

**THE EDUCATED SELF: PSYCHOLOGY'S
CONTRIBUTION TO THE EDUCATION OF CHILDREN IN
TWENTIETH-CENTURY NORTH AMERICA**

by

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ABSTRACT

Critical scholarship contends that psychology has provided ways of thinking about our selves that are consistent with the Enlightenment notion of persons as autonomous and self-governing. Utilizing this framework, I examined the interrelationships between psychological conceptions and practices of the self, and the education of persons.

I conducted a critical review of self, children and schooling in PSYCINFO from 1850 to 2008, and an analysis of self measures in educational psychology. Psychology's scientific measurements and classifications have produced an increasingly fragmented self, the various aspects of which are presented as amenable to research-based educational interventions. I also conducted an exhaustive review of elementary school curricula in British Columbia, Canada from 1872 to 2008, to understand the ways that public education has contributed to the production of children as selves. Conceptions of the self in school curricula, derived from psychological theory and research, have resulted in an elevation of goals and strategies of self-fulfillment and individual freedom over citizenship and civic virtue. I then examined how psychological theorizing and research on the self translates into B.C. elementary school and classroom practices and policies. Psycho-educational kits, programs and initiatives adopted at school and classroom levels emphasize personal expression and self-responsibility at the expense of social commitment and curricular content.

I contend that psychological theories, research, and practices have produced an empirical self that has contributed much to educators' understandings of the selves of children as discrete, calculable sets of competencies that can be developed and enhanced through instructional procedures. Whether the measured self is packaged as scores on self-concept scales, steps in self-esteem programs, or self-regulated skills and strategies, this

self encourages judgements, comparisons, and reshaping of students' selves in accordance with psychological conceptions and practices of self-fulfillment and self-management. Disciplinary psychology has played a critical role in advancing the notion of the radically free individual that is at odds with the notion of the active, responsible citizen. A shift to an ontology of persons contingently positioned as sociohistorically situated agents is necessary. On this view, individual freedom and civic duty are virtues that can co-exist in a community-oriented liberal democratic society.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

What is the purpose of the formal education of children in contemporary society? This question is critical to any discussion regarding the aims and goals of school curricula, and the instruction of children. Most parents, teachers, and other educational professionals would agree that the education of persons in a liberal democratic society entails more than the pursuit of academic achievement. In fact, the stated goals of public education in North America emphasize the production of persons as responsible citizens committed to a democratic society and way of life.

With respect to communal living more generally, we expect our children to be educated in ways that are consistent with our views of the good life. Of course, specifically what the good life might entail may differ across groups of individuals, but there is an expectation that we have the right to educate our children in ways that are broadly consistent with some vision of the good life that is at least generally acceptable. In other words, the notion of responsible citizen implies a constraint on individual freedoms, in as much as individual freedoms might possibly interfere with the good of the community.

Most of us would agree that we want our children to develop into self-assured, self-managed individuals who are able to think critically and set goals for themselves. At the same time, we want our children to be considerate and

tolerant of others, and valuable contributors to their communities and society at large. This thesis addresses the relationships between the development and promotion of the self as an autonomous individual and as a responsible citizen by critically examining the relationships between disciplinary psychology and the formal education of children as selves.

Recent postmodern, critical and social constructionist theories contend that there is an intimate link between the social order, the social sciences, and the study and “manufacture” of the self that is related to power relations (Popkewitz, 1997). Popkewitz (2000), for example, claims that since the 19th century, the governing of the individual in western societies has been carried out via the social sciences, which have organized the thinking, feeling, and knowing capabilities of the responsible citizen. In the early 20th century, the formation of the citizen was related to external, societal morals and obligations. This meant that teachers were to educate the child and the parent “to universal rules of national sagas” (Popkewitz, 2000, p. 4). Today, the formation of the citizen is related to internal practices of the self working on the self. This means that teachers are to guide the child and work in partnership with the parent to empower the child (Popkewitz, 2000).

Public education in North America is an endeavour designed to produce particular kinds of citizens. This endeavour is explicit in various education documents, such as curricular goals and aims that emphasize responsible, participatory citizenship. On the one hand this is no surprise, given the numerous school projects and events that are designed to educate children about the

rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship (e.g., learning about national anthems, statue history, etc.). On the other hand, such an endeavour might appear to be, and perhaps is at odds with the kinds of instruction that children, as students, actually receive (e.g., learning to be self-regulated, self-disciplined, etc). I contend that this is indeed the case - that the public education of children in contemporary North American society contributes to the construction of radical, autonomous selves that are incompatible with responsible community participation. Moreover, the discipline of psychology has played a critical role in advancing the notion of the self as a radically free individual at the expense of the self as a socially committed citizen.

In what ways has psychology¹ contributed to the education of children as selves? The framework I will use to answer this question is based on “critical history” (Danziger, 1997; Krantz; 2001; Rose, 2001, 1998), broadly defined as a careful analytic investigation of the past that enables us to think differently about the present, by examining the historical conditions that have made our current truths possible (Rose, 2001, p. 3).

Psychological investigations of children in school settings typically focus on the attainment of academic skills and other forms of scholastic achievement. These traditional investigations most often reflect the natural science view that anything external to the individual, including social context, can be separated from the core individual. In chapter two, I discuss the traditional approach to psychology and its history, and contend that this “scientific” approach is not

¹ The term “psychology” refers to the modern formal discipline of psychology.

adequate to the study of psychological phenomena such as selfhood. I then present a critical historical approach, which allows an understanding of psychological phenomena that appropriately situates persons in their historical, sociocultural contexts. I conclude the chapter with the “Psy” hypothesis, which anchors my specific thesis concerning psychology’s contribution to the education of children as selves.

The significant role that the discipline of psychology has played in the construction and education of persons is discussed in chapter three. I conducted a review of self, children and schooling in the PSYCINFO database from 1850 to 2008. During the first half of the twentieth century, there were relatively few studies on the self as anchored in inner experience. From the mid-century onward, the number of such studies increased greatly. Current investigations focus on ways to enhance children’s self-esteem, efficacy, and self-regulation. Psychology’s “scientific” measurements and classifications have produced an increasingly fragmented self, the various aspects of which are presented as amenable to research-based educational interventions.

I also conducted an exhaustive review of elementary school curricula in the Province of British Columbia, Canada from 1872 to 2008, to understand the ways that psychological research and conceptions of the self have been transported to the public education system, and have contributed to the production of children as “selves,” not simply as “students.” Chapter four presents an historical analysis of psychological conceptions of the self in school curricula, including the social and political conditions that have influenced

curriculum development in relation to conceptions of the self. During the first half of the 20th century, the child as self was conceived in terms of others. From the mid 20th century onward, the self came to be conceived in terms of fragmented self-processes and skills, such as self-esteem, self-concept, and self-regulation. I conclude that psychological conceptions of the self in school curricula have paralleled psychological conceptions and investigations of the self.

Public schooling is intended to support the personal development of students as individuals with the social development of students as future citizens. At the school level, it is the responsibility of administrators, teachers, and other educational professionals to provide appropriate instructional activities to ensure that school curricular goals and aims, are achieved. In chapter five, I examine how psychological conceptions of the self have translated into educational practices and policies at the school and classroom levels. I conclude that psychology's empirical self, often presented in the form of psycho-educational products, is promoted and offered for consumption by educators and students, and has allowed for the new emergence of what I refer to as the enterprising self.

The changing conceptions of self in psychology and their subsequent infusion in elementary school goals, curricula, policies, and practices reveal the critical role that psychology has played in the education of children as selves. The result has been the celebration of the autonomous individual at the expense of the responsible, committed citizen. The fragmented, radical self of contemporary North American society is insufficient to meet the requirements of an active, participatory, committed citizen. In the sixth and final chapter I discuss

the implications of the role that disciplinary psychology has played in the production of children as educated selves. I conclude with a brief discussion of what I regard as a necessary and corrective shift from an ontology of persons understood as radical, autonomous selves to persons contingently positioned as sociohistorically situated agents. On this view, individual freedom and civic duty are virtues that can co-exist in a community-oriented liberal democratic society.

CHAPTER TWO: PSYCHOLOGICAL METHODS: CRITICAL HISTORICAL APPROACHES

In this chapter I present the methodological framework of my thesis, which is a critical historical analysis. I begin with an overview of the traditional scientific approach to psychology and the history of psychology. I then discuss a critical historical approach to psychological investigations, including method and source considerations in the conduct of such research. I conclude this chapter with the “psy” hypothesis, which anchors the specific structure of my thesis concerning psychology and the education of persons.

Traditional Approach to Psychology and Its History

According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, modern psychology is defined as “the scientific study of the mind as an entity and in its relationship to the physical body, based on observation of the behaviour and activity aroused by specific stimuli” (OED Online, 2008²). More broadly, psychology is viewed as the scientific study of mind and behaviour ranging across such diverse subject areas as child development, emotion, learning, personality, and abnormal psychology. The American Psychological Association (APA) extends these definitions to include the applied scientific practice of psychologists: “in every conceivable setting from scientific research centers to mental health care services, ‘the

² Note: this definition is similar to other source definitions, including the Dictionary of Psychology

understanding of behavior' is the enterprise of psychologists" (2008a, p. 1).

Regardless of the particular definition of psychology, it is clear that this enterprise is dedicated to the scientific study of human behaviour.

The modern discipline of psychology is founded on Enlightenment philosophy, which espouses a view of the individual as distinct from others and self-governing (Danziger, 1997; Fay, 1996; Popkewitz, 1998). In particular, eighteenth century Britain embraced Enlightenment liberal ideals of representative government, individuality, and scientific reason (Popkewitz, 1998; Rose, 2001). Western psychology descended from this British empiricist tradition that replaced the old moral discourse about "revealed truth" with a new discourse about "human nature." For psychology, this meant that human mental experience was bound by natural laws. More specifically, it was psychology's challenge to describe and explain mind in terms of conscious sensory experience (Leahey, 1992).

From this perspective, the scientific method has been presupposed to be the best way to uncover the universal laws of nature. Psychology is thus based on a positivism that assumes that knowledge can be acquired only through direct observation and experimentation, and maintains: (1) that the scientific method is the method for all inquiry; (2) that the natural sciences provide the methodological standard for all inquiry; and (3) that specific historical accounts are explained under ahistorical, general patterns (Fay, 1996). I address these three tenets of the traditional approach, and conclude this section with a brief

discussion of recent criticisms of the traditional approach to psychological investigations.

The scientific method. The scientific method is a procedure that consists of the systematic observation and measurement of phenomena. In psychology, the scientific method allows for the objective testing of theories to determine which one best explains relevant facts. To this end, controlled observational studies, blind and double-blind experiments, and other scientific assessments of hypotheses, purportedly allow psychologists to grasp directly the facts of reality. In other words, reality is out there in the world independent of mind, and knowledge lies in the discovery of the structure of that reality. Thus, objectivism - the belief that objects exist independent of the observer (ontological realism) and can be known as such (epistemological realism) - is entwined in the principles of psychology's natural science methodology. According to this view of human experience, anything external to the individual, including social context, is reduced to the status of external factor that can be separated from the core of the individual.

According to the rules of observation and measurement, psychological constructs must be defined according to overt operations, so that such objects of study can be scientifically examined (i.e., objectively observed and measured). For example, "intelligence" or "self-concept" can be operationally defined and numerically measured as responses to items on self-report questionnaires. Hypothesis-testing is central to this knowledge-acquisition endeavour. Suter's (1998) "Primer of Educational Research," a traditional educational psychology

methods textbook, states that “almost all research hypotheses can be recast into the form *If A, then B where A* represents the independent variable, and *B* represents the dependent variable” (p. 66). Put simply, the purpose of psychological research is to test a theory about human experience using the scientific method. To this end, constructs are operationally defined as variables, and a research hypothesis about the relationship between observable (causal) variable A and observable (effect) variable B is tested. Based on the research findings, the theory is supported or refined, and subsequent research is carried out.

Physiological basis of psychological phenomena. Wundt’s (1874/1904) book entitled *Principles of Physiological Psychology*, is considered the first major textbook of psychology. This work linked mind and physiology in terms of concepts and methodology. Wundt’s method of introspection focused on the analysis of mental content through the measurement of observable effects, such as discrimination responses, reaction times, and emotional responses. Most of the work in the first psychological laboratories (of which the very first was arguably Wundt’s laboratory at Leipzig) was informed by work in mid-nineteenth century physiological laboratories that studied elements of the human body, such as vision, touch, hearing, reaction time, and other physiological reactions (Leahey, 1992).

At the turn of the twentieth century in North American society, there was a growing interest in applying a scientific approach to social problems, and for many this meant developing a social science based on the physical sciences.

From this point of view, comparative psychology occupied a key place among the sciences. It provided the important link between the biological and social sciences, and its investigations were expected to yield knowledge of basic principles about animals and humans (Brennan, 1986). This generalization of knowledge about animals to knowledge about humans in society depended on the use of the same language to describe and explain the physical activity of animals and the mental activity of humans. Not surprisingly, the new discipline of psychology adopted categories from physiology to describe psychological phenomena. In particular, the categories of stimulation (later expanded into “stimulus-response,” and “variable” terms) and behaviour provided a way of describing human experience that placed it far away from historical, political, and moral considerations (Danziger, 1997). This was consistent with the natural science view of human experience as natural and universal.

Comparative psychologists commonly used the phrase “animal behavior” in reference to their objects of investigation (Danziger, 1997). In a similar manner, J. R. Angell, spokesman for the functionalist school of psychology, supported the “rejuvenation of interest in the quasi-biological field which we designate animal psychology” (1907, p. 690, in Danziger, 1997). In 1913, Angell delivered an address to the APA on “Behavior as a Category in Psychology.” He asserted that “there is unquestionably a widespread movement on foot in which interest is centered on the results of conscious process, rather than in the processes themselves. This is peculiarly true in animal psychology; it is only less true in human psychology” (1913, p. 47). The same year, John Watson

presented a paper at Columbia University called "Psychology as the Behaviorist Views It" (1913). In Watson's words,

the behaviorist asks: Why don't we make what we can observe the real field of psychology? Let us limit ourselves to things that can be observed, and formulate laws concerning only those things. Now what can we observe? We can observe behavior – what the organism does or says. And let us point out at once: that saying is doing – that is behaving... (Watson, 1929, in Green, 2006)

In the period of behaviorism and neo-behaviorism, animal learning experiments supported the view of behaviour as something that "individuals" did (Danziger, 1997). The focus of study in these experiments (e.g., rat mazes, Skinner box) was the interaction of isolated animals with the physical environment in stimulus-response terms. The study of behavior as an activity of individual organisms also meant that any social elements could enter the arena of investigation only as external "stimuli." At the same time, the identification of behaviour in stimulus-response language expanded to include terms such as independent, dependent, and intervening variables. For example, Tolman's work entitled *Purposive Behavior in Animals and Men*, introduced intra-individual events as intervening variables which functioned as "behavior-determinants" (1932, p. 412). By the mid-twentieth century, stimuli were defined as "independent variables," and responses were defined as "dependent variables." Objects of investigation were defined in terms of categories such as "experimental variables," or "social variables." Importantly, the term "variable"

allowed for the investigation of psychological constructs that previously were excluded from experiments. For example, correlations among measures that were not experimentally expressible in stimulus-response terms (e.g., self-esteem, personality) could now be scientifically investigated.

Today, under the guidance of the scientific method, psychological studies continue to examine relationships among psychological phenomena, commonly identified as stimuli/responses, and dependent/independent variables, and sometimes as neurophysiological “stimulation” or “activation.” For example, studies on perception may examine the effects of present stimulation, while studies on learning and memory may investigate the effects of past stimulation (see Danziger, 1997, for a comprehensive history of psychological language).

Historical accounts as ahistoric general patterns. Psychology’s scientific mode of inquiry requires that explicit theories about psychological events and phenomena be corrected in light of new empirical evidence. Traditional historical inquiries, common in mainstream psychological textbooks and other historical works (Jansz & van Drunen, 2004; Krantz, 2001), reflect this natural science view of the history of psychology and its objects of study. In particular, traditional historical inquiries of psychological phenomena are interpreted as contributing to

a succession of progressively better theories, with development primarily attributed to cognitive factors: the analytic and experimental power of scientific procedure, that has allowed us to weed out misconceptions and bring us closer to the truth. (van Drunen & Jansz, 2004, p. 2)

For example, traditional historical works regarding the self are generally organized chronologically in correspondence to their contributions to the advancement toward current conceptions and theories of the self. Thus, the historical works of James (1890/1983), Erikson (1950), and Maslow (1943), among others (e.g., Freud, 1923/1956; Coopersmith, 1967; Bandura, 1977) are discussed in relation to their influences on the renewed theoretical and research developments related to contemporary self-constructs, such as self-esteem and self-efficacy (e.g., Pajares & Schunk, 2004).

These historical analyses emphasize important events, trends, studies, and psychologists as contributing factors to the progressive understanding of individual behaviour, as well as to the advancement of psychology as a discipline. For example, Hock's (2002) history of the *Forty Studies that Changed Psychology: Explorations into the History of Psychological Research* discusses psychological studies that are "arguably the most famous, the most important, or the most influential in the history of psychology" (2002, p. xii). This book includes a chronology of famous works by well-known researchers such as John Watson (1920), B.F. Skinner (1948), H.F. Harlow (1958), and S. Milgram (1963), among others. Hock informs his readers that

the studies you are about to experience in this book have benefited all of humankind in many ways and to varying degrees. The history of psychological research is a relatively short one, but it is filled with the richness and excitement of discovering human nature. (2002, p. xviii)

Critiques of the Traditional Approach

In recent decades, the traditional approach to psychological investigations has been challenged (e.g., Danziger, 1990; Rose, 1998; Williams, 2005) because this “natural science” view ignores the social, cultural, historical, and political embeddedness of human experience. According to Fay (1996), psychology’s application of natural laws to human experience embodies a methodological individualism, which explains social phenomena in terms of individual “behaviour.” Underlying this claim is ontological atomism, which purports that “human needs, capacities and motivations arise in each individual without regard to any specific feature of social groups or social interactions” (Fay, 1996, p. 23). Thus, social context is explained by individual dispositions, rather than the other way around. This interpretation of social phenomena, derived from the liberal ideology of the Enlightenment, breaks down the basic unit of social life to the level of the individual. That is, we see ourselves as individuals, not as members of a group (Fay, 1996).

Although the boundaries of the scientific method may appear to make the study of psychological entities more precise and the entities themselves more clearly identifiable, such limitations make the traditional approach inadequate to the study of persons. Danziger (1997) explains how psychology has rejected the archival, textual methods of history in favor of the experimental methods of natural science because scientific research is concerned with natural objects, not historical objects. Accordingly, psychological objects of investigation are understood as non-historical natural phenomena, not as historical, social phenomena (Danziger, 1997).

Psychology's adoption of seemingly neutral, asocial and apersonal terms, such as behaviour and stimulus-response, has reduced human social experience into external factors that can be separated from the core individual. The language of dependent and independent variables provides an even greater sense of neutrality in the description of aspects of the social or physical environment, as well as attributes of the individual. This new language has a nonreflective quality, which has the "resultant effect of eliminating the 'subjective' meaning of a situation and replacing it with a new-behaviorist explanation in which 'persons' respond under the 'influence' of 'variables' that have the solidity of physical objects" (Danziger, 1997, p. 171; also see Ash, 2005).

