

***A TEST OF CHARACTER: A STUDY OF CHARACTER EDUCATION AS
ETHNODRAMA WITH HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS***

by

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In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Education

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*A Test of Character: A Study of Character Education as
Ethnodrama with High School Students*

BY

Roberta Garton

**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**

MASTER OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participated in an ethnodrama that was based on a lesson about character education. This research was conducted as an ethnography, which followed an iterative design process. Twenty-five Manitoba senior three English language arts students discussed and journaled their reactions, feelings and transformational experiences as they participated in writing an ethnodrama on the topic of intolerance. The resulting discussions and journals were examined and seven themes regarding student values emerged. Results of this study showed that the use of ethnodrama at the high school level can be a catalyst for both student voice and the examination of values and character development (Graue, 1999; Saldana, 1999). Results showed that high school students want to be provided with opportunities to discuss their values and character through methods that stimulate their minds and imaginations.

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Chapter One

Prologue

“I don’t get it” Jeremy said in a voice tired from a long hard year at high school. “It’s quite simple, class”, I said. “Your next assignment for Teacher Advisory class is not only to bring in a written report of where and when you completed your twenty hours of volunteer service, but also a visual representation to illustrate your volunteering in some manner. You will present them in class in exactly one week from today, so get those creative minds working.”

“Do you mean draw a picture?” Dylan asked, “I suck at drawing.”

“No, it doesn’t have to be a drawing. It could be a collage, a painting, a graph, a chart, a video tape or a script. It can be anything that represents your volunteerism in any way. Dylan, just open your mind to different ways of expressing yourself.”

“So does that mean I don’t have to draw a picture?” Dylan asked again.

“No, Dylan” I replied, “It doesn’t have to be a picture.”

The week between classes passed very quickly as it always does at the end of a busy school year. As I unlocked my classroom door and turned on the lights, I began to wonder if my students’ imaginations had been stimulated and what their representations would look like. The ten-minute warning bell rang out through the school hallway to signify that classes would be starting soon. Slowly my class arrived with an array of representations ranging from a painting to an actual quilt piece which the mother of one

of my students helped put together. I was relieved and overcome with joy; this was exactly what I had hoped for. The students immediately began to admire each other's work. One of my quieter students spoke up.

"Let's put the representations on the bulletin board at the back of the classroom and see what they look like together."

"Great idea, Sam" I said "Here is the stapler, some tape and some thumb tacks."

Together the students and I hung up their creations on the old bulletin board at the back of the classroom. When we placed the pieces side by side, their representations blended together and an entirely new picture emerged.

"Wow!" Trevor said. "Looking at my work by itself, I didn't think I made much of a difference in our community, but looking at all of our pieces together, I realize what a difference we as a group actually do make."

"It's just like a song." Carla said.

"What do you mean?" I asked. "Could you explain that?"

"Well, that's simple" she said. "Solos are very nice, but to actually be heard loud and clear, we need all of our voices together to become a choir."

"Yes" I thought to myself. "Your voices are being heard loud and clear."

The responsibility of guiding young people to look beyond themselves in order to piece their understanding of the world together is an important aspect of curriculum. In my classroom, high school students talked about their feelings, reactions and transformational experiences as they wrote a play. Their play focused on the topic of intolerance and their voices rang out crisp and clear through their journal entries, their

discussions and finally through the composition of their play. In order for students to make sense of the world around them, student voice must be added to the character education curricula enabling our society to become a better place in which to live.

This chapter will summarize the context and purpose of the research done in this study. The research question that was investigated will be presented to the reader along with the significance and scope of the study. Finally, limitations of this study will be discussed.

Introduction

Most people would like to live in a world where values, morals, and virtues are present. "For in the end, the welfare and the very existence of our society does not so much depend on the IQs of its inhabitants, as on their character" (Wynne, 1986, p. 31). This seems to be a prevailing notion in our society today. With this notion comes political and social pressure for schools to respond through their curricula. "Schools can never be free of values. Transmitting values to students occurs implicitly through the content and materials to which students are exposed as part of the formal curriculum as well as through the hidden curriculum - - the routines and assumptions that shape school policies and programs" (Thomas, 1991, p. 51). The character education debate is nothing new for the school system. Schools, throughout history, have had to deal with a swinging pendulum with regard to character education and the numerous pressures put upon them from a variety of sources.

The pendulum in education has swung again and once more character education has become a focus in many schools and school divisions. For example, my own school division has a mission statement that addresses the issue of character.

The Seven Oaks School Division is a community of learners, every one of whom shares the responsibility to assist children in acquiring an education which will enable them to lead fulfilling lives within the world as moral people and contributing members of society (Seven Oaks School Division, 1990).

Most school divisions have added a character education component to their mission statements either as leaders in this pedagogical area or as a response to public attitudes.

The emphasis on character education in many school divisions has progressed far beyond mission statements with encouragement from parents and communities who are embracing this focus.

The public has responded favorably when it comes to the need to tackle character issues, but critically as to how schools have addressed these issues. With the push for character education programs in the schools, a debate has risen in the educational community as to how character education should be taught (Howard, Berkowitz & Schaeffer, 2004, p. 196).

With public attitudes propelling many school divisions forward to implement quality character education programs, the challenge for educators, of how to deliver such meaningful programs, becomes apparent.

The debate over character education is divided into two major pedagogical camps (Duncan, 1997). The first pedagogical camp believes that character education should be used as a means of cultural assimilation. This approach is referred to by different names: the traditional approach, the conservative approach and the direct approach. The second camp believes that moral education is the means to developing rationality. This approach is also referred to by different names: the progressive approach, the constructivist approach and the indirect approach (Duncan, 1997). These portrayals describe two divergent points of view that are at odds with one another. If this is the case, what may be needed to draw together or unify the pedagogy of character education in our time?

Context

Following a preliminary review of the literature, it became evident that there was little to reconcile the differences between the traditional approach to character education and the progressive approach. Since there did not appear to be a reconciliation in the literature, I looked at types of methodology that unified the two positions. In my mind there appeared to be a definite need to examine the issue of character education in a live setting, address the opposing views on character education and attend to the inclusion of student voice in the shaping of character. The need to focus my attention on my own high school classroom became apparent. Also it was imperative to try to understand which side of the character education fence students were on, traditional or progressive;

or if they did indeed look at character education through the lenses described in the literature. Were students simply reiterating what they have learned or were they thinking critically about morals and values? In spite of their backgrounds with regard to character education, how were students challenged to discuss and reflect on character development? As a teacher of English, I was presented with a great many opportunities to discuss with students their thoughts about morals and values. In this study, therefore, it seemed a natural next step to engage high school students in a typical character education lesson and study the language and ideas that emerged from their engagement in the lesson.

Students responded to the topic of intolerance, journaling their reactions, feelings and transformational experiences as they engaged in a character development lesson of writing an ethnodrama. Students were not only able to use reflection journals to communicate their feelings and experiences but also were able to provide a mirror of reality through the construction of their play.

This thesis followed an ethnographic format because it framed social behavior, and it “goes beyond reporting events and details of experience and works to explain how these represent the webs of meaning in which we live” (Graue, 1999, p.1). Using Graue’s point emphasizes that the students in this study were active and participating in something and the study was more than just a report about what happened. The students were active in a process which involved and stimulated their moral imagination to make sense of the environment and the world in which they live.

This study began as a discussion with students about their ideas about character.

This discussion provided a springboard for students to comment on specific scenarios regarding intolerance. The students then used their comments in the next step, which was playwriting. Finally students were asked to respond to the overall activity in journal format. This design process is known as the iterative design process and it complemented the ethnographic format which this research followed.

That is, interpretation begins with the first steps into the field; the first set of field notes and experiences; and the first set of guesses, hunches, or hypotheses. It continues until a fully developed and well-supported interpretation emerges; ready to be communicated to others (LeCompte and Schensul, 1999, p. 147).

The cyclical nature of iterative design allowed the researcher to build upon the initial data by gathering new data and intertwining the two. As this process continued in this study, a picture of the students' interaction with character education emerged.

Purpose

Educator Shawna Brynildssen (2002) states that one approach, that is showing particular promise with regard to character education, is using literature as a pedagogical device to teach character education. She says that educators who use methods such as reflection, response, discussion and role playing can help students delve more deeply into the understanding of who they are as people and what values they hold. In order to try to understand students' experiences with regard to character development, this study used discussion and the composition of a play to encourage students to uncover their values, regardless of their previous exposure to character education.

In order to understand students' experiences, a particular type of methodology is needed to show these experiences. Ethnographic research methodology emerged as the appropriate choice in this study because not only was there a process involved in the research but there was also a product, the ethnodrama, which demonstrated students' internal thinking as well as their awareness of the external and cultural arena in which they live. Part of ethnographic research methodology requires that the researcher become a participant-observer. As a classroom teacher I found that to be fairly easy to accomplish. Secondly, as part of an ethnographic study, the subjects, who were my students, were interviewed. Thirdly, the research was conducted in a field work setting (the classroom), and finally the data collected were reflected upon and interpreted (Druckman, 2005). By using this research method, the main research question in this study was addressed.

Research question

In conducting this research study I wondered if, in spite of all of my research on traditional and progressive methods of character education, would students even be interested in the topic of character education and if they were, would they get something out of this topic? One overriding research question became apparent: What are the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participate in an ethnodrama based on a lesson about character education?

Significance

The significance of this study lies in the main arguments with regard to character education, that this kind of education does not stimulate students at the high school level. At this level, some scholars and students argue that character has already been formed and teachers have little or no impact on students (Romanowski, 2003, p. 32). This study may be important to educators because of its potential to demonstrate that students' reactions, experiences and transformational experiences stimulate students with regard to character education and are vital to the social construction of character education pedagogy.

Lecturing students does not fit with a social constructivist's approach to learning. Students must be given the opportunity to interact with "data" and construct their own meanings of life, both personally and socially. This study engaged students in learning as an active process. It promoted both mental and social activity and allowed students to create their own knowledge about character education.

Scope

The scope of this study involved twenty-five high school students who were enrolled in a typical grade eleven English class. The study was conducted in one regular classroom in a multicultural urban high school with an overall population of thirteen hundred students. The students involved in this study were from ethnically diverse backgrounds and provided a reasonable sampling of individual and group responses. Although the actual action research took place over a time period of one week, the study itself was not completed until the students had graduated from my class. At this point the

data was analyzed. This study explored the viewpoints of typical teenagers in a typical urban high school setting. Therefore the findings of this study may have wider implications.

Limitations of the study

An endeavour was made in this study to incorporate student voice regarding character and values into the curriculum. While the conclusions made in this research are tentative, there are some limitations evident in the study that may have implications for future research.

Although previously stated, this study could have wider implications, yet ironically one of the biggest limitations of this study is related to scope. The scope of this study involved 25 high school students and was conducted in one classroom, in one high school. This sample of individual and group responses may be limiting because it cannot generalize to all school settings, all teaching styles and all grades.

A second issue, which would be interesting to consider in further research, concerns the fact that there may be some false objectivity on the part of the researcher. Although the researcher strived to make the lesson one that was very objective and one which focused on progressive methods of teaching, the lesson was not a “purist’s” vision of social construction. In fact, it was a blend of both the traditional and the progressive. The lesson was planned by the researcher (traditional) and the particular intolerance issues that were taught focused on “hard” virtues such as responsibility and personal courage. The students arrived at their own conclusions about character and values and wrote an ethnodrama describing their ideas with regard to values (progressive). The limitation associated with this finding could suggest that the two pedagogical camps in

character education are not as far apart as some of the literature might indicate. This present study attempted to address the apparent polarization of the two philosophies through a blending of the two pedagogies.

Thirdly the time of the year that this study was conducted in may have played a part in the study. The study was conducted during the last week of April and students were very comfortable in the classroom. The willingness of the students created a positive atmosphere that might not be duplicated in another study.

A related issue to the time of the year was also the time frame for the study. My class and I were extremely focused and wanted to see the end product of a completed ethnodrama over the course of five classes. This might not be the case in other studies and future research may make use of longer time frames.

Finally, in terms of my own part as an ethnographer, strict adherence to ethnographic procedures was followed. The disadvantage of this approach was taking on the multifaceted role of both educator in my own classroom and participant-observer without intruding on the study in some way. As an educator I did provide the lesson yet as an ethnographer, I did not direct the students' ideas or opinions in any way. Future research that explores the role of both ethnographer and teacher in one role appears to be both feasible and worthwhile.

Despite these limitations, this study offers an approach for the inclusion of students' ideas and voices in the discussion of character and values. This study encourages and challenges both educators to investigate creative means to address the issue of including students' voices in their schools, communities and globally.

Chapter Two

Literature Review

Character education has played different roles in the school system over the years. In this chapter a brief overview of the history of character education will be provided for the reader. Along with the historical perspective, an outline of the two main educational approaches to character education will also be discussed. Finally the importance of adding imagination and student voice to the character education curricula will be examined.

A brief history of character education

As Brian eloquently expressed in his reflective journal:

With the increase in population and incline of people moving to the major cities, people's morality is on a decline and we forget our own values and who we really are. With a society that demands conformity, we tend to lose ourselves. So much is expected from our generation and not surprisingly, since we are to inherit the earth with all the negative influences in the world, it is easy to go astray and end up in a dark place (Brian).

As Brian reminds us society has changed over the years and so too has character education. Character education has taken on many names and shapes over the last hundred years, from moral education to values education to character education. Although the names have changed, the basic foundations of character education have

remained the same. From the beginning of the public school movement in the United States, character education has always been present. In the mid 1830s and beyond, a major concern was that home values be part of classroom instruction. This instruction was to be delivered by women who were purported to be virtuous teachers and good role models. These teachers were made to seem even more virtuous by the mere fact that they taught their students by using the McGuffey Readers, which reinforced moral instruction (Howard et al., 2004, p. 191). The McGuffey Readers, the first of which were started in 1841, were a series of six readers written by Rev. William Holmes McGuffey, a minister and a philosophy professor at the University of Virginia. The books provided its readers with a variety of lessons based on McGuffey's own ethical code. The readers had a very moralistic tone. They placed the stereotype of a White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant as the model American (Payne, 2000).

The mid 1850s represent a period in history when the discussion of education and religion became predominant. With the influx of immigrants to Canada a division between public and separate schools became apparent. Sixty percent of the immigrants were British Protestants and their vision of education was different from that of the French Catholics who resided in Quebec. Although there are other points of view on this, and issues that go beyond the scope of this paper, Howard et al, 2004 presents the argument that French Catholics felt overwhelmed with the Protestant view of education and continued to establish their own parochial schools. Ontario continued to give provincial support in the 1850s to separate schools. In response to these new schools, "Protestants had to expand the religious neutrality of the public schools in order to prevent" more "state aid to Catholic Education" (Howard et al., 2004, p. 191). Schools

had to provide a balance which reflected dual commitment to both cultures but remain impartial at the same time. Section 93 of the 1867 Constitutional Act provided this impartiality by extending the rights of separate schools to dissentient schools in both Upper and Lower Canada. The New Brunswick Act in 1871 went further by introducing non- denominational mandatory schooling (Fay, 2002).

By the time the 1890s rolled around there was a definite division in the approach to delivering character education. The general public had differing views on the best way for children to learn to develop their character. There was the traditional approach that entailed the “Aristotelian” tradition of action and habit as fundamental, over knowing and desiring (Howard et al., 2004 p. 191).

This division in the approach to delivering character education continued past the turn of the century.

Time continued to march on and “In 1918, ethical character and citizenship were identified as key components of education, by the National Education Association’s Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education” (Ries, 1999, p. 26). Once more, the McGuffey Reader took on a prominent role in the classroom.

The opposite side to the traditional movement was known as the progressive approach. This approach followed a Socratic view in that it focused more on the process of children thinking critically in order to make their own decisions and to take action based on those decisions (Howard et al., 2004). As traditional character education began

to lose its steam in the late 1930s and 1940s, the progressive approach was gaining momentum. There were several reasons for the decline in popularity of the traditional approach. Firstly, there was a criticism by educators of the day about the methods used to “make” students behave. Secondly, and perhaps the biggest turning point and most interesting factor involved a study conducted by researchers Hartshorne and May between 1928 and 1930. Their study was called the *Study in the Nature of Character Inquiry*. They studied almost 11,000 students in both public and private schools in the United States to see if students who participated in programs which emphasized character development had more character than other students. The results of Hawthorne and May’s study indicated that character education programs had virtually no impact on the students and that universal character traits did not seem to exist (Leming, 1997). This was a significant finding and it served to shift the public’s focus away from character education altogether.

The 1940s and the 1950s generally were a time when a sense of optimism pervaded education. World War II was over and “public discourse about character education gradually declined, many character education school practices were slowly changing in response to shifts in societal and educational priorities” (Leming, 1997, p. 12). The main thrust of education was social adjustment. This was a natural reaction after many people saw the atrocities of war. They hoped that their children would never have to see or participate in the harsh realities of war. If children could get along with others and develop into responsible citizens, the world would be a better place. By the 1960’s the term social adjustment meant not only the relationship children formed with others, but also the relationship they formed with themselves with regard to mental health and

feelings of well being (Clouse, 2000). As the interest in social adjustment rose, there was also a parallel rise in interest in the psychology of learning that meant that it was time for character education to make a re-surgence in a different format.

The 1960s was an explosive time on all fronts, not just education. Politically there were many changes resulting from the civil rights movement and an entire shift in the population's way of thinking. Civil rights came to the forefront along with changes in sexual norms and values, opposition to war and cultural diversity. In education the focus on privacy became important because families believed values should be taught in the home and character education was seen as an invasion of that privacy. There was a push for the separation of church and state that was solidified with the 1962 decision of the United States Supreme Court prohibiting teacher led prayers in public classrooms. This paved the way for a new name and shape of character education.

This new name for character education became known as values clarification, and it focused on the promotion of student moral growth in a school based forum. (Howard et al., 2004). "The values clarification movement was an understandable attempt to address the increasing cultural pluralism, engaging students in a range of exercises designed to increase personal awareness of and/or make critical decisions about the values they held" (Howard et al., 2004, p. 194).

Values Clarification got its start in 1966 with the publication of *Values and Teaching* by Louis Rath, Merrill Harmin, and Sidney Simon—all professors of education. What the authors offered was not a way to teach values but a way for students to "clarify" their own values. The authors

took pains to distance themselves from character education and traditional methods of teaching values (Kilpatrick, 1992, p. 80).

Simon also published *Values Clarification: A Handbook of Practical Strategies for Teachers and Students* in 1972. There were really three steps to the values clarification movement that attempted to help students address their own values critically and make decisions based on those critical reflections. The first step of values clarification began with knowledge of the facts, details and events. Learning about World War II might be one example of the first step in the values clarification process. This led to the next step of understanding the concepts and the principles of underlying facts. In other words, knowledge of World War II was no longer enough. There needed to be an examination of the root causes of the war. Finally, students could choose their values based on their feelings, opinions and interests. "This caused a problem because this movement did not differentiate between what students could choose to do and what they should choose to do" (Clouse, 2000, p. 24 - 25). Teachers who used values clarification were supposed to support their students even if the students chose not to have any values at all.

