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Community in Early Twentieth-Century Schools, A Case Study: 1920s to 1940s

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ABSTRACT:
"Community civics" developed as a new American school program for citizenship education at the turn of the twentieth century. Linked to progressivist philosophy, it conceived of good citizens as individuals who understood, valued, and lived in a manner that nurtured "communities." Like many American educational ideas, it found its way into Canada through study in the United States by Canadian scholars, conferences, and journals. American ideas were considered to be at the vanguard of educational reform by some Canadians at that time. After briefly describing community civics, this paper presents the findings of a case study of one BC school that illustrates how it attempted to develop a common feeling of community in its student body through its textbooks and school culture from the 1920s to the 1940s, which was similar in form to that of community civics.

RÉSUMÉ:
Au début du vingtième siècle, un cours de formation civique intitulé « community civics » a été développé dans le cadre d'un nouveau programme scolaire américain. S'inspirant de la philosophie progressiviste, la conception du bon citoyen visait la formation d'individus capables de comprendre, d'apprécier et vivre dans un esprit communautaire. À l'instar d'autres concepts américains en éducation, celui-ci traverse la frontière par l'entremise d'étudiants fréquentant des universités américaines et par le biais de conférences et de revues savantes. Certains Canadiens de l'époque estimaient que les théories américaines étaient à l'avant-garde de la réforme scolaire. Après une brève description du contenu de ce cours, cet article présente les résultats d'une étude de cas d'une école en Colombie-Britannique. On y expose comment on a cherché, entre 1920 et 1940, à développer un esprit communautaire parmi les élèves à travers les manuels et la sociabilité scolaire tel que suggéré dans ce programme américain.

Dewey and Communitarian Democracy

Philosopher John Dewey argued in *Democracy and Education* (1916) that schools could contribute to developing a continually growing democracy through experiential and problem (or inquiry) based pedagogy.[1] Dewey philosophized that "education is a social process"[2]: society and the environment shape students through real

experiences, and a central role of education is that of "socialization," of passing information onto the young in order to nurture a continually developing society. Creating this "progressive" democratic society involved educating students to maintain their plasticity — their capacity to constantly grow.

Education was to be composed of life-like experiences that were relevant and interesting to students. Dewey used the word "experience" to mean interactions between a person and his or her surrounding environment. Students were to be actively doing in order to learn; facts were to be used in the process of discovery not simply memorized in endless lists. Real experiences led to problems that the student had to solve with thought, the use of support materials, and in collaboration with others. Dewey understood democracy as a form of community-based government in which individuals were bonded together through shared concerns.[3] Participation in this process provided for society's growth and could be fostered through democratically-run schools.[4]

The American "community civics" movement emerged during a time of considerable ideological debate between liberal classicists, social efficiency scholars such as Bobbitt, and progressivists.[5] This paper presents a case study of one school that attempted to cultivate democratic values through an experiential (or lived) environment. It begins by describing the new civic education program.

Community Civics

"Community civics" aimed to teach students concern for and involvement in improving their local, national and global communities.[6] It was one of the central organizing concepts for the influential American social studies report of 1916. The report was produced by a committee of the American National Education Association (N.E.A.) which was itself established to provide recommendations for managing rapid changes occurring in early twentieth-century schools and society. The report laid the foundations for the development of social studies in schools.[7] It began by defining the aims of the new subject of "social studies":

> [T]he Social Studies… should have for their conscious and constant purpose the cultivation of good citizenship…[to form]…'the thoroughly efficient member' of that neighbourhood…characterized…by a loyalty and a sense of obligation of his city, State, and Nation.[8]

This "good citizenship" was to be developed through a practical program embedded in a community civics curriculum. The latter conceived all individuals to be part of the community and dependent on each other: individuals were united in a community of interests. The objective was "training the pupil to recognize the common general interest in the midst of conflicting group interests and for cultivating the will to subordinate the latter to the former"[9] through a focus on "the necessity for cooperation on the part of the people."[10] Government was positively portrayed. It served society by providing services that made life better and more comfortable:

"government is merely a means of citizenship cooperation."[11] To understand how social needs were to be satisfied, students were to learn the "elements of welfare"[12] which were (a) health, (b) protection of life and property, (c) recreation, (d) education, (e) civic beauty, (f) wealth, (g) communication, (h) transport, (i) migration, (j) charities, and (k) correction. They were to develop awareness of the different government bodies responsible for these elements, to value and realize their "dependence" on these bodies, and to recognize their responsibilities.[13]

