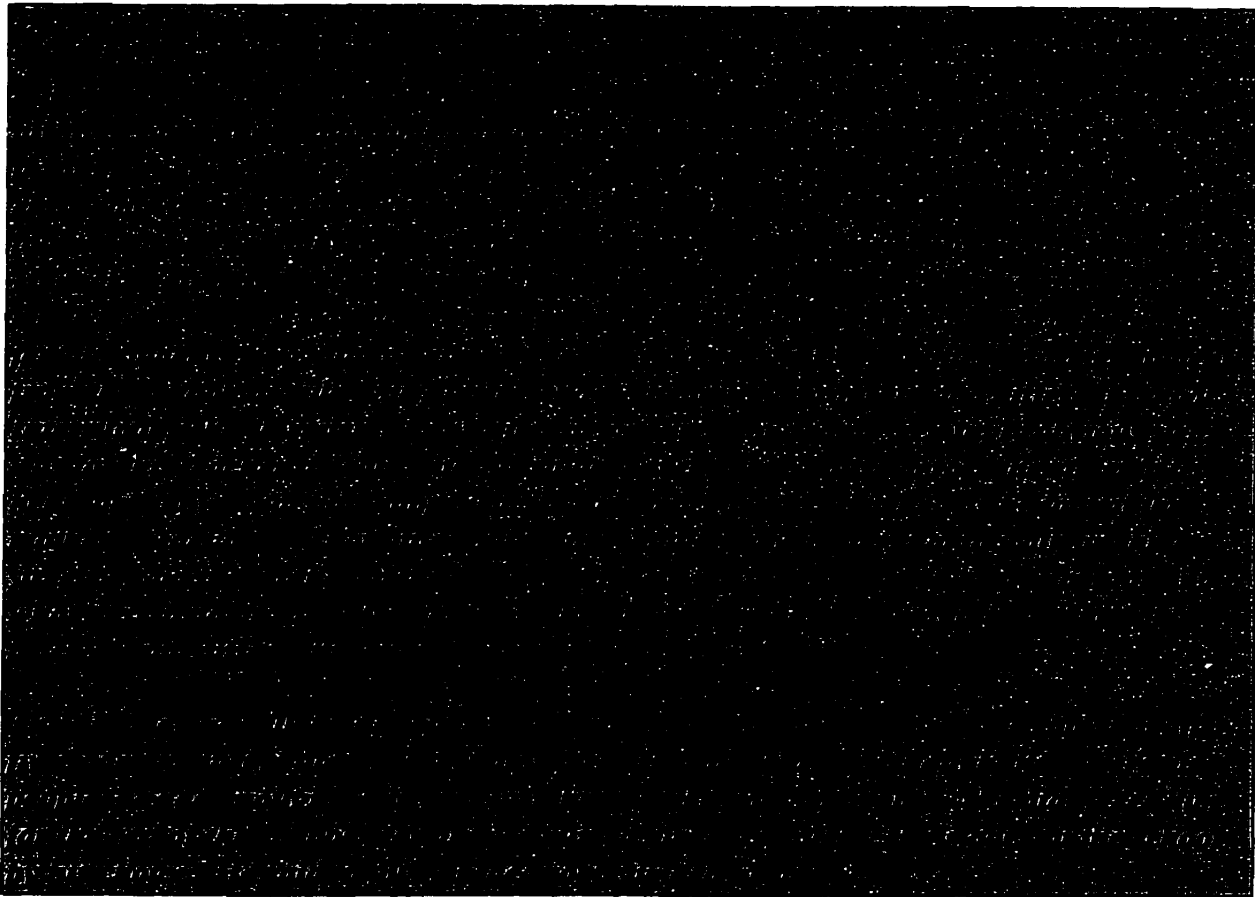
Paul M. Johnson, 1999

Political economy is a way of thinking about education that creates an alternate conceptual framework for analysis of institutions established for health, social welfare, employment, and training give structure to community life in the inner city. It is these systems that reproduce human relations according to economic requirements. Concerned with the interrelationships between economic and social institutions and processes, political economic theory frames schools as social institutions foundational to creating and sustaining equity and justice.

Poverty is an economic condition. Understood as such, the problems of poverty require economic responses. This is as much the case in education as it is in other related areas of employment, training, and business development. It is also the case in the delivery of health and family services, and in ensuring public safety and social justice. Yet, considering the conventional approaches to the delivery of services in these areas, conditions of poverty continue to confound the service providers.

Labels of "disadvantage," "at risk," and "high needs," acknowledge the influences of poverty. Nevertheless, service solutions are generally referenced to psycho-social considerations. Issues of class in education provide a counter argument to orthodox thinking of schools as places open for all to achieve and shows this latter way of thinking serves to mask the economic realities of public schooling.





Issues of Class in Education

Class analysis is a tool of political economy. It is concerned less with the nuances of what constitutes the mainstream versus the marginalized and more with acknowledging hegemony in economic terms. In the evaluation and ranking of social categories there are three fundamental dimensions within all systems of social stratification being power, privilege, and prestige (Hughes and Kallen, 1974). Further influences to class structure come with considerations of ethnicity and race although heterogeneous cultural developments sometimes conceal other class realities (Aronowitz, 1975).

There is merit to applying class analysis as a way of understanding issues of poverty and schooling and the influences of class structures on school and community life. In education, social class is a concept that is frequently referred to in the problem definition stage of research on poverty and education but there is a tendency to set it aside as being an economic problem unrelated to education in terms of solutions. As an educational construct, it has an opaqueness that results in some important educational realities related to poverty being overlooked or set off to one side because of some implicit agreement that this area should remain outside of the educational mandate. With a closer consideration of social class, understanding its conceptual beginnings and its impact on issues of poverty, the role for schools becomes more transparent. Looking back to go forward is an approach used in participatory economics which could be helpful here (Albert, 1997).

Understanding the nature of class and class conflict recognizes two points of view: one takes the position that there will be an end to ideological influences with the development of mature capitalist societies and the other, a Marxist view, predicts its increase (Mann, 1977). Critical theorists learn from Marxist ideas and locate hope in the potential for emergent class consciousness.

There is a strong tradition of thinking about social class as a concept necessary for social organization because of its integrative function of social order. Influencing educational theory is functionalist theory referenced to the Weberian tradition. Weber presents a broader conceptualization of social stratification in terms of class, status, and power, classified by types of authority:

A "class" is any group of persons occupying the same class status. . . . The concept of class and class status as such designate only the fact of identity or similarity in the typical situation in which a given individual and many others find their interests defined. . . . Only persons who are completely unskilled, without property and dependent on employment without regular occupation, are in a strictly identical class status. Transition from one class to another vary greatly in fluidity and in the ease with which an individual can enter the class. Hence the unity of "social" classes is highly relative and variable.

(Weber, 1968, 201-202)

A Marxist view of social class broadens to embody a theory of history and revolution not just considering the concept of class as fundamental to the social order but separating individuals into distinct groups depending upon their economic relationship to the means of production. According to Marx, these "classes as such" are determined by this economic relationship but, a "class for itself" could exist if members of a class became conscious of themselves as members (Marx, 1976).

Marxist theory has been fundamental to the development of radical theory. In educational leadership, the influence of the Frankfurt School developed a perspective on struggle and emancipation within a Marxist paradigm yet much of its discourse remains abstracted from the actual struggle and the terrain of power. Theory as political endeavor risks being separated from the struggle of women, of those non-white, and of the poor, but Marxism gives way to a critical stance of the "we".

The significance of the primacy of class and most generally the economic sphere, particularly production relations, in Marxist theory, cannot be overestimated. For Marx, class was the fundamental theoretical category explaining history and the nature of the human struggle. His famous formulation that “the history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggle” became the theoretical cornerstone for various shades of Marxists in understanding and explaining the underlying logic of capitalist exploitation as it evolved within the sphere of production. Moreover, against those views of history in which great ideas or great men became the central explanatory categories, it provided an alternative analysis.

(Aronowitz and Giroux, 1993, 113-114)

Refining a Marxist theory of class, Miliband suggests two polar groups exist in our society -- the class that on the one hand owns and controls, and the working class, on the other, that does not. While admitting other classes made up by various economic, social, and occupational groups, this kind of analysis puts forward the notion of a dominant class (Miliband, 1969). Adams, too, looks to the unequal distributions of power and resources in our society to produce two groups. Canada's society is a class society, organized around the division between the powerful and the powerless - a division that perpetuates itself from generation to generation (Adams, 1971). Expanding the notion of power as class defining for the evaluation and ranking of social categories, the three fundamental dimensions identified within all systems of social stratification are power, privilege, and prestige (Hughes and Kallen, 1974). Therborn raises similar questions about power

related to the dialectics of state power and class rule. Therborn points to the difference between the "power to do" as opposed to "power over" identifying the mainstream concept of power as something to struggle for, to win, and the to act in ways to keep it. But, the primary motive of the "power to do" evokes the question "power to do what?" (Therborn, 1980).

The implications of ethnicity and race further influence considerations about class structure although heterogeneous cultural developments sometimes conceal the class realities associated with these concepts (Aronowitz, 1975). Terms of "race", "gender", and "class" are socially constructed, open to interpretation, and generally referenced to the ideological perspective of whoever might be using them for whatever purpose. Poverty gives community context to the cultural experience. The lived experience of poverty crosses cultural borders (Giroux, 1992). A clearer understanding of these concepts is gained when language changes to describe race as being non-white, gender as being non-male, and class as being poor.

Education is a Political Act

In political economic terms, education may be understood as an ideological state apparatus that is heavily dependent on a large number of workers to make it operate effectively for the state (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978). Conceived this way, education is a political act (Freire, 1973) and it becomes a necessary tool for those living in economic disadvantage to bring about social change. Within the politics of change, schools hold potential for collective action. Working together broadens an alliance from an

individualized experience to the experience of collectivity. This can “provide individuals who feel harried and trapped in society with a real opportunity for community activity . . . for some profound education, for a real attempt to grasp a piece of the social world and change it” (Corrigan and Leonard, 1978, 148). This struggle exists for children and their families living the urban core of Winnipeg. Establishing a link between history and policy show how some things can change in our educational practice which can help to define solutions to address the root problem of poverty.

Poverty is systemic causing inner city children to endure oppression. Left alone in their community, they will not develop the critical understanding they need to shape, to create, and to participate in their world. Disadvantaged children see themselves through the eyes of the advantaged. Poverty makes people objects having to adapt to things done to them and to their community. Freire describes this adaptive behavior as characteristic of the animal world. People become dehumanized but this can be overcome if people are able to interact with, rather than adapt to, their world (Freire, 1973).

Conscientizacao means the awakening of critical awareness. Freire describes it as a process of becoming more fully human divided into stages of magical, naive, and critical consciousness. Magical individuals conform to the situation in which they find themselves. Naive individuals blame themselves for their situation and spend all their energy trying to conform to the system. Critical awareness leads people to see the system as needing to be transformed and themselves as agents of change.

This understanding exacts a role for urban core schools to engage learners to become actors, not acted upon, in their community. High test scores and having students feel good about themselves are not sufficient indicators of effective teaching practice. If

anything, emphasis on these outcomes reinforces adaptive kinds of behavior children should be encouraged to grow through. Indicators of school improvement in the urban core should reflect developing levels of critical awareness demonstrated by learners in interaction with their community. Initiatives which focus only on the learner as the locus for change are likely to be those of the conventional sort characterized as a matter of course by their function as systems-maintaining. Innovations reflecting collective interests assist schools to respond to a community of learners where all have a part in creating and sustaining change.

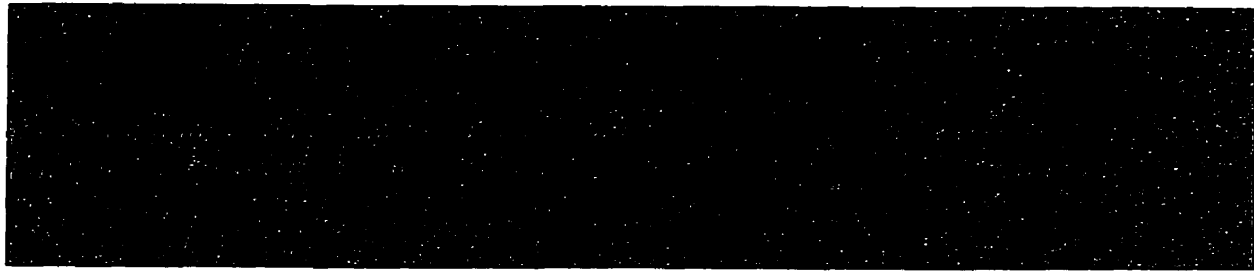
. . . of fundamental importance to education as an authentically gnosiological condition is the problematization of the world of work, products, ideas, convictions, aspirations, myths, art, sciences, the world in short of culture and history which is the result of relations between human beings and the world. To resent this human world as a problem for human beings is to propose that they enter into it critically, taking the operation as a whole, their action, and that of others in it.

(Freire, 1973, 155)

Freire claims that the aim of education should be for liberation, rather than domestication, of the human experience. Being disempowered does not mean being without potential for change. Recognizing strengths of children and families in the urban core, particularly the strong survival skills which people develop in order to cope in conditions of economic disadvantage, provides a basis upon which to build community development strategies. The challenge to those of us working in urban schools is to engage community

in a learning process that allows people to problematize their experiences so as to develop the critical consciousness necessary for them to become constructive actors in their realities. Rather than requiring students to adjust to schools, school can adapt to the developmental needs of the students in them. Recognizing the real needs that poverty creates for students is a vital understanding for educators. What comes with this understanding is the ability to perceive the widening gap between rich and poor. Not necessarily as clear is the discernment of the difference between compensation and charity, on the one hand, and justice and redress, on the other. Of most importance in this analysis is the ability to identify one's own role as maintaining or transforming our social world.





Empowerment is rightly conceptualized as collective social action. The notion of “literacy” provides illustration. Literacy as a goal in itself is not enough when working with a “marginalized” community. Freire refers to this need to extend learning beyond the “banking” concept of education:

The more students work at storing the deposits entrusted to them, the less they will develop the critical consciousness which would result from their intervention in the world as transformers of that world. The more completely they accept the passive role imposed on them, the more they tend simply to adapt to the world as it is and to take the fragmented view of reality deposited in them . . . The banking approach to adult education, for example, will never propose to students that they critically consider reality. It will deal instead with such vital questions as whether Roger gave green grass to the goat, and insist that, on the contrary Roger gave green grass to the rabbit.

(Freire, 1970, 60-61)

A literacy of thoughtfulness involves both the exercise of thought and a certain amount of caring about other thinkers in past and present communities (Brown, 1991). Applied literacy enables people to articulate important needs for their community. It is a way to

establish visibility and voice with accompanying practical solutions, not just working on assumptions about invisibility. But when democratic ideals of equality and justice are contradicted in societal practices, stereotyping, fragmentation, isolation, invisibility, and imbalance results. In his research study on literacy reform efforts, Brown provides an explanation for this:

Although we have enormous evidence and common sense to back us up on this point, we have also found it politically difficult to assert vigorously that all children can learn whatever they are motivated to learn and whatever they are given appropriate opportunities to learn. To be sure, the basic structures of schooling were established when this was not widely believed; it appeared that only a few students had the intelligence to excel at schoolwork, just as it appeared that only a few people could excel at being millionaires or rulers of vast empires. It appeared that poor people and minorities - and, in fact, the majority of young people who swarmed into schools during the Great Depression - lacked the interest, intelligence, and willpower to tackle academic success. It appeared that a high I.Q. was the key to academic success, and only a few people had high I.Q.s. It appeared that children had to learn how to compete so they could fit into a dog-eat-dog, competitive world. There had to be winners, and there had to be losers; schools had to sort out people into the economic and social strata that were best for them. Allowing that it all made sense at one time and was consistent with the economic and social realities of the early twentieth century, it has not made sense for the past fifty years, and it does not fit the economic and social realities we have faced during that period.

(Brown, 1991, 250-251)

People are Community

Education and community building are human endeavors and, because of this, we need to be mindful of fundamental assumptions about human nature that necessarily influence practice in schools. Early in life, we begin to develop a perspective on the world, a world view that has to do with beliefs about what it means to be human in this world. Teachers' enterprise, both in the classroom and as it spins out to influence school administration and school organization, has strong roots in what people believe about life and, as such, about notions of what things are good and not good. Beliefs about the human capacities for good or propensities for evil, innate goodness versus homo dementias, are revealed in day to day living and in the work that we do. This is just as apparent in practice in schools as in other work places and daily life situations. In preservice training days and, then, in professional development activities once on the job, teachers learn how to be good at their work. Less clear, though, is how teachers can apply these skills to accomplish good. A main tenet of this study is that doing 'good' in educational practice, at the local school level, is a fundamental step in the movement toward greater social justice. Further, the essence of what is good in education is measured by the extent to which equity and justice is reflected as practice. This requires us to go beyond an understanding of human nature to an understanding of human oppression and how we can work collectively toward a just and equitable educational transformation.

The local school is a critical site for social change with many and real opportunities for us all to become actors, rather than acted upon, in our social world (Freire, 1972). With the

recognition that systems work to keep poor families poor, comes the understanding that the local school likely contributes to these mechanisms. If teachers are to be agents of change in the social arena, then they use their voices to confront this injustice, and encourage the voice of others. The nature of good in community-based schooling moves beyond the actions of dismantling systemic barriers of poverty, to inform practice with essential questions which assist our judgment and which involve asking what is best? , what is right?, what is doable? and what do we know? Thoughtful analysis about good educational practice involves questions of values, moral and practical considerations, and reflection on experience. It implies a vision that goes beyond the parameters of the job which leads to critical action situated in the context of community. Schooling and curriculum can address cultural differences by becoming fully aware of the political economic nature of the school system and the enormity of class struggle.

The challenge is to create at the level of every day life a commitment to solidarity with the oppressed and an identification with past and present struggles against imperialism, against racism, against sexism, against homophobia, against all those practices of unfreedom associated with living in a white supremacist capitalist society. As participants in such a challenge we become agents of history by living the moral commitment to freedom and justice, by maintaining a loyalty to the revolutionary domain of possibility, by speaking truth to power, and by creating a collective voice out of the farthest reaching “we” - one that unites all those who suffer under capitalism, patriarchy, racism, and colonialism throughout the globe.