In the 1970s and early 1980s character education shifted again due to parental pressure. Parents felt that the values clarification method did not teach students to use their intelligence, but to simply rely on their feelings and therefore was ineffectual in stimulating students' minds. Just at this point in time, along came Lawrence Kohlberg, a psychologist, who became important by developing a technique called the moral judgment approach. Kohlberg believed that students should decide on their own values,

but these decisions about values should be based on reason. His approach used stories and questions with moral dilemmas as a foundation for character development.

Kohlberg's ideas in terms of character education were criticized by feminists. Carol Gilligan, for one, pointed out that Kohlberg's theory was male - biased (Howard et al., 2004). However, the greatest criticism came from both educators and the general public. The moral judgment approach proved itself difficult for teachers to implement and students were not really developing their character. "Children seemed to be doing little more than developing rationalizations for what was all too often their morally unacceptable behaviors" (Leming, 1997, p.13). Kohlberg's theory did not last long because most of the work done with students remained an abstraction. Students really did not grasp the true implications of their actions because they were not in the situations Kohlberg proposed.

The shift away from moral judgment came in the form of "the study of caring" in the mid 1980s. Although the term caring was not a new one in education, Nel Noddings popularized it. Noddings' approach to character education focused on the aspect of caring in terms of relations, using moral emotions as a stimulus to moral action and the fact that care does not have to be universal to be justified (Noddings, 1995). As a response to the changing world where wars and violence were part of the daily news, schools welcomed the idea of caring.

Today, character education has again evolved and changed shapes. Character education is currently linked to democracy and good citizenship (Lickona, 1991). However, the tension still exists between the traditionalist and Aristotelian view of

character education versus the progressive or Socratic view of character education, in other words, the historical and the developmental. Prominent educators, such as Alfie Kohn and Thomas Lickona, have chosen sides with regard to implementing character education programs in this long running debate.

Two Traditions

Traditionalism

Thomas Lickona, a traditionalist, is an advocate for teaching responsibility and respect in school. He is the Director of the Center for the Fourth and Fifth R's at State University in New York and one of the major leaders promoting the idea of going back to the teaching of core values. "Good character consists of knowing the good, desiring the good, and doing the good – habits of the mind, habits of the heart, and habits of action" (Lickona, 1991, p. 51). He suggests that as a whole, society needs good character and good character values to become fully human. He also feels that staff and students can be held accountable to the values on which good character is based. Finally he says that character education is essential to the task of building a moral society. He also maintains that knowing, valuing and doing the right thing result in the building of moral character (Lickona, 1996).

Lickona's view of character education represents a traditional view of the world. His view is one that is rooted in the belief that society must retain traditional relationships and values, while preserving a social order. "Character education is seen as a way of teaching children to respect these values and relationships to thereby protect us from moral decline as embodied by the poorly developed characters of youth" (Collins and

Henjum, 1999, p. 24). This is where most progressives find fault with Lickona's beliefs. They do not believe that values come in neat tidy packages that are handed to students who can open and ingest them.

The traditional view portrays the idea of character education as the transmission of ideas, or in less unflattering terms, indoctrination. Transmission in the traditional approach is the passing down of wisdom from adults to children so they are able to internalize that wisdom (Hymowitz, 2003). "Traditionalists are often critical of the 'soft virtues' such as caring, compassion, kindness and friendliness that are championed by the progressives. They instead focus on the 'hard virtues' such as self-discipline, courage, loyalty and perseverance" (Williams, 2000, p.35).

Traditionalists view habit formation as a central key concept of character education. They argue that much of good character becomes automatic with both repetition and time. They also argue that it is one's actions that shape who one is. The progressives see character education as putting more emphasis on understanding, reasoning, conviction and awareness (Williams, 2000).

An additional aspect of the traditional view of education and character formation is the belief that there is no such thing as a value free school and that there are both right values such as honesty and wrong values such as lying. Schools can shape students character accordingly based on these values. Traditionalists also proclaim that there are three elements to a good character education program: example, study and practice (Doyle, 1997). Setting a high moral standard, engaging in worthwhile texts, persevering

with hard work and practice all combine to produce good habits according to traditionalists.

Traditionalists also believe that many children are growing up without a moral or ethical framework to guide them and to help them develop good character. If this is so, conservatives feel that even children who have academic knowledge but are lacking in morals are not truly educated (Schaeffer, 1998). After all, children are not wildflowers but domestic ones. They require very special tending both academically and morally. They should not be left to their own devices because school is about adults knowing more than the children and passing on this knowledge to them (Doyle, 1997).

Progressivism

Progressivists view character education differently from traditionalists. They believe children are reasonable and basically benign. They also believe children should be spared feelings of shame and guilt. They are wary of adult authority decreeing extrinsic moral principles to students. Progressives feel that children should be given opportunities to construct meaningful values from experience (Hymowitz, 2003).

Educators such as Alfie Kohn maintain that traditional character education paints young people as having dark natures. He has no particular love of the character education movement.

What goes by the name of character education *now-a-days* is, for the most part, a collection of exhortations and extrinsic inducements designed to make children work harder and do what they are told. Even when other

values are promoted – caring or fairness, say – the preferred method of instruction is tantamount to indoctrination. The point is to drill students in specific behaviors rather than to engage them in deep, critical reflection about certain ways of being (Kohn, 1997, p. 434).

Kohn also maintains that when children are encouraged to reflect upon their behaviour and that of others, more social and moral development takes place. When students are given the opportunity to tackle issues and reflect upon those issues, students ultimately become responsible for their own behaviours and positive character development occurs (Kohn, 1997).

Anticipating Kohn's thoughts, progressives believe that the traditional view of character education represents a cynical view of children and a pessimistic assessment of human nature. They feel that children don't need fixing. Progressives do not view character education as a socializing power that will "tame the beast" (Kohn, 1997, p. 434) in children. In addition to this, the progressives certainly do not adhere to the assumption that the current order of traditional society and socio-economic forces are best and any deviation from it would produce undesirable students. Furthermore, progressives think that the traditional perspective is deference to authority and that this places children in subservient roles, perpetuating traditional teacher-student interactions. Progressives feel that without awareness and sensitivity to all factors in society, students can be hurt by the conservative view of character education. They believe that in becoming more sensitive to differences and exploring creative contemporary teaching methods, students will develop into citizens of good character (Collins and Henjum, 1999).

Progressives further believe that stimulating moral imagination is more important than rote memorization of values. Once moral imaginations are stimulated, students will begin to review their own actions and behaviours as well as how these actions and behaviours impact on others (Martinson, 2001). Once moral imaginations are stimulated, students will begin to share their thoughts and ideas. This lends itself to capturing student voice and making it part of the literature.

The blending of traditions

While traditionalists focus on the development of habits and extrinsic motivation, progressives focus on the intrinsic development of values and attitudes that apply generally to all situations. Progressives maintain that the traditionalists' focus on the development of habits only supports behaviour in some cases, usually dependent on the presence of an adult (Collins and Henjum, 1999). Kohn further emphasizes this point when he says the traditional view of education treats students like "passive receptacles to be filled, pets to be trained, computers to be programmed and objects to be manipulated" (Kohn, 1997, p. 434). Once again the image of students being handed packages of values to be opened and ingested reappears as the position of the traditionalists.

The greatest difference between traditionalists and progressives is how they view teaching. Traditionalists view students as empty vessels to be filled, while progressives feel children learn character from the inside out. Progressives feel that children should be given the opportunity to construct their own meanings from learning situations rather than having adults teach children what meanings to construct (Collins and Henjum, 1999). In other words, they experience the world, reflect upon their experiences and

make decisions based on these reflections. Traditionalists seem to want to approach character education from the opposite view, from the outside in. They believe in “*transmitting* good values and students being good *receivers* who pick up these good values blindly” (Collins and Henjum, 1999, p. 30).

Despite what seems like overwhelming differences between the two philosophies, these apparent conflicting traditions have more in common than the literature describes. The common premise between the two positions is that they may both indeed be universalists, with the same fundamental ethical principles. After all, both pedagogies center on the importance of good character and character values even though their approaches are different. The blending of the two traditions could provide an important dimension to the character education curricula.

Character education curricula

Can character education be taught and learned either through a blend of the traditional view of character education and the progressive view of education in an effective manner that changes student behaviour (Romanowski, 2003). “In the end, does it merely come down to a competition between the two methods of teaching character education? Is it a competition between the product desired and the process by which that product is to be achieved” (Anderson, 2000, p. 139). Or is it recognizing high school students’ predisposition to character education, and using that to instill greater understanding and greater reflection upon moral issues. It doesn’t matter whether character education is the “schools’ latest fad and oldest mission” (Ryan and Bohlin, 1999, p. 72). The real challenge is using students’ ideas and behaviours with regard to

character and making an impact on self-reflection and teaching practices. In light of what we already know about character education in Canada, the United States and globally, research in this area is needed because, in the final analysis, one goal of education should be to help students become people of good character.

That goal is achievable if we adults can see people as ends, not means; if we can see that people matter and need to be taken seriously and respected; and if we can see that we must be responsible as individuals for our own behaviour (Lasley II, 1997, p. 654).

The quandary of how to teach character education through a blend of both traditions was something that needed to be dealt with in this study. In response to that need, the use of student imagination and student voice proved to be essential ingredients in this research. Kieran Egan (2005) suggests that stimulating students' imaginations is crucial to successful learning.

... Imagination is at the center of education; it is seen as crucial to any subject, mathematics and science no less than history and literature.

Imagination can be the main workhorse of effective learning if we yoke it to education's central tasks (Egan, 2005, p. xi – xii).

The use of imagination to blend traditions

It almost seems impossible to imagine teaching students without taking their ideas and dreams into account when planning a lesson or choosing a novel.

In the past, in moral education programs, we have often given almost exclusive attention to the general needs of society, especially the adult world, and neglected the distinctive needs of adolescents. We have sometimes even questioned the morality of adolescent desires and aspirations (Beck, 1992, p. 178).

Taking Beck's point into consideration, the focus of this study included social interaction and social construction in response to students' imaginative desires. "Moral education... is the education of a conscience that is cultivated by attachment to a social group, that is to say, it is the education of the conscience of membership" (Green, 1998, p. 11).

Students, who work together in a community to rediscover their values, form a relationship that not only builds mutuality and joint identity but provides an opportunity for self reflection.

Student imagination

Through discussion and writing, students can be encouraged to use the conscience of imagination. What matters when encouraging students to use their imagination is the power that comes from the use of this imagination.

What matters ... , in short, is not their scientific validity or accuracy, but their evocative, rhetorical and imaginative power, their capacity to draw us out of our presumed world of thought and action and to grant us once again the ears to hear, the eyes to see and the courage to act in different ways (Green, 1998, p. 26).

This suggests that an activity such as writing an ethnodrama together would not only stimulate minds and imaginations, but also that it would make sense according to the literature.

Education is directly related to the stories attached to the educational reality at any level, to the archetypal imagination: myths, beliefs, values and cultural patterns. Institutional life and living reality in schools and universities is shaped by the imagination structures connected to cultural models, social roles, heroes and values and by administrative norms

(Popenici, 2004, p. 1).

These kinds of activities such as story telling and play writing are effective because students are able to paint a picture of their own realities through their own words, voices and imaginations.

Student voice

Imagination and student voice are an essential ingredients for social change. One way to incorporate both student voice and imagination into the character education curricula, according to artist-scholar Johnny Saldana is to use ethnodrama. He maintains that through qualitative data analysis of interviews, field notes, journal entries, observations and the research literature, ethnodrama can provide a portrayal of three-dimensional participants (Saldana, 1999, p. 62). As actual participants, students can be catalysts for social change.

In order for social change to not only happen, but be meaningful, voices of students must be heard and considered. "It is the transformation, the urging, the invitation to enter now into the realm of possibilities that exist so far only in imagination and that being acted upon will change the future" (Green, 1998, p. 26).

Using ethnodrama can challenge students to think about character and values and it can effectively include their voice in the research.

The performance text is the single, most powerful way for ethnography to recover yet interrogate the meanings of lived experiences. The performance text is a lived experience in two senses. The performance doubles back on the experiences previously represented in the ethnographer's text. It then re-presents these experiences as embodied performance to the audience (Denzin, 1997, p. 94 -95).

Ethnodrama not only allows for student voice, but it enables students to empathize with their peers and reflect upon their own values in an empowering way. "It uses words and stories that individuals tell to fashion performance texts that imagine new worlds, worlds where humans can become who they wish to be, free of prejudice, repression and discrimination" (Denzin, 2003, p. 105) As students reflect upon the ideas and opinions expressed in an ethnodrama, they can begin to realize how their own character makes them an integral part of the community in which they live.

The research

According to Kevin Ryan, a strong advocate for traditional character education, teachers are responsible for this very difficult task of developing and reinforcing character.

Teaching is intrinsically and unavoidably a moral act. Schools and their classrooms and playgrounds are cauldrons of moral matter, ethical issues, and the events that affect a young person's character. Some children slip into the habit of cheating; some become champions of the underdogs; and everyone's image of a good person, a good life, is profoundly affected by their long years in school (Ryan, 2000, p. 41).

If, according to Ryan, teachers are responsible for developing and reinforcing character, it is important to understand how high school students interact with lessons which challenge their thinking about character and values and also understand how this can relate to teaching practices. "... by entering into first-hand interaction with people in their everyday lives, ethnographers can reach a better understanding of the beliefs, motivations and behaviors of their subjects than they can by using any other method" (Tedlock, 2003, p. 190). Inviting students to participate in activities such as ethnodrama, can give credence and importance to their voices, and character may indeed be developed.

This research used an ethnodrama to explore the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participated in an ethnodrama based on a lesson about character education. Through the use of discussion and role-playing which stimulated students' imaginations and students' voices, the research examined these perceptions and reactions.

As the case with any research, certain terms are used with regard to that research.

In order to clarify and illuminate the descriptions and details of this research, a list of terms and their definitions is provided as follows:

Definition of Terms

Arts-based research - A method of inquiry that uses the elements of the creative arts experience as a way of understanding teaching practice (Speiser, 2003).

Bricolage - "Something made or put together using whatever materials happen to be available" (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2004).

Caring - Moral emotions as a stimulus for moral actions (Noddings, 1995).

Character - Character refers to the moral qualities that determine the way a person thinks, feels and acts in the important matters of life. Or as King (1931, p.15) put it "What god and angels know you are...the sum total of ideas, aspirations, attitudes within the brain, mind and spirit that crystallize into thought and action."

Character education - Character education, in this study, will refer to the cultivation of moral values that form character by practicing, teaching and using decision making to help guide students throughout their lives (Collins and Henjum, 1999).

Character education curricula - A range of activities used in the classroom to stimulate and motivate students to examine their own character (Clouse, 2000).

Ethnodrama - A role playing simulation in which actors produce and organize the circumstances of everyday life (Graue, 1999).

Ethnography - A qualitative research process that involves three sources of data: participant observation, open ended questions which elicit cultural knowledge and analysis of data (Graue, 1999).

Imagination - the ability to construct and manipulate mental imagery, and participate in mental activities dealing with the non –actual, not real and not concrete (Thomas, 2004).

Iterative research design - The cyclical process of testing, analyzing, designing and repeating the cycle (Zimmerman, 2003)

McGuffey readers - A series of six readers written by Rev. William Holmes McGuffey, the first of which started in 1841. The books provided its readers with a variety of lessons based on McGuffey's own ethical code. The readers were moralistic in tone. They presented the White Anglo-Saxon Protestant as the model American (Payne, 2000).

Performance ethnography - An enacted text that interlaces a written description with oral interpretation based on cultural interpretation (Magoulick, 2002).

Progressive character education - The term Progressive character education refers to the exposure to historical values, critical thinking about values in the context of experiences, and the action on those values by integration into personal value structures (Collins & Henjum, 1999).

Student voice - Student voice is defined as the opinions, ideas, experiences and knowledge of young people in school (Laborlawtalk Encyclopedia, 2005).

Traditional character education - The learning of a set of specific historical values and virtues, and the action taken upon those values as habit and as a fundamental way of life (Collins & Henjum, 1999).

Value structures - Principles or standards that guide a person in conducting their life (The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, 2004).

Universalist - Those who believe that some fundamental ethical principles are universal and unchanging. In this vision, these principles are valid regardless of the context or situation. (McGraw- Hill, 2003)

For the purpose of this paper, it was also necessary to clarify and illuminate the themes/ values which emerged from the students' writings. The students' writings were collapsed into seven themes which will be discussed in greater detail in Chapter Four: Findings. These seven themes are be defined below according to the researcher's themes/values definitions of the terms as they were categorized in the analysis.

Theme/Value Definitions:

Citizenship - Membership in both a community and a country.

Community - A group of people sharing interests and interacting with one another in a common area or region.

Empowerment - Enabling students to have the freedom to use their abilities and capacities to have control over their learning.

Identity - An understanding of who the student is as a person and where they fit in the world.

Social Justice - Respectful relationships, equality, fairness and justice.

Society and Self - An understanding of a person's place and role in the community and the world at large.

Working together - To willingly join together with classmates for a united purpose.

Chapter Three

Method

This section outlines the underlying principles of the study, describes the participants and provides an explanation of the procedures used in the study. It also provides a detailed description of the materials used, the assessment procedures implemented and the method of data analysis.

By conducting ethnographic research with an iterative design, students were able to express their opinions and more often than not, their enjoyment of the process.

Underlying principles

One of the underlying principles behind using an ethnographic approach to my research was that the students' voices could be examined through their reflections and writings. Mienczakowski (2001) says "that performed ethnography may provide more accessible and clearer public explanations of research than is frequently the case with traditional, written report texts" (p. 471).

Validity, generalizability and reliability are also key components of research. Using an ethnographic approach to research does not negate these terms; rather, it merely uses them in different ways. Validity in qualitative research means description and explanation and how the descriptions and explanations fit together into a credible piece of writing (Janesick, 2003). Generalizability in ethnographic research refers to the findings of the study, and the contribution of these findings to the research and to our knowledge. Janesick (2003) also states: "the traditional view of generalizability limits the ability to reconceptualize the role of social science in education and human service" (p. 70). And

finally, reliability does not mean replicability but rather that the study has merit. "In fact, the value of the case study is its uniqueness; consequently, reliability in the traditional sense of replicability is pointless here (Janesick, 2003, p. 70).

The final principle links the research to a larger social context and makes the research come alive with human experiences.

These understandings, in turn, are reinscribed in the transcribed voice and dialogue of the other. They are created in the social text. These texts are dialogical, the site at which multiple voices commingle. In them, the voices of the other and the voices of the researcher come alive and interact with one another (Denzin, 1997, p. 33).

In this way student voice can not only be heard, but also added to the character education curriculum. In this way too, the main research question, what are the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participate in an ethnodrama based on a lesson about character education, can also be addressed.

This study engaged students in a character education lesson in order to understand some of their experiences with regard to character development, regardless of their previous exposure to either traditional or progressive methods of character education. The expression of the students' reactions, experiences and transformational experiences proved to add another dimension to the social construction of character education pedagogy.