This conception of citizenship education de-emphasized the study of the structures and processes of government as found in traditional citizenship programs. Instead, its focus was "social," or communitarian, as students were to learn about the importance of cooperation and community ("the meaning of his community life")[14] with the aim of improving society.[15] Its pedagogy sought to move students away from fact-based learning to active learning through student-based methods that developed interest in the subject.[16]

The new civics program was to be taught using progressive pedagogy. The latter, a complex, multifarious movement, is understood here as a student-centred approach to education in which students took part in real experiences and problem-solving activities in order to nurture their growth as citizens. Each student was "to live his civics," and curriculum content was to be based on the current interests and needs of the students and a study of local, community problems selected from the elements of welfare.[17] It incorporated some elements that were similar to Dewey's (1916) conception of "democratic education" which aimed to produce individuals devoted to improving democracy through their civic mindedness, developed through an experiential and problem-based curriculum in which students worked together to investigate social issues using inquiry-based procedures. However, it differed from Dewey's program, as it was taught primarily as the inculcation of good habits and behaviour, a morality-based education.[18] Thus it was linked to, and was a vehicle for developing, "character education." Debates about character education which addressed community and civics occurred at the same time. Some of the key concepts of character education were illustrated in the province of British Columbia's social studies curriculum of 1937. This curriculum extended the implementation of progressivist ideology in BC, which was first apparent in the middle schools curriculum of 1927 and the new high school "social studies" curricula of 1930.[19]

BC's social studies curriculum revision of 1937 stated that character education ought to pervade the school's environment and facilitate the development of knowledge, attitudes, and habits in students in order to improve them, and ultimately the whole of society. Character education was to foster student interest in public service, tolerance, open mindedness, and responsibility to the present and future. Students were to appreciate their advantages, value others, behave well, work to exacting standards, and understand and work towards the social good. Significantly, students were expected to realize their interdependence with others as they worked towards a peaceful, harmonious world. They should value good health, justice, fair play, honesty, truthfulness, and moral thoughtfulness. They were to be well educated in mind, body, and character and to be polite, courageous, problem solvers. Good

citizens were to be aware of their responsibilities and duties, the law and rights of others, and be temperate and self-controlled. The school environment — its staff, curriculum and activities — were all to contribute to this character development.[20] Flowing from Dewey's concept of experiential education, character education was to be based on lived experience: "schools should be thought of as life to be lived where there is action, cooperation, and opportunity to develop desirable attitudes, habits, and ideals."[21] Character education was thus intertwined in thought and practice with progressivism and the teaching of community civics.

BC's 1930s curricula drew from the 1916 American report from which social studies developed. That report argued that all of grade 9 was, if possible, to be devoted to citizenship education, taught with appropriate historical content and framed within community civics. The curriculum was then designed to expand out from local community civics into national and international studies. National studies "means primarily that the history of the Nation is treated as the story of the growth of a national 'community,' involving all the 'elements of welfare.'"[22] After studying the nation, students progressed to learning about the international community, with the aim of building respect for and sympathies with other nations:

> As individuals within a community, or local communities within a State, or the States constituting the Nation, are dependent upon one another and are bound together into the larger community life by their common interests and cooperative action, so it can easily be shown that nations are becoming more and more closely dependent upon each other. Common world interests need emphasis, world sympathies need cultivation.[23]

The same program was repeated in grades 10 to 12 but with greater depth and breadth. In grade 10 and 11, students were to study European and American History up to the present time. In grade 12, they received their second community civics course, "Problems in American Democracy."[24] History was taught as "new" history: it was to be relevant to students, used "to understand economic, social, and civic factors in community life,"[25] useful ("use history to illuminate topics of immediate interest"[26]) and topical. The course was also based on the "elements of welfare." The approach was student-centred and interdisciplinary: History was the core to which were added political science, economics, and sociology. Problems, based on students' needs and interests, were selected and studied from political, economic, and social angles. Examples included the cost of living and immigration. The focus was not on factual (content-based) learning but on students learning the complexity of current social issues and on forming a disposition for observation and "dispassionate" judgement[27] with the aim of creating good citizens. The latter, as defined in this report, were responsible, actively involved in government, sympathetic, just, self-supporting, and good decision makers who stimulated the continued societal development.

