



Britain and the World

Constructing National Identity in Canadian and Australian Classrooms

The Crown of Education

STEPHEN JACKSON



Britain and the World

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CHAPTER 1

Introduction

In a 1966 appeal to the Ontario Department of Education, Dorothy McGuire, from the Christian Women's Council on Education of Metropolitan Toronto, opined that "Canada has been steadily losing its image as a British country."¹ She blamed this loss of a British identity on the massive and mostly non-British post-World War II immigration program into Canada as well as the increase in the French-Canadian population. She argued that immigrants were still mostly loyal to their original homeland because "patriotism [had] not been impressed upon Canadians as much as it should have been."² English-speaking students, who McGuire asserted were more loyal to Canada, could naturally be expected to "cherish the symbolism of the Union Jack and Red Ensign which is a part of their heritage." But minority groups needed to be educated more completely on Canada's history.³ For McGuire, schools were the site at which the intellectual elite could construct and instill into young people a shared vision of Canadian society. If the education system did not convey a strong spirit of nationalism, then Canadians would not be able to achieve the "national destiny."⁴ She recommended a strengthened system of religious education for Ontario schools that would lay a moral foundation for a unified Canadian nationalism, bridging the gap between the various cultural groups that composed Canadian society.

McGuire's appeal to the Ontario Department of Education was a reactionary response to a major transition within the English-speaking

provinces of Canada. In the 1960s, the political and cultural relationship with Great Britain faded in its significance to their sense of national identity. By the late 1960s, McGuire's attachment to Britishness was out of step with the predominant educational thinking of the day. A major commission on education produced an influential report just two years later with a profoundly different viewpoint. According to *Living and Learning*, a central task of educators was to aid the "Canadian struggle to establish a national identity reflecting its multi-cultural nature and its bicultural base," an identity that would transcend "the bounds of narrow nationalism."⁵ Educators rejected Britishness in favor of a multicultural approach that would, at least in theory, celebrate the many different peoples of Canada rather than focus exclusively on the Anglo-Saxon heritage.

Educators through the 1950s promoted an exclusivist Anglocentrism as the basis for the Canadian national identity. They believed the imperial relationship was crucial for Canadian international prestige and relevance. But years of immigration by non-Britons, the accelerated pace of decolonization within the British Empire, and a major nationalist surge by French Canadians prompted the Canadian federal government to officially declare itself a multicultural nation in 1971. This represented an official acceptance of cultural diversity within Canadian society and ended overt appeals for cultural assimilation. This was a remarkably swift change for a state that had not even developed a formula for national citizenship until 1947, relying instead on the concept of British subjecthood for most of its existence.⁶ But this rapid construction of a new identity was not unique to the Canadian experience. At much the same time, Australia went through a similar metamorphosis from an Anglocentric identity to one of official multiculturalism. *Constructing National Identity in Canadian and Australian Classrooms: The Crown of Education* traces the development and eventual abandonment of the exclusivist and assimilationist identity centered on Britishness that had been at the heart of Victorian and Ontarian education in the mid-twentieth century.

Looking at this shift in national identity through the lens of education and within a comparative framework, this project addresses several critical questions regarding the cultural decolonization of Canada and Australia from the 1930s until the late 1970s. How did educators and government officials maintain and reinforce Anglocentrism and the imperial attachment in the 1940s and 1950s? And, by the 1960s and 1970s what forces drove the abandonment of Britishness as a critical component of the national identity? How did the educational establishment navigate the

critical transition from Anglocentrism to multiculturalism, and in what ways did other actors in these societies contest, debate, and ultimately define this movement? Answering these questions helps us understand how Canadian and Australian national identities were constructed and contested in the critical decades from the Second World War through the 1970s.

Educational institutions offer a unique window into issues of national identity in settler societies since they were designed specifically to protect, defend, and reproduce views on the world deemed acceptable by policymakers. In the words of an Ontario Royal Commission on education published in 1950: "Education is everybody's business."⁷ Ever since education became the responsibility of the state, it has been a primary means by which policymakers and intellectuals promote their notions of national identity.⁸ As the locus of national identity slowly shifted away from the concept of Britishness, this was powerfully evident in educational curricula, textbooks, and other materials that had to redefine how to teach, in a literal sense, what it meant to be Canadian or Australian.

Although educational systems often declare themselves value-free, historians have demonstrated that one purpose of public education is to produce "a national ethos, and an incontrovertible sense of political orthodoxy."⁹ In Canada and Australia the schools were a critical site at which the intellectual elite constructed and disseminated an officially sanctioned version of the national identity. Textbooks, curricula, and educational publications provide a valuable lens for historians to view the evolution of national self-understanding.

Primary and secondary educational sources document this historically significant transition away from Britishness in the colonies of white settlement. The production of texts for primary and secondary schools was a complex process that occurred at the intersection of political, intellectual, and cultural constructions of the national identity. There are few places where officials in Canada and Australia were quite as explicit in defining the national identity as in textbooks and curricula meant for primary and secondary students. Educators and the political officials who approved their work transmitted the normative cultural ideals they found essential to pass down to the next generation. Educational materials, therefore, contained an officially sanctioned worldview for students deemed necessary for the preservation of the Australian and Canadian way of life.

The centrality of education to the process of national identity formation in the mid-twentieth century British World is widely acknowledged,

but as yet there has been no full-length study on this important subject. Jatinder Mann's recent work examines the Australian and Canadian transition towards multiculturalism, and he acknowledges that education was a crucial component of the national identity in Canada.¹⁰ But he does not address Australian educational initiatives in his work. José Igartua argues in his work *The Other Quiet Revolution* that English Canadians, in the face of the French Canadian Quiet Revolution, swiftly abandoned their previous Anglocentric ethnic form of nationalism in the 1960s, replacing it with a sense of civic nationalism as a foundational principle.¹¹ Both of these works raise important questions about the nature of Britishness after the Second World War, and they hold implications for the rest of the British Dominions. This project builds upon these insights by offering the first book-length study of the rise and demise of Britishness in education as a key site of national identity construction in Canada and Australia.

Canada and Australia are comparable not only because of the historical parallels in their development as colonies but also because they responded similarly to the collapse of the British Empire by officially designating themselves "multicultural nations," thereby resolving the identity crisis brought on in part by that collapse.¹² Because education in both places was a provincial or state responsibility, this study focuses on the province of Ontario and the state of Victoria as case studies of the challenge posed by the decline of a British-affiliated identity for the wider English-speaking communities of the two countries.¹³ Ontario and Victoria offer a valuable basis for comparison because of their large population size, which gave them a high degree of influence over the production of educational materials in Canada and Australia, and because of several other critical historical parallels, which together make the comparison of these locations appropriate and meaningful.

Ontario and Victoria were the second most populous territories in their countries. Both were dominated by a major urban center, Toronto in Ontario and Melbourne in Victoria, with a large and sparsely populated hinterland. For the time period under consideration, Ontario was the largest English-speaking province in Canada and the center of educational publication.¹⁴ Many publishers of textbooks focused on creating books that met Ontarian standards, and these materials were often used in schools throughout Canada. Victoria was also a major market for textbook publishers in Australia, and, along with New South Wales, considered one of the leading states in Australian education.¹⁵ Detailed analysis of textbooks is central to several chapters of the book, so the large population in

both Ontario and Victoria and hence their importance to textbook production and marketing in Canada and Australia make these two territories crucial case studies for an understanding of educational developments in these nations as a whole.

Ontario and Victoria also shared numerous postwar historical similarities that revealed important parallels in the ways they used and ultimately discarded Britishness as an important component of their national identities. In the postwar era, Ontario and Victoria made education a major priority, as evidenced by the rapid rise in postwar educational expenditure.¹⁶ Both territories were major centers for postwar immigration, necessitating both an increase in the physical capacity of educational systems as well as attention to the special needs of non-British immigrant students. Since many of these new Canadians and Australians were not of British origin, their presence in the educational systems challenged officials and educators to alter the assimilationist policies that had promoted conformity to an Anglocentric ideal.

Critically, as Chaps. 4 and 5 show, both Ontario and Victoria experimented with new forms of religious education during and immediately after the Second World War, modeled in part on similar legislation occurring in England, to correct a perceived problem of moral decay. Their choices to make religious education compulsory were steeped in the rhetoric of Britishness and proved enormously controversial. The debates surrounding religious instruction in Ontario and Victoria over the next three decades reveal critical perspectives on issues of national identity and illuminate the changing understanding of Britishness in Canadian and Australian society.

This project supports the findings of British World scholarship that view the relationship with Britain and British culture as an essential component of the development of Canadian and Australian identity.¹⁷ The development of the British Dominions across the globe created a transnational system centered on the ideal of Britishness.¹⁸ The mass migration of Britons to Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa created a series of communities with shared traditions and cultures. This scholarship has challenged older interpretations that viewed the relationship with Britain as an impediment to a unique and stable national identity.¹⁹ Importantly, British World historians assert that the rise of colonial nationalism was not a direct contradiction to a concomitant sense of Britannic nationalism.²⁰

British World scholarship on national identities and shared cultures in Australia and Canada often focuses on the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries and has revealed the intense attachment between the Dominions and Britain on a number of economic, social, cultural, racial, and gendered lines. The events following the Second World War, however, remain understudied. This project demonstrates that educators continued to adapt and redefine the meaning of Britishness to suit their own needs in the postwar era. This is particularly evident when looking at the rise of Protestant religious education following the Second World War. Fearful of the collapse of democracy, educators in both Canada and Australia asserted that a non-denominational Protestant religion represented the moral core of the nation and made it a mandated subject of study for the first time. Canadian and Australian educators studied for this project embraced an identity centered both on their own particular location and on a wider community of Britons until the 1960s.

The comparative perspective adopted for this project reveals striking parallels between the responses of intellectuals and government officials in Canada and Australia to the diminution of British power following the Second World War. From the Depression years through the 1950s educators espoused a collective identity centered on cultural and political attachment to Britain. This attachment perpetuated the presumption that the true citizen of Canada and Australia was white, Protestant, and culturally British. Educational institutions, textbooks, and curricula reflected these assumptions and promoted assimilation to the normative cultural ideal. Non-British groups were often stereotyped, marginalized, or simply omitted from educational materials.

Beginning in the 1960s, however, educators began to call into question many of the Anglocentric assumptions of previous generations. This was the result of several changes both internal and external to Canadian and Australian societies. Both countries initiated ambitious immigration programs that brought hundreds of thousands of non-Britons into their societies.²¹ Although in the 1940s and 1950s immigration was limited to Europeans, it was expanded in the 1960s to include non-whites. These groups began to challenge the educational establishment with demands for cultural recognition and for some concessions to their unique educational needs. In Canada, the other major historical event was the Quiet Revolution in Quebec. The dramatic rise in nationalism within the French Canadian population threatened the

stability of the entire country, and schools across Canada faced difficult questions regarding the treatment of French Canadian history and students.

In addition to the major internal changes occurring within Canadian and Australian society, the British Empire collapsed. Begun in the late 1940s with the partition of and withdrawal from India and Pakistan, decolonization accelerated in the 1960s.²² Of major concern to Canadians and Australians was the rapid increase in Commonwealth membership, which had previously been reserved for the colonies of white settlement alone. Above all, however, they worried about the inability of Britain to offer either economic or military security as well as the desire of the British government to join Europe rather than preserve and promote the Empire.²³ The diplomatic and political aspects of decolonization are relatively well known, but as Jordanna Bailkin argues in her study of Britain *The Afterlife of Empire*, “decolonization could also be deeply personal,” occurring in the quotidian structures of everyday life such as education.²⁴

As decolonization gained momentum in the 1950s and 1960s, Canadian and Australian educators were faced with the difficulty of maintaining an identity centered on a British Empire that was disappearing before their very eyes. Both Ontario and Victoria quickly began to alter their curricula and textbooks in similar ways, though Victorian educators were far more reticent about abandoning an identity centered on Britishness. The solution educators eventually developed involved two avenues of reform. One was to initiate measures that removed the assimilationist—and frequently discriminatory—emphasis on a normative Anglocentric cultural ideal. This took the form of weeding out stereotyping in textbooks, introducing new curricula emphasizing the pluralist heritage of Canadian and Australian schools, and providing more resources to immigrants and non-Anglo children. The second and far more difficult process involved constructing a new basis for the national identity. By the late 1970s both Ontario and Victoria had taken significant steps to address the first problem but had tremendous difficulty with the second.

Even within the provincial or state level, educational practices varied considerably. Perhaps the most dramatic variations were due to religious differences. According to the terms of the Canadian British North America Act (1867), Ontario maintained two state-sponsored school systems, the public schools and the Roman Catholic Separate Schools (R.C.S.S.).²⁵ The provincial government provided far less funding for the R.C.S.S., perpetuating a system of state-sponsored inequality based on religious lines.

Victoria did not have a publicly funded system of Catholic education, but it did have a large network of privately run Catholic schools that remained influential in the twentieth century.²⁶ In both Ontario and Victoria, the relationship between religion and education was a controversial issue that regularly affected policy decisions, especially as some educators and activists argued that Protestantism was an essential part of the national identity.

Although the religious divisions between schools were an immensely important component of education in both Ontario and Victoria and inform several chapters of this book, the focus will be on the public schools of Ontario and Victoria, not on the separate systems of Catholic education.²⁷ The exact nature of Catholic education varied tremendously within Canada and Australia. Ontario maintained a dual system of education because that was the system in place before the British North America Act (1867),²⁸ but other English-speaking provinces were not under this obligation and not all maintained a separate school system. Thus, including Catholic education would make this study less representative of the predominantly English-speaking provinces of Canada.

Despite a focus on the predominantly English-speaking schools, issues concerning the education of minority groups, including immigrants, indigenous communities, and religious minorities, are central to this work. With high levels of non-English speaking immigration both to Australia and to Canada following the Second World War, the publicly funded school systems needed to expand their language training programs and develop new ways of assimilating non-traditional students. In Ontario, Catholic, Jewish, and Franco-Ontarian educators continuously pressured the Department of Education for greater levels of inclusion. In fact, religious minorities were often at the forefront of movements to reduce Anglocentrism in the classroom. By the late 1960s immigrant communities and indigenous Canadians and Australians advocated forcefully for a rejection of the overwhelming focus on cultural assimilation and lobbied for an end to stereotyping in educational materials. Although largely ignored or marginalized for decades, these groups began to exert a powerful influence on education officials in both Ontario and Victoria.

This project emphasizes state or provincial, rather than local, educational policy. Sources include Department of Education minutes and memoranda, curricula, and printed educational materials made available to educators including textbooks and teacher's guides. The study is based on an examination of all officially mandated curricula and a large sample of

approved textbooks for disciplines such as history, geography, and social studies in the primary and secondary schools in the state of Victoria and the province of Ontario from the 1930s through the 1970s, as well as a host of educational documents produced on an ad hoc basis for the Departments of Education such as annual reports, minutes and memoranda, and departmental files.²⁹ In both Ontario and Victoria, there were several major commissions designed to seek out public input on educational issues during this time period that deeply informed the book. These commissions' reports were produced by a large array of people including academics, intellectuals, elected officials, bureaucrats, child psychologists, teacher unions, citizen groups, and religious organizations. These committees and commissions represent an important snapshot of the intellectual elite in each territory. This array of sources allows for a careful examination of the nexus of intellectual and administrative discourses that produced textbooks and curricula deemed officially acceptable for children, thus profoundly shaping the content, goals, and outcomes of education in classrooms across Ontario and Victoria.

By their very nature, however, educational sources are limited in a variety of ways. In the first place, curricula, textbooks, and other educational materials studied here were produced by an elite group of academics (with the occasional classroom teacher), elected officials, publishing companies, and bureaucrats. Each of these groups had their own agenda for what they wrote, which necessarily altered their narrative of the national identity. All of them were united in fearing controversial issues that would cause problems within school communities. Since Canada and Australia underwent enormous social and political change in the three decades following the Second World War, changes to curricula and educational content often took time, and it is clear that primary and secondary textbooks and curricula rarely reflected the full extent of political and social ferment exhibited in both countries, particularly in the 1960s.

The aversion of education professionals to controversy and the difficulty in effecting swift change is most evident in the consideration of religious education in Ontario. Unlike in Victoria, the Ontarian program of religious instruction was administered directly by the Department of Education and by regular teachers. Over time, the Department became increasingly unwilling to support religious education because the subject continued to cause complaints from religious minorities. In a 1962 meeting with the Ontario Inter-Church Committee, the Assistant Superintendent of the Curriculum, David Clee, said, "The Department

can only do so much—it must respect the people, and its policy must respect the society it serves.”³⁰ Vocal minority groups who were not well represented within the academic and political elite could nevertheless have a profound impact on what was or was not acceptable in the classroom through the generation of educational materials. The issue of religious education is an extreme example of where passions flared up almost continuously from the 1940s through the late 1960s; it illustrates the unwillingness of the Department of Education in Ontario at that time to publish and widely distribute controversial materials. This sort of scenario is an example of why scholars René Lévesque and Alf Chaiton argue that education cannot be “a prime mover of change.” They contend that education systems are designed to “institutionalize whatever changes society at large has agreed upon” and that “in a time of transition, the educational system reflects the confusion around it.”³¹ Despite these limitations, the educational materials analyzed in this project represent an official discourse that generated and sustained a dominant master narrative of history disseminated to a huge number of children for several decades.

Constructing National Identity in Canadian and Australian Schools consists of seven thematic chapters and a conclusion that collectively analyze the gradual transition from Anglocentric assumptions of Britishness to the confusion brought on by the adoption of multiculturalism. Chapter 2 provides an introduction to the education systems of Ontario and Victoria. It examines important social and political changes in Canada and Australia from the 1930s until the 1970s that had a direct impact on educational policy and planning. Specifically, it highlights the crucial importance of the population increase in both countries as a result of natural population growth and, more importantly, the large-scale immigration policies adopted by both countries shortly after the conclusion of the Second World War. Heady economic growth accelerated the pace of urbanization and precipitated a large increase in white-collar work, prompting a higher value to be placed on education. Ontarian and Victorian educators responded by increasing the structural capacity of their education systems, but also lavished resources on the modernization of facilities.

Chapter 3 compares the treatment of the British Empire in Ontarian and Victorian textbooks and curricula. Canadian and Australian involvement in the British Empire/Commonwealth was characterized in educational materials as a central component of each country’s national identity. Authors and educators continued to emphasize the importance of the

imperial relationship through the 1950s, though many intellectuals recognized Britain's declining standing in the world. By the 1960s, however, educators could no longer ignore the waning importance of Britain and the Empire in the face of an accelerated program of decolonization. Canadian textbook authors, simultaneously facing a major internal challenge from Quebec and a diminishing external affiliation with Britain, launched initiatives to reconstruct the national image by emphasizing the uniqueness of the Canadian heritage. Victorian educators emphasized the cultural benefits of Britishness well into the early 1970s, when major educational reforms took place to revise the curriculum and reduce the emphasis on Anglocentrism. The collapse of the British Empire was a catalyst for major reforms in education that took place in both Ontario and Victoria as educators struggled to find a new focus for the national identity.

Chapter 4 investigates the establishment of legally mandated Protestant training in both Ontario and Victoria. In the 1940s, fearing moral decay at home and a menacing world environment seemingly unfavorable to the "British way of life," educators asserted that religion, and specifically Protestant Christianity, was the only means by which the moral core of democracy could be preserved. Legislation was passed in Ontario and Victoria mandating time be set aside for religious instruction. This was especially complicated for Victorian educators because since its inception in 1872 the education system was legally secular. The solution they reached was to allow an outside organization, the Council for Christian Education in Schools, to administer religious education in public schools. In both places religious minorities, particularly Catholics and Jews, opposed the legislation for religious instruction, but were largely ignored.

Chapter 5 continues the story of religious education into the 1960s and '70s, when the consensus of the 1940s largely vanished. Religious minorities, civic organizations, and many educators attacked religious education as anti-democratic, discriminatory, and largely a relic of the past. But religious education also had defenders, particularly in local churches, and it still received support in public opinion polls. Ultimately, reform committees were created in both Ontario and Victoria to address the issue. But, for a variety of political and legal reasons, these committees spurred more controversy than consensus and proved largely ineffective at initiating any lasting reform. By the late 1970s, despite official disapproval, religious education remained on the books, and the measures passed in the 1940s remained largely unaltered.

The history of religious education in Ontario and Victoria reflects broader trends in the development of official constructions of national identity in both countries. In the 1940s widespread consensus was still possible under the Anglocentric assumption that Britishness was an integral component of Australian and Canadian nationhood. This situation remained more or less stable until the 1960s, when reformers began to attack religious instruction as discriminatory and inconsistent with the democratic principles of society. But no new consensus arose out of the controversy over religious education in the schools.

Chapter 6 examines the portrayal of ethnic and cultural minorities in educational materials. Despite paying lip-service to the concept of equality in education, mid-twentieth-century educators in both Ontario and Victoria typically asserted that the “ideal” citizen was white, culturally European, and Protestant. People who did not fit into these categories were consistently stereotyped, vilified, or relegated to the margins of historical accounts. The official strategy for dealing with children who did not meet the Anglocentric ideal was to assimilate them into the dominant cultural norm. But beginning in the 1960s, some reformers began to make calls for change. Efforts were initiated in both Ontario and Canada to remove discriminatory educational materials and to foster a more inclusive environment for all students. In Ontario, this was the result of several factors, including a greater willingness to make concessions towards Franco-Ontarian students, the involvement of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and better facilities for educational research. Although the process happened more gradually in Victoria, serious efforts to promote inclusion in education were well underway by the mid-1970s. Full equality of treatment is still a major goal for educators in both territories, but the efforts of the late 1960s and the 1970s marked a point when acceptance of diversity, at least in theory, became an important goal of education.

Chapter 7 examines the problematic nature of an external focus for national identity. Since the establishment of the public school system in the nineteenth century, educators and policymakers saw Canadian and Australian national identity in terms of their relationship to the British Empire. Holding both a national and an imperial identity was not a problem until after the Second World War, when the imperial identity gradually started losing strength as a result of the decolonization of the British Empire. This chapter shows how the waxing importance of the United States and the United Nations as subjects of post-war educational materials accompanied the waning importance of Britain. The increasing irrelevance

of Britishness as an organizing paradigm for historical narratives led to a complete re-evaluation of educational content. For the first time in Ontarian and Victorian history, educators embraced an internally focused identity celebrating the unique historical development of Canada and Australia within a multicultural framework. Both countries sought to use multiculturalism as a way to re-establish a narrative for the nation. Yet the lack of any coherent definition of, or vision for, multiculturalism became a stumbling block to a truly unifying identity in the 1970s and early 1980s. Educators rejected the association with Empire but could not reach a consensus on what should replace it.

Together, these chapters make several arguments regarding the development of national identity in postwar Canada and Australia. First, educators in the 1940s and 1950s maintained a deep cultural attachment to Britain, and internationally to the British Empire, but this attachment was not rigidly resistant to change. Educators and officials in the two decades following the Second World War were able to creatively reinterpret Britishness to suit local political needs. In the 1940s, for instance, educators placed much greater focus on Protestant religious instruction than their predecessors. Historical narratives in this time period incorporated the new realities of the postwar British Empire, including the partition and independence of India, Britain's dramatically weakened economic and political situation, and the Suez Canal Crisis, in a way that ensured loyalty and allegiance to the rapidly changing Empire/Commonwealth. Rather than merely being a nineteenth century encumbrance on the development of a unique national identity, Britishness remained a useful and malleable tool in the hands of postwar educators that was used to construct and maintain their specific worldview.

By the late 1960s, however, internal demographic changes as well as the external collapse of the British Empire prompted Canadian and Australian educators to reject assimilationist, ethnically exclusive policies in favor of a multicultural approach, rejecting the Anglocentric notion of Britishness. Acceptance of cultural pluralism came about slowly, awkwardly, and unevenly. And, whereas a consensus emerged that Britishness should no longer be a dominant feature of education in either Ontario or Victoria, there was no general notion of what should replace it or how a view of the nation acceptable to most people in an openly pluralist society should be reconstructed. For Canadians and Australians, the loss of a British identity brought with it a much higher level of inclusion, but a concomitantly higher level of ambiguity about what national identity entailed.

NOTES

1. Dorothy McGuire, "The Crown of Education," Brief A-64 to the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives in Ontario: The Christian Women's Council on Education of Metropolitan Toronto, 1966, Archives of Ontario RG2-168, Container 3, 6.
2. *Ibid.*, 8.
3. *Ibid.*, 8.
4. *Ibid.*, 9.
5. E.M. Hall and L.A. Dennis, *Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives in the Schools of Ontario* (Toronto: Newton Publishing Company, 1968), 93.
6. A.G. Hopkins, "Rethinking Decolonization," *Past & Present*, Vol. 200, Issue 1, Aug. 2008, 210-247.
7. Justice John Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1950), 31.
8. Although he wrote about education in England, Stephen Heathorn's argument that "[h]istory instruction was thus specifically invested with the role of training the patriotic and loyal citizen" was just as applicable in Ontario and Victoria. Stephen Heathorn, *For Home, Country, and Race: Constructing Gender, Class, and Englishness in the Elementary Schools, 1880-1914* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2000). For an introduction to histories of education in Canada, see Alf Chaiton and Neil McDonald, *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity* (Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing Limited, 1977); R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999); George S. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada, 1986); J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, Louis-Phillippe Audet, *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough, Ont.: Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1970). For more information on Australian education, see Bob Bessant, *Making Policy for Schools: The Education Policy Process in Victoria* (Parkville, Victoria: Centre for the Study of Higher Education at the University of Melbourne, 1980); L.J. Blake, ed., *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria, Volumes I-III* (Melbourne: Education Department of Victoria, 1973); G.S. Browne, *Education in Australia: A Comparative Study of the Educational Systems of the Six Australian States* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927); R.T. Fitzgerald, *Through a Rear Vision Mirror: Change and Education, a Perspective on the Seventies from the Forties* (Hawthorn, Vic.: Australian Council for Educational Research, 1975).

9. Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford, "The Critical Importance of History Textbook Research," in Stuart J. Foster and Keith A. Crawford, *What Shall We Tell the Children?: International Perspectives on School History Textbooks* (Greenwich, Connecticut: Information Age Publishing, Inc., 2006), 1. See also many of the works of Michael Apple including *Teachers and Texts: A Political Economy of Class and Gender Relations in Education* (New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1986).
10. Jatinder Mann, *The Search for a New National Identity: The Rise of Multiculturalism in Canada and Australia, 1890s–1970s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016).
11. José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945–71* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006).
12. The first Trudeau government announced the Canadian policy of "multiculturalism within a bicultural framework" in 1971, and Australia followed suit in 1972. For a helpful overview of literature on Canadian multiculturalism, see Miriam Verena Richter, *Multiculturalism in Canadian Children's Literature from 1950 to 1994* (New York: Rodolpi, 2011), especially Chapter 2. For a good overview of multiculturalism in Australia, see Mark Lopez, *The Origins of Multiculturalism in Australian Politics, 1945–1975* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2000).
13. The purpose of this study is to examine a shared culture based on a sense of British culture that gradually fell apart in the wake of decolonization. Therefore, my focus is on a primarily English-speaking province of Canada, and not on the French-speaking province of Quebec, which generally refused to embrace Britishness. Schools in both Ontario and Victoria had to find ways to accommodate, assimilate, and eventually celebrate minority groups including immigrants and Franco-Ontarians, so those groups do figure prominently in this analysis.
14. For an overview of education in Ontario, see Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools*.
15. Craig Munro, and Robyn Sheahan-Bright, eds., *Paper Empires: A History of the Book in Australia 1946–2005* (Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2006). For an insightful analysis of education in Victoria, see Blake, *Vision and Realisation*.
16. For more detailed information on government expenditure on education, see Chap. 2.
17. For some of the most influential work on the British World, see Philip Buckner, "Presidential Address: Whatever Happened to the British Empire?" *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 4, 1993, 3–32; Philip Buckner, ed., *Canada and the End of Empire* (UBC Press: Vancouver, 2005); Philip Buckner and Douglas Francis, eds., *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006);

- Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, eds., *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (London: Frank Cass, 2003); Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); James Curran and Stuart Ward, *The Unknown Nation: Australia after Empire* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2010); Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw and Stuart Macintyre, *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007); Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine, Frank Trentmann, eds., *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, c. 880–1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Stuart Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
18. 'British Dominion' denotes a colony composed mostly of emigrants from the British Isles that was given the right to autonomous government in the nineteenth or twentieth centuries. They include Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa (following the Anglo–South African War). Ireland was also granted Dominion status after the signing of the Anglo–Irish Treaty in 1921. The term broadened in meaning and legal status following the Second World War.
 19. Literature on Canadian and Australian nationalism has often focused on the implications of developing an autonomous national identity. This is sometimes referred to as the "colony-to-nation" theory in Canada, and the "thwarted nationalism" thesis in Australia. For examples of literature on Canadian nationalism, see Chaiton and McDonald, *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity*; Ryan Edwardson, *Canadian Content: Culture and the Quest for Nationhood* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008); Arthur Lower, *Canadians in the Making: A Social History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans, 1958) and *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Don Mills, Ontario: Longmans Canada, 1964); Eva Mackey, *The House of Difference: Cultural Politics and National Identity in Canada* (London: Routledge, 1999); Eli Mandel and David Taras, eds., *A Passion for Identity: Introduction to Canadian Studies* (Scarborough, Ont.: Nelson Canada, 1988); Vincent Massey, *On Being Canadian* (Toronto: J.M. Dent, 1948); W.L. Morton, *The Canadian Identity* (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1961); Philip Resnick, *The Land of Cain: Class and Nationalism in English Canada, 1945–1975* (Vancouver: New Star, 1977), and *The European Roots of Canadian Identity* (Peterborough, Ontario: Broadview Press, 2005). For examples of literature on Australian nationalism, see John Carroll, ed., *Intruders in the Bush: The Australian Quest for Identity* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1982); Catriona Elder, *Being Australian: Narratives of National Identity* (Crows Nest, N.S.W.: Allen & Unwin, 2007); Geoffrey Stokes, ed., *The Politics of Identity in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997); Kosmas Tsokhas,

- Making a Nation State: Cultural Identity, Economic Nationalism and Sexuality in Australian History* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2001); Russel Ward, *The Australian Legend* (Melbourne: Oxford University Press, 1978); Richard White, *Inventing Australia: Images and Identity, 1688–1980* (Sydney: Allen & Unwin, 1981). For more on the “colony-to-nation” theory, see A.R.M. Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans, Green, 1946). For some examples of the ‘thwarted nationalism’ school, see Stephen Alomes, *A Nation at Last?: The Changing Character of Australian Nationalism, 1880–1988* (North Ryde, NSW, Australia: Angus & Robertson, 1988); W.F. Mandle, *Going It Alone: Australia’s National Identity in the Twentieth Century* (Ringwood, Australia: A. Lane, 1978).
20. Bridge and Fedorowich, “Mapping the British World,” in *The British World*, 11.
 21. Canadian and Australian immigration will be discussed more fully in Chapter 2. For reference on Canadian immigration, see Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–2006* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007). For information on Australian immigration, see James Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
 22. For more on decolonization within the British Empire, see Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire* (Berkeley: The University of California Press, 2012); John Darwin, *The End of the British Empire: The Historical Debate* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1991), *Britain and Decolonisation: The Retreat from Empire in the Post-War World* (London: Basingstoke, 1988), *The Empire Project: The Rise and Fall of the British World-System, 1830–1970* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2009); Roy Douglas, *Liquidation of Empire: The Decline of the British Empire* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002); Frank Heinlein, *British Government Policy and Decolonisation 1945–1963* (London: Frank Cass Publishers, 2002); Ronald Hyam, *Britain’s Declining Empire: The Road to Decolonisation* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2006); W.M. Roger Louis, *Ends of British Imperialism: The Scramble for Empire, Suez, and Decolonization* (New York: I.B. Tauris, 2006); Martin Lynn, *The British Empire in the 1950s: Retreat or Revival?* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006); Andrew Stewart, *Empire Lost: Britain, the Dominions and the Second World War* (London: Continuum, 2008); Nicholas White, *Decolonisation: The British Experience Since 1945* (London: Longman, 1999).
 23. J.L. Granatstein, *How Britain’s Weakness Forced Canada into the Arms of the United States* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989); Stuart Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2001).

24. Jordanna Bailkin, *The Afterlife of Empire*.
25. For more info see the multivolume work by R.T. Dixon and N.L. Bethune, *A Documentary History of Separate Schools in Ontario*, Parts One–Three (Toronto: Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, 1971); also, Peter McLaren, *Schooling as a Ritual Performance: Towards a Political Economy of Educational Symbols and Gestures* (London: Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1985).
26. For more detailed information on Catholic Education in Australia, see Lawrence Angus, *Continuity and Change in Catholic Schooling: An Ethnography of a Christian Brothers College in Australian Society* (London: Falmer Press, 1988); Ronald Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia, 1806–1950* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1959); Thomas O'Donaghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia, 1922–1965* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001); P.D. Tannock, ed., *The Organization and Administration of Catholic Education in Australia* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University Press, 1975).
27. The terminology is somewhat confusing in the case of Ontario. Though both systems were 'public' in the sense that they received state funding, the non-Catholic system was typically referred to as the "public school system." The Catholic schools were generally referred to as the "Roman Catholic Separate Schools," "R.C.S.S.," or simply "Separate Schools" for short, thus perpetuating a sense of difference through the name.
28. The terms of the BNA Act stipulated that the system in place at the time of Confederation be maintained afterwards. Whether this was a 'final settlement' on Catholic education was an extremely controversial issue, particularly for Separate School supporters who wanted increased funding for the Catholic school system. For more on this, see Chapter 2.
29. In Ontario, sources came from two primary locations. The first was the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, especially their Ontario Historic Textbook Collection, which contains a comprehensive collection of authorized textbook used in the province. This study also relied heavily on the Archives of Ontario for critical resources, especially for official documentation from the Ministry of Education. Australian sources contained information from the State Library of Victoria, the Public Records of Victoria, and, importantly, the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library's Historic Textbooks Collection. Other archives accessed for the study included the General Synod Archives of the Anglican Church of Canada, the University of Toronto Archives, the Robarts Library, the Thomas Fisher Rare Book Library, and the Victoria University E.J. Pratt Library, the La Trobe University Library, and the University of Melbourne Library.

30. Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Ontario Inter-Church Committee on Religious Education in the Schools, 1962, General Synod Archives: Anglican Church of Canada, 3.
31. René Lévesque and Alf Chaiton, "Education in a Changing Society: A View from Quebec," in Chaiton and McDonald, *Canadian Schools and Canadian Identity* (Toronto: Gage Educational Publishing, 1977), 177.



CHAPTER 2

Society and Education in Mid-Twentieth Century Ontario and Victoria

Identifiably modern public education came to Ontario and Victoria in the mid- to late-nineteenth century. In Ontario, the Methodist minister Egerton Ryerson became the architect of the public education system. Over a two-decade span beginning in the 1850s he tirelessly traveled the province in an effort to expand elementary education. This effort culminated in the 1871 Schools Act, which made primary education tuition-free and laid the groundwork for making attendance compulsory in the province.¹ The timeline for Victoria was roughly similar. The Education Act of 1872 made education compulsory for children for the first time and proved to be the basis for modern education in the state. Both systems of education were established during an era of intense loyalty to the British Empire in the colonies of white settlement. Content concerning the empire permeated educational materials and historical narratives, and, as this book will show, generations of students were raised with the idea that British history was a part of Canadian and Australian history.

A fundamental characteristic of state-run education in nineteenth century Ontarian and Victorian education was a high degree of administrative, economic, and legal variation. The major urban areas of Toronto and Melbourne had by far the largest schools and the most money to spend on them. The urban areas could more easily consolidate school districts and construct large buildings that housed more students. In rural areas districts

were often quite small, and one-room schoolhouses were common. This led to a gargantuan number of school districts, which made it difficult for local educational authorities in both Ontario and Victoria to experiment and expand. In 1948 Ontario had 6800 elementary schools, 4400 of which had a single room and one teacher.²

Education in the more rural districts posed a challenge in both territories, but did so especially in Victoria. In order to meet the needs of rural students, Victorian policymakers pioneered a system of correspondence classes that gave students the opportunity to take classes that would otherwise have been unavailable to them.³ The provincial government of Ontario provided grants to school districts in order to promote equality of education “in some measure” for all students in the province.⁴ In Victoria and Ontario, consolidation and amalgamation of educational districts were major objectives for educators who wanted to provide better facilities and more uniform education.

Catholic education also added to the variety of institutions in Ontario and Victoria. In Ontario the system of Catholic education was largely the result of the British North America (BNA) Act of 1867, the foundational document creating the country of Canada. A primary motivation for the BNA Act was the paralyzing gridlock in the united parliament of Upper (mainly Protestant and British) and Lower (mainly Catholic and French) Canada. The two sides were rarely able to agree on anything. As a result, Ontario developed a dual system of publicly funded schools, one system for Protestants and one for Catholics.⁵ The larger and better-funded Protestant schools were referred to by the generic term ‘public schools.’ The smaller system for Catholic education was called the Roman Catholic Separate School system (R.C.S.S.). The BNA Act gave the province the power to legislate on matters concerning education, but in Article 93 stipulated that “nothing in any such Law shall prejudicially affect any Right or Privilege with respect to Denominational Schools which any Class of Persons have by Law in the Province at the Union.”⁶ Effectively, the education system would remain as it was at the time of union. The act was intended to protect the Catholic minority in what became Ontario and the Protestant minority in Quebec, guaranteeing their right to denominational education.

Separate schools remained a contentious issue throughout the nineteenth century and into the twentieth. As time wore on, the mainly Protestant educational officials of the province stuck to the letter of the law and maintained 1867 levels of support for Catholic education, but

steadfastly refused to expand the separate school system to the secondary level. Additionally, separate schools were not allowed to receive corporate taxes as part of their revenue, largely because this was a non-issue in 1867. But as corporations developed this became a major source of revenue for the public schools. As a result, Catholic education mainly ceased after elementary schooling, and it was significantly underfunded compared to the public schools of the province. The issue of separate schools was a nationally important issue since the treatment of religious minorities struck at the heart of the English/French divide in Canada. Ontarian policies regarding the separate school system were, therefore, of major importance to provincial relations.⁷

Victoria did not have two fully separate public school systems, one Protestant, the other Catholic, as Ontario did. Catholic schools in the state were privately funded.⁸ The publicly funded school system established in 1872 declared itself officially secular, and many devout Catholics would not tolerate a fully secular education for their children. The system was often viewed as unfair because Catholics had to pay taxes to support the public education system even if they supported the Catholic schools as well. The Archbishops of Australia noted in 1949 that although Catholics chafed at this injustice, "They would rather pay twice than allow religion to be driven out of their educational system."⁹

In both Ontario and Victoria, there were also numerous private schools in operation, further adding to the diversity of the educational scene. In each case private educators often had difficulty keeping up with the rapidly increasing cost of education in the postwar era, but despite this difficulty private schools remained an important sector of education. By the 1970s private schools in Australia began to receive public funds in order to make them more competitive with the state-run education system.¹⁰

In the early twentieth century, societal expectations placed upon the education systems were fairly similar in Ontario and Victoria. Attendance was compulsory for children from the ages of six to fourteen years in Victoria and from ages eight to sixteen in Ontario. In both cases, applications could be made to release students earlier if they had some form of employment or seasonal obligation. Secondary education was not considered an achievable goal for the vast majority of students. Out of 234,802 students enrolled in Victorian schools in 1938, only 27,230 were over the age of fourteen.¹¹ In Ontario the numbers are only marginally higher: 72,247 students were enrolled in secondary school out of a total of 712,021.¹² R.D. Gidney suggests that these low numbers reflected a

conscious decision on the part of policymakers to limit secondary education enrollment. Elementary schooling held mass appeal as a means of providing basic education and instilling citizenship, but secondary schooling was for an elite cadre of students, most of them preparing for university.¹³

Canadian and Australian education was left in the hands of state or provincial level authorities, not the federal government. The Ontario and Victoria Departments of Education,¹⁴ located in Toronto and Melbourne, produced curricula and authorized textbooks that were mandatory throughout their respective territory. Teachers had little freedom to shape course content to suit local demands.

In Ontario, however, there was a decentralized administrative system that delegated authority to local school boards of trustees that had great influence on day-to-day operations. These local school boards were responsible for managing local property taxes earmarked for education. The provincial government of Ontario maintained strict control over the curriculum and textbooks until the late 1960s, when they ceded more authority to local school boards.¹⁵

The Victorian system was, by contrast, highly centralized. The state Department of Education possessed almost total control over everything from primary to tertiary education. State educators argued that the immense distances covered by rural districts necessitated a strong centralized administration. This was a major difference between Victorian education and that of Ontario and England, both of which relied on local educational authorities. In fact, centralization was often seen as a weakness of the system, particularly to progressive educators who clamored for local control and flexibility in education. G.V. Portus argued that more flexibility would have strengthened the Australian system, but that it was not possible “in the geographical and economic circumstances of Australia, to avoid centralized administration.”¹⁶ But while Portus suggested that centralization was a necessary evil, his contemporary G.S. Browne argued that Victoria “holds that her list of progressive legislative enactments has earned her a place amongst the foremost countries in the sphere of educational progress.”¹⁷

The Depression years of the 1930s hit the educational systems of both Ontario and Victoria hard. Maintaining standards in education was difficult in an era of cost cutting and economy. Lindsay Thompson, the Minister of Education for Victoria, noted in 1972 that the state government paid about \$7 million per year on education at the start of World War II, which amounted to about \$4 per person.¹⁸ To put that in

perspective, during his time as Minister of Education Victoria spent \$485 million on education, which amounted to \$138 per person in the state. The belt tightening in the 1930s meant that despite attempts at curricular innovation, there was little expansion or upgrading of facilities during this time. Progressive reforms initiated in the decade were therefore severely limited in practical effectiveness. In Victoria one other effect of the Depression years was a decrease in primary school enrollment. The Department of Education estimated that between 1933 and 1943 annual enrollment dropped by 50,000 students.¹⁹

Even with the major financial crisis of the Depression, both Ontarian and Victorian educators managed to produce some reform to the curricula during the 1930s. In 1932 the Victorian Curriculum Committee, led by G.S. Browne, from Melbourne Teachers' College, introduced a new program of study. The major features of the educational system remained relatively unchanged, but there were some definite differences in course content. The subject of social studies received the most attention. Teachers were given a much broader range of educational materials to choose from and had more freedom to effect changes to course content than previously. This was representative of the reforms more broadly because, though they did not alter the fundamental subjects or educational organization, they did allow teachers more leeway in choosing what material to present to children. Another significant change to Victorian education was the introduction of a Curriculum and Research Officer, established in 1939.²⁰ With this appointment, the Victorian Department of Education took a step towards what would in the 1950s become a system of continuous revision of the curriculum.

Similar reforms came to Ontario in 1937, producing the standards by which the Department would operate for the next twenty years. The expressed aim of the new *Programme of Studies* was to use child psychology to develop courses best suited to children's abilities. This was heavily influenced by progressive educational theory originating in the United States and Great Britain. The new curricula emphasized play as a key to intellectual and physical growth. In practice, however, these new guidelines were difficult to enforce, and many teachers seemed to have trouble grasping or implementing the desired courses.²¹ Without money for teacher retraining, curricular innovation was extraordinarily difficult to achieve during the Great Depression.

The war years in the early 1940s proved to be even more challenging. Both Departments of Education responded with eager participation in the

war effort, but it was quite clear that wartime constraints proved difficult to overcome. One early effect was a drop in school attendance, particularly in secondary education. In Ontario by 1941 the secondary school population plummeted by 14,500. The Annual Report noted that this was due partially to military recruitment, but more because of greater wartime employment opportunities.²²

Educators also confronted the major problem of a teacher shortage. The 1942 Ontario annual report stated frankly that until or unless teaching became more financially competitive with other employment opportunities, the shortage of teachers would be severe.²³ Considering the number of teachers recruited into the military and the availability of work in more lucrative positions, the teacher shortage became a major obstacle for the Departments of Education in both Ontario and Victoria.

The war affected virtually every aspect of education in both Ontario and Victoria.²⁴ The lack of oil due to rationing limited the ability of inspectors to visit classrooms in Victoria. Students were constantly encouraged to raise funds for the war effort. In 1942 when the threat of a Japanese attack in Victoria was all too real, air-raid drills became standard procedure in classrooms. Paper rationing limited the production of textbooks and other educational materials, resulting in either low-quality texts or, more often, the retention of older books and materials. In some ways the privations of war were seen as a badge of honor. Ontarian Minister of Education George Drew said in 1943 that teachers had “responded nobly,” and had “caught something of the spirit of those former pupils now serving their country on distant battlefields.”²⁵ However noble the response, it is clear that the war seriously hampered educational activities in Ontario and Victoria.

In spite of—or perhaps because of—the varied disruptions to normal operations, many educators began to lobby vociferously for change. In 1943 Julia Flynn, the Chief Inspector of Victorian secondary schools, called for an overhaul of the educational system because “the social policies of democracies have failed to some extent to keep up with the changes imposed by a technological age.”²⁶ Some reforms happened during the war. In both places citizenship training became a major focus of the curricula. Religious education, thought to provide a moral core for British-style democracy, became a regular part of the Ontario curriculum in 1944.²⁷ Victorian educators, despite the officially secular terminology of the 1872 Education Act, followed suit after a series of protracted political negotiations in 1949 to allow the Council for Christian Education in

Schools time during normal school operating hours to offer religious training to students.

Educators in both Ontario and Victoria began to plan for major reforms to the education system in the postwar world. In 1946 the Victorian Council of Public Education stated that the current education system was “definitely out of adjustment with the needs and requirements of an enlightened democracy.”²⁸ The Council went on to advocate a number of reforms it thought necessary to modernize the education system in the state. The Council wanted to raise the school-leaving age from 14 to 16 years. It sought a building program that would provide more modern classrooms, a secondary education system meant for more than an elite group going to university, an expansion of technical education to give students vocational training, and also a great expansion of adult education.²⁹ Taken together, the Council of Public Education argued for a major program of modernization for the entire educational system.

In 1945 Ontario created a royal commission charged with recommending changes to the Department of Education similar to those of the Council of Public Education in Victoria. The Royal Commission on Education in the Province of Ontario, often known as the Hope Commission, after its chairman, deliberated for five years and created a massive report of over 1,100 pages that envisioned a wholesale transformation of the provincial educational system. The Commission focused on creating a 6-4-3 education track. With this formulation a student would have six years of elementary school beginning at age six and then continue on to four years of secondary school at age twelve. These ten years would provide mostly a general education focusing on the acquisition of written and oral English skills, basic computational mathematics, and an enhanced course in history and civics. The Hope Commission thought that most children would stop attending school at this point. If students chose to stay in school after the mandatory ten years, they would take entrance examinations and for another three years attend a junior or technical college in their pre-university years.³⁰

The Hope Commission weighed in on virtually every aspect of education. They recommended the adoption of kindergarten programs and demanded rapid consolidation of school districts. But, unhappily for the Commission, they became mired in controversy over the issue of separate schools. With the proposed 6-4-3 reorganization of the curriculum, Catholic education would be reduced in size to only the first six years of schooling. A sizeable and vocal minority demanded that Catholic children

should receive the same educational opportunities as other children in the province. The debate fractured the commission and seriously damaged its credibility with the Government of Ontario in the early 1950s.³¹

So despite a major push for educational reform in both Ontario and Victoria, the 1940s did not produce significant change. Reformers were unable to implement any wholesale changes to the education system, and state and federal governments were reticent to move away from traditional practices. Educators continued to embrace Britishness as a key component of national identity. Some historians of education argue that this resistance to change was the result of the desire for traditional and stable ideas of education, as well as the lack of widespread public desire for major change.³² It took three decades of postwar societal transformation to pave the way for the major reforms in education which took place in the 1960s and 1970s.

Although not immediately felt in the classroom, the most important change in Canadian and Australian society affecting education was the liberalization of immigration policy. After experiencing the dire threat of invasion during the Second World War, Australian politicians started to advocate rapid growth through immigration. The Labor government of Ben Chifley officially began this new immigration policy in 1947, and the Liberal government of Robert Menzies continued it in 1949. The goal was to raise the population of Australia by 1 percent per year. Between 1947 and 1952 Australia received over 170,000 displaced persons from Europe and allowed even more immigrants to enter the country in the 1950s.³³ By 1961 over 8 percent of Australians were born in Europe, and the Australian population climbed to 10.8 million. Immigration of this magnitude seriously altered the demographic composition of Australia and therefore had a profound impact on education.

Throughout the early twentieth century Australian politicians had consistently preferred and called for British migrants over all others, arguing that these settlers acculturated with only minimal difficulty. This accorded with the notion that Australia was a homogenous nation of transplanted Britons and set the stage for Britishness to be central to civic education in Victoria. Accordingly, the architects of the 1940s immigration plan hoped to attract far more Britons than other Europeans, but this proved unfeasible. There were fewer Britons willing and able to migrate, and there were millions of refugees from World War II seeking a permanent place to live. Feeling that demographic expansion was a public necessity, the Australian government reluctantly made the decision to allow huge

numbers of non-British migrants into the country for the first time. Of course, this liberalization only applied to white Europeans. The White Australia Policy, which effectively prevented the permanent immigration of Asians into Australia, remained in force until the 1970s. But the liberalization of immigration in the late 1940s rapidly changed the social makeup of Australian society.³⁴

In Canada, immigration was a part of the postwar agenda, but it never attained the same sense of urgency as in Australia. With the guarantee of American protection in North America, Canada was much more secure than Australia. As a result, Canadian policy was much more cautious and selective in its intake of immigrants. In 1947 Prime Minister William Lyon Mackenzie King announced a change in policy that would allow refugees from Europe into the country. In that year 64,127 immigrants entered the country. During the 1950s Canada received in excess of 100,000 immigrants per year, with a high of 282,164 in 1957.³⁵ As in Australia, Asians were for the most part excluded until the 1960s when immigration policies were overhauled once more.³⁶

The high levels of immigrants entering Canada and Australia deeply affected the Departments of Education in both countries. Teachers and administrators had to deal with large numbers of new students, many of whom did not speak English as a primary language. In some cases, particularly in ethnically distinct urban districts in Toronto and Melbourne, there were more immigrant children than native born. Specialized classes for immigrants were put in place to teach English and give students a quick immersion into Canadian and Australian culture.³⁷ The Departments of Education focused on full assimilation of immigrants into Australian and Canadian society. As we shall see in later chapters, immigrant children were expected to adopt the ideals of Britishness considered acceptable to the dominant majority. It was not until the 1960s that both countries' education departments began to grapple with the larger philosophical problems of how immigrant diversity necessitated educational sensitivity and change.

The baby boom posed another major demographic challenge to the education departments of Ontario and Victoria. From 1945 until 1961 the rate of live births increased dramatically and produced this well-known generation. In Ontario the rate of live births per year increased from 65,564 in 1938 to 123,667 in 1952. The population of elementary and secondary school children in Ontario jumped from 662,858 in 1946 to 1,097,501 in 1956.³⁸ Victoria showed similar increases to total school

population. From a total enrollment of 234,802 in 1938 the school system climbed to 422,395 by 1960.³⁹

Both the baby boom and the rise in immigration can in part be attributed to the heady economic growth period that both Australia and Canada experienced after the war. This boom transformed the economies of both countries and created a need for an expanded system of education. Gidney points out that from about 1951 there was a major increase in the number of white-collar jobs.⁴⁰ The increase necessitated a more educated and highly skilled workforce and also shifted the population towards urban areas, especially metropolitan Toronto and Melbourne.

The demographic increase in Australia and Canada meant that increasing numbers of children and youth required schooling, precipitating a significant expansion of physical capacity in the 1950s. In the nine years between 1945 and 1953, the Ontarian Department of Education increased its pupil capacity by 206,430 elementary seats and 48,180 secondary seats.⁴¹ In Victoria over one hundred sites were purchased for secondary school construction between 1945 and 1960, about 60 percent of which were in urban areas and the other 40 percent in the countryside.⁴² The new buildings were equipped with the latest pedagogical tools and were constructed in a way to maximize pupil comfort.⁴³ But despite the massive building program many classes were still conducted in temporary buildings constructed on an ad hoc basis.

The Departments of Education also expanded the number of services they provided in the 1950s. The Victorian Education Department, for example, increased the staff of the Curriculum and Research Branch, increased funding to school libraries, and created a Psychology Branch to provide guidance activities for students.⁴⁴ In 1956 Ontario finally created a Curriculum Branch to assist in the creation and revision of curricula.⁴⁵ With expansion came an increased professionalization in the Departments of Education, and an enlarged educational bureaucracy was a major feature of postwar education.

But the expansion of the education system created a series of problems in the 1950s that proved to be challenging for educators. As a result of expansion the teacher shortage became even more acute after the Second World War. Policy-makers in Ontario and Victoria attempted to solve the teacher shortage in a variety of ways. On the one hand, both Ontario and Victoria attempted to incentivize students to attend the teachers' colleges. But in a time of economic prosperity the relatively modest salary of a public school teacher was not an effective draw. So in both territories educators

resorted to allowing underqualified teachers into the classroom. The problem was severe in the elementary grades during the 1950s, and a major problem for secondary educators in the 1960s. Victorian Chief Inspector of schools O.C. Philipps said that, due to the massive expansion of the education system of the state, staffing represented a major problem and had to “be solved if instruction [were] to reach adequately efficient standards.”⁴⁶

Another difficulty was the enormous cost of the expanding educational systems. The annual expenditure for the Ontarian Department of Education rose from 8 million dollars in 1945 to about 22 million dollars in 1952.⁴⁷ In Victoria the Department of Education spent over 2 million pounds on buildings in 1953 alone.⁴⁸ Of course, the soaring expenditures led to an increasing level of debt. The Ontarian school debt increased from just over 56 million in 1947 to over 144 million in 1951.⁴⁹

The extraordinarily high levels of expenditure on education and the willingness of educators to increase their debt showed the high priority given to education in the postwar generation. Indeed, spending on education received widespread support from all major political parties, as “unrepentant elitists” and “convinced ideologues of left and right” could both be persuaded to support equality of educational opportunity.⁵⁰ The position of Minister of Education became a very important post within the provincial government of Ontario. Two premiers of Ontario, John Robarts in 1961 and William Davies in 1971, were ministers of education immediately before their election to the premiership. Both Victoria and Ontario demonstrated widespread public support for a rapid expansion of the education systems in the postwar era.

Since the overwhelming focus of educators was on physical expansion, it is perhaps unsurprising that little emphasis was placed on reforming the content of education. The curricula in both Ontario and Victoria underwent at least some revision in the 1950s, but the changes were mostly minor and did not significantly alter the way education was conducted. In Ontario, the *Programme of Studies* noted that the slight revisions to the 1955 version “represent no change in point of view from that embodied in the edition of 1941.”⁵¹ Both Ontario and Victoria created branches of the Education Department to deal specifically with curricular revision, but in the 1950s these bodies tended to be conservative and reinforce traditional ideas about the nature of education rather than advocate for reform. So despite the increasing sophistication and size of the Department of Education, no significant alteration from the 1937 curriculum took place.

