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Educating for Democratic Development: A Study of Women Leaders in Social Action

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A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Culture and Values in Education

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the question of educating for democratic development from the perspective of women leaders in community development organizations. The goal of this study is to expand our current understanding of education by giving voice to women's insights and experiences while considering their philosophical and practical contributions to the field.

Education is first considered in its traditional form as a static phenomenon which promotes hierarchy and perpetuates the status quo. The deconstruction of oppression is then addressed in order to develop a theoretical framework of critical, feminist and engaged pedagogies. This framework offers insight into a reconstruction of education as an instrument for promoting social responsibility and social action.

Nine women leaders in social action are interviewed using qualitative and phenomenological research methodologies. Their motivations, philosophies and organizational practices, and ideas are considered in the context of education. As a result, the insight that these women offer to the field of education is revealed and illustrated.

Résumé

Cette thèse porte sur la question de l'éducation pour le développement démocratique à travers la perspective des femmes engagées dans les organisations pour le développement communautaire. Le but de cette étude est d'élargir notre connaissance actuelle de l'éducation en présentant les perspicacité et les expériences féminines tout en tenant compte des contributions philosophiques et pratiques dans le domaine de l'éducation.

L'éducation est d'abord considérée comme un moyen pour promouvoir le système hiérarchique. Par ailleurs, la déconstruction de l'oppression est adresseé pour présenter un cadre théorique de la pédagogie critique, feministe, et engagée. Ce cadre conceptuel permet de comprendre la reconstruction de l'éducation comme un instrument pour encourager la responsabilité et l'action sociale.

Neuf femmes militantes dans l'action sociale sont interviewées en utilisant la méthodologie qualitative et phénoménologique. La motivation, la philosophie, l'organisation des pratiques, et les idées sont considérées dans le contexte de l'éducation. En conséquence la perspicacite que ces femmes offrent dans le domaine de l'education est révélée et illustrée par cette étude.

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This study is a collage of the beliefs and values of a truly exceptional group of women. In traversing its wholeness from start to finish, I can see the images of the individuals who inspired, responded to, and even questioned my questions. I want to thank each one of them for giving me the gift of this thesis and, more significantly, the gift of their community.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

The goal of education, according to Dewey (1925), is to develop a society in which people have high self esteem and a strong sense of community; a society in which people take responsibility for their own actions and care about the well being of others. In such a society, all citizens are equal in voice and in value and have equal access to education, opportunities and resources.

The first step in achieving this vision is the realization that the issue of poverty needs to be addressed; that our world, our nations, our communities and our souls are impoverished. Instead of forging together and creating communities people tend to create borders and construct walls, dividing us into ethnic, religious and political affiliations. Although many people the world over face social and economic poverty, I believe that in Canada our greatest poverty is that of empathy or care. Empathy is being able to imagine or place yourself in the situation of another person.

> Empathy... is not altruistic love. Rather, empathy ... is a willingness to relate to the situation of others as if it were our own; to make the links between ourselves and that which we see around us. By making those links, we draw ourselves into the situations of others, so that we now have a stake - a self interest, really - in ensuring that they are cared about. (Manji, 1997, pg. 78-79)

Care, which Nel Noddings (1984) has written much about is, like empathy, not an engendered trait, it is relational and can be pursued by both men and women (Noddings in Stone (Ed.), 1994; Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998). Caring is an act of openness and interest in the well-being of another human being.

> Caring for another person is life affirming. It acknowledges that the other

> exists and is worth the effort of trying to perceive. Such acts of caring help each of us establish our own core identity. (Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998, p.65)

The establishment of a core identity based on empathy and care is supported by some education initiatives in the Middle East. One UNESCO educational workshop for teachers intending to encourage peace between the Palestinians and the Israelis is based on the assumption that emotional ties between human beings must inevitably counteract war (Halperin (Ed), 1997, p.3).

Objectives and Goals

This study addresses the question "How does one educate for democratic development?" Numerous philosophers, authors and pedagogues have contributed to the question at hand, addressing that question in various fields. One such field is ethics. Plato asks in Protagoras, "How can virtue which Socrates equates with being a good citizen be taught?" (Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998, p.82). In Book Two of the Republic he focuses on the question, "How do we persuade people from an early age to value striving to be just?" (Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998, p.85). Many philosophers have placed their concerns in the context of education. For example, Kant wanted children to learn how to become moral agents (Collinson, 1987; Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998). Marx believed that education should teach people to challenge unfair distributions of power; and Dewey spent his career on the question of democracy in education (Collinson, 1987; Dewey, 1925, 1928, 1938, Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998).

Before creating a dialogue that may provide the space to answer such questions and address these issues, we need to establish a basis on which to build. In developing that foundation I discuss *oppression* as an institution which creates borders, and as a motivating force for this study; *development* and *education* as means through which to address oppression and bridge difference; and finally *democracy* and *social action* as the

ultimate goal. These concepts are discussed in the section "Definition of Terms" towards the end of this chapter and lay the foundation for critical, feminist and engaged pedagogy which form the literature review and theoretical framework for this thesis.

As the objective of the study is to understand how to educate for democratic development, this thesis considers women who are taking action by establishing or leading grassroots community development and advocacy organizations, who are working to empower and educate the public in the hopes of creating a more just, healthy society. In seeking to find solutions for our society's poverty of empathy, I make an effort to connect with the personal journeys which lead these women to their present pursuits.

My thesis is based on qualitative and phenomenological research, which work on the assumption that "there is a need to make more public the interplay between emotional and intellectual" (Ely, 1991, p.1). Through this study I am rewarded with a sense for the ways in which the women leaders I interview were educated, and the philosophies that, as a result of their formal and informal upbringings, they adopt for their work today.

Personal Background and Biases

We are all daily witnesses to injustice. For as long as I can remember I have always wondered why some people were blessed, were gifted, or were lucky enough to live lives seemingly free of suffering, while others can't escape their daily pain. This imbalance is particularly evident in terms of people's access to resources, education and opportunity. This imbalance can also be observed in terms of people's ability to take care of themselves and each other.

Ironically it is often those who have greater access to resources, and who possess greater societal power, who do not have strong connections to their communities. The way success is defined on a societal level and on a personal level often forces us to hold power over people rather than to share power with people. It is these personal challenges that create

patterns and attitudes of inequality. What has become important to me is how I can play a role in alleviating this imbalance of power.

Inequity is only one of the issues with which this thesis is preoccupied. This thesis has a background in education and development, identity issues and feminist philosophy. In the first year of my Master's studies, I spent a good deal of my energy focusing on the roles of Indian women in India and in Canada. The women I focused on in the Indian context were rural women, and I was concerned with their needs for education and economic resources. The issues I considered in the Canadian context were those of identity conflicts faced by immigrants and children of immigrants as they mediate their dual cultures. These issues were of interest to me as I mediated my own sense of identity. I came to a point in my studies, however, where I was able to take a step forward, beyond my own identity issues, and address a vision that was inclusive of my preoccupations with democracy, development, education, and identity in a way that was outward looking. For this reason, while a portion of this study considers identity, the more significant focus is on philosophy and application - the building blocks required for democratic development.

Contributions

Throughout history male leaders in grassroots social action have become philosophical icons, political heroes and venerated saints. Mahatma Gandhi, Martin Luther King and Steven Biko are all examples of such leaders and, while these men have undoubtedly made enormous contributions to society, one would be hard pressed to name three women who have achieved comparable fame. Countless women leaders have been overlooked throughout history and continue to be neglected. It is significant that those women who gain recognition (such as Mother Theresa and, to a much lesser degree, the women in my study) tend to earn recognition for their work, while their philosophies or intellectual contributions tend to be ignored. "Ethics has been discussed largely in the language of the father: in principals and propositions, in terms such as justification, fairness and

justice. The mother's voice has been silent" (Noddings, 1984, p.1). For this reason, I am studying women as leaders and philosophers of social action so that their experiences, philosophies and practices can serve to role model education for democratic development.

The writing of this thesis has been a journey, and through it my definition of success has matured, from one of seeking out women who are world recognized in development to one of recognizing the value of the lesser known stars, those who act daily in our own, local neighborhoods. Indeed, all of the women in this study pursue their daily work on a local level. Only one of the women interviewed has achieved recognition beyond the community she serves. Choosing to seek out local women was a major step for me which I view not as a compromise but as a gift. I have been struggling for years with my definition of success, with what I recognize and with what I value. I had heard the popular phrase "think globally, act locally" before but I never realized how important it should be to my pursuits. This realization proved valuable for me because it shone light on where I want to be involved in development and education, and it allowed me to find for myself role models to whom I can look for direction.

Numerous studies have been conducted on women participating in social and environmental justice or community development at a local level. The majority of these studies focus on international development in countries of the South from the perspective of Development Studies. (Charlton, 1984; Levy, 1988; March & Taqqu, 1986). The studies which have taken place in North America focus, for the most part, on women participating in social movements in the United States from the perspective of History or Political Science (Astin & Leland, 1991; Daniels, 1988; Kaplan, 1997; Schofield, 1997). Irshad Manji (1997) conducted an interdisciplinary study of Canadian citizens involved in community development, with ill-identified connections to education.

In addressing the need for understanding how to educate for democratic development, I recognize that a study focusing on local community leaders in Montréal and Toronto has not

been previously conducted. Nor, to my knowledge, has a study been done which looks to women participating in democratic development, with a view to understanding their motivation, their philosophies, and their practices for applications to education. As such, this study, attempts to fill the observed knowledge gap by seeking to understand democratic development from the experiences and philosophies of local women.

Definitions of Terms

Defining the terms of reference is an essential step in this thesis, as it provides the reader and the writer with a foundation on which to build. This foundation can also become a place to return to if clarification is necessary. In the question, "How does one educate for democratic development?" there are many terms which require further explanation. I begin the definitions by discussing oppression and power as points of departure. From there I move on to addressing development and education by expanding on their evolution and their present day preoccupations. I then present a definition of democracy. In an effort to illustrate democracy through community building, I close the definitions of terms with a brief discussion of social responsibility and social action.

Oppression and Power

Social **oppression** exists when one group either consciously or unconsciously exploits another group for its own benefit. Such benefits are usually reaped in terms of resources and psychological control (Adams et al, 1997). Oppression promotes the division of a dominant culture from an inferior culture based on external notions of power; notions typically related to the identity of a group based on their race, class, gender, sexual preference, age and ability (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1997; Manji, 1997).

In the past these notions of power allowed the British to colonize India, the Portuguese to colonize Brazil, the French to colonize Algeria, granted the misnomer of 'discoverer' to Columbus, and prompted the spiritual and cultural destruction of the First Nations people

of Canada (Memmi, 1965). Hierarchy and aristocracy ingrained a superiority complex into those of European descent whose cultures traditionally placed greater value on the individual than the collective. Conversely, indigenous cultures traditionally placed a greater emphasis on the collective. The European colonizers were thus able to assert power over indigenous cultures by considering themselves to be superior to the colonized peoples. Memmi (1965) considers this attitude to be racist, "The colonist stresses things which keep him separate, rather than emphasising that which might contribute to the foundation of a joint community" (p.71). The colonizers established themselves as the dominant culture and maintained their position of power at the expense of all others.

Power is often the vehicle or the voice that commands obedience through oppression or fear (Eisler, 1987). Once established in a society at large, in a classroom, or in a family, power imbalances are internalized into the human psyche

> Oppressive beliefs are internalized by victims as well as benefactors. The idea that poor people somehow deserve and are responsible for poverty, rather than the economic system that structures and requires it, is learned by poor and affluent a like. Homophobia, the deep fear and hatred of homosexuality, is internalized by both straight and gay people. Jews as well as gentiles absorb anti-Semitic stereotypes. (Adams et al, 1997, p.5)

The internalization of oppression by individuals or groups, imposed the promotion of a larger disempowerment which was perpetuated through development.

Development

I begin with the traditional definition of development, namely that of a form of oppression, as this version of development implicitly enforces oppressive paradigms. Following this description, I discuss the changes which have taken place philosophically and practically in the field of development in order to move towards a broader, more progressive definition of the term.

Traditionally, development has been a business which provides band-aid solutions to the problems which exist between people, between communities, and within and between nations. Development has historically supported the division between a dominant and an inferior culture based on external notions of power. After WWII, when colonized countries became independent, development emerged as a means of supporting 'backwards nations' through monetary contributions and human resources (Fagerland & Saha, 1989). Success in development has historically been equivalent to productivity and profitability, and thus a country's Gross National Product (GNP) was employed as a means of evaluating developing countries and communities (Ekins, 1992).

The concept of human development created by the United Nations Development Program has emerged in recent years to consider the level of citizens' participation and social equity in measuring a nation's level of development.

> The basic objectives of human development is to enlarge the range of people's choices... These choices should include access to income and employment opportunities, education and health and a clean safe physical environment. Each individual should also have the opportunity to participate fully in community decisions and enjoy human, economic and political freedoms. ("The Human Development Report", 1993, p.47)

In acknowledging that powerless societies need sustainable resources and tools, **development** has been redefined to be any act of transformation which promotes social and environmental sustainability (Ekins, 1992).

Education

The process of education is central to this study and is examined here thoroughly to understand it, not only for its role as a societal institution, but also for its human potential. For the purpose of this work, education is inclusive of all of the definitions found below.

Education, like development, is a political act. When confined to rules and borders,

education can serve to perpetuate the unequal distribution of power in the existing status quo.

> Education is an important social and political force in the process of class reproduction. By appearing to be an impartial and neutral 'transmitter' of the benefits of a valued culture, schools are able to promote inequality in the name of fairness and objectivity. (Angela in Nemiroff, 1984, p.63)

Conversely, when cultivated with compassion, enthusiasm, and a love of learning, education can be an empowering and inclusive experience.

> Urging all of us to open our minds and hearts so that we can know beyond boundaries of what is acceptable, so that we can think and rethink, so that we can create new visions, I celebrate teaching that enables transgressions - a movement against and beyond boundaries. It is that movement that makes education the practice of freedom. (hooks, 1994, p.12)

Education as a practice of freedom is achieved by role modeling and engaging in the practice of life-long learning collaboratively. It is within this ongoing dialogue that education can cultivate social responsibility.

According to Kant, in fact, the goal of education is "to help students form moral characters (Kant in Thayer-Bacon & Bacon, 1998, p.105). Even Webster's Dictionary defines education with a moral purpose in mind: "Education is instruction or training in which people (generally young) learn to develop their mental, moral and physical powers" (Cayne (Ed.), 1988, p.298).

Although we generally associate education with a formal system of instruction regulated by Education Ministries and School Boards, I feel that greater personal development takes place in the form of non-formal educational experiences throughout one's lifetime. I think that the education that creates collaborative and cohesive communities of dialogue is not necessarily the education which is regulated (Belenky et al, 1986). With personal and community development in mind, our definition of educator should include parents, peers,

counsellors, tutors, community organizers, journalists, celebrities, authors, and political leaders. To this end, an educator, a teacher, a role model could in fact be anyone who is able to teach based on their knowledge or actions (Giroux, 1992a, Moran, 1997).

Democracy

Understanding how to achieve democracy is the goal of this study. John Dewey, who spent most of his lifetime considering the question of democracy and education, states that "democracy is always a community in the making" (Dewey, 1928, p.148). With that in mind the term community is employed frequently throughout this study and therefore can be considered synonymous with democracy.

In support of Dewey, Giroux calls democracy, "the points of intersection, where different histories, languages, experiences and voices intermingle amidst diverse relations of power and privilege" (1992b, p.209).

The community which Giroux describes as being inclusive and free to engage in diverse relationships is what Maxine Greene refers to as the *public space*. "The creation of this public space or philosophical space" is Greene's ideal of democracy, "wherein diverse individuals recognize each other as equals and communicate with each other" (Greene in Oldenquist (Ed.), 1996, p.3).

Drawing on and encompassing these definitions, **democracy** is be addressed in this thesis as a process of seeking freedom, social equality and meaningful participation; meaningful to the citizen and also meaningful to society (Kaplan,1997; Manji; 1997).

I believe that it is through the process of seeking democracy that institutions of development and education can acknowledge and make space for possibility rather than for political correctness.

Social Responsibility and Social Action

Social Action is a consequence of a democratic community and democratic citizens. When a person is engaged in education which questions the existing domains of power in a way that is fulfilling and liberating they become motivated to participate in the development of their community (Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Witherell & Noddings, 1991). The feeling of motivation, engagement or interest in their community is the waking of what Freire (1997) calls conscientization and what is called, for the purpose of this study, **social responsibility**. The participation is called **social action**.

> For Dewey, a public begins to come into existence when various people begin paying heed to the consequences of certain private transactions - consequences that affect the lives of people outside of those transactions. When there is reflection on those events, when groups of persons begin to appreciate and to care about what is happening (as they sometimes do with respect to the plight of abused children, homeless families, undocumented immigrants, or poorly served students), then they are likely to open a public space in which demands on representatives can be made and people can begin to find their voices and to express what they think and feel. (Greene in Oldenquist (Ed), 1996, pp.28-29)

In opening the space for citizens to critically engage in a dialogue which encourages the cultivation of social responsibility and the pursuit of social action it is expected that the development which occurs will be democratic.

Conclusions/ Outline of Thesis Contents

Thus far, I have provided a brief summary of the issues to be confronted, and have outlined the personal and pedagogical background of my research. In the following chapter, I provide a literature review and theoretical framework for the study. This section discusses theoretical and pedagogical frameworks which, with the goal of social responsibility and social action in mind, allows educators to address oppression and power imbalances. I begin Chapter 2 by focusing on critical pedagogy. After a description and analysis of this framework I address feminist and engaged pedagogies. In this section I also discuss the

pedagogical applications which emerge through these topics, namely social justice education and service learning, which both fall within the category of critical pedagogy.

Chapter 3 outlines of the methodology which takes a qualitative and phenomenological approach. The chapter begins with a summary of the way in which the data was collected. I specifically address the rationale for my study and how it prompted me to select a research group. I discuss the means with which I accessed and gained consent from my participants, the questions that I asked of them, and the ethical concerns that arose along the way. In the second half of the chapter the data analysis is explained in terms of the interpretative strategies and presentation tools used. In this section I give support for the decisions, steps and procedures taken in analysing my data.

Chapter 4 discusses the interviews held with the nine women leaders working in the areas of social and environmental justice in Montréal and in Toronto. The women include June Callwood, Joanne Filon, Elizabeth Hunter, Kim Kidder, Jacque Kistabish, Paula Kline, Patrica Murphy, Willi Nolan and Luciana Soave. Following the personal introductions of the participants, the thematic analysis begins by situating women in terms of society's understanding of care. The core questions of the thesis are addressed in the following section through a discussion of the participants' views on the issues of personal motivation, the philosophies and practices of democratic communities, and the educational applications of these practices .

Finally, Chapter 5 discusses the answers and questions that have been provoked by my study. This chapter concludes the thesis with a focus on key findings, emerging issues, and implications for further research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review & Theoretical Framework

Introduction

In this chapter, the literature addressing critical, feminist and engaged pedagogy is reviewed, with particular concern for oppression and power as they are perpetuated in society and thus in education. Through these philosophical standpoints I discuss the role of education in cultivating social action and social responsibility in citizens. The chapter begins by briefly acknowledging the potential of education, historically, in influencing development. Next, I discuss the theoretical aspects of critical pedagogy, followed by a discussion of feminist pedagogy and engaged pedagogy, and the emphasis these frameworks place on voice, narrative, and self-actualization. Current education applications are acknowledged throughout this chapter.

According to Dewey, the potential of education to influence development is very significant. He argues that, "What nutrition and reproduction are to physiological life, education is to social life" (Dewey, 1925, p.11). The impact education can have on a society can be significantly positive or negative. In The Colonized and the Colonizer, for example, Memmi (1965) considers how education was used in Algeria during French colonization in order to maintain the unequal power balance, and the mutual dependency between the colonized and the colonizer. In India during British colonization, education was an élitist segregated structure that promoted inequality and discrimination (Das, 1979; Gabriel, 1991). Critical, feminist and engaged pedagogies provide the tools to deconstruct past and current existing power imbalances and each seeks a role in liberation (Bruner, 1996; Freire, 1997; Giroux, 1992a; Greene, 1988; hooks, 1994; Nemiroff, 1992; Stone (Ed.), 1994; Weiler, 1988).