In short, "community civics" was a new approach to citizenship education that developed in the early twentieth century in the United States and was illustrated in the 1916 social studies report. It drew from some of Dewey's concepts, and progressivism

in general — primarily that civic education involved developing students' community-mindedness through an experiential education. It was also related to the character education debates. But to what extent was progressivist philosophy, including associated movements such as that of community civics, found in Canadian schools and in what form? Research has shown that progressivism was a complex movement. Sutherland, in the 1960s, argued that progressivism was not found in early twentieth-century schools, as these schools focused on rote learning and traditionalist practices.[28] However, more recent work by Von Heyking and Axelrod have described elements of progressivist ideology in policy and curriculum documents. Axelrod argues that 1950s school policies in Ontario contained elements of both progressivism and traditionalism.[29] Von Heyking describes progressivist-minded curriculum designers who developed progressivist curricula in 1930s Alberta and worked to publicize it. She includes description of some teachers who attempted to implement this philosophy, in particular the project/enterprise method.[30] The remainder of this paper explores these questions through a case study of one Canadian school. It finds that concepts similar to that of "community civics" were apparent in at least one early twentieth-century BC high school, which consciously attempted to develop a common community feeling through an experiential, or lived, program as illustrated in the school's culture and some of its textbooks, from the 1920s to the 1940s.

A Case Study of One High School

North Vancouver High School was established in the first decade of the twentieth century in a small Vancouver suburb. The school grew as the community developed. At the turn of the century, student numbers grew quickly due to the promotion of immigration to Canada in the UK and Europe.[31] Class sizes were large. Some classes had up to 40 students with a varying age span of 3 to 4 years in each class. More

North Vancouver High School, 1938. Source: North Vancouver Museum & Archives, #5339

females attended the high school until numbers equalized in the 1930s. Females were most likely studying to be teachers or office workers.[32] Male enrolments declined in the 1940s and then surpassed those of females in the 1950s. These numbers were likely affected by several factors including World War I and II and the practice of sending girls from families with sufficient income to high schools in order to train as teachers or office workers.[33] Most of the students up to World War II were white, of European origin, and most likely middle class — from families that could afford to send them to high school. (School photos reinforce this image: students are well-dressed, neat, and well fed). After World War II, the ethnic diversity of the school grew quickly.

On the first floor were the 'girl-subjects' (that is, Home Economics and Sewing) on one side of the school, and the 'boy-subjects' (Manual Training) on the other side of the school, separated by classrooms and the library. These classifications reinforced traditional male and female roles. The girls' cloakroom was located in the middle of the hallway across from the library. The boys' cloakroom was located next to the Manual Training room. On the second floor were classrooms 10 to 18. The council room and the office in the hallway joined the two wings of the school. A science lab and a science preparatory lab were found in the east wing. The Putman-Weir Report (1925), the first Royal Commission report in BC to recommend a number of changes to schools, gave the new school building the highest rating possible.[34]

In the early part of the twentieth century, the school aimed to develop community feeling in its students through its textbooks and school culture. The school's motto was "Per Ardua Ad Adstra" (Through struggle/adversity to the stars). This has also been the motto of the Royal Air Force since 1912 and was most likely chosen for the school by one of its principals who served in World War I. It illustrated Canada's conscious connection to the UK and an educational program striving for excellence.

Textbooks

In Canada, older civic textbooks such as the *History of Canada* described the processes and structures of the Canadian government in great detail.[35] They included an explanation of the process of developing and enforcing laws, as well as the significance of laws to society. This was often combined with a historical study of the development of Canada's current government structure (ie. Responsible Government and Confederation). In a deviation from these older texts, *Studies in Citizenship* included "social" and "economic" information and the ideal of "community civics."[36] It stated that people were dependent on one another and needed one another for all aspects of life. As "our welfare is tied to others'…each one must play his part."[37] An institution was described as "an association formed for a particular purpose."[38] Even government was defined in this way: "this working together to accomplish certain things for the benefit of the whole we call government."[39] Consequently, the book argued, everyone ought to follow the government and its laws and put the state before him or herself including, for example, by serving in the nation's army, if required.

The book contended that training in good citizenship should be supported in the

home through the cultivation of self control, truthfulness, honesty, cooperation, consideration, and respect; in the school by thinking of the good of the group, treating all equally, being polite, patient, persevering, punctual, orderly, and courteous, believing in justice and fair play, having a love of the nation, being industrious, acquiring accuracy and skill, pleasure in and satisfaction from work, a sense of honour and duty and a desire to live rightly; and in the church by teaching brotherhood and service. Drawing on Hanna's well-known social studies framework, later subjects moved from a study of local community to a study of the nation and then of the world.[40] The progressivist idea underlying this was that students should start by studying what they know (their local community). The economic life section of the book stated that the government worked to conserve natural resources, and that it was the "duty of the good citizen to assist in their observation."[41] The government was also perceived to play an important role in managing a healthy economy. In its discussion of manufacturing, banks, and trade, the book illustrated the theme of "how much we depend on each other."[42] It included all but one of the American "elements of welfare" under the main theme of "community," and respecting others. The book aimed to build students' sense of "community" — of connection to and need for others — with an emphasis on moral and character education. Other classes also encouraged community awareness. For example, in English class, students read novels such as *Silas Marner*, which explored the themes of love and community.