Urbanization, immigration, higher birth rates, and an economic boom all placed great demands on the education systems in Ontario and Victoria. One effect was to change educational expectations. Since many parents were no longer suffering from the Depression, they could afford to allow their children to stay in school longer. Increasing numbers chose to remain in the system through high school rather than leave at the earliest legal opportunity. In and of itself, this was a major transformation of the school system, which had hitherto used secondary education primarily as a means of preparing students for university entrance examinations. As early as 1951 the Victorian Chief Inspector of Secondary Schools noted that about 75 percent of students went on to some form of post-primary education. The older model for secondary education, that of preparing a tiny elite for tertiary education, was no longer appropriate. The more diverse student population necessitated an expanded curriculum more suited to different career paths, one that would place some “emphasis on the development of manual skills and some designed to foster healthy social attitudes.”⁵² The implications for the school system were clear: the secondary school had to transform in order to meet society’s new demands upon it. A secondary school system that had been designed for training a small cadre of students for university entrance examinations was now expected to provide quality education for all students. As not all secondary students wanted an education geared towards university admission, the Departments of Education had to find ways of identifying which schools or programs students should enter shortly after primary school. This proved to be a challenging issue for policymakers and was the focus of an immense amount of debate within Ontario and Victoria.

In 1960 Ontarian John Robarts initiated a plan that would place students into one of three streams: Arts and Science; Business and Commerce; or Science, Technology and Trades. While all of these streams had a vocational component, they allowed for a great deal of academic training as well.⁵³ At the end of Grade 12 students could choose to enter the job market or to attend Grade 13, which prepared students for university entrance examinations. One major drawback to the Robarts Plan was the rigidity of the system. Once a student chose one of the four or five-year streams it was difficult to change streams. Ironically, a system designed to allow greater flexibility actually prevented many students from receiving the education they thought most suited them. But, as Gidney points out, “the intent of the Robarts Plan was not to disenfranchise students by restricting access to the senior high school, but to make it more inclusive”

with more career options offered in a way that might retain students who would have traditionally left school early.⁵⁴ Though open to criticism in implementation, the significance of the Robarts Plan was that it committed the Ontario government to universal secondary education.

One notable feature of the Robarts plan was that it used funds from the Canadian federal government for expensive building projects. Under the terms of the Provincial-Federal Technical and Vocational Training Agreement,⁵⁵ the federal government would pay 75 percent of the cost of school construction. At this time the Canadian federal government was especially active in creating newer institutions of higher education and technical training; in fact, its involvement in education was at an all-time high during the early 1960s. But by the mid-1960s there was resistance to increasing federal involvement in education, particularly in French-speaking Quebec. After a major inter-provincial meeting in 1966, the federal government began to reduce its role in education.⁵⁶

In Australia, the relationship between the federal government and state education systems was much different. Although the federal government was not willing to initiate major changes to education immediately after the Second World War, they did do so three decades later, after the publication of the Karmel Report in 1973. Simon Marginson argues that “the Karmel committee connected to the radical egalitarian and progressivist values of the time, such as redistribution and positive discrimination, devolution, self-determination, and equality of respect.”⁵⁷ The report urged a massive federal funding increase in Australian education and initiated a period of a high level of federal activity in the sphere of education.

During the 1960s both Victorian and Ontarian educators sought to improve the level of educational research being conducted in their territories. In 1965 the Ontarian Department of Education created the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) in order to provide up-to-date research into educational matters. In the same year the Department significantly altered the Curriculum and Research Branch, granting it wider powers and a broader mandate. In Victoria, the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* was established in 1965 with the mission “to keep teachers informed on new developments and to encourage them to express opinions.”⁵⁸ The *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* produced articles on major educational issues for the next 20 years and gave educators a forum to express new ideas and pedagogical techniques.

It was during the mid-1960s that the Ontarian system began to experience significant reform. This was the result of a number of forces operating

in Ontarian society more broadly. One event was the government effectively discarding the White Canada immigration policy in 1962.⁵⁹ If an immigrant could prove the requisite education and qualifications to enter Canada, he or she could do so irrespective of race. This was a major achievement of the Diefenbaker government, ending a policy operative since the foundation of Canada in 1867. From that date on immigrants from around the world began to settle in Canada. As more and more immigrants entered the country, educators found the possibilities of multiculturalism increasingly attractive.

Another major impetus for change in the 1960s was the Quiet Revolution in Quebec. Quebec nationalists resented interference from English-speaking Canada and wanted increased autonomy. Many of these nationalists called for total separation of Quebec from the rest of Canada.⁶⁰ Quebec nationalists challenged the idea of Canada as a British nation more fiercely than ever before. Debates over national symbols such as the Canadian flag triggered widespread considerations of the key characteristics of Canadian identity.⁶¹ English Canadians in all the provinces realized that reform of English/French relations in Canada was necessary. Educators had to be particularly careful with schools for French-speaking Canadians and the tumultuous issue of separate schools.

Reform of the Ontarian education system began with the 1965 creation of the Committee on Aims and Objectives in Ontario, which was given a broad mandate to look at all aspects of education in the province. The committee issued its report, *Living and Learning* (also called the Hall-Dennis Report after its chairmen), in 1967, initiating a paradigm shift in educational thinking. In general, the committee did not conceive of education as an effort to produce citizens with the 'right' kind of attitudes and behaviors. Rather, they argued that the true purpose of education was to help children attain a sense of self-fulfillment. *Living and Learning* fully supported the tenets of progressivism, and the Department of Education threw its full weight behind the Hall-Dennis Report over the next decade.⁶²

As part of this philosophy, the Department of Education began to embrace multiculturalism as a viable option for the school system. *Living and Learning* advocated greater resources be devoted to the education of Canadian Indians, the teaching of foreign languages, and a greater sensitivity to the Franco-Ontarian population. Ontarian educators were also influenced by the 1967 report of the national Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B&B Commission).⁶³ This Royal Commission devoted an entire volume to the problems of educating

French and English speakers, emphatically proclaiming that “equal partnership in education” necessitated equality in educational opportunities for Francophone and Anglophone Canadians.⁶⁴ The older Ontarian ideals of Anglo-assimilation were being replaced with biculturalism, and eventually multiculturalism, in the eventful 1960s.

On a more structural level, school districts continued to amalgamate, producing ever larger districts. Combined with the elimination of the Grade 13 exam for university qualification, this allowed a much greater degree of local control over education. Departmental curricula transformed into one containing a set of general guidelines instead of specific educational criteria. Rather than being the final authority on education in the province, Department-produced curricula were supposed to “provide a framework for teachers working with students and program consultants to develop their own courses based on local needs.”⁶⁵ Departmental control over the content of educational material was dramatically reduced in the 1960s to allow for greater local control over education.

Of course, the continued growth and expansion of the system inevitably increased the fiscal burden on the Ontarian taxpayer. The education system took on a greater share of tax revenue as the budget continued to skyrocket.⁶⁶ By the end of the decade, education accounted for over 30 percent of the provincial budget and almost 60 percent of property taxes.⁶⁷ As the economic boom times came to an end, the budget became a major political issue. The progressive changes of the 1960s came under direct attack in the 1970s. Robert Stamp argued that “the conservative restoration of the 1970s found the ideals of *Living and Learning* too radical, too expensive, or just plain silly.”⁶⁸

There was quite a bit more stability in education in Victoria than in Ontario. The dominant educational paradigm of the 1960s continued to emphasize the fundamentally British character of Victoria. By the 1970s this situation began to change. Gough Whitlam was elected Prime Minister of Australia in 1972 and immediately set about attempting to transform Australia into a multicultural nation. In 1973 he and his immigration minister, Al Grassby, dismantled the White Australia Policy.⁶⁹ During the thirteen years of Labour Government in Australia, Asian immigration averaged about 40,000 per year.⁷⁰ The increasing federal financial support of education forced state educators to follow the federal lead. Educators in Victoria slowly introduced initiatives to make education in the state more inclusive. This included a major review of the curriculum that acknowledged multiculturalism while at the same time upholding some of the more traditional

goals of the state education system.⁷¹ As we will see in later chapters, the adoption of multiculturalism was a slow and ambivalent process in Victoria.

One change to the Victorian education system in the 1970s was a major effort at decentralizing the education system. *A Green Paper on Government Policy Going Forward* declared in 1979 that “only those functions which cannot be adequately carried out by individual schools should be the responsibility of the region, and only those which cannot adequately be carried out by the region should be the responsibility of the central office.”⁷² This was in many ways a response to the international philosophy of progressivism emphasizing local control as the key to making education more individualized and therefore more effective. Control was ceded to local authorities to accommodate the diverse needs of a heterogeneous society.

By the 1970s both Ontario and Victoria had weathered the major postwar population increases from the baby boom and migration, had thoroughly modernized and transformed their educational systems into large bureaucratic agencies, and had done so with a commitment from all major political parties along with widespread public support. Secondary education became a realistic possibility for every child in both places. Although there were problems on the horizon, especially higher costs as the economic boom times ended in the 1970s, the educational system in both provinces could claim, as the Victorian Annual Report did in 1963, that education set out “an account of commendable endeavor and progress...from which we can look to the future with increased confidence.”⁷³

1 TRADITIONAL, PROGRESSIVE, OR HYBRID? DEVELOPMENTS IN EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

As demonstrated in the previous section, the mid-twentieth century witnessed major societal changes in both Australia and Canada. These changes created new demands on educators and saw the role of education in society increase dramatically. In an effort to meet the changing needs of society, educators began to question the purpose of the educational system itself. What were the main aims and objectives of education in Ontario and Victoria? And what philosophies of education should educators use to answer these important questions? As time wore on following the Second World War, educators began to question their role in constructing a coherent national identity. Philosophies of education began to emphasize goals

that were antithetical to a British identity, and thus hastened the abandonment of Britishness as an organizing feature of Canadian and Australian education. This section explores the changing nature of the educational mission in Ontario and Victoria, focusing on the rapid transformation of pedagogy in both territories.

The school systems of Ontario and Victoria were originally intended to support democratic forms of government by promoting literacy and instilling in children all the traits necessary to form a compliant citizenry.⁷⁴ Pedagogically, most education was done through rote memorization and lecture, with the teacher as an absolute authority in the classroom who rarely permitted independent student activity. George S. Tomkins argued that the mentality of the late nineteenth century Victorian age continued to permeate the Canadian school system well into the twentieth century. Most of the top policymakers of the early to mid-twentieth century were raised in a traditional environment emphasizing nineteenth-century norms, and they continued to espouse these ideas despite rapidly changing conditions in the twentieth century.⁷⁵

Traditionalists advocated a core of learning that included mastery of English, mathematics, and history. By far the most important subject for socialization of students was history since educators generally considered the subject a vehicle to instill ideals of citizenship, duty, and nationalism. The 1936 *Ontarian Programme of Studies*, for instance, said, "The teacher should not fail to emphasize the extent, power, and responsibilities of the British Empire, its contributions to the highest form of civilization, the achievements of its statesmen and its generals, and the increasingly important place that Canada holds amongst the Overseas Dominions."⁷⁶ The curricula firmly embraced a Canadian identity subsumed into a wider sense of Britishness as the ideal model for civic education in Ontario. The importance of Britishness for both Ontarian and Victorian educators in the first half of the twentieth century cannot be overstated.

By the early twentieth century a new philosophy called "educational progressivism" began to challenge the traditional goals of education systems throughout the English-speaking world and seriously influenced numerous educators in Ontario and Victoria. Progressivism was a mixture of ideas coming from the work of child psychology as well as the influential works of John Dewey.⁷⁷ Dewey combined child-centered learning with a focus on aligning democratic forms of government with education. For Dewey, democracy was about social participation and cooperation. The

traditional classroom, by contrast, was an authoritarian system in which the teacher exerted total control over students. One of his basic ideas was to socialize students into active participation in classroom life as a prelude to useful participation as a modern democratic citizen.⁷⁸

Progressives sought to update the curriculum so it would apply better to modern life; they proposed a wide range of reforms to contemporary educational procedure to put these goals into practice. The movement advocated making the classroom more democratic, with greater independence for both students and teachers. Progressives also wanted to change pedagogical technique to more accurately reflect the mental and physical development of children. Their motto was often to teach the “whole child,” by which they meant engaging the child in more than the basic tasks of literacy and mathematics. Progressives advocated everything from the establishment of kindergarten and vocational schools to replacing chairs and desks with more comfortable ones.

The effect of progressive changes was to broaden the curriculum, enhance local authority over education, and allow for much greater student participation in the learning process. The progressive educational agenda represented a major deviation from the traditional aims of school procedure, but it is important to note that the terms ‘progressive’ and ‘traditional’ themselves often can be misleading.⁷⁹ Both educational philosophies encompassed a large set of objectives designed to more effectively create a suitable environment for learning. Many educators accepted some progressive tenets but rejected others. The tension between traditional and progressive educators would fuel educational debate in both Victoria and Ontario for much of the twentieth century.⁸⁰ Until the 1960s traditional aims and objectives maintained predominance at the highest levels of educational policymaking.⁸¹

As important as the debate between progressives and traditionalists was, it was not linked to the wider debate over national identity. In other words, an educator’s position on how best to educate children did not necessarily affect his or her stance regarding issues of identity. The progressive movement gained ascendancy in policymaking circles immediately preceding the adoption of multiculturalism, and it emphasized that difference in the classroom needed to be accepted. This made progressives in general less willing to tolerate the assimilationist policies generally advocated by traditionalists. But, as we shall see in subsequent chapters, there were many Canadian and Australian progressive educators in the interwar period, for instance, who lauded the British Empire and

accepted Britishness as the centerpiece of the national identity. Being a progressive educator did not automatically make one an anti-imperialist.

Progressive ideas first came under serious consideration in the late 1920s. In some ways this was due to the precedent that the English educational system set with the publications of the Hadow reports.⁸² The progressive tone of one of these reports, *The Education of the Adolescent*, is evident right away: “[It] will be designed to stimulate interest in boys and girls who are beginning to think of the coming years and a career in life, and are likely to feel the liveliest quickening of the mind when they see the bearing of their studies on that career.”⁸³ The report relied heavily on child development theory to inform its recommendations. In the end, the report affirmed the traditional aim of “forming and strengthening” individual and national character, but it did advocate a progressive broadening of the curricula together with new teaching techniques emphasizing student participation.

With the example of the English system in mind, Victorian education scholar G.S. Browne called for major reform in his 1932 work *The Case for Curriculum Revision*. Browne argued that while the Victorian education system had many strengths, “too much emphasis [was] undoubtedly placed upon formal matter, such as memorization of spelling rules.”⁸⁴ According to Browne, these outmoded practices would ultimately lead to a failure of democracy because there was little or no student participation. He argued that “children cannot be trained for seven or eight years in an autocratic institution where the control is mainly exterior in nature, then suddenly emerge full-fledged citizens in a democratic country where co-operation, self-control, resourcefulness and power to think are qualities of the highest community value.”⁸⁵ Browne wanted greater teacher input, a greater emphasis on foreign educational precedents, and a system of continuous revision for the curriculum. He warned that, although education in Victoria was not falling behind in absolute terms, the advances made in places like England were widening the relative achievement gap between Australian students and other nations.

Browne’s influence was great enough for him to be named chair of the Victorian Curriculum Revision Committee in 1932. The new curriculum kept most of the features of the old system, but Browne argued that the spirit was completely different. Teachers were given more freedom to choose educational content, students were given more opportunities to meaningfully participate in the educational process, and external examinations would interfere less with the average school year than previously.⁸⁶

History was combined with geography to produce social studies in order to allow students to more fully grasp the human experience. The curriculum declared that “pupils should be impelled rather than compelled in all their work, for cheerful goodwill is the key to success.”⁸⁷ Overall, “health activities, social efficiency, training for the right use of leisure time, character training, and drill in fundamental processes, are the main objectives of the elementary school.”⁸⁸ Much like the Hadow Reports, the 1933 Victorian curriculum revision attempted to affirm some progressive goals along with the traditional aims of education in the state. But the reforms were more philosophical than structural, often leaving teachers confused about what practical changes they needed to make in the classroom.⁸⁹

The 1936 Ontarian Curriculum Revision Committee also relied heavily on the Hadow Reports to which they were “indebted for the spirit and in some instances for the language” of the new curriculum.⁹⁰ The document stated that excessive homework, rote memorization, and other traditional teaching practices were outdated and counterproductive. But as in the case of Victoria, Ontarian educators only tentatively embraced progressive reform. The new curriculum reaffirmed that the school “should also join with the home and the church in the effort to guide the child in the formation of desirable attitudes.”⁹¹ The mission of the school system, therefore, was to give children a fundamental understanding of critical subjects and to form socially acceptable moral attributes so that children could actively participate in Canadian society.

At the start of the Second World War, Ontario and Victoria remained for the most part wedded to the traditional aims of the school: to produce socially and morally responsible citizens with a solid grounding in basic subjects of education. The war profoundly affected the notion of the educational mission. Educators in both Victoria and Ontario believed that democracy was directly threatened. Therefore, the school’s objective was to raise a newer, more vigilant citizenry to protect democratic living. The Ontarian Minister of Education said in 1939, “With the ideals of the democratic way of life at stake, and with the lights of freedom going out over Europe, it [has become] increasingly important that our schools should give pupils genuine experience in democratic living.”⁹² The emphasis on the duties of citizenship was pervasive in both Ontario and Victoria. Although character training had always been a component of the curriculum, the focus on values training became much more urgent.

It was during the war in Ontario, and shortly afterwards in Victoria, that policymakers instituted religious education in the schools. Courses in

Protestant Christianity were thought to be a necessary prerequisite for the maintenance of a British democratic culture. The topic of religious education and the schools is more fully explored in later chapters. Here it is enough to note that this was a key component of the postwar effort to consolidate a British identity in the curriculum.

Following the war, both Ontarian and Victorian educators began making plans for major revisions to the educational system. The Victorian Council of Public Education came up with seven priorities for the education system, most of which reflected traditional aims of education embodied in previous curricula. Overarching all of these goals was the objective of preparing students for the duties of citizenship.⁹³ The Council also recommended a wide range of structural changes,⁹⁴ but they placed a high priority on developing “a high conception of personal conduct and social responsibility.”⁹⁵ Civic education, always an important topic for socializing children into the dominant national narrative, took on added importance in the wake of the Second World War.

The focus on citizenship training and values also pervaded Ontarian postwar educational planning. The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario (Hope Commission) provided a forum for concerned groups to articulate their vision for postwar education. The Toronto District Inspectors presented a brief to the Hope Commission that argued democracy could be protected by forming “schools organized along democratic lines” that would fully embrace the mental, emotional, and physical aspects of childhood development.⁹⁶ Once again social studies or history were given a primary place in the curriculum because they were seen as a center of identity formation. The curriculum advised educators to place the emphasis on the rise and triumph of democracy in Canada, Britain, and throughout the British Empire. This was all part of an effort to instill in students a proper respect for the nation and a correct understanding of the duties of citizenship.

For the most part, the Hope Commissioners agreed with the Toronto District Inspectors. In their massive 1950 report, they argued that a good school was one in which “there is respect for authority, there is respect for the cardinal virtues, and there is respect for the pupil.”⁹⁷ But the Hope Commission also advocated a strengthening of character training for democratic governance. They concluded that “the inculcation of worthy ideals should begin as soon as the child enrolls in school and should be continued with increasing emphasis,” and that the subjects of English, social studies, and religious education were especially valuable in this task.⁹⁸ The emphasis

on values training pervaded the Hope Report and was a major feature of Ontarian education for the next decade and a half. Taken together, Ontarian and Victorian educators pursued very similar paths directly after the war. They reaffirmed most of the traditional objectives of the school system and strengthened key aspects of citizenship training and religious education.

By the 1950s educators faced the postwar expansion of the school system. Both Ontario and Victoria pursued aggressive building programs designed to do more than just meet the needs of a rising population. The newer buildings were to be fully ‘modern’ with all the latest equipment, more comfortable class sizes, and space for things like science labs or play rooms for younger children. Educators could get behind these reforms without abandoning the traditional purpose of the school: the production of worthy citizens holding the ‘correct’ sort of values.

In both Ontario and Victoria, the 1950s were characterized by a lack of meaningful reform to the curriculum and a wholesale rejection of progressive values. Hilda Neatby, from the University of Saskatchewan, the lone female member of the influential national Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, was perhaps the most vociferous advocate for traditional values. In her book *So Little for the Mind* she argued that, when applied to education, words like “democracy” had lost all value because “[they are] used freely by those who exploit their traditional dignity and worth, to cover all sorts of mysterious and doubtful transactions.”⁹⁹ Indeed, she blamed John Dewey for beginning this worrisome trend which she argued seemed “to consist of an artificial leveling process as between the teachers and the pupils.”¹⁰⁰

Neatby broadly attacked the very foundation of progressive education, arguing that it had “effectively cut off many if not most of our pupils from any real enjoyment or understanding of the inheritance of western civilization.”¹⁰¹ Given the postwar commitment to education in Canada, Neatby was incredulous that instead of using the enormous resources dedicated to education to build a better citizenry, “they frittered them away in making school life easy and pleasant, concentrating on the obvious, the practical, and the immediate.”¹⁰² She saw progressivism as an anti-intellectual and amoral agenda.

For Neatby, quality education in the postwar era consisted of three major points. First was the need for educational expansion necessitated by the rising Canadian population. Second was providing every pupil the basic information for informed citizenship. Third, and by far the most

important, the school needed to strongly convey “the intellectual, cultural and moral training which represents the best in a long and honourable tradition of Western civilization.”¹⁰³ Neatby called for a revitalization of faith and a rejection of the “false rationalism” of the progressive agenda.

In such a conservative climate, educators in 1950s Ontario and Victoria did not abandon the modest progressive reforms achieved in the postwar era, but they were unwilling to expand the agenda any further in an intensely traditional era. In Ontario the emphasis on traditionalism started with the Minister of Education W.J. Dunlop who staunchly opposed progressivism in education, and presided over a department “where change was not prized, and those bureaucrats sympathetic to progressivism could only keep their heads down and bide their time.”¹⁰⁴ It was not until John P. Robarts became Minister of Education in 1960 that reform of the curriculum became a major objective of the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The Victorian system experienced similar retrenchment in the 1950s and 1960s. Of the eight major goals laid out by the Committee on State Education in Victoria in 1960, four of them dealt with training in citizenship, religion, or character.¹⁰⁵ The report noted the major societal changes including rapid industrialization and urbanization that had occurred in Victoria along with upheavals in the nature of employment. The committee believed that the key to education was to secure, with the cooperation of parents at home and with the Christian church, a moral core for each and every student so they could weather the rapid transformation of Victorian society. They suggested, “[A] continuing plan of Christian education in the home and daily life would be of great assistance to schools in what they are trying to accomplish.”¹⁰⁶ The Victorian curricula experienced only incremental and intermittent change until the 1970s.

The 1960s were, by contrast, a time of great upheaval and a wholesale transformation of the basic philosophy of the Ontarian education system. There were several reasons for this period of change. Ontarian educators were all too aware of the growing tension with the province of Quebec, which was experiencing what is known as the Quiet Revolution. Also during the 1960s, immigration restrictions were lifted, making it easier for non-white migrants to enter Canada. The old assumptions of Anglo superiority were much harder to sustain in this atmosphere, particularly since the British Empire was seemingly on the verge of collapse.

Within the education system itself, pressure for reform built with dissatisfaction with the Robarts Plan implemented in 1960 that placed

students into various academic streams. Teachers and administrators soon became disillusioned with the rigidity of the system and campaigned for a new curriculum. Many were also influenced by international trends in neo-progressive thought including the ‘open education’ movement, which sought to free students from the rigidities of the grade system.¹⁰⁷ William Davies became Minister of Education in 1962 and encouraged innovative curricular thinking within the Department of Education. The crowning moment for this reform movement happened with the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives in the Schools of Ontario, appointed in 1965. Chaired by Justice E.M. Hall and L.A. Dennis, the committee came out with their influential report *Living and Learning* in 1968.

The Hall–Dennis Committee was given wide terms of reference to explore virtually every aspect of education. They received over one hundred briefs from interested parties all across the province. But ultimately, the committee was unimpressed with the public commentary on educational aims and objectives. Committee members complained about “a notable absence of philosophical analysis” and that “the briefs revealed considerable ignorance on the part of the public about what goes on in our schools.”¹⁰⁸ They therefore relied primarily on professional educators as well as several tours that committee members took to other Canadian provinces and other countries. The educators in the Hall–Dennis Committee signaled their desire to completely change the underpinnings of educational philosophy.

The Hall–Dennis Committee embraced the idea of a “child-centered” curriculum, meaning a program that would “guide each child along his own critically determined path.”¹⁰⁹ Rigid subject barriers and examinations would be tossed aside to allow for a program tailored as much as possible to each and every child’s individual needs. The learning experience was the crucial point of education, not the material mastered. Teaching by subject would not disappear, but “such disciplines should be seen as aids in the student’s search for skills and understanding rather than as bodies of content to be mastered.”¹¹⁰ The new program would consist of a few broad areas of knowledge including communication, man and his environment, and man’s ideas and values.

The last area posed a problem for the committee: How could values be taught in a modern educational system without indoctrinating children? The Hall–Dennis Committee repeatedly expressed their desire for education to accept and even embrace Canadian diversity. Were there universally acceptable values in a pluralist society? They argued

that the curriculum needed to make students aware of opposing points of view. "A desirable curriculum helps pupils understand other people, especially groups or nations with different characteristics or points of view," and "encourages patriotism and attitudes toward international relations that are compatible with the preceding ethical aims."¹¹¹ On the surface, this focus on values sounds much like the traditional aims of education including the development of patriotism. But the focus on social justice and acceptance of opposing viewpoints was different from the conformist and assimilationist policies of the past. In addition, the Hall-Dennis Committee did not believe it was the teacher's job to inculcate specific values in children. They argued, "The modern professional teacher is a person who guides the learning process."¹¹² Teachers were not responsible for producing proper outcomes, only for insuring they fostered an inclusive environment that was conducive to good learning procedures.

Living and Learning represented the pinnacle of progressive thought in Ontario during the twentieth century, initiating numerous reforms many educators had wanted for decades. But the report also made several claims about the national identity. The Hall-Dennis Committee transformed the postwar emphasis of "education for democracy" into a child-centered program focused not on the traditional mastery of core subjects but on the fostering of a nurturing environment for child development. Democracy could be achieved by tolerating diversity in the classroom and embracing local control over education. This was a major transition for the Ontario Department of Education and paved the way for the acceptance of official multiculturalism in the 1970s.

Although *Living and Learning* enjoyed widespread acclaim after its publication, it did not go unchallenged. James Daly wrote a critique of the Hall-Dennis Report in his 1969 work *Education or Molasses?*. Daly argued that *Living and Learning* acted as the new Bible in Ontarian education, "[but], like most bad sermons, it is full of truisms mixed with outlandish assertions, good sense tumbled together with bathos and shallow moralism."¹¹³ Daly found *Living and Learning* completely derivative of John Dewey's work fifty years earlier and lacking in intellectual force. "We must challenge the statement that a child who is learning 'cannot fail.' Suppose he is not learning very much? Suppose he is learning far less than he shows every sign of being able to learn? How is he to be brought up sharp and informed that far more is expected of him?"¹¹⁴ Despite the vehemence of his attack, criticisms of the Hall-Dennis Report were largely ignored, and

for several years after its publication *Living and Learning* enjoyed unparalleled support in official circles.

The publication of *Living and Learning* set the stage for numerous other changes within the Ministry of Education. In 1975 the Department of Education in Ontario developed a new curriculum called *The Formative Years* and even published a separate document specifically detailing the new philosophy of education to be implemented in Ontarian schools.¹¹⁵ They did away with the Robarts Plan in favor of a credit system that allowed secondary students far more freedom to choose their own courses. One historian said that the new progressivism was implemented in schools “however much local administrators, principals, teachers, or parents believed in it or not, and however much philosophers might carp that it was no ‘philosophy’ at all.”¹¹⁶ The Department of Education made it clear that their professional opinion was what mattered most, and enforced the progressive agenda as the new orthodoxy for education. This typified Ontarian education in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The new orthodoxy ultimately came under challenge in the 1970s. Many Ontarians were wary of the enormous cost of education as the economic boom times of the 1960s gave way to harder times in the early 1970s. Others believed the lack of subject focus and core standards led to students being woefully unprepared for either university or employment. Indeed, “from the early 1970s onwards, virtually all the critics, and all the studies, had remarked on the deleterious consequences of a system with no external performance standards.”¹¹⁷ The Department of Education in the late 1970s and early 1980s began to roll back some of the open education concepts deployed in the 1960s, but many important progressive changes remained. Core standards were reintroduced, but the focus on inclusivity and equality that pervaded the progressive agenda remained an entrenched feature of Ontarian education.