Psychology's goal of the progressive accumulation of scientifically-derived knowledge about human nature extends to historical inquiries within psychology. Traditional historical investigations, sometimes referred to as "Whiggish," portray historical events as having direct relations to contemporary research (presentism), a rational evolution (progressivism), and devoid of social, political, and personal influences (internalism) (Hilgard, Leary, & McGuire, 1991; Morawski, 1987).

A Whig account of history sees history as a series of progressive steps leading up to our current state of enlightenment. A Whig history of science assumes that present-day science is essentially correct, or at least superior to that of the past, and tells the story of science in terms of how brilliant scientists discovered the truth known to us today... Whig histories of science are typically internal, seeing science as a self-contained

discipline solving well-defined problems by rational use of the scientific method, unaffected by whatever social changes may be occurring at the same time. (Leahey, 1992, p. 35)

These, and other critiques (e.g., Ash, 2005; Cushman, 1995; Olssen, 1993; Rose, 1998) reveal the inadequacy of the traditional approach to investigations of psychological phenomena and the history of psychology. The next section presents a critical historical approach that considers the socio-cultural, historical context of human experience.

Critical Historical Approach to Psychological Investigations

Because understanding and interpretation are necessary in descriptions of human behaviour, some scholars (e.g., Taylor, 1995) have argued that the social sciences require a different methodology from the natural sciences. Dilthey (1883/1989) viewed science as a social institution and the pursuit of scientific knowledge as social practices that are historic and cultural. That is, science and its practices may be different in different times and places. This perspective acknowledges meaning as the central concept in the human sciences. A critical historical approach to investigations of psychological phenomena situates psychology, including its objects and methods of inquiry, within relevant sociocultural, historical contexts. This approach is seen in the works of Danziger (1990, 1997), Herman (1996), Rose (1998, 1999), and others. These historiographies have a commonality with critical theory, feminist analysis, constructivism, and interpretive social science (Morawski, 1987). Thus, a

historiography may guide researchers who are attempting to develop, for example, narrative accounts of the construct of self.

Historical research is both science and art. As science it is the conduct of historical research in a way that involves certain procedures of investigation and analysis. Some statements, such as “William James was born in 1842” produce little argument, given that we are discussing a particular person and the relevant records can be consulted. However, a statement such as “modern psychological conceptions of the autonomous self are instruments of social governance” is more difficult to verify because the purported facts involve issues of both definition and value judgment. In this sense, historical analysis is an interpretive art.

There is no single, definable method of inquiry, and important historical generalizations are rarely beyond dispute. Rather, they are the result of an interaction between fragmentary evidence and the values and experiences of the historian. History is a challenging and creative interaction, part science, part art. (Kaestle, 1988, p. 61)

According to the tenets of critical history, the past cannot be reconstructed, but we can construct a picture of the past that can be tested by the consistency of the various sources that are available (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000). The use of primary sources, such as those held in archives, is a form of applied research that involves a search of historical data, the appropriate exploration of those data, and the presentation of findings in a form acceptable to social scientists (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000). Primary sources

are the firsthand accounts of those involved in, or witness to, an historical event, such as documentary records and oral evidence. Some examples are policy reports, autobiographies, photographs, and curriculum guides. The fastest growing kinds of primary sources are internet-based, such as government, library, and journal websites. Historical researchers must recognize that firsthand accounts are produced with a particular purpose and audience in mind, and they must “understand these in order to appreciate the perspective adopted by the author and therefore the potential biases and interests involved” (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000, p. 80).

Historical researchers also utilize secondary sources. These are interpretive accounts of historical events written after the fact, usually by persons not present at the event (McCulloch & Richardson, 2000). Some examples are published books and chapters in edited works, articles in academic journals, and unpublished graduate theses. A particular source may be treated as a secondary source in one analysis, and a primary source in another. For example, a book on the history of self in school curricula written during the Progressive era may be a secondary source on the history of self in curricula, but a primary source on conceptions of self in the Progressive era.

It is important to recognize that primary and secondary sources are used by both the natural science and critical approaches to psychological investigations. However, the use and interpretation of these sources and the emphasis placed on them within these two approaches are different. The modern tradition examines historical sources as if they are indisputable facts or evidence

supporting a particular theory, while critical analyses may utilize sources as evidence or tools of a particular time and place. For example, Popkewitz, Pereyra, and Franklin (2001) illustrate how historians of education interpreted school differently at different times. In the early part of the 20th century, traditional historians interpreted the public school as an institute of democracy and progress. In contrast, revisionist historians in the 1960s and 1970s placed social regulation and control at the center of their inquiry, interpreting school as an enterprise of power and control that middle/upper classes held over racial minorities and the urban poor. In their Foucaultian analysis, Popkewitz et al. (2001) contend that schools do not simply function to reproduce the existing culture. Rather, like other social institutions, schools are sites of contradictory and conflicting goals, in which efforts of regulation and control are more implicit than explicit, and may be resisted as much as they are embraced.

Popkewitz et al. (2001) define their perspective as the “history of the present” (not to be confused with presentism), also termed “cultural history.” Cultural history is a critical consideration of the present by making its manufacture of collective memories available for examination and amendment. Cultural history examines the ways in which systems of knowledge organize our sense of our selves through rules of reason, action, participation, and reflection. This approach is in stark contrast to an “empty history” which paints a picture of “a universal, boundless human progress associated with ideas of an infinite perfectibility, an additive viewpoint whose illusions are of a seemingly continuous

movement from the past to the present, and whose methods have no theoretical armature” (Popkewitz et al., 2001, p. 4).

The utilization of both quantitative and qualitative methods may aid a critical historical interpretation of psychological phenomena as much as a modern, progressivist history. The use of quantitative data is limited on its own, yet traditional historians have written much about aggregates at the expense of other methods of examination. In the context of education (and applicable to psychology), McCulloch and Richardson (2000) report that documentary sources such as census reports portray a “top-down view of the history of education, and take for granted inbuilt power balances ...[which] lead us to view educational history through the eyes of the ‘winners’ of conflicts over the nature and purposes of education” (p. 115). However, if used in conjunction with other, more qualitative methods, quantitative methods can be informative in a descriptive manner. For example, a quantitative survey of the number of entries of the term “self” in online databases such as PSYCINFO during a certain historical period may inform a researcher about fluctuating interest in the self in psychology (see Danziger, 1990 and Martin, 2004 for examples of the use of quantitative methods in concert with critical work).

Critical historical researchers must place boundaries around a research project, determine what analytical tools, methods, and raw materials are available, and choose among them. Given these considerations, it is no surprise that historical research is broad and varied. For example, various types of historical evidence have been used in psychology to investigate such topics as

the contemporary understanding of childhood (Sealand, 2003), and the concept of “stimulation” (Danziger, 1997). The research question guides the use of sources. Documentary sources would be appropriate if one is interested in the presence of conceptions of the self in those documents; whereas a broader approach utilizing other sources, such as oral materials (e.g., audiotapes of classroom interactions or interviews with teachers), would be appropriate if one’s research question was the extent to which the self is emphasized in classroom instructional practices.

The “Psy” Hypothesis and the Education of Selves

Foucault (1988), Rose (1998; 1999), Martin (2004), and others (e.g., Danziger, 1990; 1997) contend that the social sciences in general, and the “psy” disciplines in particular, have provided ways of thinking about ourselves that are consistent with the Enlightenment notion of the autonomous individual. In this way, “psychology has provided powerful technologies of our individuality apparently manageable and controllable by ourselves and others” (Martin, 2004, p. 190). Popkewitz (2000) contends that since the 19th century, the social sciences have organized the “thinking, feeling, hoping, and ‘knowing’ capacities of the productive citizen” (p. 19). In the early 20th century, the shaping of the citizen was related to external morals and obligations, whereas today it is related to self practices through which individuals work on themselves (Popkewitz 2001). Psychological technologies of the self have been infused into educational practices, and have produced simplified conceptions of the educated person as removed from her worldly involvement with others. In many quarters, schooling

has come to be understood as the preparation of individuals who can work on themselves toward self-development, lifelong learning, and responsible life management (Popkewitz 2001).

I take the “psy” hypothesis as the framework for my thesis on psychology and the education of persons. In general, psychological practices support and perpetuate the notion of autonomous, self-governing, and self-concerned individuals who freely choose to participate in a liberal democratic society. In the words of historian Ellen Herman (1996), we Westerners now are “likely to measure [both] personal and civic experience according to a calculus of mental and emotional health” (p. 1). In liberal societies psychology has influenced practices such as childrearing, personal relations, business, and education to emphasize ways of thinking, acting, and feeling that place personal fulfillment and freedoms alongside more traditional civic virtues of sacrifice and dedication to common causes. The resultant tension between individual freedom and civic virtue demands a blend of governance and self-governance.

A critical analysis of the technologies that have been created to shape human conduct elucidates our experience of ourselves as certain types of persons – as free, self-governing, self-powering, and self-realized. Technology is “any assembly structured by a practical rationality governed by a more or less conscious goal” (Rose, 1998, p. 26). Thus, one can examine how numerous technologies such as schools, workplaces, governments, disciplines, or personal relations have helped to shape the self. For example, the school with its structuring of time, space, and relations among persons, fosters the individual’s

adoption of these practices to govern his/her own conduct, to relate to others, and to relate to him/herself.

The modes for governing the self in nonpolitical domains, such as the technical knowledge of experts, the organizational knowledge of managers, or the natural knowledge of the family, sanction political powers to govern the self (Rose, 1998). Rose argues that these technologies of self must be known and understood in ways that support political objectives. Thus, in liberal societies, practices such as childrearing, personal relations, business, military, and schooling, produce ways of thinking, acting, and feeling in relation to autonomy, virtue, and harmony, yet at the same time must not challenge or oppose social and political power. Rose (1998) contends that effective contemporary governance is concerned with the ways that free individuals can be governed to use their freedom in appropriate ways. In this sense, power is not about domination and repression of subjectivity, but about the ways in which influence can be exercised through subjectivity. Thus, an investigation in nonpolitical domains requires an analysis of the ways in which subjectivity has become a target of techniques of regulation. Foucault terms these ways “technologies of the self,” which are techniques that:

permit individuals to effect by their own means or with the help of others a certain number of operations on their own bodies and souls, thoughts, conduct and way of being, so as to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality.
(Foucault, 1988, p. 18)

Of particular importance in psychology and education is the institution of school that operates as a human technology and which supports and educates or trains persons in various technologies of self. School is technological in that it seeks to organize the activities of persons under a “practical rationality directed toward certain goals” (Rose, 1998, p. 153). School attempts to maximize certain abilities of persons and constrain others in accord with pedagogic knowledge steering them toward certain liberal objectives of autonomy, self-discipline, and self-development. However, the technology of school does not operate on its own. Psychological products or knowledge have been transported into contemporary Western schooling practices on various levels. For example, psychological procedures of authoritative observation and normalizing judgment have resulted in the individual’s adoption of these practices to govern his/her own conduct (Rose, 1998). Thus, an individual’s attributes and experiences can be compared to those deemed normal and can be adjusted accordingly. Psychology has become a technique for human management (Danziger, 1997; Rose, 1998) that has expanded far beyond psychological laboratories and investigations to the management and education of selves.

Conclusions

In sum, psychology is characterized as a science that is mostly value-free in its inquiries into human experience. The traditional approach to psychological investigations seeks to describe and understand human behaviour through methods modeled on the natural sciences. This natural science view holds that the ultimate goal of research is to discover the true laws of human nature using

the scientific method. The natural science principles that guide empirical research in psychology also require any historical studies to adopt the same themes of progress and refinement, whether the historical object of study is a psychological phenomenon (e.g., the history of self-concept) or the history of the discipline itself. The natural science view of psychological investigations continues to have strong proponents in psychology, as reflected in a recent article on the welcome return of science to the area of clinical psychology:

Despite the hegemony of postmodernism in academia and the denial of the biological foundations of human personality, researchers in the natural sciences recently have reasserted the causal influence of our evolutionary background on our psychological makeup... it is apparent that the guiding paradigm of the life sciences (i.e., evolution through natural selection) will have to be incorporated into any theory of human psychology. (Rand, 2005, p. 1185)

In contrast, a critical history of psychological investigations considers the relations between the objects of study and their social, cultural, historical, and political contexts. Knowledge is socially constructed, so “meanings and understandings are local, contextual, and bounded by the specific practices and commitments of individuals, groups, or both” (Krantz, 2001, p. 188). This approach examines previously established facts or evidence in a different light, and highlights areas of concern that were heretofore ignored or overlooked. For example, Rose (1998) examines the history of self from a perspective termed “the genealogy of subjectification” (p. 23), in which he defines subjectification “as

the processes of being made up as a subject of a certain type” (p. 199). This Foucaultian approach takes the individualized, totalized, and psychologized understanding of personhood not as the basis for a historical account, but as the location of a historical problem. Thus, this genealogy is not a history of the person, but a history of the relations that persons have formed with themselves in which they have come to relate to themselves as selves (Rose, 1998). In this way, the ontology of the human being is historical.

At the same time, as the foregoing discussion illustrates, there are guidelines to critical historical research. Historical researchers need to engage critically with theory and with available sources. Sources remain the core of historical research, and the intentions and biases of researchers play a large role in what sources are utilized, how they are utilized, and how they are interpreted. Because boundaries around objects of study are less distinct than frequently assumed in standard scientific methods, historical analyses may seem less objective, less controlled, and less precise than scientific methods of inquiry. However, the critical approach is appropriate to examinations of intentional, contextual psychological phenomena, and the histories of inquiry associated with them.

Critical history is distinct from modern histories that view changing forms of identity or self as resulting from broader social and cultural changes. Modern histories that adopt the traditional natural science approach to objects of investigation view transformations in ways of being human as the result of some historical event(s) in some domain, such as technological change, cultural

change, or changes in family makeup. In contrast, critical historical investigations make use of norms, techniques, and other social and political practices that place persons in particular systems of personhood. The next chapter will examine the influence of psychology on the education of persons, as revealed in psychological investigations and measurements concerning the self.

CHAPTER THREE: PSYCHOLOGY'S MEASURED SELF: A PRESCRIPTION FOR EDUCATORS

Almost since the inception of general schooling in North America during the 19th century, educators have utilized the products of psychological research to enhance student achievement. Yet, psychology does not share directly in the societal mandate of education to prepare persons as productive citizens. Rather, disciplinary psychology is committed to the study of individuals. Nonetheless, education has been of considerable interest to psychologists from at least the time of William James (1899). A summary of proceedings from the inaugural Education Leadership Conference convened by the American Psychological Association in October, 2001 (Belar, Nelson, & Wasik, 2003) reflects the extent of this interest: "Psychology as a discipline is important to teacher education; knowledge of learning, development, and behavior is essential for effective classroom teaching" (p. 681). In the brief history of the relationship between the institutions of modern psychology and education, psychologists have been dedicated to the scientific understanding of the nature of development in general, and learning in particular, while educators have developed, modified, and improved school curricula and classroom instruction to align with new psychological theories and knowledge about learning and development.

Psychologists are interested in moving further into educational institutions by promoting their professional services to educators, parents, and students. A recent issue of *Monitor on Psychology* dedicated its cover page and numerous inside articles to the education of students through “new studies on everything from using computers in the classroom to promoting the teaching of such skills as resilience and responsibility” (Clay, 2003, p. 50), and encouraging “students to become better critical thinkers” (Dittmann, 2003, p. 53). Implicit in such calls for psychological guidance in schools are conceptions and notions of selfhood that understand the selves of students and learners as autonomous, self-governing agents who require particular kinds of educational experiences and school contexts in order to flourish.

In this chapter, I use the “psy hypothesis” as a framework for considering the interrelationships among psychological conceptions and practices of the self, and the education of persons. To this end, I present a critical history of self studies in psychology as applied to education and a critical analysis of self measures in educational psychology, with an emphasis on their content, judgements, and interpretation. I conclude this chapter with a general discussion of the ways in which psychological conceptions and practices of the self reflect the construction and management of personhood in ways broadly amenable to the social management of such individuals.

I conducted a search of psychological studies on self, children, and schooling from 1850 to 2008 in the PSYCINFO database. The search requested title keywords that included self* and child*, school*, pupil* or elementar*.

Because few titles contained self and one of these other terms prior to 1930, I broadened the search for the period 1850-1930 by only using the keyword “self*.” I also conducted a search of psychological measures of the self across the four prominent research areas on the self in educational psychology, identified as self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation (Martin, 2004). Specifically, published measures of these four constructs listed on the BUROS Mental Measurements Yearbook online service were selected for a literature search of several major journals of educational psychology and educational practice using the ERIC database. The journals searched were *Educational Psychologist*, *Educational Leadership*, *Educational Researcher*, *Elementary School Journal*, *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *Phi Delta Kappan*, and *Review of Educational Research*. Because of its popular use in educational psychological research, the *Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale* also was included in the ERIC search, although it was not on the BUROS list. Measures across the four areas that received the most “hits” were selected for further examination. The self-esteem measures included for further investigation were the *Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory* (170 hits) and the *Rosenberg Self Esteem Scale* (88 hits). The self-concept measures were the *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale* (256), the *Piers-Harris Children’s Self-Concept Scale* (130), and the *Self Description Questionnaire* (120). The self-regulation measures were the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* (50) and the *Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire* (32). There were no frequently employed, general self-efficacy measures, given the task-specific character of these measures.

Psychology's Early Views of Self

In the late 1800's psychologists were attempting to establish psychology as a scientific discipline based on the physical sciences. The new discipline of psychology saw mind, often referred to as consciousness, as the primary object of study. Williams' chapter on "The Consciousness of Self" in his *Principles of Psychology* (1883/1890) is widely accepted as the first influential work on the self in modern psychology. James presented a theory of self as knower (I) and known (Me). His divided conception of the self provided a framework for investigations of the self by the new science of psychology. Initial investigations of the self centered on philosophical, theoretical, and biological questions regarding the self. Structural psychologists, such as Titchener (1911), focused on the reduction of consciousness to its constituent parts (i.e., the elements of mind). In contrast, functional psychologists, such as Angell (1907), focused on understanding the practical function of consciousness (i.e., the operations of mind). Self psychology (Calkins, 1915; 1916) attempted to integrate these two approaches by proposing that the self is made up of conscious elements and mental functions.

Researchers and scholars in the new science of psychology relied heavily on scientific methods in their investigations of the self. The earliest recorded empirical investigation of the self in PSYCHINFO, conducted by G. Stanley Hall (1898), presented findings from self-report questionnaires concerning children's sense of self, and recommended the objective study of the self according to the scientific method. Titchener (1911) also examined the nature of self-consciousness via self-report questionnaires, and advocated an examination of

the self through observable, measurable behaviour. John Watson contended that psychology should be a science of behaviour, not of mind, and that science must be based in methods that required reliable observations of behavior (1913). This adherence to the objective study of psychological phenomena allowed for the eventual domination of behaviorism, with its focus on observable stimuli and responses.

