Community Controlled Schools and the Peace Process in Guatemala: Citizenship Learning, Participatory Democracy, and Social Change in the Ixcán

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Introduction

Considered narrowly, this study deals with the struggle of the Maya indigenous residents of five villages located in the isolated rural municipality of the Ixcán in northern Guatemala to make the education of their children socially and culturally relevant. The protagonists in this struggle are (i) the residents of the five communities; (ii) PRODESSA, a Guatemalan non governmental agency with a social justice orientation inspired by Mayan values; and, (iii) minimally, the Guatemalan state represented by the Ministry of Education.

Considered more broadly, however, this struggle is a case study of civil society being used as a space within which the Pan Maya social movement representing the aspirations of ordinary Maya men and women, works to bring about far reaching social change at the community level. This, when combined with similar struggles throughout the country, form part of a nation-wide movement for transformative change. The protagonists in the struggle conceptualized in this way are (i) the many organizational expressions of what has come to be known as the Pan Maya Movement (which includes local community organizations, Maya NGOs like PRODESSA, other specialized agencies and Maya coordinating agencies at the national level) and (ii) the Guatemalan state and those political parties and civil organizations which represent those who would block reforms that favour the Maya people.

The struggle for survival and affirmation by the Maya people of Guatemala can be dated to the Conquest. The particular form that the contemporary Pan Maya Movement has chosen to advance the interests of its people emerged from the process of negotiating the Peace Accords which ended Guatemala’s armed insurgency which lasted for almost four decades (1960 – 1996). These negotiations between the Guatemalan state and the leadership of the insurgent guerrilla organizations (the URNG) took place over two years (1994 – 1996) and came into effect in December of 1996. The resulting Peace Accords constitute, among other provisions, a program for the peaceful transformation of Guatemala’s social, political and economic structures and an affirmation of the rightful place of the Maya culture and the Maya people in Guatemalan society.

Prior to 1996, despite the fact that at least one-half of the Guatemalan population are Maya indigenous people, many of whom continue to speak their native language in preference to Spanish, “official” Guatemala, (i.e., Spanish speaking Guatemala), was a militantly ladino.

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1 These villages are Pueblo Nuevo, Cuarto Pueblo, Los Angeles, Mayalan/Zunil and Victoria 20 de Enero.
4 For an account of the peace negotiations and an analysis of the content of each of the Accords see Jonas (2000). The Accords themselves can be found in United Nations (1998).
culture in which the Maya people were relegated to the status of tourist attractions who were otherwise marginalized from national life.

The armed insurgents, the leadership of which was mostly Ladino, took up the cause of the Mayas, and in the expectation that the exploited indigenous population would join them in taking up arms against the military, they established their operation in the areas of the country that were mainly populated by Mayas. The army reciprocated with their strategy of mass murder and scorched earth and the leadership of the indigenous population, while not entirely unrepresented in the insurgent ranks, generally preferred the non armed strategy of building advocacy organizations within the civil society when, in the mid to late 1980s, the repression of the civil society began to lessen and such organizing became possible.

When the leadership of the insurgents realized that the military strategy had exhausted itself and it came time to negotiate a settlement to the war, the URNG took the social, political, economic and cultural concerns of the Maya organizations to the negotiating table. It is for this reason that the Peace Accords which emerged from the negotiations contain so many provisions which favour the Maya people.5

Implementation of the Peace Accords is, of course, an entirely different matter. Even the government of President Arzú, who signed the accords, failed to move vigorously to implement the social change oriented Accords while the rightist Portillo government, elected in 2000, has utterly failed to live up to the commitments that they inherited.6 Meanwhile, the non governmental agencies, and the communities within which they work, despite the difficulties imposed by official disinterest (indeed hostility) and declining international financial support, attempt to implement the letter and the spirit of the Agreements.

The Ixcán
What is happening in the Ixcán in the field of education is an example of how the Peace Accords are being kept alive at the community level despite the failure of the Government of Guatemala to live up to its obligations as defined in those Accords. The Ixcán and el Quiché, the department within which it is located, are sadly well known. The area, and its mostly Maya population, was among the hardest hit by the military’s “burnt earth” strategy in the 1980s, a situation that was well documented at the time and followed with alarm by concerned observers.7 The Ixcán is the northern-most municipality8 of the Department of el Quiché. It borders the

5 For a discussion of the conceptual and practical challenges of the Maya national question and the peace process, see Plante (1998).
6 The United Nation’s Verification Team (MINUGUA), established by the Peace Accords, to monitor progress on their implementation, issues monitoring reports on a regular basis on a wide range of issues covered by the Accords. These reports document a long list of failures on the part of the Government of Guatemala to meet its obligations as provided in the Accords. While some specialized agencies of the Government, usually with financing from the international community, are involved with programs provided for in the Accords, much of what is happening on the ground is happening at the community level through the agency of local and international non governmental agencies. Without a sustained and well financed effort involving the state, however, changes in governance and in health, education and welfare, to name only those, will not be possible. MINUGUA’s monitoring reports can be viewed at their website (www.minugua.guate.net).
7 The counter-insurgency strategy of the Guatemalan Armed forces has been extensively documented. Accounts include Comisión Para el Esclarecimiento Histórico (1999), Falla (1992), and Oficina de Derechos Humanos de Arzobispado de Guatemala (ODHA), (1998).
8 A rural municipality in Guatemala is more like a township or a county in the Canadian context. In other words, it is a rural area with a municipal seat and villages separated by large tracts of land which may be cultivated or not, depending upon their suitability.
Mexican state of Chiapas on the north. The municipal seat is the town of Playa Grande, also known as Cantabal. Canatabal has been for years and remains today, a major military base. Of the municipal population of 55,815 inhabitants, 49,642 are rural residents and the remainder live in Cantabal (ESEDIR, 2000, 4).

Prior to 1966 very few people lived in this hot, tropical land. Due to the number of landless peasant families in other parts of the country, that year the Guatemalan state, supported by USAID, initiated a colonization program. This project was promoted (and given socially progressive content) by the Maryknoll Fathers of the Catholic Church. The population quickly grew. Most of the new arrivals were Maya and were drawn from a variety of linguistic communities – Mam, K’iche’, Q’anjob’al, Poqomchi, Ixil, Chuj, among others (ESEDIR, 2000, 4). The Ixcán is one of the most multicultural municipalities in Guatemala.

The settlers, encouraged and assisted by Father William (Guillermo) Woods, organised their agricultural production in the form of co-operatives. The land was held communally and democratic decision-making was the norm. According to all accounts, the cooperatives were a great success both from a financial and an organizational point of view. (For a brief history of the cooperatives in the Ixcán, see Falla, 1992).

Counter-Insurgency in the Ixcán

The early success experienced by many of the new arrivals was to be short-lived. The cooperative model was viewed with hostility by the military which saw it as a dual power structure. Furthermore by 1975 the guerrilla, having identified the Maya people as a natural base of support for their revolutionary program, had established itself in the Ixcán and in neighbouring municipalities. The repression by the Guatemalan military, based on the strategy of “denying the fish the water in which it swims”, would soon follow.

In mid 1975 the first disappearances of peasants at the hands of the military occurred. In 1976, Father Woods, who was not afraid to use his influence to get what the new settlers needed to make a success of their cooperatives even if that was opposed by the local military authorities, died under mysterious circumstances in the crash of the private plane that he was piloting. Two other priests, one expelled and the other assassinated, were removed from the area and by 1981, the church which had constituted a progressive voice in the defense of the Maya peasantry, had been silenced in the area.

In 1982 the military initiated its “burnt earth” strategy in the Ixcán. This involved disappearances and selected assassinations and then came to include the massacre of whole populations (e.g. Quarto Pueblo), the burning of villages and the destruction of crops (see Falla, 1992, for an account of these events).

After the March 1982 massacre at Quarto Pueblo, the local population could no longer ignore the danger that the military posed to their safety. Thousands of Ixcán residents fled to Mexico where they joined the many thousands of others who had preceded them after having survived similar treatment elsewhere in Guatemala. These refugees would live for over a decade in camps under the protection of the Government of Mexico’s refugee agency and the U. N.’s High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR). 

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9 While some refugees arrived in Mexico before 1981, it was the events of 1981 and 1982 that led to whole communities feeling to Mexico and to Honduras. By 1991 it is estimated that 41,500 officially recognized refugees were living in over 130 camps in three Mexican states. In addition to this number, we must add some 55,000 refugees who were living illegally in Mexico. The majority lived in Chiapas, but thousands of Guatemalan refugees
At first life in the camps was very difficult as aid of any kind was slow in coming. Many, especially the old and the very young, died of starvation and illness in the early weeks and months of exile. Over time, however, assistance from Mexican, U.N. and other sources began to stabilize the living conditions and make possible the organization of basic services including education.

**Education in the Refugee Camps**

In order to understand the success that these refugee communities would have in securing the type of education it wanted for its children, it is important to remember that these communities were not without experienced leaders. They had learned leadership and organizational skills as a result of their cooperative experience in Guatemala. Their successes, far from being the result of luck or attributable to outside agencies, can be attributed in large part to these leadership skills already present in the community.

One of the first problems that the communities wanted to resolve was that of schooling. There were no schools in the camps, of course, nor were there any teachers. The lack of schools was frequently solved by the simple expedient of constructing a thatched roof on four poles. The issue of teachers was less easily resolved. It was decided that young people, who ideally had completed at least the sixth grade (although some only had third grade), would be selected by the leaders of the camps to be trained as educational promoters. The designation promoters distinguished them from certified teachers. At first this educational process was supported by the local Catholic Church through the Christian Committee of Solidarity of the Dioceses of San Cristóbal de las Casas. They provided the camps with materials to build the primitive schools and with very basic school supplies. (AEN, 1999, 43).

The individuals who were selected to be promoters were young people who were seen by the community as having leadership potential. In order to be selected, each candidate had certain personal traits considered essential, only one of which was a minimal level of educational attainment. This method of selection was made necessary by the lack of individuals in the camps with anything but the most basic educational experience. One community leader commented that “even if the person had studied but his behaviour was not held in high regard by the community, or if he didn’t do community work, then he was not considered …” (AEN, 1999, 55).

The promoters received a stipend that was provided by the Christian Committee of Solidarity of a few dollars a month for their work. Like everyone else in the camp they were given food, clothing and shoes and “on the weekend they work in agriculture or in some other occupation of importance to the community.” (AEN, 1999, 54).

**The Model Meets with Success**

Ironically, despite “teachers” who often had no more than a year or two more education than their students, and the other adverse conditions under which they were working, the success rate in these make-shift schools was significantly better than was the case in schools back in Guatemala. This situation was a result of the circumstances in exile. Typically the parents of

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10 The account of the years in exile and the educational work both in Mexico and, upon their return, in Guatemala, is taken from the study by the Asociación de Educadores Noroccidentales, (AEN, 1999) unless another source is specifically cited.
these refugee students didn’t have land which required the labour of all family members. As a result, they encouraged their children to go to school as a way of keeping them busy and did not, as so often was (and is) the case in Guatemala, insist that their children skip school to work the land or do other chores. Consequently, 80% of all primary school aged children were in school and 50% of them completed grade 6. Figures tabulated for 1988 show that for Guatemala as a whole, only 33% of indigenous children were enrolled in primary school in Guatemala (Tay Coyoy, 1994, 44) and, of course, not all of this low percentage completed their primary studies. In the Quiché, for example in 1995, on average students only attended school for 1.1 years (COPARE, 1998, 129). By these standards what was accomplished in the camps by the promoters bordered on being miraculous.

The Politics of Education in the Refugee Camps

It wasn’t long before the Mexican Secretariat of Public Education (SEP) attempted to take over responsibility for the education of refugee children from the camp leaders. Their first demand was that, in order that their studies be accredited by the SEP, the Mexican curriculum would have to replace the Guatemalan curriculum being followed by the promoters. The community leaders, insisting that their stay in Mexico was temporary, opposed this requirement in favour of following the Guatemalan curriculum which they had modified to include Maya cultural values. After considerable controversy a compromise was reached wherein the community leaders agreed to supplement the modified Guatemalan curriculum with a course on Mexican history and contemporary studies.

Another battle was over the issue of school supervision. The Mexicans wanted to appoint regional coordinators (or supervisors) while the Guatemalans wanted these posts to be filled by promoters elevated from the teaching ranks and chosen by the camp leaders. In the end, there were, in effect, two educational coordinators for each region, one a promoter and the other a Mexican official, appointed by the SEP. The promoter handled the academic coordination for the area while the Mexican official handled the administrative matters. (AEN, 1999, 49). This arrangement had the advantage of allowing the Mexicans to save face while putting the academic supervision firmly in the hands of the Guatemalans.

This division of labour, coupled with other agreements that reflected the wishes of the communities (such as their insistence on following the Guatemalan and not the Mexican school calendar), allowed for the delivery in the camp schools of what they called an education founded on the reality of Guatemala.

The themes that were developed in Social Studies didn’t really follow either the official history of Guatemala or that of Mexico. The Chiapas communities demanded what they called real history, based on their experiences as a population uprooted from their lands. The Christian Committee provided them with books with the following themes: the history of the refugee experience and its consequences; land tenure in Guatemala; the history of farming and of the peasant organizations; the Conquest …. etc. In addition, a year before their return [to Guatemala] they began to teach about the contemporary social-political situation in Guatemala. (AEN, 1999, 52 – 53).

In-service Training of the Promoters

Because of their lack of formal education and their lack of pedagogical training, it was essential that ongoing efforts be made to upgrade the promoters. Consequently, the promoters
taught in the mornings and were taught in the afternoons. At first, because the promoters could only copy their own experiences as students, the education that they provided was very traditional, however, over time, because of the content of their upgrading workshops, this would change although the profundity of the change varied greatly from camp to camp. (AEN, 1999, 56).

The content of their training programs included popular education techniques of the sort associated with Paulo Freire, lessons on how to integrate environmental education into the curriculum, participatory techniques, drama, human rights and other, more conventional upgrading such as typing, accounting and religious studies. (AEN, 1999, 57). This popular education approach represented both a revelation and a challenge for the promoters. One called the popular education workshops “surprising” and commented that his educational experience in Guatemala included two years as a pre-primary student where his teachers, “taught the alphabet, never words, just the alphabet”. He said it was difficult to apply the teachings of Paulo Freire. Would this approach work? Would his students learn to read and write? His experience taught him that the students “learned to read by playing, participating, relating, practicing, and exercising in a fraternal space”. (cited in AEN, 1999, 57).

The promoters were also introduced to the concept of bilingual education through a textbook written by Guatemalan teachers working in the refugee camps in the Mexican state of Campeche. Formal training in the philosophy and practice of bilingual education (Maya/ Spanish) would prepare these educators well upon their return to Guatemala where the issue of the students’ right to be educated in the language of their indigenous community would be put on the forefront of educational practice as a result of the rights enumerated in the Peace Accords.

**Teachers as Community Leaders**

An important by-product of the creation of educational promoters was the formation of a new generation of trained community leaders. All the promoters, even the youngest, as we have noted, were chosen for their leadership qualities. These qualities, coupled with their in-service education, and the responsibility they assumed in the classroom, caused them to fully develop the values, skills and knowledge associated with community leadership. It is, therefore, not surprising that the promoters came to represent their communities at regional meetings and were named to local development committees.11

Indeed, the promoters came to play many roles in the camps: the promoter as community leader, the promoter as the vehicle of participatory education, and the promoter as the transmitter of Maya languages in the school. It is not surprising that they would play leadership roles when they returned from exile in the 1990s.

**The Return to Guatemala and Education in the Resettled Communities**

It is beyond the scope of this study to examine in detail the emergence of the conditions that allowed the refugees to return to Guatemala starting in January, 1993. Suffice is to say that the changing politico-military situation within the country, coupled with the Central American

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11 Poretti (2002) cites the example of Nicolas Cruz Ramirez, who at the time of writing is working as a facilitator for a human rights unit designed for junior high school students in Guatemala. He spent 8 years as a young man in a refugee camp where he was a promoter. He notes that, like many other promoters, because of his leadership skills, he became a spokesperson for his community in dealings with the authorities.
Peace process, set the stage. The signing of two agreements between the Government of Guatemala and the UNHCR in 1991 and 1992 contained the provisions allowing for their return. Once they were re-settled in their communities in the Ixcán, the leadership undertook to re-establish their schools. The promoters, who had provided their children’s education in Mexico, were reconfirmed in their posts at community meetings and, where necessary, new promoters were appointed. Community leaders wanted the Guatemalan educational authorities to recognize and to give credit for the studies that the children had undertaken in Mexico. They also wanted the promoters, and the courses that they took in Mexico, to be recognized by the Ministry of Education. Furthermore, given their successful battles with the Mexican SEP, these leaders wanted such recognition on their own terms.

The relations with the Ministry varied according to the region and the personality of the Ministry supervisors. In some cases, the supervisors were not at all sympathetic to the challenge represented by these new arrivals and the educational system that they wanted to implant on Guatemalan territory while others, recognizing the uniqueness of the situation, were very helpful. Soon, however, the relations between the new arrivals and the Ministry were normalized and the government established the procedures by which they undertook to recognize the studies the students had completed in Mexico and they agreed to continue the process of in-service training of the promoters. (AEN, 1999, 77).

For the most part the Ministry’s collaboration was limited to providing legal recognition both to the students’ studies which had been attained in Mexico and to the promoters’ qualifications. They certainly provided very little in the way of material resources or salaries. Nonetheless, it was important that the promoters’ qualifications be recognized because in 1993 the Ixcán alone would have required 200 bilingual teachers for its classrooms if the ministry had insisted that only qualified teachers be placed in the schools. The truth is that there simply were not 200 qualified bilingual teachers in the entire country free to be placed, much less in this one municipality. It was therefore very fortunate that the communities of the Ixcán could rely on their promoters and, because of their status as retornados (returned refugees), that they had access to international funds channeled through local agencies, both governmental and non-governmental. It was within this context that Guatemalan agencies, including several NGOs, began their collaboration with the educational work in the Ixcán. Of particular interest to us is the work of PRODESSA, the Proyecto de Desarrollo Santiago, S. A. 12 By 1993, when community leaders from Victoria 20 de Enero, undoubtedly the most politicized of the resettled communities, asked PRODESSA to work with their promoters, PRODESSA already had a high profile in the Pan Maya Movement due to its training of indigenous student-teachers and its Maya community leadership program. This invitation to work in one community would soon lead to work with communities throughout the Ixcán.

12 PRODESSA was founded in 1989 by the Catholic La Sallian brothers as a rural community development agency which focused its work on the Maya communities of the Guatemalan highlands. It was a logical extension of two other La Sallian initiatives: (a) the Instituto Indigena Santiago (IIS), a three year residential senior secondary school for Maya boys, with a long history, the students from which, upon graduation, were qualified bilingual elementary teachers with a specialization in rural Maya education; and, (b) ESEDIR, founded in 1988, to offer a 10 month residential program entitled Community Development from a Maya Perspective. ESEDIR would later develop and expand a distance education capacity designed to offer progressive educational experiences to rural Maya communities. Despite its non Maya origins, PRODESSA, the IIS, and ESEDIR are now staffed predominantly by Mayas, many of them graduates of one or more of the programs for which they now have responsibility.
A priority for the promoters, once they were back in Guatemala, was to bring their qualifications to the point where they could cease being promoters and gain their certification as primary school teachers. This meant, minimally, completing senior high school with a specialization in primary bilingual education. As there was no secondary school in the region at that time, such a program could only be offered by distance-education programs on an in-service basis. The Ministry of Education, through its SIMAC program (Sistema de Mejoramiento de Adecuación Curricular) agreed to offer a package that would allow the promoters to complete senior high school and obtain their teaching certificates. However, in late 1994, barely a year after it started, this program was plagued with problems and the executing agency walked away from it leaving the promoters, and the communities they served, in a bind.

With the collapse of the SIMAC program, Redd Barna, a Norwegian NGO that was collaborating with the precursor to the Asociación de Educadores Noroccidentales (AEN)\(^\text{13}\) indicated their willingness to finance a continuation of this work if AEN could find an experienced Guatemalan agency to deliver the program. The AEN, aware of PRODESSA’s work in Victoria 20 de Enero, as well as its other work in Maya communities all over the country, asked Brother Oscar Azmitia, PRODESSA’s Director, if his organization would play this role.