Victoria did not experience change in such dramatic fashion. Educators continued to espouse a hybridized mix of progressive and traditional educational objectives. The Minister of Education Lindsay Thompson wrote in 1969 that the most basic objective of education in the state was the ability of young people to develop to their fullest potential “regardless of colour, class, race or creed. In other words there should be true equality of educational opportunity.”¹¹⁸ Thompson believed education should be centered on the traditional skills of reading, writing and mathematics. But just a few paragraphs later he argued that “the most important aim of an effective education system is to develop a healthy set of values in younger

people.”¹¹⁹ Thompson continued to preach the effectiveness of citizenship training based upon religious belief, though he acknowledged that there should be a respect for other religious groups.

But though the 1960s were typified by an adherence to more traditional ideas, the 1970s brought about major changes to education in Victoria. Gough Whitlam’s national election meant the end of the White Australia Policy and the beginning of multicultural Australia. Internally, educators in Victoria began to question the place of values education in the state and certainly the perpetuation of a system of religious education in the schools.¹²⁰ The centralized administration of Victoria began to devolve power to local educational authorities to provide for the widespread diversity of needs in Victorian society. All of these internal and external changes drastically affected education in the state.

But change in the overall aims and objectives of education still came slowly. A White Paper on government policy regarding education published in 1980 once again showed the incremental nature of change to educational philosophy in Victoria. The pronouncement stated, like previous statements going back to the Council of Public Education’s 1945 report, that equality of educational opportunity was the official policy of the state of Victoria. But in a new twist the report stated that students should “recognize and accept both the diversity of our community and the widely agreed values and structures within it.”¹²¹ Diversity was recognized as a fact of Australian society, but the report still maintained that values education was possible and desirable in education. Educators were encouraged to preach values in the classroom “while at the same time acknowledging that values are changing, that tolerance of other views is expected, and that the values of minority groups should receive appropriate attention.”¹²² The rise of multiculturalism and the devolution of educational authority were major changes to the educational philosophy of the state, but educators still managed to graft these new realities onto the older and more traditional objectives of state education in Victoria.

2 PUBLISHING TEXTBOOKS IN AN UNCERTAIN MARKET

One often underexplored and yet vital aspect of education is the process of producing materials for use in the classroom. The creation of a school textbook was the result of a complex collaboration between the publishing industry and the Departments of Education in both Ontario and Victoria. Particularly in Ontario, it was also an important political and cultural

marker of identity. Educators consistently sought to give preference to local authors in order to protect students from foreign influence. Until the 1970s, this meant ensuring the production of books with Britishness at their core.

In many ways, Ontario and Victoria were in different situations when it came to educational publication. Ontario was by far the largest English-speaking province in all of Canada,¹²³ and many publishers sold Ontarian books throughout Canada because it was not profitable to make province-specific books. As Tomkins points out, “upwards of 40 percent of all students in the country were domiciled in the province,” which meant that “Canadian texts were, in practice, Ontario texts.”¹²⁴ Many English-speaking Canadian publishers, including the influential Copp Clark Company, were based in Toronto. Victoria, by contrast provided the second largest market in Australia. Though there was some publishing located in the state, including the Cheshire company, many publication offices were located in Sydney rather than Melbourne, and still more books came from British, American, or New Zealand publishers. But the large student population of Victoria made it a major market in Australia, so there are numerous examples of publishers developing books specifically for the state.¹²⁵

Both Departments of Education sought to build and maintain control over educational materials. Ontario produced an approved list of textbooks in an annual document called Circular 14. Victoria, on the other hand, controlled most primary educational publishing directly, and used its monthly publication of *The Education Gazette and Teacher's Aid* to send out yearly information on allowable secondary school textbooks. Ontario regulations in the 1940s stated that “if a teacher negligently or willfully [permitted] an unauthorized book to be used as a text-book” the Department had the right to suspend the teacher and to reduce their salary by the amount of the book.¹²⁶ Maintaining control over educational materials assured standardization of education across the varied landscape of the Ontarian and Victorian education system.

Ontario actually ceded some control over publishing with the major curriculum revision in the 1930s. Before then texts were often created under direct Departmental supervision, but after the changes publishers developed books on their own and submitted them to Departmental committees to authorize them for use in Ontario. Approval by these committees, which often included a majority of teachers, was incredibly important for publishers because the standard contract signed by the Department in

those years guaranteed a stable market for multiple years.¹²⁷ This involved a complex relationship between publisher and the Department in which the publisher served as “a liaison between the creative educationist and the public” in order to produce quality texts at fair prices.¹²⁸ At the same time, Ontario began the process of moving away from their previous one-class-one-textbook policy, recognizing that teachers should have some choice as to the materials they used in teaching. Circular 14 began to grow larger, with multiple books allowed in classrooms.

One of the main problems with the educational publishing industry in both Canada and Australia was the small market size compared to other English-speaking nations like the United States and Great Britain. American and British publishers had large stable markets locked in at home and could easily take risks and out-produce smaller Australian and Canadian firms. Those firms took big financial risks on each and every book they produced: poor judgment and failure of even a small percentage of their books were severely penalized. As Canadian publisher Roy MacSkimming wrote in his memoirs, “Economically speaking, publishing Canadian books doesn’t make a lot of sense. It’s a high-risk, low-margin business conducted on the fringes of empire.”¹²⁹ Educational publishing was the most profitable venture for most publishers because they could be guaranteed large contracts at a relatively stable rate, but they still faced stiff competition from foreign companies.

The 1930s and 1940s were especially tough times for Canadian and Australian textbook publication. The Depression and the Second World War seriously impeded the ability of smaller publishers to succeed. And it was during the Depression years that many U.S. publishers began to radically alter the nature of textbooks along progressive lines. They made higher quality and more attractive books that were far more expensive to produce, but more desirable in the classroom. As a result, in Ontario “the tide of American texts could not be controlled.”¹³⁰ The Ontario and Victorian Departments of Education took several steps to ensure the success of homegrown publishing. As we have already seen, one method was to tightly regulate the textbooks allowed in the classroom. Another was to modify books so that they were acceptable for use in Canadian or Australian textbooks. This was the method used to adopt the booklets for religious education in Ontario in the 1940s.¹³¹

In Victoria, foreign publication did not become a major political issue. The *Education Gazette* mentioned that texts produced in Australia would receive preference over foreign books and the matter was dropped. Some

British publishers like Oxford University Press used Australian authors to produce books for the Victorian market.¹³² One major publisher of Victorian texts was the New Zealand-owned company Whitcombe & Tombs, which consistently won contracts for books in the state. British publishers like Macmillan and Cassell also established local branches that proved successful in publishing textbooks.¹³³ As long as texts survived the scrutiny of Departmental approval committees, who ensured that content was appropriate for children in the state, they were eligible for consideration in the classroom.

In Ontario, however, the use of American texts in schools was a major issue for decades. In the early twentieth century there was a contentious public debate over the presence of American texts in Ontarian classrooms. Debate gradually died down because the Department assured the public that “no books, either American or British, were authorized for use if they did violence to the Canadian spirit or ideals. Precedence was given at all times to a Canadian text, and failing this, a British one.”¹³⁴ So the influx of American texts in the 1930s and 1940s was particularly troubling to the Ontarian Department of Education. Foreign authorship was viewed as especially problematic in topics like social studies, history, and civics considered vital to national identity. The Department made good on its promise to support Canadian authors, and by 1958 confidently proclaimed: “There are now Canadian books in every division of the list.”¹³⁵

The 1950s were a time of expansion for everyone involved in education, including the publishing industry. The immense increase in enrollments in both primary and secondary schools clearly benefited publishers. Expansion in the secondary schools was even more helpful because there were more textbooks needed for those years than in primary school. Ontario re-organized two of its previous branches to create the Curriculum and Text-Books Branch in 1956.¹³⁶ This branch was designed to more effectively liaise with curriculum creators and publishers. Both Ontario and Victoria liberalized their text-book policies to a degree, allowing more books within the classroom. This is not to say that the trend of foreign ownership declined in this period, just that everyone was making profits in the 1950s. One estimate says that during the 1950s about sixty percent of textbooks in Canada “were either direct American imports, or American in origin, adapted for Canadian students.”¹³⁷ Canadian authorship remained high in the subjects of history, social studies, and civics but continued to lose ground in other areas.

A major problem for the publishing industry was not encroachment by foreign firms but their wholesale takeover of Canadian publishers. In the late 1960s American companies took over both Gage and The Ryerson Press, two older educational publishing houses that had fallen on hard times.¹³⁸ In response to this perceived crisis the government of Ontario created a Royal Commission on Book Publishing tasked with assessing the entire industry to see if it could be saved. In the realm of educational publishing, the Commission took note of new problems with textbook production. In the late 1960s the Department of Education began to allow ever greater control over education to local educational authorities, including authority over textbooks. Educators wanted a much wider array of educational materials rather than the one-subject-one-textbook approach that had been the standard. The purpose of the annual Department publication Circular 14 became less and less clear as the list continued to expand during the 1960s. Was a list of books necessary for each and every class, or merely a convenient resource keeping teachers up to date on recent publications? The Commission also noted that “the basic textbook shows a tendency to be displaced in an increasing number of situations, if not always by new kinds of topical books, then by other media altogether.”¹³⁹ All of this occurred in the context of a dramatic rise in costs of textbook production, making it much more difficult for smaller publishers to keep up.

In the end, the Committee recommended the government aid struggling Canadian publishers in order to “nurture a firm sense of Canadian identity at home and to project the Canadian identity abroad.”¹⁴⁰ Supporting Canadian authorship was crucial to the establishment and preservation of a unique Canadian identity, and a local publishing market was central to this objective. It was clear that “book publishing would no longer be regarded as a business like any other; it was a key cultural industry.”¹⁴¹

Australian publishers felt many of the same pressures as their Ontarian counterparts. Major educational publishers like Cheshire and Jacaranda changed ownership several times in the 1960s. The premier Australian publisher Angus & Robertson ceded its educational book production to the American McGraw-Hill Publishing Company. The British were particularly active in the Australian market, opening newer and more extensive branch operations in the country than ever before. One author argued that the rapid ownership changes were the result of a “lack of finance capital for the development of new titles and for physical expansion.”¹⁴²

But unlike in Ontario, the scarcity of Australian publishers did not generate widespread public outrage. In fact, G.A. Ferguson, who had worked for the New South Wales-based Angus & Robertson for forty years before becoming the director of the Australian Book Publishers Association in 1970, presented a brief to the Ontario Royal Commission on Book Publishing arguing that foreign ownership was not particularly problematic. Ferguson argued matter-of-factly that “the nationality of the ownership of publishing companies has not meant in practice that an un-Australian or anti-Australian attitude has prevailed” because “most British and U.S. publishers have realized that if they are to make any sort of success out of Australian publishing they have to approach it in pretty much the same way as an original Australian publisher would.”¹⁴³ As far as textbooks were concerned, all of these books had to be approved by local educational authorities who would maintain certain standards and never accept ‘un-Australian’ works.

By the 1970s educational publishing had made remarkable progress in terms of the quantity of books available for each subject and the quality of all books produced for classroom use. Both Ontario and Victoria sought to encourage local authorship and both insisted on texts conforming to local curriculum standards. They differed primarily in their views on the protection of local publishing houses as a means of defending the national identity. Educators in Victoria and Ontario consistently sought to produce authentically Australian and Canadian works that gave home-grown accounts of the national identity.

3 CONCLUSION

The decades between the Depression and the 1970s were times of tremendous growth and change for the publicly funded education systems of Ontario and Victoria. These changes are reflective of wider societal changes including a massive demographic increase due to both greater immigration and the baby boom generation. All of this happened in the context of sustained economic growth that fundamentally altered the Canadian and Australian economies by speeding up the process of urbanization and industrialization. These changes fueled widespread public support for education as a vehicle for social mobility, and public support translated into massively increased political and budgetary importance for education.

But despite the major societal changes taking place around them, post-war policymakers were loath to abandon the traditional notion of

Britishness at the center of the curriculum. Educators relied on the continued viability of the British Empire and the value of Britishness itself as a fundamental component of Canadian and Australian identity. Doing so, however, became increasingly challenging with the postwar demographic changes brought about by looser immigration policies. As we shall see in the next chapter, Britain continued to possess a favored place in textbooks and curricula well into the early 1960s in Ontario and into the 1970s in Australia.

The reliance on Britishness as an organizing framework for national identity began to crumble in the 1960s and 1970s. During the 1960s Canadian identity was challenged as never before by the rise in nationalism evident in Quebec. English-speaking Canadians were forced to reconcile their vision of Canadian identity with that of French Canada. In Australia the increased immigration after the war, and the eventual dismantling of the White Australia Policy in the 1970s, called into question continued utility of Britishness. Internationally, the British Empire itself began to disintegrate and an enervated Britain sought to abandon the empire in favor of increased integration with Europe.

As a result of these internal societal changes as well as the external collapse of the British Empire, by the 1960s educators were beginning to look for alternatives to an Anglocentric national identity. They began to more fully embrace educational philosophies that emphasized diversity in the classroom as well as local autonomy in education. As we shall see in the following chapters, these changes produced a more inclusive educational system, but they failed to produce a universally acceptable national narrative to replace Britishness in the classroom.

NOTES

1. W.G. Fleming, *Ontario's Educative Society* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1971).
2. R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris: The Reshaping of Ontario's Schools* (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 1999), 11.
3. For more information on the system of correspondence schools and for a detailed analysis of Victorian education, see L.J. Blake, ed., *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria Volume 1* (Melbourne: Education Department of Victoria, 1973).

4. Ontario Department of Education, Report of the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1947), 6.
5. Actually, there was a system for 'coloured schools' in Ontario as well. At the time of the BNA Act there was a separate system of schools composed primarily of children of escaped slaves residing in Canada. But by the turn of the twentieth century these schools, although still protected under the BNA Act, had fallen out of use. When referring to separate schools I am referring to the Roman Catholic Separate School system.
6. "British North America Act Document, 1867," *The Canadian Encyclopedia* <http://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/british-north-america-act-1867-document/>, 1/2/18.
7. Although the Roman Catholic Separate School system was a major feature of education in Ontario, it is not analyzed at any length in this book, the aim of which is to compare Anglophone populations that embraced Britishness for much of the twentieth century. R.C.S.S. were, for a variety of reasons, not as engaged in the wider imperial framework that was so dominant in the Ontarian Public Schools. Relations with French Canada and the Separate Schools will inform this study, but they are studied only in relation to the purportedly non-sectarian public school system. For more information on the Roman Catholic Separate Schools, see the multivolume work by R.T. Dixon and N.L. Bethune, *A Documentary History of Separate Schools in Ontario* (Toronto: Ontario English Catholic Teachers' Association, 1974).
8. For more information on the operation of Catholic Schools in twentieth century Australia, see Thomas O'Donoghue, *Upholding the Faith: The Process of Education in Catholic Schools in Australia* (New York: Peter Lang, 2001) or Ronald Fogarty, *Catholic Education in Australia 1806–1950* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1959).
9. Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic Church of Australia, *Christian Education in a Democratic Community* (Victoria: Renown Press, 1949), 3.
10. For more information on private schools in Canada, see Robert M. Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario 1876–1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1982); J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, Louis-Phillipe Audet, *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada, Ltd., 1970); for information on private schools in Australia, see Simon Marginson, *Education and Public Policy in Australia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1993).
11. Minister of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Year 1938–39* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1939), 9.
12. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education in the Province of Ontario for the Year 1941* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1941), 60.

13. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 15.
14. A word should be said here about terminology. In an effort to prevent confusion I have consistently used the terms 'Departments of Education' and 'Ministers of Education' to refer to the state or provincial level educational authority and the political head of that division, respectively. Ontario had a Department of Education until 1972 when it formally changed the name to the Ministry of Education, though the title for the political head office was always 'Minister of Education.' In Victoria, the state authority was the Minister of Public Instruction who presided over the Education Department until 1948, when the Minister of Public Instruction officially became the Minister of Education.
15. For more on the Ontarian system of administration, see Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, especially chapters 1 and 2.
16. G.V. Portus, *Free, Compulsory, and Secular: A Critical Estimate of Australian Education* (London: Oxford University Press, 1937), 34.
17. G.S. Browne, *Education in Australia: A Comparative Study of the Educational Systems of the Six Australian States* (London: Macmillan and Co., Ltd., 1927), 82.
18. Blake, *Vision and Realisation*, xxxviii.
19. Minister of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Year 1942-43* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1944), 4.
20. Minister of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Year 1938-39* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1939), 5.
21. W.G. Fleming, *Education: Ontario's Preoccupation* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1972), 11.
22. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education in the Province of Ontario for the Year 1941* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1942), 2.
23. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education in the Province of Ontario for the Year 1942* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1943), 1.
24. For more information on the war's effect on Australian education, see Andrew Spaul, *Australian Education in the Second World War* (St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press, 1982).
25. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education in the Province of Ontario for the Year 1943* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1944), 2.
26. Minister of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction for the Year 1941-42* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1943), 22.
27. The implementation of Protestant religious instruction will be a primary focus of Chaps. 4 and 5.
28. Council of Public Education, *Report on Educational Reform and Development in Victoria* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1945), 7.
29. *Ibid.*
30. For an overview of the recommendations of the Hope Commission, see Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, Chapter 1.

31. The Commission published a minority report as part of its recommendations that largely dealt with the treatment of the Catholic separate schools. See *Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, Archives of Ontario RG 18–131, Container 3, Minority Report and Memoranda.
32. See R.T. Fitzgerald, *Through a Rear Vision Mirror: Change and Education, a Perspective on the Seventies from the Forties* (Hawthorne, Victoria, Australian Council for Educational Research, 1975); R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, Robert Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario 1876–1976* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983).
33. Freda Hawkins, *Critical Years in Immigration: Canada and Australia Compared* (Montréal, McGill-Queen's University Press, 1991), 33.
34. James Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration*, 2nd Edition (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002). For more on assimilationist policies in Australia, especially of the White Australia Policy, see Jatinder Mann, *The Search for a New National Identity: The Rise of Multiculturalism in Canada and Australia, 1890s–1970s* (New York: Peter Lang, 2016), Chapter 4.
35. Valerie Knowles, *Strangers at Our Gates: Canadian Immigration and Immigration Policy, 1540–2006* (Toronto: Dundurn Press, 2007), 274.
36. For more on debates in Canada and Australia over immigration, see Jatinder Mann, *The Search for a New National Identity*.
37. The 1957 Victorian Report of the Minister of Education states, for instance, that a variety of methods were employed to meet the challenge of immigration: “It is surprising how quickly they [immigrant children] adopt Australian ways, manners, slang, appearance, and outlook... Assimilation proceeds rapidly even where the new-comers form a substantial percentage of a school's enrolment.” *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1956–57* (Melbourne: W.M. Houston, Government Printer, 1958), 21.
38. W.J. Dunlop, Report of the Minister (Toronto: Government Printer, 1957), iii.
39. Minister of Public Instruction, *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction 1937–38* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1939) and Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education of Education for the Year 1959–60* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1960–61).
40. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 25.
41. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1953), 77.
42. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1959–60* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1960–61).
43. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1950–51* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1952), 1.

44. A.E. Shepherd, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1952–53* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1953), 3.
45. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister* (Ontario: Government Printer, 1956), 7.
46. O.C. Philipps, "Report on Primary Education," In *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1958–59* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1960), 18.
47. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister for the Year 1953* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1953), 87.
48. *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1952–1953* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1954), Public Records Office of Victoria.
49. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister for the Year 1951* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1951), 118.
50. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 43.
51. Ontario Department of Education, *Programme of Studies for Grades 1 to 6 of the Public and Separate Schools 1955 (A Reprint of the 1941 Edition with Minor Revisions)*, 1955, 3.
52. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1950–51* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1952), 16.
53. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 45–46.
54. *Ibid.*, 47.
55. John P. Robarts, *Report of the Minister*, (Toronto: Department of Education, 1961).
56. J. Donald Wilson, Robert M. Stamp, and Louis-Phillipe Audet, *Canadian Education: A History* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall of Canada Ltd., 1970).
57. Simon Marginson, *Educating Australia: Government, Economy and Citizen Since 1960* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), 54.
58. J.H. Brooks, "Introduction," *Curriculum and Research Bulletin*, Vol. 1. No. 1, October, 1965, 1.
59. For more on this topic, see Jatinder Mann, *The Search for a New National Identity*, Chapter 3.
60. For more on the Quiet Revolution, see Michael Gauvreau, *The Catholic Origins of Quebec's Quiet Revolution, 1931–1970* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005).
61. José Igartua argues that "the flag debate [of 1964] marked the end of the British view of Canada." José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945–71* (Vancouver, UBC Press, 2006), 192.
62. E.M. Hall and L.A. Dennis, *Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario* (Toronto: Newton Publishing Company, 1968).

63. Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1967).
64. *Report of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism Volume 2* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969), 8.
65. William Davies, *Report of the Minister of Education, Ontario* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1969), 2.
66. Gidney reports that "by 1970 spending on the schools and post-secondary education accounted for 32.5 percent of the budget" compared to only 16 percent in 1950. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 57.
67. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 58.
68. Robert Stamp, *The Schools of Ontario*, 252.
69. For more information, see James Jupp, *From White Australia to Woomera: The Story of Australian Immigration* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2002).
70. *Ibid.*, 31.
71. This topic is a major focus of Chap. 7.
72. A.J. Hunt and Norman Lacy, *Green Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victoria* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1980), 5.
73. Minister of Education, *Report of the Minister of Education for the Year 1963-4* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1965), 6.
74. For more information on the early days of state education in Ontario and Victoria, see Blake, *Vision and Realisation*; Wilson, Stamp, and Audet, *Canadian Education: A History*.
75. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance*, 258.
76. Ontario Department of Education, *Courses of Study for the Public and Separate Schools*, 1936, 17.
77. Dewey was a prolific author for several decades beginning in the late nineteenth century. For some of his more influential works, see John Dewey, *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990); *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (New York: The Free Press, 1944). For a collection of all of his works, see Levine, Sharp, and Simon, eds., *John Dewey: The Collected Works, 1882-1953* (Carbondale: Southern Illinois Press, 1991).
78. For more on the progressive educational movement in Ontario, see Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, Chapter 2.
79. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 30-31.
80. The Hope Commission said of the differences between the two groups: "We may think of the traditionalist as one who believes in strict discipline and the mastering of school subjects, and of the progressive as one who puts emphasis on interest and learning by experience." John Hope,

- Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1950), 33.
81. When writing about educational philosophy it is easy to categorize educators as either progressive or traditionalist, but the situation was more complex than this suggests. Many otherwise traditional educators were perfectly comfortable with some progressive reforms and vice versa. It might be more helpful to think of traditional and progressive ideologies along a continuum with educators falling somewhere along the line between the two.
 82. There were over six reports published by the English consultative committee on education under the chairmanship of Sir William Henry Hadow. For two of the most important to Ontarian and Victorian authors, see W.H. Hadow, *The Education of the Adolescent* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1926), and *The Report of the Consultative Committee on the Primary School* (London: His Majesty's Stationery Office, 1931)
 83. Hadow, *Education of the Adolescent*, xx.
 84. G.S. Browne, *The Case for Curriculum Revision* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1932), 20.
 85. Browne, *The Case for Curriculum Revision*, 25.
 86. J. McRae, "General Course of Study for Elementary Schools 1934," *Victoria Education Gazette and Teachers Aid*, Volume XXXVII, No. 10B, November 22, 1933, 434.
 87. *Ibid.*, 435.
 88. *Ibid.*, 437.
 89. The 1936–37 Annual Report, for instance, said: "It is but natural that in some cases the first wave of enthusiasm has almost expended itself. The new courses made great demands on the teaching staffs, and the handicaps have been considerable." The report advocated setting up "refresher schools" for teachers "with the object of keeping teachers' methods fresh, interesting, and educative." J.W. Gray, "Report on Elementary Education," in *Report of the Minister of Public Instruction 1936–37* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1938), 15.
 90. Ontario Department of Education, *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI of the Public and Separate Schools 1937* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1937), 3.
 91. *Ibid.*, 7.
 92. D. McArthur, *Report: Minister of Education Province of Ontario (Canada)* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1940), 4.
 93. The list included: health, development of character, worthy participation in family life, knowledge of the fundamental learning processes, preparation for vocational efficiency, unselfish democratic citizenship, and the

- proper use of leisure time. Council of Public Education, *Report on Educational Reform and Development in Victoria*, 7.
94. The group even advocated the establishment of kindergarten classes, a major item on the progressive agenda.
 95. *Ibid.*, 8.
 96. Brief 79 to the Hope Commission: Toronto District Conference of Inspectors and Normal School Staff, Archives of Ontario, RG 18-131, Container 12, 4.
 97. Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 42.
 98. *Ibid.*, 221.
 99. Hilda Neatby, *So Little for the Mind* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company Ltd., 1953), 3.
 100. *Ibid.*, 40.
 101. *Ibid.*, 16.
 102. *Ibid.*, 15.
 103. *Ibid.*, 14.
 104. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 36.
 105. Ramsay, A.H., *Report of the Committee on State Education in Victoria*, 1960, 38-9
 106. *Ibid.*, 94.
 107. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 65.
 108. "Report of the Briefs Committee," December 4, 1965, Archives of Ontario RG 2-168, Container 1, 1.
 109. Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario, *Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario* (Toronto: Newton Publishing Company, 1968), 59.
 110. *Ibid.*, 77.
 111. *Ibid.*, 75.
 112. *Ibid.*, 122.
 113. James Daly, *Education or Molasses? A Critical Look at the Hall-Dennis Report* (Ancaster: Cromlech Press, 1969), 3.
 114. *Ibid.*, 30.
 115. The Ministry of Education, *The Formative Years: Circular P1J1 Provincial Curriculum Policy for the Primary and Junior Divisions of the Public and Separate Schools of Ontario*, 1975. Ontario Historical Education Collections, Ontario Institute for Studies in Education.
 116. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 83.
 117. *Ibid.*, 91.
 118. Lindsay Thompson, *Looking Ahead in Education* (Clayton, Victoria: Wilke and Company Ltd., 1969), 4-5.
 119. *Ibid.*, 5.

120. The Russell Committee was initiated with the specific task of evaluating the continued utility of religious education in the schools. For more information, see Chap. 5.
121. Victoria Department of Education, *White Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victorian Government Schools* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1980), 2.
122. *Ibid.*, 3.
123. Quebec had its own internal publishing industry geared towards French-speaking students.
124. Tomkins, *A Common Countenance*, 410.
125. In many cases publishers still attempted to capture multiple markets with every textbook. For example, C.H. Wright's *The Australian Citizen: An Introduction to Civics* was "written mainly for Victorian students, but it is hoped that it will prove a useful class book and reference book for schools throughout the Commonwealth." (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1956), Preface.
126. Ontario Department of Education, *Circular 14: Text-Books Authorized and Recommended and Text-book Regulations for Public, Separate, Continuation and High Schools and Collegiate Institutes* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1941), 9.
127. Parvin, *Authorization of Text Books for the Schools of Ontario*, 108.
128. Brief 180 to the Hope Commission: Educational Committee of the Book Publishers' Branch of the Board of Trade of the City of Toronto, April, 1946, Archives of Ontario, RG 18-131, Container 18, 1.
129. Roy MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade: Publishing Canada's Writers* (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart Ltd., 2003), 1.
130. Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario*, 116.
131. Minister of Education, "Programme for Religious Education in the Public Schools: Teacher's Manual," 1944.
132. Ernest Scott's *A Short History of Australia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947) is a good example.
133. John Arnold and Martyn Lyons, *A History of the Book in Australia: A National Culture in a Colonised Market* (St. Lucia, Queensland: University of Queensland Press, 2001), 296.
134. Parvin, *Authorization of Textbooks for the Schools of Ontario*, 93.
135. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1958), 5.
136. W.J. Dunlop, *Report of the Minister* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1957), 7.
137. MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade*, 33.
138. *Ibid.*, 113.