With the rise in behaviorist inquiries in psychology, studies of the self construed as inner experience were practically nonexistent from the 1920s to the mid-twentieth century. However, a small stream of studies explored young children's identification of self via paper-and-pencil tests and other observable indicators, such as the onset of the use of self words and pronouns (Goodenough, 1938) and pictorial self ratings of the physical self (e.g., Clark & Clark, 1939; Horowitz, 1943). Other studies examined the behavioural management of the self, commonly labelled as "self-discipline" or "self-control," and emphasized external factors such as daily schedules that contributed to the child's developing sense of self-regulation. For example, Brooks (1949), examined modes of self-discipline, and recommended a "daily schedule geared to the individual child's needs ...with natural or logical consequences for willful deviations from the planned course" (p. 85). Similarly, Hunt (1959) presented a list of 12 principles for teachers to help "pupils develop self-control with full recognition of the fact that some external control is necessary as children move slowly toward self-discipline." (p. 34). Such applications of psychological learning principles to aid children's development became popular beyond the scope of

scholarly journals. For example, John Watson's advice to parents on objective child rearing was published in widely available, fashionable magazines such as *Cosmopolitan* and *Harper's* (van Drunen & Jansz, 2004).

Psychology's Renewed Interest in Self and Its Measurement

In the mid 20th century, the humanistic revolt, led by Abraham Maslow (1954), took hold in psychology. This movement, a backlash against behaviorism, called for a return to internal processes and experiences.

Numerous studies during this time examined self-development, often in terms of the congruency between self and ideal-self (e.g., Lipsitt, 1958; Long, Henderson, & Ziller, 1967; Soares & Soares, 1969). Much of this research concluded that as children gain an understanding of human behaviour in general, they develop a greater congruency between their actual and ideal conceptions of themselves (e.g., Griggs & Bonney, 1970).

In concert with this resurgence of interest in the self, there was a significant increase in the number of psychological studies on the self. An examination by Martin (2004) of the word "self" in entries in the ERIC database from 1960 to 2001 revealed that most studies on the self focused on self-esteem (1,379) and self-concept (1,540). Educational psychologists of this era examined relationships between these measured constructs and other educationally relevant constructs, such as intelligence and academic achievement (e.g., Bledsoe, 1964; Engel & Raine, 1963; Phillips, 1964). The ERIC Clearinghouse defines self-esteem as a person's sense of general worth, and self-concept as judgments of the self in specific domains (e.g., "I am good at math") (ERIC,

2004). However, publications often blur the distinction between these two constructs. For example, contemporary undergraduate textbooks in educational psychology emphasize the importance of a child's self-esteem in academic achievement, and often include self-concept in such discussions, yet there often are no theoretical or practical distinctions drawn between these constructs (e.g., Kostelnik, Whirren, Soderman, Stein, & Gregory, 2002).

Notwithstanding this conceptual conflation, both self-esteem and self-concept are generally considered to be powerful influences on student achievement. In the 1960s and 1970s, investigations primarily examined relationships among these constructs, and others, such as intelligence and academic achievement (Bledsoe, 1964; Engle & Raine, 1963; Phillips, 1964). Piers and Harris (1964) developed a children's self-concept measure in 1964, which was subsequently revised and expanded, and is still widely utilized. Numerous studies examined correlates of self-concept, with results often indicating a moderate to strong relationship between self-concept and academic achievement (e.g., Ozehosky & Clark, 1970; Sears, 1970; Williams & Cole, 1968).

Many investigations in psychology during this period focused on the diagnosis and enhancement of children's self-esteem and self-concepts. Research in these areas usually involved the use of paper-and-pencil tests, such as the *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale* (Roid & Fitts, 1988) or the *Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale* (Piers & Harris, 1964), in which the respondent places a mark beside the statement that is most like him/her. Scores on such inventories

are then correlated with other constructs, such as academic achievement (Marsh, 1986). Results from much of this research were interpreted to demonstrate that increases in self-esteem or self-concept result in increases in academic achievement. For example, self-esteem measurement in preschool contributes “significantly to predictions of third grade academic performance” (Bridgeman & Shipman, 1978, p. 17), while global and academic self-concept scores contribute significantly to variance in academic achievement (Jordan, 1981), and children with high rather than low self-concepts attribute their academic success to their own skills (Ames & Felkner, 1979).

The blurred distinction between the constructs of self-esteem and self-concept is also indicated in the interchangeability of esteem and concept scales during this period. For example, studies by Kelly (1970), Trowbridge (1974), and Zirkel and Moses (1971) examined self-concept using *Coopersmith’s Self-Esteem Inventory*. Alternatively, Harris and Braun (1971) examined self-esteem using the *Piers-Harris Children’s Self Concept Scale*. Several other studies reported on definitional and statistical issues related to the self, including dimensions of the self (e.g., Guardo & Bohan, 1971; Richmond & White, 1971), semiprojective measures of self-concept (Cicirelli, 1971), and the application of self scales to different populations (White & Bashaw, 1971). Trowbridge (1972) examined socioeconomic status and self-concept, and contended that “the search for an adequate, meaningful tool to measure a child’s self-concept was the most difficult and crucial part of the study” (p. 532).

Several other studies examined the reliability and validity of self-esteem and self-concept scales. For example, Michael, Smith, and Michael (1975) examined the factorial validity of the *Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale* for different age populations, while Battle (1976) conducted a test-retest reliability of the *Canadian Self-Esteem Inventory for Children*, and Drummond (1977) examined the factor structure of the *Self-Esteem Inventory* and the *Self-Concept and Motivation Inventory*. The apparent need for the development of more accurate assessments of the self was indicative of the continuing dominance of the scientific, or at least psychometric, method in psychology.

A number of other studies and projects focused on ways to promote a positive, independent, and responsible sense of self in children. For example, Wang and Stiles (1974) examined a program called the "Self-Schedule System," and concluded that this program was effective in the development of children's concept of self-responsibility, including their beliefs that they could control and be responsible for their classroom behaviors and learning outcomes (notice that self-responsibility here refers literally to responsibility for one's self, and not responsibility to others). Mattocks and Jew (1974) discussed ways in which teachers could contribute to the development of children's self-concepts. They contended "that the teacher's role in shaping the self-concept of the child has not been sufficiently emphasized. The general goal of education should include encouragement of the child's dependence upon his efforts, decisions, and self-control" (p. 204). Hauserman, Miller, and Bond (1976) presented a procedure designed to raise the self-concepts of four children with negative self concepts,

and reported a large gain in self-concept score by every child exposed to the procedure.

Alongside investigative applications of self-enhancement programs was the publication of books on self-esteem and self-concept. Many works were directed to parents and teachers, and provided guidance and recommendations on ways to enhance children's self-esteem and self-concepts. Examples of titles are *Your Child's Self-esteem: The Key to His Life* (Briggs, 1970), and *Self Concept and School Achievement* (Purkey, 1970). Other books were written for educational psychology students, and included titles such as *Self-worth and School Learning* (Covington and Beery, 1976), and *Enhancing Self-concept in Early Childhood: Theory and Practice* (Samuels, 1977).

The measurement of self-esteem and self-concept continued into the 1980s through to the present, and many studies have continued to use the *Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale* and other standard, self-report measures of self-concept and self-esteem. Some additional studies have used Maslow's self-actualization theory as a framework for examinations of the self in children (e.g., Farmer, 1982; Parish & Philip, 1982; Nystul, 1984), while still others have focused on self-control (e.g., Humphrey, 1984; Mischel & Mischel, 1983).

A few investigators have concentrated on definitional and statistical issues related to self-esteem and self-concept (e.g., Shavelson, Hubner & Stanton, 1976; Winne & Walsh, 1980). Shavelson and Bolus (1982) examined subject-specific and general self-concept among adolescents using the *Tennessee Self-Concept Scale* and the *Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale*. They concluded that

self-concept is multifaceted and hierarchical, and that there is a “causal predominance for self-concept over achievement” (p. 15). Byrne and Shavelson (1986) examined the multifaceted structure of self-concept to determine whether academic self-concept could be discriminated from academic grades, and concluded that general self-concept could be distinct from but related to academic self-concept. More recently, Marsh, Hey, Roche, and Perry (1997) developed and tested the *Physical Self-Description Questionnaire* with elite and non-elite adolescent athletes, and concluded that these discriminations broaden our understanding of self-concept in school contexts.

There have also been attempts to get at a more complete or accurate sense of the self by revising and/or expanding self instruments. The development, testing, and subsequent revisions of self instruments mostly have focused on improving the statistical reliability and validity of the measures, and enhancing discriminations among various aspects of the measured self. For example, the *Self Description Questionnaire (SDQI)* originally examined self-concept variables across academic and non-academic domains (Marsh, Smith & Barnes, 1983). It has since been expanded to include the *SDQII* and *SDQIII* for measuring self-concept across age groups and the *ASDQI*, *ASDQII*, and *ASDQIII* for measuring academic self-concept across age groups. However, beyond such statistical and psychometric work, theoretical or conceptual issues concerning the self are rarely, if ever, considered. And, as Wittgenstein (1953) and Smedslund (1988), among others, have pointed out, it is impossible to resolve or clarify conceptual matters through empirical research.

An examination of items on self-esteem and self-concept scales reveals a focus on an emotional, personally-valued self. For example, *The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (RSES)* is almost exclusively directed at the respondents' feelings about themselves, without specific reference to others. Items on this scale reflect a general judgement of one's worth, as evident in items such as "I feel I do not have much to be proud of," "I feel that I have a number of good qualities," and "I wish I could have more respect for myself." The *Coopersmith Self-Esteem Inventory (CSEI)*, contains similar items to the *RSES*, such as "I'm pretty happy," "I can usually take care of myself," "All in all, I'm inclined to feel that I'm a failure," "I often feel ashamed of myself," and "I have a low opinion of myself." The self-concept scales also ask respondents to describe and judge themselves on similar items. For example, the 80-item *Piers-Harris Self-Concept Scale for Children (PHSCS)* contains statements such as "I am unhappy," "I am good-looking, and "I am good in my school work." Similarly, the *SDQI* has items such as "I am good looking" and "I like all school subjects" (Marsh, Smith, & Barnes, 1983).

These measures of self-esteem and self-concept seem to assume a sensitive, self-striving, purposeful, and self-concerned, humanistic self. Such a conception of personhood is devoid of any consideration of the self as historically, socioculturally situated. Indeed, any meaningful connections between the self and others are almost nonexistent in the items that constitute such scales and subscales. There are, of course, statements regarding one's relationship with others, particularly peers and parents. But, the degree to which one feels

that others “like him/her” certainly does not constitute a genuine social or moral connection to others. Further, statements such as “I am as sociable as I want to be,” “I get along with others”, “I’m easy to like” (CSEI), and “I am able to do things as well as most other people” (RSES) are more reflective of a radically isolated individual who acts dispassionately and instrumentally on the social world. There is little here that reflects a socially committed citizen who acts dutifully and/or virtuously in a communal context. Greer’s (2003) genealogy of self research and measures in psychology reveals a similar theme of a general lack of integration of the measured self with meaningful moral and social commitment. “Questions of agency, intentionality, reflexivity, and moral judgment are gaps left behind in the wake of the disciplinary transformation of the self” (Greer, 2003, p. 101).

Contemporary Studies of the Self

Studies on self-efficacy and self-regulation lagged far behind the number of studies on self-esteem and self-concept during the 1960s and 1970s. However, in the 1980s and 1990s, interest in self-efficacy and self-regulation increased greatly, with the number of such studies more than doubling during the 1990s (Martin, 2004). This trend followed the cognitive revolution in psychology that saw psychologists shift their interests and commitments to information-processing views of human functioning. Many studies viewed self in relation to information-processing, problem-solving, and general skill acquisition. In this climate, psychological research on self-efficacy and self-regulation began to flourish, and is still thriving. The number of investigations of children’s academic

achievement and self-efficacy (e.g. Schunk, 1981, 1982; Schunk & Hanson, 1985; also see Bandura, 1993) and self-perceptions of ability (e.g., Altermatt, Pomerantz, Ruble, Frey, & Greulich, 2002; Blumenfeld, Pintrich, Meece, & Wessels, 1982; Pintrich & Blumenfeld, 1985) increased noticeably. Other studies examined relationships among academic achievement, self-regulation, self-monitoring, and self-instruction (e.g., Arnold & Clement, 1981; Fish & Pervan, 1985; Harris, 1990; Stright & Supplee, 2002).

The ERIC literature search revealed that there have been no consistently popular self-efficacy measures in educational psychological research. Nonetheless, self-efficacy is considered an important concept in contemporary psychological research, and numerous studies have examined students' efficacy within specific subject areas (Bandura, 1993; Pajares, 1996), utilizing various task-specific, context-specific measures of self-efficacy (e.g., focused on student self-efficacy, academic efficacy, and collective school-based efficacy within particular academic situations). According to Bandura, self-efficacy concerns "people's beliefs about their capabilities to exercise control over their own level of functioning and over events that affect their lives" (1993, p. 118). Self-efficacy is considered to be a strong influence on task engagement, performance, persistence, and use of academic or social coping strategies. At the same time, feedback, self-assessments, and environmental cues are considered important influences on self-efficacy (Bruning, Schraw, Norby, & Ronning, 2004). Even though there are few standard measures of self-efficacy, researchers assert that

“the empirical connection between self-efficacy and academic performances and achievement has by now been reasonably secured” (Pajares, 1996, p. 563).

Self-efficacy beliefs are viewed as integral to self-regulation (Bruning et al., 2004), and educational psychological investigations often examine these two concepts in relation to one another. For example, Pintrich and De Groot (1990) examined relationships among motivation, self-regulated learning, and academic achievement, and concluded that self-regulated learning is related closely to self-efficacy beliefs. Sawyer and Harris (1992) examined the effects of a self-regulation intervention on the self-efficacy of grades 5 and 6 students with learning disabilities, with results indicating greater improvement for students in the experimental condition. Zimmerman and Martinez-Pons (1990) examined students' self-regulated learning strategies, verbal and mathematical self-efficacy beliefs, and academic performance, and argued for a triadic view of self-regulated learning based on these three constructs.

Self-efficacy is also closely linked to self-concept. However, as Pajares (1996) remarks, “the conceptual difference between self-efficacy and self-concept is not always clear to researchers or in investigations” (p. 560). One way that psychologists attempt to differentiate these constructs is by viewing self-efficacy as context-specific and self-concept as more global (Pajares, 1996, p. 561). For example, note the difference between the item “I am good at math” (self-concept) and the item “I am confident that I can solve this math problem” (self-efficacy). In this way, self-concept is viewed as an appraisal of one's overall ability in a particular area, while self-efficacy is a judgement of one's ability to

complete a particular task (“Can I do this?”). Self-efficacy beliefs are considered “excellent predictors of choice and direction of behavior” (Pajares, 1996, p. 570), and “a strong sense of efficacy enhances human accomplishment and well being in countless ways” (Pajares, 2002, p. 10; see also Bandura, 1993). Apparently self-efficacy is essential to healthy human functioning, by influencing “the choices we make [and] the effort we put forth” (Pajares, 2002, p. 10).

Self-regulation is also considered to be a powerful predictor of human functioning. Self-regulation is defined as a “learner’s intentional monitoring and managing of cognitive and motivational strategies and the learning environment to advance toward goals of instructional tasks” (Winne & Perry, 1994, p. 213). There has been relatively little research utilizing specific standardized measures of self-regulation. Most of the studies that are available use self-regulation measures to focus on the usefulness of self-regulation in predicting students’ academic achievement. For example, Albaili (1997) used the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* to examine differences between high, average, and low-achieving students, and concluded that motivation was the strongest factor in discriminating these groups of students. Miller and Byrnes (2001) examined the utility of a self-regulation model of decision-making as a predictor of adolescents’ academic decision-making, and concluded that students’ decision-making competency and valuing of academic goals were strong predictors of academic achievement.

More generally, psychological research on self-regulation focuses on the understanding and promotion of self-regulation in school contexts. Thus, many

studies tend to be intervention-based. For example, Butler (1998) examined the efficacy of an instructional model designed to enhance self-regulation among students with learning disabilities. In another study, Zimmerman (1997) examined the effects of goal-setting and self-monitoring phases of self-regulation on a motor task performed by female students and concluded that shifting from process to outcome goals results in better achievement than focusing on process goals alone.

The most popular self-regulation instruments are the *Motivated Strategies for Learning Questionnaire (MSLQ)* and *The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI)*. The *MSLQ* is a 56-item Likert-style self-report inventory that assesses student motivation, cognitive and metacognitive strategy use, and effort management (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990). The items on this measure “were adapted from various instruments used to assess student motivation, cognitive strategy use, and metacognition” (Pintrich & DeGroot, 1990, p. 34). The *MSLQ* was originally designed for college students, and has been adapted for use with younger students. Examples of items on the *MSLQ* are: “I expect to do very well in this class,” (self-efficacy), “Understanding this subject is important to me” (intrinsic value), “I worry a great deal about tests”(test anxiety), “When I study I put important ideas into my own words” (cognitive strategy use), and “I work hard to get a good grade even when I don’t like a class” (self-regulation). These items are almost exclusively focused on students’ use of strategies and skills to reach academic goals.

The Learning and Study Strategies Inventory (LASSI) is a 90-item self-report inventory designed to test university students' use of study strategies and methods. The *LASSI* is comprised of 10 scales that measure different groups of learning strategies and study attitudes. The 10 scales are anxiety, attitude, concentration, information processing, motivation, scheduling, selecting main ideas, self-testing, study aids, and test strategies (Weinstein, Goetz, & Alexander, 1988). The *LASSI* is very similar to the *MSLQ* in its measurement of strategies and skills. Examples of items on the *LASSI* are: "When I begin an examination, I feel pretty confident that I will do well" (anxiety), "Success in school is very important to me" (attitude), "I concentrate fully when studying" (concentration), "When I study, I try to somehow organize the material in my mind" (information processing), "I read the textbooks assigned for my classes" (motivation), "I make good use of daytime study hours between classes" (scheduling), "My underlining is helpful when I review text material" (selecting the main idea), "I go over homework assignments when reviewing class materials" (self-testing), "I make sample charts, diagrams, or tables to summarize material in my courses" (study aids), and "I think through the meaning of test questions before I begin to answer them" (test strategies).

An examination of items on the *MSLQ* and the *LASSI* reveals a cognitive, managerial self made up of componential parts and processes. Items on these measures reflect a model of the self-regulated student who has a positive attitude toward studying, utilizes appropriate strategies to perform well, and maintains motivation to achieve. Measures and studies of self-efficacy and self-regulation

are focused almost exclusively on goal-related activities within the school context. At the same time, this componential self works in relative isolation, and is focused on acquiring and improving skills and strategies directed at self-determined goals. According to the conclusions of much of the research, and reflected in the items on the self-regulation measures, the successful individual is a rational, calculating scientist/practitioner, able to scrutinize her own practices, consider alternative solutions to a problem, and implement appropriate steps to become, and continue to be, a successful student. Items such as “I work hard to get a good grade” and “I make sample charts, diagrams, or tables to summarize material in my courses” reflect a self that is an information-processor, capable of rational planning, decision-making, and execution of skills and strategies to meet a rationally and personally determined goal. There is little or no reference to a sociocultural or moral connection to others. Rather, “the central concern is for an individual actor capable of simultaneous action and reflection on this action” (Martin, 2004, p. 193).

Conclusions

The historical review of psychological studies and measures of the self conducted herein reveals a number of trends related to investigations of the self, children, and schooling since the beginning of modern psychology. Initial interest in the self was limited, and focused on philosophical and theoretical concerns. In the middle part of the twentieth century, investigations shifted to particular aspects of the self, especially self-esteem and self-concept, with a focus on ways to improve the self-esteem and self-concepts of children in school settings.