Critical Pedagogy

Critical pedagogy argues that education is a political act that is most often used to maintain

the status quo. The potential of education to influence the perpetuation and maintenance of unequal power distribution is leveraged in order to strengthen this division. While education can serve these unjust goals, critical pedagogy also illustrates the potential of education to serve as an empowering and community-building experience. In acknowledging that students and teachers have the potential to recreate knowledge and to take action towards democratic development, human development assumes a new role of priority, and resources are redistributed in a way that strengthens communities on both the local and global scales. As Nemiroff explains,

> When people are aware of the psychological, cultural, and socio-economic determinants in their lives, they are enabled to negotiate the task of 'inventing' themselves and their lives. The aim... has always been an emancipatory one: to free people from the emotional shackles imposed by others' expectations of them and to help them achieve a high level of self-actualization that will result in personal happiness and reinvestment in their own and the global community. (1992, p.56)

The remainder of this chapter expands on the potential of education to personally liberate and, as a consequence, to cultivate a sense of social responsibility and social action. In this section, one particular oppressive style of education termed *banking education* by Paolo Freire (1997) is examined, as is Freire's means for deconstructing existing traditions in education (pp.52-67). In order to consider a more liberating form of education I consider the importance that problem-posing, dialogue, and action play in facilitating social agency for positive change.

Understanding oppression in the context of education

What Freire (1997) has termed the banking style of education is also known as computation education (Bruner, 1996, pp.1-2), assembly line education (hooks, 1994, p.13) and business as usual education (Orner in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.74). Freire (1997) considers the way in which educators teach, and the relationship (or lack of relationship) that is established between teacher and student, in order to illustrate how our education system

continues to support systems of power and control, and thus serves to further perpetuate societies' standards and expectations for success, status and power.

According to Freire, this education model is teacher-centred and students are seen as flexible blank slates who absorb whatever information is delivered. As empty vessels, students are taught that they cannot create knowledge; rather they can only receive knowledge in rote form. Teachers at the same time believe that they are more capable and knowledgeable than students. Moreover, they assume that while students have the potential to learn from them, they have nothing to learn from their students.

> It follows logically from the banking notion of consciousness that the educator's role is to regulate the way the world 'enters into' the students. The teacher's task is to organize a process which already occurs spontaneously, to 'fill' the students by making deposits of information which he or she considers to constitute true knowledge. And since people 'receive' the world as passive entities, education should make them more passive still, and adapt them to the world. The educated individual is the adapted person, because she or he is better "fit" for the world. Translated into practice, this concept is well suited to the purposes of the oppressors, whose tranquillity rests on how well people fit the world the oppressors have created, and how little they question it. (Freire, 1997, p.57)

Our education system continues, for the most part, to encourage these models through top-down success strategies, and individualistic pursuits. Teaching in a hierarchical system and about hierarchical philosophies maintains the status quo of unequal power distribution. Freire (1972) maintains that there is no neutral education, and that education is either a process of domestication or a process of freedom.

Understanding empowerment in the context of education

Education, through critical pedagogy, can also be used as a tool for freedom and liberation. Freire's theory of liberation emerged in South American literacy classes in which he asked peasant labourers to describe their world and cultivated their imaginations in terms of what

they wanted their world to be. As previously mentioned, Freire (1997) terms this social awakening 'conscientization'. Similarly, bell hooks (1994) emphasizes education as a movement against and beyond boundaries. She calls this the practice of freedom. Finally, Maxine Greene (1988) describes this as the developing of a social imagination, which creates space to engage in collective dialogue towards a collective vision. In order to achieve freedom and liberation, Freire, hooks and Greene all stress dialogue, critical analysis, a deconstruction of existing systems and ideas, and an emphasis on reflection with practical applications (Freire, 1997; Greene, 1988; hooks, 1994).

Cultivating social responsibility: Problem-posing and critical thinking

Although Canadians live under a democratic government, freedom of choice is not truly availed to them if they are not free in spirit and have not been educated to think freely about society. If citizens have been socialized to maintain the status quo and to not question or be critical, then whether they are choosing a governmental leader, evaluating a political strategy or addressing an issue of concern, they will be doing so with the intention of unquestioningly fulfilling the existing political agenda. In the same sense, understanding democracy and working towards democratic development must be a vision which is constructed out of critical observation and critical thinking.

It is through problem-posing and critical thinking that such action is cultivated. Problem-posing education, as defined by Freire (1997), is a tool which surpasses banking education in order to move into a liberatory form of learning. By engaging in discussions regarding current or historical problems, the students and teacher meet on a new plane, one in which authority and hierarchy are no longer relevant, and issues are instead discussed from various perspectives. In this model all participants are open to learning from one another.

> Problem-posing education, as a humanist and liberating praxis, posits as fundamental that the people subjected to domination must fight for their emancipation. To that end, it enables teachers and students to become

> Subjects of the educational process by overcoming authoritarianism and an alienating intellectualism; it also enables people to overcome their false perception of reality. The world - no longer something to be described with deceptive words - becomes the object of that transforming action by men and women which results in their humanization. (Freire, 1997, p.67)

It is through posing problems and then engaging in critical discussions that people become involved in the construction of a society. These challenges encourage commitment and thus a sense of social responsibility. Educators have created and implemented various models with which to teach social commitment. Social justice education, which is considered next, is one such example.

Applications: Social Justice Education

Social Justice Education is a current working tool in education which operates under Freire's theory of problem-posing education. Inclusive of "isms" such as racism, sexism, classism, ageism, and multiculturalism, social justice education works to eradicate oppression through a deconstruction of its foundations, as well as through a careful merging of action and reflection.

> Social Justice education is both a process and a goal. The goal of social justice education is full and equal participation of all groups in a society that is mutually shaped to meet their needs. Social justice includes a vision of society in which the distribution of resources is equitable and all members are physically and psychologically safe and secure. We envision a society in which individuals are both self-determining (able to develop to their full capacities), and interdependent (capable of interacting democratically with others). Social justice involves social actors who have a sense of their own agency as well as a sense of social responsibility toward and with others and the society as a whole. (Adams et al, 1997, p.3)

Understanding the pervasiveness of oppression can be achieved theoretically in social science, English or moral education courses to name a few, by defining terms such as colonization, and by using historical examples such as the colonization of the First Nations people of Canada by European settlers. In so doing, the interdependent and destructive

relationship between the colonizer and the colonized can be discussed (Memmi, 1965). Oppression can also be illustrated through practical exercises which allow participants to engage in an activity which role plays a situation of oppression. An example is depicted in the film, "*A Class Divided*", where a grade three teacher facilitates her class of students in an activity which isolates and disempowers one group of students for a day, only to reverse the roles on day two so that all of the students are placed in the positions of both powerful and powerless. Reflection on the problem posed is actively promoted following the two day exercise. This exercise is a powerful example that proves to students and teachers that the disempowered are restricted from both "self-development and self-determination" (Young in Adams et al, 1997, p.4). Oppression, as addressed in the film, is *internalized* into the human psyche (Adams et al, 1997, p.5). This internalization of oppression, which guides our actions and decisions, is also evident in social institutions. Social justice education seeks to encourage reflection which deconstructs power imbalances.

Social justice education, like problem-posing, works to find ways to connect people and groups through their experiences with oppression, while recognizing the distinctive characteristics of historical and present day oppression.

> What connects the experiences of a poor woman on welfare with a professional woman facing a glass ceiling at work?...How is avoidance and isolation of people with disabilities connected to assumptions that people who speak English with an accent are ignorant? (Adams et al, 1997, p.5)

Understanding that oppression is based on unbalanced and dependent relationships of power and privilege, social justice education attempts to cultivate strategies for its opposition. Such strategies begin with the question "in whose interest do prevailing systems operate?" (Adams et al, 1997, p.8). With this question we begin to personally recognize how we are immersed in, and contribute to, oppression. With this deep connection we can then aim to pursue equality by resisting unjust involvement, and by challenging such systems.

In the classroom, in the home, or in any environment in which teaching and learning can take place safely, comfortably, and with trust, social justice education can be applied by consciousness-raising activities through interactive, cooperative and dialogue-based teaching. This type of learning allows students and teachers to understand their position and the position of others in terms of power, authority and voice and thus encourages individuals to work towards alternatives to our past and present distributions of power (Freire, 1972).

Cultivating Social Action: Dialogue as a means for transforming communities

An openness to new ideas, to collective action, to community and to justice requires a personal sense of fairness and a greater social vision. In order for citizens to be willing to engage in such goals a foundation of community and social responsibility must be laid. The lack of emphasis on human development in education, however, means that the marginalized are isolated in their search for the personal tools to put social participation and responsibility into practice.

Although participation has been acknowledged as an important factor in education and in development, it remains at odds with the greater value system in which many dialectic relationships are in constant tension; the women versus the man, the powerful versus the powerless, the majority versus the minority, the product versus the process, the individual versus the collective, the personal versus the private, and so on. As decision makers struggle with these relationships, the cultivation of community is difficult to achieve (Orner in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992).

The cultivation of communities in which citizens dialogue and engage in meaningful participation on equal terms with one another must be nurtured through education. According to Giroux et al (1994), it is through theory and practice in education that citizens

can learn to transcend dialectical relationships, borders, and hierarchy in order to reassert their voice and their value in their communities.

In order to achieve this careful harmony between reflection on critical enquiry and engagement in societal transformation as Giroux et al (1994) suggest, Freire (1997) maintains that love is at the foundation of empowering change. With love, humility, hope, and faith in humankind, engagement can be a mutually fulfilling and transformative process (pp.68-72). This mutual fulfilment emerges as a result of the actors' interest in the community's well-being, and thus through acts of love their involvement serves to empower the community in which they act.

When speaking about involvement in community transformation, Freire (1997) suggests that,

> We must never merely discourse on the present situation, must never provide programs which have little or nothing to do with their own preoccupations, doubts, hopes and fears - programs which at times in fact increase the fears of the oppressed consciousness. It is not our role to speak to the people about our own view of the world, not to attempt to impose that view on them, but rather to dialogue with the people about their view and ours. We must realize that their view of the world, manifested variously in their action, reflects their *situation* in the world. Educational and political action which is not critically aware of this situation runs the risk of either 'banking' or of preaching in the desert. (p.77)

Dialogue-based action requires that we understand and listen to the people in the community in which we are involved. By listening to their stories we not only learn about their situations and strategies, but we know how to better help them to transform their situation from one that is oppressive to one that is empowering.

Applications: Service Learning

Service learning has been created as an educational tool to engage students in practical applications of empowerment and democracy. Service learning explores the idea of

combining reflection with action to work towards the goal of responsible and active citizenship. At this point, the concept of service learning is introduced so that further into the thesis its potential can be evaluated by the participants. This topic re-emerges specifically in Chapter 4 when the interviews are analyzed and discussed.

Service learning is a pedagogical technique that has been introduced to help students and teachers participate in social change through community service programs. Service learning provides young people with opportunities to be involved in their community through a myriad of opportunities; a few examples include working in a food bank, a shelter for the homeless, or community gardens. In these environments, students are involved in reshaping communities and empowering the people with whom they work (Schine (Ed.), 1997; Wade (Ed.), 1997). Through engagement in community transformation, young people can learn that power is a sharable commodity, that power is a transferable energy, and that power can be used to heighten the possibilities of others while heightening our own.

The goal of establishing service learning programs is being accomplished by many schools through mandatory placement of students in various community organizations. Jim Vanderkooy, the principal at Hamilton District Christian High School in Ontario says that there are two options in implementing service learning into the school. The first is the *bureaucratic model* in which the school sets up the placements, the second is the *freedom model* in which the students figure out how to fulfill the requirements (Ontario grads, 1998, B5). The Ontario Ministry of Education has adopted a service learning component into their secondary school requirements as of September 1998 in the hopes of encouraging social responsibility among young people (Ontario grads, 1998, B5).

Feminist Pedagogy

Women share experiences ranging from socialization and identity construction to

oppression. This is because in our homes, in our schools, in the media and in society at large, women and men are provided with a specific code of how to behave and what to believe. This shared psychological space that women occupy prompted the recognition and pursuit of the 'phenomenon of gender'; what has otherwise been termed as feminism (Kenway & Modra in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.139). Although motivated by a vision of a more inclusive world, feminists have come to recognize the responsibility they hold in recognizing all difference and all oppression, not simply the oppressions of gender. In doing so, feminism has evolved into a framework which is mutually accepting of the political and the personal as they are one and the same (Mohanty in Barrett & Phillips (Eds.), 1992).

The evolution of this framework derives from the gendered position through which many feminists have emerged. Women's identities have been written for them from the center while they live those identities both in the center and on the margins of society (Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.3).

> The years of looking straight in the mirror have reflected back so clearly only the spectacle and the rule of the father. We know it well. But we also know the otherness by virtue of being in the dark and on the outside of those refractions: knowing ourselves in the hidden and oblique spaces accessible through the curved specular mirror. (Irigaray in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.3)

Based on the experience and exclusion faced by women, feminist pedagogy is sensitive and open to difference, and is understanding of the dynamic complexities of overcoming personally and politically oppressive situations.

Rooted in critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy seeks also to engage in critical dialogue with the goal of becoming agents and creators in society rather than passive recipients of knowledge (hooks1994; Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Weiler, 1988).

> If the imagination is to transcend and transform experience it has to

> question, to challenge, to conceive of alternatives, perhaps to the very life you are living at the moment. You have to be free to play around with the notion that day might be night, love might be hate, nothing can be too sacred for the imagination...to call experimentally by another name. For writing is re-naming. (Rich, 1979, p.43)

Although similar issues exist in both frameworks, feminist pedagogy extends and differentiates itself from critical pedagogy on a number of significant points. This distinction is discussed in the next section, where the main philosophical difference between the frameworks is outlined. This section closes with a discussion of power and empowerment at the theoretical level. In the second section the applications of empowerment in feminist pedagogy is illustrated through the use of voice and narrative.

Addressing individual and local oppression

Feminist scholars differentiate themselves from critical pedagogues by addressing individual and local oppression while respecting difference. According to Ellsworth, critical pedagogy is guilty of oppressive simplification (Ellsworth in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.114). Freire's conscientization targets the poor working class and generalizes their experience for others. Such simplification is produced and promoted by excluding gender as a form of oppression (Belenky et al, 1986; Luke in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Weiler, 1988;).

> Alienation thus is posited as a male condition and a cultural (public) condition. Domestic labour, by contrast, which does not generate direct market surplus value is implicitly rendered as natural labor...The theoretical implication here is that women in their natural state as mothers and housewives are neither alienated from their essence or their species being. In other words, the natural, unwaged (private) labour of species production, family and child care, by virtue of being outside visible exploitation and appropriation by the capitalist wage system, constitutes a non-alienating condition in which (female) subject and essence are in a natural and harmonious state. (Luke in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.31)

In making the assumption that a) women are most often not alienated and that b) when

they are alienated, they can relate their oppression to the oppression of working class poor is itself a discrimination of non-recognition that feminist pedagogy is working against (Taylor, 1992, p.75). In this framework, feminists are not only trying to illuminate the multiple, complex and dynamic realities of women, but of all people (hooks, 1984; Offen in Witherell & Noddings, 1991).

By grounding their investment in empowerment with their own reflections on personal experiences, feminist theorists believe that oppression can be understood in various contexts. As a result of critically analyzing, and acting upon the daily and local oppressions, personal and political emancipation is possible.

Critical pedagogues provide the foundation for this idea by assuming that teacher and student can and will engage in dialogue that is able to address oppression and empowerment. Feminist scholars, however, suggest that teachers and students may not be able to identify and find emancipatory solutions to each students' oppressive situations, and dispute the claim on the part of critical pedagogues that their "static meta-narrative" is capable of equalizing all power imbalances (Orner in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Weiler, 1988). In other words, critical pedagogy implies that the teacher or the helper is the "agent of empowerment" (Apple, 1988; Gore in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.57). Feminists believe that it is only through one's own self-reflective and critical analysis that empowerment can be exercised. With this in mind, feminists regard students in education as agents of their own empowerment.

> A self-reflective politics of action would require of critical pedagogy theorists the application of the kind of reflexive and self-critical awareness demanded of teachers, to deconstruct the ideology and rational thinking embodied in their own texts. It would require that critical educational theorists ask those same questions of their own pedagogical (textual) practice that they demand teachers ask themselves...The point is that the critical pedagogy project ignores gender by a failure systematically to engage with specific feminist theoretical and practical concerns, and by a de facto erasure of women altogether, through appeals to patriarchy's

> exclusionary grand narratives as the corner stones for a new educational rationality. (Luke in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, pp.32-33)

As illustrated above, critical pedagogues not only exclude practical and personal agency from the liberation of others, but they turn a blind eye to their own critical liberation. The duality which is being addressed is Self versus Other. Feminist pedagogues see self as the means to empowerment while critical pedagogues rely on others.

With empowerment at the forefront of both critical and feminist pedagogy, it is important at this time to examine the way power is defined in both frameworks. Critical pedagogy, in the tradition of liberal and Marxist political theories conceptualizes power as,

> something which is intimately connected with authority, domination or exploitation... the role of the state is conceived in terms of the exercise of legitimate power over its subjects to ensure the peaceable and equitable opportunity to exchange. Power is thought to reside in, and radiate out from sovereignty. (Gatens in Barrett & Phillips (Eds.), 1992, p.123)

Empowerment, according to critical pedagogues, is therefore a means for assuming the power of the current authority and can be achieved and delivered through critical reflection which cultivates social responsibility and participation in community transformation. Feminists regard this approach to empowerment as limiting, as power according to feminist pedagogy is an exercised relation rather than a possession (Gore in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.59; Helle in Witherell & Noggings, 1991; Orner in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.82).

> By focusing on empowerment, feminist pedagogy embodies a concept of power as energy, capacity, and potential rather than domination...This conception of power recognizes that people need power, both as a way to maintain a sense of self and as a way to accomplish ends. (Shrewsbury, 1987, p.8)

Again the duality of self versus other arises as feminists believe that empowerment is a

practice that can be utilized by ones' self and then encouraged in others while critical theorists see it as a limited commodity that requires delivery from others.

Feminists have extended the idea of critical thinking as an acknowledgment of power imbalances to a means of self-reflective engagement. According to feminist pedagogy, this empowerment is most often reached through the tools of voice and narrative. Gaining empowerment is discussed in the next section.

Empowerment through Voice and Narrative

Histories of silence have provoked a liberation based on giving voice and encouraging narrative. Feminist pedagogues suggest the achievement of personal empowerment before engaging in the empowerment of others. By recognizing the silences in one's own life through verbal dialogue and narrative, empowerment of self and others becomes an attainable goal.

Although the women's movement has been strengthened through the liberation of women's voice, there remains a large majority who struggle with their ability to focus on themselves.

> One theme emerged in the moral thought of these women, a theme Miller and Gilligan find central in the women's voice: They should devote themselves to the care and empowerment of others while remaining 'self-less'. Accepting that the world is and should be hierarchically arranged and dualistic, the received knowers channel their increasing sense of self into their growing capacity to care for others. (Belenky et al, 1986, p.46)

The consciousness of one's social position, according to feminist pedagogues, results in a self-transformation. In the case of the women noted above, verbalizing their self-less attitude is a step towards asserting their voices (Belenky et al, 1986).

The sharing of personal stories verbally or through log books, journals and diaries is a valuable tool to express and assert one's own voice, and feminists have come to respect

and promote these vehicles for personal liberation.

> As diarists, journal keepers, professional log keepers, we seek to reclaim the right to intelligently examine our own lives even as we are deeply and personally embedded in our own context. To be detached from our feelings, our voice, our intelligence, is to be cut off, which in turn leaves scars - scars we have hidden too long and for which we are paying a great price. Telling our own stories, using journal writing to examine our lives, can heal those scars and leave us more whole. (Cooper in Witherell & Noddings (Eds.), 1991, p.111)

Self-reflective analysis of one's personal narrative is an empowering process with a liberatory product; it is the unveiling of silence. This analytic action results in the self-affirming creation of knowledge through a critically engaged pedagogy. This process is not limited to women, or even to those struggling with oppression; the process is inclusive and aims for all participants to reflect upon their sense of self, and their marginalization. Gentile states that, "Everyone is someone else's other. The dissonance may be less intense, easier to ignore, and it may not threaten their basic survival in the way it does for marginal groups" (Gentile in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992, p.85). Although the intensity and the consequences of each person's marginalization will differ, through the common practice of analysis, reflection and dialogue students can come together into a common space in which they have come to understand themselves and society a little better (Kenway & Modra in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992). Rutherford et al (1990) defines this exercise of shared development, as the development of a "third space".