139. Royal Commission on Book Publishing, *Canadian Publishers & Canadian Publishing* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1971), 169.
140. *Ibid.*, 16.
141. MacSkimming, *The Perilous Trade*, 149.
142. Valerie Ann Haye, "The Impact of Foreign Ownership on Australian Publishing of the 1970s," M.A. Thesis, La Trobe University, 1981, 23.
143. G.A. Ferguson, "Australian Book Publishing," in *Royal Commission on Book Publishing Background Papers* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1972), 365.



From “Scrub Players Playing on a Vacant Lot” to the Big Leagues: Ontarian and Victorian Educational Constructions of the Imperial Relationship

This chapter explores the various and changing constructions of Britain and the British Empire within textbooks and the curriculum in Ontario and Victoria from the 1930s through the 1970s. British history loomed large in the curricula of both territories throughout this time period, and its treatment of this important topic reveals the attitudes that educators held towards the concept of Britishness. By exploring textbooks and curricula directly related to Britain, this chapter demonstrates the evolution of officially acceptable portrayals of the connection two nations had with Britain in the mid-twentieth century.

The historiography of Ontarian and Victorian public school engagement with the British Empire after the Second World War is sparse and confined mostly to Canadian authors.¹ José Igartua argues that textbooks in Ontario after the Second World War portrayed Canada as an ethnically British nation. But the massive post-World War II immigration to English-speaking provinces combined with the onset of the Quiet Revolution in Quebec changed the ethnic identification of English-speaking Canada quite suddenly in the 1960s. For Igartua, the loss of an ethnic British

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identity was the product of internal Canadian factors leading to a loss of identification with Britain.²

George Richardson, on the other hand, argues that educators throughout Canada used the British Empire as a focal point of national identity. He contends that the national identity was integrally linked to Britain and the empire and was therefore historically reliant on the continued viability of the British Empire.³ The Empire remained a focal point in historical narratives for a generation after the Second World War until it was painfully obvious that it no longer remained an acceptable center for the national identity.⁴ For Richardson, it was the external collapse of the British Empire in the era of decolonization that ultimately caused Canadian educators to disengage from imperial themes.

Despite calls for a reintegration of Canadian history into the historiography of the British Empire,⁵ few have attempted any comparative analysis that could explain how the Canadian experience fits in within the wider history of white settlement colonies. This chapter examines the close identification of educational materials in colonies of white settlement within the British Empire by looking comparatively at authorized textbooks in Ontario and Victoria. A comparative analysis of two important territories in these colonies in Canada and Australia allows for a better explanation of the internal and external forces shaping national identity in the era of decolonization.

In the interwar period Ontarians and Victorians espoused a national identity within an imperial context. This identity prized the national independence granted by the Statute of Westminster in 1931, and it simultaneously emphasized the world importance of the white Dominions resulting from their participation in empire. This narrative persisted until the demise of British world influence after the Second World War. In the 1950s a belief in the vitality of the British Empire still existed; but in the 1960s those who wrote historical narratives for textbooks begrudgingly started to accept the loss of world influence in light of the collapse of Britain's empire. However, most texts still defended the imperial heritage of Britain and the white settlement colonies, making a key claim that the national identity shifted because of external forces acting upon both English Canadians and Australians. The many similarities in the Canadian and Australian experience indicate that decolonization profoundly affected the national identities of white settlement colonies.

The resulting scramble for identity occurred slowly and unevenly over time in both territories, and no new consensus identity took its place in

the 1970s. Educators attempted to emphasize national uniqueness but were unable to come to any firm agreement on exact parameters for a new locus of identity. In both places, an often unstated assumption of Anglo-Saxon superiority continued long after faith in empire evaporated, arguably representing the strongest point of similarity between the Ontarian and Victorian response to the failure of a Britannic identity.

Curricular or textbook representations of empire reflected contemporary assumptions of its importance for Canadian and Australian life and therefore comprise a unique and important resource for historians. Pedagogical lessons on empire were particularly important in the 1930s and 1940s since many educators saw participation in the imperial mission as vital to Australian and Canadian cultural and geopolitical survival. Over time, the political relationships binding Canadians and Australians to Britain became strained. In the 1950s and 1960s teaching about and celebrating the empire went out of favor, though it was never completely removed from the curricula in either territory.

But even though courses shifted to a more national focus, many authors continued to defend the imperial historical record. In addition to this, assumptions about white (Anglo-Saxon) superiority continued to be operative even after imperialism was seen as a spent force in international relations. This was more complicated in Ontario because educators in that province were much less accepting of explicit forms of racism. But educators continued to find ways to privilege whites over non-whites with a variety of implicit forms of racism as referenced by supposed 'levels of civilization,' development, or even climate.

The chapter begins by examining the formal prescriptions for teaching about empire as exemplified in curricula. The second section looks at the changing narrative of Canadian and Australian involvement within the empire as portrayed by officially sanctioned textbooks. The third section focuses on descriptions of the dependent empire with an emphasis on the incorporation of non-white territories into the meta-narrative of British progress and success. Finally, the last section analyzes how authors in Victoria and Ontario sought to explain and describe the empire in times of great change.

1 EMPIRE IN THE CURRICULUM

Educators in the mid-twentieth century consistently incorporated the British Empire/Commonwealth into their historical narratives in both Ontario and Victoria. From the major curricular overhauls of the 1930s

until the late 1960s, imperial themes featured prominently in primary and secondary curricula and textbooks in courses such as history, geography, and civics. In addition to assigned curricula and textbooks, every year special celebrations were held in which children learned about Britain, the monarchy, and the British Empire/Commonwealth. Official Education Department curricula, approved at the state or provincial level in both territories, stressed the continuing importance of the British Empire to Canadian and Australian life. In order to get their work approved, textbook authors needed to fully meet the guidelines written in the curriculum.

Britain and the British Empire were prominently stressed throughout the curriculum in both Ontario and Victoria, particularly in the context of courses in the humanities like history, civics, and geography. In the elementary years these topics were often rolled into one course called “social studies,” but typically they remained as separate subjects in secondary schools. In the 1930s and 1940s, curricula were often quite specific about the exact nature of material to be taught in the classroom. By the late 1950s and early 1960s, many elementary educators in both Ontario and Victoria argued for and received an expanded role in the production of academic standards at the local level. As a result, state or provincial level curricula became much less specific, instead containing general guidelines about the kinds of materials that could be taught in classrooms.

In the 1930s course descriptions usually contained the specific goals of each course, including those relating to the British Empire. For instance, the aim of the 1938 *Ontarian Grade Eight Course in Social Studies* was to introduce students “into the wider community of the British Commonwealth, learning much of the geography and history of the Motherland and of the sister nations within the commonwealth.”⁶ As will be shown in a later section, the “family” metaphor for the British Empire was a consistent trope in courses covering the British Empire until the late 1950s in both Ontario and Victoria. But here it is sufficient to note that educators thought the British Commonwealth was an integral part of the world in which the student lived, so much so that it merited an entire year’s worth of course work. In an era in which Grade 8 was frequently the last year of formal education for most children, the choice was significant, indicating that provincial officials deemed such knowledge to be a basic requirement of citizenship in Ontario.

The *Ontarian Programme of Studies* described in detail the method for teaching a course on the British Empire. Teachers were directed to cover

Britain for four months, the Dominions for three months, "smaller possessions" for two months, and the Commonwealth as a whole for the final month of the academic year.⁷ The time allotted to each subject in this course revealed their perceived importance to the educators who constructed the curricula. Britain, regarded as the "mother country," received the lion's share of time. The title "smaller possessions" for the non-white components of the British Empire is telling. Because these smaller possessions were not white, they did not merit as much attention as colonies of white settlement, and so were given only half as much time as was allotted to Britain. Significantly, this meant Canada's history was fundamentally integrated within the wider framework of empire.

The final section for the 1938 Ontarian history course dealt with the Commonwealth as a whole and was intended to be a summation of the year's coursework. Ideally, the section would emphasize the essential bonds of unity within the Commonwealth as well as its world importance. The curricula listed the elements that students should learn, including loyalty to the monarchy, the international significance of the empire, and "ties of blood and speech and sentiment."⁸ Every educator and textbook maker needed to infuse their classes and writings keeping these attributes of the British Empire in mind. The resultant educational materials produced in the 1930s were highly favorable to Britain and the empire, with only rare instances of criticism of it or of British actions in world affairs.

The Victorian curriculum in the 1930s emphasized British history far more than did its Ontarian counterpart. Whereas Ontario devoted only one year for studying Britain and the empire, Victorian educators recommended two years in elementary school. Its Grade V course looked at the history of the British Isles until the Middle Ages; the Grade VII course studied the development of Britain during the Industrial Revolution and then examined the development of the second British Empire.⁹ Victorian educators spent three years on British material, but only one of those years (Grade VI) focused specifically on the empire. This choice reflected the close identification of most Victorian educators with Britain and Britishness in this period, where studying British history was a major component of studying Australian history.

The curricula devised in both Ontario and Victoria in the mid- to late-1930s remained in place for two decades, when significant revisions took place. Curricula in the 1950s were far more ambivalent towards the British Empire—acknowledging British decline yet making the Commonwealth a major focal point for Canadian and Australian identity. In Victoria material

on the Commonwealth only existed in a Grade VI course. The reduced curricula flatly stated: "Our ties with the lands of our fathers are not quite as strong as they were in days gone by, for we are now grown up." British people were still "kith and kin" to all Australians, and Britain was still the parent country.¹⁰ The only difference was that because Australia had "grown up" it no longer relied on Britain as a child does on its parent, a result of practical geostrategic considerations. Although Australians still closely identified with British culture, they could no longer count on British support for their security, and so had to develop an independent foreign policy in an uncertain world.

Ontarian curricula in the 1950s also began to emphasize Britain's importance in a cultural way rather than focusing on political or economic factors. The 1951 curricula for a Grade 9 course entitled *Canada and the Commonwealth* argued that Canadian democracy came directly through their British origins.¹¹ Units in the course provided lengthy analyses of British culture and its impact on Canadian life.¹² British history was important because of what it could teach about Canadian society, not necessarily because of its continuing world importance.

In both Ontario and Victoria, educators recognized people from the British Isles as family. Aboriginal peoples in Australia and the French in Canada were frequently ignored or marginalized. But, increasingly, Ontarian and Victorian educators argued that their countries had outgrown the need for a 'mother' country politically and economically. Indeed, Britain's demonstrable loss of power and prestige following World War II gradually lessened the predominant focus on Britain's world importance that had previously existed in Ontarian and Victorian education.

With the perceived decline in a need for Britain's support in the 1950s came a proportional rise in national history. Educators created classes with titles like *Canada and the Modern World*,¹³ and one Victorian syllabus proclaimed that "Australia is proud of her nationhood."¹⁴ In most cases the focus on purely national matters directly replaced courses formerly devoted to Britain and the empire. Historical content covering Canadian and Australian involvement in imperialism was still important, but the focus was on how involvement with empire created national distinctiveness. Indeed, the heroes of the new coursework, particularly in Ontario, were often leaders who opposed closer imperial integration. In Australia, a new focus on the history of the Pacific region emerged as Australians felt that they could no longer rely on British protection. This was a major deviation

from previous curricula that saw the empire as a significant feature of Australian and Canadian political and cultural life.

The major curricular overhauls of the 1950s were the last of their kind in both Victoria and Ontario. After that, committees were set up to continually revise curricula. This meant that changes became gradual, and very few dramatic changes were made at any one time. In general, content on Britain and the British Empire continued to decline, with more emphasis being placed on national history and regional relationships.

In addition to regular coursework there were annual celebrations in both Ontario and Victoria throughout the mid-twentieth century designed to instill a sense of loyalty in students. The most important of these events was Empire Day, typically celebrated in late May on the anniversary of Queen Victoria's birthday (May 24). To celebrate Empire Day the Ministry of Education in Ontario created an annual Empire Day pamphlet to be distributed to schools in the province. Annual pamphlets extolled the virtues of loyalty to the king and provided information on Royal visits and messages from the monarchs.¹⁵ The Ontarian Department of Education clearly felt that knowledge of, and loyalty to, the empire was part of being a Canadian citizen.

Victorian educators in the 1930s similarly oversaw the celebration of Empire Day. According to the *Education Gazette*, the official news outlet from the Department of Education to teachers, the holiday was supposed to stress patriotic messages and include both students and parents.¹⁶ *The School Paper*, another publication of the Victorian Department of Education, regularly devoted as much space to Empire Day as it did to national holidays such as Anzac Day.

During the Second World War, proclamations of loyalty became even more fervent in both Ontario and Victoria in the face of a major world crisis. Ontarian Minister of Education Duncan McArthur said in 1943, "Should the Anglo-Saxon people be overwhelmed, democracy will vanish from the earth, and the progress of our civilization will lag, it may be, for centuries."¹⁷ Defending Britain and the empire was important because of a perceived racial responsibility of all Anglo-Saxons to promote their way of life, thus demonstrating the conflation of racial and cultural attributes common to educational literature in both Ontario and Victorian.

Soon after the war, the importance attached to Britain and the British Empire became increasingly less prominent in Ontarian Empire Day celebrations. Empire Day instead became the focal point for teaching about other concepts that were deemed of greater importance. In 1952, for

instance, the Ontarian Ministry of Education dedicated Empire Day to the concept of citizenship and service.¹⁸ Empire Day became more about character training and citizenship ethics (two major contemporary pedagogical preoccupations) than the empire itself. And, indeed, by 1956 the Minister of Education reminded instructors that Empire Day was also known as Citizenship Day and that the primary task of the celebration was to inculcate the proper values of the good Canadian.¹⁹

The 1956 celebration of Empire Day in Ontario was the last such celebration, as the holiday was renamed Commonwealth Day in 1957. The theme of the annual pamphlet continued to stress citizenship, albeit in a Commonwealth-wide or global sense.²⁰ Throughout the 1950s, Ontarian instructors used Empire/Commonwealth Day to teach about civic virtues rather than about the empire itself.

By the 1960s, the Ministry of Education in Ontario began to renew the theme of Commonwealth studies. Beginning in 1961, Commonwealth Day pamphlets began to highlight different nations belonging to the Commonwealth. The first such booklet gave a brief description of all the Commonwealth countries in Asia, focusing mostly on the economic and political problems the countries continued to have. The pamphlet described the ways Canadians could offer assistance, thereby continuing to promote a sense of Canadian superiority over Asian nations, only now along the lines of development theory rather than explicit racism. Subsequent booklets described Australia, New Zealand, and the African nations of the Commonwealth. But by 1965 the holiday changed names and direction yet again. The day was now 'Commonwealth and Citizenship Day' and focused almost exclusively on Canadian themes. By 1972, Empire/Commonwealth/Citizenship Day ceased to exist in the schools of Ontario.

In Victoria, Empire Day continued to be an important school event well into the 1970s. *The School Paper* continued to publish annual Empire Day programs (subsequently renamed Commonwealth Day), which often included poems or plays for children to act out on the holiday. The personal affection due the monarch was a popular theme. Some Commonwealth Day celebrations included descriptions of other nations in the Commonwealth, particularly other white settler nations like Canada or South Africa. *The School Paper* told students in 1966 that, although dependence on Britain had significantly decreased, "as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations we still feel strong ties with the 'mother' country."²¹ But even though the form of the celebrations remained similar,

content about Britain dwindled. No longer did Commonwealth Day celebrate the strengthening of ties with the British World. It meant a deep attachment to the person of the monarch but not to other nations in the Commonwealth, and even the attachment to Britain itself began to wane.

The overall trajectory of curricula and annual celebrations in Ontario and Victoria were remarkably similar from the 1930s to the 1970s. The wartime years in the early 1940s saw a tremendous upsurge in proclamations of loyalty to the empire, but such proclamations dwindled in intensity during the 1950s. The celebrations of Empire/Commonwealth Day became less important, and courses on British history were cut. By the early 1970s, national or regional histories were more important than British or imperial history in Ontarian and Victorian classrooms. These features of historical narratives closely corresponded to external events and contemporary notions of the waning significance of the British Empire.

2 NATIONAL BELONGING IN AN IMPERIAL FRAMEWORK

As the previous section demonstrated, teaching about Britain and the British Empire was mandatory in both Ontario and Victoria from the 1930s to the 1970s. But the curricula typically only provided brief lists describing the basic events to be taught, and a few suggestions for analytical frameworks that might be useful to instructors. Textbooks had to be approved by committees designed specifically to recommend suitable texts, but authors had quite a bit of freedom within the curricula to explore themes that interested them.²² In general, then, individual textbook authors were responsible for constructing the imperial past in a way that satisfied contemporary concerns. The following sections examine representative textbooks to illuminate their descriptions of imperial history.²³

In both Ontario and Victoria, most textbooks covering the British Empire sought to explain the place of the colonies of white settlement above all else. In fact, the colonies of white settlement, including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, garnered far more attention than the rest of the empire combined. The most convenient meta-narrative used by textbook authors was the colony-to-nation thesis, made prominent in the 1940s by several Canadian historians.²⁴ This analysis of history portrayed the history of Canada and Australia as a linear progression towards full autonomy and nationhood.

But even though educators sought to assert national distinctiveness in their historical narratives, they continued to rely on the imperial framework

to explain their own development. One key question in this narrative was when did the colonies of Canada and Australia become the nations of Canada and Australia? Some pointed to the development of responsible government, others looked at the history of Confederation, and still others sought to reconcile imperial and national histories by consistently praising leaders who balanced imperial loyalty with national self-interest.

Particularly for educators in Ontario, the role of John Lambton, the Earl of Durham, and his famous report of 1838 was crucial. The Durham Report came out after a series of revolts in both Upper and Lower Canada in 1837. Durham's report was the first major document to advocate the principles of responsible government in the white settlement empire.²⁵ Many who wrote about Lambton from the 1930s into the 1950s argued much like the author and University of Toronto librarian W.M. Stewart Wallace: "In his advocacy of the principle of responsible government he was a prophet and a pioneer of the British Empire of to-day."²⁶ From this perspective, British actions—and not Canadian demands—ultimately led to the rise of self-government.

Later authors were quick to point out that the Durham Report was a product of purely Canadian circumstances. In a chapter entitled "Canadian Colonists Fought for their Rights and Laid the Foundations of the British Commonwealth," the text *Canada and the World Today* reversed the portrayal of the Durham Report. Rather than the British generously bestowing responsible government to Canada, *Canada and the World Today* argued that Canadians, through political agitation in the 1830s, fought for and earned their right to responsible government.²⁷

In Victoria, most textbooks advocated a different view of the creation of responsible government. The author of *A Short History of Australia* argued that the entire movement towards responsible government in the white settlement colonies needed to be seen in a much larger context that included events in England like the Chartist movement and the growth of liberalism. But despite the developments towards responsible government, British leaders still had to be convinced to extend autonomy to more colonies. In this narrative, responsible government was a product of mostly British events.²⁸ The Durham Report was an important step on the road to responsible government, but one that was seemingly inevitable given domestic developments within Britain.

The concept of the inevitable rise of responsible government was part of an Australian belief in British racial superiority. Many Victorian authors from the 1930s to the late 1950s argued that Englishmen had an inbred "love of liberty and independence."²⁹ And if this was the case, the very Britishness (often inaccurately but tellingly conflated with Englishness) of Australia merited the development of responsible government. For this reason, textbook writers from the 1930s into the late 1950s generally found it necessary to assert and defend Australia's British purity. G.V. Portus, from the University of Sydney, for instance, produced an important text on Australian history in 1934 that was used throughout Victoria. He argued that as a result of intermarriage between English, Irish, and Scottish immigrants, "with the possible exception of the New Zealanders, Australians are the most British race in the world."³⁰ Victorian authors strongly identified with Britain because they saw themselves as British. According to Portus, the Australian national identity was directly linked to Britain, yet unique because Australians were able to be more British than the British themselves.

This was not to say that the high levels of immigration, particularly during the gold rushes of the early 1850s, did not change Australia. On the contrary, Portus and many textbook authors pointed to the immigration of Chartists as an important development in the history of democratic governance in Australia. He argued that the arrival of reform-minded immigrants paved the way for greater and greater levels of self-government and liberty in Australia.³¹ To Portus, the Australian gold immigrants, sometimes referred to as "diggers," were the real heroes of Australian history. They were also responsible for the democratic changes that many Australian colonies went through in the mid- to late- nineteenth century. British immigrants bringing British ideas to Australia changed the political landscape and were primarily responsible for developments in political autonomy.

Given the important sense of kinship with Britain, there was little place for non-British immigrants in historical narratives constructed by Portus and several other prominent Victorian textbook authors. The rise of an anti-Chinese immigration movement was an important theme in many books. Indeed, some authors argued that opposition to Chinese immigration was crucial for the development of a sense of Australian nationalism. One author argued that anti-Chinese feeling was "sometimes crude and jingoistic" but nevertheless reflected a growing sense of Australian nationalism.³² To this University of Melbourne historian, Australian nationalism

depended on the maintenance of Australia's European, and particularly British, heritage.

Ontarian and Victorian textbook authors constructed radically different versions of the rise of responsible government. For Ontarian authors, responsible government was the product of contingent historical processes, particularly the Upper and Lower Canadian revolts of the 1830s, which set the stage for the Durham Report in 1838. Victorian authors chose to emphasize the natural desire of Britons to have free and democratic governments. Therefore Australia's very Britishness inevitably led to responsible government. In both cases, Britain was central to the establishment of Canadian and Australian independence, but educational materials in Ontario and Victoria differed as to the exact nature of this process.

Another crucial point of difference between Ontarian and Victorian authors was their explanations for the lack of a political revolution leading to independence. Change happened gradually over the course of about eighty years from the time of responsible government to the Statute of Westminster in 1931, which formally granted full autonomy to the colonies of white settlement. The gradual shift towards political independence created fertile ground for historical confusion. Given the gradual nature of the change, it is natural to ask when was the tipping point on the road to full nationhood.

Some authors in the 1950s chose not to put a date on when their country arrived at nationhood at all. *Canada and the Commonwealth*, written by George Brown and several co-authors from the University of Toronto, argued that there were numerous instances when the nation 'grew up' rather than one definitive date. "The important thing is that they did become nations, and chose to do it, not by making a violent break, but by helping to create out of the Empire something new, a commonwealth of free nations."³³ Indeed, to many authors the nonviolent nature of Australian and Canadian independence was the salient feature of the transition, rather than the specific date at which colonies became nations.

Educators and textbook authors in Ontario and Victoria could mostly agree that the First World War was a turning point, when the colonies proved themselves to be worthy of respect among nations. This marked a definitive stage in imperial development because, according to textbook author George Brown, "The Dominions were no longer colonies; they had become completely autonomous or self-governing nations,

held together by a common allegiance to the Crown."³⁴ By this line of thinking the Statute of Westminster in 1931 merely put into writing the universally recognized fact of complete autonomy.

Textbook authors in Victoria and Ontario saw Britain and the empire as crucial to national development. But how did authors view the empire more broadly? In many ways, Ontarians and Victorians found great meaning in their belonging to the Commonwealth. From the 1930s into the 1950s there was an assumed loyalty to the Commonwealth and to Britain specifically. Indeed, during that time many authors continued to view the Commonwealth as an important force in international relations and Canadian and Australian participation in it as vital to national interests. But Ontarians and Victorians differed on the exact reasons participation in the Commonwealth was so valuable.

For many Ontarians, participation in the Commonwealth meant an increased political influence in the world. University of Toronto professor George Brown argued that the Commonwealth encouraged international cooperation and thus helped ensure world peace.³⁵ Some authors went even further, arguing that the Commonwealth relationship greatly increased Canada's influence in world affairs. Canada's place in the world was as a leader within the British Empire/Commonwealth, not as something totally distinct from it.³⁶

Contrary to the Ontarian view, Victorian textbook authors rarely considered the Commonwealth relationship as a mechanism to increase their world influence. The chief material benefit of the Commonwealth connection in the 1930s was security. G.V. Portus argued thus: "It [the Commonwealth] gives Australia the protection of belonging to a large and powerful partnership."³⁷ Security continued to be a vital concern for Victorian authors, but after the Second World War educators ceased to think that Britain could adequately provide for Australian security needs. Several authors became concerned that "the two world wars ... resulted in a serious decline in British power."³⁸ As a direct result of their isolation during the Second World War, Australians needed to come to grips with "the hard fact that Australia was a centre of western culture in an Asian world and could rely far less than before on Great Britain for protection."³⁹ History texts, therefore, needed to educate young people in the history and culture of the countries in the Pacific rather than focus exclusively on European history. Indeed, several texts called for Australian historians to match their historical narratives with their geographical location. In other words, they called for Australia to metaphorically join the Pacific region.

The most prominent Pacific country Australian texts sought to incorporate into elementary and secondary education was the United States, seen by many authors as the key to Australian security in a world in which Britain could not be counted on for security. In one such text, *Our Pacific Neighbours*, University of Melbourne professor Norman Harper wrote that increased collaboration with the United States would be essential to the survival of Australia and New Zealand.⁴⁰ This was necessary largely because of Britain's fading world influence.⁴¹

But rather than responding to waning British influence by withdrawing from the Commonwealth, many textbooks advocated a renewed emphasis on Australian participation. Indeed, according to Harper, "the hard realities of Britain's changing world position forced Australia and New Zealand to shoulder greater responsibilities for defence."⁴² Rather than question the continuing importance of the Commonwealth relationship, Harper advocated a recommitment to it. Britain's reduced status did not mean that the Commonwealth should be abandoned but instead that Australia's role in the Commonwealth should increase.

In Ontario, where authors were not nearly as concerned with security matters, post-World War II primary and secondary textbook creators began to focus on harmonizing contemporary national interests with their already established British identity. Many texts lauded leaders who were thought to have properly balanced the interests of the empire with that of the burgeoning nation of Canada. George Brown asserted that the first Prime Minister of Canada, John A. Macdonald, was able to do this best.⁴³ Macdonald received praise because he was able to find a middle way between the demands of the United States and Britain.⁴⁴ Authors in Ontario consistently looked for leaders they thought exemplified a truly Canadian voice, which lay somewhere between American and British demands.⁴⁵

In 1960, A.B. Hodgetts published *Decisive Decades*, which differed from the traditional historical narrative of Canadian identity. He emphasized the need to establish an independent Canadian identity, one free of imperial nostalgia or American influence. Hodgetts decided to write the text after the Suez Canal Crisis in 1956 and the rancorous public debate that erupted in Canada as a result. Like many authors before him, Hodgetts pointed to the relationship with the U.S. and Great Britain as the source of the Canadian identity crisis. But unlike most previous authors, Hodgetts argued that attachment to either American or British interests was equally detrimental to Canada.⁴⁶ Hodgetts thought an independent Canadian outlook was the

desired outcome, and he was one of the first textbook authors in Ontario to rewrite a history textbook with this perspective at the forefront.

The heroes of *Decisive Decades* were politicians like Wilfred Laurier, who balanced imperial obligations with a newfound sense of the independent Canadian spirit. For example, Hodgetts described in detail the controversial debate surrounding Canadian participation in the Anglo-South African War (1899–1902). Many English-speaking Canadians desired official and strenuous Canadian support for the British war effort, whereas many French-speaking Canadians thought there should be little to no participation. The Prime Minister, Wilfred Laurier, ultimately compromised by sending an all-volunteer force to South Africa and making sure that Great Britain paid for it. Hodgetts argued:

This middle-of-the-road declaration of policy, displeasing though it was to the extremists in Ontario and Quebec, was the only one acceptable to the great mass of citizens in all parts of the Dominion. Here, also, [Laurier] forecast the British Commonwealth of Nations—no longer an Empire, but a galaxy of independent states bound to the homeland only by the strong, invisible ties of loyalty.⁴⁷

To Hodgetts, truly ‘Canadian’ participation in the Commonwealth needed to be invisible. Any suggestion of formal imperial integration, or greater Canadian participation in Commonwealth affairs, ran counter to the Canadian spirit.⁴⁸ Hodgetts also argued that the French needed to be included in the Canadian identity, and many of the heroes of *Decisive Decades* were those that attempted to reconcile French Canadian interests with English Canadian interests.