Qualitative data in the form of written personal reflections by the students was used to unearth how students reacted to and were transformed during the process of a typical character education lesson. These reflections were then used by students to create an ethnodrama.

Its power is in its ability to tell the story of human experience, a story that can be trusted and a story that can be used. It opens the doors to a place where the raw and genuine find their articulation through form, through poetic expression, through art (R. J. Pelias, public presentation, Nov. 1998).

This was more appropriate than other types of data collection for my study because it actually showed, through a script and through reflective journals, how high school students interacted with character education curricula. The use of ethnodrama also provided an opportunity to analyze what was learned from high school students' interaction with character education.

Participants

Before ever approaching participants to become involved in my study, I made a proposal to the Ethics Committee outlining my ethnographic research. I had to consider who the participants of my study would be. It would have to be one of my classes so that accessibility and continuity in study would be addressed. I also wanted a group who would be willing to share their ideas and voice their opinions. Additionally, I wanted the research to complement the curriculum and not be research for the sake of research. My proposal to the Ethics Committee described the research which was to be conducted and

at this point I had also decided my grade eleven English class would fit the criteria of accessibility, continuity and willingness to share opinions. The Ethics Committee approved my research on April 12, 2005, with no revisions necessary.

After receiving my ethics approval, I approached my grade eleven English class on the Monday of the third week in April, 2005. I explained that I was working on my thesis and that I wanted to conduct my research in their class. I told students that they would be discussing their ideas concerning values, working in groups and ultimately creating a play based on their ideas. At this point I also made it clear that their participation in the research was totally voluntary and in no way would their lack of participation be held against them. I explained that students not interested in participating in the research could use the week to work in the library on other English assignments which we were currently working on in class.

At this point, I also explained that if students wanted to participate, it was mandatory for them to sign a consent form for their participation and also for their parents to sign a consent form as well. I handed out the two sets of consent forms to each student, one for the student and one for their parents. I told the class that the forms needed to be in by Friday if they planned to participate in the research on the following Monday.

Surprisingly, by the end of the week all of the students in my classroom returned consent forms from both themselves and their parents. They all seemed genuinely interested in participating in the study, although one student, who upon observing that all members of the class had handed in their consent forms, suggested that they should be

given marks for participation. It was agreed that ten marks be given to each student for their participation. This did not affect the research in any way because there was unanimous participation and this caveat was added after the consent forms were handed in.

The twenty-five subjects of the study were from an ethnically diverse high school in urban Winnipeg. Their ages ranged from sixteen to seventeen years of age. The gender split in this study was 14 males and 11 females. The participants were a perfect fit for the research because judging by their journal responses, they felt comfortable sharing their reflections, participating in discussions and writing their ethnodrama. This was an objective study and I did not examine the data until after the students had been graded and they had graduated from my class.

Procedures

Throughout the semester we had been discussing the values held by many of the characters in our novel studies. We discussed values that were displayed in *Macbeth*, *Ethan Fromme* and *Generals Die in Bed*. As a way to link the novels together and add in a component of character education, I decided that the students should identify their own individual beliefs about values. This would enable the class to talk about the development in their own character as well as to try to understand why other people act in certain ways as a result of their values and character.

The objectives of the lesson were to enable students to identify their own values and experience situations where they would have to act according to their values. A

second objective was to have students work as part of a group and through this group participation develop empathy for their peers. The final objective was to have students critically discuss the topic of values as a class and in small groups and reflect upon and analyze the impact of their own character in society.

I planned the research to take place over the course of one week, during five eighty minute classes. The structure of the research would be an initial discussion about values. This would be followed by a reading of ten scenarios, personal journal reactions to the scenarios and a discussion of the scenarios by the whole class. Finally dialogue for each scenario would be written by students and bricolaged into an ethnodrama. The time period of five eighty minute classes, which I had allotted to complete the research, was sufficient to complete all of the activities I had planned.

The initial discussion questions

The first part of the research began with four initial discussion questions to motivate students to begin thinking about their values. These initial discussion questions, are aligned with the main research question that was to explore how students' perceive and react as they participate in an ethnodrama, based on a lesson about character education. The initial questions for the discussion were:

1. Describe what you think is meant by the term values.
2. Describe how and where you learned your values.
3. Describe your opinion about whether values should be discussed in high school.
4. Describe the role you think values play in society.

As a participant-observer, I tried to limit my role in the discussion process. This meant that I only asked the questions and nodded my head as a sign of encouragement to the students with regard to their responses. This part of the lesson took place as a whole class discussion during the first thirty minutes of my eighty-minute English class. The students' responses were audio taped and later transcribed by me. The audio-tape was stored in a locked filing cabinet and the responses were examined after the students graduated from my class. These responses will be shared in Chapter Four.

After the thirty-minute discussion, students were provided with a photocopy of ten scenarios that dealt with values. In order for these scenarios to lead to character education, students were required to not only merely respond to the scenarios but also to critically analyze why they responded in such a way and to reflect upon their own values.

The act of developing morals and values in today's society is difficult. It is often a balancing act between exhibiting values that are a result of the pressures put upon a person by society, and acting as an individual who is secure with his/her own values and character in spite of societal pressures. The study of a variety of scenarios was one way to offer the students an opportunity to reflect on and understand the importance of values in their lives.

The concept of using scenarios to address issues of intolerance and values is something that is not unique to Manitoba. In fact, this idea is used quite effectively by the Harmony Movement in North York, Ontario. The Harmony Movement is a non-profitable charitable organization that was formed in 1994 to promote harmony and equality among Canadians. The Harmony Movement, which has links to the Manitoba

Human Rights Commission, believes in using interactive case scenarios as a platform to discuss how the participants perceive and use their values to react to intolerance in Canadian society (Harmony Movement, 2005). Again students are encouraged to have a voice and to participate and make a difference in society.

The following scenarios, created by me, were based on my own experiences of twenty four years as a teacher both inside and outside of my classroom. My experience as an educator has allowed me to be a witness to many scenarios both inside and outside of school which pertain to adolescents and are of an interest to adolescents. With the idea of encouraging empathy among my students, I designed the scenarios around various issues relating to intolerance.

The scenarios

1. A store has a policy that only five teenagers are allowed to be in the store at once while there is no restriction on the number of adults allowed in. Is this acceptable? Why or why not?
2. You are having a snack at the mall and end up talking to the person next to you. Before you know it, you are getting along famously and you make a date. However, before the person leaves he/she asks for your help getting into a wheelchair which you didn't notice until now. Do you pursue the relationship? Why or why not?
3. A male and a female apply for a job. They both have equal qualifications. Who should get the job and why?

4. You are assigned to plan the menu for a party which you are throwing for a class of 50 students. Two of the students have religious dietary restrictions. Do you alter the menu to suit their needs? Why or why not?

5. A new student arrives in your class. He/she is wearing some rather outlandish clothing, and speaks out in class with some very different ideas. You are assigned to complete a two week long project with this person as your partner. Do you accept this person as your partner or do you ask your teacher to change you to another group? Why or why not?

6. You work in a restaurant. Your boss tells you to get rid of some customers who are dressed shabbily so that the table is available for customers who are well dressed and wearing expensive jewellery. Do you go along with his request? Why or why not?

7. You are applying for a job that was advertised in the newspaper. When you arrive for the interview you discover your future boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. Do you accept the job if offered? Why or why not?

8. You own a small kiosk in the mall which sells t - shirts. You are in need of an extra staff member to look after sales on the weekends. You have two applicants for the job. The first applicant is a fifty year old with retail experience in the clothing business. The second applicant is an eighteen year old with no retail experience but who is willing to work long hours and is enthusiastic about the job. Who do you hire?

9. Your best friend gets into an argument with another student about their religious beliefs. You understand the point the other student is making and in fact you agree with the other student. Do you support your best friend or take the side of the other student? Why or why not?

10. Canada is asked to participate in a war against a country that is culturally very different from ours and that has been stockpiling weapons. Do we participate in the war? Why or why not?

After each student received a photocopy of the scenarios, I read them aloud to students giving them an opportunity to ask questions if they did not understand the scenarios. When no questions were forthcoming, students were then asked to use the remaining fifty minutes of class time to respond individually through personal written reflections to the ten scenarios. At the end of fifty minutes, students were asked to hand in their reflections to me. This generated twenty five individual pieces of data. These data were stored in the same locked filing cabinet along with the audio tape and again, were not examined until the students had graduated from my English class in June.

The next day, English class began with a twenty minute whole class discussion about the ten scenarios. Students orally shared some of their journal responses about the scenarios. One student shared that her brother was in a wheelchair and she described how the scenario described in number two, had affected her personally. The details of the journal responses will be shared in Chapter Four.

Once the scenarios were discussed, the twenty-five students were asked to divide up into ten groups of two or three students per group, to continue with the next part of the assignment. At this point, the lesson went through an evolutionary process. The basic assignment was about constructing a dialogue for a scene in an ethnodrama based on one of the scenarios and incorporate their ideas about values and character into it. As the teacher, I gave over control to the students to form a collaborative learning partnership.

Each group was randomly given one of the ten scenarios written on a slip of paper. Once all ten of the scenarios were distributed to the groups and before they actually began the writing of their scenes, I set the basic foundation for their dialogues. The premise of the ethnodrama, as a culminating event for the lesson, involved a group of five friends getting together to play a character question and answer game in one of the character's homes. As a class, the students' brainstormed for five names for the characters in the play and for some general character traits about each of the characters. Students had the remainder of the class and the next English class to work on their scenes, which was sufficient time, to complete the writing.

After the student groups wrote their scenes, the scenes were woven together into one complete ethnodrama by the class, including me, with the idea of a "bricolage", a piecing together of their writing to form a unique ethnodrama. The scenarios provided the prompts, from which the bricolage was written, showcasing students' voices as they wove their play together. The use of bricolage helped all parties work together toward the goal of learning about values and character which were represented in an ethnodrama.

Students used their own ideas about intolerance and, as in bricolage, placed them together to form an ethnodrama. Locke (2001) explains how bricolage – a way of writing a play collaboratively with a group, works.

In essence, bricolage is what tinkers do – collecting odd bits of stuff they think may be potentially useful, then using whatever bits seem to work in the context of some later repair job. Simple. And yet profound. Because the bits the bricoleur ends up using were not designed for the use they end up being put to. Figuring out which bits to collect and how to apply them to some task at hand requires a completely different kind of thinking (Locke, 2001, p. 2, 3).

My role again was limited to facilitator and participant-observer. I asked questions such as “Which scene should be the first in our play? How can we connect these two scenes together? How can we describe the setting of the play?” The students, collectively, decided the order in which the scenes should be woven together. They brainstormed for connectors to make each scene flow into the next. They created the ethnodrama, along with my facilitating the process in its entirety, and the end result was a representation of the values learned.

The fifth and final class encompassed the play being read in large group, a performance of the ethnodrama. In addition to writing the ethnodrama (see Appendix A) and reading it, students were asked, after the group performance of the play, to complete a reflection journal. The prompt for the second journal response was: Describe your

feelings, reactions and experiences as you participated in this character education lesson. Twenty-five written responses were again collected by me at the end of this class and once again they were stored in a locked filing cabinet with the previous data collected. This provided me with a total of fifty written responses and an audio-tape of responses which was later transcribed. These responses will be further discussed in Chapter Four.

The ethnodrama and excerpts from students' reflective pieces were analyzed through repeated readings to discover emergent themes, after my power vis-à-vis teacher of the students was over, to provide student voice in the study. This type of study ties together the five general outcomes that are from the Manitoba English Language Arts curriculum guide. Not only were students listening, speaking, reading, writing, and viewing, but they were also exploring thoughts, ideas, feelings and experiences. They responded personally and critically to material presented in class. They managed ideas and information and shaped their opinions around those ideas and information. Discussion, writing and collaboration enhanced their clarity and the artistry of communication. Finally, when students worked collaboratively, they "celebrated and built community", one is the last of the general outcomes of the curriculum (Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes and Standards, 2003). By having students practice collaboration educators give students an opportunity to use their voices and make them feel that they have a place in society.

Research method

Ethnographic research, which is a branch of qualitative research methodology, was used to develop a cultural interpretation of the students' writings.

Ethnographers generate understandings of culture through portrayal of an emic perspective, often described as the "insider's point of view." This understanding is developed through close exploration of three sources of data. The first... is called participant observation. This term represents the dual role of the ethnographer. To develop an understanding of what it is like to live in a setting, the researcher must both become a participant in the life of the setting while also maintaining the stance of an observer, someone who describes the experience. In addition, interviews provide targeted data collection opportunities by asking specific but open-ended questions to elicit cultural knowledge. Finally, researchers collect representative artifacts that embody characteristics of the topic of interest. Using these data sources as a foundation, the ethnographer relies on a cultural frame of analysis to infer tacit meanings shared by the group (Graue, 1999).

Graue's simple, yet straight forward, outline of ethnographic research connects directly to the method I followed. I was a participant-observer in my own classroom and recorded the experience of a lesson in character education. I was able to collect data from open-ended discussion questions and journal responses. Finally the ethnodrama itself became a representative artifact which embodied the students' visions and voices.

Materials used in the study

In line with Graue's concept of ethnographic methods, student journals and the writing generated from the character education lessons were used as materials in data collection and the resulting analysis. To reiterate, the journals were written as responses to the ten scenarios provided. There was also a second journal response, after the ethnodrama had been written and read in class, which probed students about their feelings, reactions, experiences and participation in the character education lesson. Responses to the ten scenarios were done in the first class while the second journal entries were done at the completion of the fifth and final class.

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985) and Wilson (2004), the investigation of an existing phenomenon, without manipulating conditions to affect subject's responses, is essential for qualitative research. In this case ethnodrama, which falls under the umbrella of qualitative research, incorporated student voices in all scenes that were based on the ten scenarios without manipulating student responses. This type of research methodology also helped investigate the current status of student views of character education and provided more insight into the question of how teaching character education in a high school setting could be better implemented.

Although descriptive qualitative analysis provided a definition for the method of analysis, it did not operationalize the process. Iterative design process was added to assist me in my role as participant-observer and facilitator and move the lesson to its ultimate conclusion, an ethnodrama. Described by Zimmerman (2003), this type of research is the cyclical process of testing, analyzing, designing and repeating the cycle. The iterative design process is an integral part of the ethnographic research method because it helps to

balance interaction of social exchange and self-reflection through discussion and writing.

In iterative design process the students

...become participants, but do so in order to critique their creations, to bend them break them and refashion them into something new. And in these procedures of investigation and experimentation, a special form of research takes place. The process of iteration, of design through play, is a way of discovering the answers to questions you didn't even know were there. And that makes it a powerful and important form of design research (Zimmerman, 2003, p.12).

Assessment procedures

Students were able to constructed their own ideas and thoughts about values. They were able to do this through their written journals, through the discussions and the social interaction with their peers. They were also able to reflect and analyze their own thoughts and emotions regarding their values. Finally, students were able to produce an ethnodrama that reflected their own voices, values, and feelings.

Analysis of the data

Data were analyzed in four distinct but interrelated categories. First of all a description of the lesson was constructed point-by-point in written detail. Second, the transcription of the first class discussion and the written pieces from the students were scrutinized through repeated readings until the researcher reached saturation. In plays or other forms of writing, there are speech "moves" that belong together. The researcher was able to use these to classify the students' writings into categories or themes. The

categories were decided upon based upon the frequency students addressed them in their writing. Seven themes emerged notably from the journals. These themes are described fully in Chapter Four. Third, the synthesized categories were juxtaposed against the literature review. Finally, the data were used to discuss the place of adding student voices to character education curricula.

As previously noted in Chapter Two, adding student voice is an integral part of ethnography.

Yet even those who acknowledge the importance of the broader context wrestle with questions about how to study the complex interactions among changing cultural, historical, and developmental factors... Researchers who are particularly interested in cultural factors in development face the calling of conceptualizing culture in a way that can be studied empirically (Phinney, 2000, p. 27, 28).

Using an ethnographic approach to investigate the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participate in an ethnodrama based on a lesson about character education appears to be an appropriate way to incorporate student voice into this research and then into the character education curricula. This type of qualitative research “may employ literary tools like metaphors, linguistic devices like pronouns, or cultural conventions like time for insights about diversity within and across participants in their research, and thus create ways to explain phenomena without reducing them” (Daiute and Lightfoot, 2003, p. 8).

Through the examinations of student interactions with a character education lesson taught to the group of high school students' by means of an ethnographic approach, educators can perhaps learn from the observed interactions and apply this learning to their teaching practices. Educators might use the examples of this lesson as indicators of what is important in terms of student voice in character education.

Chapter Four

Findings

This chapter will focus on the data gathered from the research. The students' comments will be presented without editing as they appeared in their journal responses. It should also be noted that the characters' dialogue presented in the play is also unedited and represents the students' thoughts and feelings with regard to the character education lesson. It is evident from the responses that students wanted to discuss values and this suggests there is a need for character education in high school. The first part of this chapter will provide the reader with the initial discussion questions and responses. This will be followed by a presentation of the themes that emerged from the data and that were supported by student responses.

The lesson

As outlined in the previous chapter, the first part of my research involved having my students participate in a discussion about values. The initial discussion questions were:

1. Describe what you think is meant by the term values.
2. Describe how and where you learned your values.
3. Describe your opinion about whether values should be discussed in high school.
4. Describe the role you think values play in society.

Each question was posed and every class member had a chance to respond to any question they wanted to. The rule for this discussion was that every member was welcome to participate and students were to conduct themselves in a respectful manner. Fortunately for the research, every member was willing to contribute his or her opinion to at least two of the initial questions that were posed for discussion. I kept a list of the twenty-five students' names and placed a tick beside the name of each person who spoke. Every name had a minimum of two check marks beside it indicating the number of times they spoke. A total of fifty-six comments from the discussion were audio taped and then transcribed. The classroom was set up in the shape of a horseshoe and it was very easy for students to get involved in the discussion and respond to both myself and other students.

First discussion question

The first question I posed was, "Describe what you think is meant by the term values". This question yielded a number of responses most of which suggested that students had a very strong sense of their definitions of values. The student responses to the four initial discussion questions were transcribed from audio tape, as stated previously, and appear as transcript in the following section

Angie, an outspoken member of the class, was eager to provide her opinion on values.

I believe that values are things which people hold close to them and care for because they are valued or held in high acceptance towards what

people feel or believe in. Values show the type of person you are and the understanding of your knowledge (Angie).

Another outspoken student, David, quickly added,

When someone is said to have 'values' it means that the person has a certain perspective on the way things should be. They know what is right and what is wrong for themselves, so their values influence many decisions they make (David).

David's thoughts were quickly echoed by another student who stated,

Values are a set of rules, like principles. Values are something that set you apart from everyone else. It's your beliefs, your own identity and really, what makes you an individual (Joe).

And yet another student pointed to the idea of values as a code to live by and that all people have them.

Further evidence of the notion of values as a code to live by was supported through the following quote:

In my opinion, the term 'value of a person' means a person having his own ideas like morals and ideologies. There is no person without values (Barb).