(McLaren, 1997, 288)

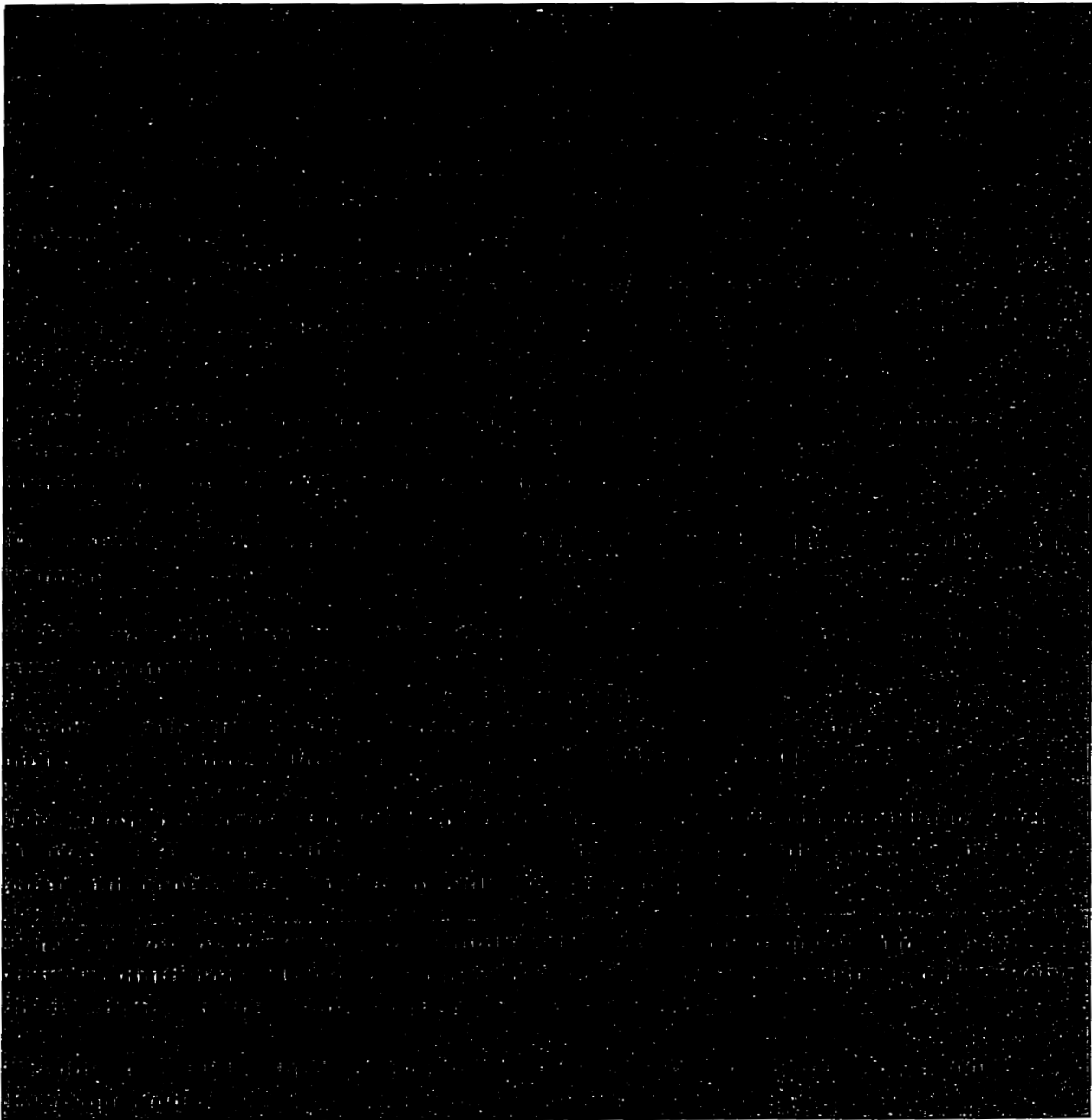
Political economy influences radical theories of schooling helping to "unravel" the ideological interests embedded in the school system, the curriculum, the systems of instruction, and the modes of evaluation (Giroux, 1983). Such foundational understandings are the fundamental basis for teaching and learning about important questions at the core of our social world; to account for why there are such extremes of rich and poor among us for example. Radical theorists understand that the basis for all learning is the struggle for a qualitatively better life for all (Giroux, 1983). Educational reform as a reaction to economic crises denies the social responsibility of education to serve people:

We need to fight not only for an education system that recognizes its preeminently social role, but also for the reassertion of social objectives as the prime task of politics and the subordination of the economic to social imperatives in the wider sphere.

(Bates, 1992, 17)

People are community. Every single person has capacities that can be used to make a contribution. In doing this, people feel valued, powerful and well connected to others around them. And the community will be more powerful because of the contributions each person makes (McKnight, 1993).

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One definition of poverty is Statistics Canada Low Income Cut-Off (LICO), commonly known as the 'poverty line'. By this definition, poverty in Winnipeg's inner city has increased dramatically over the past 25 years. Indeed, by this definition, poverty in Winnipeg's inner city has reached levels that are simply outrageous: the proportion of inner-city families with incomes below the LICO has grown from 32.6 percent in 1971, to 4.3 percent in 1991 and 50.8 percent -- more than half of all inner city families -- in 1996.

Solutions That Work: Fighting Poverty in Winnipeg's Inner City

Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives, 1999

Critical Theory and Inner City Education

There is an underrepresentation of educational concerns related to poverty that address structural inequality and almost an absence of class-based analysis in academic discourse on inner city education. This underrepresentation and meager interest in equality and justice as issues in education are underscored by data which show the growing gap between rich and poor, the systemic maintenance of opportunity and advantage for a few and exploitation and disadvantage for many.

Critical theory in education represents an alternate perspective to address this theory practice gap which continues to present very real and significant challenges. A critical perspective moves educational theorizing towards the action of inclusion, it transcends debate on method to concentrate on application, and establishes within the knowledge base, ways of thinking necessary when bringing together economic theory and educational practice.

Critical pedagogy, in this sense, remains committed to the practical realization of self-determination and creativity on a collective social scale. When I think of critical pedagogy as a practice of liberation, I think not only of Paulo Freire, Augusto Boal, Rosa Luxemburg, Judi Barri, Che Guevara, and Malcom X, for example, but also, of Emiliano Zapata . . . Like Zapata, critical educators need to wage nothing less than war in the interests of the sacredness of human life, collective dignity for the wretched of the earth, and the right to live in peace and harmony.

(McLaren, 1998, 13)

Understanding that schools do contribute to inequality is foundational to a critical perspective. To start, it is useful to consider what is already known and accepted in the field. Next steps include the acceptance of the transformational role for schooling in the social development of our world and the recognition of alternative perspectives so to expand, strengthen, and legitimate alternative ideas for educational administration research and practice. Critical theorizing represents such an approach to understand from history and from the poor how these conditions are a result of the structures of our social

world and, further, to understand how through school leadership, school organization and change processes can shift to become community-based.

When inner city schools fail to perceive poverty as a presenting problem it is some indication that pressing social issues will not be addressed and, by default, these schools will likely fail at their educational mission. Though there may be serious disagreement as to the nature and causes of poverty, there is great consensus on schools being special places where children should be able to grow to their full capacities. With this common objective in mind, we can identify, better understand, and act upon the processes, linkages, and opportunities to bring about change. The school is a critical setting to engage in processes that transcend existing social realities and transform existing economic arrangements toward the more fully human experience of equality and justice.

Outsider Research

We know that research done well, in both its quantitative and qualitative forms, is a significant tool in understanding and improving educational policy and practice (Apple, 1994). But research which answers a question relies on the question that is asked which, in turn, depends on who is asking the question. In inner city education, this difficulty is apparent when studying educational issues related to poverty. The critical distinction between research designed to answer a question or questions as compared to research designed to provide solutions to a problem or problems is a difference of involvement on the part of the researcher. For people who are poor, the research which quantifies or elicits the causal effects of poverty, or tells a story of the poverty experience, is not as

relevant or useful as is participatory action research that is engaged to offset causes of poverty or reduce its effects. The next section shows how methodology is less an issue than is the perspective or stance of the researcher and the concomitant theoretical commitments that influence research studies.

With much at stake, particular care must be taken in the conception and implementation of research strategies for the inner city. I point, by way of example, to a recent study conducted on ghetto schooling by Anyon. Her research presents a historical account of the city and schools of Newark over the last 100 years with primary sources being archival materials such as newspapers, printed documents, and interviews with participants and knowledgeable observers. She is clear that her work is not a social history and that we will not hear the voices of the residents of Newark about their feelings and actions about educational developments in their city. Anyon's work comes under criticism by subjects of the study.

When I presented to teachers and administrators a draft of my experience at Marcy School - which included my perceptions of abusive statements made by both black and white adults or children in the school - there were some painful moments. The teachers who met with me to discuss the draft (all of whom happened to be African American), admitted that I had not made any mistakes other than the grade placement of a few children, but expressed anger that I would see their school in such a negative way.

I was told later that a leader of the black parents, after reading the manuscript, tore it into pieces and said that it was "just another white person trashing the school."

(Anyon, 1997, xix)

Anyon attributes this reaction to differences in meanings that occur when observed conditions, such as those involving race, are socially constructed and are dependent on vantage point. What appeared to Anyon to be abuse could be, by African American teachers, interpreted as strict discipline. She defends her position as outside observer thinking such that newness of impression could weigh in as valuable being able to see things that long-time participants cease to perceive as remarkable.

This problem becomes generalized as a researcher dilemma when Anyon describes seeing what she considered to be abuse of children during her school-based research but not doing anything about it. This is kind of research difficulty experienced by outsiders is a conflictual predicaments that is real and concerning.

Awkwardness of research stance can also interfere with credibility and dissemination. Even with a shared interest in making schools more effective, the relationship between the researcher and the researched can be problematic. Riffel and Levin describe the situation which resulted when they attempted to conduct research in three schools with the teachers “as partners. . . in the search for more effective change in their own settings” (Riffel and Levin, 1986, 110):

. . . (O)ur approach did not work with them. We now wonder if the kind of relationship we sought - one of equal collaboration between teachers and researchers - is indeed possible. Perhaps the lifeworlds of the two activities are simply too far apart to allow bridges to be built. . . . We suspect, however, that it is next to impossible for

researchers' accounts to form the basis for sustained reflection and action on the part of teachers, any more than one culture might decide to change its patterns on the basis of a report done by someone from another culture. . . . While the outcomes of our work have not saddened us, they have made us wonder. Ironically, the persons who may reflect on the project in such a way as to change what they do could turn out to be the researchers themselves.

(Riffel and Levin, 1986, 117-118)

This call for self-examination by the researcher is a necessary, approaching courageous, step in transforming the requirements for researchers to be participants in that which is under study.

Critical Participatory Research

While studies show extreme negative impacts of poverty on student achievement, on diminishing individual human capacity, on outcomes for poor families as played out in economic and social spheres, and on diminishing social democracy, research efforts from the academic community and from the field have had limited impact. To understand why this is the case, it is useful to consider the ways in which participatory research might be conducted in schools.

In his study of collaborative research, Levin identifies three basic research orientations which he labels the pragmatic, the philosophical, and the political (Levin, 1993). Levin

describes the pragmatic perspective as one that views research as having greater impact when there is participation by people involved in the study. For example, evaluation studies that seek people's input right from the beginning do so in the belief that there will be increased confidence in the research findings. Levin identifies the philosophical position as one that supports learning about the social world from the people in it. He cites the work of Thomas Greenfield who allowed subjectivity to enter the discourse on people and organizations in educational administration theory. In describing the third perspective, the political one, Levin identifies the influences of adult education, feminist research, and critical theory:

The third orientation is political. Here the argument is that researchers have a moral obligation not just to study, but also to act in the interests of those they study. Research is seen to be part of the political world where solving problems is as important as identifying them.

The political orientation is especially strong in three bodies of work. One is adult education, where it grows from work that centers on empowering learners. The second is feminist research, where a commitment to action is often regarded as required of feminist researchers. . . . A third is critical theory, in which the commitment to improvement is seen as a fundamental requirement for research.

(Levin, 1993, 332)

A political research orientation, particularly as influenced by critical theory, would include advocates of collaboration through critical participatory research. Critical research efforts can be influenced by third world and rural development and development

efforts for the urban poor which share common history and purpose. Popular education and participatory action research are two central traditions of nonformal education. Popular education is highly critical of mainstream education, seeking to empower the marginalized, the disenfranchised, and the poor. Participatory action research combines research, educational work, and social action (Torres, 1995, 237).

Fine defines activist research as that which links "what is" to "what could be", using "We" instead of "I", electing a political and intellectual commitment to the fusion of the personal and professional, the individual and collective. "Essential to an activist stance, then, - be it feminist, African American, socialist-feminist, educational, or postmodern - is that researcher activists, informants, and other audiences be engaged as critical participants" (Fine, 1994).

Fine organizes social research differences into three categories of ventriloquy, voice, and activism. Ventriloquy is research conducted with an unauthored voice without race, gender, class, or stance. The absence of "I" implies that the subjects are objects all the while calling them subjects. It is an approach which denies politics to accomplish the very political work of social research (Fine, 1994). According to Fine, use of voices in research, such as narrative inquiry and critical ethnography, may result in a personal reflection as a form of ventriloquism. Fine explains "when voices - as isolated and innocent moments of experience - organize our research texts, there is often a subtle slide toward romantic, uncritical, and uneven handling, and a stable refusal, by researchers, to explicate our own stances and relations with these voices" (Fine, 1994, 22).

Kincheloe argues that the conventional methods of evaluation of educational practice show tendencies toward studying and measuring that which is of least cost but not

necessarily that which is important or valued in education. Action research concepts such as the promotion of greater teacher self-understanding of his or her practices, conceptual change, and appreciation of the social forces that shape the school are ignored in the traditional research classes (Kincheloe, 1995). Levin observes that "the degree of advocacy for collaboration . . . is not nearly equaled by work which is actually collaborative" and that the "simple and powerful reason why this is true" is that "writing about or advocating collaboration is much easier than doing collaborative research (Levin, 1993, 332). In the next section, a review of educational administration as a field of study links the reluctance to do collaborative research to past tendencies in the field to overlook critical theory.



Educational Administration as a Field of Study

Educational administration has been described as scholarly enterprise seemingly incapable of escaping narcissism and the tyranny of isolation (Walker, 1984.) The explanatory aspect of the study of administrative behavior in education appears to be an incomplete anthology of short stories connected by no particular story line or major themes (Boyan, 1988). Bates challenges the field as being content with the contemplation of a further twenty-five years of drift and disillusion:

What are we to make of a field that brushes aside serious criticisms of epistemological and ontological foundations of its preferred theoretical base? That is complacently satisfied with the maintenance of a status quo which is regarded by practitioners and public alike as less and less adequate? That regards the role of theory in sustaining and developing practice as only marginally relevant? Certainly not that is a field working towards the challenge of an alternative paradigm.

(Bates, 1988, 7)

A review of the literature in educational administration reveals a perceived range of options for practice. Griffiths defines the field in terms of traditional and nontraditional approaches with the latter meaning to consider alternatives but not reject conventional ideas. Griffiths contends that traditional theory and research in educational administration should not be under attack. "The usual way of 'doing business' needs no

defense. . . we must admit that the traditional approach has been fruitful, if incomplete”
(Griffiths, 1991.)

The point is, I believe, that many problems in educational administration are best examined through traditional theories and methods, but there are others that are not. In fact, if the researcher is wearing spectacles of traditional theory, he or she does not even see many problems. Research in educational administration should be done using appropriate theories and methodologies. Researchers should be trained in a wide variety of theories and methodologies and should use those that are most appropriate to solve the problem at hand.

(Griffiths, 1991, 263)

The acceptance of no one right way is holding strong currency in recent accounts of the field. Yet, is this truly the case? It seems that, while liberating us from many of the constraints of conventional practice, as Griffiths suggests, the field remains largely influenced by policies and practice of the mainstream. Respected scholars in the field clearly continue to favour science as method, although not necessarily articulated as a world view. "There are powerful and exciting philosophical alternatives to the various forms of subjectivism, critical theory, and postmodernism in vogue today. Trendy as they may be, these latter views are flawed and promise to contribute little to our understanding of how schools work and how they might be improved. Students of educational administration need greater exposure to antipositivistic thinking that shows scientific inquiry to be the enormously important, if very human, activity that it is"(Willower, 1996).

Willower's understanding of educational theory and its role in contributing to the social development of our world suggests a broadened knowledge base that integrates philosophic ideas. Meier writes of the importance of openness to other ideas, and of our willingness to suspend belief long enough to entertain ideas contrary to our own, "the habit of stepping into the shoes of others -- both intellectually and emotionally," as key ingredients to democratic education.

I consider informed skepticism - a willing suspension of prior belief - to be at the heart of democratic education, a habit or disposition natural to young children and essential to open society.

(Meier, 1996, 272)

There appears to be growing recognition of the need for the resurgence of the ideals of community, democracy, and social responsibility in the academic world and an irony in the growing voice, heard from leaders in the field, of the need to broaden the field to admit change. Reyes identifies the need to reinvent our schools as if the future matters, the need to treat children as human citizens and not as potential robots to fill slots in the job market (Reyes, 1993). Bredeson emphasizes the need for an authentic scholarly community and suggests a move away from the current situation where the values and norms of generosity, fairness, mutual respect, and social responsibility are given diminished importance in research universities that are guided by norms of materialism, individualism, and competitiveness (Bredeson, 1994).

In light of these needs, it is apparent that ontological and epistemic arguments about what constitutes a best knowledge base for educational theorizing and practice are missing some very critical dialectical considerations on issues of class, race, and gender, notions of community and culture. Somewhat prescient in recognizing the potential impact of postmodern rhetoric very early on in what is now a growing, and seemingly endless theory discourse, Hodgkinson comments on how the field, rather than broadening, is potentially inhibiting its own development.

First, and most important, is that the tension between opposing positions - qualitative-quantitative, art-science, subjective-objective, individual-collective, phenomenological-logical - has never been resolved. In terms of Hegelian dialectics no synthesis has been achieved. As (Greenfield) put it, . . .no phoenix has arisen from the ashes because there are no ashes. Nor, despite protestations by the late William Walker, is there any intellectually defensible melding of the opposing positions about the truth and nature of organizational life. Willower's neo-Deweyan pragmatism is certainly no synthetic resolution; nor is the coherentist physicalism of Evers and Lakomski. And the complementary notion of unity in diversity expounded by Boyan, . . . represents an understandable but in the end tender-minded abdication of the attempt to define a new paradigm.

(Hodgkinson, 1993, in Greenfield on Educational Administration, xiv)

Uncritical Educational Administration

This section presents an account of why there is an absence of more critical ways of thinking in educational debates. It explains the apparent contradictions between the publicly affirmed aims for educational administration and how things actually appear in the field by examining the theoretical underpinnings and differences in historical understanding that have held, and still hold, the most influence on educational research and practice.

Perhaps the most significant influence early on in the development of educational administration as a distinct field of study came with the introduction of scientific management to education (Taylor, 1911). This influence continued as administrative theorists sought to develop comprehensive conceptualizations of educational leadership. First published in 1945, Herbert Simon's *Administrative Behavior* put forward an approach that presents as method value-free inquiry into decision-making and administrative rationality. Even today, these methods are considered to provide the way by which we can be certain of reliable knowledge about educational administration as practice. "Simon's great contribution was his recognition that making decisions is the essence of administration. In a way not found in previous studies, he saw that decisions are taken by human beings, not by boxes drawn on an organization chart" (Greenfield, 1993, 137).

While positivism continued to dominate the field, scholars began to study administrative behavior rather than organizational behavior. Spearheading the New Movement that still continues to influence theory and research in the field, Halpin put forward a paradigm that attributed clear and measurable outcomes for an organization but considered administrative behavior as the variable that could potentially impede or assure

organizational goals.

Administration as a normative discipline deals with how an administrator ought to behave and is predicated upon an ideal situation in which time is theoretically infinite and choices are not coercive; in studying administration as social scientists, the concern is with how administrators actually behave in the 'real' world where time is limited and choices must be made.

(Halpin, 1959, 158)

Extending the contribution of social sciences to the field, Getzel's operational model identified major dimensions of social behavior to account for the personal antecedents of leadership. This model considered the contextual factors that impinge on leader's thinking and behavior and the variables subject to leader's influence and organizational outcomes (Getzels, Lipham, and Campbell, 1968). The notion of paradigm was introduced to support attempts to establish alternatives to traditional theories of science (Kuhn, 1962).

Allowing for subjectivity such that science is governed by ways of seeing things, evidence of this approach is seen in educational administration research that uses frameworks for investigations. Since the early 1970's, the paradigm perspective has taken root in educational administration. While this kind of organizational theorizing addresses values and context for administrative practice, recent attention to issues of diversity broaden the field to acknowledge the impact of culture on administrative

training and practice. And, there is growing recognition that culturally-related differences create a need to localize knowledge underlying administrative preparation (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996).

For the past 30 years, professional preparation and development programmes have sought primarily to teach prospective administrators about the field of educational administration. The curriculum content has focused primarily on theories and concepts derived from the social science disciplines of sociology, psychology, economics and political science. The predominant modes of instruction have been lecture and group discussion, with case teaching, simulations and experiential learning finding occasional favour among certain professors and in selected programs. . . . On entry into the field, however, graduates of these training programmes report that relatively little of the knowledge to which they have been exposed seems relevant to the problems and tasks they confront on the job.

