Toward Community:
The Community School Model and the Health of Sovereignty

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First Nations are in the process of reasserting unique locally responsive forms of sovereignty. Schooling in this time of transition requires talented lay and professional educators who are aware of language, culture, and effective teaching strategies. They will need to be aware of the role of the school in the creation of healthy communities, as healthy communal living is one foundational element in the formation of stable self-government. This article is intended to provide a cross-cultural exploration of the concept of community and of seven features of a community school model based on an analysis of 30 selections written by community education theorists.

Introduction: Map for the Journey

Every journey needs a map. This journey has two destinations. First, the article provides a cross-cultural exploration of *community*, because the implementation of a community school (CS) model requires such exploration. The CS model has been developed by community educators as a method for the reconstruction of participatory forms in healthy communities. The second destination in this discussion is the presentation of seven features of such a CS model.

In CS theory, community is identified as a laboratory for community-based teaching, learning, and planned change (Clapp, 1939; Misner, 1938; Seay, 1953, 1974; Irwin & Russell, 1971). As church-operated and government-funded forms of First Nations schooling are now known as community schools (Pacquett, 1986, p. 2), an examination of CS models may be appropriate.

In this article *healthy* means "positive and functional states of physical, emotional, spiritual, psychological, and intellectual being of the individual and the collective." The term *First Nations* is used to refer to Aboriginal collectives whose individuals "mutually agree to join together" as sovereign governing bodies (Assembly of First Nations [AFN], 1988, p. 7). This term will not be used to refer exclusively to Status Indians because that designation was invented by non-First Nations legislators; nor only to people in on-reserve settings, because urban migration has resulted in the creation of off-reserve communities. *First Nations* can be used as an adjective instead of *Indian,* as in Indian education (p. 7).

The elaboration of the CS concept in this article is based on analysis of 30 selections written over five decades from 1939 to 1989, put forward by 24 Euro-American theorists in a field that came to be known during that period as community education. Although community education has not had widespread authorship by First Nations scholars, there are philosophical similarities between community education and First Nations education. In 1981, Bobby Wright (Chippewa-Cree) concluded that the interpersonal dynamics of tribal affiliation and First

Nations education involved "a strong sense of community orientation and respon-sibility," which "effectively rendered community education in its truest form" (pp. 4, 7). The overlap between the two traditions suggests the possibility of a pedagogy that is truly unique to Turtle Island (North America), in which both theory and practice in the two related traditions could illuminate the nature of processes required to reinvent healthy forms of local self-government.

The Concept of Community: A Definition

This is a cross-cultural examination of the concept of community. The term has widespread currency and seems to have enjoyed a recent renaissance. Several dis-ciplines, such as human ecology, education, and sociology, have drawn from or contributed to a multidisciplinary discussion that has had at least two major threads: (a) *needs*, that is, the human biological, psychological, and spiritual need to live in community; and (b) *association*, that is, the trials of creating and sustain-ing respectful community-minded associations.

Community educators have used the term to designate the nature, function, and focus of education despite the identified difficulties of creating workable, humanistic communities in an industrialized, urbanized world (Minzey & LeTarte, 1979). The concept of community could also be considered as a foundational element for First Nations education because the effectiveness of First Nations self-government is dependent on many variables, including regaining local "con-trol of the institutions that impact on Indian lives" (Kirkness, 1984, p. 77). The relationship between educational development and community regeneration has been strongly linked. The First Nations cannot expect citizens to learn about "processes that will bring self-sufficiency to their communities" if educators do not comprehend the conditions and events of community self-government (AFN, 1988, p. 66). Self-government will require knowledgeable citizens with visions for their nations as communities.

Dimensions of the Concept

Community can be defined thus: individuals living in a locality, in self-chosen ways, basing those choices on the understanding that individual members will act in ways that uphold, and do not harm, the collective or the locality. The choices and actions are goal directed: there are expected outcomes. This provides a defini-tion that includes four components: (a) participants; (b) locality; (c) purpose; and (d) expected outcomes. The following discussion addresses these four aspects.

Participants. A first requirement in many definitions of community is the need for more than one participant. Joseph Hart was considered by some to be a strong influence on theorizing about community education (Olsen, 1975, p. 16). He ob-served that individuals cannot escape their community even though they may not like their companions, including parents or the customs but that they continue intentionally or unintentionally to live "in community" (Hart, 1924, p. 324). There-fore, the term implies the necessity of having more than one participant without the presumption that all individuals possess a desire to live in the collective they inhabit. In fact individuals may not even possess a consciousness of themselves as members of a particular collective, or they may be engaged in acts of passive or active resistance toward the collective.

Hawley (1950), a human ecologist, identifies community as a "human ag-gregate" (p. 232). One of the Latin roots of aggregate is *grex*, which means "herd"

(Guralnik, 1970, p. 26). The herding instincts of many species are observable in that species inhabit user-friendly environments, ecological niches. Hawley (1950) observes that separate communities do influence and interact with other communities in that the biological community "may be viewed as an organization of niches, since the activities of each class of organism influenced the activities of every other class in the association" (p. 44). Thus the recognition that more than one community exists, and that the communities interact, suggests that individuals are not members of isolated, intact collectives. Interactions occur.