As the 1960s wore on and the British Empire rapidly decolonized, more and more authors in Ontario emphasized a form of national distinctiveness that incorporated French Canadian interests over continued imperial engagement. Indeed, previous texts focusing on the empire came to be seen as dated and irrelevant, its authors still disagreeing on when the imperial mentality faded away. For the writers of *Canada: Unity in Diversity*, a joint project between French Canadian and English Canadian historians, the Quiet Revolution finally ended Canada’s time as an imperial outpost. They argued that “English [speaking Canada] was not psychologically free of its colonial mentality until well after World War II.”⁴⁹ Many other authors, however, pointed to the Imperial Conferences of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries as moments where Canadians asserted their own aims against British aspirations.

From the 1930s until the 1950s, Britain and the British Empire served a pivotal role in the historical narratives of Ontarian and Victorian textbooks. Victorians saw themselves as British and viewed the history of Britain as a part of Australian history. Ontarians likewise held that the peaceful evolution of the British Commonwealth was a central component of Canadian development. Both Ontarian and Victorian textbook authors used participation in the British Empire as a focal point for discussing the world as a whole. During these decades textbooks consistently acknowledged Britain's loss of power and the way this changed Australian and Canadian participation in the British Empire/Commonwealth. But rather than advocate for a complete withdrawal from engagement with Britain, authors emphasized the continuing importance of the example of the British Empire and Commonwealth to world affairs.

By the late 1960s, however, there was little sense in textbooks in Victoria or Ontario that the empire continued to be geopolitically relevant, or that students needed to know about the history of the empire because it directly related to Canadian or Australian interests. As will be shown in the next section, many authors continued to support and defend the imperial historical record and the contemporary Commonwealth despite their realization that imperialism was a spent force in world affairs. Indeed, Ontarian and Victorian educators continued to identify strongly with Britain on a cultural level long after they realized they could no longer do so on a political or economic level.

3 EXPLORING THE IMPERIAL PAST: COMING TO GRIPS WITH IMPERIALISM

From the 1930s to the 1970s, textbook authors in Ontario and Victoria searched for acceptable ways of incorporating the Asian and African components of the British Empire into an overall historical interpretation of empire. Non-white peoples did not fit neatly into the established narrative of a continuing progress leading eventually to autonomy. Following the Second World War, educators searched for ways to explain the imperial record that fit well with the colony-to-nation meta-narrative constructed to explain the history of their own countries. They simultaneously attempted to find new ways of asserting white superiority over non-white nations. As post-war decolonization began, first in India (1947), educators sought to explain the decolonizing empire in a positive light as far as

possible. This section analyzes the remarkably similar attitudes and responses of Ontarian and Victorian educators to changing circumstances in Asia and Africa.

E.L. Daniher's *Britain and the Empire (From 1603)* provided a telling example of early textbook portrayals of imperialism in Ontario. Daniher, a teacher at the Ontario College of Schools, was in some ways critical of the empire. For instance, he criticized Lord Palmerston and Britain's conduct in the 19th century Opium Wars of China, saying "This page of history is one that we can look upon with little else than shame. Britain's policy was dictated by greedy merchants whose tactics should have been repudiated, not upheld."⁵⁰ He was also critical of British conduct leading up to the Indian Mutiny of 1857, noting that the outburst of violence came about, at least partially, because of arrogance by the East India Company and a lack of concern for the well-being of Indians.⁵¹

But Daniher argued that, on the whole, the British played a positive and vital role in world history. In the epilogue Daniher wrote that the British "made and are continuing to make some very worth-while contributions to human progress" largely because of their "peculiar aptitude for public management."⁵² This "peculiar aptitude" meant that the British fostered "the true democratic ideals of freedom, integrity, good-will and good-sportsmanship" to the whole world.⁵³ And although he was critical of the East India Company officials leading up to the Indian Mutiny, he later pointed out that after 1858 British rule dramatically benefited the peoples of India.⁵⁴ Since he believed that the British were naturally fit to rule, Daniher portrayed any negative outcomes of imperialism as isolated exceptions rather than the rule.

Support for the British imperial record was even more pronounced in Victoria. R.H. Clayton, Senior Lecturer at Scotch College in Melbourne, wrote several texts on the British Empire from 1941 to 1946. Clayton was unashamedly supportive of the British Empire. His propensity to lionize the British was nowhere more evident than when he discussed their imperial involvement with India. The conquest of India was only necessary because of "Indian political ineptitude."⁵⁵ The Indian Mutiny of 1857 occurred because the progressive benefits of British rule "unsettled the conservative Oriental mind."⁵⁶ Clayton was aware of the critics of empire, but nevertheless concluded his work by saying that, despite some missteps, "no one can deny that the world is a freer and a better place as a result of British thought and activity and the existence of the British Commonwealth and Empire."⁵⁷ To Clayton, the British Empire was a force for good in the

world, and even the failures were but minor bumps on the glorious road to progress and independence.

Underlying the work of both Clayton and Daniher was an assumption that Britons were inherently superior to other peoples. Many texts implicitly or explicitly argued that the British possessed a special talent for governance. By this logic it was only natural that Britain should acquire and extend its empire. Doing so would greatly benefit lesser peoples who they deemed were unfit to govern themselves. Clayton and Daniher frequently relied on implicit racial assumptions that were nevertheless powerful in shaping their works of history. Geography textbooks were frequently more detailed in their views. One Victorian book divided the world's peoples according to hair type, with Europeans being classed as "wavy-haired."⁵⁸ The *Ontario Public School Geography* reader as late as 1947 declared that Europe was the most important continent because "it is the home of the white peoples of the world" that had "proved themselves superior to all others in many ways," especially their greater capacity for organization.⁵⁹

The underlying racial hierarchy that most history and geography authors ascribed to in the 1930s and 1940s led to several common tropes in discussions of the non-white portions of the British Empire. Indians invariably garnered praise for their "ancient" civilization along Orientalist lines,⁶⁰ but a common sentiment was that in the modern world it was only under British influence that India achieved peace and prosperity.⁶¹ British rule was often justified as a successful attempt to unify and pacify an almost anarchic subcontinent.

Africans received even harsher commentary. Even though "many groups of negro peoples" were "making rapid progress," one author still confidently claimed that "the Negroes were for the most part backward and lazy, as well as being frequently quarrelsome."⁶² Europeans needed to colonize Africa because Africans themselves, according to several texts, were too primitive to possess a meaningful level of civilization.

The racial assumptions at the heart of most educational materials of the time deeply affected descriptions of the British Empire. In the 1930s and 1940s many historians maintained a hierarchy in which whites had a clear responsibility to rule over Africans and Asians. As a result of this, textbook authors also saw the British Empire along strictly racial lines. James Mainwairing argued in 1945 that the amount of self-government bestowed upon any British possession should have been directly proportional to the

number of whites in the territory.⁶³ Indeed, he expressly stated this when talking about the Crown Colonies, saying, "Wherever there is a large number of white people in the population, there is a parliament of one sort or another."⁶⁴

Following the Second World War, however, explicitly racialized historical narratives began to fall out of favor in Ontario. Textbook authors rethought their views on the British Empire without relying quite so much on race. The 1954 work *Canada and the World* by George Brown, J.M.S. Careless, Gerald Craig, and Eldon Ray gave a detailed description of how and why Asians and Africans were not in a good position to govern themselves, but did so without using an expressly racist argument.⁶⁵ The authors accepted that race was an inaccurate historical tool, saying that "scientifically there are no reasons whatsoever to support any claims of racial discrimination."⁶⁶

But if race was not a determining factor in historical success, what was? The authors of *Canada and the World* relied on the idea that climate determined progress: "The greatest advances in industrial development and technical skill have taken place within the temperate zones. A cool invigorating climate may have stirred up man's genius for invention, and ... led him to make bold efforts to improve his lot."⁶⁷ But, by comparison, "the hot humid climate of the tropics seems to limit man's ability to master his environment."⁶⁸ European peoples living in temperate zones had to work harder and advance their civilization further to alter and control the environment around them.⁶⁹ This explanation allowed the authors of *Canada and the World* to explain the major differences in technological achievement without using explicitly racial terminology. People possessed some agency in overcoming climatic obstacles, but the nature of the climate was still paramount in determining historical progress.

The case of South Africa revealed the persistent tendency in Ontarian texts of the 1950s to embrace white peoples in the empire over all other groups despite assertions of racial equality. Brown and co-authors argued in *Canada and the Commonwealth* that white South Africans were clearly going too far with the policy of apartheid, but also that the alternatives to apartheid were far more problematic. They rhetorically asked, "Who would argue that the white minority should pull down all barriers and let themselves be swallowed up in a vast sea of only partially civilized peoples?"⁷⁰ In a similar vein, W.D. McDougall argued, "[The] white man feels that until civilization has caught up with the Native he just doesn't dare extend to him the usual privileges of citizenship."⁷¹ Indigenous Africans were depicted as brutes who

would immediately wipe out the white population if not strictly policed and controlled. The authors suggested that apartheid actually benefited indigenous Africans because white taxpayers built their schools and hospitals, and enacted beneficial laws to protect them.⁷² Although sensitive to criticisms of imperialism, Brown and his co-authors clearly sympathized with white over non-white South Africans.

Although *Canada and the Commonwealth* ostensibly advocated racial equality, it still revealed a racial bias. The authors argued that the only chance Africans had of attaining civilization was for the British to benevolently guide them to their 'level.' According to this view, it was through British imperial control that, "the wasted millions of manpower, the undeveloped resources, and the ignorant untrained human minds" could be raised to the level of a civilized people.⁷³ Africans may not have been declared inferior racially in any explicit sense, but implicitly the message of the texts was that they were ignorant and their lands undeveloped and wasted until they received white assistance on the world stage. Ontarian authors called on development theory to explain their continued superiority over the non-white nations of the Commonwealth.

In Victoria, explicit forms of racism were still common in historical textbooks well into the 1960s. The text *Southern World* in 1967, for instance, noted in a matter of fact way: "It is obvious that the African peoples are at varying stages of development."⁷⁴ Prejudicial language continued to be a prominent feature in Victorian descriptions of Africans in particular, but most non-white groups in general.

By the mid-1950s, authors in both Ontario and Victoria began to respond to perceived criticisms of the British Empire. One Victorian author pointed out:

It is too often forgotten that thousands of colonial administrators have dedicated themselves to bringing peace to warlike tribes, caring for the health and happiness of native people, and protecting them from many unscrupulous employers—plantation and mine owners and farmers—who would have exploited natives unmercifully without the intervention of governments.⁷⁵

Victorian textbooks such as *From Colonies to Commonwealth* defended the British record in almost every instance. A few examples will illustrate the overall point. When describing the life and administration of Robert Clive, one author asserted, "[Clive's] life may be said to have started the

tradition of purity of administration which developed in the Indian Civil service."⁷⁶ For someone who made a career out of gaining great personal wealth from conquest in India, this assertion seems dubious at best. But time and again British actors garnered great adulation in this textbook, whereas all the problems of British administration were a result of interference or ignorance on the part of indigenous peoples.

Canada and the Commonwealth and *From Colonies to Commonwealth* embody a particular way of looking at the world that Ontarian and Victorian authors espoused in the 1950s and that at least some advocated into the 1960s. Although textbook authors recognized that imperialism itself had become increasingly unpopular globally, they nevertheless defended the British record. Brown argued that "imperialism had both its good and bad sides" but "in British hands, moreover, imperialism in backward regions often did more good than harm."⁷⁷ Brown and co-authors argued that a primary motivation behind British imperialism was always the propagation of freedom, peace, and the rule of law to "backward peoples." Whether racially, climatically, developmentally, or by hair type, Ontarian and Victorian authors consistently stressed that Europeans (and Britons in particular) were superior to all others.

Given this presumed superiority, one of the most important challenges facing textbook authors in the 1950s and 1960s was how the non-white territories of the British Empire could be incorporated into an overall narrative that stressed the progressive benefits of British rights and freedoms. In earlier times textbook authors generally ignored the non-white empire or relegated those territories to second-class status. Now authors were forced to incorporate India and parts of Africa into their story about the rise of representative government within the Commonwealth.

Canada and the Commonwealth asserted that Asian and African countries were "moving along the path from Empire to Commonwealth, from colonies to Dominions."⁷⁸ The authors posited that the British peoples developed the most important aspects of modern society, including freedom of religion, democracy, freedom of speech, tolerance, and the rule of law. They wrote that Britain's aim was "to raise the living standards, education, and generally the civilization, of native peoples until they are able to take over their own government to the fullest degree."⁷⁹ This process took quite a bit longer in Asia and Africa than in colonies of white settlement because, depending on the author, Asians and Africans either

possessed much lower standards of civilization to begin with, or they were simply racially inferior.

The tendency to incorporate non-white territories into an existing narrative about the history of representative government existed in both Ontarian and Victorian textbooks and persisted well into the 1960s. The new narrative typically contended that only white British people were responsible for progressive changes to society. Non-white peoples in Asia or Africa were the beneficiaries of British wisdom and largesse but never generated any important reforms or changes. In fact, they were generally held to be responsible for failures in the British administration. In a world in which British importance had dramatically waned and independence movements were sweeping across the empire, authors needed to explain the process of decolonization in a way that seemed reasonable. Ultimately, they explained decolonization to be the logical outcome of the extension of autonomy that began with responsible government in the 1840s. They argued the British always said they would grant self-government and that the nations of Asia were only now ready to govern themselves.

The mere ‘fact’ that the colonized were ‘ready’ for self-government in the age of decolonization was proof offered by authors that the British had accomplished the impossible object of civilizing the ignorant.

The Ontarian text *Modern Perspectives* argued that decolonization was an inevitable historical outcome and that the British should be applauded for being the most farsighted nation in the process. Europeans, by ruling over other lands, brought with them “the disruptive force of nationalism, which had exerted decisive influence on European and American history.”⁸⁰ Effectively, European imperialism sowed the seeds of anti-colonial nationalism, and therefore its own destruction. Compared to other decolonizing powers (such as the French), the British ought to be praised for having recognized this early. The text argued that from the very beginning of imperialism in Africa, the British set themselves apart from other European powers. The British focused on teaching Africans how to develop their own forms of self-government, so that “when the post-war wave of nationalism struck her African colonies, Britain was already in a position to effect a generally peaceful transfer of authority to the native peoples under her rule.”⁸¹ Although *Modern Perspectives* does not condone imperialism, neither does the book condemn it. And, indeed, the British were farsighted to decolonize in a ‘generally’ peaceful manner.⁸²

Educators in the 1960s also needed to explain the rise of anti-colonial nationalism. In their work *The Making of the Modern World*, Victorian

authors Marjorie Coppel and Mary Lazarus argued that imperialism disadvantaged Asians and Africans economically: "In these undemocratic countries the workers had little chance of improving their lot. They were often too hungry and too ignorant to do so."⁸³ The authors continued that imperialism brought numerous benefits to Africa and Asia. Despite "the spirit of condescension of so many Europeans" a world without imperialism would have experienced little progress, and "no hope of ever raising the living conditions of the people."⁸⁴ Although much more critical of British imperialism than earlier explanations of anti-colonial nationalism, this description of the forces behind decolonization was inherently ambiguous. The authors conceded that the very nature of imperialism seemed "condescending," but the imperial record continued to be upheld. The British were doing amazing work for primitive peoples, but it was understandable that a people would reject foreign rule altogether. This explanation freed the British from any wrongdoing in the imperial mission and simultaneously sympathized, at least superficially, with Asian and African calls for self-government.

Pedagogical constructions of decolonization produced in both Ontario and Victoria continued the trend of marginalizing non-white agency in their meta-narratives of history. Indeed, many authors asserted with little evidence that the British plan for the decolonization of Asia in the late 1940s and later in Africa was planned in advance by Whitehall rather than having arisen from the intense agitation of indigenous peoples themselves. They thus stripped non-white peoples of agency in the historical process of decolonization, asserting instead that whites, particularly in Britain, were engineering the entire process in a farsighted, controlled, and planned manner.

Even though much of the literature in the late 1960s still lauded British imperialism in general, it is important to understand that newer textbooks initiated a major change in the standard historical meta-narrative in Ontario and Victoria. In the 1930s and 1940s there was an established and explicitly racialized hierarchy of the British Empire. In the older standard, the white Dominions were on a path to self-government and eventual autonomy. But because of British racial superiority, particularly in matters of government, Asian and African crown colonies could expect to remain under British control for the foreseeable future. With the accelerating pace of decolonization in the 1950s and 1960s, however, this earlier narrative was abandoned. In its place arose an interpretation which saw an enlightened and farsighted British presence working continually towards

the goal of independence for Asia and Africa. Ontarian and Victorian authors constructed remarkably similar historical narratives of British imperialism and the process of decolonization.

4 THE IMPERIAL FAMILY

The previous sections demonstrated the importance of the British Empire to the historical narratives of national progress and world influence in both Ontario and Victoria. But, what kind of general explanation of empire did educators use in their texts? In other words, how did they explain the contemporary and historical empire or commonwealth in a way children could understand?

Textbook authors in Ontario and Victoria found it difficult to describe precisely what the empire continued to mean to their contemporary societies. While during the 1930s and 1940s educators had little difficulty identifying closely with the British Empire, by the 1950s its importance seemed dramatically diminished. Individual textbook authors became defensive about Canadian or Australian participation in the empire. R.H. Clayton argued in 1952, “No part [of the Commonwealth] could gain anything by leaving it and all would be the poorer. Political liberty and individual freedom have found their home within its borders, and the whole world would suffer loss were it weakened or disbanded.”⁸⁵ The Commonwealth was difficult to define specifically, but always merited unwavering support.

Other authors found it difficult to reconcile national history with the long history of imperial engagement in both Canada and Australia. One author suggested Canada’s relationship with the Commonwealth combined “full national independence with the preservation of a common crown, a common citizenship, and intimate practices of consultation, in the Commonwealth.”⁸⁶ But how did authors explain this development, seemingly unique in the world?

The most common metaphor for explaining the empire was that of the family. Authors in both Canada and Victoria from the 1930s until the late 1950s referred to the British Commonwealth as a ‘living family of nations.’ This metaphor proved to be rhetorically useful in describing both the mostly independent settlement colonies and the dependent empire. For the autonomous nations of the Commonwealth, Victorian G.V. Portus argued that the family of nations within the British Empire should “continue to pay respect and obedience to their parents, not

because the parents are able to enforce it, but because both parents and children wish to keep the family together and preserve the idea of family life."⁸⁷ For Portus, Australia and the other white settlement colonies remained attached to the British Empire out of love and familial attachment.

The metaphor was also used to describe the imperial relationship between Britain and the dependent empire. W.D. McDougall explained both the history of the Dominions and the Crown Colonies using a mother/child familial metaphor: "The older children grow up, move away and establish independent homes of their own, but there are always junior members of the family who continue to hover around mother like a brook of young chickens."⁸⁸ No matter how the family metaphor worked out, authors consistently emphasized the invisible links holding the Commonwealth together. George Brown explained it like this: "The ties that hold the Commonwealth together are very real, but like those which hold a true family together they are not ties of force but of co-operation based on common interest and understanding."⁸⁹

The imperial family meant different things to Ontarians and Victorians. Ontario textbooks consistently pointed to Canada's role as mediator between Britain and the United States as the most important feature of the post-World War II Commonwealth. Donald Dickie, author of *The Great Adventure*, argued that this represented a major transformation in Canadian world status. Dickie compared the three nations to a baseball league:

Britain and the United States were ... the big-league teams. The British Provinces were hardly a team at all, just a group of scrub players practicing on a vacant lot...Every time the big fellows fell upon them, they had just to pick themselves up, sore and angry but determined, and go in again. It has been hard training, but 150 years of it has taught Canada a good deal about how to play as a junior team in a big league.⁹⁰

According to Dickie's interpretation, Canadian participation in the triangular relationship was an important step on the road to Canadian nationhood. Ultimately, Canada became a mediator between the U.S. and the U.K, a particularly important position for the small nation of Canada.⁹¹ Dickie turned Canada's historical dependence on both Britain and the United States on its head, arguing that this was in fact a great strength of the Canadian nation.

Other Ontarian authors argued that the Commonwealth served as a prominent vehicle for world peace. W.D. McDougall pointed out that the Commonwealth could serve as a model for the new United Nations, an example of nations co-existing harmoniously.⁹² McDougall's analysis compared the complicated workings of the United Nations unfavorably to the more ethereal but, from his perspective, more effective bonds of loyalty holding the Commonwealth together. As a prominent leader within the Commonwealth, Canada maintained a position of world influence out of all proportion to its modest population and served as an example to the world of a state where many races and peoples co-existed despite differences. Such a rosy view of the Commonwealth obviously ignored much of the anti-colonial sentiment prominent among newly independent countries, but reassured readers of Canada's continuing international importance in an imperial framework.

In Victoria, the focus of much of the literature in textbooks was not about world influence but about a shared identity with Britain. Victorian educators were not as interested in identifying with the Commonwealth as they were with the 'mother country.' One author argued, "British history is their history, with its failings to be guarded against and its glories to be emulated."⁹³ Since Australians were British, studying the history of the British Isles was a crucial component in understanding Australia's own past.

One idea both Victorians and Ontarians shared was a shared sense of responsibility for the non-white empire. Post-war textbooks consistently noted the duty of Canada and Australia to provide for the newly independent countries formerly governed directly by Britain. As one Ontarian textbook argued:

Canada has generally watched with sympathetic interest as others follow[ed] a similar path to nationhood...[as she] blazed the trail toward independent nationhood within the Commonwealth. Also, her motives [were] not suspect; no one could accuse Canada of being an imperialist power.⁹⁴

Ontarian authors argued that Canada was in fact the second most important nation in the Commonwealth, behind Great Britain alone.

In several textbooks, Canadian and Australian assistance was crucial to the continued viability of the Commonwealth because old assumptions of non-white incompetence survived well into the 1960s. One Ontarian work asserted that "in brief, the peoples of Asia and Africa have found

that it is perhaps easier to break the chains of colonialism than to govern themselves" and that they would need assistance from more advanced nations as they struggled to create independent nations.⁹⁵ Text after text mentioned the woeful state of Asian and African economies, generally concluding that only Canadian or British assistance would allow them to emerge out of dire poverty and ignorance. Assistance in initiatives such as the Colombo Plan was used as evidence of continuing white superiority over the non-white portions of the Commonwealth. Victorian authors stressed the importance of aiding Asian and African peoples of the former British Empire, but for reasons very different from Ontarian writers. Victorians were concerned about security in the Asian region, arguing that Australians needed to be more active in aiding Asian nations to make friends.

This emphasis on aiding the newly independent countries accorded well with a comfortably familiar narrative of British history: the story of the empire was about Britain magnanimously granting independence to all of its possessions. Textbook authors continued to portray their countries as sharing in the imperial mission long after independence was achieved. Despite some differences in emphasis, Ontarians and Victorians used similar language to construct ideas of national importance within the imperial framework.

5 CONCLUSION

By the late 1960s and early 1970s, few Ontarian authors argued that the Commonwealth of Nations was central to the Canadian identity. Some Australian authors continued to make such claims, but even in Victoria most texts in the 1970s argued that British political and economic influence was at an end in Australia. Great Britain had granted independence to virtually all its African and Asian possessions and was attempting to join the European Economic Community (successfully so in 1973). In a mere thirty years, then, Ontarians and Victorians lost a major focal point for their historical narratives of national identity.

The response of educators in both territories to the collapse of the British Empire showed remarkable similarities. In the 1940s imperial loyalty reached new heights during the Second World War. Textbooks and celebrations were effusive in their praise of Britain and the British Empire. The 1950s brought with them increasing tension about Britain's rapid post-war decline. Textbooks took on a defensive tone that generally upheld

the continuing importance of the Commonwealth. In Australia the inability of Britain to adequately provide for security led to a reappraisal of the political attachments to Britain. The 1960s produced an entirely new emphasis on national distinctiveness in Ontario. In both cases the typical historical narrative continued to emphasize national superiority if not outright racial superiority.

Ultimately, as educators realized they could no longer cling to an identity with Britishness at its heart, Victorians and Ontarians took separate paths towards a new identity. Ontarians looked to create a new historical narrative that bridged the gap between French- and English-speaking interests and so could produce a truly Canadian voice. Victorian educators, who had no major minority population experiencing unrest as Canada did, continued to use Britishness as a central component of national identity. But, on a political and economic level textbooks advocated a strengthening of ties with the United States. The external collapse of the British Empire forced local educational elites in both Ontario and Victoria to reconstruct a new historical narrative based on contemporary perceptions of national interests.

NOTES

1. There are studies of the educational literature in Victoria for earlier and later periods. For an overview of Australian texts from the emergence of public education to the interwar period, see , P.W. Musgrave, *Society and the Curriculum in Australia* (Sydney: George Allen & Unwin Australia Pty Ltd, 1979). Or, for a look at the controversy surrounding education in the 1980s and 1990s, see Stuart Macintyre and Anna Clark, *The History Wars* (Carlton, Vic.: Melbourne University Press, 2004).
2. José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 225.
3. George Richardson, "Nostalgia and National Identity: The History and Social Studies Curricula of Alberta and Ontario at the End of Empire," found in Philip Buckner, ed., *Canada and the End of Empire* (Toronto: UBC Press, 2005), 192.
4. *Ibid.*, 192.
5. See Phillip Buckner and Phillip Francis, *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity* (Vancouver: University of British Colombia Press, 2006).
6. Ontario Department of Education. *Programme of Studies for Grades VII and VIII of the Public and Separate Schools, Ontario Department of Education*, 1938. OHEC 372.1909713 O59 DE/C Box 3, 13.

7. 'Dominion' is a term referring to the colonies of white settlement in the British Empire including Canada, Australia, New Zealand, South Africa, and, for a time, Ireland. After the Second World War, use of the term to refer to these countries as a group fell out of favor. Cited text: Ontario Department of Education, *Programme of Studies for Grades I to VI*, 24.
8. *Ibid.*, 24.
9. Minister of Public Instruction, Victoria. *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid*. Volume XXXVIII No. 10B November 22, 1933, 467–469. Found in Public Records Office of Victoria (PROV) 15,609/P/4. The term 'Second British Empire' refers to the British Empire after the American Revolution.
10. Education Department of Victoria, *Course of Studies Primary Schools* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1954), 17.
11. Ontario Department of Education, *Intermediate Division: Outlines of Courses for Experimental Use*, 1951, 103.
12. *Ibid.*, 100.
13. Ontario Department of Education, *Intermediate Division*, 6.
14. Education Department of Victoria, *Course of Studies in Primary Schools* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1954), 17.
15. See, for example, Department of Education, Ontario, *The Royal Visit to Canada and Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario*, May 1939, 1.
16. Minister of Public Instruction, *Education Gazette and Teachers' Aid*, Volume XXXIII No. 4 April 26, 1933, 86.
17. Ontario Department of Education, *Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario* May 22, 1942, 7.
18. Ontario Department of Education, *Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario*, 1952, 2.
19. Ontario Department of Education, *Empire Day in the Schools of Ontario*, May 18, 1956, 2.
20. Ontario Department of Education, *Commonwealth Day: Citizenship*, May 17, 1957, 8.
21. Education Department of Victoria, "Australia in the World Today," *The School Paper Forms 1 and 2*, April 1966, 35.
22. In Ontario, this was a formal process, with all textbooks needing to be listed in the annual publication of Circular 14. Texts written by Canadian authors were given preference, though non-Canadian textbooks could be used if there was no local alternative. In Victoria, books had to be listed in the *Education Gazette*, but the selection process was much more open-ended, with American, British, and even Canadian texts gaining approval as well.
23. Textbooks are notoriously difficult to access because they are only infrequently kept and stored in archives. The sample of textbooks included more than 65 authorized for use in Victoria, and more than 45 authorized

for use in Ontario from 1930 to 1970 (all of which are listed in the Bibliography). All the textbooks accessed are from the disciplines of history, geography, civics, or social studies meant for primary and secondary school children. The number does not include multiple editions, typical of textbooks, which I accessed whenever possible. Textbooks from Victoria mainly came from the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library's Australian School Textbooks Collection and, in Ontario, from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education's Ontario Textbook Collection.