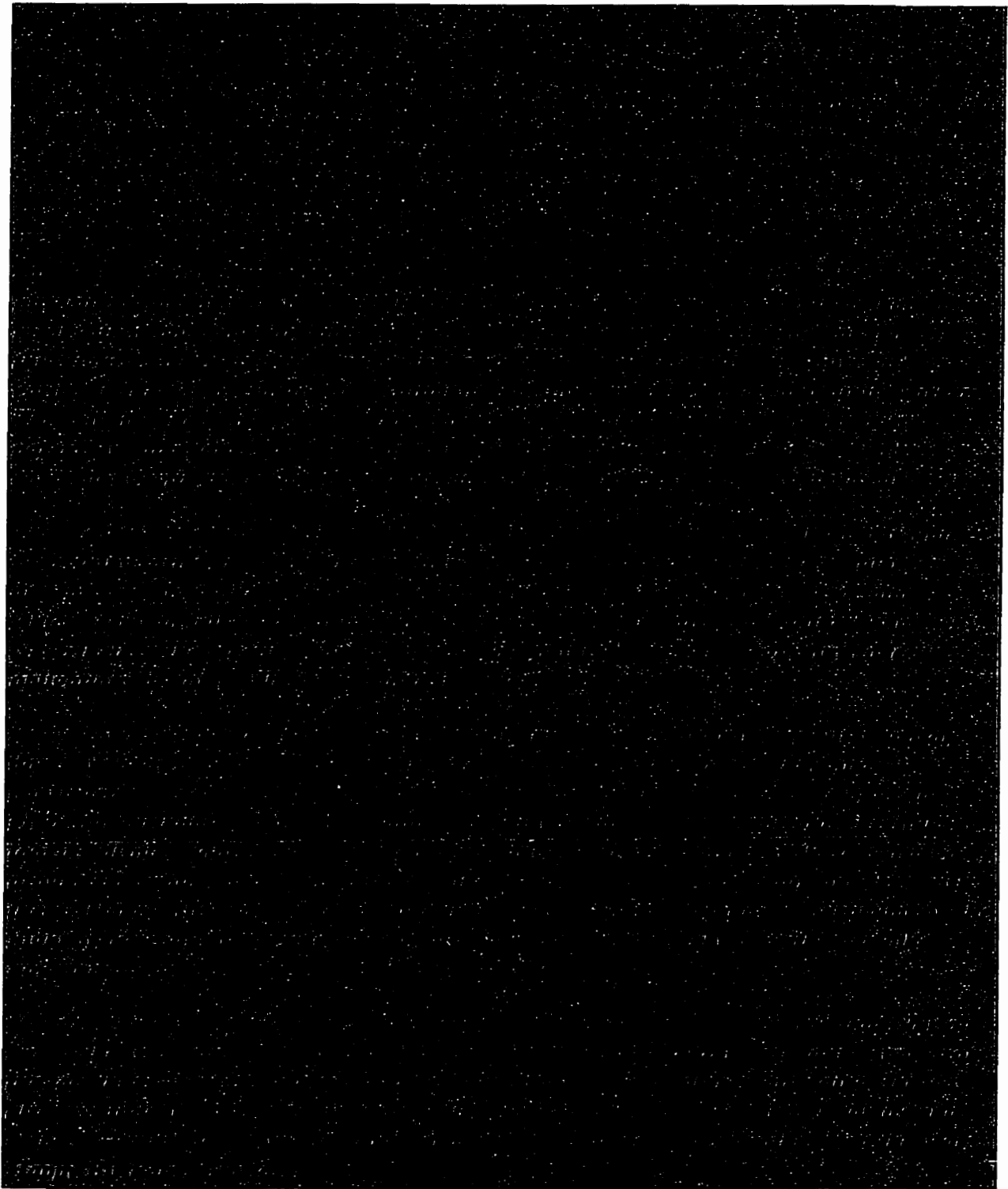
(Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996, 110, italics in original text)

Accounting for why educational administration is largely an uncritical field links to the reality that educational administration theory does not escape from the prevailing orthodoxy of thought which is empiricist and individualistic. It is thinking which does not encourage a dialectic and whose preferred research methods are from a science world view which fits perceptions to the world rather than shaping the world to fit our perceptions (Whitehead, 1929). The abstraction of science to methodology confuses

science as knowledge with "scientific method" and turns the study of educational administration into a problem of method (Culbertson, 1988). As such, theorizing about educational administration has become a problem of instrumental strategies and, in the face of methodological controversy, practical realities are left unconsidered (Bookchin, 1991).

Theoretical treatises on the nature of leadership, particularly in educational administration as it is considered a field of management, are transferred across cultures with insufficient consideration as to cultural validity. Research and practical experience support the notion that interpretation and application of knowledge - learning - is a culturally-mediated activity (Hallinger and Leithwood, 1996). Yet, the intellectual traditions and practices of other cultures have been either overlooked or judged within the implicit assumptions of western cultures. This understanding represents a challenging issue to be addressed in the field. With consideration of culturally-related differences in the practice of educational administration, certain questions resonate as being class-related differences, too.

Building on Hallinger and Leithwood's work on culture and educational administration, concerns of class overlay concerns of culture. Is there a bottomline, universal, knowledge base regardless of culture? of class? Is the appropriateness or effectiveness of training and methods related to the culture of practitioners? the class of practitioners? Depending on the answers to these questions, how should educational leaders respond to issues of culture? issues of class? social and economic issues in education?



Critical Theory and Educational Administration

Within the domain of societal and cultural influences on schooling, there is the academic argument that presents educational administration as a field of study that needs to commit to democracy by developing a theoretical framework for addressing the issues of racism, sexism, and classism; by fighting politically to ensure the creation of conditions that foster the practices of cultural democracy; and recruiting students, professors, and administrators from marginalized and historically underrepresented groups who have been excluded from the councils of power (Hoy, 1994). Yet, analysis of syllabi collected from faculties of educational administration, show that the approaches taken in course content socialize graduates intellectually and theoretically to mainstream interpretations of educational administration and to a general systems theory in particular (Niccolaides and Gaynor, 1992, 262).

The major conclusion of the study is that, with a few notable exceptions, teaching in these courses is limited to topics and themes shaped by traditional perspectives. Alternative perspectives, such as phenomenology, ethnomethodology and critical theory, and symbolic interactionism, which are widely discussed in the scholarly literature, were neither consistently nor systematically incorporated in the courses examined. Issues such as those dealing with race, gender, ethnicity, and social class were underrepresented.

(Niccolaides and Gaynor, 1992, 263)

Advocates for change in education seem to rely on mainstream theoretical orientations while critical theory in education, with its clearly stated aims for social transformation, is kept at the periphery of the field. Critical theory is more than just intellectual debate, it presents alternatives to orthodox accounts of educational theory. Yet, critical theory in educational administration has been systematically excluded as a body of scholarship because it does not subscribe to a positivistic way of viewing the universe (Foster, 1986). With its roots in radicalism, critical theory not only links behaviour to the interest it embodies but extends beyond the limits of subjectivity which say what is, or what should be, to say how things can be (Giroux, 1983). This is the importance of critical theory because it promotes reflective action and engages collective political efforts.

Critical theorizing is important to parents, teachers, and students in tackling the important issues of social and economic determination oriented toward social justice (Foster, 1986). It is a different way of thinking about education that calls for reflection on practice to challenge the conventional ways of doing things. Critical analysis as a process for practice that will bring about more adequate solutions to problems, yet critical theory argues against one best system:

No solution is presented, only the suggestion that the effort is worth the energy. No recipe for action is given, only the idea that action is needed and valued. No formula is proffered, only the clue that change occurs through reflective consideration of ideas.

(Foster, 1986, 13)

Critical perspective considers how schools can educate for democracy both through

curricula and pedagogical practices. Teachers are regarded as intellectuals and not as technicians. Teachers "take an active role in raising questions about what they teach, how they are to teach, and the larger goals for which they are striving" (Giroux, 1992, 268). They take a more critical role in reconstructing educational leadership to be consistent with what it means to make cultural diversity and social justice central to pedagogy and democratic life.

The foundations of a critical approach are based on critical social theory. Central to this theory is the relationship of schooling to cultural reproduction.

In our current historical situation we can and need to become aware of the reproductive and productive ways that schools create visions of both the past and the future in each generation. Visions of the past reproduce class and gender relationships; visions of the future modify historical relationships by innovative educational practices. A critical examination that adopts leadership as its frame helps to reformulate visions, enabling a more equitable future for new generations.

(Foster, 201, 15)

Critical approaches to educational research and practice offer insights into how forms of governance, resource allocations, and leadership practice perpetuate rather than eliminate inequality and injustice (Robinson, 1998). But, it seems that these theoretical accounts do not necessarily result in effecting structural change. Robinson addresses this issue as to why critical theory does not move beyond critique to the transformative process

supposed to be central to critical theory. To be an effective theory of change, critical theory shifts its methodological approaches to enable it to achieve its transformative purposes. For those concerned with change in education, new ways of understanding problems of agency, motivation, and resistance depend on the ability to make fundamental shifts in their understanding of their own and others' role in its origins and persistence (Robinson, 1994). Dialogue to promote this understanding between researcher and researched requires intellectual commitment to establish a shared understanding to drive the change process.

The effectiveness of a theory is enhanced to the extent that it generates explanations which point the way to a problem's resolution, that it fosters the identification and motivation of agents whose energy and commitment can drive the change process, and that it incorporates a micropolitics that helps critical researchers collaboratively resolve the ethical dilemmas inherent in the approach.

(Robinson, 1998, 17)

The importance of critical theory is not only that it promotes reflective action, but, also, that it can engage collective political efforts among parents, teachers, and students, to work on the important issues of social and economic determination.

Administration must at its heart be informed by critical models oriented toward social justice and individual freedom. This is not just "nice"; it

determines our entire way of life and the purpose of our most important social institution, education.

(Foster, 1986,13)

Foster argues for the reconstruction of administrative science as a moral science, not of the spiritual or religious sort, but in its professional, cultural and ethical sense.

As a moral science, the science of administration is concerned with the resolutions of moral dilemmas. A critical and a literary model of administration helps to provide us with the necessary context and understanding wherein such dilemmas can be wisely resolved.

(Foster, 24, 15)

Conceptual analysis from a critical perspective emphasizes the commitment to democracy as the primary function for educational leadership. Critical participants in education learn historical perspective and understand that the way things are is not the way they have always been or must necessarily be in the future. They use the language of social criticism and have the ability to think in oppositional terms. They use the language of remembrance and understand knowledge as a social and historical construction that is always the object of struggle. They use critical imagination having the vision to see schools as the essential institution for reconstructing and furthering a democratic and just culture.

There is potential to develop an emancipatory theory of leadership using language that is theoretically rigorous, publicly accessible, ethically grounded, and which speaks to a sense of utopian purpose. To do this, we need to answer the questions about the kind of citizens we hope to produce through public education and about the kind of society we want to create (Giroux, 1992). Dialogue between researcher and practitioner requires intellectual commitment to establish a shared understanding to drive the change process.

To generate a new science of educational administration or to posit critical theory to counter these approaches does not address the need for societal change nor define the role for education in that change process. Understanding the link between economic policies and practices and educational administration broadens the field to admit political economy as a way of thinking about educational administration. Particularly with reference to issues of poverty and inner city education, critical educational leadership can create structural opportunity to promote student achievement, to develop community, and to achieve equality.

Theoretical perspective influences issues of research methods and applications in ways that can be potentially either helpful or harmful to the learners in the inner city. This group stands to gain the most depending on how solutions are conceived to address a theory- practice gap which, at present, still tends to suspend practical action in favour of academic debate. With consideration paid to the impact of class, the concept of community is particularly important in the analysis of the potential of community economic development as an approach to constructive change in inner city education.

Just as using community as a context for curriculum inquiry increases the relevance of

education for families dealing with poverty, community-based schooling can be a way to encourage voice and constructive involvement of those who are marginalized or rendered invisible by virtue of their assignment to living in poverty. This kind of study is a means to open the field for research beyond conventional notions of educational administration and moral leadership to support alternative approaches which link economic solutions as political expressions in human terms.

This leadership is moral because it emphasizes bringing diverse people into a common cause by making the school a covenantal community. Covenantal communities have at their center shared ideas, principles, and purposes that provide a powerful source of authority for leadership practice. In covenantal communities the purpose of leadership is to create a shared followership. Leaders in covenantal communities function as head followers.

(Sergiovanni, 2000, 167)

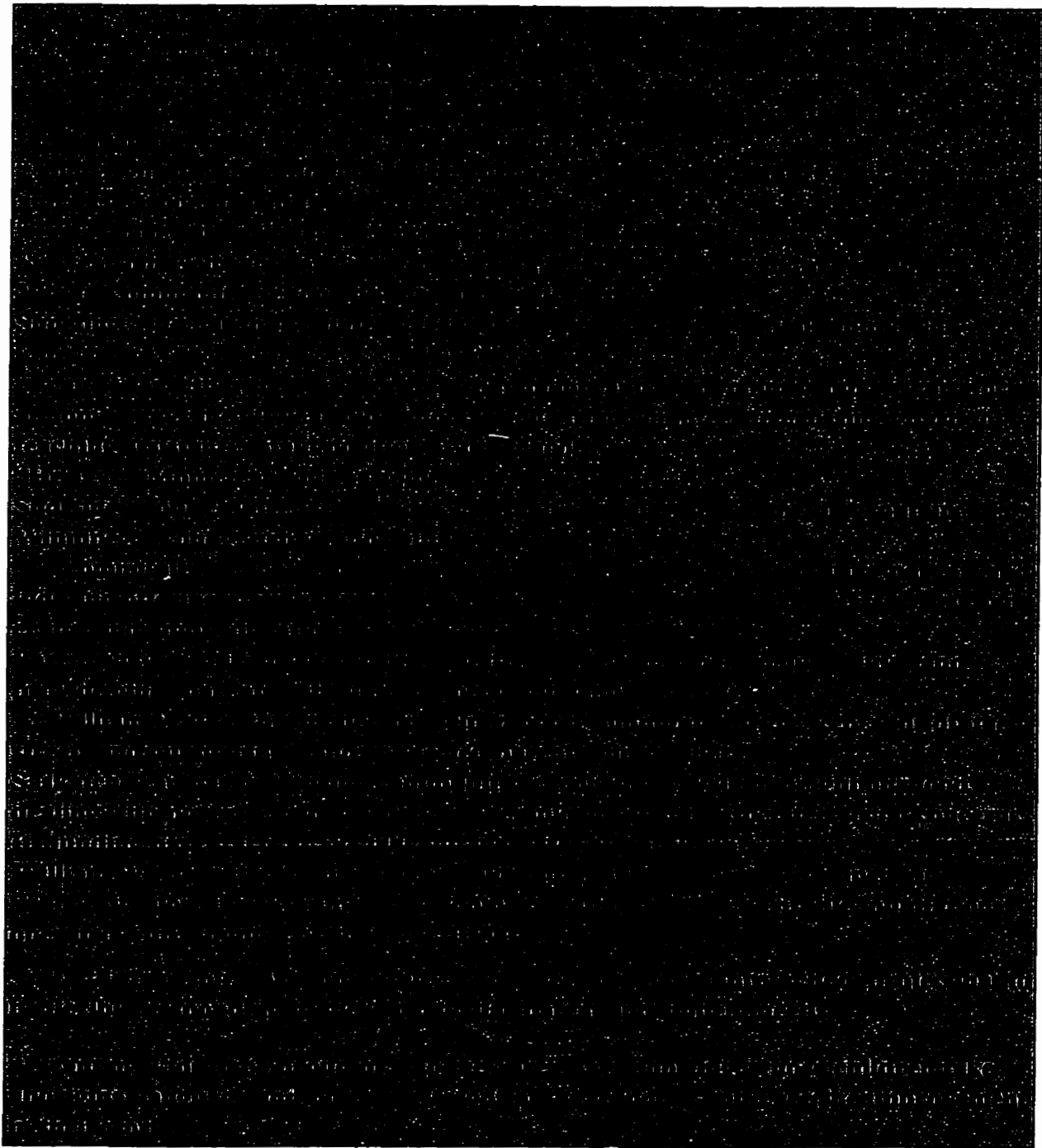
The role school leaders play in addressing poverty issues in inner city education is to work with others towards the achievement of equality through participatory democratic education such that students, and their families, can acquire both the skills and the disposition necessary for strong citizenship and social responsibility. This role requires a holistic view of schools as less hierarchical, embracing community, celebrating diversity, and better serving students by fostering a sense of community and promoting ways to advance solidarity and diversity simultaneously (Boscardin and Jacobson, 1997; Goodlad, 1994; Sergiovanni, 2000).


From the alternative perspective of community economic development, the assumption is made that achieving equality in education is an action to be taken, not a condition to be received. Inequality will not be eliminated by strengthening poor families but, rather, the achievement of equality will strengthen the family, the community, and the nation (Ryan, 1972). Structural opportunity at the local school and community level offers potential for change and hope for solutions.

Without a minimum of hope, we cannot so much as start the struggle. But without the struggle, hope, as an ontological need, dissipates, loses its bearings, and turns into hopelessness. Hence a need for a kind of education in hope One of the tasks of the progressive educator, through a serious, correct political analysis, is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be.

(Freire, 1994, 9)

Strong educational leadership does not only come from the school principal but it is certainly fostered by whomever is in that position. Parents, children, and teachers all have leadership roles in community change. This is why it is important for educational administration to embrace critical perspectives on schooling and school leadership, to explore participatory research methods, and to seek broader knowledge on issues of poverty and social change. To do otherwise keeps educational leadership efforts well intentioned but poorly informed and the conventional ways of doing things simply maintain inner city social and economic realities.





While the causes of poverty are deeply rooted in the international and national structure of our society, the potential for reclaiming and creating wealth at the local community level should not be minimized. A community economic development approach provides people who are concerned about the social and economic conditions of the inner city of Winnipeg with proven strategies for developing greater community self reliance and long term well being.

*It's Up To All Of Us: A Guide for Community Economic Development
in Winnipeg's Inner City*

Community Economic Development Network, 1994.

Introduction

There is good reason to believe, with reference to issues of poverty and education, that collective action could structure opportunities for the betterment of lives of children and families in the inner city. Such community activism could promote increased levels of student achievement and greater degrees of family and neighbourhood stability through community economic development (Blakely, 1994; Christenson and Robinson, 1989; Loxley, 1986; Ross, 1986). Study of the political economy of educational practice suggests that uncritical orthodoxy in education can be addressed through alternate

approaches. One such approach recognizes the potential for community economic development as a strategy for constructive change in inner city education. In this chapter, ideas about community, community development, and local economic development are examined as they can be understood to shape the context for community-based schooling as alternate educational practice in the inner city.

The notion of what is meant by “community-based” depends on how the term community is understood. Definition is important in conceptualizing the notion of “community” as it can provide critical context for teaching and learning in inner city schools. For example, when the metaphor for schooling changes from organization to community (Sergiovanni, 1993), we understand that what is meant by community is educative and developmental. Yet, in the absence of action, the idea of “community” remains useful for scholarship only as definition, or as metaphor.

Gail Furman-Brown separates the literature on community in education into two strands; one that considers school-community connections and the other which focuses on the school itself as a community. She contends that despite a prolific amount of writing on school-as-community, there is little which provides guidance for practice. Even when there is agreement reached on what community really is, for example how to recognize community when we see it, there is very little known about how to create and sustain it (Furman-Brown, 1999). Greene offers the following conceptualization of community that embodies both notions of the individual and the collective:

In thinking of community, we need to emphasize the process words: making, creating, weaving, saying, and the like. Community cannot be produced simply through rational formulation nor through edict. Like

freedom, it has to be achieved by persons offered the space in which to discover what they recognize together and appreciate in common; they have to find ways to make intersubjective sense . . . a space infused by the kind of imaginative awareness that enables those involved to imagine alternative possibilities for their own becoming and their group's own becoming.

(Greene, 1995, 39)

Just as important as the notion of “community is the ways in which the interpretation of “community” may influence the definition of “community development” particularly with respect to determining the objectives for and participation in such development efforts. Christenson and Robinson conducted an extensive review of the diverse definitions of community development. They synthesized key aspects to define community development as “a group of people in a locality initiating a social action process (i.e. planned intervention) to change their economic, social, cultural, and/or environmental situation” (Christenson and Robinson, 1989, 14). Loxley suggests a similar definition of community development as “a conscious intervention on the part of a group of people to shape their lives in directions they feel to be desirable” (Loxley, 1986,2). He goes on to highlight that most of the literature on community development is primarily concerned about development processes and less attention is paid to the reasons why there is a need for such development.