In the consideration of participants in a community, First Nations have recognized the interrelationality of all species, considered sacred, who "all have their own laws" (Rabesca, quoted in Martin, 1991, p. 35). Chief Luther Standing Bear (1933) stated that "kinship with all creatures of the earth, sky and water was a real and active principle," where all species shared a sense of kinship and "spoke a common tongue" (pp. 195-196). Tatanka Yotanka (Sitting Bull, Sioux Nation) said at a council held at Powder River in 1877 that we are all seeds from the same mysterious power and so "we therefore yield to our neighbors, even our animal neighbors, the same right as ourselves, to inhabit the land" (McLuhan, 1971, p. 90).

There is an anthropocentric emphasis in Euro-American definitions of community. For example, Olsen (1954) states that any "community is really a set of human relationships" (p. 83). Community from a First Nations world view would add the understanding that all sacred beings live in a universe in which each entity is simultaneously autonomous, intimately and spiritually related, and interdependent (Black Elk, cited in Churchill, 1982, p. 148). The First Nations perspective extends the membership of community to include all life forms, with the understanding that all primary (e.g., stone, human, water, elk) and secondary (e.g., manufactured items) elements of a community are manifestations of a life force— although the distinction of primary and secondary would probably not be necessary because all elements are considered to be equal and in possession of their own destiny and power.

Community is also not just people, but people in relationships. MacIver (1917), a sociologist, observes that a community "bubbles into associations" of a "political, economic, religious, educational, scientific, artistic, literary or recreative" nature that, in turn, nourish communal living (p. 24). However, the process of individuals living harmoniously appears to be easier to theorize about than to make into fact. Individual differences, mobility, individualism, and choice have been identified as some of the barriers to the creation of functional, healthy collective structures.

Differences in class, gender, sexuality, age, educational attainment, capital gain, abilities, disabilities, status, power, or cultural heritage have been used by some humans to produce and sustain conflictual, fragmented, and thus unhealthy and dysfunctional, communities. Such differences have been used by some to diminish respectful treatment of individuals. Attempts have been made to outlaw through legislation, or abandon through education, such discrimination. Second, the mobility available to individuals has tended to make identification with one particular community difficult or unnecessary for some individuals. Third, socioeconomic or other forms of individualism can work at cross-purposes in the development of collective solidarity. Last, individuals do not always know, or care to know, the other immediate members of their locality for reasons as diverse as a need for anonymity or a sense of alienation.

The task of community building is not easy. Some humans desire community. Yet some aspects of our humanity seem to impede the actuality. Thus the concept of community is paradoxical in that some individuals need or desire the creation of healthy collectives, yet the establishment of the infrastructure of community does not guarantee conscious identity, mutual respect, or intimate, nurturing relationships. A second characteristic of living in community appears to be the sense that the participants do so with intentionality and intimacy. John Dewey (1916/1966), American philosopher and educator, perceived that individuals "do not become a society by living in physical proximity" (pp. 4-5) and that a pair of correspondents separated by many miles might be more intimate than individuals living under the same roof. Therefore, community is not just a collection of individuals, but individuals who choose to identify themselves as a formed community and to live within that structure as intimates and not strangers.

Locality. A second component of the definition of community is that of location; that is, a "geographically-based human relationship between a number of people who know each other quite well" (Kuyek, 1990, p. 10). Kuyek, a Canadian activist, has written a book to restore a semblance of intimacy and intentionality in Canadian communities. Her understanding of community begins with a sense of locale. In CS theory, the geographical locale is usually the designated "service area of the school" (Olsen, 1954, p. 410).

Olsen (1954) identifies several features of the physical setting. These include climate, size of territory (e.g., a compact village, rural area, or urban site), topography, water, mineral, and forest resources and soil type and fertility (pp. 52-53). He characterizes the natural resources "as the natural inheritance of a particular community" that need to be "judiciously managed" and not exploited (p. 53). Olsen was one of the few community education theorists to provide an ecological perspective. Like other community educators, Olsen's understanding of the concept did not end at local borders but extended the sense of membership and participation in expanding circles of knowledge to regional, national, and global levels of "community."

Olsen (1954) developed three conceptual levels as a means to inventory the components of the setting: the material, the institutional, and the psychological. The material level refers to "the *things* people use or have made, as well as the people themselves" (his italics, p. 81). The institutional level identifies the ways of living or the *"mass of habits"* [his italics] (p. 82). The psychological level describes psychological motivations, attitudes, emotions (p. 82).

All the reviewed writings have emphasized the necessity of acquiring as complete as possible a knowledge of the locality before planning or undertaking community-based action. The development of such a thorough knowledge base may slow action, but the accurate collection of data may lead to planned change that is both more considered than reactive, and perhaps more respectful of land, resources, and other species.