Engaging students in reflective self-analysis through journal writing or verbal narrative about themselves can lead to the creation of a mutual and dynamic learning space. In this learning space it is crucial that a sense of trust, respect (Kenway & Modra in Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Zannis, 1994), and high standards are created "because self-respect only comes when exacting standards have been met" (Rich, 1980, p.244). In this non-hierarchical structure where students and teachers dialogue about their narratives, students gain a sense of self-confidence based on their authorship and their audience

while teachers facilitate empowering identity development (Tappan & Brown, in Witherell & Noddings (Eds.), 1992).

Self confidence is essential for establishing the goals of social action that have been discussed in the study thus far. According to Maxine Greene (1988),

> Only when individuals are empowered to interpret the situations they live together do they become able to mediate between the object world and their own consciousness, to locate themselves so that freedom can appear. (p.122)

Affirming and understanding one's place in the community nurtures a sense of self-confidence that can fuel a personal sense of agency to help others to do the same. In this community students come to realize through continued self-reflection and dialogue with others that they are social beings, embedded and embodied within society (Thayer-Bacon, 1998). With this realization of self value and connectedness students will gain a stake - that is, a responsibility to maintain what gives them confidence, and thus will continue to grow personally and politically. However rather than,

> ...gain professional dignity by doing 'right' for someone else and therefore rising to a superior position over the transformed, ...the helper moves to include an 'unvoiced relationship' as part of her concerns and enters into an authentic dialogue of shared experience and empathy, now grounded in a newly discovered capacity to listen to the self and other at the same time. (Helle in Witherell & Noddings, 1991, p.60)

This development of social responsibility and a non-hierarchical basis of action contributes not only to self-fulfilling identity development but to democratic development in general.

Grounded in critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy informs teachers on how to educate for democratic development. By acknowledging and deconstructing hierarchical and oppressive forms of education, students will become actors in their own learning and

development through critical analysis and participation in positive social change. In order to engage in the political realm of empowerment on their own terms, students need to develop the self. Feminist theorists have outlined that the use of voice and narrative are effective in self empowerment. Self empowerment and confidence inspires agency and accountability in personal and social liberation and therefore through such identity development students and teachers develop and work in a shared space for more democratic development.

Engaged Pedagogy

Engaged pedagogy further builds upon the framework of critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogy. Critical and feminist pedagogy place distinctly different emphasis on the duality between self and other. It was concluded quite simply in the previous section that empowerment of others will occur naturally if the student has engaged in self-reflective analysis that is in itself empowering. The same is true for teachers. With this in mind, *engaged* pedagogy was defined by hooks as an emphasis on the self-actualization and the well-being of the educator (hooks, 1994).

Thus far we have stated that teachers and students develop a shared space in which emancipatory development emerges. hooks stresses, however, that it is important that teachers be self-actualized in order to facilitate a truly liberating experience. hooks relies on the words of Buddhist monk Thich Nhat Hanh,

> the practice of a healer, therapist, teacher or any helping professional should be directed towards his or herself first, because if the helper is unhappy, he or she cannot help many people. (Nhat Hanh in hooks, 1994, p.15)

Theorists concerned with democratic classrooms, multicultural classrooms and anti-racist classrooms, and various other pedagogues all stress the importance of the teacher as a role model (Moran, 1997). In the definition of terms in Chapter 1, I equate teacher and role

model. Engaged pedagogy, therefore, further articulates the importance of this association as well as articulating the necessity for teachers, like students to focus on self before other.

Today's Canadian classrooms integrate young people who derive from every part of the world; different cultures, classes and backgrounds co-exist in a single learning community. In order to establish a comfortable and harmonious environment for the practice of freedom teachers must have spent time personally and then in their classes critically examining issues of power, difference, and community in themselves and in society. Once self actualized, role modeling democratic ideals becomes second nature. Until that time, "we cannot ask students to achieve what we ourselves are incapable of achieving, namely, to recognize, value and negotiate difference" (Guarasci & Cornwell, 1997, p.13).

Through self reflection and critical analysis of one's own values, beliefs, and experiences, teachers are able to invoke in themselves and their students an honest and empowering look at achieving freedom through education. hooks attempts to create, through her personal understanding of power, difference and community, a mutually fulfilling experience in her classes.

> When education is the practice of freedom, students are not the only ones who are asked to share, to confess. Engaged pedagogy does not seek simply to empower students. Any classroom that employs a holistic model of learning will also be a place where teachers grow, and are empowered by the process. That empowerment cannot happen if we refuse to be vulnerable while encouraging students to take risks. (hooks, 1994, p.21)

Engaged pedagogy therefore expands upon and challenges critical and feminist pedagogy by stressing the importance that teachers be self actualized individuals who recognize that their personal sense of well-being as well as their beliefs, values and experiences will serve to role model those with whom they are engaged in the process of learning.

Conclusions

Critical, feminist and engaged pedagogy have all illustrated the significant potential of education to influence development. Although education has most often been used to maintain the status quo in countries living under oppressive and democratic regimes alike, the ability for education to play an empowering and liberating role for individuals and in communities is revealed through these three frameworks.

Critical pedagogy is the basis for feminist and engaged pedagogy and it is through this framework that we have come to deconstruct the banking method of education. In this style of education students are seen as blank slates while teachers control and maintain knowledge which they deposit into students in rote form. Critical pedagogy articulates the tools with which to analyze and recreate education as a liberating process. Students come to understand the world in which they live by analyzing and critically thinking about the problems posed by existing power structures. Social justice education applies critical thinking to social and political problems in efforts to establish a sense of social responsibility in students. While reflecting on power distribution, critical pedagogy stresses the importance of taking action in community development. By engaging in compassionate dialogue, participation is not seen to be an imposition, but rather an aid for transforming a community. Service learning is an educational application that seeks to engage students in social action.

Feminist pedagogy is rooted in the same deconstruction of authority, yet the methodology for empowerment greatly differs. In efforts to be inclusive to oppression of not only women, feminists seek to address individual and local differences through recognition and self-reflection. By recognizing that for each individual a different story of marginalization exists, feminist pedagogy does not attempt to create a formula for understanding oppression as an inclusive institution. Rather, by making students agents

in their own empowerment, feminists encourage the assertion of voice and the construction of dialogue in self actualization. Through the empowerment of self and the engagement in a shared community in which such learning is created, students gain a sense of self confidence which inspires them to continue to take action towards their personal and political growth.

Engaged pedagogy emphasizes the importance for educators to concentrate on their well-being and self actualization in order to be able to role model liberation through learning. Educators are role models and similarly, role models are educators. Though citizens are influenced by such role models in various contexts each day, how often do we hear them? How often do we listen? An important goal of this thesis is to give voice to a unique set of role models as they themselves engage in self-analysis. As we proceed into the next chapter on methodology, qualitative and phenomenological research methods are discussed as a means of giving voice to the narratives of the participants. Through this methodology I was granted the opportunity to hear the words and understand the meanings of nine women leaders involved in community development.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This study adopts the paradigm of qualitative and phenomenological research. Qualitative research is frequently referred to as *ethnography*, which is the study of a complex society through its participants.

> ....qualitative implies direct concern with experience as it is 'lived' or 'felt' or 'undergone'... Qualitative research, then, has the aim of understanding experience as nearly as possible as its participants feel it or live it. (Sherman & Web in Ely, 1991, p.5)

Phenomenology is the study of lived experience as a human science. Whether called phenomenology, or a human science approach, this methodology seeks to "make interpretative sense of the phenomenon of a lifeworld in order to see pedagogical significance" (Van Manen, 1990, p.2). This approach ensures, through writing, a mediation between the reflection and action of the researcher, which is a major theoretical underpinning of this study.

My study uses the primary tools of interpretative inquiry, interviews and field-notes. In this chapter I provide a detailed account of my research process in which I aimed to immerse myself in the natural settings of women leaders involved in social action. In this overview I include details about contacting my participants, constructing the interview questions, and my use of a recording device. Although some may see such an approach as exhaustive, Werner and Schopfe describe it as "limitless" (Werner & Schopfe in Ely, 1991, p.3).

> We believe that qualitative research is forged in the transaction among what is done and learnt and felt by the researcher. It is an intensely recursive, personal process, and while this may be the hallmark of all sound research, it is crucial to every aspect of the qualitative way of looking at life. (Ely, 1991, p.1)

> We are living in an era of paradigm revolution. Most of us grew up in a positivist or empirical era in which the claims of empirical scientific research were held to be absolute. Particularly within the past few decades, however, this empirical world has been challenged by an alternative paradigm, frequently referred to as naturalistic...which holds realities to be multiple and shifting, that take for granted a simultaneous mutual shaping of knower and known, and that see all inquiry, including the empirical as being inevitably value-bound. (Kuhn, 1970; Ely, 1991, p.2)

With the understanding that all research is conducted from a value-bound standpoint, I present the values that influenced this research study of women leaders in the following section, entitled "Methodological Principals". Following this section, the remainder of this chapter addresses the strategies of data collection and the organizational tools used to present my findings.

Methodological Principals

Methodological principals are the values that impact the methods I use and thus the principals which drive my inquiry. Although I have already acknowledged my personal questions and biases, in this section I acknowledge the way in which I seek to have those questions answered.

The value that I place foremost importance on in my study is that of respect. I aim to respect each participant, their life position and the assertion of their voice. As much as this study is about understanding the experiences, practices and philosophies of invisible role models it is also about giving the participants the opportunity to share their knowledge and insight so to recognize their impact on social consciousness.

With the value of respect in mind, my choices are directly impacted. For example, the way in which my participant group was formed, the tools with which I recorded and presented the interviews and the manner in which I conducted my conversations with the

participants are all directed by the respect I hold for each woman. Qualitative research and phenomenological enquiry places great emphasis on the importance of respecting and caring about the culture which is being studied (Van Manen, 1990). Respect and care have been essential to the way in which I study and in the process they emerged as essential to the way in which these women lead.

Data Collection

I began my search for women in the social justice community in Montréal without any assurances as to how successful I would be. Internet and library resources provided few clues to a directory of social justice organizations and, in particular, social justice organizations led by women. Through word of mouth, I was pointed to the Québec Public Interest Research Group (QPIRG) by my colleagues. QPIRG provides a directory of grassroots social justice organizations in Montréal, along with contact persons and telephone numbers. Most of the contact names are in fact the directors of the organizations. Consulting the directory provided by QPIRG, I called the organizations led by women and obtained some preliminary information about the work that they do. I sought out organizations which are either helping people to deal with oppressive situations or advocating for change. It was also important to me, however, to include a broad range of organizations working on various aspects of social and environmental justice.

Defining leaders and participants for my study was much more difficult than I had imagined. The organizations and women I considered were, for the most part, not globally, nationally or even municipally recognized. I had begun with the intention of studying only women who were directors and presidents of the various grassroots organizations. This definition was extended over time to include women who had founded organizations.

Using the preliminary information I had obtained through my phone calls, I called several organizations and asked to speak to the women listed. After contacting over twenty women,

I was permitted to arrange pre-interview meetings with 13 of them to inform them of my interest, gauge their interest and availability, and hopefully gain their consent as a participant in my study. In those meetings, I made clear the issues involved in the study by highlighting the four sections of interview questions (Appendix 2) and by speaking of why I came to pursue such issues. By speaking of my personal biases and my academic background I was able to explain my motivations for pursuing this study. Most importantly, I clearly stated that the goal of this research was to highlight each woman as a leader and a role model.

Development of Participant Group

Although the selection of the women was an activity in and of itself, it prepared me for the responsibility of convincing the participants that they were appropriate for my study. All of the women were deeply touched by my interest. Yet, there was a consistent tendency for most of them to underestimate or downplay their value as leaders and their potential contributions to the field of education.

I was able to convince most of the women to participate. After agreeing to be interviewed, however, two potential participants decided that they had nothing to share with me and withdrew. Another felt that it would be beneficial for me to interview her together with a colleague of hers. In my efforts to recognize the participants, I decided that it would be counterproductive and unethical to choose not to follow through with any particular woman if for some reason I found that she wasn't ideally suited to the study.

As a result of the conditions I imposed on the creation of the participant group, in terms of allowing the women the freedom to participate based on their interest and availability, the size of the study grew far beyond my original intentions. As many of the women hesitated, or declined prior to or after our first meeting I continued to search for potential participants and finally 11 women agreed to participate. As it happened, I wasn't able to complete the

data collection with two of my participants, and for that reason they will remain anonymous and their reflections will therefore not be included in the data presented.

Therefore, this study is based on nine women leaders in social action in Toronto and Montréal. See Table 1 below for the participants' names, cities of work, and organizations. Many of the women have been involved and continue to be involved with more than one organization, for those women the organizations listed beside their names are those which they believe they are most often associated with.

Table 1: Participant Group

	Place of Work	
	Toronto, Ontario	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Montréal, Québec	
	Toronto, Ontario	
	Montréal, Québec	

Once the women agreed to participate on their own terms it wasn't difficult to obtain

consent to my tools of inquiry. I presented each participant with a consent form (Appendix 1), which states that the material obtained and presented in the research is based entirely on the information that the participants choose to reveal. The participants were made aware of my methodological principals and I emphasized that they were free to withdraw from the study at any time. They voiced no problem with my use of a tape recorder and they agreed to have their identities and organizations revealed in the final submission of my study.

Revealing the identity of my participants is an important factor in truly recognizing these women. It imposes, however, a responsibility to exercise sensitivity. I have made a conscious decision not to make direct criticisms of any of the participants. The nature of the study is to highlight experiences and philosophies that reflect positively on the participants. If questions arise and criticisms need to be addressed, they emerge through general statements, and are not exclusive or derogatory in any way. Praise is given both on an individual and a general basis.

In communicating the terms of reference and gaining the participants' consent, I began building a positive rapport with my participants. Being aware of the inevitable change that results within cultures when studied I did my best to ensure that the women were interviewed in their natural setting so that they were comfortable with me, with the study, and with the questions. For this reason, I suggested that the interviews take place at the particular organizations, where I spent some time getting to know my participants in their milieu. This provided them with the opportunity to also get to know me.

Development of Interview Questions

The interview questions underwent numerous revisions to ensure clarity and consistency and their potential to provoke thoughtful responses. Every effort was made to avoid questions which call for monosyllabic answers unless they directly follow with a request for explanation.

An example of two sets of questions which call for monosyllabic answers and then request explanation are shown below.

a) Is it true that you are motivated by a strong sense of social responsibility?
   How did you come to construct this priority for your life?
or

b) Do you consider yourself to be an educator?
   If yes, what do you teach?
   If no, do you feel comfortable being called a role model?
   If so, how would you define role model and the kind of role model that you are?

Spradley (1979) encourages the inclusion of questions from the following three categories. *Descriptive Questions* lay the groundwork for the study. Participants are asked to discuss broad themes about their cultural scene, which in this study concerns community development. *Structural Questions* allow the participant to speak on how they construct and organize their cultural knowledge. *Contrast Questions* allow the researcher to ask more thought provoking questions which call on explicit cultural knowledge and its use. These three categories of questions form the basis for the interview questions, as shown in Table 2. A complete protocol of questions is included in Appendix 2.

Table 2: Sections of Interview Questions

Part A: Background Information and Experience in the Field
Part B: Motivation and Socialization
Part C: Personal Philosophy
Part D: Impact and Application

Part A of the questionnaire is composed of descriptive questions and is concerned with the work these women are pursuing through their organization. It is through these answers that I aimed to highlight the specific social and environmental needs and visions being

addressed by the women in the study. Structural questions make up most of Part B of the questionnaire, which gives the women the opportunity to talk about the experiences and influences that led them to where they are today. As women they are also asked to speak on the issue of gender socialization and its impact on their personal values and pursuits. Parts C and D concern themselves with contrast questions. Part C gives the women the opportunity to share their philosophies on power, feminism and democracy, as well as to reflect on their participation and evolution in these structures. Finally, Part D allows the women to speak freely about the impact they hope to be making. This section is concerned specifically with education in terms of the lessons of social responsibility in education that these women have obviously learned and are attempting to put into practice. The women are given the opportunity to discuss the idea of service learning as a tool for teaching social responsibility and the practice of community. Finally, the women are asked to define leadership, and to speak about themselves as leaders. This is particularly important, as it provides the opportunity to discern how the women perceive themselves as impacting and influencing others.

My purpose of organizing the questions into themes was to initiate discussions with the participants on four key issues rather than following the rules of an explicit question-answer session. For the majority of the sessions I found this approach worked well and allowed me the opportunity to know my participants in ways that I would not have, had I simply relied on organized questions. With flexibility in our discussions, I facilitated the unfolding of issues in which the participants often answered questions without being asked (McCormack in Ely, p.41). In other cases, I found that the women preferred to follow a regimented question-answer session in which I raised the issues discussed. Fetterman (1989) calls this a structured interview as opposed to the semi-structured interview which allows for a more natural conversation (p.49). The women seemed to prefer what Fetterman calls the semi-structured interview for the most part, although two participants favoured the structured interview in all of their sessions and on particular sessions two of the women relied on the structured questions rather than engaging in less

structured dialogue.

Qualitative Interviews

All of the interviews took place at the organizations themselves, affording me the opportunity to not only establish rapport, but also gain a sense of the dynamic of the workplace, the work that the women are engaged in, and some initial insights into the impact being made.

Reinforced to follow an open-ended approach that encourages a conversational line of inquiry, I tried for the sake of consistency to raise the same issues and questions with each participant. Some participants showed particular expertise in a specific topic and I found it valuable to give them more time and space to elaborate (Friedman in Ely, 1991, p135). It was my original intention to conduct two one-hour interview sessions with each participant, each hour based on two of the four sections of questions.

In the first interview I had intended to address Parts A & B of the interview questions and in the second interview I had intended to address Parts C & D. Due to my own flexibility and the flexibility of the participants I didn't always complete two sections per interview. In some interviews, for various reasons or due to the particular brevity or clarity of answers, I was able to complete three sections in one hour. Each participant had a minimum of two taped interviews and two of the women necessitated three sessions. All of the participants dealt with all of the issues in some way. As previously stated, in many cases, I found that my questions were answered before they were even asked.

Table 3 provides a schedule of interview dates, along with the corresponding questions covered.

Table 3: Interview Schedule

Participant	Interview date	
[redacted]	March 3, 1998	[redacted]
	March 19, 1998	
[redacted]	March 26, 1998	
	April 7, 1998	
	May 1, 1998	
[redacted]	March 10, 1998	
	April 6, 1998	
[redacted]	March 11, 1998	
	April 15, 1998	
[redacted]	April 7, 1998	
	April 24, 1998	
[redacted]	March 16, 1998	
	May 8, 1998	
[redacted]	March 3, 1998	
	March 19, 1998	
[redacted]	March 31, 1998	
	April 15, 1998	
	April 23, 1998	

Role of Audio Equipment

Qualitative research and phenomenology promote the use of various recording devices in data collection. I chose to use an audio tape recorder because of its less intrusive nature when compared to video recording equipment in the hope of restoring the natural setting and mind frame of the participants.

I had hoped that the tape recorder would be an external device that would not interfere with my work. The audio equipment, however, played a major role in my methodology. Most obviously the tape recorder interfered in the fluidity of our conversations because it was physically in between myself and my participant. More importantly, it was somewhat of a hindrance, because I would become preoccupied with its location or slant, or with the batteries or its ability in noisy places to pick up the conversation. This preoccupation often interfered with my ability to provide non-verbal feedback, or to respond appropriately to statements that were made. In addition, there were several instances when either the tape would end or I would turn off the tape recorder because I sensed that the discussion had concluded, only to find a great new discussion emerging. I found that in some of those cases the women were able to speak more freely once the tape recorder had been turned off. In these instances, I would write field notes on whatever I could remember in order to save all of the information I could.