Current investigations continue to examine the functions, and potential means of enhancing not only self-esteem and self-concept, but also (and increasingly) self-efficacy and self-regulation in academic settings. These trends are consistent with Martin's (2004) review of self studies from 1900 to 2000 in the PSYCINFO database. His search revealed that the total number of articles during this entire period that contained the word self in their titles totaled 45,594. The number of such articles prior to 1950 (1,434 entries), was easily eclipsed during the 1960s (2,904 entries), with a steady surge in the number of works on self in psychology since then.

The humanistic revolt contributed to the initial upsurge of interest in the self amongst psychologists, and the cognitive revolution promoted a view of the self in terms of information-processing, problem-solving, and general skill acquisition. At the same time, psychology's scientific methods, particularly the translation of psychological phenomena into observable variables (see chapter one) allowed for the measurement of the self in ways previously unavailable. Measurements and investigations of the self steadily grew throughout the twentieth century and continue today. Self-report measures are used extensively in investigations of the self across the research areas of self-esteem (humanistically-driven), self-concept (developmentally-driven), self-efficacy, and self-regulation (both cognitively-driven). And, there is no indication that the number of investigations focused on the self will slow down. Indeed, the continuing refinement, expansion, and development of self measures have allowed for further and different investigations of aspects of the self across all

areas of psychology and schooling. Today, many psychological investigations of the self examine children's self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation in reading, mathematics, physical education, and other specific school domains, and many other studies focus on ways to improve children's self-regulation and increase their self-esteem.

The Empirical Self

At first glance, the wholistic, humanistic self reflected in self-esteem and self-concept measures may appear at odds with the componential, cognitive self reflected in self-efficacy and self-regulation measures. Items such as "I'm pretty sure of myself," and "I can usually take care of myself" on the *Coopersmith Self Esteem Inventory*, and "I am a good person," and "When I grow up I will be an important person," on the *Piers-Harris Children's Self-Concept Scale* seem to reflect a humanistic conception of the self that is confident, self-affirming, and striving toward self-fulfillment. In contrast, items such as "When I study, I try to somehow organize the material in my mind," and "I make good use of daytime study hours between classes" on the *Learning and Study Strategies Inventory* appear to reflect a cognitive conception of the self that is strategic, productive, and goal-oriented. The affective, humanistic self and the managerial, cognitive self may appear at odds. However, an underlying commonality exists between these two conceptions of the self. This commonality is the empirical self – a self that operates at an inner level and which can be known to itself.

The empirical self is autonomous, rational, goal-oriented, and self-monitoring. It is masterful in its skills and potentials. It is self-regulating, self-

fulfilling, and engaged in life-long learning. “Both academic tasks and social experience can be mastered by the masterful self’s attention to its own basic organismic tendencies and potentials on the one hand and to its metacognitive, strategic ruminations on the other” (Martin, 2004, p. 197). The masterful, empirical self may work to a limited degree to enhance academic achievement, but it is what Cushman (1995) refers to as an empty self. As shall be discussed later, the empty self is devoid of social and cultural tradition and is inadequate for the kind of citizenship required in a complex, social and moral world.

The interpretive analysis conducted herein further reveals the empirical, masterful self of psychology as a measured self. The development, refinement, and use of psychological measures have transformed the self from an elusive complex amalgam of experiential qualities to a visible, quantified set of scores on paper-and-pencil tests. The various measures of self-esteem, self-concept, or self-regulation reflect a calculable, componential, divisible self that can be calibrated precisely. Individuals now can be measured and evaluated in relation to these various measures of the self, both intrapersonally (e.g., “my academic self lags behind my physical self”), and interpersonally (e.g., “my self-esteem is higher than my friend’s self-esteem”).

Moreover, measured valuations of the self are normalized. All you need to do is to master the necessary skills and strategies to score highly, and you too will be happy and successful. In the eyes of most educational psychologists, and those whom they have influenced, a student who has high self-esteem, a strong self-concept, or is self-regulated has the requisite makings of a successful

student. But that is not all. Students who follow their own goals, even when these are not supportive of the goals of others, are admired as self-worthy and sure of themselves. And somehow it is implicitly presumed that these same skills and strategies will prepare students for responsible, socially-committed citizenship.

School is a socializing endeavour that is committed to the development of students as future citizens by emphasizing commitment to work, family, and society. However, at the same time, psychologists expect the student to feel good about herself and to pursue goals related to personal achievement. Consequently, much psychological research in educational settings seeks to establish conditions that foster high positive scores on psychological measures of self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. Through constant comparison and measurement, individual students can develop their self skills and attitudes, and become fulfilled. However, such aspirations and methods may come at a price. The modern psychological self, derived in part from psychological technologies, may promise a sense of autonomy and success, but also may occasion

...constant self doubt, a constant scrutiny and evaluation of how one performs, the construction of one's personal part in social existence as something to be calibrated and judged in its minute particulars. Even pleasure has become a form of work to be accomplished with the aid of professional expertise and under the aegis of scientifically codified knowledge. The self becomes the target of reflexive objectifying gaze, committed not only to its own technical perfection but also to the belief that

'success' and 'failure' should be construed in the vocabulary of happiness, wealth, style, and fulfillment and interpreted as consequent upon the self-managing capacities of the self. (Rose, 1998, p. 243)

Investigative practices related to the empirical, measured self also reveal the practical focus of much self-related inquiry in psychology. Through the efforts of psychologists, the concepts of self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation have become integrated with school achievement. Many research and intervention efforts now focus on the development of programs designed to increase these measured aspects of the self. Most contemporary self measures ask respondents to rate themselves on skills and strategies in the classroom, such as having good ideas and liking school subjects. Of course, demands by educators (teachers, administrators, school trustees) to obtain practical information from psychologists in the form of skills, strategies, and programs that may be easily transported to the classroom have at least partly driven the objects and purposes of research in educational psychology. However, educational psychologists have not shied away from marketing their wares. A far-reaching consequence of much self research in psychology has been the manufacture of marketable products (Danziger, 1997) for consumption by educators (see chapter five). Perhaps psychology has been influenced as much by education as education has by psychology. Obviously, both are nested within a larger culture of individualism and consumerism, especially in North America. Nonetheless, the self research of educational psychologists does much to contribute to this state of affairs. In the words of Albert Bandura (2001), "the psychological franchise is a

burgeoning enterprise worthy of acclamation... As an integrative core discipline, we will continue to create knowledge to advance human understanding and betterment” (p. 22).

There can be little question that psychological measurements of individuals' traits and skills, and the research that has employed such measurements, have contributed to educators' understandings of students' selves as calculable sets of competencies that can be worked on and improved through instructional procedures. For example, it is now common for teachers to urge students to engage in positive self-talk as a means of enhancing their self-efficacy in the belief that any such enhancement will pay dividends in elevated academic achievement. Moreover, in the minds of many educators, psychologists, and others (e.g., parents), such efforts also are intended to contribute to the production of citizens capable of contributing to the common good. In the next chapter, I will show how psychological conceptions of the self have become infused in school curricula and often depict the individualistic, autonomous self as the desirable future citizen.

CHAPTER FOUR: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF: THE SHAPING OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CURRICULA

Throughout modern Western history, the broad goals of school have been to teach children the knowledge, norms, and conventions of society, and how to live as democratic citizens. Goals of education that extoll the development of intellectual, personal, and social competence of individual students are thought to contribute to the collective good in that such individuals will be both self-supporting and socially productive. Psychology has been a major contributor to efforts to balance individual fulfillment and responsible citizenship through its investigations and theories of the self (Rose, 1999). To understand further and more concretely how psychological theory and research on the self have influenced the education of persons, I present a critical historical examination of changing conceptions of the self in elementary school curricula from the inception of the B.C. School Act in 1872 to 2008.

Education in British Columbia: Background

During the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, the effects of industrialization were taking their toll on life in Canada, and B.C. in particular felt much social unrest, due primarily to the influx of settlers into the province upon the arrival of the Canadian Pacific Railway (Barman, 1995; Dunn, 1980). Politicians, businessmen, teachers and others felt that industrialization had

weakened the traditional institutions of family and church that had formerly transmitted moral, social, and cultural values (Dunn, 1980). Educational reformers claimed that efficiency was a panacea for the social ills of the day (e.g., racism, poverty, confrontation between capital and labor) and aimed to shape students to society's needs by instructing students to consider their first duty as service to their community (Dunn, 1980). A mass school system modeled on the ordered, centralized manner of industry was viewed as the most effective way to achieve that end.

The Public Schools Act of B.C. was passed in 1872, and prescribed education as compulsory for all children between the ages of seven and fourteen, provided that a school existed within a reasonable distance of the child's home (B.C. Department of Education, 1913). Elementary school was defined as "common" school and grades were divided into junior, intermediate, and senior. Although there was a formal exam at the senior grade that granted a certificate to high school to those students who passed the exam, it was the teacher who determined when a student was ready to move to the next grade in the common school program. Yet, in the early years of the Act, the only requirement to teach was to pass a knowledge-based examination, and most of those who took up teaching did so for short-term, utilitarian reasons, such as the need for ready employment (Barman, 1995). Moreover, "in the early days of the working of the Act almost complete discretion was allowed to the teacher as to the course of

study which his pupils were to pursue, ...little more than the three 'R's was taught" (B.C. Department of Education, 1913, p. 5).³

In 1901, Vancouver established the first Normal school for teacher training, and the provincial education board provided licences to those who successfully passed the training requirements (Sheehan & Wilson, 1995). The Normal school would provide some uniformity, at least with respect to teaching methods. Although such requirements were enacted in 1901, curricular changes were slow in arriving. A frustrated school inspector reported in 1906, "How is it that in education alone people are slower to keep up with the requirements necessitated by changed conditions than in the lines of industrial and commercial life?" (1906, p. 38).

Self in Curricula During the First Half of the Twentieth Century

Self as Identification with Others (c. 1900s-1930s)

In 1913 the B.C. Department of Education provided formal curricula for teachers, entitled *Courses of Study for the Public, High and Normal Schools of British Columbia*. Each grade had prescribed courses of study and texts, and provincial inspectors were granted authority to regulate and sanction methods of teaching. At the same time, it was explicitly stated throughout the courses of study that "great discretion" (p. 20) and "full scope" (p. 22) were to be given to the teacher in selection of topics. Although there was no direct mention of the self, there was recognition of the child's mental ability and interest as central to

³ For all subsequent B.C. curricula citations, the page numbers that appear are the curricula page numbers for the year in which the cited curricula appeared.

teaching. For example, the geography curriculum “should be made as interesting as possible, and, especially for children, this is best done when the aid of their fingers is brought to assist their mental work” (p. 18). The history curriculum emphasized biography as the “staple subject” for the intermediate grade and “the aim will be not so much to teach the facts connected with the man’s life, but to present a vivid picture of the times in which he lived and thus cultivate the imagination of the child” (p. 43). The biographical accounts of famous explorers in an interesting, adventurous story-telling manner was seen as an important tool to promote children’s interest in and identification with renowned citizens. The underlying theme was the guidance of a child’s developing sense of self in ways that promoted identification with role models (e.g., famous explorers) who had in some way contributed to the advancement of society.

In 1924, curricula were renamed “Programme of Studies.” The public school was now called the elementary school. A substantial revision was made to the elementary program, including the division “into eight grades, each of which will, as a rule, occupy one year of a pupil’s time” (p. 1). The content to be taught and the learning expectations for each subject area within grades were described in greater detail than in previous programs. The first explicit mention of psychological terms in B.C. curricula appeared in this year. More specifically, the grade four language curriculum informed teachers that “Grade IV is the psychological period for the acquirement of mechanical skill” (p. 31). “The language-work of this grade should be put more fully on the project basis, thereby acknowledging the active practical turn of mind of the pupils and

correlating the language-work with real needs and interests” (p. 31). The health curriculum acknowledged that it was important to “give children a positive interest in their own well-being,” (p. 24) although it did not expand on what was meant by this. Nonetheless, the division of instruction into grade levels and the emphasis on pupils’ skills and abilities reflected a focus on children’s developmental needs and interests.

The 1925 B.C. curricula relied much more formally on psychological theory to guide teachers’ understandings about learning, development, and personhood, and addressed teachers as experts who could and should aid children’s developing sense of self. For example, Thorndike’s “Laws of Learning” were provided as an aid to teachers in their development of school lessons (B.C.D.E., 1925). At the same time, the health curriculum embraced a developmental view of childhood that centered on young children’s focus on the immediate self and older children’s focus on other persons and the larger community. For example, it was the grade two teacher’s duty to “give children a positive interest in their own well being by enlisting their co-operation in carrying out regular daily inspection, including condition of hands, face, nails, clothing, etc.” (p. 24)⁴. On the other hand, the grade five teacher was to encourage the development of “a sense of responsibility towards the health and welfare of the community” (p. 86), through personal hygiene.

This developmental theme continued in 1928, and the teacher’s duty to train and educate children in personal responsibility was expanded to include

⁴ The selection of B.C. curricular documents related to self conceptions presented herein are representative of self conceptions across B.C. curricula

grade one children. A primary aim of grade one health education was to help the child “feel a measure of responsibility for his own good” (p. 2), through daily health routines such as hygiene, nutrition, and play activities. The grade three health curriculum emphasized that:

Learning should be all one with living and the only health knowledge that is of value is that which expresses itself in sure and certain, self-directed action. By the time this grade is reached the pupils will have come to recognize themselves as something more than mere individuals having responsibilities pertaining only to their own welfare... They (children) should learn self-control through adjustment to the rights and welfare of their playmates. (p. 39)

The grade seven health education stated that “the great task of the teacher is so to organize the life and activities of the school” to ensure that the “habits and principles of living ...function in the core of the child’s being, so that there need be no umpire to assure the rules of the game” (p. 103). A “mental hygiene” section now existed for the “development of habits, ideals, and attitudes of truthfulness, honesty, cheerfulness, courage, helpfulness, sociability, etc. ...It is a most valuable by-product resulting from all of the work and all of the play of the school, of the home and of the community” (p. 63).

The 1928 health curriculum recognized the child as an individual who has responsibility to and for him/herself within a social community. Further, the child had moral responsibilities to the community, which it was the teacher’s duty to help develop and stimulate via health-related instruction. It was important during

the elementary school years that “emphasis should be placed on these moral qualities because they are often the source of such happiness or unhappiness as may profoundly influence health and welfare” (p. 39). The grade four health curriculum took this view further by informing teachers that school life modeled the appropriate citizenship standards of the day, and that “teachers and school nurses should be ever on the alert to detect similar cases [of incompatible home practices] where sympathetic, intelligent, and diplomatic support should be given to the child in his courageous attitude” (p. 47). Thus, it was the obligation of educators to aid children in becoming reflective, dutiful, community-focused persons. On the one hand, it was the responsibility of both the family and the school to aid in children’s developing sense of self, but if conflict did arise between these two primary sources of upbringing, the assumption was that “school knows best!”

By the late 1920s, elementary curricula clearly recognized and portrayed the importance of developing a sense of self, variously described in terms such as “well-being,” “own good,” “being,” and “himself.” Developmental phases of childhood guided the configuration of the elementary school, and instruction within curriculum programs mapped a child’s growing sense of self to these periods. This was reflected in the types of tasks teachers were to provide, such as basic personal hygiene-related tasks in the lower grades, moving toward community-based moral obligations in the higher grades. Throughout the developmental path of childhood, there was an emphasis on the needs, skills, and interests of individuals. It was the school’s obligation to aid children’s

growing sense of self, one that was personally meaningful, yet dutiful and community-focused. The motto of the day might have been, “I am what I can do for others.” Generally, this philosophy conveyed the development of the individual through an adaptation to his or her social environment in a manner capable of enhancing the growth of the self and contributing to the collective good. Even though teachers were considered important facilitators and groomers of children’s developing sense of self, the agenda clearly focused on helping children to regulate their own sense of self. That is, it was expected that children would become self-managed persons in ways that conformed to societal expectations of citizenship.

Educational reform. The Putnam-Weir Report of 1925 “played a major role – if not *the* major role - in shaping the British Columbia school system until the mid-century” (Barman & Sutherland, 1995, p. 413). The Report was an extensive examination of the public school system that resulted from a massive testing program of B.C. students and hearings at over 150 schools across the province that included input from parents, teachers, and the general public. The recommendations included the need for greater curriculum diversity and division of students according to their abilities (and less emphasis on government exams), with an aim to keep students in school longer. This was to be aided by changes to the grade-level system, which, for the elementary program, meant a reduction from eight grades to six (Barman & Sutherland, 1995).

The Report strongly favored new concepts in education, namely testing and measurement, scientific efficiency, practicality, and vocationalism (Mann,

1980). The Report was based on business principles of the day, emphasizing the importance of efficient administration and the production of efficient workers. At the same time, it is clear that some of the tenets of this new education derived from the progressive ideas of John Dewey⁵. Dewey conceptualized children in a holistic, non-dualistic manner and espoused an educational system that focused on the development of the worth of individual students with an emphasis on their needs, skills, and intrinsic interests (Barman & Sutherland, 1995; Glover & Ronning, 1987; Mann, 1980). In short, Dewey proposed an education that was child-centered as opposed to subject-focused. Mann (1980) astutely observed that progressivism was multi-faceted, and “no two waves of progressivism were identical: each was intimately and intricately related to the economic, political and social conditions of its time and place” (p. 91). This would explain the apparent difference in terms between Dewey’s conception of progressive education and the view reflected in the Putnam and Weir Report, which also seemed to embrace the notions of efficiency and centralization. This may have been a significant socio-political point of departure between American and Canadian school systems, with emphasis in the American system on progressive education for students, whereas emphasis in the Canadian system rested more on “education for the progressive state” (Mann, 1980, p. 93).

⁵ J. H. Putnam was a proponent of the child study movement, and G. M. Weir spent time studying at the University of Chicago. Both Putnam and Weir “freely acknowledge their debt to American educational theory” (Mann, 1980, p. 93).

Self as Character (c. 1930s-1950s)

There was a major revision to the B.C. elementary school curricula in 1936 that was a direct result of the Putnam-Weir Report. The elementary program was divided into grades one to six. In all subjects, “provision for individual differences must be made [and] quality of work is of more importance than the quantity” (p. 5). This revision emphasized character as education’s primary objective, and schools were to be organized toward this end.

From the point of view of society, the schools in any state exist to develop citizens, or subjects, according to the prevailing or dominating ideals of the state or society... From the point of view of the individual the schools exist to aid him in his own growth or self-realization, in making adjustments to his environment, and, it may be, in modifying this environment, which is at once a social and physical environment. These two processes, of adjustment and of growth, are largely complementary, but at times they involve conflict. From their reconciliation comes individual-social balance and the development of an integrated personality, socially efficient and capable of further growth and adjustment. ...The curriculum consists of significant aspects of experience chosen to achieve goals implicit in the statement which appears above of the social and individual purposes of education. (B.C.D.E., 1936, p. 7)

Curricular goals and aims reflected a new vision of a child’s growing sense of self that was connected to, but distinct from, the social and moral citizenship emphasis of earlier B.C. educational philosophies. “Character education finds its goal in the realization of two great ideals, social welfare and individual

development” (p. 95). Generally, this philosophy conveyed the development of the individual as an adaptation to his/her environment in a manner that would, according to the view, enhance the growth of the self.