Similarly, First Nations people understood the necessity of comprehending the homeland in its totality. Chief Joseph stated that the locality for First Nations people began with the earth beneath their feet, in recognition that "the measure of the land and the measure of our bodies are the same" (Cited in McLuhan, 1971, p. 84). However, the land is not merely a location for resource development or stewardship, but "sacred ground, it is the dust and blood of our ancestors" (Chief Plenty Coups, c. 1909, cited in McLuhan, 1971, p. 136). This territory is not iden-

tified with labels of nationhood, but is known as Mother Earth for "The Great Spirit is our Father, but the Earth is our Mother" (Big Thunder, c. 1900, cited in McLuhan, 1971, p. 22).

Although first-hand observation and experience is common to both perspectives, one difference is that the task of inventory is not so technologically dependent in the First Nations context. Instead, the inventory of one's locality must include the recognition of the relationships between elemental entities, each of which is distinct and unique, as the Great Spirit has placed each being here "to be an independent individuality" (Okute cited in McLuhan, 1971, p. 18). The autonomy, sacredness, and purpose of each being and the laws and relationships of all community members must be comprehended and respected because each "is a benefit to something" (p. 19). Location is thus conceptualized as a multidimensional arena with evident, active, and interdependent involvement among elements. Each entity performs a necessary function and requires the freedom to behave according to its laws for mutual benefit.

A First Nations perspective stresses the sacred relationship between the land and all other beings, based on a belief that the land and the attendant rights and responsibilities are a generous gift from the Great Spirit. Perhaps this sense of the sacredness and relationality between beings and the land should be incorporated as fundamental to descriptions of location in the definition of community, in order to accent the crucial spiritual-ecological relationship that has to be maintained in balance.

Location, as the second component of this definition of community, identifies the primary arena of communal living, an arena that can be inventoried and understood in a variety of ways. It is evident that the creation of community requires conscious formation of knowledge about one's area in order to act with intentionality, which supports balanced and healthy community life.

Shared purpose. The arrival of each participant to a community may be the result of accident or design. Community, however, does not appear to merely be a function of residency in a neighborhood, rural locale, or city. The purpose of and reasons for a community's existence may vary. To have purpose implies that reasons have been considered and accepted as a basis for being, or doing such actions as would maintain the continuity of community, and not harm neither the collective nor individuals in it. In First Nations cultures, these reasons are the laws of the Creator that are taught by Elders, who are individuals who continue to practice traditional ways of maintaining balance and minimizing harm. The concept of community includes the sense that individuals have a purpose based on publicly communicated reasons.

In Western civilization, with its distinctions between secular and sacred, manifest reasons for action are not necessarily based on a spiritual-ecological world view; rather, the necessity for reasoned, voluntary action is present. Dewey, writing in 1916 in *Democracy and Education*, argues that maximum cooperation is not community-minded unless all members comprehend the goal desired and are "interested in it so that they regulated their specific activity in view of it" (1916/1966, p. 5). In the case of community education, purpose has been based on reasons for the survival of the species and for the survival of democracy; in the case of First Nations, purpose has been based on respectful reverence and continuance of the sacredness of the life force in all species.

In 1950 Hawley observed that the "community conception arises from the consideration of the formation as a collective response to the life conditions" (p. 42). Hawley implied that a group will cohere if life conditions demand cohesiveness for survival. Community educators would not argue with this essential purpose. However, they have stated that the reasons for living cooperatively are based on humane and humanitarian values (Seay, 1974) and on the ideals of democracy (Everett, 1938; Olsen, 1945, 1954). All the theorists whose works are reviewed here discuss the need to create, sustain, and use aspects of a form of participatory democracy as a basis for healthy social interactions. In this discussion, democracy is conceived of as being more than a form of government. Community educators need an outlook similar to that of Dewey (1916/1966) who stated that genuine democracy is the basis of an "associated living, of conjoint experiences" that is threatened by increasing individualism and the widening of communities of interest (p. 87). Olsen (1975) believes that a profound authentic interdependence among individuals could be an antidote to such threats because "without that fundamental public sense of shared basic values, of widespread community aspiration, no democratic framework is likely to survive even for another generation" (p. 176). In this respect, a rational justification for living in particular ways provides and sustains an identified sociopolitical basis—democracy—for community-minded existence.

The basis for activities can originate from many ideological traditions. In First Nations, action is based on our several cultural heritages (e.g., Mohawk, Saulteax, Cree, Salish, etc.) as expressed in the Laws and Gifts of the Creator. The ideal result of living in accordance with these Laws would be the maintenance of balance and harmony among all entities. This ideological basis was reaffirmed in the *Preamble* to the 1985 Protocol of the Assembly of the First Nations. In this document, the Creator is acknowledged as the source of "Laws that govern all our relationships to live in harmony with nature" and each other. The Creator is also recognized as the generous bestower of rights, language, responsibilities, spiritual beliefs, culture and self-government on "a place on Mother Earth which provided us with all our needs" (AFN, 1985). Each culture has reasoned and compassionate justification for ways of living although individuals may not always follow the Good path.

Whereas First nations accent the spiritual nature of personal or collective purposeful activity, the Euro-Canadian community has created sacred and secular distinctions in living (although the sacred is not absent, as a number of Euro-Canadians are practicing members of different religious traditions and many people of all the traditions hold spiritual beliefs). Some Euro-Canadians also believe deeply in the Great Spirit and in compassionate caring for self, family, community, and the earth. The point is that in the First Nations world view it is inconceivable that a definition of community could be made without a recognition that community itself has been ordained by the Creator.