For example after my first interview with Willi Nolan, we talked for an additional hour with her colleague Rosie about family violence, children, mothers and their work. This conversation was untaped and afterwards I attempted to record our discussion in my field-notes.

> After the tape recorder was turned off the three of us sat around the kitchen table and had the most natural conversation. They told me about how most women get beaten on Fridays, and about how shelters are busiest on that day of the week. The conversation was so real. I wished during the conversation that the tape recorder had been on, but I can't imagine being able to have such a conversation in it's presence. I wish that the tape recorder could be invisible, reliable and on from entrance to exit. (Nathani, 03.03.98)

I was concerned for some time as to whether any information recorded off tape in my field-notes could be used in my study. Eventually I realized that it could be used based on the consent I had been given. It was difficult to decide what material was appropriate for inclusion in light of the respect that I have for each woman's journey. Due to the more

personal nature of many of my untaped conversations such ethical dilemmas were frequent to me.

In total I spent three months conducting interviews, writing field notes and transcribing. Once the interviews and transcripts were completed, I moved on to the task of analysing the data.

Data Analysis: Interpretation and Presentation

Entering the stage of data analysis forces the researcher to reflect on the decisions that have been made concerning how to approach the study. My interest in qualitative phenomenological research is rooted in my interest in respecting and giving voice to culture and lived experience. In this section I outline the manner in which the data has been organized and presented.

The analysis is based upon strategies of interpretation and presentation which are addressed in the six phases to follow. The analysis of the findings did not occur as an isolated experience; rather it was a continuous reformation of ideas, thoughts and patterns. From the moment I began contacting the participants and speaking with them informally I began making notes and keeping records which, over time, have emerged into the categories of findings that are being presented in this chapter. Field-notes are an extensive record of my encounters and reflections with the participants, as are the interviews which were transcribed verbatim and are the primary source of analysis.

The major themes which have emerged are allocated to the following sections in the discussion; personal introductions, situating women and community development, personal motivation, philosophies and practice, and educational applications. Additional sub-themes have been distributed throughout the chapter.

The main interpretative strategy or organizational tool employed is *thinking units* which are discussed in detail in phases one, two and three. The main presentation styles used are realist tales, vignettes, and composites, all of which are expanded on in my discussion of phases three, four and five. Table 4 is provided to visualize the format in which the data is discussed in this chapter and presented in Chapter 4.

Table 4: Analysis: Organization and Presentation of Data

Findings to be Discussed	Method of organization	Presentation Style
	Pre-Introduction	
	Introduction	
	Thinking Unit: Five themes + one open theme	
	Introduction to thinking unit two	
	Thinking Unit: Five themes + one open theme	
	Thinking Unit: Five Themes within theme five.	
	Conclusion	

Phase 1: The Creation of Thinking Units

Research texts provide many interesting models and guidelines for analysis but behind all

of the examples it is clear that, as in the process of collecting data, there is no formula. In the absence of a formula, I turn to the authorities in the field for methods with which to organize the data. Thinking units, like emerging categories or themes, have been designed in abstract form in order to be flexible enough for many researchers to use. Strauss (Garner in Ely, 1991, p.144) suggests that the following thinking units can be applied to a wide range of research:

Strauss's Suggested Thinking Units

Thinking Unit 1: Conditions

Thinking Unit 2: Interaction among actors

Thinking Unit 3: Strategies and tactics

Thinking Unit 4: Consequences.

Unlike Strauss, my study does not incorporate the interaction among actors (meaning the participants) but from his design I have opted to implement personal motivation or experiences instead of conditions, philosophies and practice instead of strategies and tactics and applications instead of consequences.

Revised Thinking Units

Thinking Unit 1: Personal Motivation

Thinking Unit 2: Philosophies and Practice

Thinking Unit 3: Educational Applications

Other researchers, such as Goetz and LeCompte, seek more specific thinking units for their data. With such specificity in mind I break each thinking unit into themes at which time I create very specific topics. I have chosen to co-ordinate my thinking units more closely to the issues I had in mind at the time of the interviews, adopting the principal of formulating specific categories with which to organize. Ely, in her chapter on *Interpreting*, supports the inclusion of an open thinking unit for any additional information that doesn't fit into the designated units. I have chosen to adapt Ely's open thinking unit to the creation of open themes in two of the three thinking units of my study

(Goetz & LeCompte in Ely. 1991, p.145). For example when speaking of motivation, almost all of the participants speak at great length about their original motivation and also discuss the reasons for which they continue to be motivated to pursue their work. Thinking unit one focuses on the original motivation of the participants in five themes, while an additional open theme discusses their continued motivation.

My choice of thinking units was directly influenced by the data which was in turn directly influenced by the question set presented to each participant. Referring to the questions in Appendix 2 it is obvious that Parts B, C, and D of the interview questions have become the three thinking units below.

- **Personal Motivation** expands on the influences and experiences which inspired each woman to pursue social action in their careers. In this thinking unit, five themes illustrate reasons, expanded on by the participants, which enabled them to see and act upon the social and environmental needs to which they respond. In an open theme I leave room for the women's discussions about why they are motivated, some after many years, to continue to work in this field.

- **Philosophies and Practice** relates the issues of power and democracy from the philosophical standpoint of each of the women. The majority of this section focuses on the way in which those philosophies are carried out in everyday practice. Therefore, the philosophies only serve as an introduction to the five themes which focus on the practices within each organization. The open theme in this thinking unit focuses on each woman's practice outside of the organization(s) with which she is affiliated.

- **Applications to Education** is based on the final section of interview questions which focuses on the teaching of social responsibility. In this section the women are asked to speak on how we can teach young people to be socially responsible on a daily basis

and in whatever they choose to pursue. Their answers are presented in five themes. In the final theme in this unit the issue of service learning is discussed. There is not an open theme in this section.

Phase 2: Emerging Themes within the Thinking Units

Although the majority of the data is organized and presented in three thinking units, within these thinking units further organization was required. For each thinking unit, I compiled a data set, and then I spent a few days reading, making notes, and colour coding all of the issues which were emerging within each set. Inside each thinking unit a number of themes emerged from the data quite naturally, and were obvious findings in terms of the sheer number of times each was addressed.

Within each thinking unit the data was organized into five themes and within each theme the participants' voices provide support for the claim. As an example, in the thinking unit of motivation, a sense of religious duty emerged as one of the five themes.

Phase 3: Presentation of Thinking Units: Realist Tales

The goal in this phase is to establish a method for presenting the thinking units. Van Maanen (1988) guides my writing at this point as he has outlined three methods with which to present my findings. The first style, which I chose to use, is called realist tales, the other methods are confessional tales and impressionist tales.

> Realist tales...provide a rather direct, matter of fact portrait of a studied culture. Confessional tales focus more on the field worker than on the culture studied and Impressionist tales are personalized accounts of fleeting moments in fieldwork. (p.171)

Although I have chosen to present my findings in the manner of a realist tale, I think that to some extent all three styles of reporting are given voice.

In each thinking unit, I outlined the themes which emerged and spoke on them one after the other, relying for the most part on my interview data. I believe that the words and experiences of the women studied reflect their truths and, consequently, the best medium with which to share them is through their own words. I used many direct quotations here although I initially found myself uncomfortable with the idea of relying too heavily on anecdotal experience. I feared in this phase that my writing would not be academic enough to qualify as a legitimate study. Van Manen (1990) addressed my concerns at this point:

> *Anecdotes form concrete counterweight to abstract theoretical thought.* The object of the phenomenological description is not to develop theoretical abstractions that remain severed from the concrete reality of lived experience. Rather phenomenology tries to penetrate the layers of meaning of the concrete by tilling and turning the soil of daily existence. Anecdote is one of the implements for laying bare the covered-over meanings. (p.119)

Using anecdotes and interview data to support themes and thinking units provides strength and conviction to the ideas which are addressed. Being convinced that my use of quotations and anecdotes was appropriate, I deliberated on how to choose appropriate examples from my transcriptions. I again relied on Van Manen (1990): "Varying the examples is the way in which we address the phenomenological themes of a phenomena so that 'invariant' aspect(s) of the phenomenon itself comes into view" (p.122). In order to vary the examples used I relied on the experiences of different women to illustrate the patterns which created the themes in the first place.

Phase 4: Using Vignettes for Personal Introductions

In the thinking units the majority of the data collected was organized under various themes. After constructing and presenting the thinking units two sets of data remained. In the first set was the transcriptions and field notes which addressed Part A of my

interview questions and in the second set was additional findings that had yet to be situated in my discussion.

Part A of my interview questions focus on the issues the women are engaged in and the vision they have for their work. These issues are brought forth in the personal introductions of the women which precede the thinking units. The data set for the personal introductions was highlighted in three colours to find the information which answered the following questions: What social need is each woman addressing? How does her organization address that need? What are the long term goals of the organization and thus the woman?

With the information in this data set which answered the three questions above, I employed an analysis device called vignettes to introduce the participants. Vignettes are a way of presenting a persons story that is written with as much likeness to a person's actual speech as possible (Garner in Ely, 1991, p.154). It is my intention that with this device important information be shared in a way that is colourful and telling of each woman's personality.

The majority of this section is in the voice of each women. Through their voices it is hoped that the reader is able to construct a more accurate picture of the participants than I would have been able to cultivate through my interpretation of them.

Phase 5: Using Composites for additional findings

After organizing, and writing my thinking units and personal introductions, I move onto my final phase which is the placement of the remaining data in various sections of the discussion. The first finding to be placed speaks to the fact that the women were hesitant to participate in the study. I discuss the reasons for this hesitation as an introduction to the discussion after the personal introductions. I have entitled this section "Situating

women and community development".

Next, I was able to place the philosophies of power and democracy as an introduction to thinking unit two. As the thinking unit is based mainly on practice, the philosophies serve as an important mediator between the motivation and the practice. The remaining information is distributed in open themes in two of the three thinking units.

In writing all of the findings discussed in this phase as well as the section on service learning I use a writing device called composites. "Composites describe findings that apply to a group of people rather than to any unique individual" (Garner in Ely, 1991, p.173). With composites in mind these sections emerge as a collaboration of ideas based on the participant groups' reflections. For support and opposition to the composites I relied on quotations from the interviews. Referring back to Van Manen's (1990) statement about choosing examples so that "invariant" aspect(s) of the phenomenon itself comes into view, I opted to allow different voices to emerge so that each example brings forth a richer development in the discussion.

Conclusions

In the face of a tremendous amount of data this chapter attempted to provide a step by step account of the way in which the data was collected, analysed, organized and presented. The qualitative and phenomenological research process allowed me, as the researcher, to engage in authentic conversation with women who are leaders in community development in Toronto and Montréal. Each aspect of the process shed light on the culture and communities I was studying. Right from the process of obtaining access to each participant to my discussions with them I was able to identify patterns and findings which are discussed in greater detail in Chapter 4.

The initial hesitation of the participants to my study is discussed as a finding in the

following chapter as well as their insight on personal motivation, philosophies and practice and educational applications. The organizational tools and interpretative strategies used in Chapter 4 are vignettes, the realist tale, and composites. Within each section interview data is relied on to support claims made.

My research group consists of a group of women who not only speak many different languages and worked in two Canadian cities but who were at very different levels in terms of their personal and professional recognition and the recognition of their organization(s). The organizations range from the relatively unknown to nationally recognized ones. The women range from recent university graduates, to women living on welfare, to women acknowledged for their work by 15 honorary degrees from various Canadian universities. Because of the range and diversity of the participants, I do not intend to compare or contrast the women. Instead, I am entering the discussion with the intention of giving individual space for each woman's contributions and reflections to emerge.

Qualitative and phenomenological research has directed my study into a paradigm of its own. In this paradigm the voices of women leaders in social action are heard. "...the time has come to listen to those who have been asking others to speak" (Orner in Gore & Luke (Eds.), 1992, p.88). In the following chapter we indirectly hear the women in their homes when they are sharing their personal experiences, and in committee meetings as they share their philosophies and practices, and we also occupy a place in their imagined classrooms as we learn about the ways in which they think educators can teach social responsibility.

Chapter 4: Discussion

I interviewed nine women for my study and in this chapter their experiences, philosophies, practices and ideas are discussed. In order to sketch a picture of the participants before discussing the findings I introduce each one of them individually. For these introductions I have used a writing tool called vignettes which provides a rough portrait of the women written, for the most part, in their own words. Following these introductions, I begin the thematic analysis by situating women and community development. After this introductory section the three major thinking units are addressed through various themes. As explained in Chapter 3, the thinking units are personal motivation, philosophies and practice, and educational applications.

Personal Introductions

In this introductory section, I establish a) the social need each woman is addressing, b) how each organization addresses that need and c) the long term goals of the organization and thus the woman. Two of the participants who are affiliated with the same organization are introduced together.

June Callwood

June Callwood is an author, journalist and social advocate in Toronto. Throughout her career she has been recognized for her involvement in social justice and civil liberty with honorary degrees, Officer of Canada status as well as numerous awards and presentations. When asked about the social needs which she addresses through her work, she very simply states,

> I just fill in the gaps. Each of the organizations I have founded came along in response to a need that wasn't being filled.
>
> I have been part of founding forty organizations. The three which I am most often associated with are Jessie's Hostel, Nellie's Shelter and Casey House, all of which are in Toronto. Nellie's was one of the first women's

> shelters in the country; it will be 25 years old next year. It was established to serve women with psychiatric problems, addiction problems, women running away from violent partners and it also served teenager mothers. When it became evident that teenage mothers were looking for help either as pregnant runaways or with the adoption or caring of their babies, I chaired a committee to look into the issue and Jessie's Hostel opened in 1982. Casey House opened in 1988 in response to the abominable treatment received by young men who were dying of AIDS in hospitals. They were being rejected, people wouldn't take their food into them, nurses wouldn't answer the bell, they were dying in terrible circumstances, very often their parents didn't want to see them - so they needed care.
>
> The biggest change I see for society needs to be in the support for newborns; the first 3 years of life, and for people who are parenting. There is a lot of information now that if you beat a little kid, neglect a little kid, scare a little kid to death you can create a very dangerous adult. Some awareness of cause and effect is needed. I think resources will shift, maybe not even in my lifetime, but resources will shift to help people with parenting because until we can raise a generation of kids who haven't been abused, who haven't been belittled, haven't been neglected and haven't been under-stimulated, we are not going to have enough people who have a surplus of goodwill to stop and interfere with injustice. (Callwood, 03.03.98)

Joanne Filon

Joanne Filon has been working with Greenpeace Québec for eight years. Dedicated and determined to play a role in social and environmental change Joanne was involved with student movements and anti-violence work before being hired on at Greenpeace. When asked about her role and her work, Joanne responds,

> I am the Québec director for Greenpeace, a large International non-profit environmental organization working to raise awareness and find solutions to problems like invisible toxins, pollutants, climate change, energy use and general consumption habits. We have ships at sea looking at illegal traffic, illegal spills and illegal disposal of waste. We have been successful in the past to document and to show the rest of the world that the Russians were disposing of their nuclear waste in the seas in a very ugly manner.
>
> Locally, we are called the campaign office. We do research, we lobby, we

conduct information searches. We can raise solid awareness here, and find solutions to problems like invisible toxins, pollutants, climate change, energy use and general consumption

I despise the media's promotion of advertisements because it contributes to our over-consumption habits but I really do wish the media would support Greenpeace so that we could educate the public about their role in living ecologically. I want people to know about the issues surrounding coffee, bananas and grapes. With these products we are creating monogram economies in some countries that are now trading deeper and deeper in the third world. You will see how this type of international trading is deeply affecting the third world. In exchange the pollutant technologies we have, even pesticides we condemn here, we send to Guatemala. It's economical but completely unhealthy to do that. I will continue to persist with the media, with the government and with the public to respect our planet by trying to make environmental action accessible. That is my long term goal and I am confident that we will get through one day or another. We are as persistent as pollution. (Filon, 26.03.98.)

Elizabeth Hunter

Elizabeth Hunter is a recent graduate from Concordia University's Liberal Arts program. Her interest in environmental and social justice has evolved over many years and was solidified when in Brazil with Canada World Youth. During her undergraduate years she volunteered with QPIRG and worked on the publication of Hungry for Justice (1993) which is the Montréal guide to socially responsible food choices. Today Elizabeth is working at ASEED on issues of agriculture and transportation.

My title is General Director but I am not the 'head honcho' of ASEED. ASEED stands for Action, Solidarity, Equality, Environment and Development. I've worked with ASEED for three years on environmental and social justice issues, particularly focusing on the issues of transportation and food and agriculture. We address these issues through four projects. The first is a bike tour and the other three are food projects. We have a project on fair trade, the second is community shared agriculture, and the last is on revalorizing a green zone on the South Shore of Montréal.

As far as our food projects go they have to do with farmers- food producers who usually get the short end of the stick. I think it's important to recognize

the incredible importance farmers have in our society. They feed us all and we should try to find ways to give them fair income, whether it's fair trade farmers in the South or community shared agriculture with local farmers.

Environmental work usually works to preserve the environment, but that's not enough. I would say that we distinguish ourselves strongly from conservation environmental groups who work to keep green spaces green and save wildlife. We work more on a fundamental level in terms of why the environment is being destroyed in the first place and we look a lot at our consumption habits and try to understand what, personally, everyone of us can do; what is the impact that we have on farmers in Mexico and farmers in Québec and the forests in Northern Québec when we write on paper and eat on paper? Everything we do has an impact on some place in the world and we try and look at that to see what are the ways that we can change individually and collectively to have a less damaging impact on the environment and create a more just society. But sometimes I wonder though why should people listen to David Suzuki when Jean Chretien is eating at Harveys and using lots of paper? (Hunter, 10.03.98.)

Kim Kidder

As a social worker, Kim Kidder applies her knowledge and interest in community development and education through her work in Little Burgundy in Montréal. After many years of working with the same community, Kim has gained an insider's sense of the needs and realities of the people with who she works. When asked about the social needs which are addressed through her work, Kim provides a description of Little Burgundy and of some of the problems which have arisen in recent years.

I'm the coordinator of the after-school program at Tyndale St Georges Community Centre which is for children aged 5 - 12 in Little Burgundy. Little Burgundy has the highest number of subsidised family housing units in Montréal. You have newly arrived immigrants coming here from everywhere in the world who don't necessarily speak English or French. That obviously has implications for the social fabric of the community, you can't talk to your neighbour anymore. There is racism and all kinds of social ills if you want. People who are just arriving are on welfare; they don't have money, they don't have an infrastructure, they don't have a lot of things.

In 1990 we had a lot of drug problems in our neighbourhood, and there were very few resources for youth. Around kitchen tables parents, community organizers, TANDEM and the local police formed the idea of having a youth centre and the City of Montréal agreed to fund it. The centre is called Youth in Motion. It's an after-school community centre which provides a space for positive interactions for the youth in Little Burgundy.

Kids have such a beautiful spirit about them, we have to protect them from being poisoned.. When I look at these kids and I see the experiences they are going through, how it effects their self-esteem and how they protest by being angry, by lashing out, by lashing in, by doing whatever they do to protect themselves from racism and classism. I realize that their violence happens as a reaction to something. These youth have no power, they become violent and then they are disciplined for being violent, but the power imbalance is never critiqued, they are just seen as bad people. (Kidder, 11.03.98.)

Jackie Kistabish

Jacque Kistabish has been working on issues concerning Native women for as long as she can remember. Whether on the reservation, at a conference or in the city, Jacque tries to ensure that the rights of the First Nations people are respected and addressed. Through the Québec Native Women's Association, Jacque encourages that First Nations people to respect each other by addressing, understanding and elevating issues like family violence and substance abuse. When asked about her work, Jacque explains the roots of the organization, the way in which they address issues and the long term goals.

The Québec Native Women's Association was founded in 1974 by a group of women who did not accept that women were not treated equally. According to the Indian Act, aboriginal women who married a non-Aboriginal person lost their status or citizenship. But if a Native man married a non-status or non-Aboriginal women not only did he not lose his status but his wife gained aboriginal status. That issue was settled 12 years ago. Since then many new issues have been discussed; youth issues, child care and the aboriginal justice system.