In effect, this was a psychosocial view of self development. For example, curricular aims included sections entitled “Education as Individual Development” and “The Social Nature of Education.” Individual development was seen as “all-round personal growth [that] involves every aspect of the human being. It includes the emotional life and attitudes as well as the ability to think and act” (p. 10). Socially, “the school should exemplify superior living to strengthen the influence of good homes and counteract the influences of others” (p. 8). Thus, it was the school’s duty to help students develop appropriate interests and preferences by “making actual contacts with the life and work of the community” (p. 9). This was to be done by making school activities as authentic as possible, and by engaging in field trips to those places where valued persons in society worked, such as firehalls and places of business. “The activities of the school should derive their meaning, in the main, from their relation to the world outside ...partly through well-planned visits and by the introduction of real things into the classroom” (p. 9). Here, the self was to be shaped through exposure and practice in the valued activities of society. Thus, a child’s growing sense of self as an individual who identifies with “those who know how to do things” might anticipate an adulthood marked by important contribution to the social community. This view presented an intricate weave between individual and social components of selfhood.

The foreword to the 1941 edition of the Programme of Studies adhered to the philosophical aims of 1936, and revised the elementary grades into two major divisions. It was acknowledged that individual differences exist in learning capacities and development, and

the transition from the Primary Grades to the Intermediate Grades is much more significant than the passage from one grade to another within the two major divisions of the elementary school. When learning is thought of as growth, and growth is conceived as being continuous, and when, furthermore, pupils vary in their rates of growth, the concept of yearly grades is seen to be artificial. Pupils should advance at their own learning rates. Administration requirements may make it necessary to classify pupils in terms of grades, but they should be taught, and should be advanced, in reference to their actual growth and learning, without regard to the calendar of months and days. (foreword)

In 1946, the social studies program underwent an experimental “Programme and Guide” change. The social studies curriculum dropped its “citizenship” component, added “civics,” “economics,” and “sociology” components, and emphasized the importance of adapting these various content areas to children’s developmental needs. “In the elementary school, material is drawn from all of these subjects to form the basis for experiences that... will afford such practice in wholesome living in that environment as will help him to achieve socially competent self realization” (p. 1). The social studies curriculum

also directed teachers to emphasize the importance of process over content, and to adapt curriculum material to the developmental level of students.

The greatest danger in these considerations at the elementary level is a violation of maturity levels by the teacher's failure to curb his natural desire for a logical, rather complete treatment of the topic – a treatment which most surely will set up a distaste for civics... Extreme caution and restraint and a proper psychological approach, rather than a logical one, are, therefore to be the rule in this field... emphasis should be upon process – process which will socialize youngsters... The social studies must give full scope for purposeful, worth-while, co-operative activities of the pupils. (p. 2)

At the intermediate level, emphasis was placed on shifting identification to peer groups.

One of the most important needs of children of the 9 to 11 age-group has been reserved to the last. These are the years when the child has definite urges to break away from adult domination in order to express his own individuality. For his purpose he forms gangs to participate in social ventures of group devising, where he will have a powerful voice... [T]his use of the tendency to form groups has great possibilities ...for training in character at a most important period in the child's growth. (p. 55)

In 1948, the B.C. Department of Education introduced a Kindergarten program to the elementary program. "The purpose of the Kindergarten year is to ensure the maximum growth of each child, physically, socially, emotionally, as an

individual and as a member of the group” and “to promote the full development of the child through his natural activities” (p. 1). For example, the child would be taught to “assume his share of responsibility for common possessions and room neatness and order; to respond to group opinions, suggestions and evaluations; and to grow in self-reliance, independence, and creative expression” (p. 3). Through these social experiences, “*readiness* for reading and other specialized learnings is developed in the child” (p. 3). At the same time, “individual differences in ability and in experience mean that every child in school must be considered as a real person, not simply as a sample which is typical of all children. Early recognition of individual differences in ability or capacity along special lines may greatly enhance the child’s chances for success” (p. 3).

Curricular documents from the 1930s to mid-century emphasized a developmental view of the child as an individual with unique abilities and potential, yet also as a member of a social group. The child was viewed as a developing person who initially required much direction and aid in the development of social skills, and who gradually developed a sense of self as an individual distinct from, but connected to, others in the social community. Those important others with whom the child initially relates and identifies are valued authority figures in the child’s small community, such as parents and teachers. With time and experience, the child’s sense of self shifts to peer models, achieving a growing sense of reliance and identification with one’s own age group.

Summary

Although there were no formal definitions of the self in B.C. elementary school curricula in the first half of the 20th century, there was an evolving, ever-present sense of self in many curricular documents. During the first several decades of the B.C. formal education system, educators conceived of the child as simply requiring those cultural skills necessary to be a productive, efficient citizen. Gradually this view evolved to one in which the child was an important, worthy individual whose developing sense of self was intricately linked to the social values and functions of the society. The early educational philosophy conceptualized the child as requiring much direction and aid to help him/her become an efficient citizen, a smoothly functioning cog in the wheels of society (“I am what I can do for others”). However, later on, a revamped philosophy (spurred by the Putnam-Weir Report) promoted a “progressive” view of the individual *within* the societal context. In the first view, the self is identified only in terms of others, whereas in the latter view, the self is identified in terms of self-other relations.

Self and Curricula: Mid 20th Century to the New Millennium

The Wholistic Self (c. 1950s)

The Physical Education Programme of Studies was revised in 1951. While the first aim of physical education was “to explore, foster, and inculcate those interests, habits, and ideals which will make the child better able to take his place in society” (p. 267), other aims were to “develop a sound body and normal mental attitudes, leading to the betterment of the organism as a whole” and “to develop

skill in psycho-motor activities” (p. 267). This view recognized the child as the total sum of his/her physiological, social, and psychological parts. This wholistic portrait of the individual was also evident in the new Health Education program:

The early years are the formative years of a child’s whole life. It is of great significance that health instruction, not only in the physical aspects of the child’s health, but also in those aspects concerned with his feelings, his emotional needs, his relations with other children, and with his parents, and teachers, be the primary concern of every teacher. ...Equally important is the need to foster the development of the child’s personal and social growth, and to provide an environment and atmosphere of healthful, happy living, physical and mental and emotional, which will result in the total well-being of the child and in the establishment of good human relations. (p. 275)

This curriculum was prescriptive to teachers with respect to students’ mental health. For example, “guide-posts in fostering mental health” directed teachers to “be strong in your belief that there are no truly ‘bad’ children,” to “have a deep faith in children – and a certainty that there are causes for all behaviour,” to “seek out the lonely children” or they will tend to “withdraw further within themselves,” to “try to provide ‘safety-valves’ through which their (students’) feelings can be expressed harmlessly,” to “remember that *each child has his own characteristics and his own rate of developing*,” and to “watch for the children who drive themselves excessively to perfection, who strive too hard to please” (p. 223). “Health is a state of physical, mental and social well-being, and

not merely the absence of disease or infirmity. Good health means the total adjustment of the individual to: Himself. His Family. His friends and neighbours. His world neighbours. His fellow workers” (p. 224).

A “Chart of Child Needs” (developed by the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene) was included in the Health Education Programme of Studies. This chart encompassed various individual needs and indicated the “sources” that could fulfill those needs, namely parents, teachers, playmates, and the community. The various child needs included: emotional affection, belonging, independence, social approval, intellectual, physical, character and social needs, and self-esteem. This chart provided the first explicit distinction between self and character in the elementary school curricula of British Columbia. The self was described in humanistic terms. For example, self-esteem was defined as the “feeling of being worth while” (p. 274). Parents could fulfill this need by building “confidence in child and his future,” while teachers could concentrate on “Making child feel a worthwhile person. Helping child understand and accept his strengths and weaknesses.” Peers could provide “appreciation of child’s good qualities,” and the community could fulfill this need by “making child feel he matters to community” (p. 274).

A section in the intermediate Health curriculum entitled the “Normal Development of Children” further indicated the influence of psychological theory and research on curricular philosophy. This section included physical development, characteristic reactions, special needs, social progress, and intellectual growth and activities. For grade three students between eight and

nine years of age, characteristic reactions included: "more dependent on mother again, less so on teacher; sensitive to criticism: Gangs beginning; best friends of same sex: Allegiance to age or peer group instead of to the adult in cases of conflict: greater capacity for self-evaluation." Special needs included the "experience of 'belonging' to age or peer group; opportunity to identify with others of same age and sex" (p. 255). Social progress included "Evidence of modesty may be increasing, probably due to social pressure; Is becoming more selective in choice of friends" (p. 255). For grade four children of between nine and ten years of age, some characteristic reactions were identified as "Gangs strong and of one sex only, of short duration and changing membership; Perfectionistic; wants to do well, but loses interest if discouraged or pressured" (p. 285). Indications of social progress were: "Sex differences in play interests beginning to be marked; 'Gangs' and club enthusiasm noticeable, with hostility toward others" (p. 285). Intellectual growth and activities were described as "interest in how things are made and produced is increasing; If interest in a special field, such as science or mechanics, has developed, this may begin to crowd out some other play activities" (p. 285).

This view of the middle-school child focused on identification with work-related activities, and a growing sense of identification with others, particularly same sex peers, and away from parents and family. This is clearly a psychosocial view of the developing child that maps well to the stages of industry and identity in Erikson's (1950) developmental theory of the self.

Under the “Normal Development of Children Between Ten and Eleven” section, characteristic reactions included “child approaching adolescence often becomes over-critical, changeable, rebellious, unco-operative” and “Interested in activities earning money.” Special needs included a “sense of belonging and acceptance by peer group; increasing opportunities for independence.” Social progress was indicated by “Occasional privacy becomes important; a room of one’s own, secret cache for personal property are greatly desired.” Intellectual growth and activities included a “steadily growing capacity for thought and reasoning makes creative companionship with parents and teachers even more desirable” (p.293). Moreover, the child at this level “begins to realize that feelings and emotions play a very important part in keeping well and begins to develop self-discipline and control over them” (p. 294). The grade six section on “Normal Development of Children between Eleven and Twelve” included characteristic reactions such as “Preoccupation with acceptance by the social group; fear of ridicule and of being unpopular; oversensitiveness; self-pity; Strong identification with an admired adult; Assertion of independence from family as a step toward adulthood; Growing interest in physical attractiveness” (p. 302). Special needs included “Conformity with and acceptance by the age or peer group” (p. 302). Social progress included “membership in clubs and groups increasing in importance; Enjoy taking part in school, neighbourhood, and community affairs” (p. 302).

These descriptions of what was construed to be normal development indicate a view of the child at the ages of eleven and twelve as becoming more

involved in broader social activities. A primary need at this point is acceptance by others, and identity experimentation proceeds mostly via conformity with peers. This would seem to produce an unsureness of oneself, indicated by a heightened sensitivity concerning acceptance and bouts of “self-pity.” At the same time, there seems to be a growing sense of social movement toward independence, admired adults, and participation in community affairs. This description also maps well to the identity stage of Erikson’s (1950) theory of self development.

The 1951 curricular changes reflected a strong influence of psychological research and theory on elementary school philosophy and practice. Many developmental terms appeared in this curriculum, such as “Very little abstract thinking yet; seven learns best in concrete terms,” (p. 243) and “psycho-motor activities” (p. 267). Previous elementary programs only broadly distinguished developmental differences between the primary and intermediate programs. The “Normal Development” sections of the 1951 curricula now distinguished developmental differences at particular ages and grade levels and within the intermediate program. These changes indicated a shift from a broader conception of self as an individual who is intricately connected with his/her community, to a self that is at once individualistic and divisible, and that consists of self-esteem, self-discipline, self-respect, self-confidence, and self-pity.

The 1954 intermediate Programme of Studies included a citation entitled “The child – our responsibility.” A citation in the Health Education unit captured the entwinement of child and teacher: “To children, the whole world is new; there is something thrilling to the healthy being in every new contact and it is eagerly

sought for, not merely passively awaited and endured” (p. 277). Thus, the child was viewed as an active agent in his/her world, and the teacher would provide the necessary guidance “to direct the growth of the pupil so that the continued enrichment of the individual’s life and an improved society may result” (p. 7).

The 1954 Kindergarten curriculum emphasized the importance of individual needs and experiences of each kindergarten child, and advised teachers to always be “aware of the abilities and needs of each individual... With proper care in his development, each child may build his own place in the community of to-morrow” (p. 8). Although the curriculum referred to the child’s identity in relation to the home (I am part of a family), the school (I am a school member), and the community (I am going to be a fireman, baker, ...), it was through the introductory experience of the kindergarten class that the child would come to identify his/her self at once as an individual and as a member of a group. Teachers were also directed to the importance of the psychological development of children:

It is important to note that now at the kindergarten level, the teacher is advised to be aware of the psychological implications of group work. She (the teacher) must be aware of the psychological moment to call a group for further discussion if the period is not progressing favourably, and she should be alert to making the most of situations arising for inculcating good social habits. (p. 40)

The 1957 edition was similar to the previous curricula aims and philosophy in that schools had “the primary purposes of developing the character of our

young people, training them to be good citizens and teaching them the fundamental skills of learning necessary for further education and adult life” (p. 7). However, the self as an individual was also prominent:

A good school programme develops children in two ways – as individual persons and as citizens. Since this development begins long before the child comes to school, the programme must build upon a foundation already well defined. It should be so planned that it helps the child to become an individual who has confidence in himself because of what he is and what he knows. At the same time it should guide him into becoming a person who is respected and trusted by his fellow-man. A school programme which neglects the child in either of these respects fails to fulfil its responsibilities. (p. 7)

That is, through the development of particular traits, described as “good work habits” identified as self-confidence, self-control, self-discipline, and self-reliance (p.8), the self will come to be known as “what I am” (e.g., “I am a good student”), and “what I know” (e.g., “I know history facts, how to count”). Moreover, the self that works on itself might one day become a respected citizen of his/her community.

The Celebration of the Individual (c. 1960s & 1970s)

From the 1960’s onward, educational aims emphasized the psychological development of the individual over social duty and responsibility. In 1965, the Language Arts programme was revised. Literature was viewed as an important subject because “that which children read has a profound effect upon their lives”

(p. 14). “Since literature is of the heart as well as of the mind, children must feel something of their own oneness with the strengths and weaknesses, delights and sorrows, that are basic threads in the web of literature as in life itself” (p. 14). The books recommended for the primary program included titles such as “Cinderella,” “Charlotte’s Web,” (p. 14) and “The Secret Garden,” and through the guidance of a good teacher, children could “feel with the character... and think of times when they have been in the position of the character” (p. 16). Literary works, then, could be tools not only for learning about language arts skills, but also about life, including an identification with certain role models (i.e., moral characters).

In 1969, a new Programme of Studies was introduced for Science across all elementary grades. It was asserted that the previous approach to science instruction placed undue emphasis on the acquisition of factual knowledge, or the “products” of science (p. 5). The new Science curriculum emphasized the need to provide balance between the process of learning and knowledge acquisition by directing teachers to de-emphasize the “acquisition of factual knowledge” and to “create an environment that invites and supports curiosity, investigation and inquiry” (p. 5). This was a shift away from passive knowledge acquisition toward “thinking like a scientist.”

The 1973 curriculum guide for the Kindergarten program was substantially revised and emphasized the importance of the self. A number of child development experts, such as child psychologist Glenn R. Hawkes (1952), were referred to. For example,

A successful... programme teaches 'I like me because I am worthy of being liked and I can do things. I like teachers because they like me and they help me. I find pleasure in relationships with other children because I can trust them and I am safe with them'. Every child who develops a positive self-image of himself and who learns to function in social situations represents a valuable addition to the total educational scheme. (1973, Introduction)

In several places in the kindergarten curriculum, the self was explicitly discussed and various hyphenated compound terms with the word "self" from textbooks and journal articles were included. For example, a work by Dinkmeyer (1965) entitled "Child Development: The Emerging Self" was referred to in the description of the child's growing sense of self:

Dinkmeyer suggests that this process of learning is directed by an ever-growing, ever-changing view of Self that is an agent in the child's own development. The child's self-concept – how he feels about himself and his relationship to his world – is the most important factor in his development. By assuming responsibility for enhancing the child's view of himself, the teacher then provides a success-oriented environment in which all children are accepted and valued as persons of worth. Further, she will, through positive re-inforcement, aid the children to gain self confidence without fear of failure. (p. 2)

In another section entitled "A Learning Environment," the kindergarten child's self in relation to education was emphasized:

The basic objective of the education for young children is to enable each child in his beginning years of school to become deeply involved and self-directive in his learning and personality development. Each child's growth is judged by his intellectual functioning, his ego strength, his inventiveness, his relatedness to peers and adults, and his capacity to cope with events of each day within his social group. (1973, p. 1)

The aim of the 1973 Kindergarten program asserted an objective of deep involvement and self-direction in learning on the part of the child, emphasizing the uniqueness and individuality of each child that was a holistic compilation of the various aspects of the child (i.e., physical, emotional, and intellectual). It also placed emphasis on the teacher's role in nurturing "a positive self-image of himself" (Introduction). This view indicated a general "turning inward" to the experience of the individual, and was reflective of a humanistic conception of the self. At the same time, the psychosocial view of the child adopted in previous editions remained, and was particularly evidenced by the view of the child as "self-centered," interested in the "here and now," developing "ego-strength," and his/her "relatedness to peers and adults" (p. 1).

The Rise of the Cognitive Self (c. 1980s-Present)

A major revision to B.C. elementary school curricula began in 1979 and stretched over the following decade to 1990. Educational psychology in general, and cognitive educational psychology in particular, influenced curricular aims during this period. For example, the 1981 science curriculum highlighted the importance of the scientific method in all areas of life.

It would be shortsighted and foolhard [sic] in the latter years of the century, to deny the significance of science in our lives and hence to undervalue the teaching of science to our children. The desire to encourage a thinking citizenry, a society in which members have developed their logical abilities to face and solve science-related problems, necessitates the inclusion of science in the elementary school program. Elementary school science will open many avenues of inquiry, questions, and future choices while providing students with opportunities to collect data and make decisions related to every aspect of their daily life. Such experiences will provide students with the techniques which can be used to make decisions regarding their lifestyles, careers, and other critical issues. (p. 5)

The 1983 social studies curriculum emphasized these science skills as well as citizenship skills. Self-worth skills were included under citizenship skills, and were delineated as "... demonstrate evidence of concern for self; display self-confidence; seek help when required; make choices and decisions; be aware that needs for attention, acceptance, approval and affection are common to all" (p. 57).

These curricula promoted a view of the individual as a scientist, knowledge producer, and rational problem solver. Indeed, the practice of science in the classroom would enable children to some day make proper decisions regarding the direction of their own lives. At the same time, confidence, acceptance, affection, and concern for the self were vital. However, all of these

developmental goals were described as “skills,” as if such aspects of self-worth might easily be observed, trained, and learned. Moreover, the placement of self-worth skills under the general label of citizenship skills implied that gratification of one’s own interests and skills would somehow move the individual closer to the goal of becoming an active, participating, responsible citizen.

In 1988, another major revision to the B.C. curricula entitled “Year 2000” was initiated. Numerous position statements, resource books, and research-based documents were published to guide teachers in implementing instruction consistent with the goals and aims of the program. The draft curriculum laid out a mission statement:

The purpose of the British Columbia school system is to enable learners to develop their individual potential and to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to contribute to a healthy society and a prosperous and sustainable economy. [Moreover,] schools in the province assist in the development of citizens who are thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base; creative, flexible, self-motivated and who have a positive self image; capable of making independent decisions; skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work; productive, who gain satisfaction through achievement and who strive for physical well being; cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences; aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world. (p. 11)

The focus, rationale, and aims for schooling across all curricula (now referred to as Integrated Resource Packages) up to the present reflect the Year 2000 plan. For example, the 1998 Fine Arts Program was designed to “nurture the emotional, social, intellectual, physical, and spiritual self” (p. 1). The 1999 Personal Planning Curriculum emphasized the need for children to develop “skills such as time-management, self-assessment, [and] goal-setting... that can enhance their personal well-being” (p. 1). Another aim was to develop in children the ability to “maintain an appropriate sense of personal worth, potential, and individuality” (p. 3).