**PRODESSA Comes to the Fore**

PRODESSA accepted the challenge. It did not, however, simply take over the SIMAC project. Given its commitment to creating grassroots democracy by promoting community participation and strengthening Mayan values, the PRODESSA team proposed significant modifications to the SIMAC program. PRODESSA understood that such a program had the potential of strengthening a social movement “which would contribute to the creation of communities that were more participatory and democratic.” (AEN, 1999, 94). This belief was based on drawing conclusions from two experiences: that of in the Mexican refugee camps, where the promoters had become invaluable community leaders, and that of the success that ESEDIR (PRODESSA’s sister organization), was having with its residential leadership program *Community Development from a Maya Perspective*, which by 1994 was into its 6\(^{th}\) year.\(^\text{14}\)

PRODESSA proposed the inclusions of a practicum centered in the communities from which those following the program came that involved community education on environmental and health issues, and on human rights and Maya culture. Details of this proposal were discussed with the promoters who would be taking the program. At that meeting, the methodology to be used and the curricular content were discussed and this input was reflected in PRODESSA’s submission to the Ministry.

In order that the curriculum truly reflected local conditions, PRODESSA hired a specialized team of curriculum writers who developed teaching materials that were based on the experiences of the promoters and on the work of the COEDUCAs, the locally elected school boards, which brought a measure of local democracy to the supervision of schools.

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\(^{13}\) The AEN (the North-west Educators Association), is a professional and advocacy group which represented the promoters of the Ixčán and neighbouring areas.

\(^{14}\) The 10 month residential program *Community Development from a Maya Perspective*, was offered in Guatemala City from 1988 to 2001. During these 13 years over 300 community leaders took the course and returned to their communities to provide leadership to their people. Many have gone on to play a role at the national level thereby expanding the influence of PRODESSA and ESEDIR.
In 1994, this preparatory work bore fruit. PRODESSA launched what would be a 5 year program involving the core curriculum of the grades being covered, pedagogy and community development. This allowed the promoters to fast track the completion of their primary and secondary studies, get their certification as qualified teachers at the end of the process, and enhance their leadership skills while continuing to work.

- In mid 1994, a 5 month part-time program was offered to those promoters who needed to complete their primary education (e.g., to Grade 6).
- This was followed in 1995 with an intensive 12 month part-time program to allow the promoters to complete grades 7 to 9 (escuela básica).
- Finally, in 1996, PRODESSA offered the first of two two-year programs to allow the promoters to complete grades 10 to 12 (escuela diversificada).

As a result of these efforts, thirty-five promoters graduated as qualified bilingual teachers in one of two groups in 1997 and 1999 (Ordoñez M, 2000, 2). 15

Not only did PRODESSA provide a necessary service, but they did so in a way that reinforced democratic values and progressive pedagogy. The community’s appreciation of PRODESSA’s collaborative attitude was expressed by a leader of the AEN who said that PRODESSA’s Director Brother Oscar Azmitia never said “this is what we are going to do”. Rather, he said that “you are the ones who are in charge”. As a result of that approach, the community leaders “learned a lot”. (AEN, 1999, 95).

The student/promoters, too, quickly noticed the difference between PRODESSA’s approach and that of SIMAC’s delivery of the old government program. They noted that the SIMAC program was delivered by lecture, that time was badly organized, and that there were too many courses offered simultaneously. In short, despite its supposedly alternative objectives of upgrading the promoters in their abilities to carry out their duties in rural Maya schools, its methodology was very traditional and not very relevant.

With PRODESSA, in contrast, the lessons were based in practice. This encouraged each student because through practice, and not through pure theory, that one learns. A document in math, for example, that is a list of equations that nobody explains, doesn’t help anybody. I don’t understand it! For that reason the methodology of PRODESSA was more practical and allowed all the promoters to adapt themselves to life as it is lived and to daily reality. (Cited in AEN, 1999, 96).

El Instituto Básico Maya Guillermo Woods

At the same time as it was preparing to offer the upgrading and professionalisation programs, PRODESSA was investigating the feasibility of opening a secondary school in the Ixčán. There was no secondary school to serve the five communities with which PRODESSA worked. When it became clear that the Ministry of Education had no interest in opening a rural

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15 These programs were also offered in sites other than the Ixčán. For example 22 promoters gained their teacher’s qualifications as a result of this same program being offered in the region of Fray Bartolomé de las Casas, in the Department of Alta Verapaz and 28 promoters successfully completed the program in the region of Barillas in the Department of Huehuetenango. Furthermore, it should be remembered that PRODESSA was not the only NGO offering upgrading to promoters throughout the Departments where the returned refugees had settled. Other agencies involved were la Fundación Rigoberta Menchu, the French Escuelas sin Fronteras and Save the Children (USA). (Ordoñez M, 2000, 2).
escuela básica, PRODESSA entered into an agreement with the communities to open such a school. In 1995 they opened the school in the village of Pueblo Nuevo with the financial support of IBIS, a Danish aid agency. It was named the Instituto Básico Maya Guillermo Woods (The Guillermo Woods Maya Junior High School) in memory of the late Maryknoll priest who had been so instrumental in promoting the settlement of the region.

PRODESSA took over several existing buildings which included a primary school in advanced state of disrepair and a building that had originally been the local hospital but which had been the military garrison in recent years. Subsequently, other buildings, including classrooms and a kitchen/dining room, have been built.

The agreement which led to the establishment of the school by PRODESSA also provided for a democratic governance whereby a Parents’ Committee (Comite de Padres de Familia) has significant input into the operation of the school. These men and women representing the five communities from which the Instituto draws its students, make the decisions about the operation of the school at their monthly meetings. The students’ parents are expected to participate in the well-being of the school by doing voluntary labour at the school several times a year. This participation is important because the school’s budget does not allow for any maintenance that is not provided by the students themselves or by voluntary labour from the parents.

Even today, after 8 years of operation, the conditions at the school are very basic. In the rainy season the campus is awash in mud. The students are squeezed into barrack style rooms where the beds are so close together their occupants must crawl in from the foot of their beds, it being impossible to walk between them. The students are expected to do a full month of study in 12 intensive days and then do assignments at home between residential sessions. Despite these conditions, the students demonstrated a commitment to their studies that would shame many North American secondary school students and the committed group of teachers return year after year despite the living conditions (not much better than the students) and very low pay levels.

The school initially offered only the first three years of high school (escuela básica) but recently has initiated a senior high school program (escuela diversificada). The model for both levels is the same. The students arrive for a 12 day residential experience each month. After 12 days of classes they return to their communities where they can assist their families on the land and do the assignments that they are expected to complete over the next 18 or 19 days before they return for the next residential cycle. The teachers visit their communities on a rotating basis to collaborate with them on the community work they are expected to do as part of the curriculum and to assist them with their homework.

Everything about the Instituto reinforces its special relationship with the communities which it serves. From the democratic nature of the governance of the school, through the cycle of studies that allows the students to contribute to the work on their families’ land, to the curriculum which is based firmly on advancing and deepening the values, skills and knowledge of these rural Mayan communities, it reflects a school truly at the service of a community in the broadest sense of the word. Indeed, everything that PRODESSA does in the Ixcán, and in the other regions of Guatemala where it works, reinforces the growth of participatory democracy and Mayan culture in the communities.

Some Concluding Remarks

The almost total absence of the state in much of rural Guatemala and the lack of the most minimal governmental services that can be expected from the state constitutes both a hardship
and an opportunity for the Mayan communities. The hardship is obvious. Basic infrastructure such as roads and bridges are in a deplorable state and are frequently rendered impassible during the worst of the rainy season. Violence and crime, including occasional lynchings as people take the law into their own hands, are serious problems as poverty and alcohol combine with lack of effective policing in the rural areas to create the conditions for lawlessness. Health care, too, is all but non-existent in rural Ixčán.

The opportunities that such a situation offers for creating participatory democracy and community controlled services are equally obvious. If the state isn’t going to provide the community with basic services then the community has a powerful incentive to get organized, establish their own priorities and seek service providers of their own choosing. This, in turn, often puts them in touch with social justice oriented NGOs like PRODESSA with its commitment, not only to provide services, but to do so in such a way that builds democratic community decision-making structures and sharpens the leadership skills of community leaders. Furthermore, through its collaboration with PRODESSA, even the smallest and most isolated communities become part of the national Pan Maya Movement and its efforts to build Maya political influence and to revitalize Maya values, Maya practices, and Maya self-affirmation throughout the country.

In effect, PRODESSA is not simply replacing the state and providing services normally expected of it. It is using the vacuum created by the state’s abandonment of its responsibilities to facilitate the creation of a form of “people’s power” or popular “local power” in the region.¹⁶ With respect to education, this means that parents are governing the schools, community leaders are defining the content of teacher education and, in consultation with the people, PRODESSA is developing curriculum that transmits Maya history, cultural, values and languages both to school children and to adults through extension programs offered by PRODESSA’s sister organization, ESEDIR.

It is important, however, to clarify that neither PRODESSA nor the communities want the state to remain on the margins of social and economic development in the countryside. Local power doesn’t equal dual power which stands in opposition to state power despite fears to that effect by the military in the mid 1970s. PRODESSA realizes that neither the communities nor the NGOs can muster the resources needed to replace the state even if they wanted to. Their vision, and it is one consistent with the role of the state as it is defined in the Peace Accords, is one of demanding that the state become what can be thought of as a facilitating state. By this I mean a state which responds to community needs by providing resources and expertise as required while not substituting itself for the community as was the case at the height of the Keynesian state as was evidenced in some European countries and Canada.¹⁷ This implies a significant democratization of Guatemalan society from the bottom up, a project which is very much at the heart of the strategy of PRODESSA and other like-minded organizations of the Pan Maya Movement.

¹⁷ Space does not permit the development of the distinction between what I am calling the facilitating state and the Keynesian state. Suffice is to say that, with the demise of the Keynesian welfare state in both theory and practice in the advanced capitalist societies, not to mention the impossibility of its realization (either historically or as a possibility in contemporary times) in the poverty stricken nations of the south, a new concept of the state must be developed. See O’Sullivan (2001).


There is a currently a multi-billion development scheme underway that would turn southern Mexico and all of Central America into a massive free trade zone, competing in the world wide race to the bottom of wages, working conditions, lax environmental regulation and disregard for human rights.

Known as the Plan Puebla Panama, or PPP, it is the brainchild of Mexican, President, and former Coca-Cola executive, Vicente Fox who announced the Plan soon after his election in July, 2000. The PPP has drawn fire from environmentalists, labor leaders and human rights advocates throughout the region. Yet few people outside of Mexico and Central America, including many opponents of corporate globalization, are aware of the Plan.

The thrust of the PPP is to "develop" a relatively poor piece of geography in the Americas, namely nine Mexican states running south to southeast of Mexico City, and the seven Central American republics, long neglected by private and public capital, and beset with some of the worst socioeconomic indicators west of Haiti.¹

The PPP proposed by Fox is not a new agenda, but rather an ersatz "conceptual umbrella" for a number of development plans that have been on the drawing board for years.² Fox's proposal links Mexico's development plans to those of its Central American neighbors and also pushes the region further down the road of corporate globalization.

**Overview**

Fox set priorities early in his administration when he stated: "my government is by entrepreneurs, for entrepreneurs." Not surprisingly then, the PPP emerges not as a strategy to end endemic poverty, as the government maintains, but as an ingenious ruse to channel massive public funds into infrastructure projects that will, hopefully, induce private investment.

It is also a Plan to turn over control of the area's vast natural resources - including water, oil, minerals, timber and biodiversity -- to the private sector, particularly multinational corporations. In spite of 20 years of relentless neoliberal privatization policies, many resources in the region are still controlled collectively by indigenous campesinos (peasants), or entrusted to the state. But it's not simply a matter of inviting in corporate investment. Under the current "rules" of corporate globalization, governments have an important role to play. But their role is limited to increasing the potential for corporate profits by making sure that:

- infrastructure requirements are in place
- all legal safeguards for private capital are in place (repatriation of profits, no local content requirements, etc.)
- people have been properly trained with at least some minimal educational skills
- people have been properly "tamed" of desires to retain ancestral lands, defend labor rights, and preserve others social values
Precisely in these aspects the Mexican and the Central American governments have been historically remiss. For centuries the PPP area has languished economically and socially, for numerous reasons. One reason is that the area's natural resources were, up to recently, of limited interest to private investment capital. Seen as a backwater by the private sector, elite-based governments followed suit, and ignored the economic needs of the region, except those linked to export crops, such as coffee, sugar, cotton, and bananas. Human development was neglected or forgotten.

Today, the backwardness is evident: infrastructure is deficient or nonexistent, socioeconomic indicators rival Africa's, and, not surprisingly, the region is rife with ongoing social conflicts, often punctuated by armed movements demanding reform or revolution. Rather than an altruistic design to bring the region "into the 21st century" as Fox maintains, it is multinational corporations' changing perception of the profitability of the area's natural resource base that has fueled the PPP.

For example, within the past decade, the importance of water as a strategic resource has increased enormously. The PPP region has extraordinarily abundant water reserves. The state of Chiapas alone receives 50% of Mexico's watershed. Energy needs, particularly those of the United States, can be profitably supplied by hydroelectric dams built in an area with plentiful rainfall. Further, the increasing price of petroleum has made rich, but deeply buried oil deposits profitable to exploit.

The region's geography -it is the narrowest part of the Americas -- is doubtlessly strategic, as East-West trade is set to skyrocket with the entrance of China into world markets. The new field of biotechnology has spurred keen interest in this area, one of the richest in biological diversity in the world. And the region's numerous Mayan archeological sites, pristine beaches and (still) relatively unpolluted Caribbean waters are being packaged to rake in tourist dollars. These and other factors have led corporations to take a fresh look at Mexico and Central America. And it is corporate interests, with the region's neo-liberal governments at their beck and call, and the backing of multilateral banks, that have brought the PPP into fruition.

**The PPP at a Glance**

The PPP's main components call for massive state investments in infrastructure projects. Close to 84% of the funds initially appropriated are for highway construction and improvement along two axes: the Pacific and Gulf Coast corridors. The latter reaches beyond the PPP's geographical confines and stretches 1,745 km from Central America's Caribbean coast to the Mexican border with Texas. The Pacific Corridor will run 3,150 km from central Mexico to Panama City. Both projects, together with feeder roads, will cost over US$3.5 billion. Other projects include:

- Upgrading and linking the electrical grids of Central America and Mexico
- Supplying electricity into the ravenous US market
- Constructing 25 dams throughout the PPP area for hydroelectric generation
- Improving or building or new ports, airports and bridges
- Upgrading telecommunications facilities, including a fiber-optic network, already well underway
- Integrating protected wildlife reserves into "corridors", ostensibly to protect diverse species, but also facilitating bioprospecting by seed, chemical and pharmaceutical companies
• Improving tourist facilities and infrastructure

Energy
One of the main projects currently in progress is SIEPAC (Electrical Integration System for the Central American Countries) a US$405 million venture that will improve electrical generating and transmission capabilities. By 2004 the electrical grids of Central America and Mexico will be compatible and interconnected, in essence linking the region's considerable hydroelectric generating capacity to the electrical grid of the United States.

The plan fits neatly into other activities, such as Fox's desperate attempt to ram legislation through the Mexican congress that would open the publicly held Federal Electricity Commission to private investment. Another component of the Plan is dam construction. Twenty-five dams of all sizes are planned for the PPP area, 18 in the Mexican state of Chiapas alone.4

In the near future, electricity generated in the region will be sold to the United States. And some will undoubtedly be channeled to the maquiladoras that are opening in the southeast of Mexico and Central America almost daily. The maquiladoras are assembly plants identical to the ones that have operated on Mexico's northern border since the 1960s. They are manufacturing enclaves that exclusively serve the demands of multinational corporations, and are divorced from the economic needs of the host country, save the minimal wage paid to the largely unskilled labor force.

Chiapas historian Andrés Aubry has compared the exploitive nature of modern maquiladoras to the old-time fincas or plantations, that are still common in rural Mexico and Central America. He says that fincas are being replaced by sweatshops fostered by the Plan Puebla Panama.

"The main difference is their flexibility," according to Aubry. 'In the old finca system, the land came first, forcing the finca owner to seek and attract manual labor...[Now, maquiladora] owners can easily pack up the light machinery and move it to another peripheral zone, situate themselves in the first depressed area they find, and capture the benefits of unemployment sown by the blows of the economy."5

Maquiladoras are expected to absorb part of the rural labor displaced by major PPP projects, such as dams, and the biological corridors cleared of human inhabitants. They are also touted as alternatives for peasants forced from their land by "free-trade" policies that permit the dumping of heavily subsidized corn, beans and other basic foods from the United States into the Mexican and Central American markets.

"Corn growing has basically collapsed in Mexico," stated Carlos Heredia, economist and former legislator in Mexico's congress, in a recent speech to an American audience. "The flood of imports of basic grains has ravaged the countryside, so the corn growers are here [in the US] instead of working in the fields." 6

"Dry Canals" and Super-Highways
With the Panama Canal saturated by traffic and too small to handle large oil tankers, the PPP region has long attracted attention as a site for new shortcuts for east-west trade. State-of-the-art water canals have been proposed for Nicaragua, Honduras and the Isthmus of Tehuantepec in Mexico, but until technical and financial considerations make them a reality, "dry canals" or "land bridges" are in vogue.

Projects are already underway in Tehuantepec. Plans call for upgrading the two major ports on each side of the Isthmus (Coatzacoalcos on the Gulf, Salina Cruz on the Pacific), linking them by high-speed trains and highways, thereby allowing corporations to transship hundreds of thousands of cargo containers per year. Similar projects are also proposed for Nicaragua.

Who Pays?
Who is footing the bill for this gigantic public-works project that will benefit private transnational capital, and help assure the profitability of corporate investments? To an overwhelming degree, it is the people of the eight PPP countries who will pick up the tab through their taxes.

Although some private investment in infrastructure investment is likely, most of the US$10 billion that the PPP will cost will come from direct government payments, or from loans granted by the Inter-American Development Bank. In any event, taxpayers pay, either this year through government disbursements for PPP projects, or for years into the future, as the IDB loans are added to already staggering debt burdens.

Who Profits?

Which American corporations appear interested in the regional scheme? In the energy sector, Applied Energy Services of Virginia, Harkin Energy Corporation of Texas; in ports and transportation, Eagle Marine, Maya Kin Superferries of Texas, Prescott Follet and Associates; in railroads, Genesee and Wyoming Inc., Santa Fe Corporation, Illinois Railroad, Kansas City Southern Railway, Mi-Jack Products of Illinois, Anacostia and Pacific Railroad, CSX Transportation Incorporated, Union Pacific-Southern; in forest plantations and paper products, International Paper, Temple Inland; in petrochemicals, Exxon, Mobil, Dow Chemical of Mexico, Union Carbide; in bioprospecting, Monsanto; in fishing and canning, Ocean Garden. This is only a partial list of the companies that have been attracted to the PPP. At a PPP trade show in Yucatán, Mexico in July of this year, 780 companies of all sizes sent representatives seeking information.

Speaking recently of the PPP's highway initiative, Costa Rica's Commissioner for the PPP said, "This highway network will serve as a catalyst for new investments in the region. High-capacity, high-speed and safe corridors will open the doors to other projects, such as the improvement and expansion of ports, airports and cargo services. Its impact will be felt in other areas of the economy, such as tourism and agro-industry."

In general all the major infrastructure projects require large amounts of land. This is particularly the case of dam construction, where flood plains are expected to displace hundreds of thousands of people. It is also true for new airports, roads, agro-export plantations, and the biological corridors. The latter is currently an especially contentious issue.

In the state of Chiapas, Conservation International has appealed to federal and state authorities to remove Zapatista indigenous communities within the Montes Azules ecological reserve. CI would seem to be pushing a radical "no people" agenda for wildlife preserves. Interestingly, though, its board of directors is controlled by CEOs of large corporations, some with direct interests in bioprospecting. The policy seems evident: clear the people from the land in advance of corporate penetration.

Grassroots Resistance

Defense of the natural resource base and of land itself has become the linchpin in the grassroots opposition to the PPP and the basis for alternative development plans. In a year and a half, three regional forums have been held on the PPP, drawing civil and social organizations from throughout Mexico and Central America to discuss alternatives to the corporate-led PPP. The latest gathering in July 2002 in Managua, Nicaragua, drew over 1,200 delegates and observers, representing more than 350 grassroots organizations. One of the agreements reached: A series of coordinated protest activities will be held throughout the eight-country region, and in the United States, on October 12, 2002.
The final declaration in Managua was clear and to the point. "We have agreed to a total rejection of the Plan Puebla Panama, the FTAA and the free trade agreements, because we are convinced that they are contrary to the sustainable development of our people, ruin biodiversity, deepen poverty and increase the debt. Likewise [these plans and agreements] are an expression of the interests of the US government, which is intent on building a free trade zone at its service and that of the multinational corporations, to the detriment of our most fundamental rights."\(^{11}\) (emphasis in original)

But the Managua encounter was just one of dozens of similar meetings throughout the region held to discuss the PPP, and even its component parts. Grassroots activists have held forums to discuss dams, maquiladoras, biodiversity, agro-toxins, highways, the free-trade agreements, the Free Trade Area of the Americas, and the building of people-centered alternatives.