Whatever unique customs or rituals are practiced in a communal setting, the definition of community possesses the characteristic that the self-chosen reasons for the collective lifeways are known, communicated, and shared. If the reasons are public and accepted, then individuals would, ideally, act to uphold this collective code. In the case of community education, these reasons are based on the need to live and survive in community and to sustain democracy and social justice; in First Nations the reasons for interactions would be based on respect for the Laws of the

Creator, Laws that make actors conscious of the need not simply to minimize harm to all other life forms and to our Mother, the Earth, but to cherish them.

Expected outcomes. A final component of the definition of community is that of outcomes. In community education and First Nations, the outcomes can be broadly described as development of a sense of cohesive identity, self-determined transformative change, social justice, and community-based democracy. The bases may differ—that is, the Laws of the Creator, in the one instance; and humane and humanitarian values or political ideologies such as democracy, in the other—but similarities in outcomes can be found.

In community education, a sense of identity will be initiated, renewed, or maintained as individuals live, work, play, and share together (Everett, 1938; Clapp, 1939; Seay, 1945; Olsen, 1945). In a First Nations perspective the activities would be broadened to include prayer. The reassertion of political will by First Nations to actualize sovereignty and to facilitate decolonialization has regenerated a strengthened sense of local and continental community. The sense of community refers primarily to a cultural identity based on gifts—language, laws, culture, rights, responsibilities, and so forth—from the Creator. Thus one's sense of identity and community may be identified with terms like Chippewa, Mohawk, or Nishga'a, although the situation of Metis and isolated First Nations peoples in urban settings may make cultural identity invisible or less easy to experience. The cultural community has been less of a primary signifier in community education. The changing character of late 20th-century American society has forced a major rethinking of community identification from one of homogeneous, small-town Americanness to that of a multicultural pluralism.

In addition to the aspiration to create cohesive and identifiable communities, community education theorists and First Nations have cited outcomes related to self-determined transformative change, social justice, and democracy.

Self-determination. Twenty-three of the 30 selections about community education reviewed here contain statements that emphasize self-determination. Everett (1938), an early community education philosopher, wrote that authentic "understanding, mutual respect and significant accomplishment" to reconstruct positive and healthy communities could only result from "self-determined change by community members" (p. 442). Community-based study and action are founded on this basic tenet of local autonomy, with a complementary respect for the ability and willingness of individuals to engage in purposeful community action (Everett, 1938; Clapp, 1939; Minzey & LeTarte, 1979).

Similarly, First Nations, building on a history of resistance, have reasserted their right to self-determination based on an elemental understanding of the need to respect the autonomy of each life form and each First Nation. George Erasmus (cited in Cassidy, 1991), speaking at a conference on Aboriginal self-determination, stated that the First Nations have never surrendered sovereignty (i.e., autonomous self-government), "regardless of the fraudulent documents that have stated that we gave up all responsibilities over ourselves or that we gave up our self-determination and sovereignty. This is not our history" (p. 172).

It is, perhaps, cruelly ironic that some inhabitants of a democratic nation have been excluded from processes of decision making, and thus are forced to reassert their rights to self-expression, self-determination, and self-administration in order to retain their identity, their sense of self-worth, and their culture.

Second, community education is about planned change. Statements were identified in all of the 30 reviewed selections that supported the need for community members to create change. The changes identified are related to common needs, problems, concerns and resources, and coordinated use of resources to "meet these needs, solve problems and resolve concerns" (Piotrowski, 1975, p. 14). The planned changes described were primarily to transform socioeconomic conditions (Everett, 1938; Clapp, 1939; Seay, 1953, 1974; Minzey & LeTarte, 1979).

Community education theorists do not believe in the creation of change for the sake of change. The type of change contemplated is that which improves the measure of social justice (i.e., equity and right relations) for all community members. Olsen (1954) provided this rationale for community-wide betterment: "The good community is concerned with the well-being of *all* its people" (his italics, p. 69). Striving for the actualization of humane and humanitarian values (Seay, 1974), in a capitalist democracy rife with inequity, has been a continuous goal of community educators. Seay (1974) discusses the need to resolve inequitable conditions of living for community members (lack of affordable housing and nutritious food, and access to decision making). The hopes for meeting basic needs was most thoroughly described by Seay in 1953 in an enumeration of 13 areas of communal living that required collective solutions to reduce inequality and injustice. Thus the ideological basis of community education is based on a humanitarian interest in the welfare of everyone.

This sense of mutual reciprocity and caring for each other is also manifest in First Nations; however, it is not only a case of establishing outcomes of just social relations, but also just spiritual relations, in order to maintain a delicate balance of energy and well-being among all entities. The outcomes of living in particular cultural ways are those that will respect and revere the sacredness of all beings, demonstrate caring for Mother Earth, and show adherence to the Laws of the Creator, thereby upholding the stability of the community.