The Year 2000 plan makes a clear distinction between the individual and the citizen, yet they are inextricably entwined through the assertion that working to develop one’s own potential will somehow yield responsibility to others. The self is independent, self-determining, strategic, and striving toward its own potential through the acquisition of certain quantifiable skills and abilities. Moreover, through the acquisition of such skills, the self is thought to move gradually toward the exercise of the rights and responsibilities of committed citizenship required in a complex, democratic society.

Summary

In the latter part of the 20th century, B.C. elementary school students came to be identified in terms of their individual potential (“I am what I want to be”), and more fragmented self-processes, such as self-esteem, self-concept, and self-regulation. In recent years, the self has been divided even further into a compilation of quantifiable skills that together make up a strategic, self-governed,

and technical entity striving toward its own self-determined possibilities in ways somehow connected to common societal goals (which are seldom articulated clearly).

As the Year 2000 plan illustrates, the modern educated self seems to have everything. This self is independent, self-determined, self-fulfilled, and constantly moving toward greater possible self-potential. However, this modern self remains tied to the radical, autonomous self born of Enlightenment ideals. Martin's (2004) examination of two distinct conceptions of the self - "scientific" and "humanistic" - in educational psychology reveals an underlying masterful self, and offers a concise description of the composite self that has emerged in B.C. school curricula :

Both academic tasks and social experience can be accomplished and controlled by the masterful self's attention to its own basic organismic tendencies and potentials on the one hand and to its metacognitive, strategic ruminations on the other. This is a self that already knows its business, one that requires only a facilitative grooming to become more fully socialized and intellectually engaged. (p. 197)

Conclusions

The critical historical examination conducted herein of changing conceptions of self in the B.C. elementary school curricula illustrates the powerful influence that disciplinary psychology has had on the education of persons for over 100 years. The goals and aims of modern school curricula can be understood "as the cultural production of individuals who work on themselves

through self-improvement, autonomous and 'responsible' life conduct, and 'lifelong' learning" (Popkewitz, 2001, p. 7; also see Rose, 1999).

The goals of education are to inculcate in children the social and political conventions of a liberal democratic society, and to teach them what is "real and true" in the world, at least as revealed through extant traditions of knowing. Since the inception of the formal school system in B.C., curricula have explicitly mandated the production of active responsible citizens as the overarching goal in the education of persons. However, changing conceptions of the self in school curricula, which have been drawn from psychological theory and research, have increasingly merged the interests, skills, and abilities of the autonomous self with the production of the responsible citizen. The result has been the current celebration of the autonomous, self-governing individual, who almost as an afterthought also is held to be a socially dependent, committed citizen.

Psychological discourses and practices that advance a radically autonomous self have been incorporated into school curricula that have shaped our understandings of selves as educated persons. Such conceptions of the self in psychology and education are inescapably entwined with the values and interests of individualistic Western societies. Psychology has aided our individualistic conceptions of the self through the production of devices or technologies that shape selves as objects of development, schooling, and contemporary social life in general (Rose, 1998, 1999).

The radically autonomous self revealed here is difficult to reconcile with the dependent, socially committed and engaged citizen required in a complex

democratic society. The autonomous self is able, through psychological technologies of self-enhancement and self-regulation that have spread into all facets of contemporary life, to act upon itself to achieve happiness and self-fulfillment (Rose, 1998). This self is appealing because of the great value that Western liberal societies place on self-determination and self-governance. However, the commitment to be autonomous and to fulfill oneself has resulted in a loss of interdependence with, and commitment to others.

Martin's (2004) critical analysis of two predominant conceptions of self in contemporary Educational Psychology – the scientific self and the humanistic self - reveals a single underlying conception of the self as ahistorical, amoral, and apolitical. The scientific self is a rational, deliberate cognitive processor that is capable of simultaneous action and reflection (e.g., Schunk & Zimmerman, 2001). Some models of the scientific self acknowledge social and environmental factors, but these are reduced to external variables that influence the individual's actions in some measurable way. In contrast, the humanistic self is an organized, integrated whole with an intrinsic striving toward self-preservation. Although these two conceptions of self seem at odds with one another, Martin (2004) exposes a single conception reflective of the individualistic self characterized by North American social science:

The self, whether componential or wholistic, whether instrumentally or intrinsically attuned, whether highly rational or emotional is definitely operative at some interior core. It is a Cartesian self isolated from its surrounds even as it is shaped and affected by circumstances and events,

which while always influential are not seen as in any way constitutive of the core self. For this is a self of inner bastion of individual experience and existence, one that surveys the exterior landscape for signs of personal affirmation and possibilities for expression on the one hand, and clues to strategic action on the other. Moreover, its most vital resources are apparently available within its detached internality. It acts as a final arbiter over whether or not its strategies are effective or its appraisals self-sustaining. (p. 197)

Industrialization, secularism and urbanization have influenced the self-contained individualism that has become the main psychological philosophy of our era (Cushman, 1990; Popkewitz, 2001). As discussed in chapter two, disciplinary psychology has further decontextualized the individual through its scientific methodologies and technologies that emphasize the individual and her psychological capabilities and attributes, in a manner that has mostly ignored the socio-political, historical context within which the individual develops. The radically autonomous self of contemporary society is a psychological self that is rational, strategic, self-regulating, self-fulfilling, and self-actualizing, and which exists and functions apart from its relations with others. This self may appear to be masterful in all its skills and potentials, but it is really an “empty” self that is devoid of communal ways of living (Cushman, 1995). The autonomous, masterful self that has become infused in curricular aims, goals, and practices informs the individual’s understanding of his/her self as a self-governing, self-regulating, and

goal-oriented agent. This self is a problem-solver who is engaged in life-long learning toward self-actualization.

At the same time, it is entirely possible that the technology of schooling has been made more progressive and democratic through such psychological (re)constructions of such a self. According to Popkewitz (2001), the teacher administers the child who is able to “construct and reconstruct his or her own ‘practice,’ participation, self management of choice, and autonomous ethical conduct of life” (p. 6). However, whether or not such enhanced individual governance is truly capable of setting and achieving personal goals consistent with some defensible notion of the collective good is not clear. Indeed, questions of this kind are seldom raised. In the next chapter I turn to an examination of school and classroom practices, guided by psychological theory and research on the self, that aim to support and enhance the lives of school children.

CHAPTER FIVE: THE PSYCHOLOGICAL SELF AT SCHOOL: PRACTICES AND POLICIES

The institution of school is granted the authority to prepare children for participation in the larger society. The broad goals of school are to support the personal development of students as individuals and the intellectual and social development of students as future citizens. Accordingly, educational curricula are designed to balance the individual goals, needs, and interests of children with the social advancement goals of society. At the school level, it is the responsibility of administrators, teachers, and other professionals (e.g., school counselors) to ensure that broad curricular goals are achieved via various practices that range from specific classroom activities and experiences to broader school-based initiatives. Much like the distinction between theory and practice, there is a distinction between the formulation of policy and the realization of policy (Popkewitz, 2000). Thus, it is of considerable interest to examine how individual needs, interests, and goals are balanced with broader societal goals once the achievement of curricular goals and aims is put into the hands of schools and teachers.

A century ago psychologists believed that psychological theory and research regarding child development and learning should guide teachers in their instruction of students. William James' (1899) lectures to teachers emphasized

their role in the education of children as paramount. As the historical analysis of elementary school curricula in British Columbia presented in chapter four showed, formal schooling at the beginning of the twentieth century gave teachers much discretion in terms of what and how to teach their students within a general curricular framework that emphasized social progress and citizenship. From the 1920s onward, psychological theory and research began explicitly to guide teachers in their understandings of students in ways that reflected psychological interests of the day. From that time on, changes in curricular goals and aims increasingly were aligned with extant psychological theories and research regarding the development and learning needs of children.

The continuing (and growing) reliance by educators on psychological research and expertise has produced a current state of affairs in which psychologists are seen as leading experts regarding the development of children in educational settings. The production and application of expert knowledge related to children and schooling continues to be a prominent goal of psychological research, theory, and application. The “Center for Psychology in Schools and Education” (CPSE), an initiative of the American Psychological Association, aims to promote “high quality application of psychology to programs and policies for schools and education” (APA, 2008b). The mission of the CPSE is to:

Develop and strengthen linkages between psychology/psychologists and education/educators to serve all students’ emotional and academic needs; generate public awareness, advocacy, clinical applications, and cutting-

edge research to enhance the educational and developmental opportunities for students at all levels of schooling, with a special focus on: ... assisting educators and other school personnel in grounding both teaching and learning in current psychological science; ... and advocate for and build a presence of psychology in the national education agenda, particularly in the preparation of teachers. (APA, 2008b, p. 1)

At first glance, the guiding hand of psychology in the education of students seems to be a desirable state of affairs. After all, it makes sense that an understanding of children's development should help teachers instruct students in the best possible ways, and an understanding of learning skills and strategies should help students achieve better in school. Nonetheless, it is important to ask what such endeavours imply for the education of persons, and how psychological theorizing and research on the self translates into school and classroom practices.

The foregoing question is taken up in this chapter by critically examining the promotion of the empirical self in educational practices and policies at the school and classroom levels, through professional and scientific psycho-educational products, so as to shed light on the prevalence and consequences of the promotion and sale of psychological conceptions of the self for consumption by educators and students. To this end, I examine B.C. Ministry of Education learning resources that are designed to aid teachers in their efforts to ensure that students achieve objectives related to curricular goals and aims. I also examine B.C. educational policies and practices regarding the instruction and assessment

of students at the school and classroom levels. I conclude that personal expression and self-responsibility are emphasized at the expense of social commitment and curricular content. Moreover, school practices and policies derived from psychological conceptions of the self are reflective of notions of individualism and consumerism that guide much of our contemporary Western way of life.

Instructional Programs and Initiatives

I have selected representative material from the British Columbia Ministry of Education (B.C.M.E.) recommended learning resources regarding the development and enhancement of students as selves. Recommended learning resources are Ministry-approved instructional materials that come in various forms, such as print, games, manipulatives, video, and software “that support BC curriculum, and that will be used by teachers and/or students for instructional and assessment purposes” (2005 English Language Arts K to 7, p. 299). Although teachers have choice in selecting materials for use in the classroom, they must use provincially recommended resources or learning resources that have been approved at a local school board level (2005). Learning resources are aligned with grade, subject area, and curricular goals, and range from classroom kits and programs, to school-wide programs and broader school-community partnership initiatives.

Many learning resources that address the personal development of students are packaged as psycho-educational kits, and are offered to improve students’ personal competencies and skills, such as self-esteem and self-

discipline. These kits, often self-contained modules aimed at individual success within specific programs, include titles such as *100 Ways to Enhance Self-concept in the Classroom: A Handbook for Teachers and Parents* (Canfield & Wells, 1976) and *Epecially You*, an 18-minute video that helps students to develop coping skills “by emphasizing the importance of feeling good about oneself, developing strong decision-making and problem-solving abilities and respecting differences” (National Film Board of Canada, 1989, p. 1).

Other programs are geared at enhancing personal management and career building competencies. For example, the *Destination 2020* resource for grades six and seven students “is designed to help students recognize the many skills they are acquiring now and how these skills will be useful in their future careers.” (National Life Work Centre, 2005, p. 1). Personal decision-making is a common component of learning resources. For example, the *Making Decisions* video and activities package is designed to prevent drug and alcohol abuse. Lessons within the package, entitled “The Whole You,” “The Importance of Needs and Wants,” “Our Personal Goals,” “Decisions, Decisions, Decisions;” and “The Choice is Mine” focus on making decisions that promote individually-focused skills such as assertiveness, self-confidence, thinking for oneself, and considering how choices affect the student’s own life (Mangham, 1999, in B.C.M.E., 1999, p. 1).

Healthy Buddies is a “school-based healthy living program providing direct instruction to intermediate students in the areas of nutrition, physical activity, and emotional health and self-esteem” (B.C. Children’s Hospital, 2007, p. 2). The

program meets prescribed learning outcomes across a number of B.C. curriculums, from English Language Arts to Physical Education, as well as social responsibility. The program has three themes that are “based on the understanding that the health of an individual depends upon three equally important components [identified as] moving your body, nutrition, [and] feeling good about yourself... [Students learn] to value who they and others are on the inside [and] about being ‘positive buddies’. This role can help kids feel good about themselves as productive, valuable people” (B.C. Children’s Hospital, 2007, p. 3). Here we see a merging of the managed and esteemed selves - the acquisition of work skills, whether in the shape of physical coordination skills or verbal skills such as kind comments, makes students feel good. Whether or not such skills are indicative of a deeper social commitment to the well-being of others is not considered.

The *Healthy Buddies* program is marketed to teachers and school administrators as an appealing, easy-to-use package that also addresses practical and administrative concerns. For example, “learning aids include fun card games, skits, poster design challenges, and cooperative in-class activities,” (B.C. Children’s Hospital, 2007, p. 4) and the “fitness activities are incredibly easy for teachers to facilitate.” Further, the matching of older and younger students from intact classes as “buddy classes... in the gym helps address the shortage of gym time and space that exists in many elementary schools” (B.C. Children’s Hospital, 2007, p. 4). The implication is that students’ well-being can

be enhanced in a timely and efficient manner to conserve limited educational resources.

Friends for Life is a psychological program designed for classroom application that purports to teach “cognitive and emotional skills in a simple and well-structured format” (Barrett, 2001, cover). The Ministry of Education partnered with the Ministry of Children and Family Development in 2004 to implement the program “as a classroom-based universal prevention program or as an early intervention risk reduction strategy for anxiety.” The “Friends for Life” teacher kit is described as a “scientifically validated cognitive behavioral program ...designed for ease-of-use in a day-to-day Canadian classroom setting ...to prevent anxiety and depression and encourage resilience and self-esteem” (Barrett, 2001). The program “promotes important self-development and educational concepts such as self-esteem, problem-solving, self-expression, and building positive relationships with peers and adults” (Barrett, 2001). The *Friends for Life* website advertises program snippets in the form of “free downloads,” as well as an online shopping service to purchase a sample of materials. Also included on the website is an advertisement by the BC Ministry for Education stating that “The No. 1 goal of our education system is to help BC students achieve their best. FRIENDS provides the early support some children need to reduce their anxiety and make their school years healthier and more successful” (Friends for Life, 2008, p. 1).

Action Schools! B.C. is a prevention program designed to assist schools in the promotion of healthy living, with an aim to “achieve long-term, measurable

and sustainable health benefits ...based on four health targets that incorporate health and academic outcomes” (B.C. Ministry of Health Services, 2005, p. 11). One of the program modules, designed for classroom application, is entitled the “healthy self,” and claims that “self-esteem and specific competencies [identified as athletic, social, and academic, derived from Susan Harter’s Perceived Competence Scale] are key indicators of a healthy self in children” (Harter, 1982, cited in B.C. Ministry of Health, 2005, p. 32). Action Schools! B.C. promotes the use of “programs and activities aimed at improving self-concept in children” (p. 62), such as “Self-Esteem BINGO,” the “Self-Confidence Quiz,” “Things I do Well,” and “Hero in You,” an “online education program designed to motivate, inspire, and encourage youth to set and achieve meaningful personal goals” (B.C. Ministry of Health, 2005, p. 11). The *Esteem Team* is a goal-setting program designed “to inspire and educate Canadian youth... [in] life skills, values, and goal-setting strategies that apply to all young people, no matter what they hope to achieve” (Esteem Team, 2005, p. 41). The program consists of seven lesson activities and worksheets that are “flexible, user-friendly and specifically designed to meet the needs of busy teachers” (Esteem Team, 2005, p. 2). According to this program, “students will learn responsibility, accountability, self-assessment and above all, empowerment” (Esteem Team, 2005, p. 1).

The B.C.M.E. also endorses programs that are designed to enhance students’ personal and social responsibility. These often involve partnerships between schools, school districts, and provincial and federal institutions that utilize “guiding legislation,” such as human rights, in the development of school

policies and initiatives. For example, the *B.C. Safe Schools Centre* is a partnership between the B.C.M.E., the B.C. Solicitor General, and local school districts that provides a centralized resource program for educators, parents, and students regarding issues such as bullying. The Centre provides information and access to manuals, kits, and programs for personal development, such as self-esteem, self-concept, and self-efficacy enhancement. Manuals and kits include titles such as “Building a positive self-concept: 113 activities for Adolescents,” and “Building self-esteem in the classroom” that provide “grade-levelled workbooks designed to help students appreciate their uniqueness” (B.C.M.E., 2004c, p. 4).

In summary, learning resources in the form of classroom programs and school initiatives are offered to teachers, school administrators, and other educators (e.g., school counselors) that focus on the personal development of students through the acquisition of particular skills and abilities. Terms such as “inspire,” “values,” and “empowerment” reflect the esteemed self, while terms such as “goal-setting strategies,” “responsibility,” and “accountability” reflect the managed self. Oftentimes the desirable educated self is depicted as a collaboration between the esteemed self and the managed self. For example, the *Friends for Life* program emphasizes cognitive and emotional skills defined as problem-solving and self-esteem respectively. On the one hand, students who learn self-discipline, who regulate themselves to become better achievers, will feel good about themselves. On the other hand, students who learn to feel better about themselves, who have high self-esteem, will be able to achieve more.

A remarkable claim of many of these programs is the personal and social benefits that students will reap simply by completing the required steps, sessions, and activities. The *Friends for Life* program “ensures even children whose distress has gone undetected by parents, carers and teachers will be helped” (2008, p. 2). The implication is that non-specialized teachers may deliver the user-friendly programs during normal class times, but the power is in the structure, content, and method of the program itself. Further support for the educational authority of such programs, kits, and activities (beyond the fact that they are Ministry-approved) is in their claims that they are evidence-based, user-friendly, fit well within and across existing curricula, include well-scripted lesson plans with ready-made activities and assessments, and are applicable to a wide range of students. It is not difficult to see the appeal of psycho-educational products, particularly for teachers who must consider issues such as time, student capabilities, and personal expertise on the one hand, and achievement of curricular goals on the other hand.

The emphasis on the personal growth and achievement of students in such kits and programs reflects psychological theorizing and research on the development of children as individuals. By promoting individual achievement, attainment of personal skills and abilities (identified both in terms of self skills and scholastic skills) and assessment at the individual level, all will be well for both learners and teachers. For example, the *Making Decisions Program* is designed to promote skill development in making major decisions through learning activities such as role playing, vocabulary, and paragraph writing, and is

recommended for the B.C. Grade 6 Personal Planning curriculum that aims to promote “skills such as time-management, self-assessment, [and] goal-setting... that can enhance their personal well-being” (B.C.M.E., 1999, p. 1), and “maintain an appropriate sense of personal worth, potential, and individuality” (B.C.M.E., 1999, p. 3).