I started in my own region in 1979 as a court worker. I was working with the abusers and the people that were committing crimes. Most of them were

men who were battering their wives. Between working with these people who were committing crimes against their own wives, or their grandparents or their children, the victims also started to come and see me. I started to hear that the women didn't have any resources, they didn't have any people to go and talk to. They all came to see us. Eight of us got together to organize something because one of our sisters was killed by her husband. He shot her. She had two young children. This is where it started - the wakening of the women. We ended up having a conference and we established another committee for men, we asked the men to be involved in the process. It's a man's issue too. It's a family issue. It's a political issue. I'm still trying to make them understand that violence is a family issue. When you get beat up or abused, your children get beat up too.

Equality is our goal and I guess this will always be an issue until we sit down with the chiefs and talk about it. Equality of everything. Fighting with the chiefs to have them hear me is not my goal anymore. I have to work with the chiefs, because they represent the communities. We also have to train women to be chiefs so one day the communities will be more open to what they need. (Kistabish, 07.04.98.)

Paula Kline and Patricia Murphy

Paula Kline and Patricia Murphy have both been a part of Montréal City Mission's transformation from a charitable model of development to a social justice ministry. With an interest in social justice work and the culture of social justice both Paula and Patricia speak about their work and their long term goals;

We are both community organizers with Montréal City Mission which acts in affiliation with the United Church of Canada and is presently located in the Mennonite Friendship Centre. Montréal City Mission was opened in 1910 under the charitable model of service providing clothing, food and temporary resources to marginalized people of Montréal. It has recently transformed its mission to become a social justice ministry which works on a wide range of issues. We develop projects, but we do meet basic needs in terms of clothing, etc. which is still part of the charitable model which is necessary if you're working with certain populations. We also do lobbying and we are involved in networks, and coalitions.

Under the empowerment model of community networking we have been involved with community partners on many projects over the years. The

three main areas which the mission pursues in collaboration with other organizations are housing, refugee work and community economic development. We work on projects that we feel can bring long term solutions to problems faced by marginalized people. We tend to get involved setting up projects, being involved in the initial phase and trying to get those projects autonomous and on their own feet. Then we withdraw because we are a very small staff and we can't remain involved in all of the things that we initiate. So then we move on to other things.

The problem that we see the most and that underpins all of the work we are doing is the need for greater equity. Montréal City Mission sees that as the long term goal and it's ours as well. (Kline & Murphy, 16.03.98.)

Willimina Nolan

Willi Nolan advocates for women's right to power, and economic resources in Toronto. Through different organizations she seeks to inform and educate women on paths to personal empowerment. Willi discusses the social needs she addresses and the way in which she does this below. She also states her long term goals.

For the last twelve years I've been looking for ways to address violence against women and children and to assist what I call the shelter movement and that's a movement to stop the social pathology of family violence and assault against women in whatever form it might take. It's an effort to promote peace in the family so that women and children, rather than being chatteled, can be empowered and can fulfill their lives rather than having to seek to take power and assert power from men.

As a mother and a community activist, I work on women's rights through issues of social justice and environmental justice in Toronto. I am the founder and President of the Board of Project Esperance which is a housing community that was developed for battered women. Being primarily concerned with empowering women and reducing inequalities and assaults against them I am also a member of the Toronto Women's Economic and Community Development Association with who I am working to establish a branch of the Women's World Bank in Toronto. I continually come back to the question, how do women learn to take care of themselves? So I give courses on how to survive on welfare. I also work in the shelter movement and through my work at Bio Business I look at issues of women's health and the environment.

> Society refuses to acknowledge that we are equal and capable. I think women just need to assume the power they rightfully have but until that time I want to continue to deliver power to women. To bring women's views on what's good and what's required to maintain a healthy society to the forefront. Women are always looking at what's going to be good for their grandchildren, which inevitably involves the rest of the world. (Nolan, 03.03.98.)

Luciana Soave

Luciana Soave is concerned primarily with educating and integrating handicapped people in the greater Montréal community. She founded the Québec Multi-Ethnic Association for the Integration of Handicapped People in an effort to do this. As an immigrant from Italy she understands and empathizes with the primary obstacles of immigrants, and in addition, she recognizes the enormous difficulties immigrants or people from various cultural communities with handicaps have.

> Persons with disabilities from ethno-cultural communities are forgotten because they are a minority between a minority and whenever you make a law, a program, a service you may think of immigrants or the disabled but you never think of somebody who is both.
>
> The Québec Multi- Ethnic Association for the Integration of Handicapped People works on giving voice to this minority group through establishing support networks, home visits, mediation sessions, social and language courses, and recreation workshops. Our primary goal is to work on the integration of disabled people into the larger society and so we work to ensure that government bodies and the greater society is being trained and educated to be more inclusive in their policies and practices.
>
> Discrimination against people with disabilities is based on fear. At one time, even I wouldn't know how to react to people with intellectual disabilities. I didn't know how to speak to a blind person. Then I found myself at meetings with people with serious disabilities, they were active and involved. That really changed my life. I began realizing that discrimination is not only political, and social but it is personally created. I don't really think there is an ideal person and so I would really like a society that accepted all people - as people. And what I hope for our organization is that we help people see the potential and the importance of recognizing

> people with disabilities from cultural communities. Once acknowledged in society through organizations like ours, people with disabilities can be encouraged, with support and resources, to reach their potential. (Soave, 31.03.98.)

Thematic Analysis

The thematic analysis begins by addressing the initial finding of the study which is the hesitation most of the women expressed when asked to participate in my study. To follow I move on to the three thinking units by discussing first the motivations and inspirations which led these women to be open to and motivated to pursue social and environmental needs. Next, the practice of democratic communities and the philosophies associated with each woman's leadership is discussed. To close the analysis, I examine the way in which the women think social responsibility can be taught through our formal and informal educational experiences.

Situating Women and Community Development

Before I was able to collect interview data for this study a very important finding arose. When asked to participate in the study the majority of the woman approached were uncomfortable, hesitated or declined. I think it is appropriate therefore to begin the analysis by considering some of the reasons why these women felt uncomfortable being called a leader, a role model, and an educator in society at large. Their reasons are addressed by acknowledging the roles women have taken in community development, their perceptions as to why they have taken such roles, and how they feel they are valued and recognized for doing so.

In seeking to situate women in community development one must acknowledge the fact that, stereotypically, women address invisible services each day in the domain of care. As the needs which are not addressed by social policies continue to be met for the most part by women in families, in schools, and in community organizations, Canadians at large continue

to believe that development is not a Canadian issue and therefore citizens need not feel responsible. For these reasons among others, women working in community development receive very little recognition from society at large. Daniels argues that,

> Women have accepted the assignment to watch out for matters that go unattended in the formulation of social policies, the sick, the elderly, the homeless children who are neither publicly valued or part of a profitable industry are traditionally regarded as the concerns of women. These concerns form the nucleus of the areas women are expected to care about. (1988, p.13)

Women's work, traditionally, exists in the domain of care. As the women's movement has made great progress in recognizing these efforts as valuable and essential to society, many feminists scholars have begun to look beyond the work and ask questions. Questions are now being asked about why women continue to take care of the neglected, abused and impoverished.

I posed this question to the women interviewed and those who work primarily in the service of women speak of their connection to women's needs. The rest of the women, however, believe that women address the issues they do for the following reasons; some say that women are, by biological imperative, life givers, while others say girls are socialized to nurture and care about interpersonal relationships throughout their lifetime. Whether the participants explain the care-giving roles of women as biologically based, as a result of socialization, or through a personal concern for a connected group, they all say that they have made an active decision to fulfil their maternal instincts in their work.

The women interviewed are pleased that feminists have begun to acknowledge their work and have turned their attention to women in various pursuits. When asked if they consider themselves to be feminists, all of the women said yes with a qualifier that the feminism they believe in is inclusive. By inclusive the women indicated that they did not only mean that they should recognize, work towards and wish empowerment for all women, but for all

people.

June Callwood speaks about how feminism should aim to make life more fair for all people. Over the last twenty years she has seen feminism evolve from a very elitist institution to a more inclusive practice.

> The emphasis for twenty years was that women get into law school. That was never my idea of being a feminist and I think now the movement has recognized that by sneering at prostitutes and housewives and women who stay home to raise their children and ignoring the poor ... that we did ourselves a disservice. (Callwood, 19.03.98.)

As feminism has come to acknowledge and value women in grassroots community development, Paula and Patricia believe that feminism is now about sharing power. Finding a place in feminism on their own terms is no longer a challenge. For most of the women interviewed, finding a place of acknowledgement in mainstream society is more difficult.

As was observed in Chapter 2, citizens have a tendency to internalize power imbalances. The majority of the women asked hesitated to be participants in my study for this very reason, lacking a confidence or sense of authority concerning the work that they do. According to Belenky et al, women "do not align themselves with authorities" because of their lack of female role models in positions of authority (Astin & Leland, 1991; Belenky, 1986, p.44). As many women lack female role models in positions of authority, they are not able to imagine themselves in such positions, and thus do not have the confidence to aspire to authority status. It is important that I make clear that all the women in this inquiry believe wholeheartedly in, and are satisfied by, the work that they do. The participants do not see themselves solving all the world's problems. Instead, they see that they are able to address an issue in a particular place where a need has arisen.

If they are to be recognized at all, most of the women said, they feel that it should only be to strengthen their cause. As for personal recognition, they, like most women, according to Belenky et al, feel they receive more than enough through their families, their co-workers and through the ability to know, empower, and advocate for those in need (Belenky et al, 1986, p.47).

Chodorow (1989) and Taylor (1992) have written extensively on this issue, otherwise known as the politics of recognition. While there is a wide range of material on this subject, any further discussion is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Personal Motivation

As we move into the heart of the analysis, it is important to be conscious of the fact that addressing the nine women leaders, their experiences and philosophies on social action provides support for and mirrors much of the theoretical framework. At the same time, however, the study's findings provide alternative means by which to address issues of social and environmental justice and responsibility. In the literature review and theoretical framework, feminist theory emphasizes the inter-dependent relationship between political justice and personal experience:

> As a way of describing new ways of being in the world, feminism tries to move issues of morality out of abstract theories of justice and into concrete experiences and relationships... into the actuality of women's lives. (Bartlett in Farganis, 1994, p.19)

This study follows that train of thought by seeking political alternatives within personal experience.

In asking a question as open as *why* the women choose to pursue social justice, we must be prepared to receive a multi-layered answer. In this case, the responses are dynamic, are complex, and are very simple. I will do my best in this section and in the ones to follow to

present responses in a manner which is representative of our discussions. June Callwood, Joanne Filon, Elizabeth Hunter, Kim Kidder, Jacque Kistabish, Paula Kline, Patrica Murphy, Willi Nolan and Luciana Soave, are proactive, are socially responsible, and are founders and leaders of various social and environmental justice organizations for many reasons. Through a detailed analysis we witness many themes emerging. The women studied all pursue community development based on at least two of the motivating themes below. Those themes include, in no particular order;

- A parent, family member, or a spouse loved, supported and encouraged them, instilling in them confidence, allowing them the space and time to cultivate their talents and giving them opportunities to pursue their interests.
- They have either been eye-witnesses to or have personally experienced injustice or suffering.
- They have had a role model who pursued justice in their everyday experiences.
- They were exposed to and participated in social action or advocacy during childhood or adolescence.
- They have a sense of religious duty.

Each theme provides insight as to why the participants choose to address social and environmental needs and is expanded on with support from the interviews. Through recounting the experiences of these women it becomes obvious that they have been motivated by several themes, but because I do not intend to repeat their story or to break them down into many fragments, I place each woman under the theme(s) which has/have emerged as most prominent in our discussions. Following summaries of the five themes above, I discuss, in an open theme, why the women continue to be involved in community development. Following this thinking unit the significance of teaching empathy in the home is clearly identified and expanded upon.

The issue which is of foremost importance when analyzing motivation is that for all of the

women; whether it was Joanne establishing safety lights in metros after the Montréal Massacre, or June establishing a hospice for men dying of AIDS - all of the women interviewed act on a perceived need. They don't seek to create needs, nor do they duplicate already existing programs; a need has emerged which they feel that they are capable of and interested in pursuing.

Motivating theme number one: A parent, family member, or a spouse loved, supported and encouraged them, instilling in them confidence, allowing them the space and time to cultivate their talents and giving them opportunities to pursue their interests.

It is through relationships, most of the women explain, that they have established the foundation of confidence through which they pursue their interest. Although most of the women who fall into this theme speak of the individual(s) who have supported them as being highly influential, some pointed out that, although verbal support was provided, positive actions didn't always follow. It is therefore important to start with the understanding that the women interpret their motivations as being both positive and negative.

Luciana Soave grew up in Italy as a soft-spoken girl with little confidence. As a child she not only faced the separation of her family, but lived in a household in which she was discriminated against and deprived of affection. She speaks of her husband as being deeply supportive and encouraging of her. Insecure about her talents, she was pushed by her husband to pursue her interest in painting, to return to school, and to take language classes. When their son was born with spinal bifidus, Luciana and her husband were interested in joining a support group of parents but, on the evening of the meeting, Luciana had to stay home with their son. Her husband went to the meeting and volunteered Luciana to join the Board of Directors of the Spinal Bifidus Association. From that seed has grown the Québec Multi-Ethnic Association for the Integration of Handicapped People for which Luciana is the Founder and executive director. Even today Luciana is nervous before big events,

speeches and conferences, and her husband continues to support and encourage her to reach her potential.

The Indian Act (Canada, 1993; Wherrett, 1997) states that the Canadian government must "educate the savages". Based on this goal of assimilation residential schools were established for children from First Nations communities. Jacque Kistabish was taken from her home by the local police to a residential school at the age of seven where she was emotionally, physically and sexually abused for six years. In the meantime her community was forced onto reserves which Jacque compares to a military base and their traditional way of life was outlawed. Upon her return to the reserve at the age of 13 she witnessed the degradation of her people through alcohol and violence. Her parents were very supportive of her and tried to encourage her healing, while providing her with the confidence to come out of the experiences as a better person.

> My father and my mother told me that life is not supposed to be painful. We are supposed to live in peace and harmony with all of the creations that God has given us. My father told me that God created me for a reason and he told me never forget who I am and my mother used to tell me don't ever forget that you are a special person. My father said if you have a chance to go somewhere else, go. (Kistabish, 24.04.98.)

Today, Jacque works from Montréal on strengthening Native communities across Québec. She attributes all of her strength to her parents.

Motivating theme number two: They have either been eye-witnesses to or personally experienced injustice or suffering.

A personal experience is a great teacher and has profound impact on a person's life. For the women whose motivation falls in this category they speak of their past experiences and their present commitment with great conviction. They define their purpose in life as addressing social wrongs. For those who have personally faced injustice in their lives, which almost all

the women interviewed had, they understand what it feels like to be treated unjustly and thus can empathize with others in unfair situations.

Willi Nolan is a survivor of family violence. It was through healing from these experiences and identifying their roots through deconstruction that she realized how much work needs to be done.

> I came out of the counseling educated in the background of how did I get here...from female circumcision in Africa and witch burning and throwing women in their husbands graves in India and I came through with such a global view of this pathology that ... I set out to find ways to carve a place for myself in this work. (Nolan, 03.03.98.)

Understanding injustice provides an opportunity to address it. Willi was told by her mother that she could do anything she wants to do. What she wants to do is empower women with information, with resources, and with understanding.

June Callwood is a journalist and journalists are often confronted with first hand information. She says, "(journalists) go into the slums, under the bridges where people have jumped and I had a sense of outrage" (Callwood, 03.03.98.). June believes that we should never walk by an injustice, that when we see people in trouble it becomes our business and that when we can, we must always do something to help. In a speech she gave at the University of Calgary she explained,

> I was raised in an isolated, dirt-poor village where we had to rely on one another to survive, I have assumed all my life (because of that) that if anyone is in trouble it is my business. (Callwood, 05.06.98.)

Being witness to injustice, June Callwood feels obligated to act on social needs that arise.

Motivating theme number three: They have had a role model who pursued justice in their everyday experiences.

Many of the women recounted stories of how someone in their life, always a family member, role modeled the pursuit of justice and, in doing so, they speak of how in their eyes the efforts appeared accessible.

Patricia Murphy speaks a great deal about her family. When asked about inspirational role models she speaks of three members of her family,

> my father because I always saw him as more of a free spirit, as an adventurer. I had an aunt who I found really interesting because she had a career and she wasn't married and she was different. Both of my parents came from families of ten and she was the only one who marched to a different tune. And I had an uncle who was a Jesuit Missionary in Malaysia. (Murphy, 08.05.98.)

Paula Kline, whom I interviewed with Patricia Murphy, tells a story of Patricia's father who was a successful businessman and who received terrible service at the bank when he was mistaken for a regular customer. When the bank personnel realized who they were serving, they were deeply apologetic, but when her father realized that not everybody received the same treatment he withdrew all of his funds. Paula, who has similar stories about her parents confirms, "Our parents weren't revolutionaries but had those kinds of values"(Kline, 08.05.98.).

Joanne Filon, grew up in a poor family in Gaspé and contributes the following about her motivation,

> I never had dolls, but I had the river, the St. Lawrence river to play with. I had the fish in the river and I had the woods, the wildlife and it was enough to be happy. Life is simple, we try to complicate it. (Filon, 07.04.98.)

She lived in a simple family and in a sustainable community. She talks about her father who was a grocer, and how he never learned to read or write. She goes on to talk about how he asserted great courage to speak out and create a laborers union protesting unfair working conditions in Gaspé. She is very fond of her father who in her eyes was very brave and who is very wise. Today she is the director of Greenpeace because she has realized, after years of working on issues of violence at the Ecole Polytechnique after the Montréal massacre, that it is in nature that she finds the most peace.

Motivating theme number four: They were exposed to and participated in social action or advocacy during childhood or adolescence.

This theme reflects on the experiences which allow the participant an insiders understanding of social action. Experiences such as these are rewarding and have the potential to deeply affect and inspire people to pursue further involvement (Astin & Leland, 1991; Zeldin & Tarlov in Schine (Ed.), 1997)

Many of the women speak of accompanying a parent in their volunteer commitments, Kim Kidder had to make calls to the blood donor clinic for her mom. She started learning about social causes at school, and later she started volunteering with physically and intellectually challenged adults. She speaks of recognizing all of the issues that they faced, which ranged from discrimination to transportation.

> I always, from a young age, got physically upset when I saw things that were unjust, like someone parking in a handicapped zone. I just felt that it was unfair. (Kidder, 11. 03.98.)

Kim's experiences with handicapped people was a significant learning experience; through developing a connection with the people she worked with she started empathizing with them.

Many of the women claim that empathy is the starting point for social responsibility. After one is able to see or feel something from another perspective, they then start to take responsibility to ensure the well being of the other. The effect then snowballs.

Elizabeth Hunter has a picture of herself at age 14, selling cookies for the World Wildlife Fund with a shoe box around her neck. That is her first memory of social action. Since that time Elizabeth got involved with environmental work and international development through an international co-operation and solidarity exchange between Québec and Brazil through Canada World Youth. She believes that that experience was fundamental to her life choices. "It certainly gave me a bigger picture of how the world works and a direct look at the effects in different countries" (Hunter, 10.03.98.). Since that experience, Elizabeth became involved with QPIRG, which was a stepping stone for her present work at ASEED.

Luciana Soave was also very involved with social activism as an adolescent. She protested the war in Vietnam and the discrimination against African Americans in the Southern states of America. She has also been involved in the women's movement. Like Kim, Luciana talks about getting very upset when she sees an injustice, like when bigger kids beat up small ones, or when she once rescued a kitten who had been thrown into a river by four teenagers. Watching her son face discrimination because of his disability was very difficult for Luciana and one day when he came home from school crying she made him a promise. She said,

> I cannot cure you, I cannot change your situation, but I want to do my best so that the society changes at least for the people that come after you, so there will be better services and less obstacles. (Soave, 15.04.98.)

Luciana developed the confidence to act as an adolescent. Today she is motivated by her promise.

Motivating theme number five: They have a sense of religious duty.

Many of the women speak of religion when asked about motivation and inspiration and in fact two of the organizations I interviewed at have religious affiliations. All of the women, in their own ways, expressed a belief in what in Western society is known as the Golden Rule. The same affirmation is made in many religions.