Thus this final component of the definition of community illustrates that particular outcomes are sought in choosing to live collectively. Whereas community educators seek social equity and justice for the *good* of all community members, First Nations seek to establish balanced relationships respectful of the life force shared by all entities. However, harmonious cooperation to achieve these outcomes is not always evident or easy. Sale (1980) argues that the modern complexities and malaise of living can be traced to the development of industrialized societies (p. 181). Rozak (1972) perceives that a genuine sense of community is not often present in 20th-century lifestyles. Instead, he comments that individuals often make do with the bad substitute of "politics" that resemble "institutionalized dog fights" and "grudging evanescent compromises" (p. 192). Thus the achievement of community and intended outcomes, albeit difficult to attain, are an essential component of the definition of community.

Summary of this Definition

Four components of the concept of community are described in this cross-cultural exploration. First, both Western and First Nations perspectives indicate that community includes the need to have more than one participant. However, the First Nations perspective would broaden this sense of membership from an anthropocentric bias to a more inclusive one that acknowledges the needs of all species. Second, both perspectives identify the need to comprehend thoroughly

the nature and inventory of the elements and relationships evident within a lo-
cale. Third, both perceptions are examined to identify that individuals choose to
live in particular ways for reasons that are specified, communicated, and under-
stood. In community education, community cultural mores are based on ideals of
humanitarian democracy, whereas First Nations lifeways are based on the Laws
of the Creator, with a respectful reverence for the sacredness of all forms of life.
Finally, both world views indicate that certain outcomes are expected to invent
grassroots transformative change and social justice.

Features of the Community School (CS) Concept

This identification of seven features of the CS concept is based on an analysis of
community education writings over five decades (1939-1989). Within this educa-
tional tradition is an aspiration to create what is called an *educative community*
(Melby, 1955) that is "person-centred, problem-oriented and community-centred"
(Hiemstra, 1972, p. 19). Clapp (1939), a CS pioneer and community education the-
orist, identified community education as being processes of social education, and
the CS as a mechanism of enabling it (p. 123). In 1943, Hanna and Naslund de-
scribed the CS as one that is "consciously used by the people of the community"
to meet their needs (p. 52). In the educative community, each institution (justice,
health care) would ideally consciously operate with this philosophy.

Olsen (1954) states that the CS is one where community members are enabled
through curricular experiences to "identify needs, set priorities and organize ap-
propriate educational measures to achieve these goals sought" (p. 229). Therefore,
in community education there is a stress on holistic educational activity that is
reciprocally shared by community members through processes of self-observation,
self-education, self-help, self-reflection, and self-evaluation at the grassroots level.

A community school can be described as one that has (a) community-based
research and knowledge; (b) extracommunity awareness; (c) proactive problem
solving; (d) educational activism; (e) participatory democracy; (f) intergenerational
connectedness; and (g) egalitarianism.

Community-Based Research and Knowledge

The health of a sovereign community will depend on citizens who are know-
ledgeable about their unique cultural heritage (AFN, 1988, p. 159) and Laws of
the Creator. Culture is defined in that document as the "customs, history, values,
and language that make up the heritage of a person or people and contributes to a
person's identity" (p. 6). A healthy sovereign nation also requires citizens who are
knowledgeable about contemporary problems, issues, needs, resources, and the
culturally appropriate solutions that are available. These needs require a com-
munity-based curriculum where the school "centers its curriculum in the com-
munity" in order to meet needs and solve problems (Olsen, 1945, p. 410). A
community-based curriculum, which involves learners of all ages would be ap-
propriate because curricular experiences from day schools, residential schools, or
integrated schooling were culturally irrelevant or negligent (Indian Chiefs of
Alberta, 1970; National Indian Brotherhood, 1972).

Olsen (1945) observes that European schooling practice seems to have evolved
through three stages that he termed book-centred, interest-centred, and com-
munity-centred (p. 475). The term *book-centred* refers to schooling that stresses
mastery of subject matter (p. 475). The theorists surveyed stresses community-

based curricular content and instruction for all ages that must be redirected from overabsorption with specialized subject matter to study of the immediate problems of significance (Everett, 1938, p. 448). In First Nations schooling, a book-centred education is not always necessary because there has been an honoring of knowledge that can be encoded in other forms; for example, in storytelling, in the work, thought, and discourse of Elder specialists, and in symbol and rituals. The term *interest-centred* refers to curricular experiences that meet the need of the individual learner (Olsen, 1954, p. 475). In First Nations schooling, an interest-centred education can begin to meet unique language, cultural, and career needs of the learner; however, these lessons need to be tangibly and coherently connected with the transition of community life from colonized domination to health autonomy. The term *community-centred* refers to curricula embedded in the local social processes and problems (p. 476).

In First Nations schooling, community-based curricula could be developed to address directly problems of a social (e.g., family violence), economic (e.g., inadequate housing or resource stewardship), environmental (e.g., contamination of water supply), or political (e.g., land claims or democracy) nature. Sovereign citizens who know how to collect researched knowledge about the conditions and events of their cultural community would be those more likely, as observed by George Erasmus, to be stronger and more involved in processing restructured self-government if "we have our people far more informed" (cited in Cassidy, 1991, p. 178).