National and international coalitions are uniting throughout the region. Several meetings have already been held between Mexican campesinos from Chiapas and their Guatemalan counterparts from Petén, to hammer out joint activities to prevent dams from being built on the Usumacinta River that separates the two countries.

Although formally outside the PPP area, peasants in the Texcoco area just northeast of Mexico City, who staged a nine-month, machete-wielding uprising over the expropriation of farmlands for the capital's new airport, are emblematic of what is at stake: an indigenous and campesino struggle to maintain and control natural resources, in the face of government and corporate attempts to wrest them away.

On August 1st, 2002, following violent confrontations that left one peasant dead and scores injured, the Fox government announced it was withdrawing the expropriation order, thus conceding an enormous victory to the Texcoco campesinos. Enjoying the festivities that followed, Francisco Morales perhaps best summed up the feeling in Mexico and Latin America. "I am an ejidatario (communal land owner) from La Magdalena, Morales explained. "I'm 75 years old and have been working my plot for 50 years, since my father passed away. Our people have preferred a handful of earth to a wad of bills. Money disappears (but) we will have our lands forever. Our land is our life. Our land allows us to look people in the eye, as equals."\(^{12}\)

Footnotes

1. The Mexican states are Puebla, Veracruz, Guerrero, Oaxaca, Chiapas, Tabasco, Campeche, Yucatán, and Quintana Roo. The Central American countries are Guatemala, Belize, El Salvador, Honduras, Nicaragua, Costa Rica and Panama.

2. For historical background of the PPP via World Bank and ECLAC documents, see "Los peligros del Plan Puebla Panamá" by Andrés Barreda, in Mesoamérica-los ríos profundos, Armando Bartra (edit.), Instituto Maya, A.C., Mexico City, 2001.

3. "Mexico has been selling California some 50MW of energy around the clock since the state's first power shortages began at the start of (2001). The interconnection capacity between Mexico and California is 400MW, and is slated to increase to 2,000MW by the end-2002". Financial Times, June 21, 2001.

4. See CIEPAC's "Chiapas Today" bulletins nos. 301 and 303 at www.ciepac.org


10. See "Deconstructing Conservation International", by Irlandesa, available by contacting chiapas95-lite@eco.utexas.edu


12. La Jornada, Aún hay reticencias entre ejidatarios para echar campanas al vuelo; quieren certezas, August 3, 2002, by María Rivera.

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Introduction

In this paper, I will begin by introducing various concepts of citizenship and citizenship education through a literature review. Then, I will offer a brief history of the federally-funded Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) language and settlement program for immigrants. Next, using Miller and Seller’s (1990) model of three types of curriculum—transmission, transaction, and transformation—I will analyze how various interpretations of citizenship education inform the three stages of the LINC 4 & 5 Curriculum Guidelines: production, reception, and implementation. Each stage represents a site of conflict, in which the formalized descriptors of a task-based, communicative language document both enable and constrain the types of citizenship practices that might be explored through pedagogy.

The production stage will be investigated through an interview with the Curriculum Expert of the document, the reception stage with a thematic analysis of the document, and the implementation stage through interviews with six present or former LINC teachers who discuss how they used, modified, or ignored the Guidelines while acting as curriculum-makers in their own LINC classrooms.

Theoretical Framework: Curriculum Metaorientations

Miller and Seller’s Curriculum: Perspectives and Practice (1990) offers a model of three characteristic types of curriculum metaorientations—transmission, transaction, and transformation—which differ in contexts, aims, learning experiences, role of the teacher and evaluation.

In a transmission curriculum, the context is based on an atomistic paradigm in which “reality [is] broken down into distinct separate elements.” Transmission is linked philosophically to empiricism, psychologically to behaviorism, and politically to conservatism. The aim of transmission is the “mastery of school subjects [and] inculcation of students into social norms” and students are “expected to learn facts and concepts associated with the subject” in a “structured learning situation” in which the teacher “play[s] a directive role” and where evaluation “[o]ften focuses on traditional achievement tests” (pp. 55-56).

Franklin Bobbitt’s theory of education, in the 1920s and 1930s, which was based on “knowledge of the ‘things for which [students] should be trained’ ” and the breaking down of subject matter into small components in a school curriculum which mirrored the mechanistic society and which sought to shape the individual student to social norms, is a prime example of transmission theory (p. 39; 24).

A transaction curriculum, which stresses “interaction between the person and the social environment,” is linked psychologically to cognitive developmentalism and politically to liberalism. The aim of a transaction curriculum is the “development of rational intelligence in
general and complex problem-solving skills in particular” (p. 110). The learning experience “[s]tresses inquiry and problem-solving skills” academically and on “developing inquiry skills that facilitate democratic decision making” socially (p. 110). The role of the teacher in this curriculum metaorientation is to “facilitate the development of student inquiry skills...[and] to stimulate inquiry with questions and probes” (p. 111). Evaluation “focuses on the student’s acquisition of complex intellectual frameworks and on social skills that are important in a democratic context” (p. 111).

John Dewey’s theory of education, (in books published from 1897 to 1952), serves as a prime example of a transactional curriculum. It is based on providing a learning experience in which “intelligence is developed through the individual’s interaction with the social environment, particularly through solving problems” (p. 65). Rooted in scientific method, the student moves through a five-step process by: (1) confronting a problematic situation; (2) defining exactly what the problem is; (3) clarify the problem through analysis; (4) developing hypotheses; and (5) selecting one hypothesis and implementing it. If the chosen hypothesis “does not work out, the individual selects another alternative” (p. 65). For Dewey, education, “by employing the scientific method, can help direct the course of social change in a positive direction” (p. 63).

The transformational curriculum has as its context the ecological paradigm in which all phenomena are linked. It is linked psychologically to transpersonal psychology and politically to movements for social change. Its aim is “[s]elf-actualization, self-transcendence, [and] social involvement.” The learning experiences focuses on the integration of the “physical, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions” and on connections “between disciplines, between one’s inner and outer worlds, [as well as] school and community.” Teachers must be in touch “with inner life while also working on communication skills” and “making links with the community” and evaluation often focuses on “informal and experimental forms of evaluation” (p. 167).

The transformation position is represented by two currents of thought, one romantic or humanistic, and the other neo-Marxist and concerned with educating for social change. The romantic stresses “the freedom of the child, the passivity of the teacher, equality between teacher and child, the virtues of play and unstructured activity, and distrust of extrinsic motivation” (Ravitch (1983), quoted in Miller & Seller, p. 146). The social change position of transformational curriculum is exemplified in the work of Paulo Freire.

In The Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1972) Freire developed “a method for teaching basic literacy to Brazilian students that involved their social awareness” by which they “move[d] through different stages, leading ultimately to a stage in which they [were] able to take action to overcome oppression” (p. 160). Freire’s three-step procedure involved naming important conflicts in a community’s situation and “generating interest in these key words” thus enhancing literacy, analyzing the “systemic causes of conflict” in the community and encouraging “collaborative action to resolve conflicts” (p. 160). By stressing the integration of the personal and the political, by helping peasants to become conscious of the social, political and economic roots of their poverty and illiteracy, and by moving students from self-understanding to social involvement, Freire’s curriculum is a prime example of a social change transformational curriculum.

In this paper, I will use the transmission, transaction and transformation paradigms to analyze various positions of citizenship education.

Literature Review
Citizenship and citizenship education are highly contested concepts. Sears and Hughes (1996), in a review of citizenship education in public schools in Canada, offer two tables which identify four major conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education. They indicate how ideas about sovereignty, government and the role of citizens can range from the implicit to the explicit, and how these then inform an equally broad range of ideas about knowledge, values, and skills/participation in citizenship education.

In “Citizenship Education and Current Educational Reform,” Sears and Hughes “examine the character of citizenship education in the official policy documents of the provinces and territories, as opposed to the actual classroom practice of the curriculum-in-use” (p. 123). Each conception in their proposed typology “illustrates a view of what constitutes good citizenship and the corresponding knowledge, values, and skills students must learn to be good citizens” (p. 126). Interestingly, Sears and Hughes’ models of citizenship education mesh with Miller and Seller’s definitions of curriculum metaorientations. (For a summary of Sears and Hughes’ Conceptions of Citizenship and Conceptions of Citizenship Education, please see Appendix B and C.)

Thus, in Conception A, the knowledge students are taught should be “a common body of knowledge about the history and political structures of the nation” in which political and military history are presented within the context of a “narrative of continuous progress,” where institutions are presented “as operating in lock-step fashion” and where teaching styles “are focused on students arriving at common answers on matters of fact and/or value.” Students are taught a “particular set of national values” and the skills necessary “to allow them to vote in an informed manner” (p. 128). This is strikingly similar to the characteristics of Miller and Seller’s transmission curriculum, with its focus on facts, concepts, mastery of school subjects, and teacher-directed classroom activity.

In Sears and Hughes’ Conception B, “students learn the knowledge necessary to become involved in resolving public issues.” This knowledge is drawn from “the social sciences, literature, the humanities, and the experience of teachers and students.” Liberal democratic institutions “are presented as the best theoretical form of social organization but as flawed in practice” and teaching styles “are focused on students arriving at well grounded alternative possibilities for resolving social issues.” Students are taught to “explore questions of value, particularly as they relate to public issues” and to learn “critical reflective processes...and develop skills that will help them to participate effectively” (p. 128). This model shares many similar characteristics with Miller and Seller’s transaction curriculum, with its emphasis on inquiry and problem-solving skills used to facilitate democratic decision-making.

In Conception C, the focus is on preparing citizens of the world: students “should develop a knowledge of world systems [and]...global topics,” should “imagine and plan for alternative futures,” be committed to “environmental responsibility [and] social justice” as well as “develop critical/reflective problem-solving...and cross-cultural skills so that they can participate with a wide variety of people in making the world more just” (p. 128). In Conception D, a more neo-Marxist approach is favoured, in which students “should be taught the ways in which institutions and structures support certain oppressive social organizations” and in which new curricula “should actively challenge systemic discrimination.” Students are taught the values “of the equal participation of all individuals and groups” and “to confront any manifestations of privilege and inequality,” as well as the skills needed “to recognize oppressive social structures” and the opportunities “to act to challenge and change them” (p. 128). I suggest that these two
conceptions of citizenship education mirror the two tendencies found in transformational curricula. Conception C mirrors a romantic-ecological type of transformation, which stresses the interdependence of phenomena and is linked with self-actualization, mysticism and worldwide environmental movements, while Conception D mirrors the social-change position in its emphasis on consciousness-raising and community-based political action.

While Sears and Hughes maintain that “the official curriculum of educational policy inclines towards an activist conception of citizenry,” (p. 123), Tracey M. Derwing, in “Instilling a Passive Voice: Citizenship Instruction in Canada” (1992), which focuses on “the nature of citizenship instruction for adult immigrants to Canada as indicated in a national survey of citizenship and ESL programs,” maintains that

the predominant view [of]...citizenship is static...seen as something to be acquired rather than a process of continuous growth in attitudes, skills, and knowledge. The nature of The Citizenship Act serves to encourage a minimal approach to citizenship instruction in that citizenship and ESL programs generally react to the limited knowledge and language criteria stated therein... (p. 193)

Thus, Derwing suggests that these ESL programs transmit the concept of citizenship as a series of facts to be memorized by students for their citizenship hearings.

Whether citizenship materials for Canadian public schools differ markedly from those made available to immigrants to Canada in terms of their social orientation, or whether this difference is based more on matters of the individual perspective of each critic is a question for another paper. However, it is clear that Derwing sees citizenship education in the 1990s as based on a transmission (or Conception A) approach to citizenship education. In its place, she calls for a more transactional (or Conception D) curriculum which stresses developing immigrants’ inquiry and critical skills . A brief review of the literature of ESL and citizenship reveals that most analysts seem biased in Derwing’s direction in being critical of the role of ESL teachers in promoting a passive citizenship education.

Bullard’s (1989) analysis of citizenship education programs in the 1980s points out that, “[b]y and large, materials and methodologies used in citizenship classes are directed at helping students meet the requirements for naturalization and prepare for their interview with a citizenship judge” (p. 21). Referring to a national survey of citizenship acquisition programs by Derwing and Munro (1987), Bullard states that most programs then were “delivered outside the context of ESL, in the form of short-term courses providing information about Canada’s geography, history, and political system in order to help applicants meet the knowledge requirements for the citizenship hearing” (p. 24).

It is the “development of critical thinking skills” among immigrants to Canada through a critical language awareness that most concerns Morgan, in his article “Promoting and Assessing Critical Language Awareness” (1995/1996). In it, Morgan stresses the community-basis of many ESL programs in Toronto and believes that “[a] community-based, ESL pedagogy doesn’t mean neglecting language. It means organizing and assessing second language education around experiences that are immediate to students” (p. 11). While not focused on an ESL citizenship program, Morgan’s article is important for highlighting the role of critical language awareness for immigrants, which he describes in the following way:

Dominant social groups...rely upon the power of language to normalize ways of seeing, knowing, and doing that support their particular interests and privileges. But consent is never a foregone conclusion. Words and texts have many potential meanings ultimately mediated by the particular
experiences of the language users...Language is used to put people in their place; people also use language to change where they’ve been placed. (p. 12).

Finally, and at the other extreme, Ellen Cray’s “Teachers’ Perceptions of a Language Policy: ‘Teaching LINC’ ” (1997) presents an analysis of LINC drawn from qualitative interviews with six teachers in the Ottawa area, who “mentioned three characteristics of their classrooms that they associated with LINC [:]...continuous intake...multilevel classes...[and] off-site locations” without prompting, but “assessment procedures and the curriculum” only with prompting (p. 25). The teachers interviewed used the Draft LINC Curriculum Guidelines (1993) “to get ideas of themes and topics” and as an “interesting catalogue of ideas and suggestions,” though none of the teachers “saw the curriculum as guiding their teaching on a day-to-day level” (p. 33). This suggests that the conception these teachers favoured in terms of citizenship education was closer to the transmission (or Conception A) approach to citizenship education than any other.

This brief review of the literature points to a tendency among many ESL analysts to disparage much ESL for citizenship education for being used to instil a passive absorption of rote citizenship facts, whereas these same writers promote a move towards critical language awareness as a tool for helping immigrants develop critical and reflective problem-solving and cross-cultural skills so that they can participate more effectively as Canadian and world citizens.

A Brief History of LINC and the Canadian Language Benchmarks

In 1991, Employment and Immigration Canada (EIC), the federal department now called Citizenship and Immigration Canada (CIC), set up a new policy, Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC). The provisions of the policy are laid out in two documents, Innovations in Training and New Immigrant Language Training Policy. LINC was to “provide immigrants with basic communication skills...in an environment in which new developments in curricula, teacher orientation, and methodologies can flourish” (EIC, 1991a, n.p., in Cray (1997), p. 23).

The Draft LINC Curriculum Guidelines, which “outlines 12 themes, including family life, transportation and Canadian society, for three different levels with tasks, grammar, vocabulary, and pronunciation points that can be taught [as well as] a LINC literacy curriculum” were designed to “meet the needs of students ‘in a variety of community and institutional settings’ and to specify content, method, and approach for LINC classes” (Cray, 1997, p. 33).

According to “A Follow-Up Study of People in Ontario Completing Level 3 of the Language Instruction for Newcomers to Canada (LINC) Program,” (1997), LINC programs up to that time were offered by a wide range of service-providers, including colleges, school boards, private language schools, and diverse immigrant-serving agencies. The program is typically structured into levels of proficiency in English, with level 1 representing the most basic, limited proficiency in English, and level 3 a minimal communicative competence with simple interactions and texts in English (Hart & Cumming, 1997, p. 1).

In 1997 Revised LINC Curriculum Guidelines were published, again for LINC levels 1 to 3. Finally, in November, 1998, “the Toronto Catholic District School Board was awarded the contract to develop the curriculum guidelines for LINC 4 and 5...to establish measurable outcomes based on the Canadian Language Benchmarks” (Toronto Catholic District School
Board, 1999, p. 9). While LINC provides a specific curriculum for teachers in this language and settlement program, it is the Canadian Language Benchmarks which are used to assess the language level of immigrants across English-speaking Canada so that they can be placed in appropriate ESL class levels. In 1992, the EIC (later the CIC?? FULL NAME ??), funded a project to develop national standards, beginning with consultations with experts in second language teaching and training, testing and measurement. The consultations confirmed that no one instrument, tool or set of “benchmarks” was widely used or appropriate to Canadian newcomers’ needs (Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000, p. vii).

In March 1993, the National Working Group on Language Benchmarks (NWGLB) was established by the CIC, and it was this National Working Group which published the first version of the Canadian Language Benchmarks in 1996 (Canadian Language Benchmarks, 2000, p. vii). The Canadian Language Benchmarks are a descriptive scale of communicative proficiency in English as a Second Language (ESL) expressed as 12 benchmarks or reference points; a set of descriptive statements about successive levels of achievement on the continuum of ESL performance; [and] statements (descriptions) of communicative competencies and performance tasks in which the learner demonstrates application of language knowledge (competence) and skill...(Pawlikowska-Smith, 2000, p. viii).

In Ontario, the Canadian Language Benchmarks are used by assessment centres to place immigrants in appropriate LINC classes.

In the next half of the paper, I will analyze how different concepts of citizenship and citizenship education have informed The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines through three stages: in its production, reception, and implementation.

The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines: The Production Stage

In “The Practical: Translation into Curriculum,” Schwab outlines a deliberative form of curriculum planning, in which representatives from five disciplines – the subject matter, the learners, the milieus, the teachers, and the curriculum specialist – collaborate with each other through a two phase process. In the first phase, these representatives, or “agents of translation,” go through a three-step program of discovery, coalescence, and utilization, to generate “new educational materials and purposes” (p. 501).

Each representative is to be treated as an equal participant in the collaborative process, for “each must discover the experience of the others and the relevance of these radically different experiences to curriculum making for a partial coalescence of these bodies of experience to occur” (p. 504).

The curriculum specialist must not seek to “overawe” the group, but rather should serve three functions: first, in the preliminary phase, to “function as a countervailing force...[to remind] all the others of the importance of the experience of each representative to the enterprise as a whole” (p. 505); second, in the writing stage, “to instigate, administer, and chair this process of realization of the curriculum” (p. 506); and third, in the revision stage, through the trial use and reworking of this curriculum: the “trial construction of a bit of curriculum, followed by scrutiny of the trial by the planning group, followed by discussion of it among both makers of the bit and planners, followed by a corrected bit or an additional bit, and so on” (p. 506).
The creation of the curriculum guidelines for LINC 4-5 appears to have followed Schwab’s deliberative model in certain respects. Three committees, the Guidelines Advisory Committee, the Expert Panel, and the Writing Team, were made up of representatives of the five disciplines: the subject matter (English as a second language and settlement issues), the learners (the immigrant students), the milieus (cultural advisors, schools, school boards), the teachers (through field testing, questionnaires, and workshops), and the curriculum specialist. On the other hand, the curriculum team also had to face obstacles foreign to Schwab’s vision: they had to work with the LINC 1-3 guidelines as their base, as well as within the task-based orientation of the Canadian Language Benchmarks.

Schwab stresses the need for equality and compromise in the deliberative curriculum making process. In a qualitative interview with the Curriculum Specialist for The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines, this person described some of the difficulties involved in trying to include two related issues – form-based instruction and content-based instruction – in the document, in order to provide for the possibility of a more critical citizenship pedagogy, given the constraints imposed on it by the LINC 1-3 guidelines and the task-based Canadian Language Benchmarks.

According to this informant, the Canadian Language Benchmarks are underpinned by two theoretical components, Krashen’s acquisitional model of language learning and Nunan’s task-based model, which “make the performance of tasks...the centralizing...element of the syllabus.” This Curriculum Specialist’s goal was to justify theoretically the introduction of pre- and post-tasks into the curriculum, in order to “move towards explicit...grammatical and pronunciation components” and thus legitimize what ESL instructors had already been doing with their immigrant students.

As well, this specialist was concerned with focusing on content in a more critical way in each of the thematic components. This informant made the point in a discussion about the theme of banking:

Banking can mean two things, you know: are banks ethical or moral, or how do I open a banking account? And I worked very hard to make sure that both elements were in the units. I said, ‘Let’s do banking. But one of the topics is going to be what are the ethical limits of...bankers. Is it moral, what they’re doing?’ And stick that in there right beside how do I open a checking account...That we don’t take things at face-value. That we look at every topic and unit from both sides.