24. For reference, see Arthur Lower, *Colony to Nation: A History of Canada* (Toronto: Longmans Green, 1946). For a historiographical discussion, see Welf Heick, ed., *History and Myth: Arthur Lower and the Making of Canadian Nationalism* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1975).
25. 'Responsible government' refers to the right of a colonial parliament to direct internal affairs. In effect, the executive or governor-general would be 'responsible' to the Legislative branch or elected Parliament. It was not until much later that Canada and Australia gained full autonomy and control over external affairs and matters of defense.
26. W.M. Stewart Wallace, *A History of the Canadian People* (Toronto: Copp Clark Company, Ltd., 1930), 226.
27. Lester Rogers *et al.*, *Canada in the World Today* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company, Limited, 1952), 154.
28. Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 206.
29. C.H.K. Marten, E.H. Carter and H. de Havilland, *Marten and Carter's Histories Book IV: The Latest Age* (Melbourne: Macmillan & Co. Limited, 1941), 31.
30. Portus, *Australia Since 1606*, 134.
31. *Ibid.*, 135.
32. R.M. Crawford, *Ourselves and the Pacific* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1945), 220.
33. George Brown, ed., *Canada and the Commonwealth* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons, 1953), 294.
34. George Brown, *Building the Canadian Nation* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1942), 437.
35. George W. Brown, ed., *Canada and the Commonwealth*, 296.
36. George Richardson argues that "Canada's postwar identity was celebrated through events external to the nation (such as Commonwealth membership, UN peacekeeping missions, the cultural attainments of expatriate Canadians, and NATO involvement) much more than internal achievements (such as the building of the St. Lawrence Seaway system, the construction of the Trans-Canada Highway, the growth of the Canadian

- Broadcasting Corporation, or the design and construction of the Avro Arrow)." George Richardson, "Nostalgia and National Identity," 187.
37. G.V. Portus, *Australia Since 1606*, 210.
 38. N.D. Harper, *Our Pacific Neighbours* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1960), 383.
 39. *Ibid.*, 41.
 40. *Ibid.*, 406.
 41. The complicated relationship between Canada, Australia, Britain, and the United States will be dealt with more fully in Chap. 7.
 42. N.D. Harper, *Our Pacific Neighbours*, 385.
 43. George Brown, *Building the Canadian Nation*, 390.
 44. There was no indication of any concern with identifying John A. Macdonald as a bona fide Canadian hero. There has been a high amount of contentious debate over Macdonald's treatment of First Nations peoples in Canada recently. For a general introduction to this controversy, see Dakshana Bascaramurty, "Debate Escalates over Legacy of John A. Macdonald in Ontario Schools," *The Globe and Mail*, August 24, 2017. <https://www.theglobeandmail.com/news/national/ontario-elementary-teachers-union-wants-john-a-macdonald-schools-renamed/article36076966/>
 45. Canadian attitudes towards the United States are treated more fully in Chap. 7.
 46. A.B. Hodgetts, *Decisive Decades: A History of the Twentieth Century for Canadians* (Ontario: Thomas Nelson & Sons (Canada) Limited, 1960), preface.
 47. *Ibid.*, 137.
 48. After writing *Decisive Decades*, A.B. Hodgetts continued to be an influential voice promoting the rise of Canadian Studies. He created the National History Project and published a highly influential book entitled *What Culture? What Heritage?*, which argued for a radically revised historical narrative to be taught in the classroom. Hodgetts complained that "the courses of study in Canadian history are based on the interests and concerns that preoccupied academic historians of the 1920s. These courses lack any contemporary meaning....We are teaching a bland, unrealistic consensus version of our past; a dry-as-dust chronological story of uninterrupted political and economic progress told without the controversy that is an inherent part of our history." Hodgetts. A.B. *What Culture? What Heritage?* (Toronto: Ontario Institute for Studies in Education, 1968), 115.
 49. Paul Cornell, Jean Hamelin, Fernand Ouellet, Marcel Trudel, *Canada: Unity in Diversity* (Toronto: Holt, Rinehart and Winston of Canada, Limited, 1967), vii.

50. E.L. Daniher, *Britain and the Empire (From 1603)* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Company, Limited, 1939), 211.
51. *Ibid.*, 213.
52. *Ibid.*, 326.
53. *Ibid.*, 329.
54. *Ibid.*, 261.
55. Clayton. *From Colonies to Commonwealth*, 38.
56. *Ibid.*, 75.
57. *Ibid.*, 228.
58. Ludley Stamp and A. Grenfell Price, *The World: A General Geography, Australian and New Zealand Edition* (London: Longmans, Green and Co., 1939), 175–176.
59. *Ontario Public School Geography 22nd Edition* (Toronto: W.J. Gage & Co., Limited, 1947), 161.
60. Edward Said, *Orientalism* (New York: Vintage Books, 1994). For a good historiographical overview of the debate on Orientalism, see Gyan Prakash, “Orientalism Now,” *History and Theory* Volume 34 No. 3, Oct. 1995. For more on post-colonial theory generally, see Dane Kennedy, “Imperial History and Post-Colonial Theory,” *The Journal of Imperial and Commonwealth History*, Vol. 24, Issue 3, 1996, 345–363.
61. See, for instance, Ludley Stamp and A. Grenfell Price, *The World: A General Geography*, 372.
62. Ludley Stamp and A. Grenfell Price, *The World: A General Geography*, 673.
63. James Mainwaring, *Man the World Over, Volume III* (Oxford: Basil Blackwell, 1945), 222–223.
64. *Ibid.*, 226–7.
65. All authors were in the history department of the University of Toronto except for Eldon Ray, who was a principal at Kenner Collegiate Institute in Peterborough, Ontario.
66. George Brown and J.M.S. Careless, eds., *Canada and the World* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1954), 73.
67. *Ibid.*, 53.
68. *Ibid.*, 53.
69. *Ibid.*, 51.
70. Brown, *Canada and the Commonwealth*, 393.
71. McDougall, *The Commonwealth of Nations*, 312.
72. Brown, *Canada and the Commonwealth*, 394.
73. *Ibid.*, 405.
74. G.S. Browne, I.G. Coghill, D.D. Harris, *Southern World: A Physical and Regional Geography for Australian Schools* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1967), 427–429.
75. Lloyd Evans, *Australia and the Modern World* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire Pty. Ltd., 1957), 291.

76. S. Hopewell, *From Colonies to Commonwealth* (Melbourne: Cassel & Company Ltd., 1967), 7.
77. Brown, *Canada and the Commonwealth*, 260.
78. *Ibid.*, 403.
79. *Ibid.*, 9–10.
80. Trueman, Schaffter, Stewart, Hunter, *Modern Perspectives*, 658.
81. *Ibid.*, 697–698.
82. This idea is more fully explored in Todd Shepard's *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France*. Shepard argues that French intellectuals defined decolonization as a stage in a linear historical progression, thus allowing them to ignore the more difficult questions of dealing with the legacy of imperialism. Todd Shepard, *The Invention of Decolonization: The Algerian War and the Remaking of France* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2006).
83. Mary Lazarus and Marjorie Coppel, *The Making of the Modern World* (Melbourne: Macmillan & Co. Limited, 1960), 233.
84. *Ibid.*, 233–234.
85. R.H. Clayton, *Our Social System* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1952), 165–166.
86. Chester New and Reginald Trotter, *Modern History* (Toronto: Clarke, Irwin & Company 1946), 433.
87. G.V. Portus, *Australia Since 1606: A History for Young Australians* (London: Oxford University Press, 1934), 209–210.
88. W.D. McDougall, *The Commonwealth of Nations*, xiii.
89. George W. Brown, *Building the Canadian Nation* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1942), 547.
90. Donald Dickie, *The Great Adventure* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Limited, 1950), 450.
91. *Ibid.*, 458.
92. McDougall, *The Commonwealth of Nations*, 405–406.
93. Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 409.
94. Hugh Peart and John Schaffter, *The Winds of Change: A History of Canada and Canadians in the Twentieth Century* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1961), 457–459.
95. John Trueman, H.J.P. Schaffter, R.J. Stewart, T.M. Hunter, *Modern Perspectives* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1969), 703.



“The Ideology of All Democratic Nations”: World War II and the Rise of Religious Instruction in Ontario and Victoria*

1 INTRODUCTION

Victorian Sir Edmund Herring, who later became chief justice of the Supreme Court of Victoria, believed promotion of character training and religious instruction were absolutely vital to the future of Australia. He argued that without improving the “moral fibre” of Australian people, the nation could not confront the pressing problems of the day, nor “play our part worthily at home or abroad.”¹ Sentiments like Herring’s led to a movement for moral education in both Ontario and Victoria during the 1940s, culminating in legislation that made religious instruction compulsory. Thus, the publicly funded state-run schools asserted that religion was a key component of national identity without which the democratic forms of government crucial to contemporary notions of Britishness would fail.

During the 1940s Ontario and Victoria followed England’s lead and fully embraced expanded forms of religious instruction. The public discussion around this movement offers important insights into the motivations of educators during this decade. Underlying the call for religious education was an assumption that Protestant Christianity was central to the protection of Britishness and of democracy. That legislators were

*Title from G.W. Morley, *Brief 103 to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, Archives of Ontario, RG 18-131, Box 13.

able to make such instruction mandatory, despite determined opposition, sent a strong message that Protestant Christianity lay at the heart of national identity and was central to the task of promoting and preserving Britishness in Ontarian and Victorian society. Educators were able to adapt Britishness to meet the unique landscape of local educational institutions.

Scholars have demonstrated the many ways white settlers across the British Empire viewed themselves as part of a wider British World.² Late nineteenth century Canadians and Australians forged an identity that relied on both civic and ethnic elements as they constructed their own idea of Britishness.³ To be British in Canada or Australia meant the culture of the mother country was to be maintained, including its concepts such as the rule of law, parliamentary democracy, the right to property, and the valorization of whiteness.⁴ There has been less of a focus on the ways religion was a critical component of Britishness in the twentieth century, though it remained culturally and socially powerful in the imagination of white settlers across the British World.

This scholarship largely focuses on two periods: the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, when the bonds of Britishness were firmly cemented in Dominion societies, and the 1960s, when Britishness was abandoned.⁵ Both supporters and detractors of religious education appealed to elements of Canada and Australia's British heritage to support their claims. This controversy had important ramifications for post-World War II debates about national identity.⁶ In the 1940s all sides tacitly agreed that British heritage needed defending, but working out exactly how this would be accomplished proved enormously difficult. The issue of religion in the schools produced a discussion about the nature of democracy, minority rights, and the significance of Britishness to the Australian and Canadian nations.

The Ontarian and Victorian curricular overhauls of the 1930s maintained character training as a primary goal of the educational process, but the Second World War brought with it a sense of urgency that prompted education officials in Ontario, Victoria, and England to promote religious instruction as a vital part of the national identity. Educators argued that World War II was a struggle for the protection of democracy, which in turn required Protestant Christianity to provide a strong core of morality for the nation. As a result, legislating religious instruction seemed like an urgent task. The simultaneity and similarity of the legislative acts in all three countries leaves little doubt that religious instruction was an

important component of a British identity shared by Canadians, Australians, and English alike.

Challenges to the new legislation also reveal important similarities. Several non-Protestant groups that opposed religious instruction in schools produced an important critique of state-sponsored religion. Jewish and Catholic groups in both territories argued that forcing religion onto children was inherently undemocratic, a betrayal of the values of Britishness. Their efforts to stop the legislation failed, but criticisms from minority groups had a lasting impact on the education systems in both Ontario and Victoria. Indeed, the question of religious instruction in schools produced a major debate on the protection of minority rights in a democracy.

2 THE PROGRESSIVE AGENDA AND CURRICULUM REFORM

In the 1930s, primary and secondary educators in Ontario and Victoria responded to calls from proponents of new educational theories with a curriculum overhaul that remained in place into the mid-1950s and provided the framework for the religious education debates of the 1940s. These theories, typically referred to as 'progressive,' originally came from American thinkers such as John Dewey.⁷ But borrowing from the United States was problematic because Americans did not fully share in the British identity. In the same work in which he advocated the history of the British Empire as a focal point for history in Australian textbooks, prominent education advocate George Browne said of borrowing ideas from America, "There is not even the shadow of a suggestion that American courses of study are to be imposed on Australian boys and girls."⁸ Educators in Victoria were willing to borrow American ideas, but only ones that fit in with the "Australian flavor."

The education departments in both Ontario and Victoria were also deeply influenced by the publication in England of the Hadow Reports, which proposed major educational reforms.⁹ Educators were willing to borrow entire syllabi from England's curriculum with no qualms. Indeed, historians of education argue that educators in both Ontario and Victoria were sensitive to international trends in education mainly through the medium of the English educational system.¹⁰ Pressure from progressive educators resulted in the first significant curricular revision in both countries since before the First World War.

The primary emphasis of the progressive agenda as applied in Ontario and Victoria was on preparing children for responsible democratic

citizenship. George Browne argued that rote memorization would not produce strong democratic citizens.¹¹ A major objective was the abandonment of rote memorization in favor of active learning and pupil participation. Progressive educators also advocated a greater role for individual teachers in lesson planning and curriculum construction. Although there was resistance to their reforms, primarily from so-called traditionalists, the progressive agenda was influential and set the stage for the revision of the curriculum in primary and secondary schools in Victoria in 1934 and in Ontario in 1937.

Progressive educators, however, made it clear that these more democratic forms of education would not detract from the important task of character formation. In Victoria, the *General Course of Study for Use in Schools* promoted character training as a fundamental objective of education.¹² Likewise in Ontario the writers of the new curricula advocated for character training, but declared, “[Good citizenship has to be] accepted willingly, as desirable forms of conduct... cannot be developed by coercion.”¹³ Despite the ‘progressive’ label, reformers were quite conservative in their advocacy of traditional values in the schools. They merely advocated for new methods of achieving traditional educational goals in character training.

Character training, then, was a crucial objective for educators in the 1930s, but the question remained of how exactly it would “guide the child in the formation of desirable attitudes?”¹⁴ Character training was especially important for classes such as history, civics, and social studies, where educators believed values could be most readily instilled into children. Progressive educators believed children could not learn patriotism by rote; instead, they endorsed class projects, discussions, and debates, which they believed better than traditional methods for producing the right type of citizen.

An important—and controversial—method of character training was the one accomplished by religious instruction. Despite some advocacy for more religion in schools since the nineteenth century, in Ontario and Victoria there were no formal lessons in Christian doctrine in the official curriculum. The Ontario *Programme of Study for Grades I to VI* asserted that, although the Department of Education did not “prescribe a course in morals nor include religion as a separate subject,” the entire educational experience “should be pervaded by the spirit of religion.”¹⁵ Ontarian educators in the 1930s were expected to uphold Christian virtues, but there were no formal time requirements or other means by which they were

expected to achieve these pedagogical objectives. One major reason for this was the fear of sectarian strife between the Protestant denominations in the province over which exact Christian doctrine ought to go into a prescribed curriculum.

The most controversial and complicating religious factor in Ontarian schools was the Roman Catholic Separate School System (R.C.S.S.). There was and is a separately organized and publicly funded Catholic school system in Ontario per the terms of the British North America Act of 1867. R.C.S.S. authorities were allowed to teach religion any way they saw fit. The debate within the Department of Education over religious education only ever concerned the public and non-Catholic schools of the province, not the R.C.S.S. So when Ontarian Department of Education officials referred to 'Christianity' in the public schools they generally meant Protestant Christianity.

In Victoria, also, the history of religion in the schools was contentious. The original Education Act of 1872 that created publicly funded education officially defined the state system as secular. Nearly a century later the Russell Committee on Religious Instruction in the Schools of Victoria argued that the central matter of contention surrounding the act was the struggle between the varying denominations of Christianity. For many politicians at the time, denominational Christianity produced "waste and chronic inefficiency" in public education, and was generally "a divisive, narrowing, and obstructive force in the community."¹⁶ After much discussion and eventual compromise, lawmakers decided to create a secular system of education. Denominations could still offer regular religious training to students, but it could not be overseen by any state employee or take place during the regular school day. So despite a nominal label of 'secular,' the educational system of Victoria still openly encouraged religious teaching as long as instructors were not paid by the state.

By the time the Second World War broke out, educators in both Ontario and Victoria had already developed a large array of educational techniques to instill the 'proper' values into their pupils. These techniques were found throughout the curricula, but were especially evident in subjects such as history and civics. Although the progressive agenda succeeded in changing many of the forms of education, the traditional aims of producing pupils with such values remained almost universally recognized. Prior to the Second World War, religious teachings were considered important to an overall education, and to societal morality overall, but most educators

contended that this was primarily the responsibility of parents and churches rather than the state's.

3 THE DREW REGULATIONS IN ONTARIO

The Ontarian and Victorian curricula produced in the late 1930s remained the basis for education until the mid-1950s, and their prescriptions for character training were highly influential. The Second World War, however, powerfully influenced many educators to increase time and attention dedicated to character training, with religion as a key component. The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, established immediately following the Second World War, considered the values of discipline and morality necessary for the production of citizens who would understand their responsibilities in a democratic society. Justice John Hope, the chair of the commission, passionately argued that "the inculcation of worthy ideals" needed to be a high priority of education in Ontario, and religious education was an especially valuable tool to accomplish this task.¹⁷ Strong efforts within education systems were necessary to ensure a vigorous and dedicated democratic citizenry in the future.

In the early 1940s many educators believed the Second World War was a contest over democratic governance itself, a critical component of Britishness. The University of Toronto's George Browne argued that Canada went to war partly for economic reasons, since Britain was a major trade partner. But, more importantly, Canada "had grown to nationhood" within the context of the British Empire and had embraced the principles of self-government. Nazi Germany fundamentally threatened democracy by destroying individual liberty and parliamentary government.¹⁸ As the 1942 Ontarian Empire Day pamphlet argued: "[Democracy is] part of the Anglo-Saxon tradition... [if the Anglo-Saxon people fall] democracy will vanish from the earth, and the progress of our civilization will lag, it may be, for centuries."¹⁹ Teachers, pupils, and citizens needed to protect the British heritage at all costs.

Those who perceived an internal lack of morality within Canadian society saw the global danger to democracy as an existential threat to Britishness. J.C. Hodgins, Ontario's Deputy Superintendent of Education, wrote in 1948 that "[during the war] a very large number of children were receiving no religious instruction in Sunday Schools or in their homes."²⁰ In a brief to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario in 1945 (the Hope Commission),

the United Church of Canada estimated the number of children without any formal religious instruction at somewhere around 50 percent.²¹ Judge G.W. Morley argued that training in the Bible needed to begin in the home, "but the home has fallen down badly," as parents refused to spend time educating their children in critical matters of religion.²² The fear that Canada would lose its character as a Christian nation became widespread in educational policymaking circles.

The place of religion in the publicly funded schools had been controversial in Ontario since the nineteenth century. But by the start of World War II many educational officials and organizations began to advocate for a significantly expanded program of religious training. They argued that excluding formal religious training from education robbed it of "essential vitality" and also "[gave] youth the impression that [religion] is not of any great concern for life."²³ It became a commonplace argument that a religious foundation provided the moral core that was essential to the production of democratic citizens. Indeed, the Hope Commission stated that "a spiritual faith based on absolute values is the rock upon which character and conduct are built."²⁴

Facing the uncertainty of war abroad and the perception of a crisis of lax morality at home driven by increasing evidence of poor church attendance, many educators advocated a strengthening of religious instruction in the public schools of Ontario. Character training and religious instruction were important tools with which educators would weld the nation into one citizenry with a commonly accepted core of Protestant values. If parents would not be responsible for sending their children to church and Sunday school, the provincial education system needed to take over.

George Drew, the Prime Minister of Ontario, reacted to pressures from home and abroad by creating regulations mandating religious instruction in the publicly funded schools in 1944. Twice a week all Ontarian students, except those in the Roman Catholic Separate School system, would be given formal religious training by either denominational ministers, or, if none were available, by regular teachers. Critically, the Drew Regulations (sometimes called Regulation 13) allowed parents the choice of removing children from this instruction, guaranteeing, in Hodgins' words, the "religious freedom of the individual."²⁵ Though religion had informally played an important role in Ontarian education since its inception, the new regulations powerfully formalized and expanded religious education in the province.²⁶ Regulation 13 was a forceful expression of how important educators deemed Protestant Christianity to the Canadian nation.

Writing in 1950, the Hope Commission put it this way: "Honesty and Christian love are the absolutes of a free society.... If this be indoctrination we accept the stricture."²⁷

The passage of the Drew Regulations was strongly reminiscent of the English Education Act of 1944, also known as the Butler Act, which made religious instruction compulsory in all county schools for the first time in English history. This legislation set aside time in the regular school day for formal religious training, and it contained a clause by which teachers or students could opt out.²⁸ In other words, these two pieces of legislation were remarkably similar.²⁹ Writing about the Butler Act two decades later, University of London Professor Roy Niblit argued, with a rationale nearly identical to that of many groups in Ontario: The law passed due to the "association of the Christian religion with the cause of democracy."³⁰ Oxford historian R.J.K. Freathy agreed with this assessment, pointing to the ecumenical movement of the interwar period as acceptable to all and "a part of English cultural identity...which maintained and undergirded British political institutions and processes."³¹ According to Freathy this was a particularly English phenomenon, but the close parallels between Ontarian and English religious education in the 1940s demonstrate wider ramifications, as settler communities in the British Empire were profoundly influenced by the English legislation.

Passage of the Drew Regulations involved a number of immediate challenges. The most pressing was creating and implementing an acceptable curriculum. To put the plans for religious instruction in place, the Ministry of Education partnered with the Inter-Church Committee for Weekday Religious Instruction in Ontario (OICC), an organization representing many denominations: Anglican, Baptist, United Church, Evangelical United Brethren, Mennonite Conference, Presbyterian, Church of Christ Disciples, Evangelical Lutheran Synod of Canada.³² A core belief of the OICC was that no education could be complete without religion, and that "religion is the only true basis for morality."³³ E.R. McLean, a prominent member and eventual leader of the Inter-Church Committee, wrote a history of the group in 1965 that offered a glimpse into their operations. He argued that the guiding principle of religious instruction in Ontario was "corporate compulsion with individual and area freedom," calling this "a strangely contradictory but a marvelously practical and workable principle."³⁴ The Inter-Church Committee advocated for a Protestant inter-denominational approach that mandated religious instruction but left specific doctrinal teachings to the denominations.

Given the short amount of time to implement the new system, the Inter-Church Committee made the choice to adopt a revised version of the Cambridgeshire Syllabus from England as the basis for religious instruction materials in Ontario. The original Cambridgeshire Syllabus was produced in 1924, but there was a committee established in 1939 to revise it under the chairmanship of Sir Will Spens, the Master of Corpus Christi College.³⁵ It was this revised edition that served as a template for Ontarian schools.

In part, the choice of an outside syllabus was simply a matter of convenience. E.R. McLean of the Inter-Church Committee pointed out that the Cambridgeshire Syllabus was already used in some Canadian schools, making it a natural choice for wider audiences.³⁶ Additionally, the Department of Education wanted a complete syllabus ready for distribution by the school year ahead, which did not allow much time for the creation of entirely new syllabi. Use of an English syllabus would be a much less labor intensive project—easier for the Ontario Department of Education to produce than to develop an all new program of religious instruction.

But convenience was only part of the rationale for choosing the Cambridgeshire Syllabus; engagement with a wider British identity was also a factor. The Ontario Education Association advocated the Bible be taught because "no other single book has had so profound and pervasive an influence upon the English race."³⁷ By conflating the cultural relevance of Biblical instruction with the English race, the group essentially made the point that religious instruction was necessary for the production of Canadian citizens with a British background. So although the adoption of the Cambridgeshire Syllabus was convenient for both the Inter-Church Committee and the Ontario Department of Education, the choice also reinforced the notion that the core identity educators were trying to protect was not specifically Canadian but part of a wider British identity.

The authors of the Cambridgeshire Syllabus held that religion in the classroom could help young people find direction in a turbulent world.³⁸ But to do this instructors in religion would need to both preach actively and use sound modern scholarship in the classroom. The Cambridgeshire Syllabus argued that active preaching was necessary in the classroom.³⁹ The association declared, "[If instruction is done correctly] the classroom becomes a place that is 'holy unto the Lord.'"⁴⁰ The emphasis on preaching was an important component of the syllabus, but a controversial one

in Ontario, where the various Protestant denominations wanted to make sure matters of doctrine or conversion were left up to the churches.

A second important feature of the Cambridgeshire Syllabus was an emphasis on modern forms of Biblical scholarship. Indeed, the treatment of the Biblical text would be “as thorough and serious as that which the history teacher gives to history or the science teacher to science.”⁴¹ The syllabus made a careful distinction between legends, myths, and stories. Noah’s Ark and the Garden of Eden, for instance, were regarded as explanatory legends and not a recounting of facts. Educators were keen to establish that Christians did not have “to believe that every word in the Bible ... [was] true, [or that]... everything recorded in the Bible occurred as there related.”⁴² The emphasis on modern Biblical scholarship was of major importance because it gave religious instruction courses an air of academic respectability. Educators could rest assured that religious instruction, while an important generator of national identity, was also sound from an educational standpoint. This feature was a major selling point for the Ontario program.

It becomes obvious, then, that the creators of the Cambridgeshire Syllabus believed they could be both academically rigorous and true to the Christian religion. There is little evidence that the authors were concerned about minority rights or the possibility of indoctrination, issues that became crucial in Ontario and England in the years to come. The Drew Regulations in Ontario, by contrast, took several precautions to prevent such accusations. The most important was the ability of parents to withdraw their children. The regulation stipulated: “No pupil shall be required to take part in any religious exercises or be subject to any instruction in Religious Education to which objection is raised by his parent or guardian.”⁴³ This legislative feature became a lightning rod for criticism. Proponents of religious instruction argued that this provision magnanimously provided for religious minorities and other dissenters, while opponents complained that it segregated minorities and therefore discriminated against them.

With the Cambridgeshire Syllabus as an inspiration, the Ryerson Press hurriedly published educational materials for the new religious instruction program in Ontario. Although the guidebooks as well as the teacher’s manuals were originally published in England, the OICC made it a point to revise them for use in Ontario. The main object of the revisions was “to make the books more acceptable for Canadian use” by replacing English words with their Canadian equivalents and

adjusting the curriculum to the Ontarian school year.⁴⁴ These were relatively cosmetic changes that left the overwhelming amount of lesson plans untouched. Once again, for a topic so crucial in creating a sense of national identity, it is telling that educators were willing to rely so heavily on materials produced in Britain, with only minor modifications.

The resulting series of teacher manuals strongly emphasized the three-fold objective of character formation, citizenship training, and preservation of a Protestant British identity. There was some debate about exactly which methods would be most effective, but there was no "dispute as to the ultimate aim of instruction... the acceptance of the historic Christian Faith."⁴⁵ The precise methods utilized to accomplish this were significant. Jesus, for instance, was consistently praised for his "virility, courage, and forthright manliness,"⁴⁶ three highly valued masculine qualities. Other important virtues were obedience, courtesy, bravery, and promptness. Educators in Ontario used Christianity to instill traditionally desirable forms of masculine behavior in children.