Although the reality of a canonical curriculum content, mastery of which is measured by standardized test performance, looms large over First Nations' resumption of local control of education, even standard curriculum guides could be modified to address contemporary concerns. In the First Nations CS, community-based curriculum would vary in off- and on-reserve settings; however, common outcomes related to preservation of cultural heritage and activation of self-determination would be expected.

Extra Community Awareness
Communities are not isolated islands. We all live downwind or downriver from other communities. Community educators have often defended community education against accusations of provincialism or narrow-minded insularity and have expressed a recognition that one's community extends outward from the most immediate to the global. Kilpatrick (1938) believed that community educating cannot occur unless "self-regarding" and "other-regarding feelings and acts are balanced interaction" (p. 5). Manuel (Manuel & Posluns, 1974) also reminded that we must "learn to share this common bed without persisting in a relationship of violence" (p. 7). Both perspectives share an understanding of the common ground and need for mutuality and reciprocity. Therefore, immersion in the complexities of locally constructed community-based curricula could prepare students in methods to examine and to understand their communities as being in transition from colonized territories to independent and interdependent sovereignties.

The networking has begun. George Erasmus (cited in Cassidy, 1991) states that First Nations have worked with church organizations and are beginning to build alliances with labor, women's, students', and environmental groups (p. 178). However, the political realities of extracommunity awareness suggest that a community

school would be involved in public education programs to provide surrounding communities with information about self-government as directly related to locale.

Tony Penikett (cited in Cassidy, 1991) states that self-government will establish unique negotiated agreements with each First Nation individually, without "one set of rules for all First Nations" (p. 45). He describes the government-to-government relationships as ones whose powers do not need to be "seen as threats to other governments" (p. 145) and hence to citizens. The reestablishment of healthy sovereign nations will depend on intercommunity and intergovernmental relations where "mutuality can come only as each respects the wholeness of the other, and also acknowledges his [her] own roots" (Manuel & Posluns, 1974, p. 7). The role of the CS can be viewed as one of developing curricular experiences for citizens from local and neighboring communities about the operation of the Nations' unique form of responsible, local self-government, citizen responsibility, and the culture and rights to be respected.

We must know about each other. We must know, in order to avoid creating or perpetuating confrontations that frighten and demoralize individuals. We must know about each other in order to create informed comprehension of our communities' ability to influence the shaping of others' unfolding future.

Proactive Problem Solving

A CS that provides community-based study and curricular experiences with an extracommunity awareness will have a pragmatic emphasis on the active implementation of knowledge into action. Community educators, like Kilpatrick (1938), have stated that experiential learning that focus on practice problem solving is to be favored over the expense of "time and energies of dead problems" (p. 11). Twenty-nine of the 30 works reviewed here contain statements that indicate that community members must proactively solve their own problems. The methods indicate a range of pragmatic activities, from administration of surveys to identifying needs (Everett, 1938; Seay, 1945, 1953, 1974; Olsen, 1945; Minzey & Le-Tarte, 1979) to study circles, to town hall-style debates, to multi-age research teams.

In community education, the term *pragmatism* refers to a sense that knowledge must be useful and must be used to solve the problems of the everyday practicalities of communal living.

In 1938 Everett asked, "Of what earthly use" is knowledge if it does not directly relate to meeting community needs? (p. 443). Community educators believe that *finding out* also implies *applying* the new knowledge to persistent difficulties. Seay (1972) summarizes the problem solving educative process as related to curriculum in community education as a six-stage sequence (p. 18). He describes problem solving as a proactive process of schooling where students would "determine to solve a real problem" (p. 18). He describes this seven-step process as:

1. collection of facts to formulate a problem;
2. design of experiments and demonstrations to attempt problem solution;
3. participation in study circles to discuss features of the problem;
4. direct observation of the problem in the community to consider the solutions available locally and elsewhere;
5. development of projects related to the problem; and
6. usage of diverse instructional materials. (p. 18)

This problem solving methodology is almost universal and may need to be transformed to suit First Nations' perspective.

A problem solving-based curriculum in a First Nations CS has, in addition to understanding humane processes of self-government, numerous problems to apply knowledge to in terms of community development. The debilitating problematic of some First Nations communities is well summarized by the Indian Chiefs of Alberta in their 1970 response to the Federal Government's proposed *Indian Policy* of 1969. The Chiefs' document stated that

The basic problem in all its varying degrees of intensity, which is confronted by all reserves and their peoples, is that of poverty with all its relevant symptoms—unemployment, inadequate education, overcrowded and deteriorating housing, crime, alcohol, and drug abuse, sub-standard preventive medicine and resultant disease, apathy, frustration, moral decay, destruction of the family and community unit and total alienation from society. (p. 83)

Both community educators and First Nations activists have advocated that local control and self-determination must be fundamental to problem solving to create transformative change and social justice.

Clapp (1939) states that

Above all, it seems to me, the record should make clear that in community education one is never dealing with a fixed plan, a formula, or a ready-made organization, but with needs as they are revealed—needs and aspirations of the people. (pp. 255-256)

Community educators express that if problems are to be effectively solved, then local involvement is essential. This sense of independent self-determination is evident in the reassertion of First Nations to plan and to administer their nations. Olsen (1954) states the "paternalism" or a "dependence on 'Mr. Big' to solve problems" could lead to a malfunctioning in problem solving, especially those problems related to economic welfare (p. 70).