Jason delved further into the issue and added the dimension of the traditional idea of character education, in that values are handed down from generation to generation.

What is meant by the term 'values' is that you respect certain things. You know your limits. You're brought up in such a way where you are taught to do and not to do certain things and in a certain way. Values separate or distinguish people from each other. I might be taught to respect my elders along with my youngsters and everyone in general. But maybe someone else will be taught just to respect family. So, values are set by you and the environment in which you live (Jason).

Finally the idea of values was summed up by Ian who said:

The term 'values' in my belief, means the things both physical and spiritual that one holds with them; their beliefs (Ian).

The students used words like acceptance, perspective, beliefs, ideas, identity, morals, ideologies and the physical and spiritual. These words demonstrate that students went beyond the surface level of the meaning of values.

Second discussion question

“Describe how and where you learned your values” yielded a lot of very similar responses from the class members. This question yielded a number of responses, most of which suggest that students had a very strong sense of their definitions of values.

I feel that I learned my values while growing up with my family. I personally have a very large family that is all very close to one another and as I was growing up I was constantly being taught what was right

from what was wrong. My family helped shape my personality by helping me understand what I believe in (Rudy).

While family seemed to be the overriding collective response (all students mentioned family) the relationship to friends was also mentioned by six students.

I have learned all my values from my parents. The person that I am today is because of my parents. My parents have always taught me and my brother and sisters respect, stay within our limits and to be happy with what we have because there are many people out there in the world who aren't even close to having the things we have. I have learned a lot from my parents, but I have also learned things from my sister, friends, relatives which make me who I am today (Ed).

One other popular response was learning values through past mistakes and experiences. This statement by Debbie shows that these experiences are important decision making moments. She says...

I have learned my values from my family because they have been through just as many events as you have, which makes your family a good teacher. Life also helps you make decide your values. Everyday life, learning from mistakes, your friends, your community and everything else (Debbie).

As well, the dichotomy of the two philosophies behind the character education movement is shown in the responses to question two. Students have shown that both the progressive and traditional approaches to character education have had an impact on their

lives. The following example by Rhonda demonstrates she was affected by the passing down of age old wisdom from her church, but also through experiences.

I think I learned my values from the people around me, but mostly from family. I also learned many values from church. But I don't agree with everything my church believes in. But at the same time I still learned many values from church. I also learned my values from the mistakes I've made. Without making mistakes, I wouldn't have some of the values I have now. I do regret some of the mistakes I've made, but at the same time they've taught me some lessons (Rhonda).

Chuck also expresses his own dual experiences with both the progressive approach to character education as well as the traditional. He talks about learning from both real life experiences as well as more traditional approaches such those stemming from his church.

I learned values from real life. I think when I saw my family and friends move when I was younger, that made me want to share every moment I had left with them and try to keep the little things that reminded me of them, like a pen or a bottle cap. I also learned from the church, television, my residential and cultural communities and my teachers and school (Chuck).

The most interesting part of these two responses to question two is really shown in the fact that only two respondents mentioned getting their values from school. The

other interesting aspect to this question is that only another two respondents mentioned the impact of media on their character development.

Third discussion question

The third question we discussed was “Describe your opinion about whether values should be discussed in high school.” Students were very interested in this particular question. All respondents with the exception of one student said that it was important to talk about values especially at the high school level. Doug stated that values go beyond formative years in high school...

Yes, I think values should still be talked about in high school because not everyone knows about values. It's never too late to be talking about values. I think the questions for the discussion should be asked to some adults. I bet some of them would have a hard time answering (Doug).

All of the students said that at their age, they were just starting to develop into young adults and definitely their character could still be formed. This is expressed by the following consecutive statements that were made by Murray and then Donna:

In high school with teenagers my age; talking about values would not be a horrible thing to do. Many teenagers at this age upon entering high school change their thoughts and opinions of their own values (Murray).

I think some kids need to be reminded about what is good in life. Even if it is only one kid listening in a class, at least you are changing one person's point of view instead of none at all (Donna).

Claire and Ron, whose comments were also consecutive, both agreed vigorously with Murray and Donna.

Values should be talked about because we're still open to learn about it. I don't think it's necessary but it would be good because we can learn a lot and question the values we have today. It's never too late to learn something new (Claire).

Of course we should discuss values. People can change values anytime in their lifetime; however it is harder to change as people grow old (Ron).

According to Schaps, Schaeffer and McDonnell (2001), "When guided by a trusted adult, these opportunities to talk and to think about social and ethical matters enable every student to come to a clearer, stronger sense of 'what really matters' and 'who I want to be'"(p.3).

Romanowski (2003) found in his survey of 144 students that they too enjoyed talking to and learning from their peers with regard to character education. "Relevant class discussion was important not only because of its interest value but also because students heard their peers' thoughts about various traits and issues" (p.15).

Fourth discussion question

The final discussion question was “Describe the role you think values play in society.” This was a bit of an eye opener for me especially after the class had been so positive in their responses about talking about values in high school. The class was split down the middle in terms of their views as to the role values play in society. The students who saw the importance of values said:

Values are extremely important in a society. Without values in society communities fall apart and into anarchy (David).

I think values are what make us superior to all things on earth. If one does not have values they are pretty much an empty shell. Because without values one would not respect others and most times that means not respecting ourselves. And when you don't respect yourself, then no one else will respect you (Joe).

I think it is important to have values in society today, although it seems that people are caring less and less. Without values the world would be corrupt. People wouldn't have respect and no drive or dignity (Barb).

Educator Barbara Duncan reinforces the students' assertions when she sums up the importance of character education and values in our society by stating that:

Character education today is a move in the right direction – a move toward the social. In a society that sees its strength in its people and in its

democratic impulses, it is imperative to take seriously the multiple traditions, stories and everyday knowledge that can fruitfully be brought to bear on the development of moral skills, knowledge and habits of the citizens of all our communities, including schools (Duncan, 1997, p. 129).

While half of the students thought values were important in society the other half of the students definitely saw a lack of evidence of values in the world in which they live in today, which makes talking about values at high school even more imperative.

There are no values in society today because families don't sit down to eat together anymore. If your wife divorces you, it doesn't matter because you can go out and get a new one. So values in the society we live in today .

. . . There are none (Manny).

Values today don't play a very important role to some people. I've seen people totally go out of their way and do stupid things just for other people (Tim).

Unfortunately, values aren't reflected in many people's behaviour and acts in today's society. People don't seem to care too much about what is right and what is wrong as much as they should (Melanie).

The comments, from students who looked at society in this manner, suggested that they do not feel empowered by the values displayed in society today.

While students had had a very strong sense of their definitions of values, it was evident from their responses that they got their values through both traditional means, for example from church, and through progressive means, for example learning through past mistakes. Despite how students arrived at their values all agreed that it was important to talk about values especially at the high school level while character could still be formed. Finally, with half of the students commenting on the lack of values displayed in society today, it is time to give students an opportunity to change that. Students need to be challenged in ways that will empower them, stimulate their moral imaginations and encourage their participation not only in their schools and communities but in society at large.

After the initial discussion the students were then provided with a photocopied sheet (Appendix L, p.157 - 158) containing the ten scenarios on discrimination reflecting ten different types of intolerance. Students were asked to use the remaining fifty minutes of class time to respond individually through personal written reflections to the ten scenarios. The next English class began with another twenty minute, whole class, discussion about the ten scenarios. The remainder of the class and the next English class were set aside to work on their scenes, which provided sufficient time to complete the writing. After the student groups wrote their scenes, the writing was woven together into one complete play by the class and me using the idea of bricolage and a group rewrite. The fifth and final class encompassed the play being read in large group after which the class completed a reflection journal to record their feelings, reactions and experiences as they engaged in the character development lesson of writing a play.

Themes

The ethnographic research method approach requires that repeated readings be done on students' writing in order to ascertain any themes which emerge from their journal writings. Through repeated readings seven themes emerged from the students' writings. These themes were: (1) social justice, (2) relationship between self and society, (3) citizenship, (4) identity, (5) empowerment, (6) working together, and (7) community.

In order to capture the essence of student voice, each one of the seven themes that surfaced out of the students' final journal writings was examined in three ways. First, the journal responses were read repeatedly until various themes emerged. The identification of these themes was based on the number of times they were mentioned by students. The criterion used for identifying the seven themes was that they had to be written about by a minimum of eight students, which constitutes approximately one third of the participants of the study. Second, a literature foundation for these responses was established. Third, parts of the play, which are enactments of the transfer of engagement in the character education lesson, were ethnographically presented.

Ethnography was extremely useful in this research study because it vividly captures the essence of what is being studied in a clear and communicative way. In fact, the play becomes the analysis of students' writings. Students showed their engagement in the mastery of civic knowledge about discrimination throughout their play. Their play became an ethnodrama, a simulation of what the students are actually thinking and feeling. Richard Bauman (1986) suggests that we:

... recognize that the symbolic forms we call folklore have their primary existence in the action of people and their roots in social and cultural life. The texts we are accustomed to viewing as the raw materials of oral literature are merely the thin and partial record of deeply situated human behaviour. My concern has been to go beyond a conception of oral literature as disembodied super-organic stuff and to view it contextually and ethnographically, in order to discover the individual, social, and cultural factors that give it shape and meaning in the conduct of social life (p. 2).

Social Justice

The first theme that became apparent through the students' final journal response writing was the theme of social justice. According to Aristotle, social justice was an equal distribution of benefits and burdens among all of society to achieve a level of goodness for all.

Humans are by nature social beings, and the possession of rational speech (logos) in itself leads us to social union. The state is a development from the family through the village community, an offshoot of the family. Formed originally for the satisfaction of natural wants, it exists afterwards for moral ends and for the promotion of the higher life. The state in fact is no mere local union for the prevention of wrong-doing, and the convenience of exchange. It is also not mere institution for the protection of goods and property. It is a genuine moral organization for advancing

the development of humans (Aristotle, n.d. as found in the Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy).

More recent scholars, such as Andra Makler and Ruth Hubbard, maintain that social justice is an appropriate social structure that promotes respectful relationships among persons, without regard to race, ethnicity, religion, age, physical ability or sexual orientation (Makler and Hubbard, 2000). Whichever definition one ascribes to, students are definitely concerned about their relationships with others, in which they can share ideas openly and feel respected and trusted. This notion supports the addition of student voice, a form of respect for their views.

I would have to say that values are important and awkward at the same time. They are important because you find out for yourself really what other people go through in life and awkward because at first you might not like that person because he or she is ugly or whatever. But really in the end of all of this you see that even though the person is someone you may initially have judged in a certain way, you are open to them. So my reaction to learning about and discussing about values is that it is great to get an opportunity to get to know people, understand their opinions about life and relate to them in a whole new way (Angie).

Angie expressed, through her writing, the typical teenage view of judging people based on their looks. However, through her own analysis of her ideas about values, she realizes

that there is much more to a person than the surface. She is starting to examine her own character.

I was really surprised to talk about values in class. We have never actually talked about values in class. I think values are a very important part of any person's life. Values reflect a person's emotions and the way that they think. I personally think that I can relate to some scenes in the play. My values mean a lot to me so I was happy to talk about them in class. I think that I can relate to the scenes in the play, especially the one with altering the menu (Appendix B, p. 131-133). I think I could relate to that scene because I am a vegetarian. So whenever I go to my friends' houses they all know that I don't eat meat so they alter the menu so that I could enjoy the party as well as others. I think the scenes in the play are things that really happen and that's when your set of values kick in. Your set of values help you decide what you should do when you are tangled up in situation and there is no way out. Your values help you decide what is right and what is wrong and they help you build relationships with others (David).

David's own voice can be heard in the scene of the play which deals with altering the menu for a student with different dietary needs. In this scene, one of the characters reacts adversely to changing the menu for a person in the class. The group of characters get to the bottom of this reaction and discover that the character, Grace, has experienced discrimination due to her own eating habits (Appendix B, p. 132-134). Obviously David

has gone through the ordeal of having had to explain his diet to others. David incorporated his own ethnographic event into the play and this becomes a mirror of his life and society. Through his journal he expresses that the writing of the play adds to his understanding of the need for social justice in order to build relationships with others.

Joe also understands the need for social justice as shown by his reflective journal.

I think people need to sometimes be asked these questions to make them think twice about their actions. Like if you are drinking and driving and got into a car accident, being paralyzed for life, what would you do? People take their lives for granted and waste it on dumb decisions. Some people only think about themselves and not others. It's not bad to think about yourself but think about how you treat others too. What is your relationship like with others? Do you treat them the way you want to be treated? Are you just mean to others? Are you respectful? Getting asked those questions, like would you be on your best friend's side in an argument or teasing someone because they eat different things than you do? If that happened in real life, I think I would have probably laughed or just been quiet while she's doing that, even though I know the person is probably getting hurt. But actually getting asked that question and having time to think about it gave me another approach to the situation. It was pretty weird getting asked those questions because I would have never thought those situations would happen to me but they can and they can

help me prepare to deal with people and situations in the future. I think that this was very useful (Joe).

Social justice education begins with students' experiences and then moves toward fostering a critical perspective and action directed toward social change (Bigelow, et al, 1994). Accordingly, several elements point to effective social justice education. The main element as evidenced by this portion of the students' writings is that "Students need to feel cared for and respected to learn to trust one another, share ideas openly and collaborate on issues of mutual concern. Teachers need to respect students' abilities, interests and opinions, and encourage students to make connections between themselves and the curriculum" (Wade, 2001, p. 2).

Wade goes on to describe the role that teachers play in promoting social justice. "In searching for ways to create a better world, social justice teachers ask students to critique the status quo, examine underlying assumptions and values, and explore their own roles in relation to social issues" (Wade, 2001, p.2). As evidenced by the journals, students care about their relationships with others and social justice both in school as well as society.

The writing of the play seemed to awaken the students' values with regard to social justice and again this is addressed in their journal reflections. Ed, for example, said that people with different qualities need to be treated as equals.

When I engaged in this lesson on values, my feelings during this experience changed. It feels bad to go against another person's values

just by the way they act, look, or where they came from because each person deserves to be treated equally with different qualities they hold and values they have. It is also wrong to judge another person's values just because it doesn't suit your own. My reactions to this would be to look away from their values that everybody else judges by and try to accept the other things they enjoy doing so differently. I would help the person if needed in any different circumstances and learn and accept them for who they are. My experience during this lesson was shocked because you aren't really concerned about situations like this until you really think about them. It was good to learn about situations as in these and to take them seriously, by not hurting others values (Ed).

“Whether education is primarily a matter of transmitting democratic values to the young or whether the focus is on fostering the capacities necessary for the process of democracy” (Howard et al, (2004, p. 196) is not an issue when students have an opportunity to discuss and reflect upon essential issues such as social justice.

Another scene in the play (Appendix E, p. 140-141) which explores the issue of social justice is where the group of characters investigate their feelings if they apply for a job and discover that their potential new boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. Melanie, a student who was born in Canada relates her experiences about equality.

I feel that people underestimate immigrants because of how they look or talk differently. But in reality, they are no different from us. If you define

an immigrant as someone who came from another country, then aren't we all immigrants? Because each one of our families, at one time or another came from different places in the world. Therefore immigrants/everyone should treat each other the same no matter what color they are. I felt that having an immigrant as a boss wouldn't matter to anyone who wanted a job, but for some people in my group it did matter and I was surprised. An experience I had which was close to what happened in the question was when I was with a group of friends who were making fun of an immigrant because he talked differently; I talked them into stopping (Melanie).

I found that students, in writing their ethnodrama, kept a “conscious and consistent focus on including the history and perspectives of all people including those with different ethnic backgrounds, physical abilities, religious beliefs, genders, sexual orientations and socioeconomic classes” (Wade, 2001, p. 2). The ethnic diversity of the students in my classroom made them aware and sensitive to each others’ views and values.

As Pinar states “To become present among ourselves, not as atomized, acquisitive individuals posturing for individual gain but as individuated beings giving our shared experience form and reality through our words and actions, to become so present, the self allows its circumference to extend into its own past and into what is metaphysically transcendent” (Pinar, 1988, p. 271). Students’ collaborative work with each other allowed them to share their ideas on social justice. It also allowed them to move beyond the printed curriculum into meaningful educational experience.

Self and Society

The second theme that emerged from the students' final journal writings was the relationship between self and society. According to Kieran Egan (1979), students at the high school level go through a "philosophic stage" in their education.

The major defining characteristic of the philosophic stage, then, is the search for the truth about human psychology, for the laws of historical development, for the truth about how societies function. That is, the philosophic focus is on the general laws whereby the world works. By having an understanding of how the world functions, the students will know their proper place and roles and they will securely know themselves (p. 51).

Barb demonstrates this stage by writing:

My feelings about the play that we wrote are mixed. Sometimes we have to choose the ways in which we don't like to follow. Sometimes we follow our heart to do things that we need to do to help others. Everyone has different opinions and experiences different situations in life. We have to help people who have disabilities whether we like it or not. That's the proper thing to do for others. We have to help. Maybe sometimes something could happen to us. Then we need help. Helping other people shows how high your values are to others (Barb).

Barb demonstrates her knowledge of how the world functions. She understands that service to others is a part of the society we live in. Important to her perspective is not that helping others is the proper thing to do but rather, it is a moral obligation between the self and society.

Manny likewise reflects this notion when he says:

By listening to the opinions that everyone had based on different forms of values, it helped me understand the way people may feel being placed in different situations in society. This lesson has led me to gain the knowledge of the beliefs that people have, as well as the type of person they are and where they will be later in life. By sharing feelings and emotions we have all been able to accept the different thoughts of individuals. I feel as though I have grown that much more. I am able to read a person like a book and put myself in their shoes to understand their point of view. Morals and values are things should be studied and followed in all different shapes in order to help people believe in what they believe and to help people live together in this world (Manny).

Through Manny's writing, the idea of the self and society is again echoed. Manny speaks of his own empathy in order for him to get along in society. Understanding of who you are and what place you hold in society is explored in the scene of the play which describes the group of characters debating whether it is fair to restrict the number of teenagers in a store, while adults can go in unrestricted (See Appendix C, p. 135-136).

The next journal reflection relates directly to that scene and probed the idea of self and society in greater detail.

I think talking about values in school is important. Talking about it got me thinking about how others think of other people. It also made me think about real life situations. Who is really right in the scenario when both sides have really good reasons for how they act. When we were writing the scene we had for the play about the restrictions on the number of teenagers in a store, we started talking about it more (Appendix C, p. 135-136). I was kind of seeing how someone would choose to have that restriction. I realized that it was true both adults and teenagers have equal chances of stealing, but it is not always about stealing. A majority of teenagers are not as mature as most adults. But I still think that if they are going to have a restriction, they should have it for everyone not just for teenagers (Tim).

Howard et al (2004, p. 196) emphasizes the point that it is necessary to consider both self and society at large. "A well-functioning democracy is dependent on an enlightened citizenry and one that can engage in the 'pursuit of happiness' while also considering the common good." The students have used their voices to express their feelings about their roles in life, functioning both as themselves and as a part of society. The students are doing what Alfie Kohn (1997) suggests, that is, they have been given the opportunity to grapple with issues that define and shape their social and moral development. Students grappled with the idea of self and society, and defined themselves

as more accepting of others and accepting of sometimes choosing ways that they don't necessarily want to, for the greater good of society.