Willi Nolan expressed her belief that she, like Jacque Kistabish has been called by her Creator to do the work she does. She believes in the words of an old poem that says, "First they came for the Jews and nobody came to help and then they came for me and there was nobody left to help". It is this belief that prompts her to treat people in the way that she would like to be treated and motivates her to address the needs that she does.

June Callwood was raised in a Catholic home and she said that Catholicism establishes that you should feel terrible about your sins. She agrees that we should feel terrible about sinning but she does admit that she is often very hard on herself. Like Willi Nolan, June is motivated by a personal sense of duty that redefines success on a daily basis.

Paula Kline's mother used to tell her stories of her ancestors from Ireland and how the British used to sew the Irish up in pillowcases and pitch them out to sea. As a child this made a big impression on her. Understanding such personal accounts of injustice, being involved as she was with Irish politics in Québec, and having a strong Catholic belief system was motivation for Paula to become involved with Montréal City Mission in the early 80's to work with the rooming house population. Since she returned to the church seven years ago her motivation for her work has increased. She makes a daily effort to be generous in spirit.

Open Theme: Continued Motivation

I have discussed the motivating factors which have influenced or directed these nine women to pursue social action. It is important that it is not taken for granted that those factors continue to motivate them to work today. The second issue to discuss under the theme of motivation is that of what *continues* to motivate these women to work in community development on issues of social and environmental justice.

Although many of the women entered the field of community development and advocacy in order to focus on personal and social issues that they felt needed addressing, many of them admit to working today for less altruistic goals. All of the women find the issues that they work on very interesting. They are motivated by their respected causes and the growing needs which arise out of each of them. They are motivated by each other, by their co-workers and by the people who are serviced by their organization. Almost all of the women relish the opportunity to be creative in their work, to pursue related interests in unique ways, and to be flexible with their methodology and thus they are always learning new skills and having unique experiences. Finally, quite a few of the women relate how lucky they feel to be paid for doing work that is so fulfilling and that most people would only have the opportunity to do similar work in their spare time. Paula and Patricia share a quote from Confucius, "Find something you love to do and you'll never work another day in your life" (Kline, 08.05.98.).

That being said each woman came to pursue and is pursuing work that fulfills them and inspires them to be creative. They choose to address needs which have arisen through social actions, based on at least two of the five themes considered. In all of the cases it is important that it is repeated that each woman is motivated to act by the recognition of a need which has arisen in the context of their lives.

Each motivating theme, in isolation or in combination, encouraged or encourages the women to reflect upon and act on their values. This combination of action and reflection, as

mediated by through Freire, Greene and hooks in Chapter 2, allows for the cultivation of empathy, which was discussed with respect to Kim and her experience with handicapped adults. Empathy is the starting point from which the development of agency and accountability grow (Manji, 1997). Manji, who also studies Canadians involved in social action, came to the conclusions that in our complex society it is important to recognize the significance of values.

> ...values really do count. Self-interest, too, can be a source of progressive action. Above all, because they have to try harder than most to belong, those on the edge of society often exude a spirit of democracy from which we can all learn. (1997, p.5)

Central to this findings is that all of the women feel that the core values which motivate them to pursue social and environmental needs were learnt in their home. For some of the women that was positive and inspiring, and for others the difficulty of their home life was an inspiration. This finding has significant implications for education and the goal of educating for democratic development and must be considered when establishing pedagogical tools that foster social responsibility in young people. For some reason, values such as social responsibility have been shown to be taught in the home for the most part and we therefore must discuss either how to avail such opportunities in the classroom or how to avail these ideas to all parents and guardians so that we can create a generation of democratically minded citizens.

These five motivating themes are significant in identifying the importance of the home, the family, and informal educational experiences in creating a sense of social responsibility and the cultivation of the confidence required to take social action. The enthusiasm the women share about their work explains what continues to motivate them to pursue social action. As they are in positions of leadership, I believe that each woman interviewed plays a large role in constructing and maintaining a work environment that is enriching and motivating in its practice. As was mentioned in the section entitled "Engaged Pedagogy" in Chapter 2, it is

important that values and principles be role modeled and practiced by teachers if the goal is for students to pursue similar strategies (hooks, 1994). Through the practice of a democratic community, which is discussed in the following thinking unit, each woman is role-modeling her vision of democratic development.

The Philosophies and Practice of Democratic Communities

In Crazy for Democracy, Kaplan (1997) recounts the stories of six women who faced unjust circumstances and took action. Some dealt with environmental pollutants which were causing them and their families terrible disease in the Love Canal in New York, while others joined forces against apartheid in Crossroads, South Africa by forming communities of resistance and advocacy. Through this work I was first made aware of the ways in which women in community development worked for democracy democratically.

As was demonstrated in the section on motivation, many of the women faced injustice personally or through their families and workplaces and, for that reason among others, have chosen to respond to social and environmental needs of their community through social action. One's philosophies and practices are directly tied to one's experience. To follow the section of motivation I summarize the women's philosophies on power and democracy. I define each term by bringing forth all of the issues that the women spoke of in our discussions. After bringing forth what was similar in their philosophies, I discuss any unique contributions. Following this brief survey of philosophical standpoints, I discuss in detail the their practical implementation.

Reflections on Power

According to the participants, power can be a useful tool for people and organizations if those who have it are working to make society more inclusive and democratic. Unfortunately, however, according to June Callwood, "people who are generous and thoughtful about their communities are not usually the people who gain a lot of power"

(Callwood, 19.03.98.). Power is most often associated with money, status and influence, and it works for the most part to create and maintain inequality and injustice. Power is seen by some as a construct of control, a game of sorts, in which someone is always the winner while the majority loses.

Due to the degree to which power influences our reality, our experiences and our perceptions of self, power is a desired entity. The women interviewed suggest that, although they are not powerful in terms of economics and politics, they do feel they have a great deal of strength concerning social conditions and education in their communities. Knowledge is power, suggest almost all of the women and because all of the women work on education internal and external to their organizations in various forums and forms, they feel like they are working on empowerment. When asked if they feel that through their work they were redistributing power, most of the women say yes, that they hope so, or that they think that through their work they are simply trying to make life more fair.

They pursue such empowerment through sharing power, by using power as a transferable energy to be shared with people rather than used over people. This philosophy of power as a transferable energy is maintained and practiced by the women and is discussed in the context of practice in the following section. When speaking of sharing power, quite a few women speak in admiration of the traditions of Native American communities and matriarchal cultures where power is a shared commodity.

While speaking of Native traditions, Jacque Kistabish asserts that, "power is only a word...in my language power doesn't even exist, it's respect...and when you have respect you work to give respect to your people" (Kistabish, 24.04.98.). I return to Eisler's (1987) definition as it reinforces Jacques comments, as well as the intentions of the rest of the participants by saying,

> Power is seen as responsibility that can be used to the benefit of all persons, this is preferable to power as privilege that commands obedience through oppression or fear. (p.28)

The philosophy of shared power or respect is used by each of the women in working towards democratic communities. Before we discuss the practices of democratic communities we must provide space to understand the participant's reflections on democracy itself.

Reflections on Democracy

Almost all of the women speak of democracy as a concept that must be discussed relative to the society. Although all of the women criticize the democratic framework in place in Canada, they are grateful that they have what little choice they do in comparison to Nigeria's state of affairs and the history of oppressive regimes in countries like South Africa. That being said, the women feel that democracy, like power is a construct that is designed to make citizens believe that they have choice. Paula and Patricia quote a graffiti slogan from the Plateau of Mont Royal, "if voting could change a system it would be illegal" (Kline & Murphy, 08.05.98.). Jacque points out that, "we don't live in a democratic society because every decision is made for us"(Kistabish, 24.04.98.).

"In a true democracy", according to Beth, "everybody has a say in choosing the people and policies that are going to govern that country"(Hunter, 06.04.98.). Everybody *doesn't* have a say in Canada, according to the women studied. Even if we are told as citizens that we are equal and have freedom of speech, the majority of citizens cannot access those opportunities due to lack of resources. June Callwood adds,

> Democracy means proportional representation, so people not affiliated with a political party but who represent a community should have the opportunity to be elected if they got enough votes. (Callwood, 19.03.98.)

Although there is room for independent parties to participate in elections, they are not given a fair chance as the political powers rest in the core parties and new candidates, regardless of their affiliation, are not given the media attention, or the credit to be valued and understood as equal.

The education system neglects its role in democracy according to Elizabeth,

> There are all sorts of prerequisites to a true democracy that we don't have, like a good educational system in which people grow up able to inform themselves and be critical and make independent decisions. (Hunter, 06.04.98.)

Finally a few of the women speak about freedom in democracy and many say that what should be free is the individual, starting with ourselves. We should be free to voice our opinions and act on our beliefs but, because the majority of people feel that they must abide by a code of ethics based on their familial, political or occupational ties, none of us are in fact free in the truest sense of democracy.

Although the women feel discouraged when speaking about how democracy cannot exist without the participation of citizens, they all feel that their work is in support of the democracy which they believe in. Their visions of democracy include meaningful participation, fair and proportional representation, shared power and decision making, bias-free information and education and the tools with which to critically examine issues. Central to their reflections is the belief that democracy should instill a degree of freedom.

Let us compare these findings to the definition of democracy used in the theoretical review; In Chapter 1 democracy was defined as a process of seeking freedom, social equality and meaningful participation; meaningful to the citizen and also meaningful to the society. According to the participants, such equality and participation can only truly be achieved if all citizens or employees in the case of a community development, social justice or

environmental organization, have/has enough information and power to make a free and informed contribution. In the next section we consider how the philosophies of power and democracy are carried out in the daily practice of each woman.

The Practices of Democratic Communities

In my study I found that most of the participants do lead their community of justice and development democratically. For those women who are associated with more than one organization they, too, work towards democratic communities. For the one participant in my study that does not have the privilege of working in such a democratic structure, we discuss her reflections on democracy and her hopes for change. I must take the opportunity to say that the women are practicing democratic development outside of their organizations as well. This is acknowledged in an open theme after the themes for practicing democracy within the organizations are discussed.

Five themes which reflect the way in which these women have created and maintain empowering collaborative structures have emerged in my observations and in the interviews. The themes are as follows:

- The organization has a broad vision, high standards of excellence and a solid structure which is created collaboratively. The organization is sustainable.
- The Board of Directors is diverse and inclusive of people who serve and who are served by the organization. The meetings are collaborative and call upon the expertise of each individual. The organization is representative of the community.
- The organization consists of a small staff whose members make decisions together and share responsibility. The organization shares power among staff.
- The organization works to ensure positive interpersonal dynamics.
- The organization is flexible to change and inclusive of all needs which arise.

Like the motivation section, where additional findings were discussed in open themes, in

this section I again bring forth additional items. The open theme in this thinking unit addresses the question of how the participants extend their democratic practices outside of their organization(s). Following the open theme, I discuss an issue that challenges the practices of democratic communities.

The practice of each woman studied is illustrated in at least three, and for the most part all, of the themes above. In the discussion of the themes, each woman's practice is placed under the theme which is most reflective of her preoccupations.

Theme of practice number one: The organization has a broad vision, high standards of excellence and a solid structure which is created collaboratively. The organization is sustainable.

This is necessary for small organizations, especially service sector organizations or advocacy groups. Without a solid structure and support community development organizations are not seen as credible in the larger society. Such creditability is crucial for receiving funding, volunteers, and a community support network. Such creditability is also very important in terms of ensuring one's belief in an institution and its employees, as that guarantees staff that they are valued in the organization and that their positions are stable. This provides for a sustainable core group of committed people and thus a sustainable organization.

At Greenpeace, Joanne speaks with great pride about her small staff that consists of three full time staff members and fifteen volunteers. They work in a mutually consenting structure, where everybody does a little bit of everything. The staff has meetings every two weeks at which time all decisions are made together. All of Greenpeace's funding comes from public sources and are not affiliated with government or industry grants. This funding policy ensures their freedom, and allows them to express civil disobedience without concern for their financial support. For these reasons Greenpeace relies on the media, as well as

their public education sources to be credible, to help them raise funds, and to keep the public informed of their efforts and findings on an ongoing basis. Recently Greenpeace decided to boycott a newspaper that charges $10,000 for a full page advertisement and decided instead to spend a lesser amount internally in order to create solid documentation on the topic. Such decisions keep Greenpeace sustainable and maintains their large degree of respect in society.

When June Callwood decides to pursue an issue she doesn't compromise her high standards. When asked what steps are required to put together an organization she responds that she gets together a committed and capable group of people who have the expertise that is needed to meet the need, and she goes to the government and steers the organization through the credibility process. She believes that the ground work must be done well, that the expertise of the group must always represent "front line workers" not presidents of organizations but people who have information and who are open to an egalitarian structure (Callwood, 03.03.98.). For Jessie's that meant getting public health nurses and high school teachers, people who are close to the issue of teenage pregnancy. "And then I always make sure that it has good core funding, so even if fundraising goes sour the jobs aren't in jeopardy" (Callwood, 03.03.98.).

Theme of practice number two: The Board of Directors is diverse and inclusive of people who serve and who are served by the organization. The meetings are collaborative and call upon the expertise of each individual. The organization is representative of the community.

The strength of the Québec Native Women's Association comes from its membership which includes people from across the province from the various First Nations communities. Each community has locals (selected members) who attend a general assembly once a year in their nation. In addition, a provincial assembly is held each year at which each nation is represented. Members bring up issues for the Québec Native Women's Association to consider and the group calls on the expertise of each nation, a

discussion is held and the issue is addressed.

Kim Kidder founded Youth in Motion and considers its Board of Directors to be grassroots. The members of the Board come from the community and the bulk of these people are parents of the young people who attend the centre's activities. Kim thinks that in order to serve a community it is very important that members of the community are involved in the decision making. She thinks that training parents to be community organizers is an important step in the community development of Little Burgundy. At Tyndale St. Georges, where Kim heads a department, the Board of Directors is not as representative; the Board members are not from the community and the structure is very hierarchical. Kim finds this much less effective and even discouraging for staff and participants. She does her best to ensure that the people she hires are from the community as she believes that services should be representative, and that staff should work in a collective, where responsibilities are shared.

Willi is President of the Board of Project Esperance until the next Annual general meeting at which time she wants to move out of the role of president and into a fundraising position. She wants the organization to move on without her, and she wants to share the recognition that comes from having the title of president. Like many of the women, she believes that her title is really insignificant to her work. I found that to be true in numerous cases; many of the organizations I contacted at the outset had presidents, executive directors, directors and various other titles of authority, and this made it difficult to pinpoint who in fact I was looking to speak with. So many titles are shared amongst the staff of these organizations, I found, because it shares the recognition and the responsibilities.

Willi speaks of working on a program to find housing for women who have survived family violence. She once found in her efforts that the housing policy had changed and restricted who was eligible to apply. She worked on the expansion of eligibility so

> that single people with big ideas can now find a way inside the big bureaucracy to show their stuff, to have their ideas and their dreams reviewed to see if they can also contribute. (Nolan, 19.03.98.)

Like Willi, each woman believes that inclusive and fair representation is essential to democracy.

Theme of practice number three: The organization consists of a small staff that make decisions together and share responsibility. The organization shares power among staff.

It has already come into light in the previous two themes that all of the organizations are small in structure and staff and that most them are working towards a collegial model of responsibility which is non-hierarchical. I therefore illustrate only one additional example under this theme.

Beth describes ASEED's non-hierarchical structure and small staff, and attributes this to the fact that the organization "evolved in a very organic way". She states, "It began with a group of three friends that wanted to do this type of work (local environmental projects) and make a living off of it" (Hunter, 10.03.98.). Today, with a five person staff for most of the year and temporary growth over the summer months, Beth works to ensure that staff and volunteers are supported and validated for their efforts. In talking about her small staff, Beth shares with me about how supportive they have been of her during times of stress.

Like Beth, most of the women studied believe that working towards a non-hierarchical model, in which decisions, power and responsibilities are shared, is possible and achievable simply because they work exclusively in small communities, and that such a model would not be feasible for large-scale development.

Theme of practice number four: The organization works to ensure positive interpersonal dynamics.

Paula Kline and Patricia Murphy consider themselves to be team members at Montréal City Mission, where they are both working on the practice of a collegial model which stresses interpersonal dynamics, a sharing of responsibilities and decisions, and a way to deal with confrontation positively to bring out the best in one another. They both speak about how grateful they are to be learning about all aspects of their organization and to be able to reflect on themselves in their workplace. The collegial model ensures that people are valued and recognized for their work and for that reason all of the staff of Montréal City Mission including volunteers and student interns are sent to conferences and workshops on various issues.

Theme of practice number five: The organization is flexible to change and open to of all needs which arise.

The Québec Multi-Ethnic Association for the Integration of Handicapped People was founded seventeen years ago and at that time the organization consisted only of Luciana Soave. When she realized how big and how real the need was for such work, she started training and visioning a staff, volunteers and a Board of Directors. The organization has grown but is still small in staff. The structure is not complex and is very flexible to change. For many years most of the clientele were parents of children with disabilities and so the organization did a lot of work with parent support groups and activities for children, as well as awareness-raising. The organization has evolved to include a greater number of adults with disabilities and so greater emphasis is being placed on support for disabilities, support in terms of finding employment, and integration into society.

Open Theme: Coalitions and Public Education

In working towards a democratic ideal, many of the women have pursued educating not only within their organization but outside of it as well. Coalitions or community

partnerships between grassroots organizations have become 'en vogue' according to many of the women interviewed. In creating and maintaining links with other organizations the women find that they are able to redirect people to other services, thus strengthening those services while expanding the knowledge base of these organizations and others. All of these implications, which arise from the women's continued involvement in coalitions and public education, increase participation and commitment in social action, which are the strength and foundation of grassroots community development.

Willi Nolan works with community partners who, like her, work on issues surrounding women's health and the environment. Joanne Filon speaks about working with consumer groups, and expressed a desire to work more with health groups, women's groups and youth groups. Paula Kline and Patricia Murphy at Montréal City Mission work with the Community Economic Development Association on helping people obtain small loans, and Beth Hunter works with various organizations and farms in her efforts in community agriculture.

One of the four initiatives that ASEED works on is called *Together in the Green Zone*. Beth explains the program as follows,

> The goal of the project is to revalorize the green zone, which is an area on the South Shore and the idea is to put this land to use for agricultural projects that will be beneficial for the community. (Hunter, 10.03.98.)

ASEED works on this project with community partners that run food banks and collective kitchens, and the produce grown becomes alternative food aid. ASEED, in turn, expands its membership with volunteers who in turn benefit from the produce and learn how to garden.

In creating and maintaining such coalitions, organizations are in fact educating each other not only on their respective pursuits, but also on other ways of approaching service and advocacy. Although coalition building is external to the democratic environment created in

their organizations, even more external is the focus on public education forums.

Luciana Soave speaks about giving presentations in schools. Joanne Filon works on educating through the media and feels that, when given the opportunity to do so, she gets a lot of positive feedback from readers or listeners. Paula Kline and Patricia Murphy go around to churches on the West Island and speak about economic justice and the effects of social cuts.

Jacque Kistabish recounts a time when she was speaking at a conference in the Cree community. Her talk was at 10:00 AM and there was hardly anybody there, but the talk had been set up to be broadcast over the local radio. Jacque started talking about her experiences at the residential school and about all of the pain she feels the First Nations people have experienced. As time went on the room started filling up with people who had been listening on the radio, and by noon the room was completely full. It is from understanding and admitting their pain that Jacque thinks her people will heal. Through sharing her experiences, she is facilitating such healing.

Coalitions between community organizations and public education forums are additional ways in which the women studied promote their work and engage in positive change. The women speak with genuine interest about strengthening these aspects of their work. As such, these efforts bring the important issues which they deal with each day into the larger communities to give more people the information and opportunity to participate.

It has become clear how each woman, in her own way, and through the spirit of her cause and her working community, has come to pursue democracy internally and externally. Internally, democratic communities are being pursued through the realization of the five themes discussed in this section. External to their organizations, many women are educating the public on the social needs which the address, while giving them opportunities to be involved. In creating and extending democratic communities these women are role

models for democratic development. They practice social or environmental justice by addressing their causes and they do so justly, fairly, and with a people-first philosophy.