A community school in a First Nations setting could provide community-based curricular experiences that could assist citizens to develop proactive problem solving skills. As well, the problem solving process would need to be presented as ethically founded (morally conscionable in accordance with the Laws of the Creator) if sovereign nations are to be nurturing and just collectives. For example, a problem of community unemployment could be resolved with a collectively supported decision to open a toxic waste facility. However, ethical (and other) questions could be raised about short- and long-term environment and species health, and about the quality of the economic gain to be acquired. Olsen (1945) states that "knowledge without ethics is at best indifferent" to community standards and could destroy them (p. 35). Thus curricular experiences would need to illuminate the ethical nature of such questions and provide opportunities for dialogue about how actions can create imbalance, disrespect, or lack of reverence for the life force shared by all.

Seay (1945) observes that problems are consociate (p. 220). Because problems are interconnected, credible solutions can also produce further problems if effects of the solution(s) are not fully considered. As well, curricular experiences could be created to assist citizens to approach problem solving on a holistic basis, where the interconnectedness of the relationships are perceived, observed, and understood in order to develop effective rather than piecemeal solutions.

One caution about community education theory is that problem solving could be interpreted as an overly rationalistic approach. Reasoning is stressed in the literature (Everett, 1938; Seay, 1945; Misner, 1938; Hanna & Naslund, 1953; Olsen, 1945, 1954), but the emotional or affective realm of problem solving has not often been addressed. Kerensky and Melby (1975) are two theorists who do raise the issue. They argue that community educators cannot be expected to appreciate the affective considerations of community-based praxis if only the cognitive concerns are stressed (p. 148). Emotions must be acknowledged in community-based study and action, because misunderstanding can lead to conflict (Everett, 1938; Clapp, 1939; Olsen, 1945). Conflict has an emotional concomitant that can inhibit personal motivation to attempt problem solution; timidity, frustration, suspicion, and antagonism are some examples of emotional factors that result from conflict and that can interfere with problem solving (Minzey & LeTarte, 1979, p. 45). Such emergent and unresolved feelings could interfere with the stability of the transition to First Nations' unique forms of sovereignty.

Thus it would seem necessary to have community members understand that as problems are identified, studied, and discussed, there will be intelligent observation, thought—and **feelings**—expressed about the problem under discussion. In the First Nations CS, rationality could be balanced with the sense of wisdom and compassion embedded in fundamental values, such as those identified by McGaa (1990): sharing, generosity, and control of pride and ego (p. 45).

Collaborative Teaching and Learning

Twenty-three of the 24 theorists supported the use of educational process to achieve desired outcomes. Olsen's (1958) statement can be viewed as a summary of the intent of many of the theorists. He believes that community members of all ages must "learn to utilize educational processes as dynamic means for improving the individual's own life" in local and global arenas. The term *educational activism* is not used by the theorists. This term is introduced to identify the primacy given to "education as a means of change" (Hanna & Naslund, 1953, p. 62) where all community members are valued and respected as both teachers and learners throughout their lifetime. Thus the roles of the school and education are viewed, in both perspectives, as active processes where individuals are engaged with contemporary problems that have an historical basis, in order to develop long-term solutions that are appropriate to local, cultural needs, under the direction of self-government and self-administration.

In the processes of proactive problem solving, the development of solutions would be enduring, educated, and educative. Although Seay (1953) observes that other procedures are available besides community-wide education, to produce changes in behavior—such as high-pressure sales tactics or subsidization projects—the resultant change arising from educational activism is more likely to be permanent because community members are less likely to return to "old practices" (p. 3). Seay (1972) describes this type of change as one that "permeates the whole fiber of the individual" and "becomes part of his [or her] understanding as well as his [or her] way of doing things" (p. 18). Thus the CS model assists community members to create enduring and educational change. In the case of the reassertion of First Nations sovereignty the evidence of political will is strongly evident, but schools can play an important role in the education of this political will so that it will endure.

Teaching and learning are indeed lifelong responsibilities. In the First Nations CS, the problem solving process creates solutions that would help learners to understand that actions do have an effect, even unto seven generations and beyond.

Participatory Democracy

In community education literature, participatory democracy is characterized as (a) inclusive participation by all community members (28 of the 30 selections); (b) collaborative or cooperative processes (30 of the 30 selections); (c) faith in the individual community member to effect change-making (17 of the 30 selections); (d) respect for the individual (26 of the 30 selections); and (e) shared power in decision making (25 of the 30 selections).

Minzey and LeTarte (1979) use the term *participatory democracy* to describe the nature of community involvement envisioned in community education. Denton (1983) uses the term *direct democracy* to describe community-wide involvement and the localization of community-based action. *Decentralization* suggests to Denton (1983) a devolution of decision making to direct community control, a process that implies more immediate responsiveness, less bureaucracy, and a reduction in external decisions made that are divorced from or irrelevant to people's lives (p. 20); this mirrors First Nations' aspirations for local autonomy. Although Olsen (1954) does not use the term *participatory democracy*, he describes democracy as more than a governmental system, which he believes essential to freedom, but rather as a pattern for group living (p. 494). He describes democracy as self-government, equality, and "above all else a dynamic social faith in the ability of enlightened people to manage their own affairs with justice and intelligence" (p. 494). Thus the term *participatory democracy* is selected to identify the type of localized self-government envisioned by education theorists. Eleven of the 24 theorists directly recommend that time and opportunity must be made available for community members to share dialogic encounters. For example, Olsen (1954) recommends that community members need settings of informal association where people can "move, talk, argue and reach agreements" in relaxed, inclusive interactions (p. 98).