Citizenship

Maxine Greene states that a democratic community is always evolving. "It is energized and radiated by an awareness of possibility. To develop a vision of such possibility of what ought to be is very often to be made aware of present deficiencies and present flaws" (Greene, 1973, p. 166). The theme of citizenship arose from the students' writing. This theme reverberated throughout their writing, both through the journals and through the play. As was previously stated the class was composed of an ethnically diverse group of students who emanated strong views about the values of citizenship. For example Rudy stated:

It was really difficult to give in to our reactions about the scenarios. This is because some of my actions influenced by my values may not necessarily be the right thing to do. However I do feel stronger about my values now more than before. I am glad that I live in Canada where we aren't afraid to give our opinions on values. I just don't know if I'd be able to follow what I wrote in the play because as they say 'It's easier said than done'. This experience made me think of my values and my thoughts on things that occur in the world today. I learned that values do play a big role in the way a person handles a situation (Rudy).

Rudy expressed the notion that living in Canada allows him the freedom to express himself on any subject, even values. One scene in the ethnodrama, (Appendix D, p. 137-139), reveals the students' thoughts on their philosophy of multiculturalism. The five characters in the ethnodrama tackle the issue of allegiance to one's country. The group has to decide whether or not they would participate in a war against a country that is culturally different from our own. The notions of looking at issues from various perspectives and citizenship are explored both through the scene in the play and the students' journals.

I felt that when we did these lessons on values it was a good experience. We don't really get to talk about our values with everyone, so it's nice just to share it with someone else. Doing these questions gave me a chance to share my views and opinions on certain situations. I personally like to hear other people's views and opinions on certain situations. Some of the questions were really interesting to answer and do. I never realized I felt so strongly about this country. That kind of surprised me. Doing the play was really fun as well. We got to share our own opinions and also put it into our play. To me, values are a good thing to talk about with other people and also it is a good thing to reflect on especially in school. Sometimes people may forget about what values really are and how values should play a role in our lives (Connie).

Citizenship was important to Connie and she was able to reflect on her feelings about it. Connie also exposes the progressive perspective on character education when she emphasizes the importance of sharing the experience of talking and developing a play incorporating student voice into the writing.

John Dewey, who was a strong supporter of citizenship education in schools, adds to Debbie's comments. Dewey states: "[t]he schools are the only place where it is possible to give everyone alike this necessary groundwork of social and democratic consciousness" (Dewey, 1919, p. 336). So, therefore by giving students and opportunity to participate in activities which develop their values and citizenship, educators also provide opportunities for students to share their voices and feel empowered.

Also, from their writings, it is evident that students are incorporating some of their awareness of the world beyond the classroom. "Social justice education is not just about process; it involves real intellectual work on the part of students and teachers. Students engage in inquiry and research ... and throughout these experiences, students are asked to apply the skills and knowledge of the curriculum as they examine multiple perspectives on a variety of issues" (Wade, 2001, p. 2). The students did this when they considered citizenship through the eyes of a multicultural nation.

Identity

Students indicated that they discovered more about themselves through this character education lesson that leads us to explore the next emergent theme which is identity. Students needed to go beyond the superficial surface and discover the depths of their own identity. Their play writing spurred their reflections as shown by Val.

I suppose this was a positive experience for me. This lesson on values was very important to me and was a good discussion topic. A lot of the questions asked were difficult to answer and had you looking deep within yourself to find your answer. It really got me thinking and I suppose it showed me a lot about who I am as a person and about my own character. With the increase in population and the incline of people moving to the major cities, people's morality is at a decline and we forget our own values and who we really are. With a society that demands conformity, we tend to lose ourselves. So much is expected from our generation, and not surprisingly, since we are to inherit the earth with all the negative influences in the world, it is easy to go astray and end up in a dark place. However, this is what makes things interesting in our world. I enjoyed every moment of the activity we have done and I thought it was a good lesson learned (Val).

Giving students the opportunity to question their identity and how they fit into a just society seems to be very appropriate, especially in high school. "At this time, youth are often concerned with the attempt to answer questions like 'Who am I?' 'What will I do with my life?' and other self-concerns. This internal questioning is manifested in the trying out of new roles, the identification of occupational/career preferences, and especially in the struggle to develop independence..." (Beane & Lipka, 1986, p. 23). In the struggle for independence, students voiced their concerns about their own character, values and what kind of a person they would ultimately be.

Rhonda understands the entanglement of character and identity all too well as she explains the circumstances surrounding her brother.

My reaction to this lesson was not so sure if I wanted to answer the questions, but once I started to answer them I started to think about how people can be stereotypical to other people. Like if they are in a wheelchair, they are scared of them. Or that if you made a date with them but when you see that they are in a wheelchair you say you will meet them, but you don't. That is very stereotypical against their disabilities especially when people in wheelchairs are equal to everyone else. Like my brother. His friends never come to see him. He has "real good" friends but they never come to see him and in my opinion they are scared of him just because he is in a wheelchair. That is so stereotypical, just because of the way he looks (Rhonda).

Rhonda is expressing her frustration at the treatment of her brother. His friends only see him as a person in a wheelchair and not for his true identity. The scene in Appendix F (p. 142-144) describes this exact dilemma and placed real life in the ethnodrama. I did not know that this student had a brother in a wheelchair before we started working with the scenarios.

The wheelchair scene in the ethnodrama describes a person who meets another person at the mall. They strike up a conversation and a connection is made with a possible prospect for a future relationship. Before leaving they discover that the person they are attracted to is in a wheelchair. The dilemma is whether or not a relationship

should be pursued with a person who has a disability. The group of characters explores the concept of identity by deciding if a person's identity is solely based on the fact that the person is in a wheelchair. Obviously this scene resonates with Rhonda who realizes her brother is a person in a wheelchair, not just a wheelchair person.

I felt like everybody has their own values. I think it is good that everybody has their own values, because this makes everybody different from each other. When we did those questions, some of those things never came across my mind, and now that they did, I realize a lot more about who I am as a person. Actually my reactions to them kind of shocked me. The question about the person in the wheelchair kind of changed my values. I thought that no matter what their appearance looks like, it's who they are on the inside that counts, and I do believe that this is a value of mine. Although doing this question in class totally changed my view on my value. I realized that there are other sides to issues and just because I don't feel a certain way doesn't mean I am a bad person. Right now thinking about being with a person in a wheelchair would probably not be something I want because it is a big responsibility and it would be hard to have a relationship with this person and grow with it, because there are down falls to being in a wheelchair. This experience helped me identify who I am (Murray).

Murray examined the wheelchair scene in a different way from Rhonda. At first he felt badly that he would not want to be with someone in a wheelchair but he was able to explore other sides of the issue and come up with a picture of his own identity. As Beane and Lipka (1986) maintain, teachers who encourage their students to explore their own identities and their place in society and the world at large do a great service to their students. The students' "quickly gain a sense that he or she is capable of living effectively in the larger world outside the home... heightening a sense of self – worth" (p. 20). Students who have opportunities to investigate their own identities quickly discover their own opinions and values. If educators can provide occasions for students to explore their identities they are paving the way for a better society.

Empowerment

The fifth theme that emerged was students' appreciation for control or power over their learning and their own character development. "If children are to become critical thinkers tolerant of competing interests and loyalties, and strong independent moral agents, they must be active participants in moral decisions" (Goodman, 2002, p. 35). This is illustrated by Richa who states:

This lesson asked some difficult questions that really made you think and give honest answers. Writing the play was interesting because I felt like I had power over my learning because by becoming another person, one can give different perceptions on things, just like real people do. Some people sugar - coat things and some people give cold blunt answers.

Questions such as “Would you pursue a relationship with someone in a wheelchair?” made you think deeply about who you are as a person and what you would honestly do. If one answers honestly to any one of the ten questions, the values seemed to be reflected in their answers in a way. Although one cannot know exactly what a person is like because of the answer they gave, it still gives an idea about what they are like (Richa).

Richa has used the power she felt over her learning to take on other personas and view character from another perspective.

Students begin to feel the power of their own learning when they take responsibility for their learning and they actively engage in it. As a result of this power students build greater understandings not only of themselves, but of the world around them. John clearly illustrates this in his reflective journal.

I liked being able to construct a play around what I learned from other students and through my own learning. Some of my reactions and feelings about answering the questions were that I was surprised to see how hard it is to answer questions that really test your values and morals. I think that it was pretty hard to answer some of the questions because they were situations that would have made you want to put your best interest in front of another person's which then made the question tough to answer. You don't want to be mean but in some situations you're just not ready for certain responsibilities. And you may not be quite ready to make a lot of

choices that could affect other people. With writing the play, it was a little easier because since there was more than one character you could show all of the different sides and answers to a question because after all, there's always a different perspective that's different from your own (John).

John, like Richa, is able to use the power over his learning to develop empathy for his fellow students.

The scene described in Appendix K (p. 156-157) is about a best friend who gets into an argument with another student about their religious beliefs. The argument the other student puts forward makes sense to one of the characters in the play while the best friend's argument does not. The character in the play has to decide who to support, the best friend or the other student. By learning to act on their own values and feelings students become socially responsible.

William Glasser (1986) asserts in his book, *Control Theory in the Classroom*, that youth should be allowed to exert power over their lives. He says that all people need to feel power and control in their lives. When we give students control over their learning, we nurture them and help them evolve toward responsible independence.

Though this experience I learned more about myself than I did in any other course over the last three years in high school. I learned that I have control over my learning, my development as a human being and my life (Jenny).

Students also felt empowered with regard to their own character development as they tested themselves by answering the ten scenarios and reflected on improving their own values. Doug, for example, started to look beyond putting himself first. He states:

I feel that the values before and the values today have changed. Before people's values were to raise a good home and family. Now most of people's values are to have more money than what you need, to look out for only number one and to gain power in the business world and in life. I don't want to be like that, I want to be better. I think the questions you asked us were really hard to answer honestly. Everyone wants to put the answer that is the nicest, but if one of these scenarios in the question happened to me, I don't know what I would do. I might even do the complete opposite of what I said. I think writing the play was a good idea. It made us think about our values and if we had forgotten them, it helped us remember some of the values we should have. I think it is important to learn about values even at higher grades because learning about values might even help some people (Doug).

The importance of students reflecting on their actions and decisions in order to improve themselves is essential in schools. There is a greater chance of internalizing these values, when students' feel empowered and their thinking is challenged with regard to character and values. "The most obvious way of doing so is to engage in the kind of

institutional and curriculum planning that enhances self-perceptions. As this occurs, the school will itself contribute to the shift in values and educate young people to live in and maintain a person-centered society” (Beane & Lipka, 1986, p. 190). Claire reinforces the point made by Beane and Lipka when she talks about the need to work her own character.

Writing a play was not easy to do. It needed patience and time. For me, writing the play was a goal and a goal to me is a dream with a plan and a deadline. To me, I realized from doing this lesson that we cannot become or do what we need to, by remaining what we are. Sometimes people need to reflect on what they are and change what they don't like (Claire).

Claire was not alone in making some realizations about her character.

I felt after reading these questions and doing the assignment, I needed to have a more open mind about things (Ron).

Another essential element of effective character education allows students to reflect upon their actions and make changes accordingly. “Student involvement and engagement in mentally and physically active experiences are essential in the social justice classroom. Through projects, role playing, mock trials, simulations and experiments, students experience concepts and key ideas firsthand, rather than just reading or hearing about them” (Wade, 2001, p. 2). Through their mental and physical involvement, students can begin to change what they don't like

about themselves. The scene described in Appendix G (p. 145-147) explores the issue of self-improvement. A worker is asked to get rid of customers who are dressed “shabbily” in order to make way for customers who are dressed “expensively”. Through the actions of the characters, the students were able to expose how they would act in this situation and reflect upon ways in which to improve themselves.

Their ethnodrama provides not only a voice for their values but also an opportunity to develop their own ideas with regard to empowerment either through control over learning or through self-improvement.

Working together

The sixth theme that emerged from students’ final journal writings was that of the combining of mutual co-operative learning experiences and interaction with the curriculum in order to work with and understand values and character development. Cooperative learning strategies have been shown to increase pro-social behavior and to enhance children's ability to take others' points of view (Kohn, 1990). Marli states:

My feelings towards this whole experience were kind of mixed. In one way, I took it as a regular assignment and in another way, I saw it as really insightful and I enjoyed what I did see. The whole values part of it was good because it was interesting to hear everyone else’s opinions and give my own as well. When writing the play, I enjoyed working with

someone whose ideas were slightly different. In all, I enjoyed this whole experience (Marli).

“Effective social justice teachers create a classroom community in which students collaborate with one another to learn, solve problems and mediate conflicts, and effect change” (Wade, 2001, p. 2). The progressive approach to character education not only allows students to explore and learn through experience, but to also encourages students to grow as individuals. This becomes apparent in Mark’s statement about his own personal growth when working collaboratively.

It’s fun doing something like writing a play with a group. Sharing opinions and ideas and getting closer with each other. In this lesson, I sometimes find it difficult because I am still adjusting with my language. Working with others helped me and so far I’m doing well. I am learning new things everyday (Mark).

In order to have a large number of values in common, all members of the group must have an equable opportunity to receive and to take from others. There must be a large variety of shared undertakings and experiences. Otherwise, the influences that educate some into masters, educate others into slaves. And the experience of each party loses in meaning, when the free interchange of varying modes of life-experiences is arrested (Dewey, 1916, p. 84 - 86).

The essential point that Dewey makes is that without the exchange of ideas, opinions and voice, students within the group become stationary and self-interested. Stannis expresses her own pleasure in the exchange of ideas with her peers and also her surprise at her some of her own answers

I think I really enjoyed doing a lesson on values and writing the play.

While answering the questions about values, I had some difficulty. But I really enjoyed it. Writing the play was fun because working in groups is always a great experience. I came to know the others, their ideas and their way of thinking. I was really surprised while answering some of the questions about values, at how I would respond if it happened to me. In the end I would like to say that working in groups and answering questions based on scenarios is never a bad experience for me (Stannis).

Appendix H (p. 148-149) is a scene from the play that describes a situation where there is a job opportunity at a t-shirt kiosk in the mall. Two people have applied for it, a fifty year-old man and a teenager. The cast of characters had to decide who would be more suitable for the job. Chuck, by working cooperatively with his group, is able to come to his own understandings about discrimination.

My feelings and reactions on all this is that not everyone is being treated equally. I enjoyed working in a group. While writing our play, as a group we learned that people are being judged on their gender, age,

background, how much money they have etc., when they are supposed to be judged on the inside not on the outside. I think age differences are an important issue because people think that teenagers are immature and adults are mature, when it can be the opposite. Everyone deserves to have the same rights as an individual. Especially to be treated fairly (Chuck).

Alfie Kohn (1997) suggests that teachers who are more open and less tightly controlled, and who give students the opportunity to work and reflect together, will see that students are capable of discovering more about themselves and exhibit moral growth. The progressive approach to character education allows for the experiential aspect of the curriculum to be explored. Violet states her pleasure with regard to being given the opportunity to write a play.

I felt like I was writing a play for one of those places like for Manitoba's Theatre for Young People. And it was pretty cool, because we could have written about anything we wanted to say. The play was exactly what teenagers would say so it was pretty easy to write a scene for me because it was about something that comes natural to me. The other great thing was that I could spend time talking with a group of friends and share my ideas. The lesson on values made me think a lot about my values because I had to compare my definition of values with others. So this lesson sort of reawakened me to what I think my values are (Violet).

"Several studies have shown that schools that seem to have an impact on student character respect students, encourage student participation in the life of the school, expect students to behave responsibly, and give them the opportunity to do so" (Leming, 1993, p. 67). By respecting students' opinions and giving them a chance to voice their ideas, students are moved in profound ways. Kirk commented about his own character development.

I felt very happy to talk about values with the class. Listening to all the different opinions was interesting and it gave me a chance to think more openly. As we made the play, I thought more deeply about the topics. Religion, war, disabilities and stuff like that are in our everyday lives and are good to talk about (Kirk).

According to Fennimore and Tinzmann (1990) going beyond the traditional syllabus to a curriculum that involves students in thinking, responding and interacting with one another is essential for good pedagogical practice.

While traditional curricula tend to teach content and process separately, a thinking curriculum weds process and content, a union that typifies real-world situations; that is, students are taught content through processes encountered in the real world. Some thinking and learning processes apply across all content areas and all areas of life and thus are generic: for example, decision making, problem solving, evaluating, and comparing (p. 1).

Through this experience of this lesson I feel that I was given the opportunity to talk to my friends and learn that people are more defined by their values than anything else. Everyone is the same, but due to their own values they react in different ways. I feel that I now know my own values better and realize that everyone picks their own values because of past and maybe future experiences. This has also shown me that in some aspects, I have a lot of growing up to do (Chris).

Chris clearly enjoyed the opportunity to interact with the curriculum and her peers. This study engaged students in ideas and activities that not only connected to their lives but could make an impact on them. Chris was evidently happy with the interactive teaching strategies going on in the classroom. Chris' reflection fits perfectly with Fennimore and Tinzmann's idea of curriculum.

Students are motivated to learn when curriculum considers their experiences and the issues and problems with which they are concerned as well as their patterns of processing knowledge. The content in a thinking curriculum is relevant to important issues and tasks in the lives of students (p. 1).

Appendix I (p. 150-152) is the scene in the play which gave students an opportunity to deal with the issue of gender bias and at the same time challenged students to explain their views on value-based issues. Students were totally immersed in the scenario that dealt with equality and gender issues. My experience in teaching has taught

me that if you get any group of males and females together to talk about gender issues, you will find, as these teenagers did, that there is not a lack of communication going on with regard to this subject. The scene describes two applicants for one job. One applicant is male and the other applicant is female. They both have equal qualifications and the question was posed, who should get the job? In the ethnodrama, students were able to articulate their convictions and develop their thinking skills

In his reflective journal, John articulates what other students have said about appreciating the opportunity to discover and build upon his own values and character.

Ehmmmm.... The whole thing was fine I guess. It made me think for a bit about certain things and about myself. Some of the questions are pretty easy and some I really didn't know how to answer. The question that we got for the play was fairly simple so it didn't take us long to figure out which side was right....for us. It was kinda' fun writing the play, we all joked around about what to write but ended up finishing with a pretty serious piece of work. All in all, I thought it was pretty good, both the questions and writing the play. It made me think, which is something that I don't have an opportunity to do much anymore! (John)

Through their interaction with the curriculum students had an opportunity to make moral discoveries. Students actively participated in the ethnodrama and formed their own convictions and character. Students were able to add their voices to the discussion and ultimately the writing and come to an understanding of their own character values.

Community

The final theme that emerged as students participated in the character education lesson was the notion of community. “Character education integrated into the school community is a strategy to help re-engage our students, deal with conflict, keep students on task in the learning environment, and reinvest the community with active participation by citizens in political and civic life” (Holt – Otten, 2000, p. 1).