Being largely concerned with “process”, however, the literature on community development tends to overlook the historical factors that give rise to the need for “conscious intervention” by the community. As a result, it also tends to have

relatively little to say about possible economic strategies that communities might adopt to deal with their marginalization. . . . literature on concrete community experiences tends to be more concerned with history and strategic alternatives than is the more general theoretical and policy oriented C.D. literature; but as a rule, the bulk of C.D. literature is relatively silent on crucial aspects of economic strategy communities must confront if 'community development' is to have any lasting beneficial impact.

(Loxley, 1986, 3-4, underlining in original text)

Orthodox approaches to economic development generally have a narrow perspective that emphasizes technical issues mostly concerned with whether a business venture can succeed in a given marketplace or with government interventions as they might strengthen the economic base. In economically disadvantaged communities, a much broader range of issues are involved. Issues to be addressed include political decisions about the control of the process, who the leading participants are to be, who is to have access to community resources, and how the benefits of economic development are to be distributed (Wien, 1986, 127). Implied in this is a role for the local school to contribute to necessary education and training to assist the community to resolve, even in some part, these issues surrounding community development and to establish, at the local level, new economic relationships and institutions.

In the underdeveloped inner city, there is potential for the school to promote curriculum inquiry into community creating learning opportunities to support local development. With this approach, the resources attached to education become an alternate form of

capital and the local school can determine specific ways to use this economic power to support children and families and to strengthen the local economy. Further, educated people are in the position to construct a better quality of life in economic terms. Children and their families in the inner city depend on the local school for educational attainment. Borrowing from the work of Coleman (1988), Maeroff defines this form of capital as “social capital” (Maeroff, 1998). “The argument is that societies derive economic and social benefits by investing in people” (Willms, 2000, 1). Investments in education, health, and nutrition are considered to increase human capital gauged by the knowledge, competencies, and health of individuals. According to Maeroff:

Schools are strengthened when their communities take seriously the matter of supporting education and children. When those in poor neighborhoods turn to activism on behalf of their schools, they usually seek nothing more than the benefits that come to affluent youngsters almost as a matter of birthright.

(Maeroff, 1998, 8)

Missing from the analysis of social capital is the recognition that changing relationships among people does not necessarily imply changing economic relationships. As Willms identifies “social capital is undoubtedly correlated at the community level with the aspects of economic and human capital which are known to affect social outcomes” (Willms, 2000, 1). Community economic development is concerned with social and economic outcomes.

Conventional Inner City Development

The inner city community is dependent on the mainstream urban community. In economic terms, this means a situation in which one economy is conditioned by the development and expansion of another economy to which the former is subjected (Brewer, 1980). Urban interests are class interests that perpetuate economic underdevelopment. Poverty understood in terms of economic forces, social relations, property rights and power accounts for why so many inner city residents are marginalized. Poverty is not just a state of deprivation but, instead, it is the kind of deprivation which results when resources are applied to satisfy the wants of a few while the many do not even have their basic needs met.

McKnight describes the situation in American cities that bears similarities to what has happened in Winnipeg's inner city:

No one can doubt that our older cities these days are deeply troubled places. At the root of the problem are the massive economic shifts that have marked the last two decades. Hundreds of thousands of industrial jobs have either disappeared or moved away from the central city and its neighbourhoods. And while many downtown neighbourhoods have experienced a "renaissance," the jobs created are different from those that once sustained neighbourhoods. Either these new jobs are highly professionalized, and require elaborate education and credentials for entry, or they are routine, low-paying service jobs without much of a future. In effect, these shifts in the economy, and particularly the removal

of decent employment possibilities have removed the bottom rung from the fabled American “ladder of opportunity.”

(McKnight, 1990, 1)

Within the urban setting, concentration of wealth plays out in the buying of land and housing and the appropriation of common resources. This, combined with low wages and unemployment, keep people poor and even make them poorer. The traditions of mutual responsibility and sharing are weakened and so poor families are weakened, impoverished, and isolated. The urgency of needs in the inner city is met with urban reform efforts that seem only to tinker with the things that actually require structural change. A distrust of these reform efforts by those whom they ostensibly benefit has not softened over the years. Eighteen years ago, Roussopoulos predicated the notion of radical urban change on a belief that such change would come from the local workplace and community levels. These urgings for structural change, from the “roots up”, still resonate out of the inner city as the quality of urban life continues to be defined by crises of gangs, guns, and arson.

We must resist supporting reformism because not only will such reforms not solve the deep social crisis we are facing but will also retard the process of developing radical alternatives. A contemporary radical urban movement, combining the struggles in the neighbourhoods with those of the workplace, can shake up the power structures of big cities in advanced industrial societies like our own.

(Roussopoulos, 1982, 34)

The definition of “development” as being important to understanding community economic development should also be highlighted here. Fairbain (1991) cautions that the concept of development as growth leads to the idea that economic activity can always be taken to a next level of intensity and that this thinking can lead to unsupportable results.

We have to be clear, then, that by development we do not mean an open-ended process of more and more exploitation, more and more complex technology, less and less control. Development for modern communities has to be first and foremost development of people and development of quality of life, within a framework of local education and control. It may be that Canada’s rural areas and smaller communities, depressed as they are, can legitimately sustain a higher level of economic activity and a higher population than they now have, but one should not assume this as a matter of principle. Maybe they should be no bigger, only better. The principle is quality of life, based on sustainable and meaningful values, and this is a principle that applies to any community of any size.

(Fairbain, 1991, 12,)

Development is not necessarily the other side of the coin of underdevelopment (Brewer, 1990). Development efforts which contribute to the “poor” becoming poorer are found in conventional development strategies which focus on the modern sector with economic

activities that support the growth of population and migration rates which exceed the growth of employment opportunities. According to these approaches, migration results in a better life for those who leave their communities in search of better circumstances with aspirations to become employed taxpayers. Yet, resulting conditions don't match this description. Increased levels of structural unemployment and immiseration of the traditional sector are some manifestations of conventional development. Community economic development does not focus only on the traditional as opposed to the modern sector but, rather, recognizes the capacities within the traditional sector to foster and sustain local development.

Just as for the terms "community", "community development", and "development", Loxley cites the need for clarity as to the meaning of "economic strategies" as they may be understood as efforts for community economic development (Loxley, 1986).

Some of the key policy areas which comprise economic strategies are as follows:

- a) Ownership of capital and natural resources and control over economic decision taking.
- b) The direction of investment and the choice of products and markets.
- c) The scale and technology of production and market size.
- d) The participation of women in economic activity.

A clearly articulated economic strategy would specify policy in these and related areas, thus setting a clear direction in which the community would move in terms of economic development. . . . Community development literature tends, in general, to say focus on only some of these elements.

Being preoccupied with “process’ it tends to concentrate on how decisions are made rather than on the substance of those decisions. Thus, the theoretical and policy literature on C.D., as well as C.D. manuals tend to say relatively little on items (a) to (d) beyond the dimensions of process.

(Loxley, 1986, 4-5, underlining in original text)

Local Economic Development

At the local level, the urban core economy is like a sieve. Economic activity is carried out by all kinds of people from social workers and teachers to drug dealers and pawnshop owners. For all of them, the mainstay of their work is focused on the problems of inner city life. However, the money associated with their work activities drains out of the neighbourhood economy without improving economic opportunities for inner city residents.

While most people identify underdevelopment with third world countries, the dynamics of underdevelopment are very much present in the drain of economic surplus or income from a region or community . . . (M)illions of dollars come into the inner city each year in the form of social assistance rental payments that ultimately end up in the pockets of absentee landlords who do not live in the inner city. Millions of dollars are earned by professionals who work in inner city education, health, and social service organizations which are not re-invested or re-circulated in inner city communities. Millions of dollars of purchases are made

each year by inner city public and private service organizations and charities from commercial interests outside the inner city. Under-development in the inner city means that money comes into the community and immediately leaves the local economy.

(CEDN, 1994, 2)

A more coherent approach to community development emphasizes capacity building, using available resources as fully as possible to meet the needs of the community, recognizing that one cannot separate economic development from social and cultural development (Loxley, 1994). Because community-based economic development initiatives involve local employment and local institutions, there is potential for the local school to contribute to these development efforts.

Convergence theory support self-reliance. This is built when economic strategies educate and provide guidance. If the community can produce something locally, it probably should. Nozick suggest five basic ways to stimulate the creation of local wealth from the inside-out: make more with less; make the money go around; make it ourselves; make something new; and trade with equal partners (Nozick, 1992). The local school can be situated as a site whereby the processes associated with schooling can offset drainage of resources from the inner city through local hiring and purchasing practices. Processes of community education can teach people at the neighbourhood level to own their own pond and to fish it (Blakely, 1994). McKnight cites two reasons to develop policies and activities based on capacities, skills, and assets of low-income people and their neighbourhoods:

There are two reasons for this capacity-oriented emphasis. First, all the historic evidence indicates that significant community development only takes place when local community people are committed to investing themselves and their resources in the effort. This is why you can't develop communities from the top down, or from the outside in. You can, however, provide valuable outside assistance to communities that are actually developing their own assets.

The second reason for emphasizing the internal assets of the local urban neighbourhoods is that there is very little prospect that large-scale industrial or service components will be locating in these neighbourhoods . . . it is increasingly futile to wait for significant help from outside the community.

The hard truth is that development must start from within the community and, in most of our urban neighbourhoods, there is no other choice.

(McKnight, 1990, 2)

The principal goal of local economic development is to stimulate local employment opportunities in sectors that improve the community, using existing human, natural, and institutional resources (Blakely, 1994). Community development is accomplished by generating employment, gaining control over the local economy, initiating cooperatives, and operating for public benefit. Loxley identifies these different strategies in the *Economics of Community Development* (Loxley, 1986). The relative merits of each of these approaches are framed in the context of what is the potential for increasing economic self-reliance. For example, out-migration is described not as a solution but as a problem for underdeveloped inner-city communities. Out-migration is cited not as a ^e

means to improve life chances but as the reflection of deteriorating social conditions, or as unintended effects of community development initiatives.

Policies that deliberately encourage migration reflect a belief that alternative community development strategies are not feasible due to a poor resource base or a small and/or isolated economy. Loxley identifies alternative strategies that maintain the integrity of the traditional sector. There is potential for poor communities to use convergence theory implementing self-reliant strategies for economic growth, strategies that have, as a goal, for communities to produce what they consume and consume what they produce (Loxley, 1986).

Local economic development initiatives can be guided by community type. For example, in a growing area, the challenge is to manage the population and to plan economic alternatives. In a community that faces problems of economic restructuring, the task is to diversify the existing economic and employment base. But, in a declining neighbourhood and community such as the inner city, development initiatives have three parts: to manage existing public resources, to retain remaining local business, and to search for alternative local businesses consistent with government capacity and community employment requirements (Blakely, 1994). An inner city neighbourhood can use existing resources to stabilize the economy and to improve services. Regardless of community type, information on the status of the economy alone is no indicator of the ability of a community to in fact engage in economic development.

The development process begins by looking inside the community for the objectives, resources, methods, and personnel available to build the local economic and employment base. Local economic development is both "process" - community organization,

leadership, and capacity building - as well as “task” - economic and data analysis - oriented (Blakely, 1994, 321):

. . . (T)he actual structure of a local development organization is dependent on community circumstances. It is, however, extremely important for everyone to follow the old management principle - “form must follow function.” Too frequently, communities adopt a structure based on reading about the experiences of other places. The correct procedure is to design an institutional form that fits the political and economic situation . . . for a development organization to be successful, it must be able to use a combination of authority and resources to facilitate work.

(Blakely, 1994, 288)

Community economic development approaches in the urban core can use practical frameworks by which to reference initiatives. We can learn from alternative approaches that have been and are being used in rural development, in participatory economics, in third world development efforts, and in informal economies. For example, we know that within the inner-city community, authority and resources are not necessarily determined in favour of local development efforts. This is also the case in rural development. There is a pluralism that comes with the clash of cultures. As a result, the modern sector top-down, core-periphery, centre-outwards biases of knowledge overlook the critical consideration of people in a particular place as being the true centre of attention and learning. Rural development uses approaches from the bottom up, from the periphery

towards the core, from the remote towards the central. To understand poverty better, and to judge better what to do, outsiders, of whatever persuasion, benefit from seeing things as the insiders do.

To educate children and families living in poverty, we can first learn from poor families. As outsiders, we are hindered from such learning in reverse by our educational attainment, status, and roles of bearers and dispensers of knowledge. Differences in amounts of print exposure and language patterns between lower, middle and upper income children and families, and the problems with outsider research are two examples discussed in earlier chapters. Other examples can be found in the ways school staff distance themselves from poor people, showing separate style and standing through clothing, shoes, vehicle, office, lap top cases, documents, manner and speech. Hierarchy, authority and superiority prevent learning "from below." Knowledge of one sort perpetuates ignorance of another. Learning, as a community development effort, should start at the other end (Chambers, 1983, 201).

Participatory Economics

Participatory economics is a development approach that puts forward broad goals upon which to judge how well or how badly our economic arrangements serve us. It is an approach that popularizes economics in ways somehow more acceptable, certainly more accessible, to those interested in fundamental change. Similar to the questions raised in rural development, evaluating any economy means asking how its institutions affect people. If the economy propels anti-social attitudes or distorts and under utilizes human

capabilities or rewards people unjustly, these would be issues to address through evaluation (Albert, 1997, 24). Albert proposes the following criteria:

Equity says we should have fair or just outcomes. No one should get more of a good thing or of a bad thing than he or she deserves.

Solidarity means the economy should foster empathy among people and mutual respect and caring, rather than an attitude that you are my enemy or, in any event, that I don't care about your well-being.

Diversity testifies to a belief that homogeneity is boring and we all benefit from diverse outcomes. Partly it is because this is a good hedge against errors. Partly it is because life is short and we can enjoy other people's different involvement vicariously.

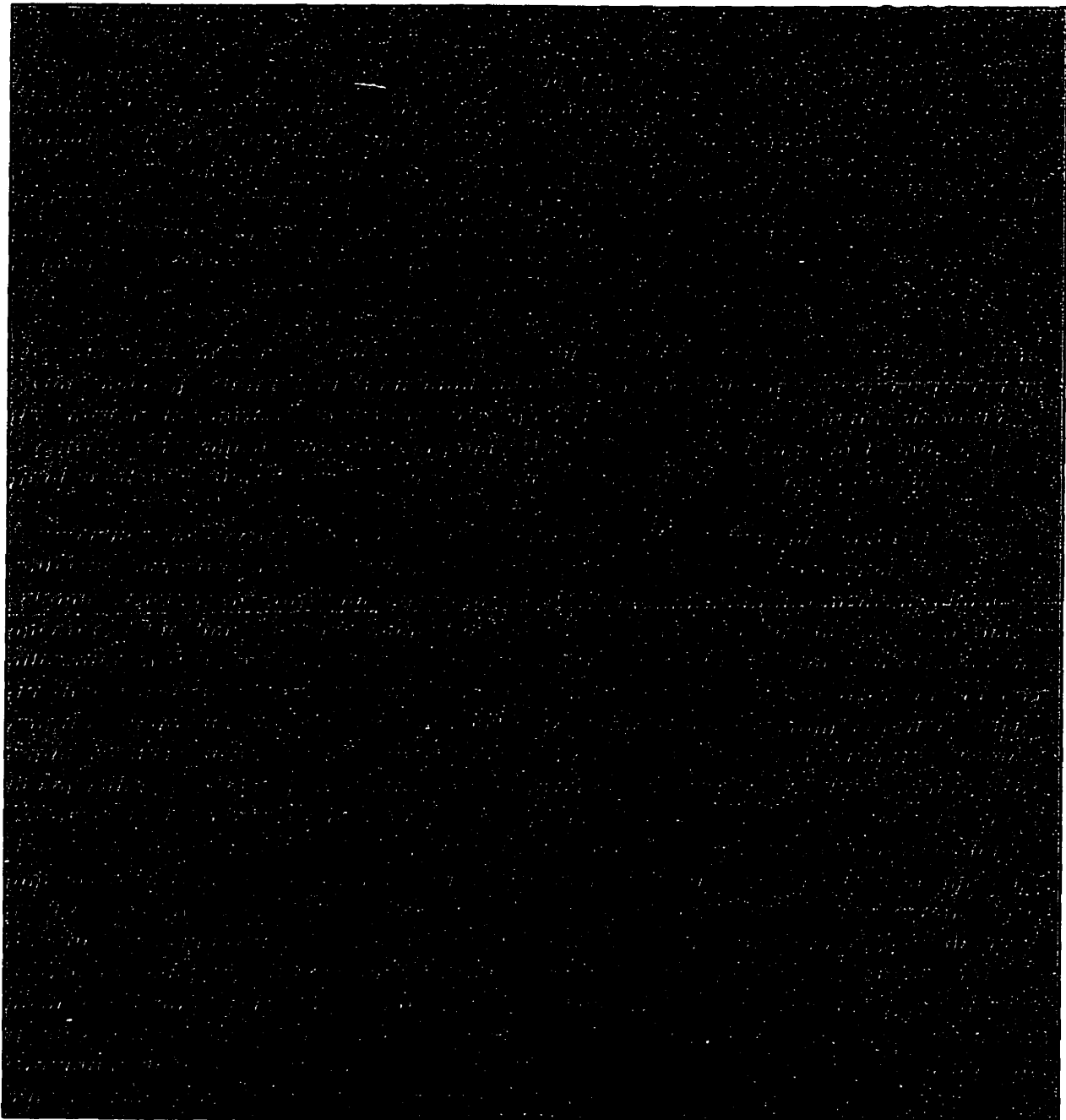
Participatory self-management means each person should be able to affect the decisions that in turn affect him or her in proportion as we are affected by those decisions. And, of course, the economic functions to produce, consume, and allocate in light of people's preferences and capacities and to attain these broader aims, should be carried out without waste (efficiency).

. . . Class division reduces equity, curtails solidarity, reduces diversity, limits self-management, and introduces various inefficiencies. So on the road to meeting the above criteria, you also strive toward classlessness.

(Albert, 1997, 25-26, italics in original)

Participatory strategies for economic development require both shared understanding and collective will. To illustrate this point, Albert and Hahnel refer to a particularly

frustrating situation in Alice in Wonderland where Alice queries The Cat: “. . . would you tell me please, which way should we go from here? The Cat replies: . . . that depends a good deal on where you want to get to (Albert and Hahnel, 1991, 145).”



In considering participatory economics, it is self-evident that there is little reason to address details of transition until there is at least broad agreement on “transition to what.” Participatory vision informs strategy.

How to move toward a participatory economy is a very different question than how does a well-established participatory economy work. Strategies for building a participatory economy are part of overall strategies for social change. As such, the transition to participatory economics includes how to mobilize people’s energy for social change, how to raise consciousness and commitment, whether to pursue electoral, grassroots, or confrontational tactics, what interim institutions to establish, what programs to pursue in other dimensions of social life, and how to overcome various obstacles as they arise . . . even after we begin the “long march” toward participatory economics. . . the “playing field” continually alters. Opponents continually use new methods to block change. Not even the most thoroughly prepared movement can foresee all the eventualities of struggle. . . . Even the best prepared movement for economic change will fail if it underestimates or misunderstands the impact of political, cultural, and gender forces. It follows, therefore, that economic activists must be flexible and promote the agendas of activist struggling to change other spheres of social life in compatible directions.

Looking Forward: Participatory Economics for the Twenty First Century

(Albert and Hahnel, 1991, 144-145)

Development on a Human Scale

To educate children and families living in the inner city, we need to set aside the deficit thinking model (Valencia, 1997) which has informed our practice and, instead, we need to learn from poor families. Reversals in learning include approaches such as sitting, asking, and listening which reflect attitude as much as method. To enable the poorest to do better, the starting point is to understand how they manage at present. This practice includes reversals in our administrative and organizational structures and styles where leadership and teamwork, rather than blueprints, are the key elements (Chambers, 1983).