In terms of the curriculum metaorientations, the Curriculum Specialist’s struggles can be seen within the framework of attempting to include more transactional aims and learning experiences in a curriculum document whose antecedents tended to stress a transmission approach of survival English, by focusing on facts and concepts required by immigrants for their citizenship interviews.

This informant also took exception to the way the Canadian Language Benchmarks equates students’ ability to analyze complex social issues with their ability to communicate and analyze opinions:

One of the things I tried to talk about...[was] how, even at a basic level, people will engage with the substance of these topics, but they will frame them in everyday experience...It’s an elitist attitude, when the curriculum’s like that. When they get to Level 12 and they can manipulate this highly complex sentence-structure, then they can talk about human rights, or the Canadian political system which, you know, I think is nonsense. And I used to complain bitterly to people in the writing of documents that this doesn’t need to be that way.
This informant characterized critical citizenship as involving “a kind of critical autonomy...the ability to not take things at face value, to appraise and evaluate...To be able to weigh the consequences and to see whose interests are being served behind anything and whose are not.” While admitting that some of the themes could not be developed in the Guidelines, given the restrictions imposed on the team by the Canadian Language Benchmarks, this informant is still pleased with the possibilities for critical engagement about citizenship that the document does open up:

I think that there [are] really positive aspects of the document. Just the fact that they are there encourages teachers...the fact that it’s there allows teachers who feel they want to do that kind of teaching, who are inspired by it...[to be] legitimated to do it...I think it’s a great document and, for those people who want to build on it, I think the basic tools are there.

Thus, this analysis of the curriculum development process of The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines, reveals that a limited form of deliberation took place, during which conceptions of citizenship and citizenship education were highly contested, given the models presented in the LINC 1-3 Guidelines and the Canadian Language Benchmarks, as well as those models presented by other participants in the process.

The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines: Reception—the Written Form

A note from the Guidelines serves as an *apologia* to those seeking content geared towards a more critical approach to citizenship education, and lays the responsibility on the task-based obsession of the Canadian Language Benchmarks:

Using the Canadian Language Benchmarks to develop these curriculum guidelines imposes certain limitations. Competencies that may be more suitable to particular topics could not be used because they do not correspond to the Benchmarks assigned to LINC 4 and 5. For example, International Human Rights, Native Peoples and National Unity do not lend themselves easily to the pragmatic, functional competencies described in the CLB at these levels and are more suited to competencies such as critical analysis (Reading, Benchmark 9) or expressing and analyzing opinions (Listening/Speaking, Benchmark 8). Consequently, these topics may not have been addressed as profoundly as the issues warrant but were included anyway because learners expressed an interest in them. (Toronto District Catholic School Board [TDCSB], 1999, p. 10).

The Guidelines present twelve themes (Business, Canada, Canadian Culture & Society, Canadian Law, Community & Government Services, Education, Employment, Finance & Banking, Global Issues, Health & Safety, Relationships, and Travel & Tourism), divided into three topics each. (TCDSB, 1999, p. 25). Analysis reveals that sample language tasks do range, on occasion, from the pragmatic to the more critical. For example, under Canada - Government, topic outcomes include the ability of students to “describe systems of government in Canada and other countries” as well as to “agree, disagree with current government policies” (TCDSB, 1999, p.35). The topic Canada - Native Peoples has, as a topic outcome, to “relate a story about a famous Native Canadian” (TCDSB, 1999, p.37), while a suggestion is also made that “Classes might want to learn about recent court cases involving Native claims to ancestral lands and natural resources” (TCDSB, 1999, p. 36). Other critical aspects of the text, either in terms of suggestions, topic outcomes, or sample language tasks, include writing “a short text about..."
[students’] own experience with Canada’s multicultural society” (Canadian Culture & Society - Cultural Diversity, p. 39); “legal definitions of child abuse; legal requirements to report child abuse...legal supports for women who are victims of domestic violence; the legal rights of same-sex couples” (Canadian Law - Family Law, p. 46); “barriers to employment for immigrants; discriminatory practices by professional organizations” (Employment - Skills Assessment, p. 66) and “the social and ethical responsibility of banks and government regulatory bodies; the implications of bank mergers” (Finance & Banking, p. 68), to name but a few instances.

The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines: Implementation - The Curriculum-in-Use Method

Participants

Besides the Curriculum Expert, I also interviewed six present or former LINC teachers with whom I was working, or had already worked. There were two males and four females with a total of 68.5 years’ teaching experience among them (or over 10 years’ experience each, on average). Four of the six had taught adults exclusively, for school boards and at colleges in the Toronto area, as well as for a Toronto-area college with an arrangement to take students from China. Besides teaching LINC 1, 3, 4, and 5, these teachers had also taught Adult ESL in the Labour Market Language Training program, in a Toronto-area school board program, English for Academic Purposes, as well as French and Italian. One of the teachers spent each alternate school year teaching Kindergarten to Grade 6 at a public school.

Study

I interviewed the participants between October 4-30, 2002 and on December 11, 2002, in various settings. Each participant was provided with two copies of an Informed Consent Form detailing the purpose of my project, the procedure to be used, the benefits and possible hazards of taking part in the study, as well as a promise that all comments, audiotapes and transcripts would be treated in a confidential manner. Each participant signed both copies. I did the same. We then each kept a copy of the form.

Interviews were audi-taped and then transcribed. I then focused on how each participant dealt with what they considered to be the more controversial themes or their more controversial duties in LINC. It was especially here that the demarcation between those who favoured a transmission approach, a mixed transmission/transaction approach, a mixed transaction/transformation approach, or a purely transformational approach became more readily apparent.

Data and Findings

Transmission Pedagogy

One of the participants, who taught the upper levels of LINC before the publication of the Guidelines, and thus based his comments on his experiences using a curriculum established at one particular college, yet communicated a very negative assessment of LINC, in terms of how a bias in settlement issues could be used to “indoctrinate” immigrants into certain kinds of belief and action:
The themes that one uses, in some ways, are a form of indoctrination in the way things are done in a particular place. Now, to a certain extent the functional aspect of getting along in a new country and doing things that are required is a necessary thing, but it [moves] very quickly into areas of social norms and ways of thinking and acting that are more affecting of personality than simply functional information.

This participant was uncomfortable with “imposing a viewpoint – whatever it might be – for purposes that are not clearly defined” and characterized this as a form of “hidden curriculum.” He expounded on this point by suggesting that

the hidden curriculum has to deal with settling people and making it possible for them to start working immediately...within Canadian society with attitudes that would be acceptable to the government or to...the minority of the population who shape the institutions and the corporate agenda. I don’t think it had anything in particular to do with language learning.

This participant could not recollect critical thinking being part of the LINC curriculum when he taught it: “Critical thinking I never thought was part of anything related to that.” Interestingly, while espousing ideas critical of the state and corporations during the interview, and mentioning how interested he was in the lives of his students and how, “when you’re teaching a course like that you’re often involved in giving advice to people about their immediate life circumstances,” this participant continued to believe that his primary, if not sole, function in a LINC classroom was to teach language. “My evaluation of them,” he stated towards the end of our interview, “was first and foremost linguistic. And the other aspects of the course were incidental.”

He also criticized his college’s LINC curriculum for moving too quickly from theme to theme and for not providing sufficient practice of lexical items to be very useful to students:

My attitudes towards materials is, first and foremost, how vital they are to the student. And, in turn, engaging. If materials are vital and of interest to them, then they are going to be engaged. And the minute they’re engaged, then pedagogical practices are going to flower. Most of these themes are unrelated to each other. They require independent, exhaustive vocabulary which is not recycled in other themes, which is not properly learned because of the nature of vocabulary learning. Then, the actual communicative work that is done is minimal in comparison to the lexical work that has to be done to introduce and prepare a theme. If a theme is vital and of interest to people, then that can be laboured on. You can work on it for a sufficient period of time so that it yields something in terms of learning. But you have to be very careful. If you are doing run-of-the-mill themes that people aren’t particularly interested in and then moving on to another one, then you’ve lost ground in terms of their language development.

Given the fact that this participant chose to ignore task-based teaching, because of his intense focus on linguistic, rather than settlement or social issues in the classroom, I suspect that he would not have used the Guidelines even if they had been made available.

**Transmission/Transaction Pedagogy**

Three of the six teachers interviewed felt more comfortable teaching practical themes. As one teacher explained, “I feel more comfortable teaching the themes that I thought they would
use, such as shopping...health care services.” Another voiced similar sentiments when she noted that “[I]n level 4 and 5, it was also very functional, so we taught things about buying and selling, negotiating things, on top of the regular housing in Canada and all that regular citizenship” theme. Yet another mentioned how his students considered information related to Canada important:

[B]ecause when you teach Canada, they perceive that, in a way, as an academic thing. Or it’s very clear to them that they have to amass some kind of information about this new country. Also, that’s a very varied topic, since you’re teaching this province, geography, history. So, I think they enjoy that...

Since the LINC clientele varies from those who have been professionals in their country and are interested in getting into the Canadian job-market as quickly as possible to either older people or housewives who are not looking to work, but rather come to class for social and academic reasons, teachers mentioned that they tailored the LINC topics to suit their students’ interests:

I think looking for work, Canadian culture and geography [were popular]...Those are the main ones...Because, in one class, I had a lot of professionals, and they all wanted to go out and work. I had engineers...[Y]ou know, I accommodated it to the class. The other class I had, the 4 high, were only interested in just studying a little bit of geography – a lot of women that weren’t working and didn’t intend to work. So, just general knowledge...You know, different levels of government, different newspapers we have to read, what the climate is like here, how many provinces we have. All that kind of stuff.

Many of the teachers seemed to teach these practical topics using a more transmission-oriented pedagogy, often centred around form-based grammatical points:

So, you would model the grammar point, and then I would try to use authentic materials from the community that had the structure. So, I would get maybe brochures from the Canadian Human Resources Centre and we would look at the grammar structure there, or we would look at sample interviews. That, to me, was the most important...that LINC was authentic material, because they would have to use these materials and if they could see the structure, then they might be able to use it.

Other authentic activities these participants mentioned included having students fill out forms, write resumes, and role-play job interviews.

Conversely, when faced with teaching a more controversial topic, such as same-sex issues, or the rights of women, most participants seemed to react by ignoring the topic completely, or else by allowing students a limited amount of values’ clarification discussion.

Same-sex issues made three of the teachers most uncomfortable. Two avoided the issue altogether. As one explained, “Same-sex benefits and things like that, I strongly believe in, but with quite a few Muslim students, any mention of topics like that made the women very uncomfortable.” Creating a nurturing environment was very important to this teacher, and controversial topics that might divide the class were best left undebated, because “I just didn’t want them [students] to be uncomfortable. I wanted them to feel they could come and learn and not justify their religious views and things like that.” A second participant seemed to have mixed feelings about not wanting to confront a controversial topic like homosexuality - “I didn’t deal
with homosexuality”—in class. Dealing with cross-cultural sensitivities she likened to “walking a tightrope” because

You have to be careful. You don’t want to offend people, but, at the same time, you know, you want...to keep them interested in learning. That’s why they’re there.

At the same time, this teacher became intrigued by a colleague’s willingness to discuss this issue with her students. Visiting her colleague, this participant found vocabulary about homosexuality on the board and asked this teacher how she had broached the subject:

And she said, “Oh, yeah. I’m talking about differences in the family and what we accept.” And there was something else she did...some vocabulary...She did much more than me, in that. And that’s when I started to think, “I never thought about that.”

Thus, this teacher became aware of new pedagogical ways to broach delicate subjects in a multicultural classroom.

Two participants defused this issue by resorting to a legal interpretation of rights for homosexuals within the framework of Canada’s liberal-democratic system, thus exemplifying Sears and Hughes’s Conception A of citizenship education, in teaching “a particular set of national values.” One expressed the view that, while everyone was entitled to his or her opinion on the subject, in the end, “It doesn’t matter who you are or what you are, the law says this. And this is the way it should be.” Another revealed that she would say “that I could understand where they were coming from, but, you know, now they are in Canada.”

A more transactional response to the topic of women’s rights saw some participants pose Socratic questions or engender small-group discussions in order to generate values clarification amongst their students. The participant who did not deal with homosexuality did deal with women’s issues “[a]s a positive, not as a negative, as [in] ‘We’ve done this...and this is what happens in other countries.’” Faced with a male student’s misogynistic claim that “women aren’t smart,” this participant posed questions, “so that they would be able to debate back and forth. Or explain their justification...The right questions...will elicit responses from them and get them to think, you know, ‘What if? What if?’” Another, male, participant, responded to the views expressed by a group of Middle Eastern male students about women by encouraging discussion. These men believed their culture protected women, “because women were all covered up in the traditional dress and protected by the family and [could not] walk in public,” whereas “we put half-naked women all over advertisements and I think they mentioned the porn industry.” This participant continued:

I think I discussed it with them, that this was news to me, that, actually, somebody sees what happens in the Arabic world and, what we perceive as repression...they perceive as protection. And I didn’t just discard the idea. I thought, “Hum, this is something to think about!”

In the end, this teacher agreed with the men about the fact that sexual exploitation of women existed in the West, but suggested that other movements existed which were trying to change the situation. “I didn’t defend our culture,” this participant went on, “as the ultimate and superior and
totally perfect, all the problems have been solved...I admitted that yeah, we have both here, I guess. And we’re working on it.”

This approach, of admitting to the ways western society fell short of its own ideals, is reminiscent of Sears and Hughes’ Conception B of citizenship education, since in this instance, liberal democracy was “presented as the best theoretical form of social organization but as flawed in practice.”

**Transformational Pedagogy**

Only one of the six teachers interviewed used the Guidelines as part of a transformational pedagogy in an effort to promote “[s]elf-actualization, self-transcendence, [and] social involvement” (Miller and Seller, 1990, p. 167). This participant has been involved in the LINC program since one year after its inception in 1992 and has taught some LINC 2, but mainly LINC high 3, which she believes is equivalent to a low-LINC 4 class, in that “you can take any subject that is in LINC 4 or 5 curriculum and teach it to the LINC 3 high.”

The themes this teacher has used consistently that are found in the Guidelines “are human rights, job search, the law in Ontario and education issues in Ontario” but, it is in her combination and critical use of these themes that this participant’s pedagogy can be understood to be transformational. She connects “human rights and...workers’ rights to any kind of employment stuff they are going to do” in order to expose her students to some of the hidden discriminatory practices at play.

[b]ecause a lot of our students believe that there is no racism, that there is no sexism, that these things exist somewhere, but it’s not going to effect them. So, I bring in some of the ideas, not to frighten them – and I tell them that, “I hope I haven’t upset your world, but I want you to know that this exists, and this is how it works.”

As an example, she distributed newspaper stories dealing with different discriminatory situations. One dealt with a major electronics chain’s policy of not promoting non-whites to management positions, an attempt by three white managers to change the head office’s policy, the company’s firing of one of the managers, and this manager’s subsequent challenge before the Ontario Human Rights Tribunal. The students moved from learning about a local company, “a company they would patronize” and their racist promotional policy to the fact that “management became responsible to the workers and to each other for what was going on.” Next, through simplified authentic material, students studied the Ontario Human Rights Code. Then, students were asked if they had experienced these kinds of things in their own countries. They began “by totally denying” it. Later, students were asked to identify a situation that they or someone they knew had experienced when they first arrived in Canada which they had not realized had been a form of discrimination when they experienced it. The students were then encouraged to write about this then give an oral or dramatic presentation, which involved “all the competencies.” Students then offered peer-reviews of these presentations, based on pronunciation and other discrete items.

This participant’s strongly believes that
the settlement part of the LINC program has to be confrontational and heads-on. I think you need to show people that what they’re facing is real. It’s not in their heads. It’s not just because they’ve just gotten here. It may go on for years.

At the same time, she also believes that a lot of LINC teachers “pussy-foot around the negative and I think that is unfair and it’s not giving these people a fair chance” to deal with the systemic forms of racism and sexism they face as immigrants to Canada.

This participant’s form of transformative pedagogy is closely related to Sears and Hughes’ Conception D of citizenship education, with its stress upon consciousness-raising and community-based political action.

Limitations of the Study

While I have sought to analyze the concepts of citizenship that have informed the making, final form, and implementation of The LINC 4-5 Curriculum Guidelines, I would be remiss not to acknowledge certain limitations to my study.

For example, while I was fortunate in being able to interview the Curriculum Specialist involved in the deliberative planning around the document, input from other members of the Expert Panel, the Curriculum Guidelines Advisory Committee, teachers’ groups or the writing team would have helped create triangulation and a clearer sense of the contestation around citizenship on these committees.

Also, my study could be faulted for being based on interviews with six teachers who are, or have been, my colleagues at various schools in the Toronto-area. It is my intention to carry out a study of Toronto-based LINC teachers as well as Montreal-based teachers in the French language and settlement program, the Centres d’orientations et de formations aux immigrants (COFI), in order to determine if the range of practices in citizenship education determined from the data provided by these six teachers is replicated on a wider scale.

Conclusion

I have sought to analyze how concepts of citizenship and citizenship education have been contested in the curricular process of an adult ESL document, using three sets of similar curricular metaorientations: Miller and Seller’s (1990) transmission, transaction and transformation models and Sears and Hughes’ (1996) Conceptions of Citizenship and Conceptions of Citizenship Education models.

While this work, like many qualitative studies, deals with a small group of participants, I believe it can help shed light on the way teachers mold or discard written curricula as they take on their responsibilities as curriculum-makers, especially in terms of language and settlement programs.

As Canada undergoes a massive demographic shift, with new Canadians to form a majority of our population by the end of this century, it is imperative that we understand how, and to what purpose, immigrants to Canada are being trained in language and settlement issues. These programs can help produce a malleable, uncritical workforce, or a thinking and dynamic group of critical citizens. The choice we make will have long-term consequences on our character as a country.