Developing Community through School Culture

In addition to its use of such textbooks, the school promoted community-mindedness through its clubs, assemblies, newsletters and house system.[43] Most of these features were added to the school from the end of the 1920s through to the early 1940s. Students could choose to join 34 possible clubs including the students' council, debating, drama, journalism, orchestra, dancing, opera, chess, camera, first aid, poster, business, archery, science, skating, and fine arts clubs. Some clubs were service oriented. For example, the junior Hi-Y Boys Club ran the lost and found, organized music and "patrolled" the school during lunch times. The Hi-Y Girls Club and the Girls League welcomed new students, decorated the rooms for mixers (socials), held teas and sales and organized or participated in other social and service events such as the penny carnival, cancer fundraisers, and concerts. The Girls League had initiation rights for its members and appears to have provided girls with opportunities to socialize and to develop their self esteem. They also hosted speakers on topics such as clothes and a health week.

The Hi-Y clubs were associated with the YMCA and required students to apply and then be selected as members. As well, students could join a host of sports clubs, which encouraged team spirit, and were expected to "produce as many keen and enthusiastic sportsmen as possible."[44] Students could take up badminton, tennis, ping-pong, girls track, boys track, soccer, Canadian football and English rugby.[45]

Regular assemblies were held at the school, at which different groups of students would present skits on their clubs and school announcements were made. The

1943–44 handbook added that the assemblies were on Monday mornings for half an hour and that they consisted of "school business, announcements, entertainment, and guest speakers."[46] On nice days, the assemblies were held outside. Another method of building school spirit was through the use of a House System, which was implemented at the end of the 1930s with the objective of developing a "better school spirit." All students were divided into houses, and they could earn points for their houses through a number of school activities including sports, debating and drama. The school also had its own school song and held "pep meets" (presumably pep rallies). It put on a yearly play with the funds raised going to the school.

Further, the school put out a monthly school newspaper that aimed to develop school spirit (community feeling) by positively and humorously describing school events and teachers.[47] It began in the 1922–23 school year at the suggestion of a teacher. The paper was originally called "School Spirit," and later changed to the "Nova High News." One article in 1927, for example, cited teachers advising the school's students to be thankful for all they had. Other articles commented on school events such as school mixers, banquets and plays, as well as student council community-service initiatives including war saving pledges, penny carnivals, paper drives, soup sales, adopt-a-navy-fund challenges, and milk funds for Britain, all of which illustrated the school's conscious effort to promote loyalty to its "mother nation" as part of the British Empire as well as to develop community-mindedness through fundraising.

Discipline through Communitarian Structures

Corporal punishment was a common disciplinary practice in early twentieth-century Canadian schools. Lynn Valley Elementary, which was in the same neighbourhood as North Vancouver High School, frequently employed this technique.[48] However, punishment does not appear to have been as much of an issue at North Vancouver High. In the early years of the twentieth century, the number of corporal punishments at the school was surprisingly low. For example, in 1920, there were 8 cases of corporal punishment, in a student body of 174. In 1925, there was just one case among a student population of 342.[49] The main disciplinary concern seems to have been "tardiness."[50] During the 1930s and after World War II, punishments increased, perhaps associated with a rapidly increasing, heterogeneous population of students from varying socioeconomic classes.[51]

Government inspectors visited the schools, on average, 4 to 5 times a year. These reports implied that teachers and the principal worked well together to develop a positive school culture. The *Department of Education Inspector Reports* on the school commented, in 1919, that discipline, methods, and progress were "very good" and that many students were taking the matriculation (university focused) program.[52] In the 1921 report, the Department of Education inspector, whose role was to investigate how well the school followed government policies and how effectively it was managed, also wrote that the principal had established good teamwork skills. In 1923, he stated that the principal taught well and supervised teachers, that teachers

were given courses matched to their interests, and that the teachers and students worked closely together. He also mentioned that the general standing and school tone were "commendable." Discipline was "good" according to the 1924 report. The inspector described the new school building as being well lit and progressive as it had labs and commercial and manual training facilities. In 1928, he portrayed the principal and teachers as "earnest, conscientious, and well trained," whose "chief interest" was the students. The school tone was "pleasing" and there was "harmony among staff." The 1931 report stated that the staff worked agreeably together and were well-coordinated and organized, with a unity of purpose and harmonious relationships. The public school report of 1937–8 commented that the teachers were "able" and students had "fine attitudes."