Entry points identified in the literature on rural development which hold relevance for schooling suggest that we alter our style of communication to talk less and listen more, that we conduct joint planning and program to involve everyone; that we introduce policies and practices which recognize and act upon rights, and amend transfer policies to stabilize staff. In these development approaches, the primacy of personal action is emphasized. Chambers outlines the following four questions as a basic guideline for interventions. How do my actions affect poor people? How should I and can I change them? What more can I do? How can I help others to do more (Chambers, 1983)?

Third world alternative economic approaches are also entry points to development based on human scale technology and organization as opposed to a bigger-is-better style of development (Nozick, 1992). An example is found in the work of E.F. Schumacher, a Western economist working as an economic advisor in Burma and India between 1950

and 1960. Schumacher warned not only that Western industries destroyed the balance between local cultures but that there was a problem, too, in that the modern factory could not possibly provide the millions of jobs needed. “Instead, the importation of Western technology created a split, dual economy composed of a small elite Westernized sector, on the one hand, and a rapidly deteriorating traditional sector on the other” (Nozick, 1992, 31, italics in text). To illustrate Schumacher’s commitment to economics based on small scale production, Nozick recounts the story he tells about meeting an unhappy farmer on a road in Zambia.

(Schumacher) asked the farmer what was the matter. The man said he produced eggs for a living but he couldn’t get his eggs to market because he hadn’t any egg crates to carry them. The factory which made the egg crates was on a long strike, and there was a shortage of crates. Schumacher, inquiring further into the matter, found out the factory which made the crates, the factory on strike, was located in the Netherlands! Refusing to let go of this matter, Schumacher arranged to meet with the company president in the Netherlands to whom he explained the sorry predicament of the peasant farmers - that their survival depended on getting their eggs to market. He suggested that the company build a factory in Zambia to supply the farmers there. The president found the suggestion outrageous - an impossibility. His factory was optimally sized, he contended, and anything smaller would be *inefficient*. . . .

(Schumacher) contacted different universities and with the help of graduate students soon came up with a new design for egg cartons and a new chemical production process which, within a year and a half, led to a new production facility in Zambia which produced 120 egg crates per hour as opposed to the

7,000 crates that the Netherlands factory considered to be optimally efficient. The unit cost turned out to be identical.

(Nozick, 1992, 32, italics in text)

The notion that there is potential for the informal economy to do for the poor what the formal economy does not, and in some respects, to offset the impact of the formal economy on those living in the inner city, has usefulness for classroom and community. In the informal economy, money is not exchanged or, if it is, just at a sustenance and not for profit level. Informal economies operate well in more stable communities where families are in a position to reach out to contribute or have more on hand to share and exchange. "The informal economy relies primarily on cooperation, solidarity, mutual aid and consensus" (Ross and Usher, 1986, 48). The informal economy is marked by substantial flexibility and by generalized rather than specialized competence. Greater reliance on the informal economy will result in a greater variety of useful everyday human skills. People will have technical abilities such as food storage and preparation, gardening, mechanical repairs, household renovations, and sewing and social and organizational skills to ensure that within the relevant group, work gets done, things get distributed and people get taken care of. These skills and attitudes necessary for work in the informal economy are normally transmitted within the family and community, rather than formal institutions like the schools.

Consideration of how the informal economy relates to educational practices with respect to local development suggests an expanded role for schools to educate about cooperative enterprises, small businesses, community development corporations, voluntary activity,

mutual aid, and household activity (Ross and Usher, 1986). These are practical economic strategies that could be complementary activities in schools to assist student achievement.

Education and Community Economic Development

In this section, I draw from my own administrative practice to provide an example of how schooling practices may support local economic development. A part of my leadership role as principal of the inner city school where I worked was to educate and encourage the adoption of ten principles to serve as a guide for the school in the area of community development initiatives. These principles were developed some years ago when a group of aboriginal women in the community formed a community development organization. As part of their early efforts, they constructed a list of principles to be used as guidelines for economic development at the local level. Published locally, they first appeared in the document "It's Up to All of Us" (CEDN, 1994). These principles, endorsed by many inner city agencies and organizations including the inner city school where I was principal, serve as a guide for community development initiatives.

This guide to community economic development in Winnipeg's inner city offers a list of criteria for assessing the activity of businesses, government departments, schools, hospitals, private and public social agencies, labour unions, charitable organizations, other institutions, and individuals. Are we helping to make things better or worse? How can our routine activities create long term community development in the inner city?

(CEDN, 1994,2)

The intention of these women was to provide a practical resource to neighbourhood businesses, community agencies, and other organizations to assist them in with the application of community development strategies to their practice. This early initiative on the part of community women, who themselves lived in the inner city, unemployed and without higher level education, presented ways of thinking which are now recognized as foundational to the broad-based coalition of community agencies and businesses known as the Community Economic Development Network. A community economic development resource group meets to implement, share and support ideas related CED initiatives:

CED Principles: It's Up to All of Us

Local Use of Local Goods and Services

- Purchases of goods and services produced in the inner-city.
- Circulation of income within the inner-city; less income drain.
- Stronger economic linkages within the inner-city; stop income drainage.
- Less dependency on outside markets.
- Greater community self-reliance.

Production of Goods and Services for Local Use

- Creation of things and provision of services for use in the inner-city.
- Circulation of income within the inner-city.
- Stronger economic linkages within the inner-city.
- Less dependency on outside markets.
- Greater community self-reliance.

Local Re-Investment of Profits

- Use of profits to expand local economic activity.
- Stop profit drainage.
- Investment that increases community self-reliance and cooperation.

Long-Term Employment of Local Residents

- Long-term jobs for inner-city residents.
- Reduction of dependency on "welfare" and "food banks".
- Opportunities to live more socially-productive lives.
- Personal and community self-esteem.
- More wages and salaries spent in the community.

Local Skill Development

- Training of local residents.
- Training geared to community development needs.
- Higher labour productivity.
- Greater employability of inner-city residents.
- Greater productive capability in the inner-city.

Local Decision-Making

- Local ownership and control.
- Cooperative forms of ownership and control.
- Grassroots involvement.
- Community self-determination.
- Inner-city residents in charge of their own destiny.
- People working together to meet community needs.

Public Health

- Physical and mental health of community residents.
- Healthier families.
- More effective schooling.
- More productive workforce.

Physical Environment

- Healthy neighbourhoods.
- Safe neighbourhoods.
- Attractive neighbourhoods.
- Ecological sensitivity.

Neighbourhood Stability

- Dependable housing.
- Long-term residency.
- Base for long-term community development.

Human Dignity

- Self-respect.
- Community spirit.
- Social equality among sexes.
- Respect for seniors.
- Respect for children.
- Social dignity regardless of personal, physical or mental differences.
- Social dignity regardless of national or ethnic background, colour or creed.
- Aboriginal pride.

(Neechi, 1993)

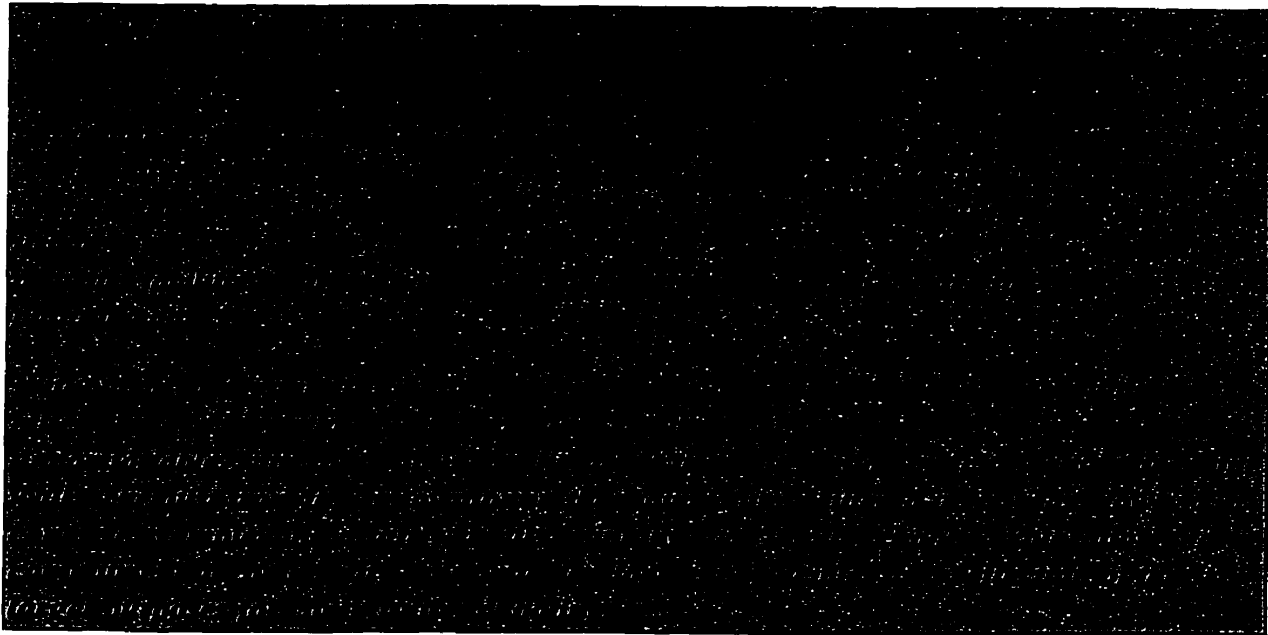
Loxley describes this set of criteria as a very exhaustive and demanding guideline by which to examine community economic development initiatives particularly in

considering the underlying vision for the processes and the goals of community economic development. He explains the approach as premised on the safeguarding and enhancement of human dignity. While there is a concern for individual well-being, the emphasis is on a collective need to generate community spirit, encourage equality among the sexes, and respect for seniors and children (Loxley, 1994).

Perhaps the most clearly articulated approach to community economic development for the Aboriginal population is that put forward by the Neechi Foods Community Store in their It's Up to All of Us guide. They lay down ten community development criteria by which to assess proposed or actual community initiatives. The first of these three essentially advocate a "convergence" approach to economic strategy as they provide for the use of local goods and services, the production of goods and services in the local economy and the reinvestments of profits locally. The point here is to emphasize the potential of the inner-city market to sustain economic livelihoods. This means that income earned in the inner-city should, as far as possible, be spent there, and preferably on goods and services which are actually produced there.

(Loxley, 1994, 24)





It is clear that poverty is a result of underdevelopment. Whether this underdevelopment is structural, a planned result of an economic system with its tendencies to place the needs of the marketplace as priority over the needs of people, or whether the deterioration and despair of the inner city just is, solutions to problems of poverty do exist. The purpose and manner in which the business of living and learning is conducted in the local school goes a long way to strengthen the economic base in the neighbourhood.

Education is required if a community is to attempt to strengthen its economic base following these kind of specific action strategies. The promise of a job and economic security are the hallmarks of citizenship. Work is the basis of socioeconomic status and to re-establish the opportunity structure we need to provide every citizen with the interest, skills, and capacity to contribute through work and community service (Blakely, 1994).

Seen here is the potential connection for economic strategies to support the educational mandates for inner city schools. Strategies for community-based schooling are

referenced to economic development at the local level and represent approaches that come from outside educational research (Albert, 1997; Blakely, 1994; Chambers, 1983; Roussopoulos, 1982). This development strand considers educational issues of power and equity in terms of economics and social change (Giroux, 1993; Apple, 1990). It addresses the questions related to how an inner-city school can support families, utilize existing capacities and access further resources to transform school practices, enhance support for families, and strengthen the neighbourhood base. Other strategies focus on student achievement and present critical ideas from the margins of educational theory (Leistyna, 1996; Boomer, 1997). These approaches acknowledge the issues of class as they translate into collective experience of community. They necessarily consider the same issues of power and equity but in terms of best practice (Zemelman, Daniels, and Hyde, 1993) for individual student achievement and oppression pedagogy (Freire, 1992, 1995) for collective change. They influence school organization, curriculum implementation, and support to students. These approaches are not conflated but rather become integrated in the implementation of community-based schooling.

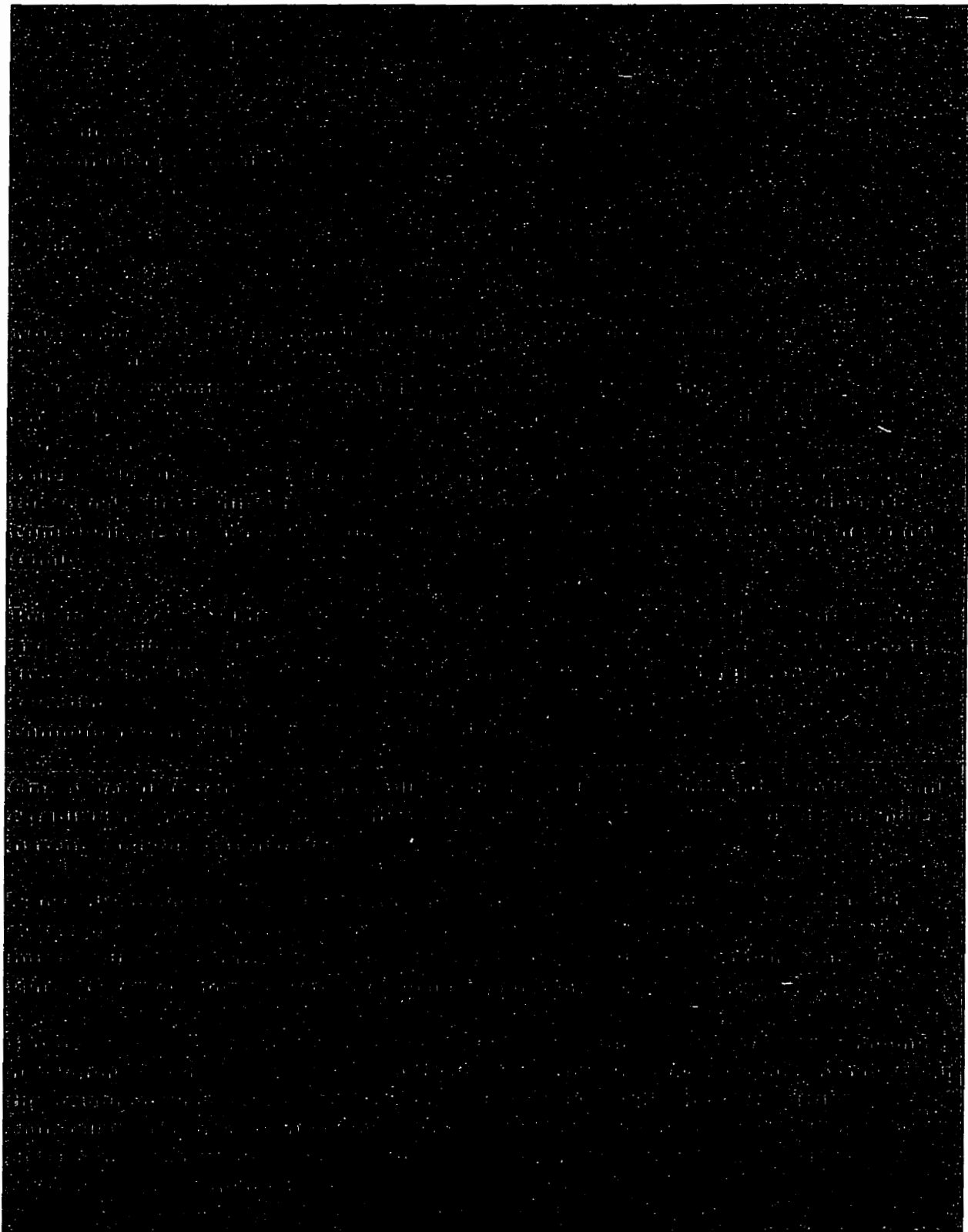
Community school efforts, as local economic development, benefit from an understanding of economic influences at the macro level. This chapter has identified numerous strands and variations of community economic development as having potential for the creation of alternative approaches. The examples provided here in Chapter Five have been taken from the literature on local economic development, rural and third world development, and participatory economics. A combination of these ideas has influenced community-based practice at William Whyte Community School.

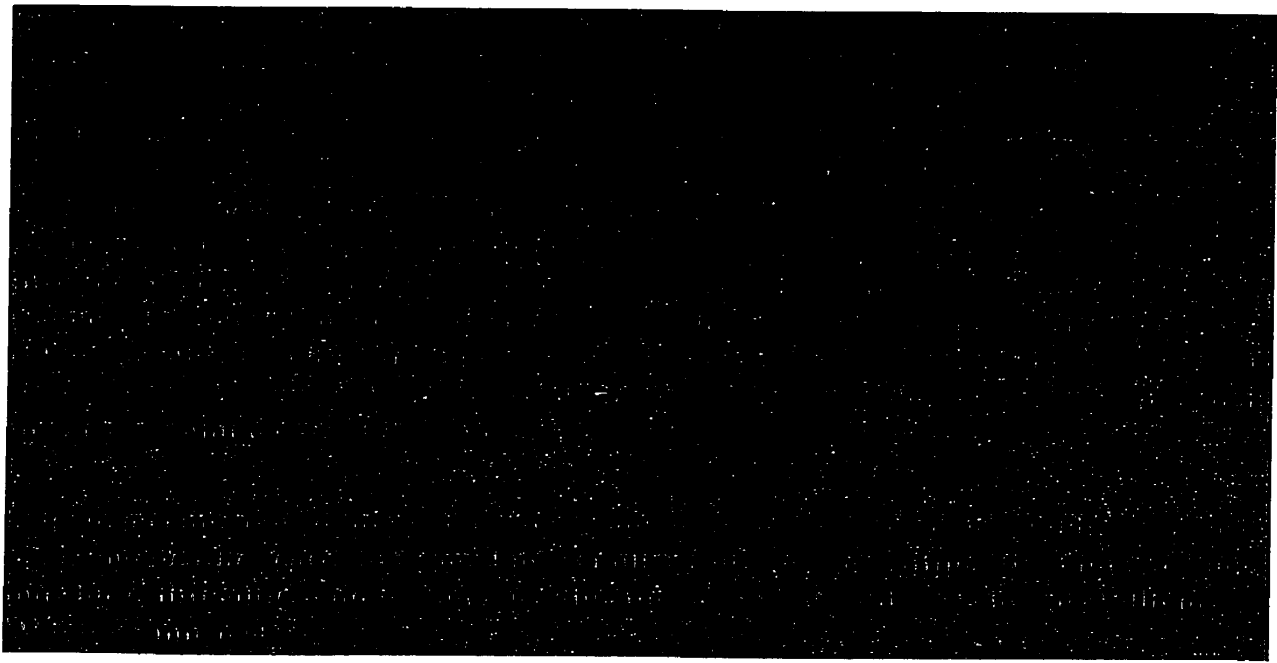
Long term community development in the inner city requires the development of a

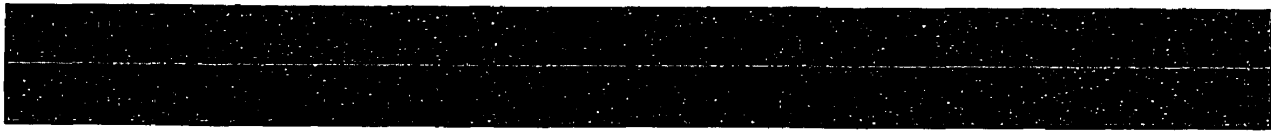
balanced local economy that will meet the needs of inner city residents. Balance means an even mix of economic activities that allows the inner city to stand on its own two feet. It means local production of goods and services meeting the local needs for goods and services. It means incomes made in the inner city being spent in the inner city. It means profits earned in the inner city being reinvested in the inner city. It means local residents building local enterprises. And it means employment and training opportunities serving local needs. . . . The development of a balanced economy means that the inner city becomes less dependent and more self reliant.

(CEDN, 1994, 1-2)

Chapter Six provides an account of efforts at William Whyte Community School to reorganize its educational resources to focus on economic responses to issues of poverty and education. It tells how the school made beginning efforts, in practical ways, to apply critical theories drawn from education, political economy, and principles of community economic development to a framework for school planning, at the local level. It is a description of how to counter the systemic impact of structural inequality experienced by students, their families, and school staff in an urban core school by realigning and building closer relationships of equal and just community.