Instructional Assessments

The B.C. Ministry of Education provides a list of achievement indicators that teachers may use for assessing students’ achievement in meeting learning outcomes for certain curricula. In the Health and Career Education Curriculum for grade 4, Career Exploration, success in the program is indicated by students’ abilities to “develop an inventory of their personal attributes (e.g., skills, interests, accomplishments; things they’re good at, things they’ve learned to do, things they like to do, things they don’t like to do), and modify this inventory periodically” (2004a, p. 25). Note the focus on individual interests and likes/dislikes only (not on the meaning or relevance of such attributes or interests in relation to others). For the grade 5, Healthy Relationships program, students are instructed in relationships with others. However, success is indicated by a student’s ability to “create a self-inventory of their interpersonal skills (e.g., listening, honesty, sharing, co-operation, respect, empathy, inclusion, refusal skills, assertiveness, seeking help, anger management)” (2004b, p. 33), and by the student’s own personal assessment of skills, such as setting “goals for improving selected interpersonal skills (e.g., identify skills they want to improve, identify strategies for improvement)” (2004b, p. 33). Here, the student determines what skills to

improve. Teachers are directed to evaluate the self development of students via objective markers, but also in consideration of the individual students' personal goals and interests.

As noted by Olson (2003), the teacher tries, oftentimes unsuccessfully, to balance the needs of the curriculum with the personal development of the student. This tension frequently materializes in the context of student assessment. For example, Katz (2001, in Olson, 2003, p. 221), asked teachers to describe their approaches to teaching a mandated curriculum. Teachers reported that they were conflicted between honoring the mandated standards and recognizing the growth of individual students. One teacher reported that

The Ministry documents say "the student will independently..." [write a report on Louis Riel]. [One child] might only be a level 2 but I'll give him a 3 plus because he has come so far. The guy next to him who has all the grey matter upstairs and is just lazy, he gets a 2. So sometimes I just toss what the Ministry says aside; I'm working with this kid's self-esteem and he has put in hours on it. (Katz, 2001 in Olson, 2003, p. 221).

Another teacher reported that

Oh, I'll go through [the assignment] the first time and see where he stands according to everybody else [the norms]. Then I'll go back and look at where he is himself [relative to] what I know he has done in the past. (Katz, 2001 in Olson, 2003, p. 221)

Such teacher reports with respect to "balancing" curricular goals and student assessment illustrate teachers' concerns for students' selves and self-

development at the classroom level. In the first instance, the teacher noted the child's efforts and interpreted them as representing achievement, while the academic performances of "the guy next to him" was deemed less worthy on the basis of the teacher's sense of the relative academic capabilities and work habits of the students. In the case of the second teacher, we see the evaluation of a student compared to other students and compared to his own capabilities and past performance, suggesting that this teacher values personal progress and development as equal to (or more important than) level of academic achievement per se.

It is not surprising that teachers and other educators value and promote the personal development of students. Educational policies and practices champion individual development. The personal development of students is advanced in broad educational aims and goals, and in specific curriculum areas achievement is sometimes explicitly defined in terms of personal skill development (e.g., B.C.M.E. Grade 6 Personal Planning Curriculum, 1999). Enhancement of individual students' self-esteem and self-management is often intimately tied to academic achievement. In particular, many classroom practices are designed to achieve subject-specific learning objectives via the attainment and refinement of self-regulatory skills and the enhancement of students' self-esteem. Thus, many programs (including some that have been highlighted here) focus on developing students' selves as a method for improving academic performance.

We live in a world that emphasizes the right to pursue personal goals and interests and advocates individual responsibility for personal decisions and actions. In the education system, these values permeate most pedagogical practices, including those that are intended to enhance communal concepts such as social responsibility, and to assist students to master curriculum content. “Self-evaluation is a key aspect of the development of social responsibility. Whenever possible, students should be involved in monitoring and evaluating their own development” (B.C.M.E., 2001, p. 2). The assumption is that students’ ability to monitor and evaluate their own work and activities (in teacher-approved ways) will somehow enhance responsibility towards others and the community (the foregoing quote is situated beneath an image of a child and teacher at a desk, with the child observing the teacher mark his paperwork), and ensure the achievement of intellectual and social mandates of schooling.

The conflicting demands of individual goals of self-enhancement and societal goals of participatory citizenship are seen in various educational initiatives aimed at the development of children as individuals and citizens. The overarching, traditional goal of education is to prepare students for citizenship. *The Report of the Royal Commission on Education, A Legacy for Learners 1988* states that:

Our expectations for schools are high. We have, in fact, an ambitious social as well as an educational agenda for them, as we seek to support our social structure in various ways. In the broadest sense, we have long expected schools to serve as agencies for civic and democratic

development and as places where our culture and values can be sustained and transmitted to the young. (Montmarquette, 1990, p. 91).

Presumably, social aims of schooling, such as the inculcation of civic responsibility and cultural transmission, can issue from an education that enshrines a wide range of human knowledge and accomplishment in core curricula delivered in ways that encourage respectful participation and open dialogue with teachers and other students. However, it is less clear how educational materials and practices that focus on the acquisition and refinement of individual skills and strategies related to self-esteem and self-regulation contribute to social and intellectual development. For example, the *Social Responsibility Performance Standards*, a recently developed handbook for assessing the civic/social engagement of students “in the context of ongoing classroom and school activities [acknowledges that] more often [than not civic/social engagement] is a secondary focus of other school activities” (B.C.M.E., 2001, p. 7). Social responsibility is an educational objective that falls under the broad educational goal of human and social development, which is one of three broad goals of the K-12 B.C. education system (the other goals are intellectual development and career development). It is important to note that the Education Ministry emphasizes that “intellectual development of all students is the primary goal of education in British Columbia,” yet programs promoting individual and social development, such as “Realizing Individual Potential and Becoming Responsible Citizens” “are grounded in the recognition that emotional

and social development are as important to healthy, educated citizens as academic achievement” (B.C.M.E., 2001, p. 1).

The Bigger Picture

Public education in North America is designed to produce particular kinds of citizens. This endeavour is explicit in various education documents, such as curricular goals and aims, which emphasize responsible, participatory citizenship. On the one hand, this seems straightforward, given the numerous school projects and events that are designed to educate students about the rights, duties, and responsibilities of citizenship (e.g., learning about national anthems, statute history, etc). On the other hand, such an endeavour increasingly is at odds with the school experiences that children, as students, actually receive (e.g., learning to be self-regulated, self-disciplined, and self-esteemed).

Psycho-educational products that are designed to enhance students’ individual development and healthy adjustment (well-being) are now frequently adopted by school communities and individual teachers in their efforts to achieve curricular goals, and sponsored by government ministries. Such products most often are replete with psychological content, research, and expert endorsement. Some are designed not only to improve, for example, students’ self-esteem, but also to minimize the risk of clinical disorders (e.g., *Friends for Life* purports to minimize the risk of anxiety disorder). Many of these products are presented as highly-structured kits that teachers can use without fear of damaging students’ psyches, trusting the psychological expertise that lies behind the kits and ensures that students will experience the psychological benefits promised. The

message to teachers and other educators (e.g., school counselors) is that they play important roles in helping students become happy, well-adjusted individuals.

The school as an institution for promoting intellectual, social development increasingly is an institution devoted to personal adjustment and self-fulfillment. The development of personal skills and abilities is offered to educators and students, often in the form of participation in, and completion of, programs that consist of apparently “fool-proof” steps and procedures that will guarantee students’ psychological health. Many of these programs and activities offer an empirical conception of the self as a compilation of personal attributes and skills which can be easily acquired, as long as one purchases the right program, activity, or videotape. Whether the broader educational goal is to increase students’ intellectual achievement or produce future responsible citizens, oftentimes the focus at school and classroom levels is to help students to build their own repertoire of self tools (i.e., self-enhancement and self-management skills and strategies), that can be easily acquired and utilized across curricular subjects.

Psychology’s empirical self has been transported to school and classroom practices and experiences and reinforces the notion that the self is made up of related but distinct affective and cognitive components that can be worked on and improved through relatively straightforward steps and procedures. Somehow the accumulation of these discrete acquisitions will transform the individual into a self that is both masterfully self-fulfilled and self-sufficient, and can successfully accomplish the required tasks and duties of school life. By following a standard

set of steps and procedures, developed and endorsed by psychological experts, teachers will be able to help students accomplish a wide range of personal and educational goals. In educational terms, students will “reach their full potential, develop a sense of self and well-being, and appreciate that they are unique and worthy” (B.C.M.E., 2007, p. 1). There is little detail devoted to explaining how “realizing individual potential and becoming responsible citizens” are related, but there are explicit statements linking the acquisition of particular skills and abilities with various aspects of the self. For example, “better concentration and problem-solving in physical education, facilitate positive attitudes about the self” (B.C.M.E., 2007, p. 3).

At the same time, educational programs and activities mostly encourage students to set their own goals, work toward those personal goals (by applying the skills and strategies they’ve acquired), monitor their progress toward the goals, and evaluate their own performance. In effect the personal development of individuals has priority over the intellectual and social aims of schooling (take the example above in which the teacher measures achievement based on a student’s personal improvement, not intellectual accomplishment). At first glance, the emphasis on personal development may not seem such a bad state of affairs. Indeed, to have children develop into responsible, happy, well-adjusted individuals is a goal that most educators, parents, and others heartily support. Rather, it is the thin type of personhood that educational initiatives, guided by psychological theorizing and practices, ultimately produce that is of serious concern. As I have argued at various points throughout this paper, whether the

goal is to enhance students' self-esteem or increase self-management, or both, the focus on the psychological interior of the individual has produced an autonomous self that operates in isolated ways outside of communal participation with others.

Psychology's overarching commitment to the measurement of individual's skills and abilities in visible, quantifiable ways has contributed much to educators' understandings of the selves of students as discrete, calculable sets of competencies (see chapter four), that can be developed and enhanced through highly structured instructional activities, programs and practices. The resultant effect has been the promotion of an empirical self that is masterful in all of its acquisitions, but empty. This self is also perpetually focused on comparisons, judgments, and adjustments, which make it well suited to the continual consumption of new and different psycho-educational products. And, the emphasis on personal adjustment or improvement, whether it is to feel better or get better, also implies a need to look to psychological experts for guidance and practice.

The public education of children encourages and celebrates the construction of radically autonomous selves that may well be incompatible with responsible community participation. It is not that attributes such as independence, responsibility, autonomy, and self-discipline are not valuable. Indeed, it would be difficult to imagine responsible citizenship and community involvement in the absence of these characteristics. Rather, the concern is with an inward-focused, detached selfhood that applies such attributes too narrowly,

instrumentally, and personally for meaningful participation in the complex social and political practices of liberal democracies. I now turn to a discussion of the psychological empirical self that has been transported to school and classroom practices and policies, and celebrates a contemporary model of personhood that is grounded in contemporary liberal individualism and framed in the context of a psychological marketplace.

Liberal Individualism and Consumerism

Individual freedom is paramount in Western life. Contemporary liberalism encourages social, political, legal, economic, and personal practices built around the essential right of individuals to choose the “good life” for themselves. Under this view, the state must remain neutral with respect to notions of the good life except under conditions when any such notions might impose on the freedom of others. Contemporary liberal theorists such as Rawls (1971) contend that individual rights have priority over state-imposed common goods. On this view, individuals are free and independent, and capable of choosing their own ends. Accordingly, the state is deemed neutral in regards to ends, and can only interfere with matters of individual rights when the exercise of those rights infringes on the rights of others.

The underlying ontological assumption in liberal doctrine is a view of persons as radically autonomous individuals. The critical examinations conducted herein reveal how psychology’s empirical self assumes and has contributed through its influence in education to liberal notions of individuality, autonomy, and self-governance at the expense of socially committed civic

responsibility. In the context of education, the development of children as selves is carried out via psycho-educational practices designed to support students' personal goals and interests that align with contemporary liberal notions of individuality and freedom.

Our contemporary consumer-based society offers us seemingly endless choices of products such as food, toys, and clothing. At the same time, most Westerners believe that school should be divorced from the marketplace. As evidenced in this chapter, this has not been the case, either in British Columbia or in other Western jurisdictions. Not only is the psychological self evident in many educational practices devoted to self-advertisement and consumption, educational versions of the autonomous self are available for purchase in the form of psycho-educational consumer products marketed directly to schools. In particular, educational practices and programs at the school and classroom level offer an empirical psychological self for consumption by educators and students as - a self consisting of quantifiable competencies that can be worked on and enhanced, often through highly regimented, research-supported instructional procedures. Whether the empirical self is packaged as scores on self-esteem quizzes, the acquisition of self-regulated skills, or steps in self-enhancement programs, this self encourages judging, comparing, and reshaping students' personal understanding in ways consistent with psychological norms of self-fulfillment and self-management. Such products often are sold as scientifically-based strategies and initiatives that are designed to address the unique personal

needs and abilities of individual students, and that also will contribute to the development of students as responsible, socially-committed citizens.

According to Cushman (1995), the twentieth-century consumer self appears to be optimistic and confident, but really is “empty.” This empty self is “characterized by a pervasive sense of personal emptiness and is committed to the value of self-liberation through consumption” (Cushman, 1995, p. 6). The technique of advertising has transformed the individual as citizen to the individual as consumer. In particular, the self-improvement industry, including psychotherapy and pop psychology, has increasingly influenced and controlled mainstream American life by offering to fill up the empty self. Societal models, such as attractive persons in television advertisements, are offered to individuals for comparison and evaluation. Such commercial advertisements, replete with professional endorsements, extol a mastery and perfection that often are unachievable in everyday life, even going so far as to criticize the consumer for falling short of the appropriate standard (Cushman 1995). In this way, consumers become aware that they are incomplete or inadequate and must be transformed into different people in order to be happy and fulfilled (Cushman, 1995).

Commercial educational programs, such as the popular “Sylvan” tutoring program, advertise the psychological benefits they offer in television ads that depict a child who brings home a much-improved report card, and is met with the long-awaited approval of his parents. Personal development and achievement are thus revealed as problems that require psycho-educational fixes. The consumer marketplace has spread to the public education of children.

Psychological fixes in the forms of psycho-educational programs, interventions, and assessments promote an autonomous self as a consumptive self. Such products tell the individual that she is responsible for making her own happiness and success. And, she can achieve these ends herself, with the right kind of psychological guidance. Self-fulfillment consists in the purchase of convenient self products. Psycho-educational products treat the individual student or teacher as a free-choosing consumer in need of expert psychological assistance.

The Enterprising Self

In closing this chapter, I want to contend that psychological understandings of the self that have been transported to the education of children as persons who are free and autonomous have also paved the way for the emergence of the student as entrepreneur. The concepts of enterprise culture, enterprising individual, and entrepreneur are commonly understood in relation to economics and business. Yet in recent years, the idea of an enterprising self has spread beyond these areas to all spheres of life. A common definition of the enterprising individual is a person who:

has a positive, flexible, and adaptable disposition towards change, seeing it as normal rather than a problem. To see change in this way an enterprising individual has a security borne of self-confidence, and is at ease when dealing with insecurity, risk, difficulty, and the unknown. An enterprising individual has the capacity to initiate creative ideas, develop them, either individually or in collaboration with others, and see them through. An enterprising individual is able, even anxious, to take

responsibility and is an effective communicator, negotiator, influencer, planner, and organizer. An enterprising individual is active, confident and purposeful, not passive, uncertain, and dependent. (Center for Educational Research and Innovation, 1988, p. 33)

The enterprise culture shapes persons as subjects that are active and free-choosing. Enterprise specifies a set of rules for everyday living that includes “energy, initiative, ambition, calculation, and personal responsibility” (Rose, 1999, p. 154). With the help of experts (e.g., psychologists, therapists, educators), enterprising individuals are free to choose a life of personal responsibility, and to create lifestyles that promote self-fulfillment. Thus, to make an enterprise of oneself is to maximize one’s own assets, develop a future for oneself, and shape oneself in order to become what one wishes to be. Under this view, enterprising individuals are the new workers who strive to align their work life with their personal life, whose work provides them with satisfaction and a means for becoming even better enterprisers. That is, enterprising individuals choose work that allows them to display, practice, and hone their unique skills (e.g., organizing, goal-setting, creative thinking). In this way, work merges with personal lifestyle and becomes personally meaningful.

Lifelong, flexible learning is viewed as fundamental to the enterprising self in order to remain competitive in an ever-changing world. Accordingly, a successful worker is, in psychological terms, self-motivated, self-regulated, and self-adapting. But, this also necessitates a never-ending commitment to change and improvement. Such a project often demands a reliance on experts in order to

become the best that one can be (Rose, 1998). To be flexible, one must be able to transform oneself into a marketable product within a free market culture in the fashion of exchange between experts who sell products and consumers who desire to purchase products. Thus, workers are often engaged in continuing education to keep abreast of new changes in the marketplace. Take, for example, the teacher who upgrades her instructional skills as courses become available in areas such as classroom technology.

The self as an enterprise demands that individuals be responsible not only for making a project of themselves, but for carrying out the requisite activities toward the project, and for the outcome. Working on the self stretches to all aspects of the individual's life, so that one now "works" on relationships with others (e.g., partner, children, colleagues), and seeks professional assistance when needed (e.g., couples counselling, consultations with educational and counselling psychologists, work retreats). In this way, individuals are responsible for their success not only at work but in personal relationships (e.g., marriage) and personal activities (e.g., cross-country running).

At the school level, the emphasis on self-regulatory and self-fulfilling skills and strategies serves to prepare young students to become enterprising. At the high school level in B.C., the Career Planning curriculum emphasizes the value of enterprising skills. In this program, students are taught to identify the skills and attitudes that are necessary to be enterprising. Students are taught that enterprising individuals are continuous learners, creative, able to plan and set goals, people who possess "management and organizational skills, show

initiative, responsibility, flexibility and adaptability, self-esteem and confidence, believe actions and choices affect what happens in [their] life, make effort to reach [their] personal potential by pursuing what [they] enjoy doing, market [their] skills and abilities in the same way as [they] would a business” (B.C. Ministry of Education Career Planning 10, 2008, p. 9). Students are encouraged to apply these skills and attitudes to broad areas of their lives including business, community service, and personal endeavours.

In numerous ways the development of skills that are essential to becoming an enterprising individual are valued and encouraged at the elementary school level. Although the terms “enterprising,” “entrepreneurial,” or “innovator” are not (yet) present in B.C. elementary curricula, the development of enterprising skills and activities are valued and emphasized at this level of education, both in school and classroom practices. As chapter four demonstrates, elementary school curricula are replete with terms such as “risk-taking,” “planning,” “goal-setting,” “personal potential,” and so on. In terms of school practices, relationships that emphasize partnerships and working together, such as the parent/teacher partnership for the best interests of the child, depict a coming together of enterprising individuals. Here, the mother and teacher each bring their expertise in the areas of parenting and child education to the table to work together to find an innovative solution to a unique problem or situation. At the classroom level, teachers are expected to play a prominent role in developing students’ skills and attitudes as enterprising individuals. For example, the teacher may use her expertise to guide students in their practice of educational activities

(e.g., *Friends for Life, Actions Schools! B.C.*) in order to enhance enterprising skills (e.g., responsibility, problem-solving, self-esteem). Teachers often are encouraged to match students in group projects, so that individual students can shine by utilizing those skills that they are good at. In this way, students “sell” themselves to one another (“Suzy is good at writing”, and “I’m good at ideas”). But, such forms of co-operation may not be as community-minded as they are targeted at achieving individual goals (“I’m working with Suzy to get a better grade”).