In an effort to develop their responsibility and sense of ownership in the school, students were themselves involved in disciplinary action through the students' council—an important experiential component of developing students' citizenship. The students' council was set up in 1923 with the aim of allowing students to express themselves, to govern and to develop students' understanding of the rights and responsibilities of citizens: "…(the) presence of a student council implies that there is student government and this in its turn implies that a sense of responsibility on the part of each and every member of the student body should be present."[53] The students' council included the following representatives in each class: class captains, vice captains, attendance officers, and assistant officers. A school president was at the top of the structure. Student handbooks of the early 1940s[54] explained that students who were in need of discipline were given a "ticket" (by fellow students) for violating rules by over one hundred "traffic officials." The school "Court Summons Ticket" included information on the "offender, date, offence, and officer." Possible "offences" included "running, loitering, opening locker, disobeying cloakroom regulations, insolence, whistling, and fighting."[55] The additional category of "other," with space to describe the infraction, was also available. School articles illustrate that the principal actively supported the students' council. For example, one article described how the principal referred two students who had been fighting to the council.[56]

The "Students' Court" aimed to teach students about justice and was held at lunch times on Monday. Student judges would pronounce on the guilt of accused students and then "sentence" them to various actions. These involved doing odd jobs around the school, for if found "guilty," they were usually sent to the janitor who required them to sweep a classroom or collect waste paper. If students did not carry out their sentences, they were sent to the office. This court was matched to society: it was a "judicial system" or "law enforcing committee," that would "cope with law breakers" in "supreme court."[57] The 1943 student handbook explained that students could attend a "Court of Appeal" if they thought they were innocent. The school newspaper in 1938, the *Nova High News*, went so far as to publish the names of students who had been disciplined and to describe the "poor" class that had the largest number of discipline cases.[58] A detention room also existed at the school in which students were required sit with their hands on their desks in silence.

Few school "laws" (in comparison to today) were listed. Students had to attend

school and were not allowed to leave school even if sick, unless they went to the office first. As well, they had to eat lunch in their classrooms or outside and to throw their garbage out in the correct place. They had to attend Students' Court if they lost the key to their lockers. They could not keep their "suitcases" on top of their lockers; these were to be kept in their homerooms. Their coats had to be left in the coatrooms with no money in them. As mentioned, students gave out tickets to those who were seen violating these school rules. Teachers were also involved in school supervision. A document listing teachers' duties included supervising students in their classrooms and the common spaces of the school, writing reports on students who were absent, and ensuring that students walked in file down the hallways.[59]

These findings are significant in that they offer an alternative to earlier studies which portray students in traditional schools as empty vessels to be filled with information through teacher-centred instruction, reinforced with strict discipline that included corporal punishment.[60] Giving students the opportunity to provide leadership and to discipline other students implies that school administrators and teachers believed in the importance of student action and empowerment; that students were capable of taking on these responsibilities and learning from them the types of behaviours and attitudes necessary for a democracy. These actions are associated with a student-centred, experiential pedagogy.

Linking to the broader community

The principal and staff attempted to develop good relations within, as well as outside of the school, through the Parent-Teacher Association (P.T.A.), formed in 1917. The P.T.A. was run by married, middle-class women, many of whom were religious (both Presbyterian and Church of England).[61] The P.T.A. actively worked to improve school conditions. Minutes of early meetings describe discussions over bible studies at school, kindergartens, and the desire to bring in school uniforms. One of the P.T.A.'s main functions appears to have been the raising money for the school. The 1929 School Annual describes the P.T.A. as a "great success."[62] It held meetings on the third Wednesday of every month, which also included guest speakers and entertainment, and it was described as very supportive: it worked to develop the school library, supported a playground motion at the city government and collaborated with teachers. The school principal, McDougall, seems to have seen the P.T.A. as an important link between family/home and school. He used to speak for half an hour at meetings, presenting information on school events and issues. A "noteworthy characteristic" of the school was the "three way cooperation" between parents, teachers, and students.[63] A member of the school students' council also attended P.T.A. meetings. As well, the school held "Education Week," which invited parents to attend classes and see classroom teaching methods.