Bibliography


**Appendix A: Miller & Seller’s (1990) Curriculum Metaorientations (from pp. 55-56; 110-111; 167)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics</th>
<th>Transmission</th>
<th>Transaction</th>
<th>Transformation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Context</strong></td>
<td>Atomistic paradigm - reality broken down into distinct, separate elements; empiricist; linked to behaviorism; conservative economic theory (Bobbitt, Skinner)</td>
<td>Interaction between the person and the social environment is central; cognitive developmentalist; liberal (Dewey, Piaget)</td>
<td>Ecological paradigm; acknowledges interdependence of phenomena; linked with various forms of mysticism, transcendentalism; transpersonal psychology; social change (Freire, Apple)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Aims</strong></td>
<td>Mastery of school subjects; inculcation of students in social norms</td>
<td>Development of rational intelligence in general and complex problem-solving skills in particular</td>
<td>Self-actualization, self-transcendence, social involvement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Learning Experiences</strong></td>
<td>Students expected to learn facts and concepts associated with the subject and master certain key skills; structured learning situation; expected to adapt to school’s framework; absorb the cultural norms</td>
<td>Stresses inquiry and problem-solving skills; may occur within the framework of an academic discipline; also possible within an interdisciplinary framework. In the social context, emphasis is on developing inquiry skills that facilitate democratic decision making</td>
<td>Learning focuses on integration of the physical, cognitive, affective and spiritual dimensions; centered around learning experiences that focus on interdisciplinary experiences; connections between disciplines, between one’s inner and outer worlds, school and community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Role of the Teacher</strong></td>
<td>Teachers tend to play a directive role. Instruction is often didactic with students responding to teacher initiatives</td>
<td>Teachers facilitate the development of student inquiry skills, are familiar with the appropriate resources, able to stimulate inquiry with questions and probes</td>
<td>Teachers must first work on themselves; tend to see life as a process of being and becoming; in touch with inner life while also working on communication skills; teachers make links with the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Evaluation</strong></td>
<td>Often focuses on traditional achievement tests; in mastery learning formative evaluation plays major role</td>
<td>Focuses on the student’s acquisition of complex intellectual frameworks and on social skills that are important in a democratic context</td>
<td>May include conventional modes that focus on skill and subject-mastery; usually a strong emphasis on informal and experimental forms of evaluation, student self-evaluation, feedback</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Appendix B: Sears & Hughes’ (1996) Conceptions of Citizenship
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspect of Citizenship</th>
<th>Conception A</th>
<th>Conception B</th>
<th>Conception C</th>
<th>Conception D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sovereignty</td>
<td>resides in parliament</td>
<td>resides in the people</td>
<td>resides with the peoples of the world</td>
<td>resides in the people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Government</td>
<td>made up of elected people with appropriate background and training</td>
<td>liberal democracy made up of representatives elected from and by the people</td>
<td>liberal democratic national governments responsive to individuals and willing to act with other governments and organizations to solve global issues</td>
<td>made up of free and equal citizens (equality is emphasized in three areas – before the law, in the opportunity and ability to participate, and in relative access to material resources) who exercise power in more direct ways than voting every 4 years.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| Citizens | *are loyal to the national state and its institutions  
* have a common body of knowledge about the history and the political structures of the country  
* are part of a common national culture and set of traditions  
* obey the law  
* inform themselves about the positions of the various political parties  
* vote | * are committed to the principles of liberal democracy (e.g., individual rights, property rights, wide participation of individuals)  
* actively participate in community and national affairs  
* are committed to the “public good”  
* use rational processes as a way to inform themselves and to get involved in resolving them, thereby reforming society | * are citizens of individual nations but with a sense of commitment and loyalty to the whole world that transcends national self-interest  
* are informed about global issues and are committed to acting to solve them in order to improve life for all people on the earth while preserving the environment  
* have a deep cross cultural awareness and respect for alternative world views  
* are able to deal creatively and positively with pluralism, interdependence, and change. | * are committed to participating in free and equal discourse where all voices are heard and power is relatively equally distributed  
* are knowledgeable about the ways in which institutions and structures privilege some people and groups while discriminating against others and are committed to and skilled at challenging them  
* are open to multiple understandings of national citizenship (e.g., it is possible to consider oneself a citizen of an Aboriginal nation and Canada).  
* are committed to citizen participation in the “public” sphere of politics and in the “private” sphere of community, home, and family. |
### Appendix C: Sears & Hughes’ (1996) Conceptions of Citizenship Education

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Aspects of citizenship education</th>
<th>Conception A</th>
<th>Conception B</th>
<th>Conception C</th>
<th>Conception D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>*students should be taught a common body of knowledge about the history and political structures of the nation * political/military history is emphasized and is presented as a narrative of continuous progress * political institutions are presented as operating in lock-step fashion (e.g., how a bill is passed) * teaching styles and techniques may vary but are focuses on students arriving at common answers on matters of fact and/or value</td>
<td>* students learn the knowledge necessary to become involved in resolving public issues * relevant knowledge is drawn from history, the social sciences, journalism, and the experience of teachers and students * liberal democratic institutions and structures are presented as the best theoretical form of social organization though flawed in practice * teaching styles and techniques may vary but are focuses on students arriving at well grounded alternative possibilities for resolving social public issues</td>
<td>* students should develop a knowledge of world systems (e.g., economic, environmental, political), human values, global issues, and world issues. * global topics and issues should show up across the curriculum and the knowledge and experience of individuals with different (particularly non-western) backgrounds is regarded as important * students are taught to imagine and plan for alternative futures * teaching and learning are conceived of in non-traditional ways. Teachers and students are co-learners in finding out about and solving global issues</td>
<td>* students should be taught the ways in which institutions and structures support certain oppressive forms of social organization (e.g., capitalism and patriarchy) * curricula and school structures have to be examined to find ways in which they have discriminated against certain groups. New curricula should actively challenge systemic discrimination (e.g., anti-racist education)</td>
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<td>Values</td>
<td>* students are taught a particular set of national values and norms (e.g., that current political structures are the best ones possible)</td>
<td>* students are encouraged to explore questions of value, particularly as they relate to public issues; to recognize and respect different value positions; and to articulate, support, and act on their own value position</td>
<td>* a commitment to environmental responsibility, social justice, pluralism, and anti-racism are key values that students should develop, as is the view that individual choice and action has global consequences</td>
<td>* students should develop a commitment to equal participation of all individuals and groups in society as well as a commitment to participate on that basis and to confront any manifestations of privilege and inequality</td>
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<td>Skills/Participation</td>
<td>* informed voting is presented as the general level of participation in government by the average citizen; students therefore need information-gathering skills to allow them to vote in an informed manner</td>
<td>* active participation in public affairs is required of each citizen; therefore, students need to learn reflective processes (e.g., identify a problem, collect and analyze information, explore alternatives, take action) and develop skills that will help them participate effectively.</td>
<td>* students need to develop critical/reflective problem-solving skills (see Conception B) and cross-cultural skills so that they can participate with a wide variety of people in making the world more just and human activity more environmentally sustainable.</td>
<td>* students have to develop the skills to recognize oppressive and unequal social structures, to discover their points of contradiction and weakness, and to act to challenge and change them. Opportunity should be provided to take such action.</td>
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With Rights Come Responsibilities: an exploration of perceptions of democratic active citizenship values amongst the post-independence generation in Botswana

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Introduction

Botswana is currently regarded as a model of African democracy. Since its independence in 1966 it has held free and fair elections every five years. There are independent newspapers in the country and all individuals have rights such as freedom of speech and association. The country has enjoyed unparalleled peace and stability within the African continent.

The majority of Botswana’s population (70%) is under 30. This means that most people in Botswana are not familiar with life before independence. They have, however, experienced unprecedented changes in the country’s transition from being one of the ten poorest countries in the world to its current status as a middle income country. More than 50% of the population still live in rural communities and traditional family ties are strong. Their needs and aspirations are informed by globalisation influences, including new technologies and enhanced educational opportunities. There are therefore particular challenges facing the younger generation in Botswana in terms of reconciling new lifestyles with cultural values and belief systems. For instance, in spite of the advances of the last thirty years Botswana still faces challenges of poverty and inequality. It carries the highest percentage of HIV/AIDS infections in the world; crime rates, violence and substance abuse are on the increase and voter apathy is high. Perceived inhibitors to progress in these matters are attributed to the erosion of traditional values and a collective reluctance to take pride in the nation.

A perceived threat to Botswana’s progress is the younger generation’s apathy towards traditional responsibilities. There has, however, been little empirical investigation into the value systems that inform post independence Botswana or how these values have been formed in the context of a rapidly changing world.

In 1997 the former President Sir Ketumile Masire endorsed the country’s post-independence, development goals of an independent and self sustaining society by 2016 (Presidential Task Group, 1997). This document, known as Vision 2016, underpins the government’s goals for Botswana – that of an ‘educated and informed nation’.

Amongst the vision’s values are:
- The concept of ‘botho’ – as an expression of civic duty and self reliance through the process of earning respect by first giving it
- Ensuring everyone’s contribution to the ‘common national endeavour’
- Notions of ‘social justice’ and ‘spiritual values’
- The desire that all citizens should ‘play a full and active part in society’
- ‘Open and transparent governance’
- ‘Accountability’ of all its citizens
- The development of leadership potential and ‘tolerance of difference’
Identified mechanisms for achieving these values are:

- Botswana’s traditional kgotla system (community meeting place) as an example of decentralised democracy but one that should be responsive to change
- The role of the family in transmitting social and moral values
- Youth organisations as key players in developing tomorrow’s active citizen and instilling concepts of citizen empowerment and gender equality
- The role of local communities in caring for their members (Vision 2016)

These values and statements provide a framework for a concept of citizenship that is linked to social capital (social networks, based on allegiance and mutual reciprocity) and embedded in tradition. They demonstrate a political commitment to lifelong learning, building on traditional, democratic foundations, but within a context of equality and responsiveness to change. These ideas need deeper analysis in Botswana’s present day circumstances.

The National Action Plan for Youth (Department of Culture and Youth, 2000) cites a commitment to civic education and youth leadership development, including infusing an appreciation of accountable governance, democratic participation, ethical values and tolerance. But the issue of how the post independence generation of adults perceive their roles and responsibilities as active, democratic citizens has not been explored. Indeed, whilst equal rights and responsibilities of men, and women and minorities are stated in the documents, the power differentials between groups and their accessibility to rights and democratic participation are often not addressed (Dow, 2001).

**Lifelong learning and social capital**

Lifelong learning is a generic term applied to learning that takes place throughout life. In the European Commission document (2000) lifelong learning is defined as follows:

All learning activity undertaken throughout life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competencies within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective (COM 2001 678 final).

In the context of Botswana and this study, lifelong learning is seen as a means of generating new awareness of needs, such as changing concepts of social justice and Botswana’s relationship to the wider world. Therefore lifelong learning, ‘should enable people to develop awareness of themselves and their environment and encourage them to play their social role at work and in the community’ (Delors, 1996, cited in Mayo, 2000: 23.). It is a potential means by which people learn formally and informally the concepts of active citizenship.

A useful theoretical concept that has been applied to the process of active citizenship and democratic participation is that of social capital. Both ‘democratic participation’ and the notion of ‘social capital’ are gaining increasing currency in the literature on lifelong learning (Mayo 2000, Avoseh 2002) in the context of learning to adapt to change as well as forming the critical facility and ability to act responsibly. Active citizenship is based on the notion of social capital as a driving force for developing responsibility towards the nation and each other (Mayo, 2000).

Social capital is defined by Baron, Field and Schuller (2000) as the social networks and reciprocities that arise from them within societal groups. Social capital is linked to economic
development and social renewal and embodies values such as trust in shaping broader attitudes and behaviour:

Coleman (1994) defines the constituents of social capital as a set of social structures and social relations which are based on three forms of behaviour. These derive from connections with, and activity in, social networks such as clubs, societies or community projects. These forms of behaviour consist of obligations and expectations developed through mutual activity and a common purpose. This ultimately entails reciprocal arrangements between members and the development of mutual trust. The outcome is a network of communication – information channels – which can be called upon outside their original social purpose. Over time norms of collective interest evolve which are internalised and act as self-defining sanctions on the behaviours of other members (in Preece & Houghton, 2000: 9).

Whilst there is an increasing literature from the North on the topic of social capital (Putnam 1995, 2000; Coleman, 1994; Fukyama, 1995; Baron, Field and Schuller, 2000), only a few people have begun to explore its applicability in African contexts (Rotberg, 1999, for instance), although the links between lifelong learning, social capital, and active citizenship are now well argued (Mayo, 2000). The words are indeed present in recent African literature (Republic of Botswana, 2000; Shaw, 2000; Avoseh, 2002 etc).

**Democratic active citizenship**

The concept of citizenship is often looked at in two ways – citizenship as a membership of a society or nation state, and citizenship as a fusion between rights and responsibilities (Holford et al 2000: 4). Rights and responsibilities are generally context specific to the nation state, though they will usually endorse the idea of civil and political rights to participate in society with entitlements to social or welfare contributions of the resident nation. Good citizens would display loyalty and obedience to rules – rather than critical thought and democratic practices. Active citizenship is perceived as different in that it focuses on both the rights to be exercised as well as agreed responsibilities:

> Active citizens are willing, able and equipped to have an influence in public life and with the critical capacities to weigh evidence before speaking and acting … [taking part] in volunteering and public service, and … individually confident in finding new forms among themselves (Crick 2000: 2-3).

Avoseh (2002), amongst others, discusses active citizenship as an already existing concept within traditional African values. However, Dow (2001) points out the problem of gender inequality in Botswana’s implementation of rights, while Good (1996, 1996a) has discussed the authoritarian nature of Botswana’s liberal democracy.

Nevertheless, active citizenship is seen as an offspring of democratic government. Davies defines the key components of democracy, and thus a democratic society, as ‘participation, legitimacy, accountability and respect for human rights’ (Davies 2000: 289). She suggests that a democratic system would contain the following elements:

- The ways of operating are open and clear to everyone, and those in post are accountable
- There are mechanisms for people to participate in decisions on matters that affect them
- The organisation is continuously open to criticism and change through legitimised formal and informal processes of challenge, such as opposition parties or a free press.
She thus states that ‘democracy by definition carries within it the seeds of resistance and the possibilities of change’. Democratic, therefore, implies that individuals and institutions operate under the above principles.

Many of the Botswana policy descriptions appear to refer more to what it means to be a ‘good citizen’. Being an ‘active’ citizen, however, may include acting to challenge the status quo. The synchronicity between wanting to be a ‘good citizen’, with feeling able to question and change existing behaviours, beliefs and values, needs exploration.

There is also a political concern, in Botswana’s democracy, that citizens must embrace both rights and responsibilities. Several indicators of this concern are apparent in recent documents. For instance, a speech by President Festus Mogae (2001) to the Annual General Meeting of the Botswana Scouts Association emphasised that the notion of responsibility included to ‘help your country and be of service to other people who may be in need of help’. The National Youth Policy of 1996 is directly concerned with infusing ‘strong personal moral and ethical values among young people’ (Republic of Botswana, 1996: 3). Two pages of the policy are dedicated to the rights and obligations of young people. Amongst those obligations include the need to respect national cultural values and to take an active involvement in decision making at all levels, and participate in the social, cultural, political and economic development of the country.

There is therefore an underlying tension between notions of good and active citizenship in democratic societies. Rights and responsibilities are finely balanced concepts influenced by national values and beliefs about equality and social justice. The mechanism for expression of active citizenship may be nurtured in different ways but will usually contain some form of social network arrangements that develop or evolve from a form of social capital. The extent to which these concepts and ideas interface is dependent on perceived values and traditions at any point in time.

Whilst Botswana’s system of democracy has come under criticism in the past (Good, 1996, 1996a, for example), there is nevertheless recognition that, as a country within Africa, Botswana manages to maintain relative peace and harmony. A closer examination of current developments, individual life transitions and their impact on current values, beliefs and behaviours may well provide useful information for the rest of Africa as well as Botswana itself.

The influence of globalisation on Botswana values and beliefs also needs exploration in the context of their perceived roles and responsibilities as citizens. For the post independence generation the impact of globalisation has brought about increased access to technologies, travel and an awareness of competitive markets. Globalisation has influenced the nature of local communication systems, mobility and international markets. The concept of a global village has been raised (Waters, 1995). This pertains to the phenomenon of distant events affecting different locations across the world. It is particularly pertinent for lifestyles in Botswana where tradition and new values interact across time and space. Globalisation can impact on national boundaries and cultural identities. The effect may be for communities to re-fragment and re-group in order to retain their distinctiveness as people try to shape what they consume in order to satisfy their own identity and needs.
The study sought to identify the perceptions and experiences of active and democratic citizenship amongst post independence Botswana. With reference to individual perceptions of rights, responsibilities and traditional values the following questions were formulated:

- Is there post independence complacency amongst the Botswana post independence population?
- What perceptions do people have regarding equal rights for minorities and women?
- How do individuals interpret their roles and relationships in society and within their community?
- How have Botswana acquired these perceptions and values?

**Methodology**

Because there has been limited research on the perceptions and values associated with active citizenship, and its relationship to social capital in the Botswana context, a qualitative design was deemed most appropriate for exploring the experiences and perceptions of different sectors of the post-independence population, using both focus groups and individual interviews. A total of 98 people were interviewed, of which ten were individual interviews with young people, seven were interviews with leaders (including the former president) and 82 were interviewed in focus group meetings. Focus groups and individual interviews were conducted across the country, in Gaborone and Francistown (the capital city and second city respectively), Maun (a tourist town in the North), and in Serowe and Bobonong (large villages). The youth individual interviews incorporated a life history approach in order to reflect how the respondents learned their values and perspectives. Interviews with community leaders provided a point of comparison between the youth and older generation.

All interviews were taped and transcribed. Some were conducted in Setswana and translated by the Setswana-speaking researcher.

The research took place towards the end of 2002. The remaining part of this paper presents an initial analysis of those findings, with a focus on the youth respondents.

*The findings*

Although the findings were wide ranging the analysis here is confined to concepts of Social Capital, Active citizenship and Democracy.

**Social capital**

The majority of young people were brought up by their parents in their home villages, during their primary school years, though many moved to the towns and lived with relatives for their secondary schooling. The most consistent values, that they learned as children and took with them into adulthood, were to respect others, especially the elderly. Alongside these were concepts of sharing and helping others, good manners and maintenance of social harmony. At the same time many were taught that self sufficiency and education were important for success in life. Religious values and avoidance of bad influences also contributed to the messages these young people received. For girls, the additional responsibilities of caring and serving were also instilled. Most of those interviewed said that in times of trouble they would refer to a family relative or friends as their first choice, whilst a few opted for institutions such as social services.
or the church. The people they identified as willing to approach them for help included siblings, family members, neighbours, peers and occasionally their elders. Whilst three specifically said they would not trust their parents in times of trouble, they identified extended family members whom they did trust.

In village communities it is still expected that troubles are dealt with at extended family level, even for adults. Institutions are relatively scarce, apart from church organisations. In spite of Botswana’s reputation for spirituality and religious organisations, only five people from the focus groups identified the church as having a significant influence in their lives. One individual, female interviewee, who was a member of a women’s development organisation even felt that the church was hindering her own goals for women’s empowerment: ‘The church conflicts with my own opinions like gender discrimination’.

In terms of social networks, the groups were self-defining in that they were contacted through their membership of an organisation. Nevertheless, almost all those interviewed indicated they were members of several organisations. Amongst the most popular were HIV/AIDS peer education groups, HIV/AIDS committees, drama groups (that often disseminate awareness raising messages about HIV/AIDS as street theatre), women’s empowerment organisations and church or sports groups.

Significantly, the AIDS pandemic in Botswana has provided youth with a focus and social commitment to share information and provide themselves as role models for behavioural change with regard to sexual behaviour. The other driving force for change was a desire to raise awareness of the inequalities of the girl child in Botswana. A lesser, but nevertheless visible interest, was a concern to promote and support entrepreneurialism amongst young people. The issue of developing economic self sufficiency is a prevailing political goal in Botswana, but is perhaps under-emphasised amongst young people because of their own stated frustrations about being allowed access to financial support for income generating initiatives. Related to the need for self sufficiency was their answer to the question: ‘Who comes first, the self, the family or the nation?’ Most (but not all) young people stated that it was important to address the needs of the self first, because if the self is secure, the family would be supported and the nation would grow.

A typical reply to this question was as follows: ‘You have got to take the responsibility to make sure you succeed as an individual, then your success will be manifested in the family and then the nation’.

There are indications, then that the youth retain some traditional social obligations to extended families and national endeavours, stimulated by dominant issues such as poverty, health and gender inequalities, but in a growing context of individualism. So how do they manifest these commitments in terms of active citizenship?

**Active citizenship**

Active citizenship was viewed in two ways – as a perceived way of behaving and also as something they all had direct experience of. The young people’s personal experience of active citizenship came not only from existing voluntary activities but also from national service. Until recently young people in Botswana who achieved the secondary school leaving certificate (Cambridge Certificate) would undergo a year’s national service ‘tirelo sechaba’. Most of the
interviewees who were over the age of 20 had done tirelo sechaba, usually teaching in a primary school or working for a community project. It was here that they often broadened their horizons about human relations. They learnt ‘not to favour anyone, to treat everyone as equal’ or ‘how to deal with people with different attitudes’. One person stated she learned how to ‘have patience and be altruistic’, while another learned to ‘be tolerant, especially with children’.

Active citizenship was also a learned value. An active citizen ‘participates in activities and makes sacrifices to help the needy’, is ‘someone who feels concerned if things are not going right in the country .. who takes action when necessary’ or ‘gets involved to help the country progress’. Doing things to ‘benefit the nation’ were seen as a priority; activity must be ‘unselfish’ and meaningful.

When pushed, however, to consider how much an active citizen should challenge the government or status quo in order to achieve their goals, the answers were almost always the same: ‘An active citizen has to express their grievances through the right channels … forward complaints in a peaceful way’. In a peaceful way meant being ‘not rebellious’ and not taking industrial action such as strikes. Active citizens should advise, or even take the government to court, but do things in a ‘non violent manner’. Botswana is a peaceful country, for which Botswana are very proud. Decisions are taken slowly, after much discussion. Although one or two acknowledged that strikes might be necessary in pay disputes, this was a rarity. A citizen should have ‘good manners, relate well to other people and be prepared to advise and guide’.

In spite of these values the young people still questioned the quality of democracy in their country.

**Democracy**

Democracy was overwhelmingly defined as ‘freedom’ and ‘not being under military rule’. One stated that it meant ‘you are free to use your freedom to benefit the community’, others felt it meant ‘people are involved in the decision making process’. There was a sense that Botswana has some democracy but that it ‘needs strengthening’, that there was some corruption and nepotism. There was also a feeling amongst some, that the elders did not always set a good example to young people, such as the power struggles in traditional institutions. So how did the youth, as the leaders of tomorrow, see themselves faring in meeting the goals of Vision 2016?

**Youth and responsible behaviour**

All the youth who were interviewed felt they were responsible, though some felt that the trend was for urban youth to be too individualistic. The general feeling was that ‘some are irresponsible because of ignorance … they are not taught what their responsibilities are … parents don’t inculcate the right values’. Others pointed out that the youth of today are better informed and therefore more ‘mindful of our rights’. From this the elders ‘get offended if we think differently from them and so they decide we are irresponsible .. if we challenge them’. But overwhelmingly the reply was: ‘Youth are not given opportunities … the laws prevent us from taking part’ in such opportunities like membership of Land-Boards, business loans. Furthermore: ‘Youth are not listened to, we are not given space to speak … adults don’t want competition from the youth so they sideline them’ and so on. They emphasised how their lifestyle has changed. Education itself teaches one to question, outside influences encourage a
greater interest in material goods, but also the nature of employment has changed so that youth need to gain qualifications, and earn a wage to survive. It is no longer possible to live off the land, like their elders did if the country is to develop.