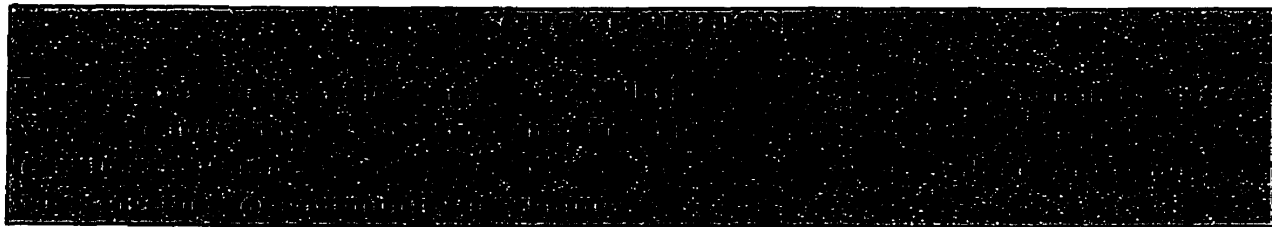




International studies on developing nations have proven that education is critical to improving the well-being of people . . . accessibility and relevance of education and learning is necessary to ensure future economic growth that is environmentally sustainable and enhances people's well-being .

Manitoba Round Table on Environment & Economy, 1998

Introduction



In this chapter, the efforts at William Whyte Community School are described as a significant attempt to reshape conditions in one of the poorest inner city communities in all of Canada. Presented here is an account of how educational resources were reorganized at William Whyte to focus on economic responses to issues of poverty and

inner city education. These efforts represent a beginning attempt to apply critical theory from education and political economy to practice at the local school level. This involved the transfer of community economic development principles to the design and implementation of schooling processes to for school planning and organization to foster community development. This initiative resulted in changing many of the fundamental elements of school organization. Implementation of curriculum, delivery of support services to students, relationships between home, school, and neighbourhood, staffing patterns, purchasing practices, and mechanisms for decision-making are all areas that have changed and continue to change.

Some of the restructuring steps taken at the school are described as the instrumental kinds of change that can be attributed to the implementation of community economic development strategies at the school. A simple example of this is the way in which the school now generates employment opportunities for local people by redirecting school staffing allocations to make do with fewer professional positions in order to create opportunities to hire people from the community into paraprofessional positions. Other examples are found in how the school redirects its budget to purchase locally. Nutrition spending for the school breakfast, snack, and lunch programs is done, as much as possible, at a local community food store that operates an Aboriginal owned workers' co-op. These kinds of community economic development strategies implemented at the local school level strengthen the neighbourhood economic base.

Other community-based practices described are seen to be more fundamental to the education of children and more directly related to schooling processes. These changes have to do with critical stance in school organization, implementation of curriculum, and delivery of student support services using community development as a context for

educational practice. Efforts of this sort include the reallocation of staffing resources to reduce class size, and the increase of teacher assistant support to classroom teachers. The role of the classroom teacher expanded to include functions of resource, guidance, and special education. Support services and co-curricular programs were transformed to fulfill a wider mandate for community education. Always the efforts are intended to counter the systemic impact of structural inequality experienced by inner city school staff and by inner city students and to realign and build closer relationships of community.

Because this was a beginning attempt to implement community economic development strategies at the local school level, the work did not begin with a clearly articulated research and evaluation plan. During the first months of my assignment as principal, and throughout the 1992-1993 school year, staff and parents worked on the development of a school purpose and identified hoped for outcomes. The two fundamental outcomes that remain in place to present day are focused on 1) increased levels of student achievement and 2) increased levels of family stability. The implementation of community economic development strategies at the local school level was intended to promote these outcomes through strengthening the neighbourhood economic base.

Initially, there was not a systematic way of measuring these outcomes. Through professional development work undertaken by the staff at William Whyte, a way of measuring the first outcome to show improved levels of student achievement, was developed. The staff engaged in a three year project, from 1995 – 1998, that resulted in the implementation of an alternative approach to student assessment at the school. Components of student assessment at William Whyte are five part and include: 1) parent participation in setting curriculum priorities through ages and grades; 2) comprehensive assessment at the point of grade level entry or school entry with all teachers using

common informal assessment tools; 3) goal-setting with student, teacher, and parents; 4) student-led conferences; 5) student portfolio for assessment and learning. The first and fifth component of this assessment initiative helped to provide a framework for the measurement of levels of student achievement.

The school developed a “N – 8 learning continuum” that was an exemplar of the continuum of learner growth through ages and grades. This William Whyte exemplar of student work represented the collective input of school staff, students, and parents. By displaying this continuum in the upper hallways of the school, expectations for learners were made visible, concrete, and very clear to the students, staff, and parents.

The school staff maintains a portfolio for every student to show evidence of learning gains through the years the student attends William Whyte. These William Whyte student portfolios assist teachers, parents, and students to see student growth from grade to grade. In the 1998-1999 school year, the staff began to work with students and parents to develop holistic assessment measures for these comprehensive student portfolios. In doing this, they hope to find new ways to measure levels of student achievement that could accurately reflect levels of achievement on a student by student basis.

The second outcome, increased levels of family stability, was identified as a difficult outcome for the school alone to measure. Implementation of community economic development strategies at the local school resulted in two major initiatives – the William Whyte Community School Project and Andrews Street Family Centre (described later in this chapter). The majority of data collected for interim evaluation reports measured participation rates and project activities. In some cases, evaluators conducted focus groups for staff and participants and collected case studies from staff and families. These

projects are being implemented and monitored by external evaluators with final evaluation reports not completed at the time of publication of this study. When complete, the final evaluation reports for these projects should be available from the Government of Manitoba, Department of Family Services and Housing, and from Health Canada.

While final evaluation reports on major initiatives at the school are still pending, the remainder of this chapter does describe, in some detail, community-based schooling as an approach taken at William Whyte Community School over a period of seven years from 1992 –1999. The “telling” of this story of William Whyte raises implications for the study of inner city education. It is a snapshot of what an inner city school might look like if the broader role for schools to address poverty influences at the local school level is taken seriously.

The School Profile

William Whyte Community School is located in one of the poorest urban neighbourhoods in the country. It is an inner city school serving 325 children and youth from Nursery to Grade 8. The school increasingly encounters students who are educationally disadvantaged or "at risk" of not completing their education with adequate levels of skills. These students lack the home and community resources to benefit from conventional school practices and the recent wave of school reform. William Whyte students are considered “at risk” with low rates of achievement and high rates of retention in grade, behaviour problems, and poor attendance.

The majority of this demographic information has been obtained from Research and Evaluation, The Winnipeg School Division No. 1., 1998. The "at risk" ranking of the school is derived from a formula developed by Manitoba Education and Training. Information concerning the urban aboriginal population was taken from Priorities for Action: Towards a Strategy for Aboriginal People Living in Winnipeg, Manitoba Round Table on Environment & Economy, 1998.

Manitoba Education and Training ranks William Whyte Community School as the highest ranking in the province in terms of students at-risk at 78% referenced to socio-economic criteria established for Manitoba schools in 1998.

Students' families are coded as single parent, two parent, and other, which includes such cases as agency care, group homes, or independent living:

| | |
|--------------------------------|-----|
| % living with parents | 95% |
| % single parent families..... | 57% |
| % with unemployed parents..... | 80% |

Mobility is the ratio of the total transfers over the average month-end enrolment, multiplied by 100. Total transfers include transfers in and transfers out:

| | |
|----------------------|-----|
| % Mobility..... | 96% |
| Total Transfers..... | 303 |

For the William Whyte catchment area:

| | |
|---------------------------------|----------|
| Median Income..... | \$17,700 |
| % Below Low Income Cut Off..... | 81% |

Statistics show that urban aboriginal families are most affected by poverty that creates family instability and results in frequent moves. Findings from *Building Communities of Hope: Best Practices for Meeting Needs of At-Risk and Indian and Metis Students*, 1996, indicate that students have difficulty learning when they are hungry, emotionally distressed, lack stability and safety in their families and communities, are discriminated against, or when other primary needs are not being met. To remove these barriers to their learning, students require a diverse range of social, health, cultural, justice, and other services. As well, if the learning program is to succeed, active and committed parents and stable communities are critical. This idea of what is needed for at risk students to succeed challenges us to rethink the role of schools, how educational and other services are delivered for children and families, and who must be involved in the process.

Background to Community-Based Change

William Whyte Community School was rebuilt in 1975 at the time when ideas about open area and community schools were optimistically identified as holding potential solutions to the special needs of inner-city education. The old school building had been a large, three storied, wooden structure. A schoolhouse classic of its day, classrooms were characterized by their big windows, worn wooden desks, old-fashioned cloak rooms, and black boards. The now not so new William Whyte Community School is a modern structure that has somewhat the appearance of a concrete bunker. Indented entranceways, initially designed to be invitational with sheltered access into the school, are now blocked by additional fire doors. This means the children have to go through three sets of heavy doors just to get into the school. The few exterior windows are caged in black mesh

metal. A covered courtyard along the south side of the building, meant to be a place for the younger children to get fresh air playtime even on the wet days, is also caged and inaccessible. Ostensibly these changes were made to prevent glass breakage and to discourage people from urinating in the doorways during the evening and early morning hours. Still, the overall effect makes the school seem inaccessible with a physical appearance more like a community jail than a community school.

The area of the schoolyard is a full city block square. Across the street is an aging brick building, a former Jewish parochial school circa 1900. A few years back, our school and community council took the lead in developing a plan and securing funds to refurbish this site so that it now houses a youth drop in and family centre. The rest of the neighbourhood is residential but since the schoolyard is the only green space around, the school takes on the feeling of a community centre with lots of children using the swings and playstructure after school and in the early evening. Benches in several places are permit adults to linger at the school and to watch neighbourhood activity.

Inside the front entrance to the school is a classroom that has been converted into the community room. It is a large, bright room with a small fridge and stove, sink, drink machine, and a phone. Tables and chairs enough for meetings of up to forty to fifty people are moved to one side to allow for a less formal seating arrangement for parents who use the room on a daily drop in basis. The cupboards hold supplies received from Winnipeg Harvest and other food donations. Generally a plate of crackers or day old muffins is out for people to help themselves. The coffee is always on started by whichever parent is first in that day. In the corner of the room, preschool children play with toys, crayon at a small table, or just run around. While this room, and the parents and other community people and staff who occupy it, appears as the most tangible

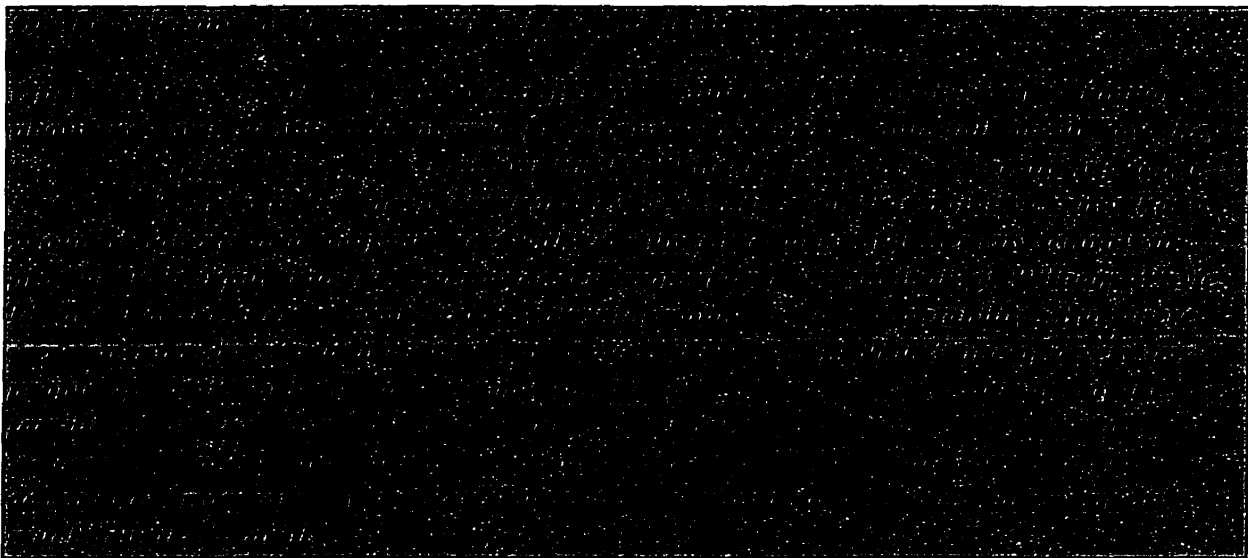
evidence of community presence in the school, it represents only one of the changes which have taken place at the school.

Members of the community council are the most frequent occupants of the community room at the school but over the years it has served as point of entry for many people who otherwise might be reluctant to spend time at the school. Following the model whereby the school functions as an extension of the family, the community room is like a second living room away from home.

Overall policy in education is not determined solely at the local school level. In the case of William Whyte Community School, it is determined at the provincial level by the Manitoba Public Schools Act and by Manitoba Education as the department responsible for education. At the school division level, policy is set by senior administration acting on the direction of the Board of Trustees of Winnipeg School Division No. 1, and at the local level with staff and family involvement. Recent influences of school reform have established policies that have been supportive, in part, of community-based schooling. While likely an unanticipated outcome of provincial incentives to have more decision-making take place at the local school level, the school division has developed some very supportive policies that have assisted leadership at the local school level in the design and implementation of community economic development strategies.

The implementation of community-based change started at the very beginning of my tenure as principal of William Whyte Community School. With a background in theory and practice of alternative education and social work, I brought to this position a broadened understanding of issues in inner city education. I also had firsthand historical context for school planning and an understanding of neighbourhood life because I had

begun my teaching career at William Whyte. I then spent twenty years as a teacher, a counsellor, and an administrator in elementary, junior and senior high school alternative and vocational settings in the inner city. In many cases, I had taught the parents who now had children attending William Whyte. In several instances, I had students who continued with me from their grade five or six elementary class at William Whyte, to middle years at Hugh John MacDonald Junior High School, to senior years at Argyle Alternative High School. When I moved to school administration, these connections were maintained and extended to many more inner city families.



What seemed most noticeable about William Whyte in the beginning weeks of my administration was a frenzy of meetings with many workers in attendance, a line up of children in the school office referred to me because of their noncompliant behaviour.

These lineups started even before opening exercises in the morning. In the first weeks of September, five families had their children apprehended directly from the school. With little to no information or follow-up by the Child and Family Services workers for actions taken with respect to these children, the school not only felt the loss of these children but also the sting from being recipients of verbal threats from extremely hostile parents.

Perhaps the most obvious difficulty when I first started the job was the overwhelming number of identified special needs children and high risk families. Of the 280 children enrolled at William Whyte Community School, 190 were listed as special needs waiting for some kind of Child Guidance Clinic intervention or some other special education program request. In terms of child protection and family support, Winnipeg Child and Family Services were also very involved. In the 1991-92 school year, the one just prior to my appointment, hundreds of referrals were made from the school to the agency's neighbourhood office. Given the 200 teaching days in the school year, this referral rate averaged over two calls a day. There was clearly some front line work needed if the school was to accomplish its educational mission for children and families to learn and to share and to work together for a more equal and just world. Even within the first years of community-based changes at the school, the referrals made to Winnipeg Child and Family Services were reduced from about 450 intake calls in 1991-92 to about 11 intake calls in 1993-94.

The first steps of these changes at the school involved listening to and sharing ideas about practical improvements with the school staff. At that time, the school had the benefit of a half time community worker provided through the Community Education Development Association. She was a highly energetic person who had a whole lot of good ideas about how to involve parents and provide practical supports to children and families.

Some of the most obvious areas of concerns became take off points for staff and parents to implement community-based approaches. Problems that might potentially be resolved through community-based strategies began to surface as concerns expressed about child and family services, housing, community safety, and recreational opportunities for children. Alternative responses to these poverty-related problems suggested a reallocation of resources through staffing, the realignment of power through decision-making, a revision of delivery of support services to families, and a focus on community education for individual achievement and collective action as targets for community development at the local school level.

That efforts to establish the school as a site for community development efforts would result in enhancing the life chances for children and their families in the community was not a sure thing. What seemed a sure thing was that doing some things differently couldn't hurt. In a general sense, it seemed a likelihood that in such a community school with poverty conditions being so severe, it would be sensible to challenge conventional schooling practices. It seemed appropriate to reflect, instead, on alternative approaches that could attend to and respect the cultural and economic realities of the neighbourhood.

School Planning

In my seven years as principal at William Whyte, school planning evolved into a fairly

consistent process which would “restart” each March with staffing decisions for the next school year. Staffing arrangements at the school were key to development efforts with respect to economic development initiatives and to the implementation of strategies for community education approaches.

William Whyte had greater flexibility in school planning because of the division policy on school-based decision-making referred to earlier which situated many of the procedures related to the annual staffing process at the local school level. The impact of school planning became more apparent over the span of several years with planning principles upheld by the staff and community from year to year.

Community-based approaches were introduced very early in to my term as principal. In truth, initial organizational changes were done in an autocratic manner although I did outline the problems as I saw them to the staff and engage them in problem-solving exercises. I also made it clear that the status quo was not an option. Change was in order.

For example, of the 18 professional staff, only nine were regular classroom teachers. Two other teachers had small groups of special education children and the remaining seven teachers had specialist assignments: one teacher to support migrant students, two resource teachers, a teacher librarian, a music itinerant, a physical education teacher, and a counsellor. It was evident to me that for 280 students, there weren't enough classrooms. Pupil-classroom teacher ratios of 30:1 were not acceptable in an inner city elementary school even though, on the surface, the amount of resource and specialist time seemed beneficial for inner-city children and appropriate to assist teachers in meeting their students' special learning needs.

A further example came from observations that I made within the first few weeks of my becoming the principal of the school. It seemed that an extensive amount of non-classroom teacher time was taken up with meetings, professional development sessions, and case conferences to plan and coordinate the delivery of individualized educational services to students. In the latter instance, there could be as many as ten adults in a round table session to discuss the situation of one student. These discussions could each last a half-day. Typically present were the resource teacher, special education resource teacher, counsellor, migrancy teacher, two or three clinicians from the Child Guidance Clinic, the area service director for the Child Guidance Clinic, the vice-principal, and some times representatives from other agencies. Unless there was some urgency that I attend these meetings, I declined on the basis that there seemed to be more than enough people at the table already. Concerning to me was the absence of child, parent, and classroom teacher from most of these discussions. It struck me that no matter how well intentioned, these planning sessions excluded key stakeholders. Why? The explanations provided were not satisfying answers although they were certainly practical reasons. Release time was scarce and the teacher was needed in the classroom. The home situation might be a big part of the problem so it would be uncomfortable to have a parent present. In a similar way the child, too, was objectified in the planning process so there wasn't really a need for parents or students to be present.

The gathering of input from teachers and parents every March to plan for the coming school year always made clear that the most important factor considered to influence student achievement was the pupil-teacher ratio. The next most important thing was the assignment of full time teacher assistance in every classroom. Next, came allocations for support roles in the school that affirmed daily physical education, library resource, and

technology teacher support. Each year, parents and teachers were consulted. Each year, similar priorities for staffing and school planning were highlighted.

Community Economic Development Strategies at the Local School Level

Community economic development strategies at the local school level keep money in the community by hiring and purchasing locally and creating jobs and training programs for local people wherever possible. At William Whyte, food is purchased for the nutrition program from a local aboriginal worker's cooperative. In this way, from its nutrition budget the school can support another community development initiative contributing in excess of \$10,000.00 to its retail sales on a yearly basis. The practice of providing nutritious daily snacks to all of the students at the school is supported by an annual grant of \$5,000.00 from an anonymous donor. This money, too, is spent locally.

Another initiative at the local school level, community-based hiring practices, has influenced school and community development. In my second year as principal, an ad hoc committee for hiring was struck as a result of a decision taken during a community school organization monthly planning meeting. The committee was a representative group of staff and parents. The committee determined that hiring criteria at the school would require that the people selected must care for children. In addition, it was determined that they be First Nation or Metis, that they be trained through provincial Access programs or have an understanding of inner-city, community education, and that they have facility in Cree or Ojibway language. If one or more of these criteria were found to be missing in a candidate, then he or she must possess very special other talent

to share with the children and in the community.