I attribute the consistency in values that the women display to the fact that they make little distinction between their personal ideals and their professional pursuits. It is as if their public and private person are one. Thus, their values - internal or external to their organization, or internal or external to their work - are all one and the same. Many of them speak of believing in working with the whole person and thus allowing your personal traits to fuel your personal and professional goals. All of the organizations are very comfortable, they have a warm and welcoming atmosphere, almost like a home. Paula Kline believes that what you choose to do should never just be a job, it should be your life's work and your purpose.

A Challenge to Democratic Communities

As illustrated in the discussion of each theme, the practice of democratic communities is pursued inside and outside of the organizations and departments in which these women work. Such communities have not been achieved without challenge and they continue to be challenged on a regular basis. I discuss here the challenges that many of the women addressed in the interviews.

Efficiency was an issue that several of the women bring up as a challenges to what they call the collegial, collaborative, or egalitarian structure. In existing in a greater society with time constraints and bureaucracy, it is important that the work produced is efficient and effective. A few of the women have achieved this by ensuring that their team has high standards in terms of their work, while others are still battling the issue internally as co-workers and outside observers continue to question their methodology. Beth has been challenged on the issue of efficiency many times. She shares her thoughts on the issue by saying,

> People tend to say to me, 'we've got to get stuff done we cannot sit around

> all day in meetings' but I don't really believe that in the long run being egalitarian is less effective. I think it is (effective). If everybody agrees on something, you don't have to go back on decisions or explain them to people, they become accepted (Hunter, 06.04.98.).

Although challenged, the majority of the women maintain a solid belief in the legitimacy of their practice as it follows their hopes for democracy.

In the final section of the analysis we examine the ways in which the philosophies and experiences of these women can be applied to education. The goal of teaching social responsibility is examined through each woman's perspective on education and on the idea of service learning.

Applications to Education

June Callwood, Joanne Filon, Elizabeth Hunter, Kim Kidder, Jacque Kistabish, Paula Kline, Patrica Murphy, Willi Nolan and Luciana Soave have a great deal to share on the topic of educating for democratic development. It is through the example they set in working for democratic development that we can see the importance of role modeling when working towards positive change. This same principle applies to education. Recall that education is being examined in this context as both an informal and a formal act that can take place in a classroom, in a home, or anywhere in which learning can take place. In light of this, parents, teachers and community workers are educators and role models in the broadest sense.

In the interviews, I asked each woman to reflect on how she thinks social responsibility can be taught; the discussions which emerge are lengthy. Their reflections have been condensed into five themes under which I expand on their ideas with support from the interviews. As in previous sections, I place each woman's reflections under one or two themes, although her comments may be inclusive of all of them. The theme under which she is placed is most reflective of her comments.

When Luciana is asked how she thinks we could teach social responsibility she points out that it is unrealistic to think that everybody can work in community organizations because the salary is so low. I then clarified my intentions to her and I do the same here for the reader. When asking the question how educators can teach people to take social responsibility, I am in no way insinuating that all people should work in community development. Rather, I am asking how we can encourage people to be socially responsible in whatever choices they make, and in whatever they are doing. I am asking how can we teach people to act for people, how we can teach people to act with the understanding that their actions have consequences.

The five themes which follow are broad titles which encompass the ways in which the participants think social responsibility should be facilitated. The questions which were asked for this section (see Appendix 2, Part D) provoked considerable discussion on the topic of service learning, which is addressed in the final theme.

- Educators should listen, should love and should be open to learn from their students.
- Educators should teach social responsibility in a way that is relevant and receivable to their students.
- Educators should encourage critical thinking, analysis and an open dialogue with their students.
- Educators and students should be visionaries.
- Educators should provide opportunities for students to act upon the issues discussed above and thus to be socially responsible.

Each of the participants are educators, some as mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and sisters; some as facilitators of pubic education forums, coordinators of projects, chairs of boards, workshop animators and most of all as leaders in social action. As I have asserted, it is important here to bear in mind that whether they work as mother, as teacher, or as director,

these women are first and foremost role models of social responsibility. They are human beings acting with human beings in mind.

To achieve such a goal these educators believe in the following five themes;

Educating theme number 1: Educators should listen, should love and should be open to learn from their students.

According to June Callwood and Joanne Filon, social responsibility has to be taught at a very young age. June Callwood believes that we are 'hardwired' before the age of five and in those first five years it is crucial that children are heard, are loved and experience two-way learning (Callwood, 19.03.98.). She thinks that toddlers who are educated in this manner will be bursting to get to school.

Throughout our conversations on education and on social responsibility, many of the woman bring up the issue of confidence building. June Callwood believes that people need confidence to be socially responsible, that they need confidence to be motivated, and even that they need confidence to be kind to one another. "It just means that you feel okay about yourself and you have something left over to give." She calls this 'something' a surplus of goodwill. "Education can be a confidence builder", she stresses, elaborating on the potential of education to bring confidence and thus empowerment through knowledge, communication skills, and through an understanding of how to obtain access to resources. She suggests, that the most important factor is that the education is received by the students, that educators make efforts to teach what can be received, and that educators bring students to a level playing field, based on what they already know (Callwood, 19.03.98.).

Everybody is an expert, according to Jacque Kistabish. She educates her community by empowering her people and helping them to find peace and strength through listening. "I teach by listening. I listen and I see their vision and I help them to see it." Jacque spends

most of her time with women, helping them understand their experiences and their rights and empowering them to work on implementing them (Kistabish, 24.04.98.).

Each of these women work with a different sector of society, and although values may be formed in childhood, the adults that Jacque works with and the teenagers that Kim works with are capable of understanding how to be socially responsible.

Joanne Filon speaks on the issue of teenagers: "I don't think society gives teenagers a place. We label them as all going through a teenage crisis, we put them in a box" (Filon, 01.05.98.). It is these boxes that we place on teenagers, on the elderly, on people in prison, and on prostitutes that prevent us from loving our neighbors, and treating each person like they have a valuable contribution to make. In order to make a valuable contribution, one that is socially responsible, you must feel able. Many of the women speak of being able to pursue action based on the support and love and thus the confidence they receive from people close to them, as discussed earlier in this thesis.

Educating theme number 2: Educators should teach social responsibility in a way that is relevant and receivable to their students.

Patricia Murphy thinks that, in order to teach social responsibility, educators need to make injustice relevant. When she goes around to churches on the West Island she speaks about economic injustice and the effects of social cuts, she tries to facilitate these forums in ways that are relevant to the participants. She does this by stressing the fact that the rise in poverty affects everybody. Paula Kline adds that they want, "to make people realize that it's in all of our interests to be responsible. Just look at the statistics" she insists, "most crime occurs in countries like the States where we have this incredible gap between rich and poor or in other poor countries" (Kline, 08.05.98.). Learning opportunities like these provide people with the chance to reflect on how they participate in society, and once that has been facilitated Paula and Patricia both suggest, educators can

help people to look at our society in terms of the bigger picture.

Kim points out that it requires innovation to speak about ways in which social issues touch us. She thinks it is important that people take ownership for change. Before that can occur, however, they first have to empathize. She suggests that students be encouraged to participate in situations or relationships that engage them with people who are in unjust situations. When social work students come to Tyndale she wants them to understand the racism which her kids face everyday. She exposes them to this racism by encouraging them to get to know the children at the center. Once they come to understand the lives of the children in Little Burgundy the discrimination these individuals face becomes relevant. She says, "When you care about someone and if something happens to them, it bothers you and makes you angry" (Kidder, 15.04.98.) A similar theme arose in the section on motivation, as many of the women are motivated based on a personal or a witnessed experience of injustice.

Educating theme number 3: Educators should encourage critical thinking, analysis and an open dialogue with their students.

Luciana Soave speaks, as do most of the women, about encouraging the critique of existing values which work against equality, democracy and community development. Luciana speaks about how she loves working in community development, albeit resigning that many people wouldn't imagine doing work like hers because of the salary. It bothers her when people haven't recognized that they are motivated by the definitions of success that society holds. On the topic of education she voiced "that we need to critique the value we place on money and how that limits us from reaching our potential and being happy" (Soave, 23.04.98.). She thinks that people should sit down and create their own definition of success.

Willi agrees that "we need to redefine happiness", and suggests that we allow students the

space to find out what really makes them happy (Nolan, 19.03.98.). She further considered how that could be facilitated through discussions that bring forth opposing views, thus allowing us to see alternatives.

Patricia Murphy also agrees with Luciana and Willi. She further emphasizes, "we need to provoke reflections on people's value systems" (Murphy, 08.05.98.). With the goal of democratic development in mind, the participants encourage students to think about what they do, and about its impact. They suggest that students critique why people do the things they do, especially those which they rarely think about, such as what they eat, how they spend money, what they do with their time, and what they choose to pursue. Such reflection forces us to critically examine our daily actions and to ask ourselves whether our choices are socially responsible.

Beth and Joanne speak about their university courses as provoking them to think about themselves, their society, and the power structure which is in place. Beth agrees that "classrooms play an important role in teaching people to think critically" (Hunter, 06.04.98.). Earlier in the discussion she calls critical thinking, "a prerequisite to democracy" (Hunter, 06.04.98.). For that same reason Joanne thinks that schools should insist that students take philosophy courses and moral education courses because she believes that schools should play a greater role in facilitating discussion of these issues. Although Kim learnt a great deal in school about feminism and power, she speaks of her kitchen table as being the ideal setting in which to discuss the existing power structures, and to take ownership of social needs. It was at her kitchen table that she thought about the needs in Little Burgundy and decided to found Youth in Motion.

When discussing this theme it was clear that, while all the women believe that critical thinking is a prerequisite to social responsibility, there is a split between those who assume critical thinking should be taught in the school and those who think that it should be taught in the home. It has been articulated many times by the women that the values which

motivate them to pursue social justice were taught for the most part in the home. Despite this, many of the women have intimated the potential for schools to play an important role in value construction and deconstruction. The role of the school however is not suggested as an alternative to the role of parents or guardians in the home, but as an addition.

Educating theme number 4: Educators and students should be visionaries.

Each woman raises the importance of having a vision, and their descriptions highlight their different perspectives. Beth encourages her staff at ASEED to do visioning exercises as a way in which to set goals for their work. Setting goals on which to take social action are helpful for students to establish their position and their intention to act.

Paula believes that social responsibility can be taught by encouraging the broader vision, by looking at an issue from more than just your perspective. She speaks about how schools in the midst of curriculum reforms and budget cuts need to do this as well. She explains that,

> Schools need to expand people's minds in terms of literature and art, beauty and philosophy. The first thing they cut in education is the philosophy courses, classic art and all that stuff that appeals to your inner goodness and your inner wisdom and that's the first thing to go because now we all have to be technicians. (Kline, 08.05.98.)

If more people articulate and recognize the importance of philosophy and art in education, Paula thinks, students will be given back the tools to create visions.

Willi Nolan expresses the importance of visioning in providing hope.

> We need to provide students with a sense of hope, hope that if they do act it will make a difference. Provide them with more positive role models, more examples that it can work, perhaps even a sense of joy thinking about noble causes. (Nolan, 19.03.98.)

It is with that sense of hope that Willi thinks students will be inspired to take social action.

Jacque speaks of inviting Native elders who have had to envision goals to speak with students. She speaks about the resource base we have in our communities in terms of role models, and how we should incorporate their experiences and ideas into our education.

Without realizing it Jacque articulated the very purpose of this study in her comment about role models presented above. There are people in every community who are working on issues of injustice by taking social action. We can learn invaluable lessons if we can understand their visions and create our own.

Educating theme number 5: Educators should provide opportunities for students to act upon the themes discussed above and thus to be socially responsible.

Beth's comments, which follow, illustrate all of the participants' statements regarding the importance of combining action with reflection.

> I think that just informing people about the problems with the world right now isn't enough, you also have to give them the tools to take action to be more socially responsible ... I think those often go together in being able to create something because people get frustrated if you just tell them 'there are all of these injustices, like pollution and waste'. But if you can say 'here's this project that we are building and this is why they are building it and this is what you can do', they can get involved (Hunter, 10.03.98.).

As stated above, reflection without action is frustrating and stagnating. In order to fully address social responsibility, we must provide opportunities for students to take social action. Many valuable suggestions were raised in the interviews as to activities and outings which can provoke a sense of social responsibility in students. June Callwood suggests that social responsibility should be encouraged in their community, in their home, and in their

school. Examples of this could be as basic as doing little things, she suggests, "by helping someone with their parcels, by being pleasant, by simply acknowledging human beings"(Callwood, 19.03.98.).

Beth thinks that after critical reflections students should be given the freedom to pursue whatever action they are inspired to take. She suggests that students have projects to do that are interactive in the community, like cleaning up Mount Royal in Montréal. She insists that high standards be maintained by the facilitator of the project, because she thinks that if students are taught to value community development and social action then we may raise a generation of kids who take the work she does more seriously.

Joanne suggests that the students should take field trips to hospitals, to shelters, and to prisons. Although such activities allow students the opportunity to witness other realities, they do not often provide students with opportunities to engage in relationships and to understand the power imbalance which lead to such disparities in the first place. In fact, activities such as performing at a nursing home, or making a mural for a soup kitchen could ultimately serve to reinforce stereotypes by tokenizing exposure to marginal populations. In such circumstances, service, like culture, can also be tokenized (hooks, 1994; Ghosh, 1996; Wilson in Samuda et al (Eds.), 1984).

Reflections on service learning

To engage students over an extended period of time in meaningful relationships with people in their community, service learning has been developed. Service learning is defined by Jacoby as,

> A form of experiential education in which students engage in activities that address human and community needs together with structured opportunities intentionally designed to promote student learning and development. (1996, p.5)

For the most part, these experiential education opportunities are implemented as a mandatory component of school requirements. It is believed that, by ensuring the engagement of students in social action over a long period of time, students not only witness but become personally involved with issues surrounding injustice.

I explained the idea of service learning to all of the women, and the responses I received varied in degree of approval. Some women think it is a great idea, others think it has the potential to be valuable if implemented properly, and a few of the women are strongly opposed to the idea altogether.

There has been considerable debate on the issue of service learning and many of the women raised points that have been included in much of the literature on the topic. I articulate here the positions of the women with support from the literature and from the interviews and finally, after the culmination of their ideas, I will invite further reflection.

The strongest expression of opposition to service learning comes from June Callwood, who calls it

> an abuse of young people. I don't think that's how you teach kindness, compassion, or understanding. It's enforced...where I think they can teach compassion is by starting with the school system. Making sure kids treat one another with compassion. They have a fine training ground at recess right there, just to teach empathy, to reinforce empathy over and over again. We don't need to drag them around to stare at poor people, to build their resume. (Callwood, 19.03.98.)

June Callwood raises important points; the first is the need to discuss and practice care in the school before extending our efforts to the larger community.

The second is the importance of empathy in teaching social responsibility and the view that, to develop empathy, one should be engaged in relationships with people from different life circumstances. Although community development organizations may provide a population

that the students could learn from, most public schools are rich in diversity as well.

The last question raised is who benefits from service learning? In the comment above June Callwood suggests that service learning could be a negative experience for the student and for the organization and from it the student may seek recognition for services rendered, without an investment of care. Kleinbard addressees care as an essential component and mutual benefit of service learning that surpasses the credit received for token gestures (Kleinbard in Schine (Ed.), 1997).

Tokenizing service in the school system could prove to be counterproductive as June Callwood states. If the student hasn't had the opportunity to probe into why there are community development organizations in their neighborhood and what that means in terms of the power distribution in that community, the experience may not be as meaningful as it has the potential to be. For this reason preliminary and ongoing reflection during service learning courses are essential if participants are to benefit holistically from the experience. Beth Hunter agrees with June's concern, "It would be useless if everybody just goes off and cuts vegetables in a soup kitchen without really knowing why (the soup kitchen exists)" (Hunter, 06.04.98.).

Ward (1997) states that the goal of service learning is identity development, which coincides with my claim that, to develop democratically, we need to focus on human development. He also states that students should, "recognize the need to become more familiar with the practice and the values, attitudes, and beliefs embedded in other cultures" (p.142). In the case of service learning, however, it should be important to ensure that the organizations, like students, can also benefit from the experience.

Many of the women interviewed articulate this concern and, in fact, express a frustration with the fact that society and educators assume that, because they are small in size and influence, extra human resources would be beneficial. On the contrary, according to many

of the women, having students could in fact be extra work unless a structure and a program is set up for them in advance.

Kim Kidder recently completed an intensive study for which she interviewed at schools, in organizations and with teens to try to make their integration into Tyndale St. Georges a mutually beneficial experience. With the teen integration program set up Kim loves having student volunteers. She thinks that Tyndale and other services of that nature are perfect places for students to be placed. She actually has had students come from a private school in Montréal for the last 10 years as part of their community service placements and she tells me that the volunteers this year, to their surprise, loved the work and the community so much that even after their required hours had been completed they continue to come once a week.

Joanne Filon doesn't think she could provide as meaningful an experience at Greenpeace. She feels that students should be placed somewhere in which they work with the people served by the organization. "At Greenpeace", the majority of the work is done from a desk so "students would only do faxing and photocopying" (Filon, 01.05.98.) This contrast between the examples provided by Kim and Joanne, continues to build as, ultimately, there is a common enthusiasm about accepting service learning students from women who could engage students with the community. The women who deal more with the administrative side of service in their organization, are less enthusiastic about having students work for them.

Many of the women who want to accept students, and even those who do not, think that service learning has the potential to be positive and fulfilling. Notwithstanding, many participants question what is meant by service and how it would be possible to institutionalize doing good deeds. Willi Nolan thinks shoveling someone's driveway should be considered service, as should taking a child of a single parent to the park.

In order to address the concerns of the participants, recall from Chapter 2 Vanderkooy's two options (the bureaucratic model and the freedom model) for implementing service learning in the school (Ontario grads, 1998, B5). Implementing the freedom model might satisfy the women interviewed as it provides the students with the opportunity to pursue their interests, on their terms.

The final and most pressing concern of all of the women except Kim and Luciana is that recent implementations of service learning are mandatory. Jacque believes, "you should never force. Give (the students) the liberty to choose"(Kistabish, 24.04.98.). Paula and Patricia both agree that such work should be voluntary. Joanne thinks that educators should, "highly promote it, but not make it mandatory"(Filon, 01.05.98.). Willi, who is suspicious of the idea suggests "if it is mandatory then it must be given credit"(Nolan, 19.03.98.). Luciana and Kim believe so strongly in the program and its potential to bring new ideas and energy into their organizations that they believe that making the program mandatory is just fine. Kim qualifies her acceptance of the structure by saying , "as long as it is differentiated from people doing community service because they committed petty crimes"(Kidder, 15.04.98.). Both of the women point out that many courses that they see as less useful are mandatory so there is no reason why service learning, which they see as highly beneficial, shouldn't be mandatory as well. Luciana recalled that she had to take mandatory moral education courses in Italy and she has learned social lessons from them that she has never forgotten, "like passing the seat to an elderly person on the bus"(Soave, 23.04.98.).

Service learning has been discussed as a way in which to implement action into the curriculum but as the above debate reveals, service learning is flexible and should be constructed in a way that is mutually fulfilling for the student and for the organization.

It is clear that the issue of service learning is highly debatable, and the women interviewed provided ideas and reflections worth considering. Ideally, however, service learning would

not be required at all if students learned care and empathy in their homes and their families and then *chose* to volunteer in their community.

An alternative to service learning and an additional suggestion from the women was for students to participate in programs like Canada World Youth and Katimavik. Canada World Youth places students in action-orientated programs around the world, and Katimavik places students in such programs within Canada. Both programs last for one year, during which time students are engaged in community development, living with a local family, and working with a team of other students. Thousands of students take part in programs like these each year and they prove to be highly worthwhile, enriching their lives immeasurably with life-experience and meaningful relationships (Lawson (Ed.), 1969; Schine (Ed.), 1997; Wade, 1997).

Returning to the slogan, "think globally, act locally", the idea of service learning is valuable as it works to strengthen the communities in which we exist. If people all over the world took social responsibility for their own communities, development in its traditional model would be unnecessary. Such a goal is attainable according to the participants. The women in this study have suggested that in order to teach social responsibility, educators must listen, love and learn with students, provide learning that is relevant and receivable, encourage critical reflection and dialogue, create visions and expose students to visionaries, and finally provide opportunities to be involved in social action.