In spite of these acknowledged changes the youth were committed to a society that is caring, sharing, loving and living ‘harmoniously with others’. Some were specifically striving to ‘keep our culture’, others were striving to ‘work hard and earn a good living’. All loved their country and wanted to see it develop positively. There was a sense that education could do more to raise awareness in youth of their responsibilities, but that their elders should also set better role model examples and that the laws of the country could facilitate better opportunities for participation and decision making by the youth. They recommended the establishment of a Minister for Youth.

**Discussion**

There seems to be a global concern that citizens are choosing to disengage from civil society and commitment to voting, particularly amongst the young (Van Benschoten 2000, Owen 1996). Equally, there is evidence that young people are participating in nation building and voluntary contribution to their communities, but in a different way from their parents. Van Benshoten (2000), for example, cited American youth as ‘volunteering more than their peers did a decade ago’. He suggested that far from being apathetic, the youth of today ‘is developing its own thoughts about what to do to create social change’ (p.301). Similarly Owen (1996) suggested that there is a conflict between the legal citizenship status of Australian youth who are not eligible to vote or serve on jury duty, but who nevertheless contribute in an ‘array of roles for maintaining and changing communities’ (p.21).

These issues ring true for Botswana. Many of the youth complained that their potential was untapped, as if they were only perceived as training for leadership roles of tomorrow, rather than action now, thus denying them the opportunity to contribute effectively in the present moment. Indeed they felt that traditional attitudes prevented the youth from playing an active role in society. There are indications that their attitudes towards rights and responsibilities are being reconfigured in today’s globalised world and some attitudes contradict their traditional African inheritance. Avoseh (2001) cited several African traditions that demonstrate Africa’s age-old pursuit of lifelong learning and democratic, active citizenship. He identified the village meeting place (in Botswana this is called the kgotla) as a community resource where the village chief consults with everybody and makes decisions based on consensus. He also emphasised the traditional African’s sense of obligation to God and the nation, giving African active citizenship a religious or spiritual dimension, where the interests of the community/nation come before the self. Proverbs and taboos are a source of wisdom that are based on an understanding of life and one’s required contribution to that life. Another feature of this value system is the principle of hard work - for the self and the extended family - that one must excel in one’s chosen career.

The youth in this study indicated that they are making their own critically informed judgements in relation to traditional African value bases, about what is valuable and useful in today’s changing world. They accepted the principles of hard work and that one must strive to excel. Religious beliefs remained strong. Democracy must be practised through the right channels. They also learned taboos and proverbs from their elders. One example is that girls should not
wash at night or bring water home at night. But many were making their own judgements about these taboos. One stated that adherence to such taboos would hinder opportunities for women to contribute to the country’s development. Equally, the kgotla system privileges discussion by the men and elderly in village communities and, whilst democratic within those parameters, it excludes the voices of many. Botswana, effectively, observes two democratic systems – the traditional kgotla, and Government. The kgotla insidiously influences how the Government operates. Youth are not ministerially represented in Government and youth are somehow kept apart from real decision making, although constitutionally there is equality for all. Yet Government consults the kgotla over new policies. So democracy is practised, but not necessarily accessed, by all. This impacts on how social capital operates.

Social capital, Putnam (2000) emphasised, emanates from community bonds of trust and mutuality. Yet Cambell (2000) raised the issue that this is too simplistic a view. It does not take account of sub-bonds within communities. So in the villages there are community sub bonds that are denied equality across the dominant groups. In some cases this meant young people in this study would reject deference to traditional community institutions. The female interviewee, for instance, who was a member of a women’s empowerment group made her own judgements about the overall value of religious observances in relation to the girl child, since the church was perceived as not supporting some equal rights issues.

But perhaps the most significant challenge to traditional values cited amongst these young people interviewed was the order in which the self, family or nation came first. With a few exceptions both male and females felt the self should come first. From a secure self it was perceived that the family, community and nation would grow. Their commitment to family and nation was high, but in a context that no longer relied on (unwaged) agriculture as a source of survival. Money is part of today’s world. Education, financial security and jobs, achieved on an individual basis, were the overwhelming goals of young Botswana. Education also teaches you to be critical, and it enables you to make informed decisions. The young and educated were doing just that. They retained values of good manners, hard work and to ‘consider my parents first in everything I do’ but now: ‘I can come up with my own conclusions’.

There is evidence, therefore, in the Botswana youth replies that traditional social networks are still strong where they were perceived as valuable in today’s context. Amongst the youth there is trust and a mutual obligation towards their peers and their nation. Indeed, most young people who were interviewed did acknowledge that the most influential person in their life was their mother, or parents. Yet the sense of trust across generations is now tempered by competing influences. Their social capital inheritance places emphasis on mutual obligations but young people felt restricted in their opportunities to share in decision making, feeling that the expected obligations tended to be one way.

These emerging attitudes need assimilating with globalisation influences that tempt young people to create a hybrid identity, one that takes the best from traditional cultural values but takes advantage of new information and awareness to question and improve society in a peaceful, democratic way. The youth were trying to re-shape their new consumer world alongside a desire to respond to Botswana’s needs. But they were still doing this against a cultural backdrop that valued peace, harmony and respect. There are implications for formal and
informal education mechanisms that strive to create Vision 2016’s goals of an ‘educated, informed nation.’ With information and democracy also comes risk.

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Aboriginal Governing Practices and its Influence on the Transformation of European Monarchical Rule to Democracy

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Aboriginal people have understood Government, leadership, and law as being components of their understanding of their place in the world. They are based on natural, custom, and personal laws applied in social and political milieus. A natural law is something that is rooted in a society and passed down to individuals through oral traditions from the society’s coming to being. Natural laws exist for both human and non–humans. An example of a natural law of an animal species would be a bear knowing he must hibernate in the winter and therefore does so each year. A natural law for an Aboriginal society would be knowing that it is time to move a village before the other non-human beings are affected by depletion through over hunting or planting. Within natural law among Aboriginal people, there is ceremony involved, as there is the belief that we are direct participants in the maintenance of the balance in creation. For instance, among individuals of the Haudenosaunee, it is a duty to help pray the sun up each morning, less it decides not to fulfill its own obligation to creation by bringing it warmth and light. These natural laws are derived from a holistic worldview rooted in oral stories that are necessary in maintaining balance within the environments the society inhabits. They are also referred to as original instructions as they are a result of the natural laws that the creator has given each species to live by. Custom laws consist of those laws that help bind relationships within the society itself such as the sharing in a pipe ceremony or rules of conduct concerning hunting and are part of the human realm; as well as personal laws that consist of those items that are used by individuals for ceremonial purposes such as individual pipes and medicine bundles.

When the Europeans arrived on the shores of the Americas, the most impressive aspect of Aboriginal life they observed was Aboriginal government. They discovered societies wherein men and women had equal power. Likewise, there was little crime within these societies. Most importantly the people had a say in all decision making. There were also confederacies of nations that existed, bounded by both natural and custom law. These nations were autonomous relative to each other but at the same time were governed under one national body. National decisions were made only after all nations involved had come to agreement. So impressed were some of the leaders of the colonists who encountered them that they began to administer their own forms of government without the consent of the Monarchy’s in Europe that had formally dominated their lives. Stated another way, some of these colonists revolted, setting the stage for the development of the most powerful democratic nation in the world. This nation, the United States, would utilize some of the principles and incorporate many of the Aboriginal symbols, most notably those of the Haudenosaunee, into its burgeoning democracy. Other nations would follow suit shucking off the mantle of the monarchy they had been governed under and discovering a freedom of self-determination they had not known in the past.

When the colonists arrived at the East Coast of the Americas from different European societies beginning in the seventeenth century, they were accustomed to governments headed by either Kings or Queens who administered complete control over their lives and lands they lived on.
Under these monarchical systems of government, the common people had few rights. For this reason many of them sought a new land where opportunities abounded. As they landed and settled at places later referred to as Nova Scotia and Massachusetts, they encountered people with strange customs. Sometimes they referred to these people as savages, although not with the same derogatory meaning that the term would later suggest. Rather the term was first used by the French in reference to people who lived in free governing societies in what was to the Europeans wilderness lands. It would be the English colonists who would use the term in its more denigrating sense, that of a wild warlike people that were thought in need of European civilization and religion.

Most of the Aboriginal people that the colonists met lived a balanced life involving agriculture, hunting, and fishing. They often associated with other surrounding Aboriginal societies, although, at times they fought against each other. In any case, what the colonists discovered were societies who had a system of laws they were governed under and administered from the people themselves, a bottom up approach to governing rather than a top down approach such as in Europe. They had no leaders in the sense of Kings or Queens. Rather they had both men and women who were chosen by the people to represent them in their affairs. These leaders worked to fulfill the wishes of the people they represented and if they failed in their duties, would be deposed by the people. All decisions were made by consensus.

One of the most written about peoples of this time were the Haudenosaunee or the “Iroquois League of Five Nations” who inhabited what is called today central New York State and who are now situated mostly in Canada although some remain in their traditional territory. Although most of the different Aboriginal Nations in the Northeast governed themselves in a similar fashion, cultural differences did exist. However, similarities could be found within the value systems of most Aboriginal societies. In 1740, Cadwallader Colden, governor of New York, wrote about leadership within the League of Five Nations:

“There is not a man in the ministry of the five nations who has not gained his office otherwise than merit. There is not the least salary or any sort of profit annexed to any office to tempt the covetous or sordid, but on the contrary every unworthy action is unavoidably attended with the forfeiture of their commission; for authority is only the esteem of the people and ceases the moment the esteem is lost” (Colden, 1922).

The Haudenosaunee, much like other Aboriginal nations in the Northeast, had leaders who responded to the decisions of the people. In this society, if there were any rulers, they were the women as they held the title to the lands the society inhabited. These women would choose from the different owichera clan families a male representative to speak for them in council. This was practical, because as land title holders, Haudenosaunee women, did not have time to attend league councils, therefore the need to have men represent them at the Grand Councils. If the male representative did not do the will of the women, who had the consensus from the people of the community, the women had the power to dismiss him from his duties. It was up to these women, referred to as clan mothers, to ensure that the voice of the people was heard.
One of the qualities expected of a leader was generosity, “Their great men both sachems and captains are generally poorer than the common people for they affect to give away and distribute all presents or plunder they get in their treaties or in war, so as to leave nothing for themselves” (Colden, 1922).

Among most Aboriginal societies, leaders had to lead by example. Likewise, Cayuga representative, Jacob Thomas (Great Law Recital, 1992) noted the leaders had to have skin seven spans thick so as not show anger. They had to be persons who could reason all of the time. Like the buck deer that looks after the doe and fawn, they had to be watchful of any danger. Further more to be a leader, one had to be married, have children, and show that he could provide for a family. It was believed that if a person couldn’t show that he could take care of a family, or wasn’t a good parent, he was not capable of representing the people. The women would look for a more suitable candidate.

Of the Lenni Lenapi, an Algonquian speaking people who lived on the east coast, it has been suggested that, “a chief dare not venture, compel or punish anyone as in that case he would immediately be forsaken by the whole tribe. The chief must endeavor to rule over his people by calm reasoning and friendly exhortations” (Newell, 1965).

Similarly, Adario, a leader of the Iroquoian speaking people, named Wendat, and known as the Huron by the French, said:

“There is a thousand of us in one village, and you see that we love one another like brethren, that our generals and presidents of the council have not more power than any other Huron, that detraction and quarreling were never among us and in fine, that everyone is his own master and does as he pleases, without being accountable to another or censured by his neighbor”(Newell, 1965).

Another important quality of traditional Aboriginal leadership was conduct. Before a council was held, either a pipe ceremony was held or words were spoken giving thanks for all things essential to the Aboriginal world. In Haudenosaunee culture, this is still called Ohonto kari wen takwen or the words that come before all else. A representative of the people begins by first giving thanks to the earth. Then he works his way up the sacred tree of life of all of creation until he finally thanks the creator. These gestures are to ensure that everyone is aware of his place in creation and the unity that exists between all beings both human and non-human, therefore creating a sense of respectfulness towards others in council. After this was done, the representatives of the people spoke. No person was allowed to interrupt. Everyone had to wait until the person speaking was finished. When the next representative resumed where the discussion left off, he had to first repeat what the previous speaker had said to ensure there was no misunderstanding. Only then could he proceed with what he wanted to add. To show anger and emotion was considered a sign of disrespect for the party who had spoken previously. The representative of the people had to always be aware of their conduct less as the Aboriginal expression goes, “They shot arrows at each other with their tongues.”

Traditional Aboriginal societies varied in size depending on where they were situated. For instance, in the north, societies were smaller due to the more fierce climatic conditions. In the south, where agriculture took place, societies were much larger. The one thing they shared was their approach to government. Within Aboriginal governments, the
rule of law applied and as mentioned conformed to the environment in which the
Aboriginal society lived. An example is as follows, if you were a Mohawk person, you
were taught from a young age not to hurt animals as doing so could affect catching game
later on. The Mohawk also believed that the actions that one took as an individual could
affect the whole community. These laws were established to prevent greed and the
subsequent starvation that might ensue, if individuals began breaking the laws that were
deemed a necessity for the survival of the society.

Generally, Aboriginal societies experienced little crime, although punishments ranged
from moderate to severe depending on the situation. Today, with an emphasis put on
restorative Aboriginal approaches in dealing with crime, such as the healing circle, it must
be noted that retributive punishment was dealt out harshly as a last resort by Aboriginal
societies if restorative approaches failed. That was because crimes such as stealing or
adultery could have a devastating affect on the cohesiveness of a community if not dealt
with in a prompt and decisive manner. In writing about Aboriginal people in the
seventeenth century, Father Baird, a Jesuit missionary, stated, “For in truth this is not a
nation of thieves, would to God that the Christians who go among them would not set a
bad example in this respect” (Newell, 1965).

In traditional Aboriginal societies, there was little need for prisons. Woman did not fear
spousal abuse or violation. Mary Jemison, after spending 68 years with the Seneca
beginning in 1758, wrote that she knew of no cases where a woman had been taken
captive and defiled (Seaver, 1990). In fact, Aboriginal women assumed leadership roles in
their societies unlike their European counterparts who were dominated by the teachings
by a patriarchal church. Interestingly, in the nineteenth century, when Elizabeth Cady
Stanton and Matilda Joslyn Gage shared leadership roles in the National Women Suffrage
Association, they used Haudenosaunee women as their role models in their fight for
women’s rights (Wagner, 1992). Today, Haudenosaunee women are still commemorated
at Seneca Falls, New York, where the seeds of the suffragette movement were sown.

If everyone understands the system within which they are living from an early age, there
is a good chance the system will work and require very little social intervention. Indeed
while some regard a lack of a written code of laws to be a weakness of Aboriginal
societies, other suggest it was their greatest strength. In Aboriginal societies, children
were informed of their duties when they were very young. They were taught positive
behaviors that would not negatively affect society. These were the social boundaries that
taught Aboriginal children how to conduct themselves in their relationships with both
human and non-human beings in creation.

Within this matrix of natural and custom law, institutions are formed. In the case of the
Haudenosaunee, the institution of government began locally with the clan family
represented by a particular animal, the oldest being the turtle, or “that which was
established here first,” the turtle said to be the very foundation of the earth. In the case of
the Mohawk, one of the five original nations that make up the Haudenosaunee
government, the other being the Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga and Seneca, there are three
clans; the wolf, the bear and the turtle. During times of necessity, the representatives of
the men and women of the three clans would attend a council of their own. A male
representative would first seek the consensus of the community from a women’s council.
The three male representatives would then meet and discuss the issue at their own council.
If the issue was of national importance, runners would be sent to the other four nations and a grand council would be held in the territory of the Onondaga. At the grand council, there would be 50 representatives in all. These male representatives would speak on behalf of 50 women or clan mothers who comprised the voice of the people.

The five nations of the Haudenosaunee were confederated under a system referred to as the *Kayeneren: Kowa* meaning the Great Way of Peace with a sixth nation, the Tuscarora, joining at a later date. This system of laws they would be governed by, was first established by a Huron born national referred to as the Peacemaker. He arrived during a time of great warfare and strife to show the different warring nations a better way of conducting their lives. Along with Ayenwatha a Mohawk man and Jakonsase a Neutral women, together they would formulate the governing structures of the Haudenosaunee. This process was *transformative* not only for the Nations themselves in stopping warfare, but for the individuals within the nations, who forever after would greet one another by first asking *skennen kowa ken* are you still living within the Great Peace?

Another person who was extremely influential in bringing different Aboriginal nations living in the Northeast together to a common purpose of living in peace was Tamanend of the Lenni Lenapi. The Lenni Lenape were referred to by all other Algonquian speaking peoples as their grandfathers because of their great influence in bringing others to live in peace (Schaaf, 1990). The name Tamanend was so revered that, American colonists in forming their democratic governing structures named societies after him as they began to develop their union.

Among other Aboriginal nations, issues of national importance were dealt with in similar ways. The Ojibwa, Ottawa, and Potowatomie also had an established union called the Three Fires Confederacy. Again their leaders *Ogima* were selected by the people to be their representatives, with the women carrying the chosen one over their head around the village. Although less formally structured than the Haudenosaunee, this union could call upon its representatives in times of crisis. This was the case with the Ottawa chief Pontiac who gathered and led an army against the British in 1763, resulting in a Royal Proclamation by King George III of England, which all subsequent treaties thereafter would be based on, both in Canada and the United States. Even to this day members of the traditional Ojibwa Midewiwin society, continue to practice the traditions set down long ago by the Three Fires Confederacy. An even greater union existed in the Northeast and Great Lakes region consisting of members of the Three Fires Confederacy called the Wabash Confederacy, taking in the Shawnee, Miami and many other Aboriginal nations.

For approximately 200 years after the beginning of the colonization of the Americas, all Europeans remained governed by the monarchies within their former homelands. One of the first segments to break away from this form of government was the United States of America. This process began with the formation of a union in 1776 when independence from England was declared that would begin a *transformative* process in governing that would have repercussions throughout the world. It began with the formation of a union of thirteen colonies in 1776. However, the seeds of this union had been planted years before.

One of the first to advise the different colonies to unify was an Onondaga representative named Canassatego. This occurred because the Haudenosaunee was tired of trying to
trade with thirteen colonies that continually bickered with one another. Canassatego said to the colonists when he was invited to a meeting by them to end their disputes:

“Our wise forefathers established a union and amity between the Five Nations. This has made us formidable. This has given us great weight and authority with our neighboring nations. We are a powerful confederacy, and by your observing the same methods as our wise forefathers have taken, you will acquire much strength and power; therefore whatever befalls you, do not fall out with one another” (Johanson, 1988, p.40).

The next to advocate a union was Benjamin Franklin. Franklin has been quoted as saying:

“It would be a strange thing if Six Nations of ignorant Savages should be able to form such a scheme for such a union and be able to execute it in such a manner as it has subsisted for ages and appears indissoluble and yet a like union should be impracticable for ten or a dozen colonies” (Johanson, 1988, p. 41).

In 1754, Benjamin Franklin called a conference at Albany, New York with delegates invited from the different colonies as well as those from the Haudenosaunee. Hendrick a Mohawk representative was invited to explain the Haudenosaunee form of union. The Haudenosaunee were among the first people to have a constitution called the Kayeneren Kowa and was recited to the colony representatives by Hendrick from Wampum belts. By 1774, Franklin’s articles of confederation appeared. Finally, in 1787, the Constitutional Convention was called and the first constitution for the American Republic was written (Burton, 1988 p.45).

Within the Haudenosaunee constitution were the symbols that would be incorporated into the American union such as the Great Tree of Peace. The idea was, that people who wanted to follow the roots of the tree to its source could do so and therefore live under its protective branches. This included individuals as well as nations. The Americans were said to have symbolically planted their pine tree at Philadelphia. On top of the pine tree, the Peacemaker had placed an eagle to watch over the people. This eagle has become the most noted symbol of freedom in the United States of America. Finally, during the process of the formation of the Haudenosaunee confederacy, the Peacemaker collected five arrows; he then pulled out one of the arrows and snapped it in two. He said if we bind five arrows together, our union will remain strong. When we take one out, however, we become weaker. Under the original symbol of the eagle of the United States, is shown thirteen arrows bound together to show unity. Today fifty arrows make up the United States. By comparison, in Canada, the maple leaf and beaver also important symbols to the Aboriginal people of the Northeast, have become synonymous with Canadian liberty.