In 1933, P.T.A. records note that students were asked to clean the play area in order to save money. Further, the committee discussed how it could help the school board help students who needed to work due to the poor economy find work, and it proposed night classes later that year. As well, the PTA helped to establish school

lunchrooms in the early 1940s and to raise funds for the school through the annual Penny Carnival. The PTA was also active in the School Trustee election and held events to help parents understand and manage their children. For example, it facilitated discussions on Guidance and a "Father's Night" that aimed to teach fathers how to understand their children's needs. The P.T.A. also organized symposiums on such questions as Canadian unity and National Compulsory Service and student-related issues including stealing, religion, and homework.

Importance of Administration

One of the school's longest serving principals, Mr. McDougall, principal from 1935 to 1961, appears to have worked actively to develop a community feeling among students.[64] He was involved in World War 1, moved to BC from Ontario, and studied at UBC. Later, he attended Normal School (presumably in Vancouver, although no more detailed information is available), became a teacher and eventually school principal. He was awarded the Ferguson Memorial Award for Outstanding Contribution to Education, and was involved in a number of organizations, including the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, of which he was president from 1941 to 1942. He was a member of the UBC Senate. He was also active in the community, serving as Vice Chair of the Junior Red Cross, Honourable Member of the Canadian Red Cross, President of the North Vancouver Community Centre, and President of the North Vancouver Board of Trade and Kiwanis Club at varying times.

He appears to have been popular with students.[65] He was described as believing in the active involvement of students in the government of the school, and of therefore working with students to establish a students' council and a students' court. The latter, as mentioned, gave students real power to discipline other students. He also had the boys of the Rugby team act as bouncers at school dances. He seems to have believed that older students could effectively aid in the management of other students: "The great emphasis, in all activities, is always on student management and supervision."[66]

Further, he did not support expelling students, which he believed would compound the problems of the surrounding community. Instead, he gave students a second chance. According to a school newsletter article included in the scrapbook, he helped troubled students find jobs.[67] These students, in later years, would often visit him to thank him.[68] He also advocated teaching students how to be good citizens and recommended that teachers not be "dictators," but rather give students a chance to express themselves. This philosophy was echoed in the schools' Accreditation Reports (yearly documents filled out by the principal and school inspector and sent to the Department of Education with the aim of getting the school exempted from giving high school exams).[69] The 1941–2 report stated that the "teaching manner" included praising students and involving students in school governance through the students' council. All teachers at the school ran extracurricular clubs and were encouraged to teach in a manner that did not unduly stress memorizing. Professional journals were circulated among the staff and information from the government (Department circulars) and topics raised by teachers were discussed at staff meetings. The school

integrated the new Department of Education's requirements of Guidance, Health, Vocational Studies, and Library research projects in the school, and the principal was described as an active supporter of the new progressivist philosophy advocated in the revised 1937–9 curriculum documents.

Conclusion

Beck and Beck-Gernsheim argue that our society had become increasingly fragmented at the end of the twentieth-century which they relate to the rise of individualism and a concomitant decline in the value of community-spiritedness.[70] This paper began with a description of "community civics," an American progressivist-based citizenship education program which aimed to develop students' connection to their communities. Drawing from Dewey's work and from contemporary character education programs, progressivist ideology and character education were incorporated into BC's social studies curriculum revision of 1937.

The question of whether these ideas were found in school practice was explored through a historical study of one BC school. In the 1920s and 30s, North Vancouver High School sought to foster students' understanding of democracy and community-mindedness, as well as their awareness of their social responsibilities, and the values of cooperation and collaboration. It did so through textbooks, experiential civics programs, school governance, disciplinary procedures, and community relations, all of which illustrated a number of the features of the American Community Civics program and connections between work in academia, government curricula, and school practices.

Some scholars have argued that progressivism was not found in school practices.[71] Others scholars have described the racist and exclusionary nature of early twentieth century schools.[72] Keeping these issues in mind, this study finds that at least some elements associated with progressivism were evident in the daily life of one British Columbian school, and possibly others. Some educators aspired to something we seem to have since lost: Dewey's elegant idea of community in which we recognize and embrace our connections to each other in order to build a better democracy — a notion that could well reinvigorate contemporary schools and their communities, particularly if the community is expanded to include all people who make up Canada today.

Notes

1 John Dewey, *Democracy and Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1916).

2 *Ibid.*, 99.

3 Walter Feinberg, in *"Dewey and Democracy at the Dawn of the Twenty-First Century," Educational Theory* 43, 2 (1993): 195-216 provides an insightful discussion of some of the shortcomings in Dewey's theoretical work on democracy. He distinguishes between Dewey's work on democracy in general and his theory of education for democracy. This review focuses on the latter.

4 Robert Westbrook, *John Dewey and American Democracy* (New York: Cornell University

Press, 1991).