The reassertion of sovereignty implies the reengagement of all citizens in processes of dialogue and decision making, as those processes are related to problem solving and long-term planning. In the First Nations CS, curricular experiences would need to emphasize active forms of citizenship in rebuilding sustainable communities. For example, Elders and elected band council officials could provide citizenship classes to assist individuals to identify and to understand their role in newly restructured local governments. In the First Nations CS, school administration would have to examine models of cooperative self-government that are inclusive and nonhierarchical. For example, the hierarchical structures of schools with graded degrees of power and authority relationships (the familiar and always hierarchical arrangement of roles in schools: principal, vice-principal, coordinator, teacher, parent, students) could be reexamined and new relationships developed that emphasize equality of power sharing in the formation of the circle. Community schools might be those that operate on a basis of cooperative partnerships of teachers, parents, and students; or a return to more traditional forms of respected authority could be explored, with Elders serving as the guiding administrators of the school on a day-to-day basis.

Intergenerational Connectedness

Both First Nations and community educators share a similar respect for inter-generational interaction. Multi-age interactions can strengthen the sense of community needed to develop concerns and to direct unified community action (Everett, 1938; Clapp, 1939; Seay, 1945; Olsen, 1945, 1954). Twenty-nine of the 30 theoretical and descriptive works reviewed here recommend that individuals of all ages be brought together as active participants in community educating. For example, in 1938, Everett stated that as essential and common purposes unite all ages, opportunities should be provided for their interaction (p. 440). In community education, collaborative teaching and learning opportunities would be designed to reintegrate "age groupings that have been segregated for learning and social purposes" (Denton, 1983, p. 21). The formation of multi-age study groups, tutoring clubs, and research teams in a First Nations community school would strengthen community-wide dialogue and community-based action, and might begin to heal the tragic separations brought to some communities by the introduction of such foreign disruptions as the residential school and other externally legislated, externally imposed separations of age groups. In the inner city, such groupings for educational purposes could assist the generations to rediscover traditional, shared roles of teaching and learning and would allow members of different generations to construct an understanding of the processes of developing sovereignty without a land base.

Social Egalitarianism

Twenty-one of the theorists state that there is a need for inclusive participation by all community members. Olsen and Clark (1977) believe that change making would require the participation of "old and young, rich and poor, white, black, yellow, brown or red, of whatever religious, societal, and political conviction regardless of their school attainment level" (p. 90). Community educators believe that all community members should be viewed respectfully without prejudice as having the right to participate in community reconstruction. Again, this perspective overlaps with the First Nations perspective. Manuel (Manuel & Posluns, 1974) states that in a society where each individual is related by kinship, "it is the society as a whole, not merely part of it, that must survive" (p. 7). Equality is paramount. Humans may be more sophisticated and complex beings "but no nearer to the Creator who infused us with life" (p. 6).

These recommendations for egalitarian participation would suggest that strategies are required to develop and strengthen shared and conjoint engagement in community-based actions. In a CS, curricular experiences would need to model the value and equality of all community members, creating group relationships wherein power is shared among individuals, not riddled with relationships of dominance. The decolonization process will be rendered meaningless if dominance and dehumanization persist in any form.

However, community educators are realists and have expressed a critical awareness about the differences that can separate community members. If education is to be emancipatory, devoted to creation of transformative change and social justice, then curricular experiences will need to demonstrate the respectful acceptance of different points of view and knowledge, the inclusion of all voices in decision making, and the overt demonstration that power is to be shared and not

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hoarded. First Nations have personal experience with the fact that legislated and socially sanctioned inequality creates injustice and imbalance.

The Reinstatement of Sovereignty and the Need for Community

Many variables—political, spiritual, economic, or educational—influence the regeneration of healthy and rebalanced sovereign communities. The consideration of the seven features of a community school—community-based research and knowledge, extracommunity awareness, proactive problem solving, educational activism, participatory democracy, intergenerational connectedness, and egalitarianism—may provide some basis for description of community health and the level of community health required to ensure structural and dynamic stability and community inclusiveness sufficient to maintain endurable sovereignties. Community educators could benefit from the researched operation of community schools internationally. This is a model of education that does in fact seem to resemble closely many aspects of First Nations world view and to provide a way of articulating current First Nations needs in this time of transition.

Perhaps if both First Nations and non-First Nations considered the guidelines of CS to be an educational basis for community regeneration and government-to-government interaction, the possibility would exist for relationships of respect and mutual teaching and learning, in which enhanced democratic decision making could occur for all our children, who will be, all too soon, the new citizens of a shared global community arrayed in renewed configurations of localized sovereignty.

These are my thoughts.

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