Another Aboriginal society influential in the development of American democracy – some Americans colonists proposed that they become a fourteenth state of the Union – were the Lenni Lenapi (Shaaf, 1990). This did not happen because other powerful Americans were incensed that anyone would contemplate that an Aboriginal people
would be equal in power to a community of their own. Today there are only a few remnants left of this once powerful society, who once inhabited the regions of Long Island, New Jersey and eastern Pennsylvania. These are only a few of the influences that Aboriginal people have had in bringing democracy to the Americas and the world.

There has been much debate recently among scholars as to how much or even whether Aboriginal people contributed anything to the formation of the American union and its democratic institutions. That is because there are important differences that exist between the Aboriginal unions and the American one. It is important to keep in mind the influences that Aboriginal societies had on the formation of the American union and not whether it replicated the same governing structures as the Aboriginal ones, and in terms of generating discussion for future democratization among American colonists such as Benjamin Franklin and the use of Aboriginal symbols as their own, they are important contributions.

Cayuga representative, Jacob Thomas (Great Law Recital, 1992) explained to his students, that when the Americans formed their union, they left out two important aspects. These were the spiritual beliefs that were central to the establishment of the Aboriginal unions and the place of women in leadership roles. For the Cayuga people, just as it is for the rest of the Haudenosaunee, the transformative process that resulted in them confederating from societies in a continual state of warfare to peaceful co-existence rests in the oral traditions of the peoples themselves and this can not be replicated by the democratic societies of today, just as the Haudenosaunee cannot replicate the new mythologies created by the more newly formed United States of America. However, as happened in 1988, the American Congress recognized the important contribution that the Haudenosaunee made to the formation of the American union adding further validation to the influence that Aboriginal societies had on the democracy’s of today.

References


Johanson, Bruce. (1988). Indian thought was often in their minds. North East Quarterly, 4-5 (1), 40-44.


We begin with the following three propositions: 1) There is no peace without justice; 2) There is no justice without an end to poverty; 3) There is no end to poverty without a paradigm shift. The purpose of our workshop is to introduce Proposition 3 and explore its implications.

The new president of Brazil, Luiz Inácio Lula da Silva (hereafter “Lula”), has stated, “It is not just that some eat five times a day, while others go five days without eating.” He has stated that his administration will undertake measures to end hunger in Brazil. *The Economist* of London, however, stated that Lula was “a recent convert to economic reality” and that if he did not do what had to be done to make investors confident that Brazil is a safe and profitable place to invest, capital flight would ensue, and poverty in Brazil would be even worse than it is now.

In a certain limited sense, *The Economist* is entirely correct. Logically, the way to end poverty is for the poor to acquire property through such strategies as raising wages, extending public services financed by taxes, and instituting the democratic control and use of natural resources. Given current economic reality, however, those who have the most property tend to respond to measures like these by leaving, by pulling out investment, on the grounds that such measures can interfere with the mandate of increasing profit margins. This is called “the exit power of capital” or “capital flight.” The “economic reality” that *The Economist* says Lula must adjust to becomes a systemic imperative because the accumulation of profit is the motor that moves society, and when that motor falters, society itself falters. Therefore, *The Economist* is correct: Lula must be careful about implementing measures aimed at ensuring greater social justice, for capital must be pleased, profits must be accumulated, and whatever it takes to attract investors must be done.

In a wider sense, however, *The Economist* is incorrect. Paulo Freire writes, “Experience teaches us not to assume that the obvious is clearly understood.” For *The Economist*, economic reality is obvious. Our purpose in this workshop is to make the obvious clearly understood by calling what *The Economist* calls “economic reality” a “paradigm,” in the hopes that it will allow us to shift our understanding of the nature of the problem and thus enable us to address it with pragmatic solutions.

Thomas Kuhn introduced the concept of the “paradigm” in his 1962 work *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. For Kuhn a paradigm defines the worldview of a group of people practicing a science; it defines what they see and how they see it (see attached handout). One clear example of what it means to be a paradigm is the science of mechanics developed by Sir Isaac Newton. In elaborating his three laws of motion, Newton succeeded in explaining many wide-ranging phenomena. This example demonstrates that a paradigm introduces orderly scientific thinking; it replaces anomaly and confusion with a model that makes the world easier to understand. In so doing, it can limit vision because it sets the parameters on what we are able to see. Shifting paradigms, therefore, Kuhn likens to a gestalt shift, to conversion, and even to reprogramming at the neural level.
To reiterate, we claim that a paradigm shift is needed to end poverty. We are making an analogy between Newton's paradigm, an exemplar of what it is to think scientifically, and the global economy, which also has a paradigm, but the economic paradigm is, as Paulo Freire would say, *culture*, not nature. It is constructed of laws designed by humans. The purpose of this workshop is to facilitate consciousness-raising, to help people begin to see that the economic reality we might have thought of as “natural” is actually “cultural.”

A particular legal framework governs the global economy. It is the framework of modern Western private law. Three of its main principles evolved under the influence of three famous maxims of ancient Roman law, which were authorized by the Emperor Justinian in the year 533: *honeste vivere*, which became the principle of freedom; *suum cuique*, which became the principle of property; and *pacta sunt servanda*, which became the principle of contract. The expansion of the European economy in later centuries, which created the global economy, posed a legal problem similar to a problem the Roman Empire had faced more than a thousand years earlier and which these three maxims served in part to address: how to create a common set of laws suitable for organizing commerce among many diverse human communities.

The solution was a stripped-down set of norms, a minimal morality. What the Romans called “the law of all peoples” demanded less than the state and city laws and the communal bonds that expressed the value systems people lived by in the different parts of the empire, and for just that reason it was easier to make it universal. When global capitalism came into existence, in the 16th through the 19th centuries, one country after another elaborated rules to govern commerce drawing upon the legal science of ancient Rome, as well as on the notion of an original social contract and other more recent legal concepts. Honorable conduct, respect for property rights, and enforcement of contracts were suitable premises for organizing relationships among strangers. These premises came to form key parts of the organizing framework for modernity. Modernity is commerce, the exchange of commodities.

Our world, organized as it is by rules for commerce among strangers, allows for only the illusion of justice, not real justice. This is because it is founded on a principle of exclusion. “*Suum cuique*” means “to each his own,” which means that property is not a functional set of institutions, organized to meet everybody's needs. The many cultures humans have created, in their ever evolving diversity, have invented many ways to include people in community. The human animal, whose vocation it is to be a creator of culture, has invented many ways to share and to cooperate. But diversity, sharing, and bonding can be regarded as problems that get in the way of conducting trade on a large scale. The Romans and the early modern jurists solved the problem with a science of law based on simpler rules and lower ethical standards: *suum cuique*. This rigid morality says: what’s mine is mine; what’s yours is yours. This kind of justice guarantees security for the haves; it guarantees exclusion for the have-nots.

Shifting the paradigm so that poverty can be ended requires implementing different ethical standards, but this is not easy to do because the very paradigm that history has bequeathed us has systemic imperatives built into it that frustrate our efforts to create more caring forms of justice. Within the economic reality we live in, commerce is the primary means for meeting people’s needs. And in such a system, there is a systemic imperative that the needs of capital must first be
met. If not, no commodities are produced. As mentioned above, doing things to prevent capital flight is one systemic imperative. Another systemic imperative is the other side of the same coin: offering tax abatements to companies or lowering wages in a global race to the bottom is often required to entice capital to come and to stay. This is economic reality.

If we are serious about ending poverty we have to be serious about changing economic reality. We have to change the mentality of the economic advisors who chastise communities for being out of touch with economic reality when these communities want to enact ethical principles by doing things like raising wages, improving public services and cleaning up the environment. It is the other way around: it is the dominant paradigm with its rigid morality that defines economic reality that is dysfunctional, not the people who are trying to build a better world. Economists insist that we act upon a false premise that cultivates dysfunction and presuming the worst of people--one of capitalism's first premises: that all human beings seek to maximize the satisfaction of their preferences (i.e., that all human beings are in all instances selfish). Economic reality practically demands that we act on this premise; it has built-in systemic imperatives, devised by us, that can punish those who choose not to.

Modernity has given us the global economy, but it has also given us a way to reform and transform dysfunctional institutions: democracy. In a democracy the people make the laws. Therefore, the people can make laws that change the paradigm that began in ancient Rome and evolved and grew to take over the world. Economic democracy, social democracy, can rewrite the principle of *suum cuique*. Democracy can create once again diverse communities where everyone is included, where the function of social institutions, including property, is to work together to meet everyone's needs. That would truly be justice for all. Not just the illusion of justice for all.

But wait. It’s not this simple.

Returning to examine the origins and implications of the rigid morality of the dominant paradigm, we must take into consideration Immanuel Kant’s single principle of ethics, his categorical imperative (first published in 1785), which states, “Act only according to that maxim which you can at the same time will to be a universal law.” This single principle of universal law serves to condemn the particular local laws and values of independent self-reliant communities and nation-states that wish to implement higher ethical standards (e.g., paying living wages, producing goods in ecologically sustainable ways).

Kant and all the early modern secular philosophers developed universal ethical theories suitable for a commercial Europe that was in the process of expanding worldwide to become today's global economy; at the same time, in the 16th through 19th centuries, lawyers were creating modern private law, building on Roman and other sources. Understanding what Kant’s principle of universal law as a basis of ethics means in practice is crucial, for Kant’s examples of strict duties owed to others circumscribe “economic reality.”

Kant gave three examples of strict duties to others: 1) Do not promise to pay debts you do not intend to pay (*pacta sunt servanda*); 2) Respect property rights (*suum cuique*); and 3) Respect other people's freedom (similar to the ethic of autonomy and dignity in *honeste vivere*). These
strict duties are virtually the same as following the axioms of commercial law, and this framework of the global economy spells trouble for Lula, and for democracy generally.

Democracy is government of, by, and for the people. As government for the people, democracy seeks to transform economic reality. Transforming economic reality means modifying property rights, restructuring contractual obligations, requiring more social responsibility, more accountability. Consequently, an ethics that turns the commercial principles of modernity into eternal universal law of right and wrong paralyzes democracy. When democratic progressives such as Lula or Salvador Allende seek to reform economic relationships, what they are doing is declared to be immoral. It is bad enough when investors lose confidence and capital flight ensues. It is worse when democratic leaders trying to cope with the situation are defined as violators of fundamental rights and freedoms. Modifying property and contract rights is defined as stealing, or tyranny, or both. Requiring responsibility and accountability is defined as taking freedom away. Since the democratic leaders are defined as threats to other people's fundamental rights, it is easy to find pretexts for taking their rights away—for example the right to be free from arbitrary arrest, or the right to remain in the offices to which they have been constitutionally elected.

Wherever the global economy goes, the laws of commerce go, and whenever the laws of commerce reign unopposed, poverty cannot be ended. But the frustrations of seeking justice and being unable to attain it are experienced in specific ways, in different historical contexts. Although the general points we are making are valid globally, therefore, the process of consciousness-raising to help people free themselves from the globally dominant paradigm must be culture-specific. So when we advocate a paradigm shift, this particular paradigm shift, unlike any discussed by Thomas Kuhn, specifically does not mean that everybody in the community that shares the new paradigm should think in the same way, or think the same thoughts.

There are many candidates for a new paradigm out there. Cultural economics is only one, and one which by its nature welcomes all the other new creative ideas and the creative revivals of good old ideas. We call our proposal “cultural” because it is about transforming the cultural roots of economic reality. Whatever else one says about economic reality, we underline one thing that must be said: it is not eternal. People lived on this planet for thousands of years before the Romans first articulated a minimal universal legal code, which frames what today is called economic reality.

Now, celebrating diversity as we do, and not privileging any one language as the unique carrier of truth, what is it that we really have to contribute to all the good work people around the world are already doing and all the good ideas people already have? If we have anything to add, it is a perspective on the old paradigm, to bear in mind in building the new paradigm. It views the old paradigm as the logic of commerce, the ethical and legal framework of the global economy.

The pessimism expressed in such quips as “That’s just the way things are,” “The world’s always been that way,” and “It’s human nature” is what we are trying to overcome by advocating a paradigm shift. Cultural economics says no, it's not human nature. Economics is culture, and culture changes.
We are optimists because we believe humans are creators of culture. We therefore propose four specific questions to ask whenever we evaluate our work toward peace and justice, to evaluate how effectively it lends itself to cultural transformation:

1) How are we transforming people's understanding of the rights and duties that go with property ownership?
2) How are we moving beyond contractual market relationships based on mutual self-interest and toward truly human communities based on norms that function to take care of everybody?
3) How are we becoming more responsible and accountable in the exercise of our freedoms?
4) How are people being empowered to participate in the creation of culture? (see attached handout)

Our challenge today is to keep the advantages of large-scale trade, modern technology, and science, while at the same time making society ever more inclusive. The dominant paradigm is such that everybody's livelihood is at the mercy of profit-seeking investors, who decide according to self-interested criteria whether economic activity will go forward or not. Pleasing investors, in order to prevent capital flight, is a systemic imperative. This means that the paradigm ought to be changed, but we must accept the fact that while we are changing the economy we have to keep the economy running. This is the question we leave you with, a problem we pose for further thinking: How can we transform economic reality to bring it closer to justice, while at the same time coping with the systemic imperatives of economic reality as it is?

Note: Those interested in these ideas should see also the forthcoming *The Dilemmas of Social Democracies*, by Howard Richards and Joanna Swanger. Sample chapters may be read on-line at [www.howardri.org](http://www.howardri.org). To contact the authors, please e-mail HOWARDRI@aol.com and radish9@earthlink.net.
WHAT IS A PARADIGM? –and-- WHAT IS A PARADIGM SHIFT?

The concepts of “paradigm” and “paradigm shift” were developed by Thomas Kuhn, in *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, originally published in 1962. Following are Kuhn’s definitions of the concepts.

A paradigm is:

*a universally recognized scientific achievement that for a time provides model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners, an exemplar, a shared example.* (p. x, p. 187)

- paradigms define “normal science” (p. 10)
- they provide constitutive principles [the “constitutions” that constitute institutions as what they are] (p. 133)
- they define points at which techniques of mathematical calculations attach (p. 183)
- a paradigm governs a group of practitioners (p. 180)
- like a judicial decision in the common law, a paradigm is a basis for further articulation and specification (p. 23)
- the paradigm provides “the rules of the game” (p. 145)
- a paradigm is a group-licensed way of seeing, not just a set of rules or laws (p. 189)

On paradigm shifts:

- shifting paradigms is like conversion, like a gestalt shift, like neural reprogramming (p. 204)
- paradigm shift requires abandoning generalizations that were regarded as tautologies, true by definition, the way the world must be (pp. 183-84)
- a paradigm shift changes the formulation of questions and answers (p. 140)

SUGGESTED CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING WORK FOR PEACE & JUSTICE

1. How are we encouraging the responsible exercise of the rights and duties of property ownership, and channeling the benefits of natural resources and other kinds of property so that more people enjoy them?

- Does our project mobilize and put to good use assets that would otherwise lie idle?
- Does it complement public sector efforts to overcome poverty?
- Does it capture property, rents from property, and savings, and channel them toward socially responsible uses?

2. How are we moving beyond a strictly commercial society based on contractual relationships between mutually indifferent buyers and sellers, toward a truly human society whose norms function to take care of everybody?

- Does our project democratize the control of resources?
- Does it bring in and include people who had been left out and excluded?
- Does it strengthen social norms of solidarity, mutual respect, and mutual aid?
- Is there a net gain in good jobs (meaningful and valuable work) in addition to or instead of taking jobs away from some people to employ others?

3. How are we using our freedom, and encouraging other people to use their freedom, to discern the right thing to do, to make the right choices, and to be faithful to our values and commitments?

- Does our project serve to weaken norms that allow exploitation and supplant them with better norms?
- How much volunteer effort does it call forth?
- Are people learning the social skills of efficient cooperation, stewardship, democratic participation, responsible follow-through?

4. How are people being empowered to participate in the creation of culture?

- Does our project strengthen existing organizations that serve and empower the working class, the unemployed, the marginalized?
- Does it support and cooperate with organized labor?
- Do women share equally in power and in leadership?

Note: This is not intended to be a complete set of criteria for evaluating any given program or project, but only a partial set, which reflects the need for a paradigm shift.

See also Howard Richards, *The Evaluation of Cultural Action*. London: Macmillan, 1985; and Howard Richards’ Nehru Lecture, "Evaluation for Constructive Development,” which is available online at www.howardri.org
Transformative Learning: The Experience of a Support Group for Assaulted Immigrant Women In Toronto

Monica Riutort
OISE/UT

Introduction

For ten years I worked as the Director of the Women’s Program at the Centre for Spanish Speaking People in Toronto. During those years I had the opportunity to meet many women from different countries in Latin America-- women who suffered physical violence at the hands of the man they lived with, sharing family life and children.

The stories of these women are compelling, painful and desperate. At the same time as they face situations of domestic violence, they confront many social, economic and educational barriers in daily life. These barriers have deeply impacted their options in a country where they are made to feel that they do not belong.

Their stories have horrified me, but I have also admired their courage and determination to move forward and to improve their lot. Many of the women have fought with all their strength to overcome adverse situations, and they have succeeded in their enterprises. The courage of these women has made me very proud, and they are models for me in my own life.

In this paper I will argue that despite the many economic, social, linguistic and cultural barriers faced by Latin American women, transformative learning can occur in the lives of assaulted women if they are provided with a supportive learning experience that builds on the reality of their daily lives, takes advantage of their inner strengths, and values the potential they possess to make positive changes in their lives.

Context

The Centre for Spanish Speaking Peoples (CSSP) opened in 1973 in Toronto as a non-profit organization that primarily served as a settlement office for recently arrived Latin American immigrants and refugees. As the Latin community grew and put down roots in Toronto, the CSSP expanded its programs to include a legal clinic, English as a Second Language Programs, a library, a children’s program and other service oriented programs.

The women’s program was initiated at CSSP in 1989 in response to the increasing numbers of women who were requesting family counselling support as a result of the physical abuse they were receiving from their spouses/partners. The program grew from a small counselling/referral initiative funded by United Way to a large comprehensive program that includes counselling, support groups, and public education in the community.

I will focus on the experience of the first support group and the transformative experience of the ten women that participated in it. I did not stand apart from the experience of transformation. As the facilitator of the group, my level of consciousness about women’s oppression and, therefore,
my own oppression, strengthened during the two years we stayed together. One of the concrete results of the work was the production of a handbook called “Working with Assaulted Immigrant Women: A Handbook for Lay Counsellors.” This handbook, written by Shirley Endicott Small and myself and published by Education Wife Assault in 1989, rapidly became the most used print document for working with immigrant women in Canada. It was republished several times, and I was invited to talk about my work experience to many public forums across the country.

During the process of writing this paper I have also uncovered two OISE doctoral dissertations that were based on the work done in the women’s program at the Centre for Spanish Speaking People (Pilowski, 1993; MacDonald, 2000).

As Macdonald said, “The women’s program is an integral part of the centre. It provides information, support and counselling to women who experience domestic abuse and is staffed by three counsellors” (MacDonald, 2000, page 16). What she does not know if some of those counsellors were part of the original group I am describing in this paper.

Participants in the First Support Group

The pioneers were ten women from different countries in Latin America: Argentina, Chile, Peru, Guatemala, and Ecuador. All of them at the time they entered the group were living with a partner who physically, emotionally, and sometimes economically, abused them. All of them had limited fluency in English and they were recent immigrants to Canada (averaging 2-6 years in the country). All of them had frequently used the services of the CSSP, requesting assistance in areas related to social services, unemployment, housing and so forth. In the process of providing concrete information, representation and advocacy with respect to different government offices, I won the trust of these women, who developed a high level of comfort and confidence in me and in the work of the Centre. This allowed them to confide enough to share their fears, shame and desperation. Most of them had no support network of any type, and they were living in isolation with their children and partner.

The Support Group

The support groups were advertised as a woman’s space, where women would have the opportunity to be listened to and believed by others. Once formed the group met once a week for approximately two hours. There was a core group of ten women and other women who came and went for a number of sessions. Each session had two components. During the first hour women shared their reasons for coming to the group, talked about their immediate crisis, checked safety and security issues, and did exercises on self-esteem, empowerment and the like. The second hour was devoted to learning practical skills, such as how to find inexpensive housing and shelter for assaulted women, opportunities for employment and training, immigration and family law. Other topics of general interest included disciplining children, alcoholism, the impact of violence on children, etc.