5 Herbert M. Kliebard, *The Struggle for the American Curriculum* 1893–1958, 3rd ed. (New York: Routledge Falmer, 2004)

6 David Saxe, "On the Alleged Demise of Social Studies: the Eclectic Curriculum in Times of Standardization—A Historical Sketch," *International Journal of Social Education* 18, 2 (2003): 93-105. M. Mraz, "Harold Rugg and the foundations of Social Studies," *International Journal of Social Education* 19, 1 (2004): 1-7. M. Nelson. "The Social Contexts of the Committee on Social Studies Report of 1916," in *The Social Studies in Secondary Education: A Reprint of the Seminal 1916 Report with Annotations and Commentaries*. (ERIC: Clearinghouse for Social Studies/Social Science Education, 1994), 71-92.

7 Catherine Broom, "Change and Continuity: A Historical Study of Citizenship Education in British Columbian Social Studies Guides, 1930–2006," in Daly et al eds., *Learning Democracy by Doing Alternative Practices in Citizenship Learning and Participatory Democrac.* (TLC: University of Toronto, 2008), 98-110.

8 M. Nelson, ed. *The Social Studies in Secondary Education* (1994): 17.

9 *Ibid.*, 32.

10 *Ibid.,* 38.

11 *Ibid.,* 39.

12 J. Reuben, "Beyond Politics: Community Civics and the Redefinition of Citizenship in the Progressive Era," *History of Education Quarterly* 37, 4 (1997): 399-420.

13 Nelson, *The Social Studies in Secondary Education*, 30.

14 US Bureau of Education circular quoted in Reuben, *Beyond Politics*, 405.

15 C. Bohan, "Early Vanguards of Progressive Education: The committee of Ten, the Committee of Seven, and Social Education," *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision* 19, 1 (2003): 73-94.

16 Reuben, *Beyond Politics.*

17 Nelson, *The Social Studies*, 30.

18 Reuben. Often social efficiency was combined with progressivism in curriculum document development in practice. Catherine Broom, "A Historical Study of Citizenship Education in BC's Social Studies Curricula" (PhD Diss., SFU, 2007), and Herbert Kliebard, *Forging the American Curriculum Essays in Curriculum and History and Theory* (London: Routledge, 1992). Social efficiency was a rationalistic doctrine developed by Bobbitt at Chicago University from Taylor's business program. It aimed to prepare students for work.

19 As with most curriculum documents, this curriculum guide contained an uneasy blend of a number of educational ideologies, including progressivism, social efficiency, and traditionalism, all underlain by an older history-based program, Broom, 2007.

20 Department of Education, British Columbia, *Programme of Studies for the Senior High Schools of BC. Bulletin 1 and VII* (Victoria, BC: King's Printer, 1937), 29.

21 *Ibid.*, 13.

22 Nelson, ed., 28.

23 *Ibid.,* 33.

24 *Ibid.*, 41.

25 *Ibid.*, 42.

26 *Ibid.*, 39.

27 *Ibid.,* 61.

28 Such as Neil Sutherland, "The Triumph of Formalism: Elementary Schooling in Vancouver from the 1920s to the 1960s," B.C. Studies 69-70 (Spring-Summer, 1986): 175-210.

29 Paul Axelrod, "Beyond the Progressive Education Debate: A Profile of Toronto Schooling in the 1950s," *Historical Studies in Education* 17, 2 (2005): 227-41.