Conclusions

The participants of this study are role models and leaders in many ways. As parents, as educators, as community organizers, and as political lobbyists, they play a significant role in shaping our society's consciousness. When asked how they lead they said they listen, they support, they encourage, they bring people, ideas and communities together, and most of all they respect.

This chapter began by situating women in development and recognizing the fact that many of the women studied are not given recognition or support as leaders in the greater society. This lack of validation has to do with the fact that women are taken for granted in terms of their contribution of care. It is therefore interesting to question why and how these women continue to pursue social needs with such conviction. Understanding the motivations, the philosophical foundation, and the way each woman fosters democratic communities while learning from each woman's reflections and ideas for education, I was able to see that many similar threads run through each issue. A review of all of the findings reveals the intertwined threads.

Each woman in this study is pursuing a need which has arisen in society. The needs range from gardening a fallow plot of land on the South Shore of Montréal to helping refugees with immigration, housing and employment issues. Five themes reflect the motivating factors with which the participants chose to pursue social and environmental needs through community development. They are as follows: the women were loved and encouraged and thus developed confidence, the women experienced or were witnesses to injustice, the women had a role model who practiced justice in their everyday experiences, the women participated in social action, and finally many women were motivated by a religious sense of duty.

Based on their lived experience, the women constructed philosophies with regards to power and democracy. Having been motivated by an understanding of injustice, all of the women believe in working for justice, and that is reflected in their philosophies and in their practice. Recall that, in Chapter 2, power was discussed as a resource of energy to be shared amongst all people, and that a democracy is a society in which power and responsibility and resources are shared. These definitions were reinforced by the participants. They collectively believe that in a democracy citizens are free to engage in meaningful participation; their voice is treated as equal.

All of the women interviewed in this study believe in the practice of democracy and thus they work with that goal in mind, both in and out of their organizations. Five themes reflect the practices of these women. The themes of practice are as follows; the organizations have a broad vision, and high standards with the goal of sustainability in mind, the Board of Directors is representative of the community, the staff is small and power and responsibility is shared, the organization stresses the importance of positive interpersonal dynamics and finally, the organization is flexible and open to change. Although the women are often questioned on the efficiency of such ideals, they favor the practice of democracy as it prioritizes people over product. In addition, most of the participants are active outside of their workplace(s) in community coalitions and as facilitators of public education forums which work to strengthen communities through granting a voice and opportunities to citizens.

All of the women interviewed are educators for social responsibility in their families, in their workplaces, in the communities, coalitions and on the Boards they chair. In the interest of understanding how to educate for greater social responsibility the women were given the opportunity to reflect on education. Five themes were created which express their input. They are as follows: educators should listen, love and learn with their students, educators should teach in a manner that is relevant and receivable, educators should encourage critical reflection, educators should help students to create visions, and finally educators should provide students with opportunities to take social action. On the issue of social action the debate on service learning was discussed in great detail for its positive and questionable traits. The most positive trait is the potential of service learning to create sustainable communities in which citizens can value one another's contribution and thus work together toward a common goal. Such potential would certainly be easily realized if the identity development that service learning strives for was accomplished early in the home or in the school. If that were the case, feminist pedagogues trust that students would be active in their communities on their own terms.

In the words of these women we have heard what motivates them, what they now believe in, and what they practice, revealing what we need to focus on when educating for social responsibility. All of these women have taught us great lessons about developing more democratic societies. From them we have learnt the following.

People need role models to give them the confidence to be able to listen, to be able to love their neighbors, and to be able to envision a better world. As their role models work with community in mind and as they value human potential, people will be inspired to have similarly fulfilling experiences.

Chapter 5: Conclusions

Introduction

The objective of this study is to understand, through the experiences of women leaders in social action, how to educate for democratic development. This chapter brings together the theoretical frameworks and the discussion of the findings in order to answer the questions posed throughout the study on teaching social responsibility and social action.

I begin by evaluating my methodology and then drawing connections between the theoretical framework and the findings, followed by a discussion of the emerging issues, and suggested directions for further research. Finally, to conclude I acknowledge the benefits of the study.

Evaluation of the methodology

As the study comes to a close I feel obligated to critique my methodology and the biases it imposed on my findings. I first discuss these biases, followed by some additional issues which affected the study.

One of the most obvious limitations to this study is my personal investment, and interest in the subject. Although a motivating element which fuels my commitment to the study, my investment imposes a biased perspective to the analysis. As a researcher I am aware of the risk of forcing the data to fit my own hypothesis. Understanding this, I do my best to seek out the seeds of truth that lie somewhere between the participants' intentions and my expectations.

A number of oversights were made during the selection of my research participants. As this stage occurred very early on in my research, many of these oversights can be attributed to

my inexperience in the field of qualitative and phenomenological study. Based on my current, and more developed understanding, I recognize that I eagerly sought out too many participants. Part of the motivation for building such a large group was the fear that the group would seem incomplete. I also neglected to consider the practicality of the research sites. I extended my research to include both Montréal and Toronto based on a personal admiration for specific leaders in Toronto. Because of my lack of knowledge for and involvement in the Toronto's social justice community, however, I was not able to balance the number of participants I had in that city with those from Montréal. As a result of my selection, of the nine women from eight organizations, only two of these are from Toronto.

Reflecting on my interviews themselves, I regret that I was unable to conduct some of the interviews in French. All of the participants speak very good English and were comfortable doing so for me, but because a few of them speak French as their first language, I do regret not having been able to conduct the interviews in French. I appreciate the co-operation and understanding demonstrated by all the women interviewed and I hope to be able to meet them again for a conversation in their first language.

Finally, based on my lack of time an important step remains unfulfilled. In sharing with me their experiences, philosophies and practices, the women that I interviewed agreed to disclose some very personal information about their lives. I had every intention of sharing my analysis and discussion with them prior to the writing and submission of this thesis to ensure that I had been true to their verbal intentions (Maguire, 1995), although this step was never suggested to the participants. Because of time constraints, however, I have opted not to share my discussion with them before submission of the study. However, I have promised that I would share the final thesis with them once completed, submitted and evaluated.

Summary of Key Findings

Throughout the discussion, many of the themes and issues introduced by critical, feminist and engaged pedagogies were addressed. It would be difficult to suggest that the women collaboratively or even individually believe in and practice one framework more evidently than the others. All three frameworks can be identified in each woman's contributions.

An acknowledgment that *critical thinking* is the basis for the pedagogical framework was encountered in the women's recommendations for educational applications. Although it was not clearly articulated in the first two thinking units, I believe that critical thinking is utilized for motivation when an individual is engaged in social action, and in practice when making collaborative decisions in an organization. A compelling basis for this belief is the observation that their very participation in a marginalized activity calls for a critical perspective. *Participation in social action* is clearly a part of these women's daily lives and is identified as a practice which motivates the women to pursue their current work. The women also state that in teaching social responsibility, students should be given opportunities to participate in community development. Most of the women believe in the core principals of service learning. Freire (1997) suggests that students be encouraged to express *compassion* and to make special efforts to ensure that the needs of the community are being met in its transformation. The participants speak of compassion when concerned with maintaining positive interpersonal dynamics in their organizations and ensuring representation of their communities, while in educational applications it is suggested that educators should love and listen to their students.

Feminist pedagogy states that empowerment should be achieved through *self-reflective analysis* (Greene, 1988; Luke & Gore (Eds.), 1992; Witherell & Noddings, 1991). Although this was not explicitly stated in any of the thinking units, this point can be seen as being indirectly addressed through personal motivation as many of the women were given

the love and support to pursue their personal interests with confidence. Self-reflective analysis as described by feminist pedagogy is pursued through voice and narrative as a means of *confidence building.* Confidence, much more than self-reflective analysis, is supported by the women as an important factor in their personal motivation- it justifies their pursuit of high standards, shared power and positive interpersonal dynamics, and could be said to be inclusive as a goal for all educational applications. None of the women speak of using the tools of *voice and narrative* although within their practices they speak of valuing the opinions of each of their coworkers and encourage each person to pursue their creative interests as they themselves do. Stronger support for these tools can be observed in the responses received from the women after our sessions together. All of the women were grateful to participate in this study. Elizabeth told me she looked forward to me coming. Willi said after our first interview that our discussion was going to help her with her day and Luciana speaks about how interesting it has been for her to link personal motivations to her practices. From their reactions I hope that the women have come to appreciate self-analysis through assertion of voice and narrative, viewing this as a fulfilling and empowering experience.

The actualization of self before others is a priority of feminist pedagogy and thus is carried into engaged pedagogy (hooks, 1994). This is not discussed by the women. Although the women clearly state the importance of *role modeling* in their own personal motivation, it is not clear whether the women ensure their *personal well-being over the well-being of others.* Many of the women speak of being burnt-out at times, tired, and needing to take better care of themselves. Although this reveals that the women in many cases do not ensure their personal well being over the well being of others, it is a testament to the fact that self-actualization may be achieved through the pursuit of others' well being. Recalling the discussion and support of Belenky et al's (1986) work at the beginning of Chapter 4, many women achieve empowerment through the empowerment of others. The participants of my study are examples of the fact that it is not necessary to be perfectly self-actualized to be positive role models and leaders of social and environmental justice. They are working

with their humanness and not necessarily their self-actualized personality in order to achieve personal empowerment for themselves and in others. This finding is in fact closer to critical pedagogy than feminist pedagogy as its emphasis on empowerment focuses on participation in community transformation.

The three theoretical frameworks are supported by the participants in various degrees. Critical pedagogy, feminist pedagogy and engaged pedagogy are all given voice while being questioned by the reflections and actions of the women interviewed.

Emerging Issues

A number of issues have emerged as being central to the study, in terms of this study's goal of seeking to understand how to educate for democratic development; particularly those of critical thinking and community participation, empathy and care, confidence and self-actualization and role modeling and socialization. Within each of the following sections I summarize the importance of these issues.

Critical Thinking and Community Participation

Critical, feminist and engaged pedagogies see critical thinking as an essential component in empowerment as it is the basis on which to deconstruct current distributions of power. Critical thinking is further reinforced by the participants in their practice of democratic communities and their ideas about education.

Community participation is emphasized in critical pedagogy as another essential component to empowerment. In discussing their motivation, practice, and ideas about educational applications, the majority of the women suggest community participation. According to the participants, community participation has the potential to be a valuable tool for understanding social and environmental needs and participating in community transformation with those needs in mind.

Confidence and self-actualization

Confidence emerged in this study as a crucial component in educating for democratic development. Critical pedagogues believe that confidence will result from critical thinking and participating in community development. Feminist and engaged pedagogues believe on the other hand, that confidence is the result of self-reflective analysis and therefore, in order to work towards political empowerment, gaining confidence through self-actualization must be given priority.

This tension is not resolved in this study. All of the women stressed confidence as a motivating factor, a practical tool, and an educational application. It is not clear, however, whether the participants believe that self-actualization and confidence are necessary before participating in social action and the empowerment of others. Through their example it can be concluded that the women often pursue the well-being of others before their own personal well-being.

Empathy and Care

As the study began unfolding, empathy and care were the first issues to emerge for me. Although not given considerable emphasis in the theoretical frameworks these two values became essential prerequisites for democratic development. All of the women, without prompting, speak about how they thought that the empathy and care that is given to people, regardless of age or gender, is most important in building confidence and teaching social responsibility.

As the participants stress the importance of empathy and care it became clear to me that it was with these two values that the women pursue their own work. This was proven true in

their discussions of practice, all of these women engage in empathy through the work they do, and in the manner that they are working. Moreover, they are play roles as educators of empathy in their homes, churches, organizations, community coalitions and public education forums.

Socialization and Role modeling

In this study the profound impact parents have in value construction and practical applications is identified. Parents are primarily socializing agents in their children's lives and they role-model their attitudes, beliefs and practices for their children.

Critical thinking, participation in community development, confidence, self-actualization, empathy, and care are all values that are nurtured through socialization and role modeling. When discussing their motivation, many of the women speak of having parents as role models of social action, they all speak about being role models in their practice and ensuring that teachers are positive role models for their students. Engaged pedagogy stresses the importance of self-actualized role models in education, but it remains to be determined whether the women studied believe that their role models were self-actualized.

Implications for Further Research

Although many questions have been answered in this study many new questions have also surfaced. In the following section, I discuss the potential this study holds for further research.

1. **Self-actualization**: In this study self-actualization emerged and remains unresolved in terms of its necessity for social action. In a further study the women studied for this thesis could be interviewed extensively using narratives, to actually find out their life stories. In this study the researcher could learn whether the women consider themselves to be self-actualized, whether they considered their role models to be self-actualized and how important they think self-actualization is to the work they are engaged in.

2. **Participation**: Throughout the study the issue of participation emerged as important in educating for democratic development. The level of participation of the clients of a service, or the members of a community, can be evaluated as a means of gauging the effectiveness of a program and a method for obtaining greater insight into the policies and practices being applied in various organizations. For this reason I think that my study could be further developed by interviewing the clients of the various organizations to hear their perspectives on the way in which their needs are being met. This extension could serve to benefit the participants, the women interviewed, and the organizations as a whole.

3. **Service Learning**: In this study the negative and positive aspects of service learning are addressed. A fitting follow up to the discussion surrounding this issue would be to construct a study based on the suggestions made by the participants. The suggestions could be presented to and revised to meet the needs of administrators, teachers, students and leaders at community development organizations. Following the implementation of the program, an evaluation could be conducted analyzing the benefit and for the long terms affects on the student, the school community and the organization(s).

4. **Parenting**: In this study all of the women stated the undeniably important role of parents when compared to teachers in educating for democratic development. Considering the importance of the role, parents are provided with minimal training and resources to support them in raising their children. This study could serve as a stepping stone for investigating resources for potential and practising parents while assessing whether future or current parents are in need of and open to courses on parenting for democratic development.

5. **Male leaders in Social Action**: The women interviewed are motivated to pursue

community development for the many reasons identified in Chapter 4. They are motivated by valued experiences and thus try to practice what they've learned in their families and in their workplaces. It would be interesting to conduct a similar study with male leaders in community development to compare and contrast their motivations, practices and philosophies. This study would respond to a concern that many of the women articulated and that is the socialization of boys. By acknowledging different socialization methods, and their repercussions on the values and practices of girls and boys, recommendations could be made for greater equity in terms of educating at home and at school.

6. **Invisible Poverty**: More than once in this study the women interviewed have confirmed my belief that there is a poverty of empathy in our society, which could be a factor in the politics of their recognition. Specifically, what institutions promote or inhibit our sense of empathy in daily life? How is this related to the value and recognition we attribute to those who care for others? It would be interesting to study this phenomenon by observing and engaging in dialogue with citizens and those involved in community development on the issue of whether or not Canadians believe that they are empathetic, and what value they place on care-giving in their own lives. This study could be done comparatively with other countries.

7. **Personal narratives for political change**: Through acknowledging and actively addressing the personal reflections of nine women leading social and environmental justice organizations in Toronto and Montréal I find myself validated in my own pursuits. I believe that further studies which promote the assertion of voice and strengthen the use of personal experience, philosophies and practice can assist in empowerment for political change.

Conclusions

This thesis is of benefit for its findings, for the voice and recognition it gives to the participants, and finally for making development an accessible practice. Each and every one of us are educators in various contexts, and therefore we participate in education, in development, and in the construction and maintenance of democratic institutions. Through this realization we all become active, to various degrees, in political, social, and personal liberation.

By acknowledging and acting upon the fact that we are all witness to, but not all principal actors in, injustice, many questions have been answered, and many new questions have emerged. Through this qualitative and phenomenological examination of women leaders in social action we identify ways in which to address global, social and personal poverty. Based upon the frameworks of critical, feminist and engaged pedagogy, and the discussions with the women themselves, we are able to identify educational tools to nurture people's instincts to recognize their and others' oppression, such that they act for empancipatory change.

Critical thinking and participation in community development; confidence and self-actualization; empathy and care; and finally socialization and role-modeling have all emerged as the key issues for educating people for democratic development. With these tools, people can be empowered to make empowering choices.

Many of the women interviewed spoke about learning their greatest lessons about the world, and about themselves at their kitchen tables. It was at the kitchen table that Kim Kidder planned to open Youth in Motion, and that Luciana Soave operated the Québec Multi-Ethnic Association for Handicapped People. It is at the kitchen table that many of these lessons continue to be taught. The inspirational leaders of this study paint a picture of possibility, and from their stories we can now see how the personal is the political.

Appendix 1: Consent Form

McGill University
Research Consent Form

Dear Potential Participant,

I am a Master's student in the Faculty of Education in the Department of Culture and Values in Education. I am studying the experiences and philosophies of women leaders in grassroots social action to fulfill the requirements of my Master's thesis.

The potential benefits of this study are encouraging and inspiring. By recognizing the work, the experiences and the philosophies of women like you, in grassroots organizations, I hope to bring to light currently invisible Canadian role models.

I hope to carry out three interviews with you, I realize that this may be an inconvenience in terms of your time but it is my hope that the benefits of our discussions and the knowledge that will be passed on as a result of them will outweigh the inconvenience. As I intend to audio-tape these interviews, I would like your permission to include the comments, ideas and observations made in your interview in my study. Please read the following consent agreement and indicate your wishes. Please sign either A or B.

A. I hereby consent to have my contribution to your research used for the purpose of your studies in education. I understand that the nature of the study is such that it requires that my name, position and organization be revealed in the final submission. I understand that at any time during the study I am free to withdraw from participation and will remain anonymous. I understand that I am not obliged to consent to this.

Name: Date:

B. I do not consent to having my interviews used in this manner.

Name: Date:

Appendix 2: Interview Questions

Part A: Background of Organization and Experience in the field

1 a) Tell me about your organization(s)/ or about your work.
b) Who directly benefits from your work?
c) Would you consider it to be in the realm of community development / social justice, activism?
d) If so, what does community development/ social justice, activism mean to you?

2 a) How long have you been involved with community development, social justice, activism?
b) How long have you been involved with your organization(s), or how long have your organization(s) existed (if participant is founder)?

3 a) How would you describe your role in the organization(s)?
b) How has your role(s) changed over the years?

4 a) What are the long term goals of the organization(s)?
b) How do you work to meet these goals?

5 How have you and your organization achieved visibility and recognition?
b) Was that challenging?
c) Are there any other challenges that you have experienced in your field that you would like to speak about?

6. a) Where do you think society needs to change the most?
b) How does your organization fit into your vision of building a better society?

Part B: Motivation and Socialization

1. What motivates you to do the work that you do?
2. a) Is it true that you are motivated by a strong sense of social responsibility?
b) How did you come to construct this priority for your life?

3. a) What values were you raised to believe are important?
b) How were you taught about these values?

c) Do you practice them?

4. a) How would you define success?
   b) Is that the definition of success you were taught?
   c) Have you achieved your definition of success?

5. a) Who has been inspirational in your life?
   b) How have they impacted you?

6. Do you think that your gender has had an impact on your definition of success, on your values and on your pursuits?

Part C: Personal Philosophy

1. **POWER**

a) What role do you think power plays in our society?
b) When did you come to realize society's power distribution? Can you tell me about that realization?
c) To what extent would you say that your work is about redistributing power?
d) What is your philosophy on power?
e) What challenges have you met in implementing this philosophy?

2. **FEMINISM**

a) What does being a feminist mean to you?
b) Do you consider yourself to be a feminist? Why or why not?

3. **DEMOCRACY**

a) What does democracy mean to you?
b) What values do you associate with democracy?
c) Is your work about furthering democratic values or it is something outside democracy?

Part D: Impact and Application

1. a) How do you want your work to impact others?
   b) Do you think such an impact has been made?
   c) If not, what impact have you made?

2. a) Do you consider yourself to be an educator?
   b) If yes, what do you teach?
   c) If no, do you feel comfortable being called a role model?
   d) How would you define role model and the kind of role model that you are?

3. How do you think we can encourage more people to take social responsibility?

4. What role can education play?

5. a) Have you heard of service learning?
   b) What are your perceptions of such work and its impact on social change?

ON LEADERSHIP

a) How would you define leadership?
b) Do you consider yourself to be a leader?
c) What kind of leader are you?

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