As the group facilitator, I shared a common language with the other Spanish-speaking participants, but I was also able to speak English fluently. This aspect allowed me to bridge the
cultural gap, connecting them to the available services in response to their identified needs. Because I am also from Latin America, I was able to understand the cultural factors that influence the way that gender and gender relations are constructed within our society. As an immigrant woman myself, I have experienced the multiple barriers that an immigrant woman faces in this country and the fear of deportation that is part of daily life during the settlement period.

The Assaulted Immigrant Woman

Wife assault needs to be better understood because abuse plays a significant role in immigration processes and adaptation to life in Canada. For immigrants and refugees who settle in Canada, cultural adaptation is a profound experience of personal and social change. The challenge of adjusting to different values, norms, behaviours and social structures involves reflection and aspects of transformative learning. Common concerns in the adaptation process of immigrant families are changes in family roles for men, women, and children, intergenerational conflicts, changes in parenting styles and stress affecting all family members (Monish, 1998). Social supports are required to provide educational and social programming to overcome adaptation barriers. Opportunities for communication and exploration of family and relationship issues in safe and comfortable environments can provide social support to reflect on sensitive issues and to develop the attitudes and skills to resolve conflict in a non-violent manner.

If the term “culture shock” is now practically a cliché, the need to explore the ethno-cultural specificity of an immigrant’s life has been virtually ignored. Abuse of women occurs within a context of community and cultural standards in which people generate normative standards about what is acceptable or unacceptable in men’s behaviour (Glen and Hill 1979). Unquestionably, abuse prevails within culturally prescribed moral codes about femininity, masculinity, the sanctity of family life, authority and subservience, and bearing the cross of personal humility and injury. Sometimes, especially in the early years, the issue of wife assault was not “validated” by ethno-cultural agencies serving immigrant women.

The social and psychological benefits of support offered and provided by family members and friends are well documented. This support can sustain individuals during periods of stress and change (Pilowsky, 1993, page 34). When support is not available, the individual often feels isolated, stressed, helpless, vulnerable and hopeless -- a situation which often leads to emotional breakdown. Immigrant women often leave their traditional support and networks behind. Consequently, they find themselves without their extended families and social networks and are, therefore, forced into a much more dependent relationship with their husband, especially in the first year following immigration. It has been suggested in studies on migrant than women migrants are more likely to be abused, especially during the first years, because their high level of mobility impedes development of community and institutional ties that inhibit the onset and persistence of abusive behaviour (Nikki R., page 14).

Immigrant women who have experienced wife assault and abuse face serious barriers to participation and education. While the same as the ones all women experience one way or
another, they pose far greater challenges for immigrant women and for women who are assaulted in the home. Misogyny or the hatred of women expressed through process of reification, or the identification of women through femininity, love of men and our weakness; vilification or how men fear women strengths and subjugation which is the process of controlling women act as powerful and effective control mechanism against the advancement of women and the violence they suffer in society. (Stalker, 1998)

**Transformative Learning**

Adult education claims an important role in changing personal and social values in the development of non-violent social relationships and structure. In this section we will review some of the frameworks that adult educators have used to look at transformative learning in the context of the assaulted women’s support group.

According to Mezirow when people experience changes in their lives, find themselves in a dilemma or encounter new information that contradict what they have always, they may revise their beliefs and perspectives (Mezirow, 1991). Based on the experiences we have, we form expectations about what will happen next. If my friend is consistently kind and considerate, I expect that she will be kind and considerate the next time I meet her. If she were cold and brutal, I would be shocked. These habitual expectations are called *meaning schemes* by Mezirow. In the case of the women participating in the support group the meaning schemes described by Merizow were constantly challenged. They were living with a man that they were supposed to trust and who was supposed to protect them -- a man who was kind and considerate some days and a monster who insulted and abused them on others.

Mezirow also argues that we do not live our lives based on a random set of expectations and assumptions: our meaning schemes are interrelated in ways that are unique to our individual experiences. For example our many encounters with women as friends, colleagues, and teachers have led us to develop a set of expectations about women, labelled *meaning perspectives* (Merizow). We have many meaning perspectives related to our work or profession, our culture and our personal partners. The women in the support group have also developed meaning perspectives in relation to men. According to the patriarchal beliefs in Latin America, men are supposed to love and protect women and children. These *meaning perspectives* held so dearly by women who live in abusive relationships fall apart in the process of immigration. Frequently, women obtain jobs before men, because there are always babysitting and house cleaning jobs available to them. Also, women are the one who first learn a few words of English because they have to register children in the school or take them to the doctors.

In order to explore different kinds of knowledge in relation to transformative learning, Merizow draws on the theoretical framework developed by Habermas (1971), a contemporary German social theorist. Habermas posits that human beings have three basic interests. They have a technical interest in controlling and manipulating the environment, a practical interest in understanding each other and their social group, and an emancipatory interest in becoming free from ignorance.
Our emancipatory interests come from desire to grow, develop and increase our self-awareness. We want to improve ourselves, understand ourselves, become better human beings, and we work towards this goal by trying to free ourselves of self-distortions and social distortions. Merizow describe emancipatory learning as freedom from “libidinal, linguistic, epistemic, institutional, or environmental forces that limit our options and our rational control over our lives but have been taken for granted or seen as beyond human control” (Merizow, 1991p. 87). This definition indicates that emancipatory learning can influence both instrumental and practical knowledge. Critical reflection is the central process in emancipatory learning and the outcome is often transformative.

As the group of assaulted immigrant women experienced the support that came from the group, they started to reflect critically about their lives. They began to work toward a vision of their lives where fear and violence were not constant and ever-present. That is when the transformative learning process started.

Following Paulo Freire’s (1970) definition of conscientization as “a process in which people achieve a deepening awareness of both the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality through action upon it,” I will say that right after or maybe at the same time that women started to look critically at their lives through the experience of sharing their lives with other women in the support group, they initiated the conscientization process described by Freire. Based on his work in Brazil, Freire outlined a process through which individuals move from a preoccupation with survival; to seeing life out of their control or ruled by fate and destiny; to some questioning of their lives, but remaining vulnerable to the persuasion of popular leaders; to participation in dialogue that focuses on the critique of ideologies that foster oppression.

What happened in the support group I would say is a classic example of Freirian theory at work. Women came to the support group through a deep fear of the violence they were suffering--violence that was escalating to a point of threatening their lives and affecting the survival of their children and the family. They came because they felt out of control. They strongly believed that their marriage was indissoluble, that they must follow their destiny and try to do the best with what they got. From this position they moved, through the experience of the support group, to a questioning of their lives, their relationships, their destiny, their position in society. It is at that point that my role as facilitator/leader of the group became crucial, because I had a tremendous influence on the decisions they might or might not have taken. It was also a time of self-doubt for me. I also began to question my relationship with my husband, my position as an immigrant woman in this society, my responsibility toward those women who believed in me, my urgent need to understand better what was happening to all of us. The group members also became more active in the group process, requesting specific educational and/or orientation sessions to complement their individual developmental process, the dynamic of the Canadian system, and potential opportunities for self-improvement. Some of the group’s members decided to participate in the management of the Centre, becoming part of the Board of Directors and a couple of other women took over my position as Directors of the Women’s Program after finishing formal college education as community workers. Others, however, continued in the same relationship and through the years ended up in states of profound mental depression and paranoia. One woman was stabbed by her husband in front of her two girls. But for most of us,
the support group was a turning point in our lives. Individually and together we started a critical understanding, of the social, cultural, ideological and economic system that oppressed us.

The Facilitator and the Group in Transformative Learning Processes

The challenging and questioning that occurs during a process of liberation and empowerment can only occur in a supportive and caring atmosphere. Group members learned to trust each other, respect alternative views and understand that there are valid differences among individuals. (Boyd 1989) especially emphasizes the learner group as a social system that “can provide supportive structures that facilitate an individual’s work in realizing personal transformation.” In the reference to group members here, the educator is included as a member of this group.

When individuals question their beliefs and values in a learning situation there can be feeling of disorientation, loss, anger, or guilt as well as joy, understanding or peace. The role of a supportive and caring group becomes pivotal to the process. The experience of our support group was no different to that of many others in Canada. The collective social nature of many adult-learning programs in Canada has clearly demonstrated that groups, in fact, learn, act and grow together (Scott, p. 182).

Mezirow (1991) describes the educator in transformative learning as “an emphatic provocateur and role model, a collaborative learner who is critically self-reflective and encourages others to consider alternative perspectives and a guide who sets and enforces the norms governing rational discourse and encourages the solidarity and group support that is necessary when learners become threatened because comfortably established beliefs and values have been challenged (p. 206). The educator maintains personal power that has as its sources expertise, friendship, loyalty and charisma. The facilitator/leader must remain authentic, true to him/herself, and not deny his or her experience and knowledge. As the same time, only by being and becoming a member of the learning group and letting go of power, can the facilitator take his or her position. The role of the facilitator in transformative learning is complex and sensitive.

The process of transformative learning varies from individual to individual, based on the preferences of psychological types, learning styles, or other personal attributes. For all learners, though, dialogue and discussion with others is critically important. A learning group helps us to question and challenge our assumptions, values and perspectives. This means that the group must be supportive and caring of each other, creating an atmosphere of openness and trust. As part of the group, the educator plays a vital role in maintaining a democratic process. (Cranton, p. 199)

Violence and education

The experience of living in constant fear of violence destroys trust in the future; victims have no experience of seeing regular efforts leading to good results (Raphael, 2002). Many of the women in the support group tried to attend English as a Second Language classes (ESL) and skills upgrading courses. They were constantly dropping them, because their husbands became too jealous, and they were ashamed to attend class showing the signs of a beating. In the group, the women slowly learned to trust themselves and the other members of the group enough to initiate a learning process. The group started setting short-term goals for themselves, for example
taking a few ESL lessons at a time and practicing the words they learned in the group. Building trust and setting up short term-goals are tasks that lie at the very heart of trauma recovery, and they represent the core skills needed to learn (Raphael, 2002).

There are many skills that women who are victims of violence develop in order to survive constant fear and shame; however, these skills are seldom understood or used by facilitators and teachers working with these women. Most often programs focus on the victimization rather than on the strengths of the women. For example, women in the group had developed powerful skills of observation and listening essential to their survival.

The support group also, built the trust of the participants because the victim’s sense of shame about the violence was never minimized or ignored by making it into an individual problem; rather it was seen as a problem that all the women were suffering. The violence was placed in the context of the general violence women suffered in society from the way they are portrayed in the media to the many ways that their desires, feelings and resources are controlled by the man they live with.

This climate of openness and acceptance of the lived realities of their lives was one of the key factors in the success of the support group.

Women in the group also suffered constantly from a number of illnesses, from allergies to migraines to high blood pressure and obesity. Because the body has been the target of the abuse or oppression, victims of violence are often disconnected from their own bodies and corporal realities, another kind of refugee. Because the group learned how to recognize these problems, a system of check-in with women who were absent for more than one session was developed. But most important, because all the women were living in such oppressive conditions at home, their ability to think for themselves was diminished.

**Gender and Transformative Learning**

It has only been within the past three decades that abuse against women has begun to receive the attention and condemnation that it justly deserves (Macdonald, page 16). The societal values that have, in the past, legitimated abuse against women continue to be prevalent today. The gender system is made up of values that are rooted in women’s subordinate position in society, encompassing a myriad of political, economic and cultural factors (Macdonald, 2000, page 17).

The gender system underlying the organization of the market work and the family work, which dates from 1780s, remains still, the most entrenched, almost unquestioned, western norm and practice. Domesticity constructed a system in which men worked in factories and offices, while women (in theory) stayed at home to rear the children and manage household affairs. The ideology of domesticity holds that men “naturally” belong in the market because they are competitive and aggressive; women belong in the home because of their “natural” orientation towards relationships, children, and care giving. Thus, these norms identified successful gender performance with character traits suitable for the roles of breadwinner or housewife (Visse, 2002).
As feminist research over the past 20 years has shown, conceptions of gender, while largely unconsciously held, are profoundly important; they influence our attitudes, behaviour, and sense of self. As well, feminist understandings of domestic violence view violence against women as a display of male power and the result of social relations whereby women are kept in a position of inferiority to men (Macdonald, 2000, page 17).

Changing such values and practices is very difficult because they are partially unconscious and deeply held or contested, because they are systemic, because they are supported by other important systems such as the economic system, and because being located in a position of subordination and violated as a human being shapes the ways we can think about a reality.

**The Change Process**

Participants were able to free themselves from their abusers as a result of cognitive, and socially supported transformation processes, which allowed the seeds of mobilization to germinate. It was found that a complex sequential interrelation of both intra-psychic and social-structural changes were crucial for the transformation to occur. The dimensions of this process of change incorporate four factors, which comprise a continuum from the intra-psychic to the social structural.

The above mentioned four factors worked in concert to produce a change in the moral discourse of each client, such that the pain of personal injury was seen to hold as much weight as a negative moral value, as did the positive values of family togetherness. For those conflicting moral injunctions to even be questioned, these women had to see themselves as having a “right” to engage in moral discourse in the first place.

The four inter-connected processes mobilizing a change in moral discourse were: denial (intra-psychic), socialization (intra-psychic-social structure), ignorance (intra-psychic/social structural), and isolation (social structural). Mobilization involved the successful interplay of all dimensions, including, the necessity of the existence of social support. In other words, reframing the abuse as such, or reframing the moral discourse, was not enough. Support systems had to be in place before the final cognitive transformation could be realized.

Pilowsky (1993) and others have examined the complex issues involved in the process of leaving the abuser; they report that severity of abuse is not the critical factor motivating women to leave. What is decisive in this process, according to Pilowsky, is personal growth. Often the reasons given by the women in her study pointed to a cognitive change. Women frequently described the reasons they left their abuses in a language that indicated a *Turning Point* in their lives, as well as a change in consciousness. They reported feeling better about themselves and about their lives after leaving the relationship.
Conclusion
A transformative learning experience occurred in the support group for assaulted immigrant women at the Centre for Spanish Speaking People in Toronto. Ten assaulted women and a facilitator, myself, shared an intense process of learning from each other for two years. The learning process took us to a turning point in freeing ourselves from the heavy burden of living in abusive situations to a decision to change our lives through a cognitive and socially supported process of transformation. The cognitive process allowed all of us to morally favour our happiness and well being above our culturally learned gender characteristics of passivity, compliance and learned helplessness and the socially prescribed roles of serving and care-giving. The support group was the system that permitted and sustained the transformative learning process.

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Youth civic engagement in a volunteer program:  
Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) Peru  

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Peru and political violence (1980-2000)
Peru was forged from the subjugation of one nation to another, with episodes of violence throughout its history. In the last twenty years, Peruvians—especially the poor, peasant, less schooled and indigenous—suffered the most intense, extensive, and long-lasting violence period since its independence from Spain. The horrors of an internal political conflict were manifest through: torture practices to punish and terrify people, selective extermination and massacres of peasant villages, forced disappearances, sexual abuse against women, extra-judicial killings, forced recruitment of children and teenagers, arbitrary imprisonment. These practices were generalized and systematic.

In a country of 27 million inhabitants, 69,000 were killed, at least 6,000 disappeared, as many as 600,000 people were forcibly displaced from their home communities, and an estimated 500 villages were razed. More than 22,000 people were detained for ‘terrorism’.

CVR
Peru’s Truth and Reconciliation Commission (CVR) began its work in late 2001 and concluded it in August 2003. The Commission was created to clarify the events of political violence and human rights violations perpetuated by terrorists, government agencies and paramilitary groups between May 1980, with the first public action of the Shinning Path, and November 2000, when Fujimori fled Peru.

The CVR’s four principle objectives were:
- investigation and analysis of the underlying conditions that contributed to the political violence,
- investigation and clarification of the crimes and human rights violations,
- proposing plans for reparations and to prevent political violence in the future, and
- establishment of follow-up mechanisms for the implementation of the plans.

Volunteer Program (January 2002- July 2003)
The CVR established a Volunteer Program (VP) were volunteers were involved in diverse tasks like community outreach and training. This program was an opportunity to participate in a national historical process of civic engagement.

The goal of the program was to serve as a mechanism to involve citizens in the CVR initiatives. This experience would emphasize action and would generate spaces of reflection on values, citizenship participation, and human rights; and would seek to foster commitment for the search of truth.

Recruitment activities were carried out several times in many universities across the country, located in the areas most affected by the political violence. So the majority of participants were
young university students (between twenty and twenty-five years of age), but there were also professionals, housewives, Andean community members, elders and two international youth, all ranging from 17 to 50 years of age.\textsuperscript{1} The total number of volunteers at the end of the program was 1,403. From this total, 480 were from Lima.

The volunteers received training in:

- CVR values
- Human Rights
- Historical memory
- Reconciliation
- Citizenship watch
- Mental health
- CVR advances
- Political violence and its aftermath
- Preparation for the hearings

**CVR volunteers EARLY years**

The CVR-V had been brought up in a society:

- marked by structural violence which translates into poverty, racism, classism, sexism,
- with Government institutions tainted by corruption (during the governments Alan Garcia, Alberto Fujimori)
- where the media was overtly controlled, sold, to power interests.
- with weekly blackouts, arm strikes
- with economic shock. With ex-president Garcia (1980-1985): hyperinflation of 7 500%, scarcity of consumer goods, changing prices day to day, with all imports stopped to retain dollars.

In this insecure context people no longer believed in the system. Children, passive observers, were taught in the school curriculum (Civics Education) a traditional model of citizenship (Rowe, 1995), where being a good citizen was equivalent to knowing one’s rights and responsibilities (namely obeying the law). This education did not encourage political trust neither political confidence (Hann, 1984).

By the year 2000 those children were youth who saw in the CVR volunteer program an open space where they could exercise their active citizenship.

**Civic engagement**

The volunteers were involved in different activities. The kind of activities depended on the geographical location of the volunteers (some activities were most needed in the rural areas while others in the cities), the budget WAS assigned for the volunteer activities in different locations, and the time and personal resources of the volunteers.

In general, the volunteers:

\textsuperscript{1}Braun, Federica (2003) Evaluación de Impacto del Programa de Voluntariado.
- Participated in outreach campaigns (in the city, in the countryside, in remote areas of the cities, etc.) and social, political and cultural activities.
- Helped in the organization of public hearings and other public events.
- Transcribed, typed and coded testimonies.
- Transcribed interviews with political prisoners and leaders of various organizations.
- Helped in the review of archives and newspapers.
- Approximately 200 volunteers participated in the public ceremony where the remains of those executed in Lucanamarca’s massacre were returned to the families. The previous day volunteers helped to arrange the remains of the dead in the caskets together with their identification. During the ceremony they carried the 69 coffins.
- A small group systematized data from the national workshops on reconciliation using qualitative software.
- Designed and implemented workshops for children and youth in schools and parishes during the summer holidays of 2003. The children and youth who attended the workshop were mainly migrant children or the first generation of people who had been internally displaced by the political violence.
- Between March and May of 2003, the volunteers set up a public booth where they ‘registered the people who still wanted to give their testimony’.

**CHALLENGES**

The CVR ended up allowing the volunteers to participate in more activities (progressively more responsible) than the initially thought. For example, they were not meant to participate in exhumations but they did. Nevertheless, the volunteers felt that they could have done more and sometimes their abilities were underestimated.

The CVR did not designate a specific space for the use of volunteers. Each time the volunteers entered the CVR offices; they were treated as “visitors”. This was an obstacle for the integration between volunteers and with the CVR.

The German NGO GTZ funded the volunteer program for 2002. In the next year there were serious economic difficulties. The volunteers did not have money for transportation to reach remote rural areas. Many volunteers contributed their own money (for example to organize media conferences, to photocopy, for transportation, etc).

Volunteers received two mental health workshops but they were not enough to process possible secondary mental health traumas (caused to them by the pain they received through testimonies or in the hearings) and/ or to help them to manage situations where others showed pain, suffering, tears.

The volunteers’ will to support the CVR was greater than the ability of the CVR to involve them.
Achievements
The VP became citizenship pedagogy with the opportunity to foster:
- personal and professional development
- communication skills
- experience in organizational skills
- volunteer’s knowledge and practice on citizenship participation

The volunteers, who had an active role establishing a connection between civil society and the State, are prepared to participate in other spaces and engage in social action.

The volunteers had the opportunity to interact and share with students of different academic, economic, social and political backgrounds. They expanded their local scope to include other perspectives and other areas of the country.

Follow-up
- Eight volunteers presented a project to a contest sponsored by the World Bank. They will receive a donation to write a book that will systematize the experience of the CVR volunteers.
- Five volunteers already have formed an NGO.
- A web-based group list was formed. It connects the volunteers across the country and out of the country. It is a space for debate and communication.
- Some volunteers are working under the umbrella of an NGO or a religious community. Other groups are still discussing how to organize their work.

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