30 Amy Von Heyking, "Selling Progressive Education to Albertans, 1935–1953," *Historical Studies in Education* 10, 2 (1998): 67-84.
31 Jean Barman, *Growing up British in BC: Boys in Private School* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1984).
32 N. Jackson and J. Gaskell, "White Collar Vocationalism," *Curriculum Inquiry* 17, 2 (1987): 177-201.
33 *Ibid.*
34 J. Putman and George Weir, *Survey of the School System* (Victoria, Canada: Province of British Columbia, 1925).
35 J. Jeffers, *History of Canada* (Toronto: Canada Publishing Co, 1884).
36 J. McCaig, *Studies in Citizenship* (Toronto, Canada: Educational Book Company, 1930).
37 *Ibid.*, 12.
38 *Ibid.*, 12.
39 *Ibid.*, 18.
40 Teachers' College (Columbia) scholar, Paul Hanna, developed one of the first elementary Social Studies textbook series. He blended knowledge learning with children's interests by organizing the content into units using a concentric circles model that expanded outwards from children's perceived worlds (family, neighbourhood…), with the increasing age of the child.
41 *Ibid.*, 100.
42 *Ibid.*, 100.
43 North Vancouver High School, *North Vancouver Annuals, Handbooks and Scrapbook 1910–1979* (North Vancouver, Canada, 1929–1979). [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver High School Collection.]
44 *Ibid.*, 1940 Student handbook, 21.
45 Some scholars, including Helen Lenskyj and Don Morrow, have criticized high school sports teams for their gendered or exclusive nature. Bruce Kidd, for example, in *The Struggle for Canadian Sport* (Toronto: University of Toronto, 1996) describes how sports aimed to create gendered roles for males and females and reinforced class structures.
46 North Vancouver Annuals…1943–44 Student handbook, 7.
47 *Ibid.*, Annuals.
48 Lynn Valley School, *Minutes of Teachers' Meetings* (North Vancouver, Canada, 1914–15). [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver Schools Collection.] For a recent discussion of the history of corporal punishment in Canada, see Paul Axelrod, "No Longer a 'Last Resort:' The End of Corporal Punishment in the Schools of Toronto," *Canadian Historical Review* 91, 2 (June 2010): 261-85.
49 North Vancouver High School, *Principal's Annual Reports and Registers 1920s–1930s.* (North Vancouver, Canada: 1911–1940). [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver High School Collection.]
50 *Ibid.*
51 *Ibid.*
52 Department of Education, British Columbia, *Inspector reports* (Victoria, Canada: King's Printer, 1919–1939). [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver High School Collection.]
53 North Vancouver High School, *Scrapbook*, 1910–1979, np.
54 North Vancouver High School, *Student Handbook*, 1940–1 and 1943–44.
55 North Vancouver High School, *Scrapbook,* 1910–1979, np.
56 *Ibid.*, np.
57 North Vancouver High School, *Student Handbook,* np.
58 North Vancouver High School, *Annuals.*
59 North Vancouver High School, *Scrapbook*, 1910–1979.

60 Sutherland, *The Triumph of Formalism*.
61 North Vancouver High School, *P.T.A. Scrapbook* (North Vancouver. Canada, 1917–1950). [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver High School Collection.]
62 North Vancouver High School. *Annuals*.
63 North Vancouver High School, *P.T.A. Scrapbook*.
64 McDougall. (No date). Typed manuscript in the Scrapbook.
65 *Ibid*.
66 *Ibid*.
67 *Ibid*.
68 *Ibid*.
69 Department of Education. 1937, 1940, 1943, 1955/6, and 1958/9. *Accrediting of High Schools* (Victoria, Canada: Author), [North Vancouver Archives, North Vancouver High School Collection.]
70 U. Beck and E. Beck-Gernsheim, "Beyond Status and Class?" in *Education Globalization and Social Change*, ed. H. Lauder et al (Oxford: OUP, 2006), 143-151
71 Sutherland, "Triumph of Formalism."
72 Previous literature has explored the gendered, racial, and classed nature of early twentieth-century schools. J. Tomas and M. Arcus "Factors Influencing Home Economics," *Canadian Home Economics Journal* 38, 2 (1988): 88-95) note that females were required to take domestic science. Freedman reports that that teaching was gendered, that female teachers were both controlled by male administrators and paid less than males. See S. Freedman "Teaching, Gender, and Curriculum" in *The Curriculum Problems, Politics, and Possibilities*, eds., L Beyer BS M. Apple. (New York: State University of New York Press, 1998): 230-244. Barman discusses social class divisions, noting the opposition of middle classes, including business people, to the expansion of free public education beyond the 'basic Rs' to the working class in the early twentieth century in Jean Barman, " 'Knowledge is Essential for Universal Progress but Fatal to Class Privilege': Working People and The Schools in Vancouver During the 1920s," *Labour* 22 (Fall 1988): 9-66. Racial issues are also examined by several authors. For example, in the article above, Barman quotes one 1920s school principal: , "…the presence of Oriental children in schools will make it impossible for them [the teachers] to transmit to the next generation the social inheritance of the present and past generation; and he considers this one of the chief functions of schools" (49). Laura Tomas describes the racially-motivated internment of British Columbians of Japanese descent during World War II in Laura Tomas, "Warriors," (2000). Retrieved 22 April 2011 from: **http://www.viu.ca/homeroom/content/timeline/1840s/warriors.htm**. According to Van Brummelen, "The view that students were given of Canada's native people was, generally speaking a negative one." H. Van Brummelen, "Shifting Perspectives: Early British Columbia Textbooks from 1872 to 1925," *B.C. Studies* 60 (1983): 1-28.