Trevor’s thoughts embody this notion of community. He talks about appreciating and valuing family and human interaction as a positive aspect of learning.

My feelings and reactions as I engaged in this lesson on values from writing this play was it was kind of weird because the questions were something that you don't think about and it was something you don't think about until it happens. My reaction was I'm happy that we did this because every time you learn about values you are challenged to learn something new. I think writing this play and learning about values made everyone think and appreciate the little things like your family and community. The questions that were asked were good questions because they were things that we experience and might not but it made us think and see what we value in people (Trevor).

Trevor’s comments also suggest that classroom activities that support interaction are valuable to him.

We ensure failure if we teach ethics without using a community context to illustrate, nurture, and support ethical development. Without grounding ethics within the particular community and cultural context of the learner, ethics remain abstract, outside the scope of experiences of the learner, and ultimately irrelevant (Matthews and Riley, 1995, p. 17).

As the comment from Trevor illustrates, the importance of discussing values and the appreciation this give him for both his family is evident. Angie feels much the same way as Trevor.

As we engaged in this lesson on values it was really difficult. Everybody has their different opinions, for example the wheelchair question showed that many people had different opinions about getting into a relationship. You cannot be wrong about getting to know other people. Everybody has different characteristics. We all know that we are not the same. The test is whether we can respect each other enough to understand each others views. I think that is important when we live in a neighborhood with all different kinds of people. We all have to take chances to do different things. You know better than anybody else what you should and shouldn't do (Angie).

Angie's writings also suggest community plays a role in character education. "Without an environment that is conducive to being a person of character, character education can not be effective" (Kohn, 1997, p. 434). Appendix J (p. 153-155) describes a scene in which a new student arrives in class. The student is very different in terms of their clothing and outgoing behaviour. One of the cast of characters is asked if she was assigned to complete a two week long project for 50% of her final grade with this person as their partner, would she accept this or ask to change to another group?" This situation mirrors what goes on in the classroom environment on a daily basis. Students do not want to work with each other because of the way they look, speak, act or dress. If we as educators can give students the opportunity to scratch below the surface of their fears and unfounded discriminations, then we have provided a warm and stimulating environment in which students can grow.

Conclusion

What are the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participate in an ethnodrama that is based on a lesson about character education? The journal writings and the play itself provided insight into their interactions with character and values. The seven themes that emerged from the students' writing gave the character education lesson a whole new context from which to look at how teenagers react to values. Themes such as social justice, the relationship between self and society, citizenship, identity, empowerment, working together and community, which came out of the students' writings, made it apparent that student voice is a necessary component in the character education discussion. It also became apparent that the discussion about

character education with students is just scratching the surface. Grade eleven students want to talk about their place in the world and the difficulties they may encounter. David sums up the discussion on character education with his journal reflection.

In doing this lesson on values and writing the play, I felt that life ahead was going to get much harder and this was only the so – called “easy” part. Going through a number of those choices and deciding one way or the other was very difficult. Knowing that coming ahead I have to make decisions for tough situations is a scary thought. Also, for some of those choices, I didn’t know what I would want to do or even think of doing. The first time I read the questions I had a chance to compare my answers to others. I had to go over what I thought felt right to me in that certain situation. I found that my own values can be mixed at times for different reasons. It was easy on paper to talk about things, but to actually face the different challenges I might have to, no matter where I live will be tough. Just talking things over with my friends really helped me think about what I might do (David).

The initial four questions which started the class discussion, the interaction with the ten scenarios, the writing of an ethnodrama and presentation of it and finally the students’ written reflections have provided a solid foundation on which to examine students’ interaction with character education and what educators can learn from this interaction.

Although the background literature has often pitted the traditionalists against the progressives in terms of their approaches to character education, there is evidence that students have benefited from both approaches. If educators give students opportunities to share their feelings, ideas and convictions with each other, provide a forum for character education learning and promote critical thinking among our students, then educators greatly increase the probability of educating our students to become the leaders of tomorrow.

If educators want to empower students, stimulate students' minds and their character development, they must give students the chance to construct their own meanings about values. They must give students the freedom to talk about values and discover what others think about values. Students benefit from hands on experience and learn from their mistakes. They like to have the freedom and yet the safety of looking at ideas through other perspectives and other personas. Educators willing to try ethnodrama will probably not be disappointed in the results of giving students the opportunity to add their voices to the character education curricula.

Chapter Five

Conclusions and Recommendations

Lessons about morals signify as matter of course lessons in what other people think about virtues and duties. It amounts to something only in the degree in which pupils happen already to be animated by a sympathetic and dignified regard for the sentiments of others. Without such regard, it has no more influence on character than information about the mountains of Asia (Dewey, 1916, p. 354).

In the end, what does this study mean? *What are the perceptions and reactions of high school students as they participate in an ethnodrama which is based on a lesson about character education?* My conclusions are a tentative attempt to examine the depth and breadth of ethnodrama and character education in a high school setting.

Ethnodrama for an improved classroom culture

This study showed that high school students not only wanted to talk about values, they seemed to need to talk about their values. They appreciated the constructing of an ethnodrama as a forum for that discussion.

The use of ethnodrama in the classroom to address character education complements the *Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes and Standards* for Senior Three students in English. Students were encouraged to use their ideas, feelings and experiences to respond personally and critically to the lesson. They were able to transform their ideas and the information they gained from this study into a clear and

artistic ethnodrama. Finally, students were able to look beyond themselves and celebrate and build community (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2003). These are the general learning outcomes which form the basis for the grade eleven English curriculum.

While it appeared that the grade eleven students in this study had rarely been asked their opinions about character and values, the inclusion of their voices became a natural step in this character education lesson. The students both participated fully and responded favourably to this approach. It served as a catalyst for the examination of students' own values and the development of their character.

This study also revealed that the values in which high school students' are interested are those that pertain to their own lives and their own experiences. When these values are discussed, high school students are more than ready to share their opinions, values and beliefs. Moreover, students want to have control over their learning and they want to be heard loud and clear.

Just because the studies of the curriculum represent standard factors in social life, they are organs of initiation into social values. As mere school studies, their acquisition has only technical worth. Acquired under conditions where their social significance is realized, they feed moral interest and develop moral insight

(Dewey, 1916, p. 356).

Students want and need classroom environments that stimulate learning about character. Both the reflective journal writings and the construction of the play itself provided the students with an opportunity to interact with character and values.

An additional topic to spiral out of this research was could this research assist teachers who want to add a character education component to their classrooms? In answer to this question, several issues became evident.

The first idea that could be applied to teaching is that of giving students the opportunity to use their imaginations. Students are freer to give their opinions and be empathetic when they take on another persona such as writing a character for a play. By discussing and writing how they would handle various situations students can learn to face difficult moral issues that they might encounter in life.

Second, students can see their place in society at large and need to think and be challenged about life beyond the four walls of the classroom. Students identify with their communities and enjoy assignments that integrate their learning with their community. When educators encourage discussions about community and citizenship, they allow students the opportunity to think about their own identity and their place in the world.

A third observation about the students' interactions with character education that can be applied to teaching is that equality is a key issue or concern for students and it is important for them to talk about issues like these especially during the teenage years.

Another observation is that students like to have control over their learning and to be given the opportunity for this control. Students feel as if they have control over their learning when educators provide opportunities for students to work cooperatively to discuss issues. Not only do they like it, but it develops their interactive skills and assists students in developing their critical thinking skills.

Finally, students relish the opportunity to share viewpoints with each other and incorporate their stories into their work. They also need the experience of sharing in a safe, respectful environment. If educators provide these opportunities for students, the character education curricula can be enhanced.

Implications for educators

The data are particularly significant for educators who would like to implement character education lessons into their classroom through ethnodrama. The concept of social justice is very relevant to students and can easily be adapted into the high school classroom and curricula.

Secondly, high school students are at the age where they are examining the relationship between themselves and society. This includes their relationship with their country (citizenship), their community and their place in society. Again, these concepts such as equality, identity and self – improvement are also easily adapted into classroom practice.

The main thing for educators to consider is giving students an opportunity to participate in mutual co-operative learning experiences and give some students some control over their own learning. By engaging students in their own learning and encouraging both respect and empathy, educators and students alike will not only improve their relationships with each other but they might truly improve their character as well.

A call for further study

One interesting topic, for further consideration, that came out of this study is whether or not character education lessons could help students become better critical

thinkers? Students demonstrated that they wanted to think critically and provided evidence of that through their ethnodrama and journals, but can they improve on those skills?

A second topic for consideration might be whether or not character education lessons promote empathy among high school students. The school in which this research was conducted was preparing for an anti-racism day that included speakers from all walks of life speaking on the concept of discrimination. Could a character education program encourage understanding and compassion among students?

A further topic for consideration was, could character education lessons assist students in having control over their own learning? Myers (2001) certainly thinks so. "When teachers offer students opportunities to express their opinions about the things that matter to them, they can be trusted to examine their assumptions and orientations carefully. The fact is, moral education is as important as it is unavoidable" (p. 221).

A final consideration with regard to character education might be whether or not character education lessons help students identify and establish their place in the community and the world at large?

There can never be a better time than the present to move students toward the strengthening of character. Whether this movement comes from discussion, role-playing, stimulating students' imagination or enhancing students' critical and empathetic abilities, ultimately the goal is to create a world where our future leaders and fellow citizens have strong values.

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Appendix A:
A Test of Character
An Ethnodrama
Written by Roberta Garton
and
Grade Eleven High School Students

Synopsis

In this ethnodrama, five ethnically diverse friends get together one day on their summer holidays to relax and have some fun. Without any money, the teenage students are hard pressed to find something interesting to do. That of course changes when they stumble upon an interesting game in their endless search for food. The game, called *A Test of Character*, is discovered in a box in the food pantry. The group decides to play it. The game provides a way for the group to discuss a variety of issues dealing with intolerance. Through the playing of the game, the five friends reveal their true characters.

Production notes:

On Stage: One large couch. Two chairs. Large coffee table. Two end tables with lamps.

Door to pantry with box of games, Monopoly, Clue, A question of Character. Additional set decoration as desired: Pillows, pictures, lamps, rug(s).

Basic Floor Plan and Setting: Jackie's recreation room during a hot day during summer holidays. Characters sit on furniture in a semi circle in this order, Jackie, Travis, Grace, Dave and Rick

The time is present day.

Characters: Group of cross cultural teenagers ages 15 and 16

Rick: Group leader

Travis: Thoughtful

Jackie: Deep thinker

Grace: Scholarship hopeful

Dave: Outspoken and controversial

Setting: Down Right is a door or entry way that leads to a pantry.

Down left is an entry way that leads into Jackie's rec. room.

Centre stage has couch, chairs and coffee table

(Off stage: voices of teens talking, enter down left)

RICK
I'm bored!

JACKIE
Well, at least we're cooler in my basement!

RICK
That's true, but I'm still bored.

TRAVIS
You're bored? I'm the one who should be bored. I'm getting tired of kicking your butt at Xbox!

GRACE
And we're tired of watching it!

DAVE
Let's go see a movie.

JACKIE
We don't have the cash. Anyway, didn't we talk about this yesterday?

TRAVIS
Yeah, but let's try it again. How much does everyone have? Come on, empty your pockets.

(All pull out money from pockets)

TRAVIS
What have you got Rick?

RICK
85 cents

TRAVIS
Jackie?

JACKIE
The same as yesterday, \$1.25.

TRAVIS
Grace?

GRACE

Even less than yesterday, my brother took some money from me so I only have 35 cents.

TRAVIS

Dave, my man, come on, tell me something good!

DAVE

I only have two quarters! Now you tell me something better Travis. How much do you have?

TRAVIS

I only have 75 cents. I had to pay for my own bus pass yesterday.

DAVE

What a pathetic group! That adds up to \$3.70! That's not even enough to rent a movie.

GRACE

This really sucks. Now what are we going to do?

RICK

I'm bored. (*Perks up*) Hey! What have you got to eat?

JACKIE

All you ever want to do is eat.

(Rick gets up and goes toward what looks to be a food pantry)

JACKIE

Get out of there Rick. My parents are already complaining that you've eaten half the food in our house.

RICK

HEL-LO! I just hit the jackpot.

GRACE

What ever it is, save some for the rest of us.

RICK

There's more than enough to go around. There's a whole box full of potato chips.

JACKIE

Those aren't chips. That's probably just a bunch of my parent's old junk. If that was a box of chips, don't you think I'd have discovered it by now?

RICK

Well let's check it out any way, you never can tell what you might find.

(Rick pulls box out and they open it.)

TRAVIS

(Pulls out the game *Clue*)

Hey it's Colonel Mustard in the kitchen with a pizza!

DAVE

How could you kill someone with a pizza, Travis?

TRAVIS

It was a thick crust!

ALL

Groan!

GRACE

Hey how about Monopoly?

(As she pulls the game out)

JACKIE

You mean monotony!

RICK

A Test of Character? What's this?

ALL

(Shrugging)

GRACE

I wonder if it's one of those adult games that we're not supposed to know about.

JACKIE

Shut up! We're talking about my parents here.

DAVE

Come on, they grew up in the 60's didn't they? For all you know, they could have been hippies.

GRACE

Hey that would be cool!

JACKIE

The only cool thing about my parents is their basement.

RICK

(Opens the game)

Hey why would anyone question your character anyway?

GRACE

I don't know, but I'm not doing anything kinky you know.

DAVE

There's a first time for everything!

GRACE

Ha! Ha! You are soooo funny.

TRAVIS

Never mind you two. What does it say?

RICK

It says "That if we play the game, we'll get to know each others deepest, darkest secrets."

ALL

(Lean in closer)

JACKIE

Is that what it really says?

RICK

No! It says it's an easy game to play, and that's a good thing for you, you brain surgeons!

TRAVIS

Okay there Einstein! How do you play it?

RICK

Well, we each get dealt 5 cards with questions and five answer cards.

GRACE

What kind of questions?

RICK

I don't know, I haven't read them yet. Can I finish reading the instructions first? The object of the game is to get rid of all your question cards. You can do this by asking the person who you think will be most likely to match the answer on your answer card.

DAVE

I don't get it.

RICK

Well suppose one of your questions is "You accidentally damage a car in a parking lot. Do you leave a note with your name and phone number on it?" If your answer card says yes, then you should ask the question to the person you think is going to say yes. That way, you get rid of one of your questions. The first person to get rid of all of their questions wins the game.

DAVE

Alright let's get started.

RICK

(Deals out cards)

JACKIE

Okay who goes first?

RICK

The person on my left starts. That will be you Jackie. Then we will go in this order Travis, Grace, Dave and then me.

JACKIE

You always make me go first.

TRAVIS

That's because you are our fearless leader.

GRACE

She's fearless that's for sure.

(Jackie smiles at her)

DAVE

Okay enough, let's get started.

JACKIE

Okay Dave, this question is for you 'cuz you're in such a hurry. "Canada is asked to participate in a war against a country that is culturally very different from ours and that has been stockpiling weapons. Do we participate in the war?"

DAVE

Good question for me Jackie because I've always liked politics. As a matter of fact, I got an A+ last semester in World Politics.

RICK

We know. You've only told us about a thousand times.

JACKIE

So Dave, would you fight in a war against another country over the stock piling of weapons?

DAVE

The answer is yes. I feel so strongly about our country. I have known the words to O'Canada since the time I could speak. And of course, everybody starts off their day by standing for our national anthem.

JACKIE

I don't think either of my parents stand up for O'Canada at the start of their day.

DAVE

Yeah, but they're hippies right?

ALL

(Laugh and Jackie shakes her head no)

TRAVIS

Nobody I know stands up for O'Canada except at sporting events.

DAVE

Well, I would show my...

(Makes quotation mark gestures with hands around the word allegiance)

"allegiance" to my country. After all, that's practically the first thing I learned in school.

GRACE

But what about your own feelings? Don't they count? I wouldn't fight. I'm a lover not a fighter.

ALL

We know!

GRACE

Dave, how can you be so heartless?

DAVE

We need to protect our country from terrorists.

TRAVIS

Yeah! Terrorists could be in Canada right now! Everywhere you look today there are people from every country of the world living in Canada.

JACKIE

Well Duh! Maybe that's because we are a multicultural nation!

RICK

I don't think I would go to war. People die in wars and I don't want to die.

TRAVIS

Well maybe people from other countries deserve to die if they stockpile weapons. I mean if they don't die aren't we going to die?

DAVE

Travis has a point. I mean isn't it better to be safe rather than sorry?

JACKIE

Just a minute. We have weapons. Why can't they have weapons like us?

GRACE

Hey that's right! They could be thinking about stockpiling weapons for their own protection, not to attack us.

DAVE

Well we don't know their motives.

TRAVIS

Yeah, they could be planning an attack on us right now.

JACKIE

Yeah, well watch out there are ghosts under your bed too!

GRACE

We have to build trust in order to become a peaceful world. Can't you see that?

RICK

Well let's go for peace right now and move on with the game. So, after all this discussion Dave, are you changing your answer?

DAVE

Nope. I'm sticking to my guns on this one.

(Group groans)

The answer is yes. Yes I would definitely fight for my country.

JACKIE

I knew it! I have a yes card and I knew you would say yes!

DAVE

I didn't realize I was that predictable.

TRAVIS

No, just fanatical. Anyway, whose turn is it now?

RICK

As a matter of fact, Travis, it's yours.

TRAVIS

Okay, here we go Grace. "A new student arrives in your class. He/she is wearing some outlandish clothing, and speaks out in class with some very different ideas. You are assigned to complete a two week long project for 50% of your final grade with this person as your partner. Do you accept this person as your partner or do you ask your teacher to change you to another group?"

GRACE

Why did you ask me that?

TRAVIS

Never mind, just answer the question "Little Miss going for every scholarship award there is."

GRACE

Well you are right grades are important to me. And I have to get a scholarship because my parents can't afford to send all six kids to university.

RICK

I don't know how you and your parents are still sane with all those kids in the house.

TRAVIS

She's not sane. So there! Now let her answer.

GRACE

I know it sounds uncool – but I wouldn't work with that new person. (*A few groans in the background*) I would have to ask to do the project on my own. Then if I didn't get a great grade through my own hard work, I would only have myself to blame. Also I like to work with people I know. I'm not comfortable in new situations.

DAVE

I didn't realize how important your grades were to you.

JACKIE

Well what about you Dave? Would you work with someone who was so different?

DAVE

If it meant the difference between an A+ and a C, then I definitely would.

JACKIE

Hey – wait a minute -- didn't you go from a C to an A+ in your World Politics course when you worked on a project with a partner?

DAVE

No comment.

GRACE

No comment? Well you had better comment.

DAVE

If I've learned anything in politics, it's "no comment" and "my record will stand for itself."

RICK

Your record? Ha! That's been broken ever since I met you in grade 2.

(Laughter)

DAVE

You're telling me Grace that based on a first impression you wouldn't work with someone new?

GRACE

I couldn't live with myself if I got a poor mark.