Adherence to these criteria brought about some significant changes in staffing at the school over the past seven years. In 1992/93, there were no Aboriginal teachers and only two with Access education training. In the 1998/99 school year, this picture had changed with over 60% of professional staff being Aboriginal, from the community, and or Access-trained.

Also, during this time there have been changes to the pattern of staffing of teacher assistant positions at the school. In 1992/93, the basic allocation of teacher assistants was 6.5, including a nutrition coordinator, an English Language enrichment for Native Students position, and Integrated Special Education Resource position, Resource and lunch duty assistance. Of these positions, 2 were Aboriginal and or community people. In 1998/99, 12 of 19 paraprofessional positions are community people.

Much of this increase can be attributed to the school's practice of trading professional time to increase the number of teacher assistant positions in the school. The decision for this aspect of school staffing is, for the most part, left to the local school. Yearly planning at William Whyte consistently situates the assignment of a teacher assistant to every classroom in the school as being a top planning priority. Other priorities for planning will be discussed in the next section on community education development at the local level.

As additional employment opportunities provided at the school, the community school project generates three positions, community, family, and youth workers, with annual salaries each of approximately \$30,000.00 and a program budget of \$15,000.00. In

addition to the important impact these services have on the people at the school, this project infuses over \$100,000.00 annually into the local economy. All of these positions are occupied by women living in the community. Two have children attending the school. These women first became involved at William Whyte as volunteers, then got jobs as teacher assistants, and are now in these higher paying positions carrying out, in highly responsible ways, “cutting- edge” community development work.

There is a pattern of parent involvement at the school where individuals first volunteer at the school and then move to a paid position either working in the school or in another community organization. While not for study here, for parents there appears to be a relationship between their increased involvement in their children’s education and their increased chances for employment. For example, when Andrews Street Family Centre first started it hired ten parents who had been volunteers at the school. Since its opening, the centre continues to hire many people from the community but often parents from the school who might be good candidates for employment at the school or the family centre now move from volunteering into a variety of other jobs in the community. Sustaining these hiring patterns is the strongest way for community-based practices to contribute to stabilizing the economic base in an inner city neighbourhood.

Policies linked to school-based decision-making support the implementation of community economic development activity at the school. Funding is another area that supports school changes at the local level. The school budget, while its allocations never seem large enough, is provided to the school with broad guidelines for spending but specific decisions as to how this money is to be spent are to be made at the local level. In fact, as part of annual school planning, there is a required process of consultation that allows for input from staff and community as to how the budget will be allocated. There

are also a number of opportunities to receive project money, from provincial and federal government grants, and from charitable foundations, which can support change in very significant ways. Examples of these changes are highlighted later in this chapter in the sections on two of the school's initiatives -- the William Whyte Community School Project and the Andrews Street Family Centre.

Leadership and program direction also fit into community-based schooling approaches when site-based management and local school decision-making were determined as policy by the school division. Annual school plans required by Manitoba Education ask that the school administrator describe school priorities, programs, and objectives that demonstrate open communication and collaboration involving all the stakeholders in the local school community. I have been able to use these kinds of directions from the provincial and school board levels to help implement community-based schooling.

Community Education at the Local School Level

Community education development is the second set of development activities intended to provide the community with opportunities for self-determination to foster individual growth and collective involvement. A model of local control for school organization and governance gives opportunity for input from all families, staff, and students about all aspects of school programming. At William Whyte, community-based change efforts do not appear, on the surface, to look that much different from conventional school change initiatives. Action planning looks at where we are now, where we want to be, and what we need to start doing, keep on doing, or cease doing, to get from here to there.

Generally speaking, the school works out practical responses toward their vision for a community-based school. But in saying this, critical change efforts are overtly ideologically driven and so while the processes for school planning may be unremarkable, the outcomes are different.

For example, at William Whyte, the fundamental principles of equity and justice are discussed and acted upon. This helps to continually resituate the school as a site for significant restructuring efforts which reallocate resources, encourage voice, stimulate consciousness, and educate the individual and the collective to develop community. This is done by the school in the ways it involves families, in the ways it allows children to learn, and in its relationships between and among all the stakeholders at the local school level.

At William Whyte, school organization, the instructional program, and support to students all reflect a community-based approach. School planning involves staff and parents in annual processes of goal setting, action planning, evaluating outcomes, and reestablishing school purpose. Mechanisms such as PATH (planning positive alternatives for tomorrow with hope) and other popular planning techniques are used to create opportunity for everyone to have voice in important decisions. Community school organization meetings are held in the afternoon of the second Friday of each month so that staff and parents can carry on with this planning. Afternoons on the fourth Friday of each month are used for school-directed professional development. These sessions include parents if the agenda is relevant for them, such as training sessions on the Internet and email held in the school's computer lab, or if parent input is needed about expectations for students or core educational outcomes.

While the school receives similar resources to those of other inner city schools, staff and parents have made decisions about the nature and kind of supports for students that represent a radical departure from the conventional student support systems. The school is organized to function as an extension of the family at the student level. If there are problems for a child at our school, school policy requires that the family first be contacted to discuss these concerns. This is the responsibility of the classroom teacher. The assumption is always that the family cares about the child's problem and will be able to help. For each child, the teacher is responsible for the planning and implementation of an individual educational program to foster development of the whole child. For some children, those who present severe learning challenges, this responsibility for planning is shared with other community services.

Support for teachers who have this larger responsibility for their students is planned and reviewed yearly. Class sizes are kept under 20 and teacher assistants are assigned full time to each classroom. Daily physical education, cultural arts, and computer classes are scheduled so that classroom teachers have about three times more planning and preparation time than the 180 minutes per cycle prescribed by Manitoba Education. This allows them time to respond to their students' needs in the areas of resource, guidance, and special education. A strict protocol for student support at the school requires parental consultation and agreement to individual educational plans or other interventions which makes the daily presence of so many parents at the school a very useful thing for staff.

The school community council meets weekly in its a morning coffee club and one evening a month. The council is a group of parents who concentrate on addressing the larger community issues that impact the school. They take action on issues of community safety, housing, youth recreation, and family services. Several parents serve

on a housing action group, others sit on community recreation and neighbourhood services boards. All of the parents are active in pursuing funds to upgrade our playground facilities.

Parents also worked to establish more cultural programming and opportunities for learning First Nations Language. For example, a recent project has been to run an immersion Ojibway language program for parents with two hour-long sessions twice a week after school. To date, this has been an entirely volunteer effort with elders from the community assisting with language instruction and parents making potluck and child care arrangements. One of the outcomes of this initiative is that twelve parents raised funds to travel to a national conference on aboriginal languages held in Ontario in the spring of 1999.

Leadership skills from this experience are already evident. Parents plan to expand the language initiative to establish a language centre at the school for families in the community to provide immersion language learning and cultural experiences as a regular part of the school program and for community healing.

William Whyte Community School Project

The William Whyte Community School Project is a community-based initiative designed to improve the effectiveness and appropriateness of support services to children and families in a high needs neighbourhood. The project aims to use school activities to promote greater involvement of families and student participation. The three objectives

stated for the project are: to establish the school as a key site to integrate and coordinate services and resources to children and families; to promote community ownership of child, family, and education-related issues; and to provide appropriate alternative support to families to increase school success and to reduce the number of children taken into care. Three positions for a community worker, a family worker, and a youth worker, have been established at William Whyte Community School, as a result of project funding. While funding arrangements had been on a year-to-year basis, in latter months of my leadership at the school, we established cooperation a protocol for cooperation between the province and the school division to provide sustaining support for these positions. These jobs are filled by parents and community people. Individually, and working together, they are responsible for an inordinate amount of after school and summer programming to support community-based schooling at William Whyte. Some of this activity is in the form of community support.

A range of community development activities designed to support project objectives include Community Council, Coffee Club, Family Pow Wow Club, Self-Defense Course, Community Get Together, Community School Organization Meetings, Community School Assemblies, Community Patrol, Playstructure Development Committee, Fundraising Committee, and Summer Program Committee.

From outside of the neighbourhood, charitable and business organizations become part of the community through contributions to the project include Marvelous Muffin, Great Canadian Bagel, Western Glove, Koats for Kids, The Thomas Sill Foundation Gifts in Kind, Casa de Fruita, Jewish Women's International League, Royal Bank and the United Way. Links to community organizations include the Aboriginal Council of Winnipeg, the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg, Indian and Metis Friendship Centre, Anishnabe

Oway-ishi, Hope Centre, North End Housing, Andrews Street Family Centre, Aboriginal Achievement Awards, Community Economic Development Association, and the Winnipeg School Division No. 1 Volunteer Services.

Examples of neighbourhood activities organized by this project include Community Clean Up, Neighbourhood Housing Postings, School Trustee Candidates Forum, Bingo Fund-raiser, Community Volleyball Tournament, Parent presentations to Community Civic Committee and to the Winnipeg School Division No.1 School Board, Family Dances, and Family Fun Nights at the school.

Family support for students and families provide interventions at the time of intake, assessment, crisis response, and short-term counselling. Examples of these interventions include referrals to local help centres such as Andrews Street Family Centre, Ma mawi Chitita, Manitoba Adolescent treatment Centre, Macdonald Youth Services, Child Guidance Clinic, and the Child Development Program at the Health Sciences Centre.

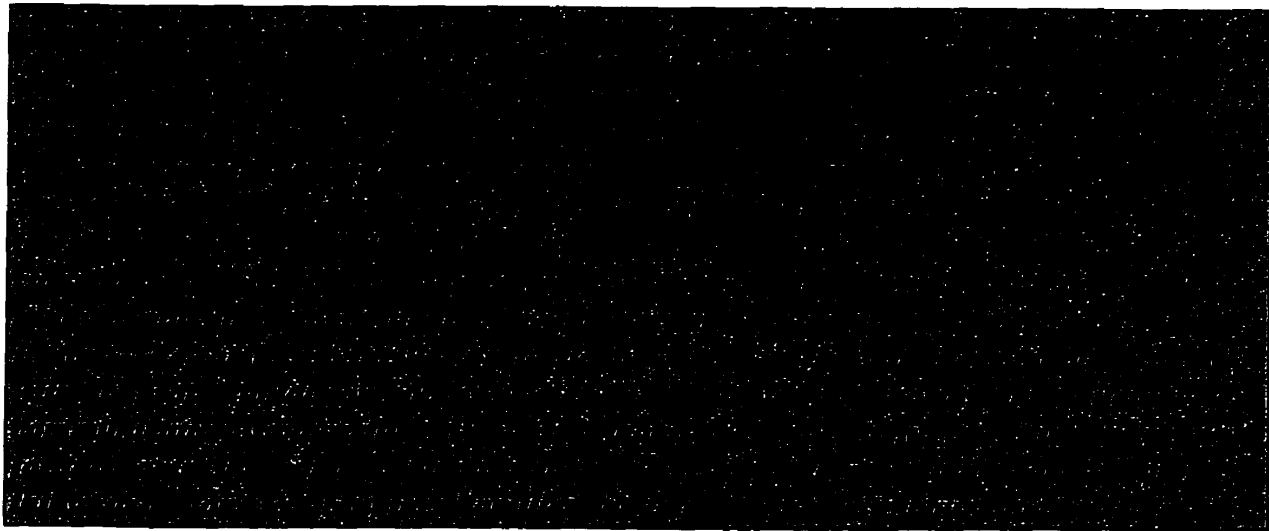
With respect to school-based family support, the family worker maintains involvement with about 20 families as ongoing weekly support. Her phone is always ringing with families requesting practical supports. For example, the family worker is key to head lice control in the community. She helps out moms by combing out their nits and washing their hair after the children have been looked after. She is the liaison between families and Child and Family Services. People who don't trust anyone seem to be able to trust the family worker. Personal disclosures are responded to by the family worker. We benefit from her larger community knowledge base and her first hand experience with the individuals involved. The family worker is involved with cultural activities, the after school reading program, Homework Club, and she takes families and children on outings

after school, in the evenings and on weekends. Wheelies, 7-Eleven, and McDonalds make donations for these activities.

The youth worker is available for any child in crisis during and after school hours. The worker is implementing small group activities after school hours including a student rock band and graffiti removal team, and on week ends for at-risk children and youth involved in prostitution, drug use, or gang activity. The community, family, and youth workers, together with parents and school staff, respond to many crises throughout the school year. This work can include cooking for families, finding emergency supplies, attending the hospital, court, or other places where people experience need, helping families whose homes have burned, families plagued by head lice, providing transportation to families to visit children in care or incarcerated, helping to deal with a death in a family by providing food, or other appropriate community responses.

Combined, these three individual positions connect with school staff and every child and family attending William Whyte Community School.





Andrews Street Family Centre

In 1995, William Whyte Community Council struggled for and received funding to establish a family centre which is located across the street from the school. Andrew Street Family Centre assists families, youth and young children to participate in practical activities to improve their own situations. Evolving out of the model at the school, this community development initiative was aimed at gaining local control of social service resources. It appears to have been successful as the Andrews Street Family Centre is now highlighted as one of three examples in the "Integrated Community Approach to Health Action: A Practical Guide to Building Healthy Communities" published by Health Canada, 1999. In it, Andrews Street Family Centre, in partnership with the William Whyte neighbourhood, is cited as an example of how community development occurs through the building of skills and experience within individuals, who further contribute to the community.

The family centre resists the approach of helping families to learn how to live with their current situation, but rather presents alternatives and a supportive environment to facilitate growth in self and neighbourhood capacity. Activities at the Centre are guided by the principles of empowerment, sustainability and social action. “Andrews Street facilitated participation at various levels through such things as literacy programming, the development of cooperatives, and small business management training” (Health Canada, 1999).

While the primary original concern of the family centre focused on young children, programming of this type shows that the benefit of support solely to a child is lost by the time that child is in grade 3, if programming does not include the entire family (see Chapter One). As a result, its activities have expanded by virtue of an amalgamation of the initial programming with those of the community safety patrol, the youth drop-in, the addition of a parent program and integration of child and parent services within the community school. Just as the programs covers a range of necessary neighbourhood issues, financial support for these efforts originates from a variety of federal, provincial, municipal and private sources.

The intent of the family centre is to provide a focal point within the community where families can become involved in meaningful ways to achieve resolution of their own needs. It represents an amalgamation and integration of existing and new programs and supports located within one neighbourhood, and operating under a community ownership framework. Programming is not intended to serve primarily as a referral service where individuals or families are directed to professionals for assistance with their needs. It is guided by the sustainable factors necessary to build internal capacity within individuals and families and to support the enhancement of existing family structures and strengths.

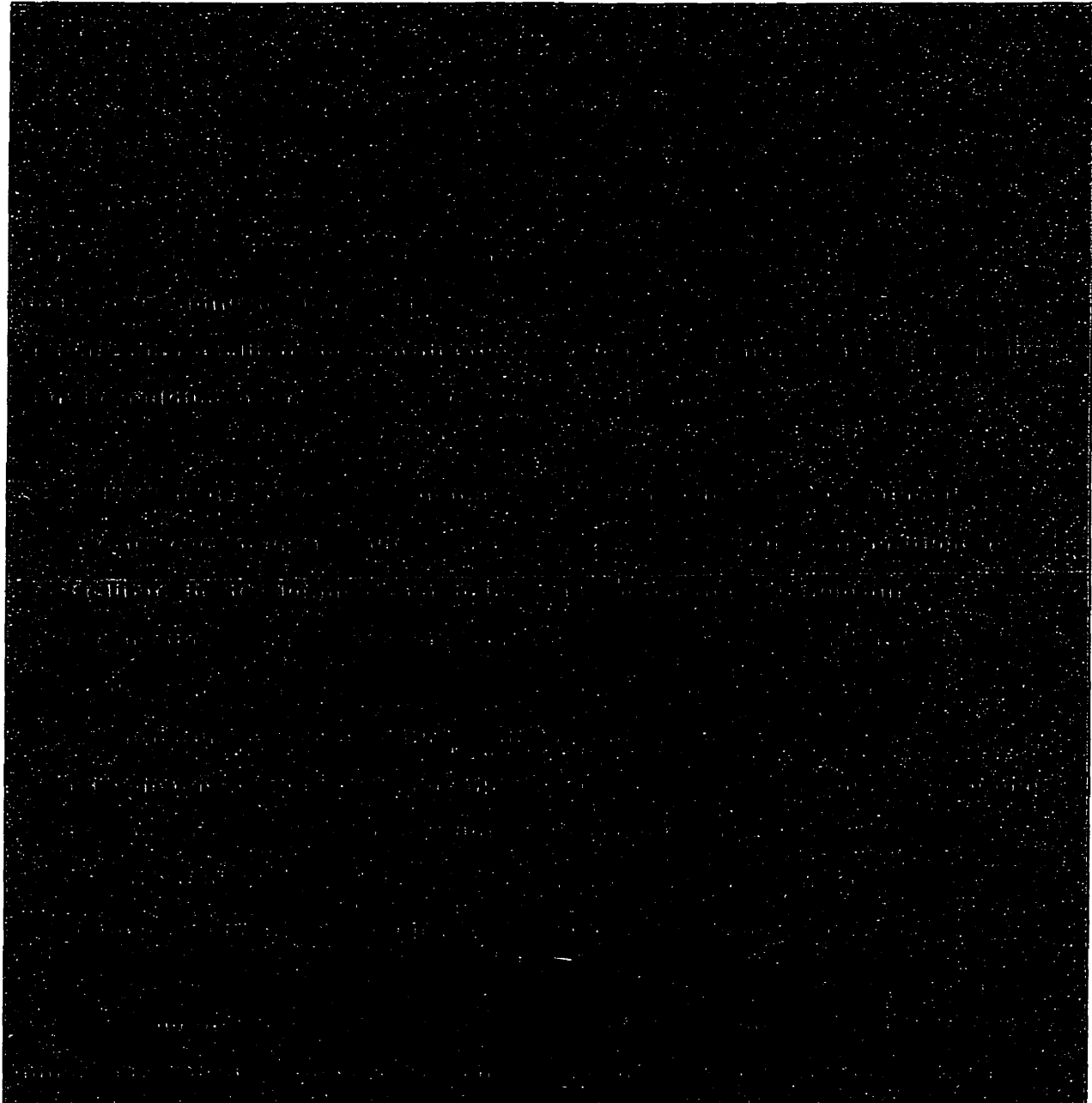
Change at Andrews Street was very tangible, and was emphasized as each individual graduated from literacy or skills training programs and the catering cooperative grew in size. Seeing changes that occurred in individuals led others to become involved and seek their own change.