Conclusion

An important question for the education of children as future citizens (a primary goal of education) is whether the educational development of students as enterprising individuals is compatible with notions of committed citizenship. As it currently stands, the enterprise culture appears to be focused on the attainment, application, and enhancement of entrepreneurial skills. In curricular context, whether such skills are directed toward civic activities or other, less socially/community-focused activities such as business or economics is beside the point. In other words, the emphasis is on the attainment and use of enterprising skills in novel ways (Alberta Education, 1997), not whether such skills serve a greater good.

School and classroom practices that have been influenced by psychological theory and research elevate the skills and abilities of the autonomous self at the expense of the responsible citizen. From this has emerged an enterprising self that operates in a marketplace culture of experts

and consumers. The enterprising self is focused on acquiring skills, abilities, and dispositions that constantly transform the individual into an adaptive worker that is primed to meet the ever-changing needs of a dynamic marketplace, and seems poised, chameleon-like, to be all that s/he can be, within the strictures of a consumer culture.

Public schooling began over one hundred years ago with the aim of educating children for the enhanced understanding and betterment of society. Schooling in the twenty-first century is beset with much controversy about what teachers should teach and what children should learn. In the next and final chapter I discuss conceptions of the self that consider the sociocultural, historical context of psychological experience, and offer a possible redress to what I see as the discord between individual freedom and civic duty that currently afflicts public education.

CHAPTER SIX: HOPE FOR THE EDUCATED SELF: A RECONSIDERATION FOR PROFESSIONALS

School as a Western social institution is obligated to produce democratic citizens who understand, respect, and contribute to society. Psychology is a professional discipline that is dedicated to the understanding and enhancement of the individual. Disciplinary psychology has contributed to the education of persons over the past century via theory, research, and interventions that aim to enhance the development of students as selves.

In this concluding chapter, I summarize the relationships between psychology and the education of selves revealed in the foregoing chapters. I then discuss the implications of psychology's adherence to conceptions of the self in individualistic terms. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of alternative ways for examining psychological experience that consider the sociocultural, historical constitution of persons.

I have used the "psy" hypothesis as my framework for critically examining the ways in which psychological technologies of the self have been infused into educational practices, and have produced simplified conceptions of the educated person as psychological selves removed from socio-cultural, historical contexts. I began with a brief overview of the traditional scientific approach to psychological investigations, derived from Enlightenment liberal ideology that viewed society as composed of free and equal individuals. This ideology saw the individual as

distinct, separate from others, and self-governing. That is, persons are who they are as individuals, not as members of a group (Fay, 1996). Under this natural science view, human nature is subject to the universal laws of nature that transcend time and location, and the best way to discover these laws is the scientific method, a system of inquiry adopted from the physical sciences. Psychology's scientific investigations are seen as contributing to a progression toward the truth about human nature and experience.

Critical analyses have challenged psychology's traditional approach to investigations of human experience. In particular, the natural science view about the nature of human phenomena, derived from liberal ideology, purports a methodological "atomism" (Fay, 1996) or "individualism" (Taylor, 1995), which explains social phenomena in terms of individual behaviour. Psychology's scientific methods, which provide the structure for investigations of psychological phenomena, observe and describe persons at the individual level. These methods also provide persons with the ability to observe themselves as both similar to and different from others (e.g., "I am a child," "I am a toddler"). In contemporary society, individuals engage in psychological practices of the self, such as self-scrutiny, self-evaluation, and self-regulation. These practices or technologies of the self (Foucault, 1988) allow individuals to perform operations on their bodies, thoughts, and conduct so that they may achieve happiness and self-fulfillment.

I then examined the ways in which psychology's investigative practices have influenced the education of children as persons. To this end, I presented a

critical historical examination of psychological studies of self, children, and schooling in modern psychology, and an examination of psychological measures of the self across the four prominent research areas on the self in educational psychology, identified as self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. My examinations revealed an empirical self that has dominated psychological inquiry for over a century. In keeping with the scientific method of inquiry, researchers developed and applied self-report measures to gain a more accurate understanding and measurement of the self. Scientific investigations of the self greatly increased in the mid-twentieth century, when researchers refined, expanded, and applied self-report scales and developed new measures to better assess the inner experience of individuals. The use of self-report measures also allowed for an increasing division of the self into components, such as self-esteem and self-concept.

Psychological theory and research on the self have been incorporated into educational theory and practice since the founding of disciplinary psychology. I presented a critical historical examination of changing conceptions of the self in the B.C. elementary school curricula. At the turn of the twentieth century, elementary school curricula conceived of individuals as cogs fitting the wheels of society, consistent with then extant notions of efficiency and utility. By the 1920s, B.C. curricula relied on psychological theory to guide teachers' understandings of child development. The child was viewed in terms of self-other relations ("I am what I can do for others"). Toward the mid-twentieth century, B.C. curricula began to acknowledge more explicitly the psychological emphasis of the day,

which promoted the view of the child as naturally good (“I am what I can be”).

From the 1960s onward, curricular goals and aims emphasized the psychological development of the individual over social duty and responsibility. Humanistic conceptions of the self that emphasized uniqueness and individual potential were prominent in the 1960s and 1970s. From the 1980s on, cognitive conceptions of the self as a scientist, knowledge-producer, and problem-solver became prominent. Current conceptions of the self in B.C. elementary school curricula reflect the autonomous, self-fulfilled, self-determined psychological self that is moving toward ever greater self potential (“I am what I want to be”).

The parallel development of changing conceptions of the self in the psychological literature and in B.C. elementary school curricula demonstrates the powerful influence that psychology has had on the education of persons for over a century. Psychological conceptions of the self have been infused in school curricular goals and aims which often depict the autonomous, self-governing, goal-oriented individual as the desirable future citizen:

Government is responsible for ensuring that all of our youth have the opportunity to obtain high quality schooling that will assist in the development of an educated society. To this end, schools in the province assist in the development of citizens who are: thoughtful, able to learn and to think critically, and who can communicate information from a broad knowledge base; creative, flexible, self-motivated and who have a positive self image; capable of making independent decisions; skilled and who can contribute to society generally, including the world of work; productive,

who gain satisfaction through achievement and who strive for physical well being; cooperative, principled and respectful of others regardless of differences; aware of the rights and prepared to exercise the responsibilities of an individual within the family, the community, Canada, and the world. (British Columbia Ministry of Education 2003, p. 4)

Psychological conceptions of the self have also influenced the education of children at the school and classroom levels. Psycho-educational kits, programs, and other initiatives promise teachers, students, and others (counsellors, parents) that students' lives will be enhanced if the appropriate steps and activities are followed. However, many of these practices focus on individual self-enhancement and self-management. Educational practices targeted at students' self-development, derived from psychological theory and practice, have contributed to an ever-growing accumulation of tools to help individuals achieve their own personal goals and interests, and have allowed for the new emergence of an entrepreneurial self that is flexible, adaptive, and able to meet the shifting needs of a marketplace world.

Since the inception of the formal public school system in B.C., curricular goals and aims have explicitly mandated the production of active responsible citizens as the overarching goal in the education of persons. However, conceptions of the self in school curricula, educational policies, and instructional practices, which have been drawn from psychological theory and research, have increasingly merged the interests, skills, and abilities of the autonomous self with the production of the responsible citizen. Although the pursuit of greater levels of

individual achievement and development in academic settings may be a valuable endeavour, in itself, it must be seen as inadequate for the education of persons as citizens.

Psychology's Empirical Self

The examinations that I have conducted herein highlight the empirical nature of the contemporary self. Psychology's adoption of empirical science methods has set a framework for understanding the self as an object that can be empirically observed, measured, and quantified. On this view, empirical science frames the self through the use of operational definitions that permit empirical accessibility to the internal self via observation, measurement, and quantification. These empirical methods aid our understanding of the self, which brings us closer to the universal truth about the self.

Early psychological conceptions of the self that focused on subjective elements such as consciousness were excluded from psychological research because they could not be empirically observed and measured in reliable and generalizable ways. The eventual reframing of psychological constructs into objective terms such as variables allowed for the statistical testing of phenomena that previously were excluded from the arena of proper scientific investigation (Danziger, 1997). During the second half of the twentieth century, new types of psychological methods that were designed to empirically access unobservable features of the self became accepted as legitimate scientific techniques. In particular, the development, refinement, and use of self-report measures refashioned the self into an empirical object, operationally defined in terms of

items on these measures. Self-report measurement continues to be used as an accepted method of investigating the self, and response scores on these measures constitute a source of psychological knowledge about the self. Thus, psychological conceptions of the self, operationalized as self-esteem, self-concept, self-efficacy, or self-regulation, are the products of empirical methods of psychologists.

The empirical methods that have been adopted by psychology to guide research on the self have also been incorporated into school curricula. In contemporary liberal democratic life, empirical methods are appealing to researchers (for the conduct of experimental investigations) and to educators (for application in school settings), because of their apparent value-neutral ways of examining interesting yet unobservable psychological phenomenon, such as the self. On the one hand, expert empirical knowledge, derived from psychology's objective methods, appears to avoid potentially biased sources of information that may infringe on the rights, freedoms, and values of individual students and families. On the other hand, the commitment to such value-free methods promotes the acquisition of skills, strategies, and forms of selfhood that also will somehow contribute to the education of persons as citizens. However, the educated self that is advanced and promoted in school curricula, and derived from psychological investigations and research, is masterful in its abilities to examine, work on, and fulfill itself according to personally determined desires and goals (Cushman, 1995; Martin, 2004), but is devoid of the practices and values necessary for socially-committed citizenship such as active participation in

community, economic, and political life, commitment to social justice, and genuine concern for the well being of others.

Whether the self of contemporary life is focused on individual potential, or strategic skills, it can be observed, measured, and revised by itself, as well as psychological experts, in empirically accessible ways. On this view, the masterful self can be known to itself via hypothesis-testing. That is, we hold working hypotheses about ourselves derived from personal observations and experience. These personal hypotheses are subject to revision based on comparisons and subsequent observations and experience. The scientific technique of hypothesis-testing has become incorporated as an educational method of self development and discovery, evidenced in school curricula. For example, the B.C. Primary Program presents a picture of a child peering through a magnifying glass like a scientist. An accompanying caption states that the “engagement in such activities [as critical problem-solving] can help children develop an awareness of their own thinking and learning processes” (B.C.M.E., 2006, p. 25). Psychology’s empirical self comes clothed in a scientific enterprise that offers self practices and products (e.g., self-report measures, steps in programs) for relatively straightforward application in school settings that include many students. Yet, this psychological self is primarily an individualistic self.

A recent feature in *Monitor on Psychology* entitled “Psychology in Education: Behavioral science and education policy are aligning to improve the nation’s schools” (2002, cover) demonstrates the purposeful desire of scientific psychology to further influence the education of persons. In this article, Grover

“Russ” Whitehurst of the U.S. Office of Educational Research and Improvement claims that “we want to see objective research in education that’s as rigorous as topics on health and medicine” (in Murray, 2002, p. 52). According to the claims under this and other recent initiatives, psychology should have a more prominent place in the education of children than it currently does (Murray, 2002). Such initiatives insist that psychological conceptions of the self are devoid of values and interest. However, the critical analyses presented here indicate that such conceptions are inescapably entwined with the values and interests of society at large and with those of various segments of society, including the interests of disciplinary and professional psychology.

Liberal individualism is promoted in psychological theory, research, and practices, and has increasingly been integrated into the educational system at various levels, including curricular aims and goals, teaching methods, student assessment, and student counselling. On this view, a teacher might give a lecture to students on a particular subject topic as a means of transferring relevant information from her mind to their minds, and may subsequently give students a written exam to assess the successful transfer of the information. From the students’ perspective, they have little knowledge about the topic, and must attend to, decode, and store the information from the lecture in order for it to become theirs. Later, they need to retrieve the information from their memories to demonstrate that they have successfully received the information. In the same vein, the assessment of the transfer of knowledge from the teacher to the student is done at the level of the individual student and teacher.

The current understanding of oneself as a self-contained individual is captured in an excerpt from an undergraduate textbook for pre-service teachers:

The professional teacher is self-evaluative... This analysis includes both assessment of strengths and weaknesses and examination of beliefs and values. Second the professional teacher is a self-directed learner who establishes personal and professional goals, develops action plans to achieve those goals, follows through on those plans, and analyzes the outcomes through reflective self-evaluation. Third, the professional teacher constantly attempts to integrate theory with practice. We might consider this person a strategist who not only relies on a proven knowledge base, but also updates it regularly and tries new approaches to improve effectiveness. Finally, the professional teacher is a problem-solver. (Holborn, Wideen, & Andrews, 1988, p. 7)

The model student is depicted in similar terms. For example, educational psychologist Anita Woolfolk (1995) states that “if one goal of education is to produce people capable of educating themselves, students must learn to regulate and manage their own lives, set their own goals, and provide their own reinforcement” (1995, p. 221). Accordingly, self-regulatory skills such as goal setting, self-monitoring, self-evaluation, and self-reinforcement are deemed to be the hallmark of the independent, self-sufficient individual. As I have attempted to show throughout this thesis, the empirical, individualistic self is promoted and reinforced by both psychologists and educators.

A Reconsideration of Psychology's Educated Self

In North America, formal schooling has the explicit sociopolitical mandate to produce persons who are autonomous, self-governing, and able freely and equally to participate in a democratic society. The goals of education aim to guide the development of individuals in a manner broadly consistent with the collective goods of civic participation and contribution. In contrast, psychological theory and research assume conceptions of the self that are highly individualistic and instrumental. When incorporated into educational theory and practice, such conceptions serve to elevate goals and strategies of self-fulfillment and individual freedom over goals and practices that emphasize citizenship and civic virtue. School curricula under the influence of psychology and the broader society now emphasize the individual over the social.

Disciplinary psychology has aided our individualistic conceptions of self through the production of devices or technologies that shape us as objects of development, schooling, work, medicine, and so forth (Rose, 1998, 1999). Through the technology of schooling, children become identified as students who are more or less successful based on the culture's criteria for educational accomplishment. These self technologies allow individuals to perform operations on their bodies, thoughts, and conduct so that they may achieve happiness, self-fulfillment, and wisdom.

In contemporary Western societies, psychological constructs and methods of investigation transform our ways of seeing, thinking, and acting (Rose, 2001). Individuals, including children and adolescents in schools, now control

themselves through practices of self-evaluation, self-scrutiny and self-regulation derived from psychological inquiry and promoted through psycho-educational interventions. At first glance, psychology's educated self that is independent, self-determined, and ever-improving seems to have it all. The autonomous self that is able, through psychological technologies that have spread into all facets of contemporary life, to act upon itself in order to achieve happiness and self-fulfillment is firmly tied to an ethic of individuality. This self is attractive, in the sense that we are individuals with freedom and choice, even if aided by a proliferation of psychological products ranging from therapies to self-help books and questionnaires. Although this self may work to a limited degree to enhance individuals' academic achievement and academic ambitions, it is inadequate for the education of persons as citizens.

It seems reasonable to suggest that psychology's championing of the individual is inadequate with respect to the institutional mandate of formal schooling to produce citizens for collective, participatory involvement in their communities. Fortunately, alternative conceptions of the self as historically and socioculturally situated are currently available from a wide variety of contemporary social cultural theories. These include, but are not limited to, neoVygotskian (Cole 1996; Wertsch 1998), and neohermeneutic (Martin, Sugarman, & Thompson 2003; Richardson, Fowers, & Guignon 1999) conceptions of selfhood that tie the self to collective life with others. Such sociocultural, historical conceptions of the self place it in a very different light from that reflected in the mainstream research of psychologists as considered

herein. In such alternative formulations, the individualistic, autonomous, instrumental self is eschewed in favour of a socioculturally situated and constituted self, meaningfully connected to its community, yet capable of modestly transforming sociocultural practices and traditions to create alternative possibilities for living with others.

A reconsideration of persons as historically, socioculturally situated, yet capable of new possibilities, eases the tensions between the autonomous, self-governing individual and the socially dependent, committed citizen. For example, Fairfield (2000) presents a hermeneutic-pragmatic philosophy that defends liberalism, but does not conceive of the self as ontologically prior to the culture and social life in which it lives. Amy Gutmann (1990) explores the implications of elevating individual freedom over civic virtue (liberalism), and civic virtue over individual freedom (communitarianism) in the education of children. Gutmann (1990) contends that democratic education prepares citizens to contribute as equals to mindfully reproduce (not replicate) their society, and examines the ways in which democratic education maintains a creative and productive tension between civic virtue and individual freedom. For Gutmann (1990), democratic education and educational practices require the interpretation and application of standards of nonrepression (repression is defined as the restriction of rational inquiry), and nondiscrimination (discrimination is defined as the exclusion of children from educational goods for reasons not related to legitimate social purposes of such goods). On this view, rights are dependent on their ends, and do not trump that of which they are in aid.

Martin and Sugarman (1999) posit a self that is a kind of understanding constituted by biological, historical, and sociocultural forces but underdetermined by those forces. On their view, we are born with biological capabilities and a limited prereflective agency from which psychological development proceeds. In the Vygotskian sense, conversations and other sociocultural practices and relations are appropriated, internalized, and transformed into psychological tools for thinking and understanding. Thus, individuals learn to talk and relate to themselves in the same manner that others talk and relate to them. These sociocultural practices constrain the ways in which persons can talk and relate to one another, and these constraints are linguistic, moral, and ethical. At the same time, these practices allow for the development of a reflexive awareness of self as both subject and object, which enables individuals' self-generated interpretations to contribute to their subsequent thoughts and actions.

The various symbolic and relational tools that individuals accumulate through their appropriation of sociocultural practices and conventions enable and constrain the personal theories individuals construct and hold about their experiences, themselves, and others... In developing our theories about ourselves, we identify with certain socially supported conceptions of personhood, and are drawn to act in some ways more so than others... Thus, socially countenanced theories of what it is to be a person act to constrain the shape our personal interpretations, values and beliefs can take... Nonetheless, the substantive content and constellation of interpretations, values, and beliefs held by an individual, is something of

a unique construction. Because of this underdetermination of personal theories by their sociocultural origins, there is a great deal of latitude in the way each individual uses a theory of self, or ideal of personhood, to reference a unique experiential history and reflect on past, present, and future intentions, expectations, and actions. (Martin & Sugarman, 1999, p. 22)

On this view, persons are intimately linked with their social surroundings. Decisions, actions, and indeed thoughts are not merely directed toward instrumental gratification of individual needs and desires, but rather are meaningfully related to families, communities, and society at large. "It would be dysfunctional for an individual to develop beliefs about things like truth, beauty, honesty, responsibility, and rights, that bore no resemblance to extant forms and practices for such social, cultural, and moral phenomena in his/her society" (Martin & Sugarman, 1999, p. 116). This self is socioculturally generated, yet capable of a socially constrained agency that seems appropriate to a kind of personhood that might be adequate to foster joint commitments to common, not just individual, goals and goods.

Disciplinary psychology, through its discourse and practices, has become infused in the contemporary lives of Western individuals in search of their selves. Today, changes to psychological discourses and practices can be expected to stimulate changes in our broader conceptions of ourselves as persons and citizens. But this does not need to be an undesirable state of affairs. The current state that leans toward self-esteem, personal growth, and personal happiness as

isolated forms of self-improvement can also form the basis of community and collective action (Herman, 1996). Rose (1999) encourages us to imagine an ethics that is collective and does not look to celebrate or govern the self. Although our liberal ideals celebrate an individualistic, autonomous self, they also can celebrate dependency, mutuality, collective action, and commitment to others, and it is important that psychology and education have something to say about the latter as well as the former.

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