JACKIE

I don't get it! How can you judge a person's ability by his looks? Do you remember last year in school I had to work with a new kid who was exactly like the person described in this question? Well, first of all when I was told I had to be his partner for a project I was scared because he was different and I didn't know him. That worried me. But, I didn't want to be rude or mean to him because after all he could have been a nice person. I decided to give the partnership a try. I thought, what's the big deal if it doesn't

JACKIE (CONT'D)

work out it doesn't work out. I could always talk to the teacher and ask to change partners later. We ended up doing our project on space. He had a lot of good ideas since he was into that stuff. We learned a lot about each other, and I learned that he wasn't strange at all. He enjoyed different things from me, that's all. We ended up with a lot of creative ideas and got an A+ on our project. I not only got a great mark, but I made a great friend.

TRAVIS

Well there you go! Variety is the spice of life

RICK

What's that supposed to mean?

TRAVIS

I dunno! It's something my parents always say.

DAVE

Well I think you've inhaled too many spices in your life!

TRAVIS

Hey!

(Travis playfully punches Dave in the shoulder)

RICK

(Turning to Jackie)

I can see why your parents buried this game in a chip box.

DAVE

Well, if we keep it up, the game won't be the only thing that will be buried.

JACKIE

Okay, let's go on to the next question. So, did she answer what your card said?

TRAVIS

Don't answer that!

DAVE

Hey! I thought I was the politician.

TRAVIS

Okay she can answer it. I just meant—let's change the game a little. Let's all have two turns each to ask a question to who ever we want without worrying about getting rid of our cards.

GRACE

Travis is right. Otherwise we'll be here all night.

RICK

Well, we have nothing else to do.

JACKIE

I think Travis is right because I want to hear how everybody else answers the questions too.

(All nod in agreement)

GRACE

Okay, I believe it is my turn to ask a question. Okay Rick, here's one for you. "You own a small kiosk in the mall which sells t-shirts. You are in need of an extra staff member to look after sales on the weekends. You have two applicants for the job. The first applicant is a fifty year old with retail experience in the clothing business. The second applicant is an eighteen year old with no retail experience but who is willing to work long hours and is enthusiastic about the job. Who do you hire?"

RICK

Do you know who you are dealing with? You're asking me to make a hiring decision?

DAVE

Yeah, we thought we'd ask you because you'll probably never be in this position! Now enlighten us with your nonsense.

RICK

Hey watch it; you might be hurting my feelings.

JACKIE

Yeah, because you are such a sensitive soul!

(Laughter)

RICK

That is so true! Anyway, that's a hard question to answer because on one hand the young person would be cool to hang with and they know what young people like to wear. But the old guy would be able to sell more because he knows the fundamentals of the trade.

GRACE

Yeah, well I would pick the person who I thought looked the best and dressed the best.

TRAVIS

Come on Grace! Don't you know all old people dress alike?

JACKIE

Well even old people can look good sometimes.

RICK

Back to the question, do I hire experience or youth?

JACKIE

Well if it were up to me, I would choose the person most qualified for the job.

RICK

You're right. You just can't choose someone based on looks. The better qualified you are, the better for your workplace. The young person might be better suited than the old person or vice versa.

TRAVIS

You're just agreeing with Jackie 'cuz you like her.

ALL

OOOOOO!

RICK

That's not true. I'm saying it because I feel that's the right thing to do.

DAVE

Looks like I'm not the only one who learned something in World Politics.

RICK

Okay, Okay Mr. Know – it – all, isn't it your turn to ask a question?

DAVE

Yeah as a matter of fact it is and since you and Jackie are such a team (*Jackie makes a face at Dave*) I'm going to ask my question to Jackie, "You work in a restaurant. Your boss tells you to get rid of some customers who are dressed shabbily so that the table is available for customers who are well dressed and wearing expensive jewellery. Do you go along with his request?"

JACKIE

Well if the people who were dressed shabbily had the money to eat there, why would I kick them out?

DAVE

Because you were ordered to and you could get fired.

GRACE

Yeah and if you lost your job you wouldn't be able to buy clothes and makeup. I know I would kick them out 'cuz I don't get enough allowance you know!

JACKIE

So are you suggesting that I should just follow authority blindly? You would want me to kick people out just because they aren't as rich looking as other people?

TRAVIS

Well if they don't have the bling, there's no cha ching!

DAVE

Yeah whatever "Homeboy!" Isn't that discrimination?

TRAVIS

Relax man. I'm just lightening the mood. It's just a game!

JACKIE

Well I don't care. I like to think for myself. And I wouldn't work for a jerk like that.

RICK

Okay, let's change the situation a bit. What if your parents told you to do it? Don't they expect you to follow their authority?

JACKIE

If I was following their authority, I would have dumped you guys long ago! Just joking, but seriously, my parents have given up on trying to make me do anything. As a matter of fact they know that if they want me to do something, they had better not push it.

GRACE

I wish my parents realized that.

DAVE

Back to the question. If you don't follow orders, you will be fired.

JACKIE

Let's make this an even bigger issue. If we followed everything blindly, than we would just be like the Nazi's following Hitler. I mean weren't they just following orders?

DAVE

That's a little extreme isn't it?

JACKIE

I don't think so if it gets my point across.

DAVE

Okay if you want to go there, then the Nazi's did what they did to support their government and country.

JACKIE

Yes – blindly – without questioning authority. Anyone who did question authority was dealt with and they didn't live to tell about it either. Not only that, look at the human devastation that was caused by following blindly.

DAVE

Hey, if I do run for politics, could you be my campaign manager?

JACKIE

(Laughs)

RICK

Okay that turned way too serious! It's my turn to ask the next question. Travis, "You are applying for a job that was advertised in the newspaper. When you arrive for the interview you discover your future boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. Do you accept the job if offered?"

TRAVIS

I'm so broke any job would suit me fine. It beats bumming off my parents any day.

RICK

What do you mean? I always end up paying for you Travis.

TRAVIS

What are you trying to say?

RICK

Oh nothing!

(Everyone laughs)

GRACE

Hey I agree. Why not work for a recent immigrant? If he's the boss of the company he must have done something right to earn it.

TRAVIS

Anyway, money is money

GRACE

By the way Travis, don't you owe me ten dollars?

DAVE

Not so fast, he owes me twenty

TRAVIS

Hey why do you guys have to be so harsh?

DAVE

That's the only way we're going to get a good discussion going. Plus, it's fun and we like bugging you.

TRAVIS

Well just spending time with me is worth every penny of your money.

JACKIE

Do you realize that this is the first answer we all seem to be in agreement on?

RICK

What? That Travis owes all of us money?

JACKIE

No that we don't care if our boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. It won't affect us on the job and if the immigrant hires us, money is money and we're all good with that!

DAVE

Definitely, I want you as my campaign manager. Better yet, you could run for politics and I'll be your campaign manager.

RICK

Hey everyone's had a turn now and we are all getting along. Let's take a break. Besides, I'm hungry.

(All groan)

GRACE

Forget it! This is just getting interesting. You've got the rest of the summer to eat.

DAVE

Whose turn is it now?

JACKIE

Well if we are going around in a circle, it's my turn again. So here we go. Grace "Your best friend gets into an argument with another student about their religious beliefs. You understand the point the other student is making and in fact you agree with them. Do you support your best friend or take the side of the other student" What do you say Grace?

GRACE

Why are you asking me that? I would support you. You're my best friend.

JACKIE

You'd better!

DAVE

(Mimicking Grace) "I would support you". You girls are unreal! Come on. If he's my friend, he'll understand if I don't agree with him. He's not going to hold it against me. Besides, if the situation was reversed, he would do the same thing to me and I would understand.

GRACE

Boys are stupid! Where's your empathy?

DAVE

Empathy? Oh! Yeah! I feel for you baby!

(All groan)

GRACE

Why do I always get the hard questions?

JACKIE

I think that your friend has the right to believe what they want to believe and not have others disagree.

TRAVIS

Whoa, Whoa, back it up! Beep! Beep! You wouldn't say a word if you're best friend was arguing with someone and she was in the wrong? Ugggh! I can't believe this. I would at least correct her in a nice way.

RICK

How could you possibly put that in a nice way? You are undermining your friend's beliefs, so how could you possibly put that in a nice way?

TRAVIS

If you tell your friend that you see his or her point of view but you also understand and identify more with the other person's view point, I think that's a nice way of saying it.

GRACE

I suppose we can all agree that you have the right to voice your opinion but you still have to be respectful of others beliefs.

JACKIE

How are you being respectful of others beliefs if you are putting their belief down?

TRAVIS

You're not putting it down; you just have a different view of it, that's all.

RICK

I think you should just stay out of the whole conversation all together. That way no one gets hurt. After all, everyone has different beliefs and religions so let's not argue about it.

TRAVIS

Yuck! Enough already! This is turning too mushy. It's my turn to ask a question now. Okay, "a store has a policy that only five teenagers are allowed to be in the store at once while there is no restriction on the number of adults allowed in. Is this acceptable?" Rick?

GRACE

I don't think that's acceptable at all... It's discrimination against teenagers.

TRAVIS

I'm not asking you, I'm asking Rick.

RICK

No, I agree with Grace. I think it's not fair that there is a limit of five teenagers yet adults don't have the same restriction.

DAVE

I agree with you on that one. See, I do have empathy. Adults can steal just as much as teenagers.

TRAVIS

I bet teenagers do steal more than adults.

JACKIE

Not all teenagers steal.

TRAVIS

Not all adults steal.

GRACE

Maybe it's not just about stealing.

RICK

What is it about then?

GRACE

It could be about teenagers acting goofy, having fun and doing dares.

DAVE

Grace has a point. Lots of teenagers fool around and can be immature. Adults have learned from their mistakes and are more mature.

RICK

I don't know about that! Have you seen Jackie's parents?

JACKIE

Watch it Rick! But you're right some teenagers, like me are very mature.

TRAVIS

Well this question is irrelevant anyway because it wouldn't really matter to me. I could persuade them to let me in with my charm.

GRACE

Well it wouldn't be with your money!

(All laugh)

TRAVIS

I wish I was at a store right now, away from you guys!

GRACE

Well, I guess it's my turn to ask a question. "You are having a snack at the mall and end up talking to the person next to you. Before you know it, you are getting along famously and you make a date. However, before the person leaves he/she asks for your help getting into a wheelchair which you didn't notice until now. Do you pursue the relationship?" Dave?

DAVE

Sorry, but no. I can't see myself dating anybody with a handicap.

TRAVIS

That's too bad because if everybody else felt the same way you do, you'd never get a date!

DAVE

That was a cheap shot.

JACKIE

I'm curious Dave. How can you answer the question like that?

DAVE

Look, I'm sorry to say this, but I have to be honest. It's about appearances. (Groans from girls) I can't help it, looks and image are important to me. Hey, you guys wanted honesty and I'm being honest. Am I the only one who feels this way?

RICK

I'm with you man! I want a trophy girl!

GRACE

I never realized how shallow you both are. I can't believe how important body image is to you.

RICK

Oh really? Then why is it you have to spend so much time in front of the mirror everyday if body image is not important to you?

GRACE

That's not fair.

DAVE

Sure it's fair. If you're not concerned with body image, why are you going out of your way to attract guys who think just like us?

(Gestures to Rick and himself)

JACKIE

Take it easy guys. It's not like this would actually happen. You would obviously notice if someone was in a wheelchair.

GRACE

I don't care what you guys say. I'd be their friend. And if they were cute and we got along then there is no reason not to pursue the relationship.

TRAVIS

Wow! Grace, you are so understanding. I completely agree with you. It shouldn't matter what race, colour or physical abilities you have. It's what's on the inside that counts.

DAVE

I bet if you guys were actually in this situation you wouldn't pursue the relationship it would be inconvenient.

TRAVIS

But Dave, what if something happened to your girlfriend and she ended up in a wheelchair, would you stop loving her because it was inconvenient?

DAVE

Aw! Come on Travis, that's a totally different situation.

GRACE

Just a minute Dave. Don't be so self-centered and heartless. Travis had a good point. If it was someone you already loved, you wouldn't just leave them because they were in a wheelchair, so why not give a stranger a chance?

TRAVIS

Oh my goodness Grace. I like the way you think.

GRACE

I like the way you think too!

DAVE

Get a room!

(Everyone laughs, Travis blushes)

DAVE

Seriously, I understand your point. I just think that I am not that strong of a person.

JACKIE

You know Dave. You probably would surprise yourself in those circumstances. We won't count you out just yet! Let's finish this game.

TRAVIS

Okay Dave, it's your turn to put someone else in the hot seat.

DAVE

Oh good! Now it's my turn to put Jackie on the spot. And remember you have to be honest, even if it's not a popular opinion. Since you were so concerned with equality a minute ago, how will you answer this one? "A male and a female apply for a job. They both have equal qualifications. Who should get the job and why?"

JACKIE

Oh, wow! That is a good question. I don't know what I would do.

RICK

Okay there Miss Perfect. Obviously the guy would get the job.

DAVE

Oh yeah, definitely. I agree with you Rick. You girls belong in the kitchen, so go fetch me something to eat.

(Laughs)

RICK

Hey don't remind me, I'm hungry!

GRACE

Why does the guy automatically get the job? It says equal qualifications dummy!

RICK

Well...umm...because.... Because that's how it is!

JACKIE

(Imitating Rick)

Okay...umm...well...yeah... Because No!

(Grace and Jackie laugh and Dave rolls his eyes)

TRAVIS

Settle down kids. Just answer the question seriously now.

GRACE

Well with equal qualifications it could go either way.

TRAVIS

Yeah exactly, that's the question. Who would you give it to?

GRACE

The girl would probably be more mature, so the female should get it.

DAVE

Well you're a girl so of course you would give it to her.

JACKIE

You would pick the guy then of course. Is that what you are saying?

DAVE

Not if the girl was hot!

(All groan)

JACKIE

Oh brother!

TRAVIS

Look now, if they both have equal qualifications and you can't decide between them, you had better look at who would be better in the job in the long run, like way down the road.

GRACE

Yeah. And also who might have the better personality for the job and all that stuff.

DAVE

Okay, that's great, but what if they were equal with all of that?

GRACE

How could they have equal personalities? One's a guy, one's a girl. There's got to be a difference there.

DAVE

Maybe not the same then, but what if you like both of their personalities for the job and you still can't decide?

GRACE

There has to be something you like more about one of them. If you got along better with one of them or if they were the kind of person you would like to hang with. That would be better for your working conditions.

JACKIE

Hey that sounds great! I totally agree with that.

TRAVIS

Everyone agree with that pretty much?

(Nods and yes from the rest)

RICK

Hey! It's my turn. And this, my friends, is the last question in our game.

TRAVIS

Let's hope it is better than the last few questions.

RICK

As a matter of fact it is! It deals with my favourite subject.

ALL

Food!

RICK

How did you guess? Anyway here goes. "You are assigned to plan the menu for a party which you are throwing for a class of 50 students. Two of the students have religious dietary restrictions. Do you alter the menu to suit their needs?" Travis?

TRAVIS

Well I wouldn't change the entire menu, but I'd make sure that there was something for them to eat. I wouldn't want them to feel uncomfortable.

GRACE

Well I say they can bring their own food. It's not my problem what they believe in is different from everyone else.

TRAVIS

Aren't you being a little hardcore?

(Everyone nods in agreement with Travis)

GRACE

Look, I have to go home now.

TRAVIS

Come on Grace. What's the deal? We are all being honest here and I honestly think that there is something more behind your answer.

JACKIE

I think that this game was a bad idea.

DAVE

You think everything is a bad idea!

GRACE

Look, don't get mad at each other. This question just brought back some bad memories for me. When I was in grade 8 we had a potluck lunch. I brought some food that is important in my culture. Everyone was grossed out by it. It wasn't bad; it just tasted different from the usual stuff. This girl in my class took the whole dish and threw it in the garbage. She said "We had to alter our menu because of you, now I'm altering it for us!" No one saw her do it, so I didn't tell anyone.

DAVE

You should have told someone about this. You should have told your teacher or your parents.

GRACE

I know, but it really hurt. I changed that day I gave up my religion so that something like that would never happen again.

TRAVIS

You don't have to worry about that anymore because we're going to accept you no matter what. Plus, we are all grown up now and understand that everyone is different.

JACKIE

So what do you really think about that question now that we all know the truth about what happened to you? Because I kind of think that you were using your first answer as a defense mechanism.

GRACE

You know guys, I would have no problem changing something as simple as a menu to change the way someone feels about themselves. Everyone needs to know that respect is a universal value.

JACKIE

Today you've become a person who has needed to emerge for a long time, and it's beautiful.

DAVE

Speaking of emerging, let's end this game and get out of this basement. How about we go to my place and see if we can con my mom into buying us a pizza?

RICK

Why would you want to do that to your mom? Don't you have any character?

(All laugh and get up to leave.)

THE END

Appendix B: Altering the menu

RICK

Hey! It's my turn. And this, my friends, is the last question in our game.

TRAVIS

Let's hope it is better than the last few questions.

RICK

As a matter of fact it is! It deals with my favourite subject.

ALL

Food!

RICK

How did you guess? Anyway here goes. "You are assigned to plan the menu for a party which you are throwing for a class of 50 students. Two of the students have religious dietary restrictions. Do you alter the menu to suit their needs?" Travis?

TRAVIS

Well I wouldn't change the entire menu, but I'd make sure that there was something for them to eat. I wouldn't want them to feel uncomfortable.

GRACE

Well I say they can bring their own food. It's not my problem what they believe in is different from everyone else.

TRAVIS

Aren't you being a little hardcore?

(Everyone nods in agreement with Travis)

GRACE

Look, I have to go home now.

TRAVIS

Come on Grace. What's the deal? We are all being honest here and I honestly think that there is something more behind your answer.

JACKIE

I think that this game was a bad idea.

DAVE

You think everything is a bad idea!

GRACE

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DAVE

You should have told someone about this. You should have told your teacher or your parents.

GRACE

I know, but it really hurt. I changed that day I gave up my religion so that something like that would never happen again.

TRAVIS

You don't have to worry about that anymore because we're going to accept you no matter what. Plus, we are all grown up now and understand that everyone is different.

JACKIE

So what do you really think about that question now that we all know the truth about what happened to you? Because I kind of think that you were using your first answer as a defense mechanism.

GRACE

You know guys, I would have no problem changing something as simple as a menu to change the way someone feels about themselves. Everyone needs to know that respect is a universal value.

JACKIE

Today you've become a person who has needed to emerge for a long time, and it's beautiful.

Appendix C: Store restrictions

TRAVIS

Yuck! Enough already! This is turning too mushy. It's my turn to ask a question now. Okay, "a store has a policy that only five teenagers are allowed to be in the store at once while there is no restriction on the number of adults allowed in. Is this acceptable?" Rick?

GRACE

I don't think that's acceptable at all... It's discrimination against teenagers.

TRAVIS

I'm not asking you, I'm asking Rick.

RICK

No, I agree with Grace. I think it's not fair that there is a limit of five teenagers yet adults don't have the same restriction.

DAVE

I agree with you on that one. See, I do have empathy. Adults can steal just as much as teenagers.

TRAVIS

I bet teenagers do steal more than adults.

JACKIE

Not all teenagers steal.

TRAVIS

Not all adults steal.