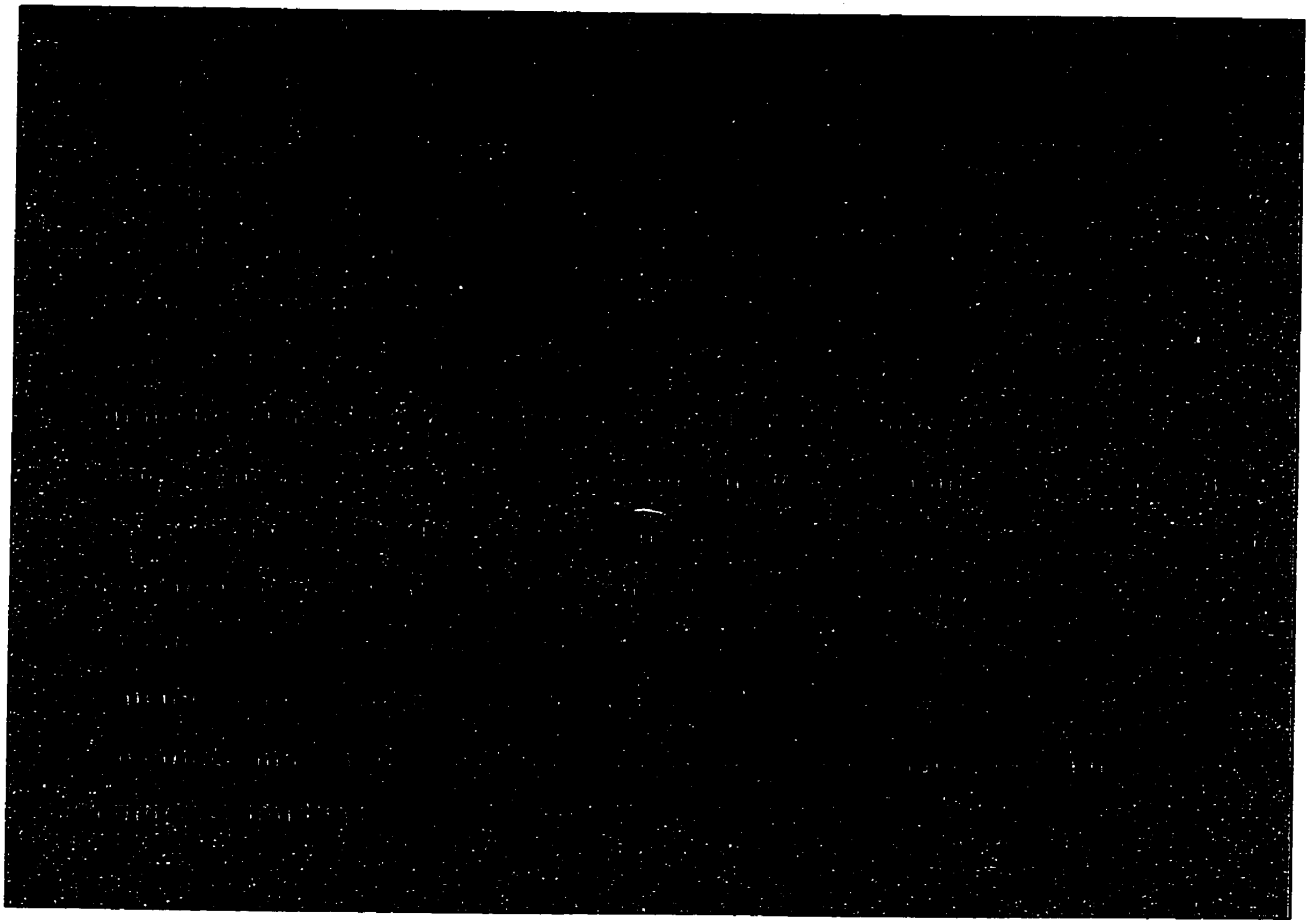
(Health Canada, 1999, 12)

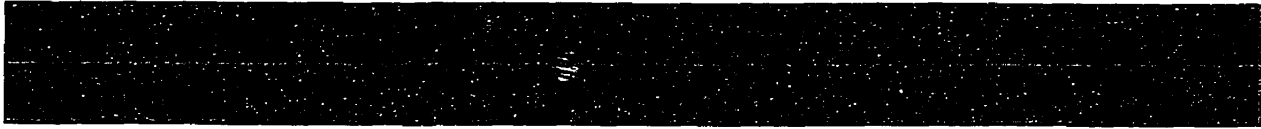
All of this work has been based on the direct requirements of the neighbourhood, as identified within an initial community survey. The approach taken was borrowed from the work of John McKnight that has to do with mapping community capacity. The "new" map of the William Whyte community was not a needs-oriented one which lists a litany of deficiencies but a list of community members' skills, assets and capacities indicating areas of opportunity for new sources of income and new possibilities for production. The skills associated with the provision of child care, sewing and mending, grass-cutting, home repair, cooking for large groups have been recognized and transferred into training and employment options. The primary focus of efforts to date have attempted to deal with priorities of family support and stability, child development and the development of an overall 'model' for local ownership and support in dealing with neighbourhood issues.

Seven years is not a long time to test the approach of community-based schooling as a concrete and practical way to respond to the issues of poverty which have confronted educators since the beginning. But it was sufficient time for me as the principal of William Whyte Community School to see some very constructive gains. Sometimes I have been accused, albeit it in friendly ways, of too much rhetoric, too much positive and hopeful posturing when it comes to explaining our successes at the school. People are

left with the impressions that we have found, in the approach of being community-based, a perfect solution to the issues of poverty and education. Such flawless outcomes are not possible. Nevertheless, for those of us who live and or work daily in the harsh circumstances of Winnipeg's urban core, a positive and constructive outlook is either innate or a necessary and learned behaviour to become habit for survival.







The human condition, plans for mankind, and collaboration between men in those tasks which increase the sum total of humanity are new problems, which demand true inventions . . . No, we do not want to catch up with anyone. We want to go forward, all the time, night and day, in the company of Man, in the company of all men. The caravan should not be stretched out, for in that case each line will hardly see those who precede it; and men who no longer recognize each other meet less and less together, and talk to each other less and less.

The Wretched of the Earth
Frantz Fanon, 1963, 312-316

In Review

Living as we do in a world where too many have too little of its wealth and resources, it seems appropriate to stop studying issues of poverty and education as problems and begin to focus on solutions. These solutions do exist throughout history to hold us accountable for current research and practice in education. At a conceptual level, this study asked the question “can a coherent argument be framed to support a broader role for schools in the development of individuals and community?”

From this study, it is clear that much educational research within the parameters of school

improvement and educational reform is most often expressed as debate. Emphasis appears to be on theoretical justification over practical implications, or on prescription of practical school improvement processes, in isolation from theoretical commitment. Further, it is apparent that poverty studied only in a social context results in partial solutions that hold implications mostly for the short-term, directing efforts at individual rather than structural change. But, when poverty is also considered in an economic context, political economy frames analysis informs and supports structural change.

The political economy of education represents a practical and theoretical commitment to address issues of poverty and inner city education. It introduces the notion of praxis, the fusion of the personal and the professional, as inner city education practice. It implies the kind of commitment evident in the work of Miles Horton and Paulo Freire. Separated by continents, in the 1930's Horton established the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee while some ten years later, Freire began to work on programs of education for the rural poor in Brazil. Both men developed different forms of practice. Horton established a small residential education centre outside of the formal schooling system. Freire worked within the system of university and state sponsored programs. Yet, common to their work is interaction with the social context for learning and participation in popular social movements. In talking about their lives as educators, Horton and Freire (1990) address many ideas that they have struggled to understand and respond to in their work. Despite the fact that they did not meet until much later in their lives, the similarities of their expressed experiences suggest much common ground. They raise important ideas as questions that will continue to confront those of us working in change in the inner city. Can education be neutral? What are the differences between educating and organizing? What are the advantages and disadvantages of charismatic leadership when working for change? What is the role of the educator to intervene in the learning experiences of

others? In terms of education and social change, what are the pros and cons for working from inside systems as opposed to effecting change from outside?

In discussing these ideas, Horton and Freire emphasize the impossibility for education to be neutral. Their commitments to radical education involve the participation of people in their own development through a philosophy of education for empowerment (Horton and Freire, 1990).





A first impression of community economic development as an approach to practice in schools is that it seems too simple. If this were the answer to inner city education at the local school level, the problems of poverty in urban neighbourhoods would have been resolved before now. But these efforts meet with resistance. They require energy, vision, and time. Sometimes even basic steps are difficult to implement when systemic barriers interfere with activities related to community-based schooling.

Maeroff's work in this area cites four dimensions that are important to a support system if students are to succeed in education. These are a sense of connectedness, a sense of academic initiative, a sense of well-being, and a sense of knowing. He writes, convincingly, of the importance of connectedness:

Connectedness is part of the support system that most students need to succeed in education. Of all the riches denied to disadvantaged children, perhaps the most important is a network that would allow them to thrive in school and give them a sense of belonging. . . Those who want to raise educational standards and improve classroom learning must acknowledge - especially so far as the one in five students who live in poverty are concerned - that the out-of-school lives of these students cannot be ignored. . . . Families and communities, too, need help if they are to structure relationships that provide children with values and opportunities in harmony with productive learning.

(Maeroff, 1998, 425)

Schooling Efforts to Counter Poverty Effects

Those of us working in inner city schools are haunted by the awareness of poverty and its impact on children and families. We know from practical experience that inner city schools require alternative structures to counter these effects but how do we create these alternatives? Can local school efforts address the problems of poverty? Can they do so through educational practice directed toward collective outcomes within a framework for community development?

Schooling efforts in the context of community development represent a set of transformational processes to bring about individual change and, as well, to reduce the influences that sustain poverty as an economic and social condition and increase conditions of economic equality and social justice. Perhaps teaching and learning processes can be geared so that critical action through community-based schooling could support broader goals for community development. Schools, particularly those in the inner city, are logical sites for alternate educational practice to extend schooling processes beyond learner-based outcomes in order to support more equitable and just community-based outcomes.

Economic strategies can support the educational mandates for inner-city schools. Such strategies for community-based schooling are referenced to economic development at the local level and may represent approaches that come from outside educational research (Albert, 1997; Blakely, 1994; Chambers, 1983; Roussopoulos, 1982).

It is clear that poverty is a result of underdevelopment. Whether this underdevelopment is structural, a planned result of an economic system with its tendencies to place the needs of the marketplace as priority over the needs of people, or whether the deterioration and despair of the inner city just is, solutions to problems of poverty do exist. The purpose and manner in which the business of living and learning is conducted in the local school goes a long way to strengthen the economic base in the neighbourhood.

Education is required if a community is to strengthen its economic base following these kind of specific action strategies. The promise of a job and economic security are the hallmarks of citizenship. Work is the basis of socioeconomic status and to re-establish

the opportunity structure we need to provide every citizen with the interest, skills, and capacity to contribute through work and community service (Blakely, 1994).

This study of poverty and inner city education has considered two important theoretical strands from the political economy of educational practice. The first, the development strand, considered educational issues related to power and equity in terms of economics and social change (Giroux, 1993; Apple, 1990). It addresses questions related to how an inner city school can support families, utilize existing capacities and access further resources to transform school practices, enhance support for families, and strengthen the neighbourhood base through community economic development. Another strand has considered strategies that focus on student achievement in terms of the kind of learner involvement required for popular participation in the struggle to change the social world.

Critical ideas from the margins of educational theory (Leistyna, 1996; Boomer, 1997) acknowledge issues of class as they translate into collective experience of community. Also acknowledged are issues of power and equity but in terms of individual student achievement, transforming schooling processes, and oppression pedagogy (Freire, 1992, 1995; Horton and Freire, 1990; Horton, 1990). These ideas potentially influence school organization, curriculum implementation, and the delivery of support services for students. These theoretical strands suggest approaches that are not conflated but rather become integrated in the implementation of community-based schooling.

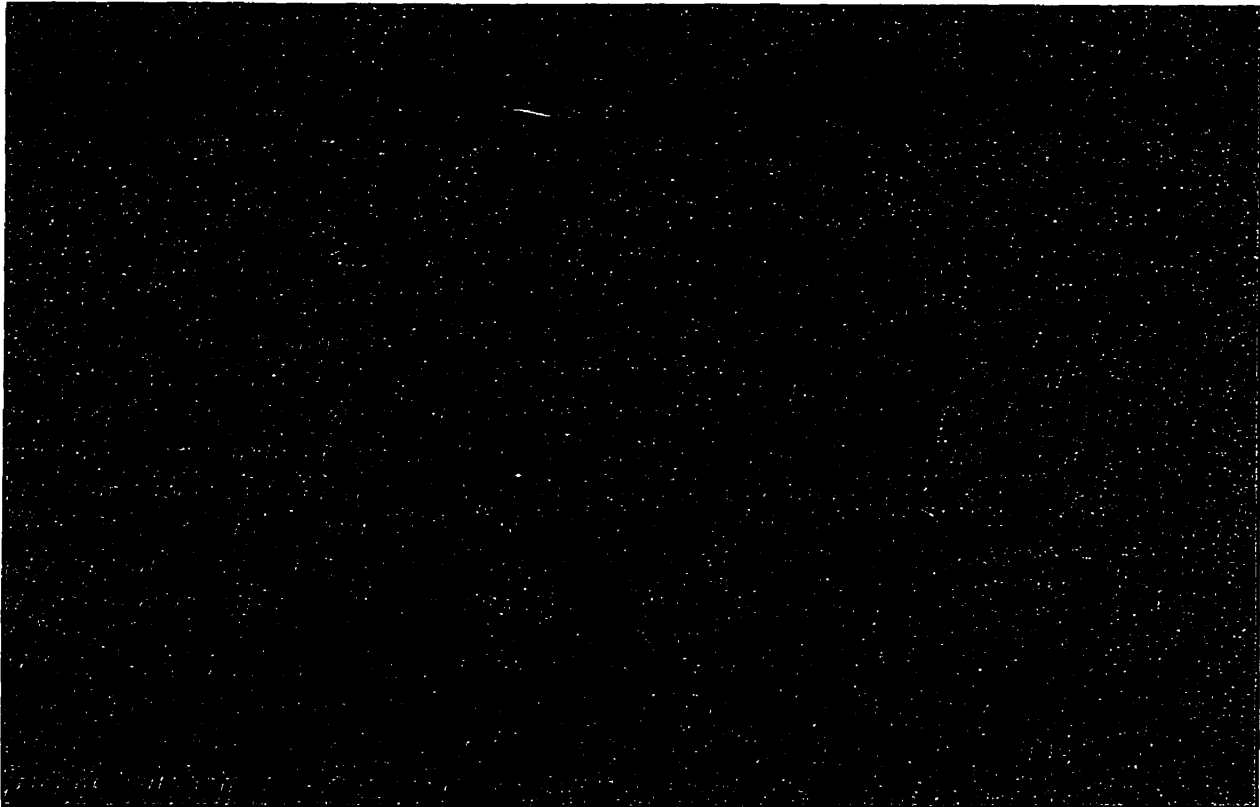
A further question in this study relevant to the practical application of community economic development at the local school level was “what might inner city schooling look like if it is to support community economic development?” This study has identified the school as a place where families, students, and staff can work together to focus on

solutions that make a difference. The local school is a place to engage in a process of change to transcend existing social realities and to transform existing economic arrangements toward the more fully human experience of equality and justice. This is the work for which the school is a critical setting. Undertaken as a collective enterprise, this is the work that emerges from the theory and practice of community-based schooling.

In Summary

A critical stance has framed my work in educational administration, and my first hand experiences in inner city schools for more than twenty-five years, have had a dramatic and an urgent impact on my world view. I recognize, too, that research and practice by other educators who share a critical view, have had a profound effect on my ability to sustain my commitment to equity and social justice.

For me, the most renewing aspect of educational administration has always been that, despite our fundamental and often radically different ideas that shape our research and study, our practical commitment to the lives of children seems to take us always to common ground. Instead of allowing schools to serve as battlegrounds for social and class interests, schooling can be transforming. What this entails is the bringing together of people to construct an educational framework that makes it possible to blend commitment to social transformation with interests in education (Wong, 1998).



Most schools could lay claim to being community schools. Fewer schools could be described as being community-based. In this study, I have considered some fundamental ideas to do with poverty and inner city education and determined the purpose for community-based schooling to create an approach that is an economic response to the problems of poverty and education. I have also described how this conceptual model has been applied, first hand, at one of the poorest inner city community schools in Canada.

The political economy of educational practice brings critical perspective to practice efforts at the local school level. Community-based schooling can create and sustain opportunities for individual achievement and community development through the recognition of community capacity, identifying individual and collective potential for change. Educational processes can assist inner city residents to stabilize home, school,

and neighbourhood life through the application of political and economic gestures.

This study has examined poverty and schooling in terms of structural change. Critical questions arise when consideration is given to what can be learned both from history and from the poor. A conceptual framework has been put forward that promotes thinking about economic responses as alternate approaches for educational practice.

From a practitioner standpoint, this study is most useful if it levers resources or prompts policy shifts to support more fundamental approaches to systemic change. This research holds significant implications for social and economic policy development on the care and education of children and families that will recognize capacity and allow communities to build from the inside out.

From an academic standpoint, study that is focused on inner city education affirms work in the larger arena of research related to economic and social policy alternatives. From a critical stance, it considers educational issues of school improvement in the economic context of community, of poverty, and of the social realities of the urban core experience. It is hoped that this study holds further purpose knowing that, in human terms, the redress of poverty through education paves the way to greater equity and justice for all of us.

The truth is . . .that the oppressed are not “marginals,” are not men living “outside” society. They have always been “inside” - inside the structure which made them “beings for others.” The solution is not to “integrate” them into the structure of oppression, but to transform that structure so that they can become

“beings for themselves.”

(Freire, 1970, 61)

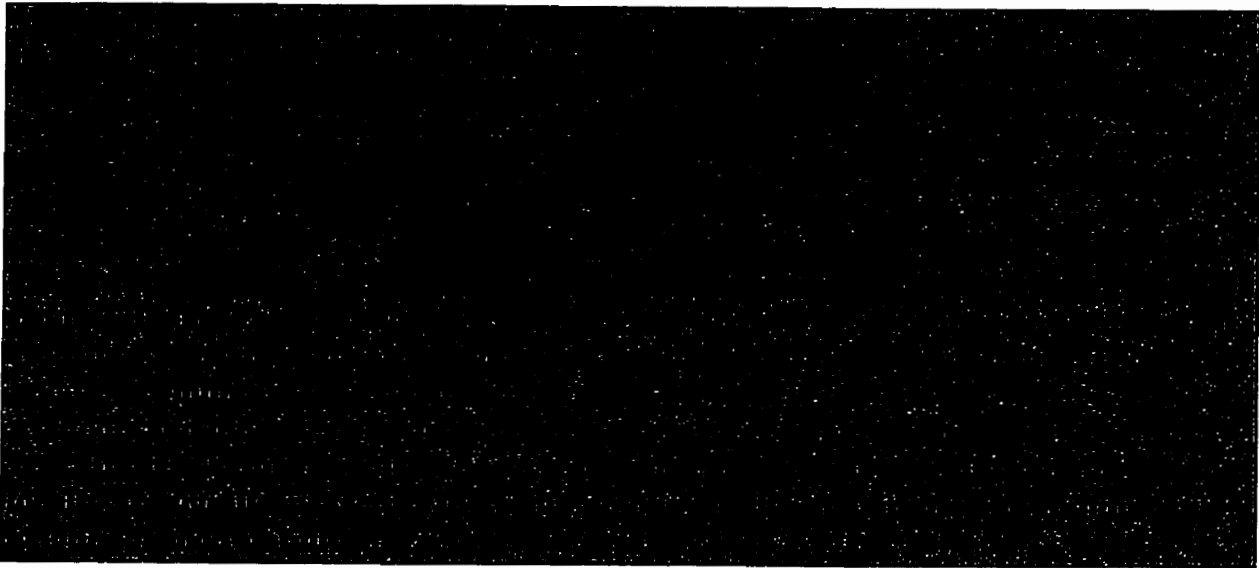
In undertaking this study, I have moved along a journey through years of varied experiences working in the inner city of Winnipeg from project worker to teacher, to guidance counselor, and then, to school principal but always in the inner city and always working around barriers presented by poverty. During this experience, Winnipeg has remained a city with an extremely high child poverty rate despite efforts to change this concerning statistic. In the face of poverty, inner city schools continue to try to get the school system to work as well for poor children as it does for those who are not poor.

This community-based initiative calls for direct action by all of us who are concerned about poverty in the inner city. There is no point in shaking our heads in frustration or in supporting band-aid approaches to the problem. And what's the point in just blaming the “government” and others? If we really care about things getting better, then let's do something about it! . . . There are no short cuts available. We all need to recognize that our own actions are part of the solution or part of the problem. We do not have to feel helpless or powerless. Conditions in the inner city can improve dramatically if we all share the responsibility of turning things around. Clearly, IT'S UP TO ALL OF US!

(CEDN, 1994, 2, Capitals in original text)

Despite the literature base which now exists, one that is continuing to emerge to advocate for new understandings of educational leadership and urging school improvement, there has not been adequate change to influence the predominant patterns of unequal circumstances for children, as learners, in our schools. These critical, life-defining circumstances have an impact on learning especially in inner city schools. Educational research faces a critical challenge to find ways to make a difference in the lives of children living in poverty and, through this inquiry, to develop the capacity to share evidence of this difference so that others will be encouraged to become involved in transforming practice.





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