GRACE

Maybe it's not just about stealing.

RICK

What is it about then?

GRACE

It could be about teenagers acting goofy, having fun and doing dares.

DAVE

Grace has a point. Lots of teenagers fool around and can be immature. Adults have learned from their mistakes and are more mature.

RICK

I don't know about that! Have you seen Jackie's parents?

JACKIE

Watch it Rick! But you're right some teenagers, like me are very mature.

TRAVIS

Well this question is irrelevant anyway because it wouldn't really matter to me. I could persuade them to let me in with my charm.

GRACE

Well it wouldn't be with your money!

(All laugh)

TRAVIS

I wish I was at a store right now, away from you guys!

Appendix D: Stockpiling

JACKIE

Okay Dave, this question is for you 'cuz you're in such a hurry. "Canada is asked to participate in a war against a country that is culturally very different from ours and that has been stockpiling weapons. Do we participate in the war?"

DAVE

Good question for me Jackie because I've always liked politics. As a matter of fact, I got an A+ last semester in World Politics.

RICK

We know. You've only told us about a thousand times.

JACKIE

So Dave, would you fight in a war against another country over the stock piling of weapons?

DAVE

The answer is yes. I feel so strongly about our country. I have known the words to O'Canada since the time I could speak. And of course, everybody starts off their day by standing for our national anthem.

JACKIE

I don't think either of my parents stand up for O'Canada at the start of their day.

DAVE

Yeah, but they're hippies right?

ALL

(Laugh and Jackie shakes her head no)

TRAVIS

Nobody I know stands up for O'Canada except at sporting events.

DAVE

Well, I would show my...

(Makes quotation mark gestures with hands around
the word allegiance)

“allegiance” to my country. After all, that’s practically the first thing I
learned in school.

GRACE

But what about your own feelings? Don’t they count? I
wouldn’t fight. I’m a lover not a fighter.

ALL

We know!

GRACE

Dave, how can you be so heartless?

DAVE

We need to protect our country from terrorists.

TRAVIS

Yeah! Terrorists could be in Canada right now!
Everywhere you look today there are people from every
country of the world living in Canada.

JACKIE

Well Duh! Maybe that’s because we are a multicultural
nation!

RICK

I don’t think I would go to war. People die in wars and I
don’t want to die.

TRAVIS

Well maybe people from other countries deserve to die if
they stockpile weapons. I mean if they don’t die aren’t we
going to die?

DAVE

Travis has a point. I mean isn’t it better to be safe rather
than sorry?

JACKIE

Just a minute. We have weapons. Why can't they have weapons like us?

GRACE

Hey that's right! They could be thinking about stockpiling weapons for their own protection, not to attack us.

DAVE

Well we don't know their motives.

TRAVIS

Yeah, they could be planning an attack on us right now.

JACKIE

Yeah, well watch out there are ghosts under your bed too!

GRACE

We have to build trust in order to become a peaceful world. Can't you see that?

RICK

Well let's go for peace right now and move on with the game. So, after all this discussion Dave, are you changing your answer?

DAVE

Nope. I'm sticking to my guns on this one.

(Group groans)

The answer is yes. Yes I would definitely fight for my country.

JACKIE

I knew it! I have a yes card and I knew you would say yes!

DAVE

I didn't realize I was that predictable.

TRAVIS

No, just fanatical. Anyway, whose turn is it now?

Appendix E: Recent Immigrant

Okay that turned way too serious! It's my turn to ask the next question. Travis, "You are applying for a job that was advertised in the newspaper. When you arrive for the interview you discover your future boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. Do you accept the job if offered?"

TRAVIS

I'm so broke any job would suit me fine. It beats bumming off my parents any day.

RICK

What do you mean? I always end up paying for you Travis.

TRAVIS

What are you trying to say?

RICK

Oh nothing!

(Everyone laughs)

GRACE

Hey I agree. Why not work for a recent immigrant? If he's the boss of the company he must have done something right to earn it.

TRAVIS

Anyway, money is money

GRACE

By the way Travis, don't you owe me ten dollars?

DAVE

Not so fast, he owes me twenty

TRAVIS

Hey why do you guys have to be so harsh?

DAVE

That's the only way we're going to get a good discussion going. Plus, it's fun and we like bugging you.

TRAVIS

Well just spending time with me is worth every penny of your money.

JACKIE

Do you realize that this is the first answer we all seem to be in agreement on?

RICK

What? That Travis owes all of us money?

JACKIE

No that we don't care if our boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. It won't affect us on the job and if the immigrant hires us, money is money and we're all good with that!

DAVE

Definitely, I want you as my campaign manager. Better yet, you could run for politics and I'll be your campaign manager.

RICK

Hey everyone's had a turn now and we are all getting along. Let's take a break. Besides, I'm hungry.

(All groan)

GRACE

Forget it! This is just getting interesting. You've got the rest of the summer to eat.

DAVE

Whose turn is it now?

Appendix F: Wheelchair

GRACE

Well, I guess it's my turn to ask a question. "You are having a snack at the mall and end up talking to the person next to you. Before you know it, you are getting along famously and you make a date. However, before the person leaves he/she asks for your help getting into a wheelchair which you didn't notice until now. Do you pursue the relationship?" Dave?

DAVE

Sorry, but no. I can't see myself dating anybody with a handicap.

TRAVIS

That's too bad because if everybody else felt the same way you do, you'd never get a date!

DAVE

That was a cheap shot.

JACKIE

I'm curious Dave. How can you answer the question like that?

DAVE

Look, I'm sorry to say this, but I have to be honest. It's about appearances. (Groans from girls) I can't help it, looks and image are important to me. Hey, you guys wanted honesty and I'm being honest. Am I the only one who feels this way?

RICK

I'm with you man! I want a trophy girl!

GRACE

I never realized how shallow you both are. I can't believe how important body image is to you.

RICK

Oh really? Then why is it you have to spend so much time in front of the mirror everyday if body image is not important to you?

GRACE

That's not fair.

DAVE

Sure it's fair. If you're not concerned with body image, why are you going out of your way to attract guys who think just like us?

(Gestures to Rick and himself)

JACKIE

Take it easy guys. It's not like this would actually happen. You would obviously notice if someone was in a wheelchair.

GRACE

I don't care what you guys say. I'd be their friend. And if they were cute and we got along then there is no reason not to pursue the relationship.

TRAVIS

Wow! Grace, you are so understanding. I completely agree with you. It shouldn't matter what race, colour or physical abilities you have. It's what's on the inside that counts.

DAVE

I bet if you guys were actually in this situation you wouldn't pursue the relationship it would be inconvenient.

TRAVIS

But Dave, what if something happened to your girlfriend and she ended up in a wheelchair, would you stop loving her because it was inconvenient?

DAVE

Aw! Come on Travis, that's a totally different situation.

GRACE

Just a minute Dave. Don't be so self-centered and heartless. Travis had a good point. If it was someone you already loved, you wouldn't just leave them because they were in a wheelchair, so why not give a stranger a chance?

TRAVIS

Oh my goodness Grace. I like the way you think.

GRACE

I like the way you think too!

DAVE

Get a room!

(Everyone laughs, Travis blushes)

DAVE

Seriously, I understand your point. I just think that I am not that strong of a person.

JACKIE

You know Dave. You probably would surprise yourself in those circumstances. We won't count you out just yet! Let's finish this game.

TRAVIS

Okay Dave, it's your turn to put someone else in the hot seat.

Appendix G: Restaurant

DAVE

Yeah as a matter of fact it is and since you and Jackie are such a team (*Jackie makes a face at Dave*) I'm going to ask my question to Jackie, "You work in a restaurant. Your boss tells you to get rid of some customers who are dressed shabbily so that the table is available for customers who are well dressed and wearing expensive jewellery. Do you go along with his request?"

JACKIE

Well if the people who were dressed shabbily had the money to eat there, why would I kick them out?

DAVE

Because you were ordered to and you could get fired.

GRACE

Yeah and if you lost your job you wouldn't be able to buy clothes and makeup. I know I would kick them out 'cuz I don't get enough allowance you know!

JACKIE

So are you suggesting that I should just follow authority blindly? You would want me to kick people out just because they aren't as rich looking as other people?

TRAVIS

Well if they don't have the bling, there's no cha ching!

DAVE

Yeah whatever "Homeboy!" Isn't that discrimination?

TRAVIS

Relax man. I'm just lightening the mood. It's just a game!

JACKIE

Well I don't care. I like to think for myself. And I wouldn't work for a jerk like that.

RICK

Okay, let's change the situation a bit. What if your parents told you to do it? Don't they expect you to follow their authority?

JACKIE

If I was following their authority, I would have dumped you guys long ago! Just joking, but seriously, my parents have given up on trying to make me do anything. As a matter of fact they know that if they want me to do something, they had better not push it.

GRACE

I wish my parents realized that.

DAVE

Back to the question. If you don't follow orders, you will be fired.

JACKIE

Let's make this an even bigger issue. If we followed everything blindly, than we would just be like the Nazi's following Hitler. I mean weren't they just following orders?

DAVE

That's a little extreme isn't it?

JACKIE

I don't think so if it gets my point across.

DAVE

Okay if you want to go there, then the Nazi's did what they did to support their government and country.

JACKIE

Yes – blindly – without questioning authority. Anyone who did question authority was dealt with and they didn't live to tell about it either. Not only that, look at the human devastation that was caused by following blindly.

DAVE

Hey, if I do run for politics, could you be my campaign manager?

JACKIE

(Laughs)

Appendix H: Kiosk

GRACE

Okay, I believe it is my turn to ask a question. Okay Rick, here's one for you. "You own a small kiosk in the mall which sells t - shirts. You are in need of an extra staff member to look after sales on the weekends. You have two applicants for the job. The first applicant is a fifty year old with retail experience in the clothing business. The second applicant is an eighteen year old with no retail experience but who is willing to work long hours and is enthusiastic about the job. Who do you hire?"

RICK

Do you know who you are dealing with? You're asking me to make a hiring decision?

DAVE

Yeah, we thought we'd ask you because you'll probably never be in this position! Now enlighten us with your nonsense.

RICK

Hey watch it; you might be hurting my feelings.

JACKIE

Yeah, because you are such a sensitive soul!

(Laughter)

RICK

That is so true! Anyway, that's a hard question to answer because on one hand the young person would be cool to hang with and they know what young people like to wear. But the old guy would be able to sell more because he knows the fundamentals of the trade.

GRACE

Yeah, well I would pick the person who I thought looked the best and dressed the best.

TRAVIS

Come on Grace! Don't you know all old people dress alike?

JACKIE

Well even old people can look good sometimes.

RICK

Back to the question, do I hire experience or youth?

JACKIE

Well if it were up to me, I would choose the person most qualified for the job.

RICK

You're right. You just can't choose someone based on looks. The better qualified you are, the better for your workplace. The young person might be better suited than the old person or vice versa.

TRAVIS

You're just agreeing with Jackie 'cuz you like her.

ALL

OOOOOO!

RICK

That's not true. I'm saying it because I feel that's the right thing to do.

DAVE

Looks like I'm not the only one who learned something in World Politics.

RICK

Okay, Okay Mr. Know – it – all, isn't it your turn to ask a question?

Appendix I: Male and female

DAVE

Oh good! Now it's my turn to put Jackie on the spot. And remember you have to be honest, even if it's not a popular opinion. Since you were so concerned with equality a minute ago, how will you answer this one? "A male and a female apply for a job. They both have equal qualifications. Who should get the job and why?"

JACKIE

Oh, wow! That is a good question. I don't know what I would do.

RICK

Okay there Miss Perfect. Obviously the guy would get the job.

DAVE

Oh yeah, definitely. I agree with you Rick. You girls belong in the kitchen, so go fetch me something to eat.

(Laughs)

RICK

Hey don't remind me, I'm hungry!

GRACE

Why does the guy automatically get the job? It says equal qualifications dummy!

RICK

Well...umm...because.... Because that's how it is!

JACKIE

(Imitating Rick)

Okay...umm...well...yeah... Because No!

(Grace and Jackie laugh and Dave rolls his eyes)

TRAVIS

Settle down kids. Just answer the question seriously now.

GRACE

Well with equal qualifications it could go either way.

TRAVIS

Yeah exactly, that's the question. Who would you give it to?

GRACE

The girl would probably be more mature, so the female should get it.

DAVE

Well you're a girl so of course you would give it to her.

JACKIE

You would pick the guy then of course. Is that what you are saying?

DAVE

Not if the girl was hot!

(All groan)

JACKIE

Oh brother!

TRAVIS

Look now, if they both have equal qualifications and you can't decide between them, you had better look at who would be better in the job in the long run, like way down the road.

GRACE

Yeah. And also who might have the better personality for the job and all that stuff.

DAVE

Okay, that's great, but what if they were equal with all of that?

GRACE

How could they have equal personalities? One's a guy, one's a girl. There's got to be a difference there.

DAVE

Maybe not the same then, but what if you like both of their personalities for the job and you still can't decide?

GRACE

There has to be something you like more about one of them. If you got along better with one of them or if they were the kind of person you would like to hang with. That would be better for your working conditions.

JACKIE

Hey that sounds great! I totally agree with that.

Appendix J: Outlandish Clothing

TRAVIS

Okay, here we go Grace. "A new student arrives in your class. He/she is wearing some outlandish clothing, and speaks out in class with some very different ideas. You are assigned to complete a two week long project for 50% of your final grade with this person as your partner. Do you accept this person as your partner or do you ask your teacher to change you to another group?"

GRACE

Why did you ask me that?

TRAVIS

Never mind, just answer the question "Little Miss going for every scholarship award there is."

GRACE

Well yo

JACKIE

Well what about you Dave? Would you work with someone who was so different?

DAVE

If it meant the difference between an A+ and a C, then I definitely would.

JACKIE

Hey – wait a minute -- didn't you go from a C to an A+ in your World Politics course when you worked on a project with a partner?

DAVE

No comment.

GRACE

No comment? Well you had better comment.

DAVE

If I've learned anything in politics, it's "no comment" and "my record will stand for itself."

RICK

Your record? Ha! That's been broken ever since I met you in grade 2.

(Laughter)

DAVE

You're telling me Grace that based on a first impression you wouldn't work with someone new?

GRACE

I couldn't live with myself if I got a poor mark.

JACKIE

I don't get it! How can you judge a person's ability by his looks? Do you remember last year in school I had to work with a new kid who was exactly like the person described in this question? Well, first of all when I was told I had to be his partner for a project I was scared because he was different and I didn't know him. That worried me. But, I didn't want to be rude or mean to him because after all he could have been a nice person. I decided to give the partnership a try. I thought, what's the big deal if it doesn't

JACKIE (CONT'D)

work out it doesn't work out. I could always talk to the teacher and ask to change partners later. We ended up doing our project on space. He had a lot of good ideas since he was into that stuff. We learned a lot about each other, and I learned that he wasn't strange at all. He enjoyed different things from me, that's all. We ended up with a lot of creative ideas and got an A+ on our project. I not only got a great mark, but I made a great friend.

TRAVIS

Well there you go! Variety is the spice of life

RICK

What's that supposed to mean?

TRAVIS

I dunno! It's something my parents always say.

DAVE

Well I think you've inhaled too many spices in your life!

TRAVIS

Hey!

(Travis playfully punches Dave in the shoulder)

RICK

(Turning to Jackie)

I can see why your parents buried this game in a chip box.

DAVE

Well, if we keep it up, the game won't be the only thing that will be buried.

Appendix K: Best friend dilemma

JACKIE

Well if we are going around in a circle, it's my turn again. So here we go. Grace "Your best friend gets into an argument with another student about their religious beliefs. You understand the point the other student is making and in fact you agree with them. Do you support your best friend or take the side of the other student?" What do you say Grace?

GRACE

Why are you asking me that? I would support you. You're my best friend.

JACKIE

You'd better!

DAVE

(Mimicking Grace) "I would support you". You girls are unreal! Come on. If he's my friend, he'll understand if I don't agree with him. He's not going to hold it against me. Besides, if the situation was reversed, he would do the same thing to me and I would understand.

GRACE

Boys are stupid! Where's your empathy?

DAVE

Empathy? Oh! Yeah! I feel for you baby!

(All groan)

GRACE

Why do I always get the hard questions?

JACKIE

I think that your friend has the right to believe what they want to believe and not have others disagree.

TRAVIS

Whoa, Whoa, back it up! Beep! Beep! You wouldn't say a word if you're best friend was arguing with someone and she was in the wrong? Ugggh! I can't believe this. I would at least correct her in a nice way.

RICK

How could you possibly put that in a nice way? You are undermining your friend's beliefs, so how could you possibly put that in a nice way?

TRAVIS

If you tell your friend that you see his or her point of view but you also understand and identify more with the other person's view point, I think that's a nice way of saying it.

GRACE

I suppose we can all agree that you have the right to voice your opinion but you still have to be respectful of others beliefs.

JACKIE

How are you being respectful of others beliefs if you are putting their belief down?

TRAVIS

You're not putting it down; you just have a different view of it, that's all.

RICK

I think you should just stay out of the whole conversation all together. That way no one gets hurt. After all, everyone has different beliefs and religions so let's not argue about it.

Appendix L: Ten Scenarios

Please respond to each of these questions individually in written format.

1. A store has a policy that only five teenagers are allowed to be in the store at once while there is no restriction on the number of adults allowed in. Is this acceptable? Why or why not?

2. You are having a snack at the mall and end up talking to the person next to you. Before you know it, you are getting along famously and you make a date. However, before the person leaves he/she asks for your help getting into a wheelchair which you didn't notice until now. Do you pursue the relationship? Why or why not?

3. A male and a female apply for a job. They both have equal qualifications. Who should get the job and why?

4. You are assigned to plan the menu for a party which you are throwing for a class of 50 students. Two of the students have religious dietary restrictions. Do you alter the menu to suit their needs? Why or why not?

5. A new student arrives in your class. He/she is wearing some rather outlandish clothing, and speaks out in class with some very different ideas. You are assigned to complete a two week long project with this person as your partner. Do you accept this person as your partner or do you ask your teacher to change you to another group? Why or why not?

6. You work in a restaurant. Your boss tells you to get rid of some customers who are dressed shabbily so that the table is available for customers who are well dressed and wearing expensive jewellery. Do you go along with his request? Why or why not?

7. You are applying for a job that was advertised in the newspaper. When you arrive for the interview you discover your future boss is a recent immigrant to Canada. Do you accept the job if offered? Why or why not?

8. You own a small kiosk in the mall which sells t - shirts. You are in need of an extra staff member to look after sales on the weekends. You have two applicants for the job. The first applicant is a fifty year old with retail experience in the clothing business. The second applicant is an eighteen year old with no retail experience but who is willing to work long hours and is enthusiastic about the job. Who do you hire?

9. Your best friend gets into an argument with another student about their religious beliefs. You understand the point the other student is making and in fact you agree with the other student. Do you support your best friend or take the side of the other student? Why or why not?

10. Canada is asked to participate in a war against a country that is culturally very different from ours and that has been stockpiling weapons. Do we participate in the war? Why or why not?