The lessons also included several more modern examples, frequently coming from missionary activity in the British Empire. The author of the Grade Six pamphlet stated, "Jesus Christ goes forth to-day bringing a peace, a gladness, and a satisfaction to the men and women of Africa and the East which their own religions do not afford."⁴⁷ Missionary activity, particularly in Africa, was seen as a paramount duty of British Christians; it was not confined solely to proselytization but was a part of the overall emphasis on the civilizing mission of the British Empire. The Grade Two booklet described Africa as a continent brought too rapidly into contact with the West, which caused high levels of cultural instability. As a result, Africa was "losing its age-long accepted beliefs and dropping long-inherited customs."⁴⁸ The booklet praised missionary activity as critical to the British mission of civilizing a more primitive Africa. Indeed, the text went on to argue that "medical work, both missionary and government, is doing much to break down evil customs."⁴⁹ The authors portrayed the Christian religion and Britishness as inherently civilizing forces in the world.

But however primitively the books portrayed Africans, the Ontarian religious instruction materials were ostensibly opposed to racism. The teacher's guide entitled *The Friend of Little Children* said children were not born with racial prejudice and that Christian brotherhood should be more important than racial differences.⁵⁰ The books argued that all people,

if they converted to Protestant Christianity and behaved as proper British subjects, were capable of attaining a high level of civilization. While this attitude was condescending and patronizing, it was in contrast to some of the history textbooks of the day, which frequently argued that whites were racially superior to non-whites. At least in the religious instruction materials of the 1940s there was the possibility of future equality between racial groups.

The emphasis on the Christianity of the British missionary is not surprising considering the books were originally produced in England, but the retention of these passages for Canadian schools was important. The revision committee assigned to Canadianize the textbooks had no problem with these British stories being a fundamental part of religious education in Canada. This once again reinforces the point that, according to educators and the officials responsible for creating the curriculum, to be Canadian in the 1940s was to be a proud participant in the British Empire.

The Drew Regulations proved contentious and numerous groups opposed them. The Royal Commission on Education in Ontario presided over an important and provincial-wide study of many issues related to education between 1945 and 1950, and studied the issue of religious education at length. Briefs to the Royal Commission, often referred to as the Hope Commission, represent a full spectrum of opinion on this divisive topic.

Proponents of religious instruction developed several strong arguments in support of their position. The OICC made the case that democracy depended upon respect for God as the fundamental basis of modern civilization.⁵¹ Judge G.W. Morley, a prominent member of the OICC, argued that religious education rested on the British precedent. He argued that the increase in Christian teaching in British schools “gave them courage to drive away the German enemy from their shores in 1940.”⁵² For Morley, the English precedent demonstrated that Christianity provided a bedrock of morality that could sustain a nation in times of dire emergency. Religious education was thus necessary for a strong and vibrant Canadian body politic.

The assumption of Protestant homogeneity in the public schools was a major precondition for the success of religious instruction in Ontario. Any hint of favoritism towards one denomination immediately caused an outcry. When revising the guidebooks for publication, the Ryerson Press hired two Department of Education officials. An irate Ontarian citizen filed a brief with the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario objecting

to the Ryerson Press, which was affiliated with the United Church of Canada, publishing the religious instruction materials.⁵³ For Gus Harris, the author of this brief, domination by a single Protestant church completely undermined the acceptability of religious instruction.

The Royal Commission thoroughly examined the matter and found that nothing improperly favored the United Church. They concluded there was no evidence supporting “the suggestion that the United Church of Canada exercised any undue influence” on the religious instruction materials.⁵⁴ To make sure no further indictments of this nature could be made, however, the Department forbade civil servants from working with publishers on educational materials. But this controversy revealed the absolute importance of inter-denominational cooperation to the success of the Drew Regulations and the OICC.

Since the OICC and its program of religious instruction was broadly acceptable to most Protestant Ontarians, and true to the British tradition, the group made the claim that any opposition must be coming from anti-Christian or secular circles and was therefore a threat to public morality. Morley proudly declared Canada to be a Christian country, and so asked why anyone should “listen to arguments put forth by atheists and ‘free thinkers.’”⁵⁵ To supporters of religious instruction, the teaching of the Christian religion in schools was the surest way to prevent the rise of fascism.⁵⁶ Following the defeat of Hitler’s Germany, Morley declared that “the freedom preached by the Bible” could return and be reinforced in the postwar world.⁵⁷ Any resistance to religious instruction in the schools would be, for Morley, tremendously dangerous to the survival and preservation of Canadian democracy.

Those in favor of the new regulations also painted their opponents as embracing American, rather than Canadian, ideals. Detractors cited the separation of church and state as a fundamental principle of democracy, and one that should be embraced by the education system. E.R. McLean pointed out that the basic principle of separation of church and state “does not prevent the cooperation of Church and State.”⁵⁸ Viewed this way, it was not in keeping with Canadian—or British—tradition for the state to be completely religiously neutral. In a 1956 address McLean forcefully pronounced: “Ontario is not neutral; Canada is not neutral; the United Kingdom is not neutral. Our Sovereign is not neutral.”⁵⁹ Absolute separation of religion from public life was not part of the Canadian or British tradition, but rather an American ideal.⁶⁰

Supporters of Regulation 13 also pointed to the opt-out clause embedded within the new religious education system. Students could be removed

from the mandated periods of religious instruction if their parents disagreed with the substance of the new curriculum. To those opposed to religious education, this measure did not go far enough to protect minorities. But supporters of the regulations believed it did satisfy individual rights. Indeed, Charles Seagar, the Anglican Archbishop of Huron, noted, "Liberty of conscience must always be respected, [but society] must beware lest we interpret this liberty in too negative a sense."⁶¹ Seagar admitted there might be cases of discrimination in the province, but for each case with a negative outcome he said, "There are hundreds of cases where the direct opposite has resulted."⁶² In other words, the new regulations did provide protection to minorities, and to remove the entire system of religious education for fear of discrimination would, in fact, weaken the rights of the majority.

The Jewish Congress of Canada became one of the leading voices resisting the implementation of mandatory religious instruction in the schools. The organization was one of the most notable activist groups in Canada opposing any sort of state-sponsored discrimination in the 1940s.⁶³ Perhaps surprisingly, then, the Jewish Congress brief to the Hope Commission began by acknowledging that religion was absolutely essential to the process of democracy. Indeed, their memo began with the central concept that "religious training is the lifeblood of Judaism," and was in fact "the mightiest force for the ennoblement of human life, and a basic ingredient in every democratic culture."⁶⁴ So important, indeed, was religious education that under no circumstances could it be placed in the hands of state regulation.

Rabbi Abraham Feinberg wrote a supplementary pamphlet more fully explicating the point of view of the Jewish Congress. Far from bolstering Canadian democracy, Feinberg thought the new regulations would in fact violate some of the most important foundational principles of democratic life. He emphasized the "absolute division of authority between Church and State," which he claimed was supported by "church-bodies throughout the Anglo-Saxon world."⁶⁵ Compulsory religious education was, according to Feinberg, discriminatory and fundamentally at odds with the proud heritage of British-style democracy.

Feinberg defended the idea that the state should be religiously neutral. He contended that this did not mean a reversion to atheism, because there existed some "basic, God-aspiring ethical truths in all Western religions"—ones which would not violate anyone's principles.⁶⁶ He believed that if people of all faiths represented in the province could sit down and fashion

a "weapon for character-building" in the public schools, it would serve as a fine example to students about the power of living in a democratic environment.⁶⁷

Feinberg's writing also emphasized that the opt-out clause in the law was unsatisfactory. The net effect of the Drew Regulations was to promote two classes of students, those who agreed with Protestant creedal statements, and "an inferior grade obliged to uphold a different conviction."⁶⁸ Students who opted out of religious education might be subject to ridicule or suspicion, which, he said, would "destroy that equality of pupils which democratic law seeks to maintain."⁶⁹

One final critique of the Jewish Congress was that the new religious instruction materials, those borrowed from England and based on the Cambridgeshire Syllabus, were heavily prejudiced against Jewish tradition and history. One charge against the new materials, for instance, suggested that they criticized Jewish beliefs "without mentioning that the very same beliefs were fundamental in the teachings of Jesus and the Church."⁷⁰ This critique proved to be one of the most significant, as the OICC took the matter of revising the instructional materials very seriously. The Hope Commission also recommended in 1950 that the OICC revise the instructional materials in light of these criticisms.⁷¹

Though the Jewish Congress opposed the type of Protestant religious instruction set forth in the Drew Regulations, they made the case for a substitute scheme to ensure character formation in students, one that would not violate the rights of religious minorities. Feinberg said that the Department of Education should develop a plan that was not specifically religious, but would teach the basic ethical values necessary for the preservation of democracy.⁷² Such a scheme would not embrace atheism or secular humanism, but would place "children of every faith into an equal fraternity of shared privileges and duties."⁷³ This, Feinberg proposed, would be much truer to the spirit of Canadian democracy. As Chap. 5 will show, this type of approach did receive serious consideration in Ontario a generation later, though it largely fell on deaf ears in the 1940s.

The Jewish Congress utilized much of the same language as advocates of religious instruction. Mandating that all children be exposed to a state-run religion would violate the rights of minorities, an inherently undemocratic action. A truly united Canadian citizenry could not allow divisive religious instruction into the classroom. Rather than protect Canadian democracy, Feinberg and the Jewish Congress asserted that state-mandated religious instruction would damage the high ideals of

religious freedom that had always been a major component of Canadian government. As a result of the rhetoric conflating education and democracy, the debate over religious instruction erupted into a full-scale discussion of minority rights in which the very nature of democracy was at stake.

Other groups expressed their opposition to religious instruction as well. Like the Jewish Congress, the Catholic Bishops of Ontario argued that religion should be fundamental to the educational mission, and that this was fully in keeping with traditions in Ontario and Britain.⁷⁴ Interestingly, the Catholic Bishops directly emphasized the British tradition of respect for the rights of minorities, noting that this should also apply to Franco-Ontarians in the Roman Catholic Separate School system.⁷⁵ Though Catholics could axiomatically not accept Protestant religious instruction (even if non-denominational), they wished the Royal Commission good-will in the task of keeping “the Christian character to which it [Canada] is indebted for its liberty and happiness.”⁷⁶

Even some Protestant groups were not pleased with the regulations. A group of Presbyterian ministers published a small booklet entitled *The Christian Faith and the Religion in Ontario Schools*, which laid out several criticisms of the new method of religious instruction. The main criticism was that “the religious instruction here is apparently based so largely on the humanistic principle.”⁷⁷ They thought the teacher’s guides were doctrinally unsound. Ultimately, they argued it was not possible to author a truly non-sectarian work that could be acceptable to all of Canadian society. They said that the religious instruction materials would certainly seem sectarian to Ontario’s Catholic and Jewish population, and amounted “to the founding of a new denomination or sect with beliefs and doctrines not found in the confessional literature of any of the Protestant denominations.”⁷⁸ This represents yet another attack on the universal acceptability of religious instruction in the schools of Ontario. To this group of Presbyterian ministers, there was simply no way a topic as complex and important as religion could be made agreeable to all or even most people. While these ministers were not concerned that the religious education program favored one Protestant denomination over others, they felt that by removing any denominational bias the Department of Education removed essential elements of Christianity for the sake of political expediency.

An educational advocacy group called the Association for Religious Liberty also voiced discontent with the new regulations because the organization was “irrevocably opposed to any steps toward a state religion in

Ontario."⁷⁹ They critiqued the Drew Regulations for violating the democratic rights of citizens to freedom of religion, for violating religious equality, and for usurping the role of the church and the home in the process of character formation.⁸⁰ To this group, religion was an intensely personal choice in which the state should have no role.

The criticisms of the Drew Regulations came from many sides, but they presented some similarities. One important critique was that compulsory religious instruction could not possibly be acceptable to all segments of society. As the Jewish Congress made clear, "There can be no such thing as completely undenominational religious instruction acceptable to all religious groups in the public school system."⁸¹ Another critique was that religious instruction was not at all the business of the state. But perhaps the most important argument against religious instruction was that it violated minority rights. The Jewish Congress and other groups contended that protecting minorities was clearly the responsibility of the majority group, and that the majority imperiled the fundamental principle of equality when it privileged one specific group over others, becoming "perilously close to the totalitarian system."⁸²

For opponents of the Drew Regulations, Protestantism was neither a crucial component of the Canadian national identity nor a feature of British tradition. Rather, the most important feature of democracy was equal representation. Although they acknowledged the fundamental importance of religion as the moral core of a democratic nation, they believed any attempt by the state to regulate religion was a violation of the fundamental principles of democracy. This is an important point because minority groups continued to protest the program of religious instruction over the next two decades. Educators eventually came to accept their interpretation of minority rights during the major investigations into religious instruction in the 1960s and 1970s.

In 1948 the Hope Commission assigned Deputy Superintendent of Education Hodgins to write a report summing up the main points of the controversy and advise the Ministry of Education of the proper course of action. His report, "Religious Education in the Public Schools," began by arguing that the Drew Regulations "did not depart, in any material respect, from the traditional policy of the public schools."⁸³ Hodgins thought that non-sectarian Protestant religion had always pervaded the public school system in one form or another. Indeed, the only thing that had changed was that religious instruction was now made part of the regular school day.⁸⁴ Citing several briefs received by the Hope Commission,

Hodgins further argued that religion was a standard educational objective agreed upon by most of the major educational organizations of the day.

Hodgins wrote in his report, "The introduction of this course has met with general acceptance."⁸⁵ And though he admitted there were groups opposed to the new regulations based on the idea of "freedom of conscience," he confidently proclaimed that "the suggestion that freedom of conscience is threatened by the regulations of 1944 appears to be without foundation."⁸⁶ He did take seriously the Jewish League objection that the teacher's manuals were offensive to Jewish Canadians, and therefore recommended they be revised. But on the whole, the weight of educational opinion was in favor of religious education, so Hodgins recommended the current provisions be continued.

The major report of the Hope Commission issued in 1950 came down decidedly in favor of the new regulations regarding religious instruction. The report made the case that the core values exemplified in the new curriculum, though considered Protestant, were universally valuable.⁸⁷ The Golden Rule, honesty, and Christian love were touted as "the intellectual and religious heritage of Western Civilization," with which no honest citizen could or should disagree.⁸⁸ The close identification of Protestant Christianity with universally acceptable moral principles allowed the Hope Commission to confidently endorse the new religious instruction program and effectively marginalize dissenting voices.

Though the Hope Commission strongly endorsed the new program, the Department of Education of Ontario, wary of the sensitivity of the subject, was quite cautious in its approach to implementing the program of religious instruction. Guidebooks and teacher's manuals were quickly produced for Grades One through Six, but despite urging from the Ontario Inter-Church Committee the Department did not immediately expand the program of religious instruction into Grades Seven and Eight. In 1952, Minister of Education W.J. Dunlop explained frankly that it would be difficult to expand the program because different religious groups held different beliefs: "[Some] would certainly be hurt while others would disagree and very few would really be satisfied. In brief, we feel that we have gone as far as we can safely go."⁸⁹ So, despite the strong endorsement of the Hope Commission, there remained significant limitations to the support the Department of Education gave towards such a politically delicate component of the curriculum.

The debate over religious instruction in the schools of Ontario prompted a significant conversation on the nature of Canadian national

identity. All sides could agree that democracy was central to the Canadian experience and to their heritage as a British nation. They also agreed that religion was fundamental to the bedrock of morality within the citizenry to protect democracy, particularly following the horrors of the Second World War.

However, serious contention arose about the place of religion in government-funded and sanctioned schools. One major point of difference between supporters and opponents of the new religious instruction was the assumption of the universal acceptability of Protestantism to Canadians. To supporters, as long as instruction was non-denominational and promoted basic Christian principles, Protestantism was the obvious choice to embody a set of values (steeped in the British heritage) that could best buttress democracy in the province. To opponents, one of the most significant features of British-style democracy was tolerance of many different viewpoints. Any sort of state-sponsored indoctrination was a grievous violation of Britishness. From their standpoint, values and ethics were fair game in the classroom, but any specifically religious teachings would be inherently anti-democratic and violate the spirit of Britishness.

4 RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION IN VICTORIA: 1944–1950

In 1944, both Ontario and England revised their curricula to make religious education compulsory for the first time. The same process occurred in Victoria, though it took over a half decade to accomplish due to legal and logistical difficulties. The chief group responsible for this initiative was the Council for Christian Education in Schools (CCES), Victoria's equivalent to the Ontarian OICC.⁹⁰ Though some opposition emerged on the issue of minority rights, a larger obstacle for the CCES was the stipulation in Victoria's Education Act that publicly funded education be officially secular.

The rationale behind religious instruction in Victoria closely resembled Ontarian motivations. Educators in Victoria also feared moral decay resulting from flagging church attendance. In a speech to the Victorian Parliament, Minister of Public Instruction P.P. Inchbold noted gravely that tens of thousands of school-aged children received no religious instruction, and this had a noticeable effect on military recruitment. Inchbold noted that military recruiters were astonished at how many recruits had little or no knowledge of the Christian faith.⁹¹ Inchbold argued that "without some form of religious instruction, education

fails.”⁹² The state therefore had to step in to preserve the religious core of the nation.

Particularly after 1945, supporters of religious education pointed to examples across the British World to bolster the legitimacy of their desired reforms. Clearly referencing legislation in both England and Canada, they could reasonably claim they were merely “bringing Victorian education more into line with educational trends in other Christian Countries.”⁹³ The CCES specifically used the English Butler Act, “liberal provisions for religious education” in other Australian states, and examples from around the British World to bolster their case.⁹⁴ In order to keep up with other parts of the British Empire and other states in Australia, the CCES and many educators argued that Victoria needed religion in the classroom.

Implementing religious instruction was vastly more challenging in Victoria than in Ontario because the Victorian educational system was legally secular. By 1943 the CCES began attempting new strategies to have religion included in formal state-run education. They believed removing religion from the classroom was “unanimously condemned” by society and used the influence of the Council to lobby the state to change the Education Act.⁹⁵ The initial aim of the CCES was to remove the secular clause from the books altogether. But changing a piece of major legislation like the Education Act proved too challenging, so by the late 1940s the CCES altered course and focused on redefining the word to permit at least some formal religious instruction.⁹⁶

Another pivotal event for religious education was the creation of the Agreed Syllabus in 1946, an important achievement that ironed out how a course in religious instruction might actually work in the state. Since it came later than similar documents in Ontario and England, the Victorian Syllabus reflected contemporary concerns about religious instruction in public schools. The preface by H.T. Langley, the chairman of the CCES, said that an Agreed Syllabus was sufficient proof that mainstream Protestant churches could work together. Langley described the Agreed Syllabus as a testament to the ecumenical movement amongst mainline Protestant groups.⁹⁷ In effect, the existence of an Agreed Syllabus proved that Protestant churches could “work together harmoniously and effectively” in the teaching of religion, and that such work would not prove divisive to most Victorian citizens.⁹⁸ The reason the state-run system of education was secular in the first place was to prevent inter-denominational infighting, so the fact that Victorian churches, in an ecumenical

fashion, could come together with an agreed curriculum was extremely important. As in Ontario and England, the non-sectarian nature of the Agreed Syllabus was absolutely crucial to its widespread acceptance in Victorian society.

Like the Ontario Teachers' Guides, the Victorian Agreed Syllabus was explicitly opposed to racism, but still presumed that the dominant white culture of Australia was superior to all others. The Grade 2 course entitled "The World Family" emphasized that non-Australians "may have different coloured skins from ours, and live in different kinds of houses, but they are all God's children."⁹⁹ Indeed, the teacher's manual contended that Christian love was the only cure for racism. When talking about Australian Aborigines, the Teacher's Guide said that "when they learn to be friends of white people, black boys and girls of Australia are really very like white boys and girls."¹⁰⁰ This is similar to the Ontario religious instruction materials that advocated for some measure of equality while still presuming that the dominant Anglo culture was superior.

The publication of the Agreed Syllabus in 1946 was an impressive achievement, but the CCES still faced numerous hurdles on the way to changing the legislation regarding religious instruction. One of the most intractable problems, and the main reason the Education Act of 1872 mandated that the school system should be secular in the first place, was the high level of denominational strife between Victorian Protestant churches.¹⁰¹ The Anglican Church resisted the CCES efforts because they wanted to ensure their ministers directly cared for their children, rather than state employees or ministers from other denominations.¹⁰² But the logistical challenges involved with this were simply unacceptable to educational officials, who did not want to divide students by specific church affiliation.

A critical moment came in 1948 when Kent Hughes, the Minister of Public Instruction, contacted the CCES and urged the denominations towards cooperation. He first said that secular education in the state had produced negative outcomes for Victoria, and that civilization could not exist without a "religious basis of some kind."¹⁰³ The letter referenced the 1944 English Education Act that made religious education compulsory in English schools, and implored the CCES, together with Catholic educational officials, to agree on a set standard for religious instruction. If they did so, Hughes implied that the government would receive them favorably. Failing to exhibit a high degree of cooperation between the churches, though, ensured "there will be no hope of any success."¹⁰⁴ This letter,

clearly arguing that the English example should set the stage for action in Victoria, had a galvanizing effect on the CCES.

In response to this letter the various churches in Victoria came together at a major conference, where they agreed on a new formula for religious instruction. The CCES and the churches they represented officially endorsed the letter by the Minister and agreed to permit religious education in the schools.¹⁰⁵ Though they recognized the changes might be regarded as utopian after so much disagreement, they stressed that there was “ample precedent both in Australia and the Home Land.”¹⁰⁶

Agreement between the mainline Protestant churches was an important victory for the CCES, but obstacles remained as they continued to seek an alteration to the Education Act. As was the case in Ontario, one of the greatest hurdles was presented by religious minorities, particularly the Catholic community of Victoria.¹⁰⁷ There was no parallel to the separate but still publicly-funded schools of Ontario, but there was a large network of private Catholic schools throughout the state. Any significant resistance from the Victorian Catholic community could have prevented legislative change to education regarding religious instruction. The Archbishops of Australia issued an official response in 1949 called *Christian Education in a Democratic Community*. Their response supported a strengthened system of religious education in Australian schools.

The main reason the Catholic community would not stand in the way of a renewed program of religious education was because, like the Jewish Congress in Ontario, the archbishops accepted that religion was absolutely essential to a quality education. They argued that the separation of religion from education had numerous deleterious effects on society, including an increase in class hatred, secularism, and cynicism, and further, “The very evils of the social system spring partly from the failure of the schools to link morality with economic life.”¹⁰⁸ The document suggested that the separation of religion from education was the reason for privately funded Catholic education. Though they had to fund both their own schools and state-run schools, Catholics “would rather pay twice than allow religion to be driven out of their educational system.”¹⁰⁹ Religion had to play a role in education for democracy to be successful.

But, as with the position of the Jewish Congress in Ontario, the Archbishops of Australia unequivocally contended that the protection of minority rights was critical to the preservation of democracy. They argued that any group of parents should be allowed to create and maintain their

own schools without financial penalty. "Catholics and Protestants, Jews and unbelievers" should have that right so long as they did not attempt to propagate "subversive" doctrines."¹¹⁰ So, though they did not oppose an expanded form of religious education in the schools, they stipulated that such instruction not be provided by professional teachers in the schools.¹¹¹ This dashed the hopes of the CCES for religious education to be provided by state employees.

The Catholic demand that no state employees be involved in giving religious instruction directly opposed a major goal of the CCES. In the Council's policy statement produced in 1948, they demanded the secular clauses of the Education Act be removed altogether and publicly paid teachers be given the capacity to administer religious instruction.¹¹² But the CCES did not get its way, and the stipulation that prohibited religious instruction by public employees became part of the legislation passed in 1950. This made the Victorian case different from most other Australian states, Ontario, and the English system of religious instruction, which relied at least in part on paid state instructors to provide for the religious needs of their pupils. In Victoria, religious instruction was made a regular component of the curriculum but was administered by a private organization.

Despite this setback, the CCES and Minister of Public Instruction carried on and made the decision to keep 'secular' in the Education Act but redefined the word to permit an expanded form of religious education.¹¹³ The state also accepted the Catholic Church's position and did not allow regular teachers to administer the Agreed Syllabus. Instead, outside volunteers, organized by the CCES, would provide religious instruction to the children of Victoria. In the words of P.P. Inchbold, "The State steps aside and allows the churches to teach in the schools their Christian ethics."¹¹⁴ This proved to be an adroit political maneuver because it undercut criticisms of state-mandated religious indoctrination.

After a period of negotiations ironing out the specifics, P.P. Inchbold confidently presented the new legislation, called the Education (Religious Instruction) Act, to the Victorian Parliament in 1950. The many justifications he gave for the new program were remarkably similar to those put forth in Ontario. He argued that up to 100,000 children in Victoria did not receive any religious instruction, which would ultimately be catastrophic for the future of Australia.¹¹⁵ Religious education was a fundamental necessity because "[the country's] British democracy has been based upon Christian ethics."¹¹⁶ As was the case in Ontario, religious

education was important because it protected democracy, which was at the heart of the British tradition.

There was some opposition to this bill in the Victorian Parliament. P.J. Kennelly from Melbourne West Province thought the bill was “a retrograde step” from the current education system.¹¹⁷ There was no public demand for such measures, and it would “create antagonism among children attending school” by segregating children into groups based on religious affiliation. H.P. Coleman concurred with this criticism, saying he was “anxious that the rights of the minority group ... be fully preserved.”¹¹⁸ Both Coleman and Kennelly were speaking of the Catholic minority, but their criticisms of the religious instruction act were very similar to the objections of the Jewish League in Ontario.

Inchbold responded to this major criticism by reiterating his respect for the rights of minorities. Jews and Catholics, who lived mostly in Melbourne, could “make use of the free periods in the school curriculum in which the children may do just as they like.”¹¹⁹ His statement led to an alteration of the religious instruction act that permitted Jewish and Catholic children to receive separate religious instruction if local religious leaders called for it. However, if no Agreed Syllabus took place in a given school, then Catholic or Jewish education would have to take place outside of normal school hours.¹²⁰ This would become a significant issue in the 1950s and 1960s.

In the end, the prevailing sentiment was that religious instruction was a national necessity for the preservation of the Australian way of life. William Macaulay, from Gippsland, expressed this sentiment best: “We have to make sure that we safeguard those things that are essential to the present form of democracy.”¹²¹ For Macaulay, the new legislation would ensure that children would receive the right kind of character training to sustain the future of Australian democracy.

Following passage of the Education (Religious Instruction) Act of 1950, the CCES became the religious arm of the Department of Education in Victoria. The group organized hundreds of clergy and lay people to administer religious instruction in the school system of Victoria. The Department of Education therefore maintained the illusion of being secular despite making religious instruction an entrenched part of the curriculum. With the passage of this legislation, the CCES and the Department of Education asserted it was their duty to the nation to educate children spiritually in an otherwise secular institution. Indeed, as the 1952 annual CCES report said: “The opportunity is now presented as never before to

preserve through the schools the Christian way of life which is our heritage as a nation within the British tradition."¹²² With the souls of individual children and the national identity at stake, religious instruction became a significant component of the Victorian curriculum.

5 CONCLUSION

Mandatory religious instruction became an entrenched feature of public education in England, Ontario, and Victoria by 1950. In both Ontario and Victoria educators were influenced by the English Butler Act of 1944. Religious education looked somewhat different in each place, but the parallels between the three systems were undeniable. Underlying the success of each system was an ecumenical agreement among mainline Protestant denominations on a set curriculum of basic Christian teachings. The denominations were able to set aside their doctrinal differences largely because they viewed morality—a critical underpinning of democracy in the British tradition—to be under direct threat both abroad and at home. Religious education seemed an expedient reaction to these threats and the surest way to protect Britishness in Ontarian and Victorian schools.

The perceived need for compulsory religious instruction in the 1940s was a transnational phenomenon affecting white settler societies across the British Empire. Proponents viewed as axiomatic the idea that society required organized religion as a moral basis underpinning democracy. Most groups viewed Protestantism as in line with the British heritage fundamental to Canadian and Australian society. However, particularly in Ontario, a determined set of opposition groups argued that state-sponsored religion was in fact antithetical to the British tradition and would harm democracy. In Victoria the strength of resistance was much lower, but the Catholic Church would still not tolerate state employees being directly involved in the administration of religious education. They believed, like the Jewish Congress of Canada, that religious education was the responsibility of parents and local church ministers rather than the publicly funded education system.

Ultimately, the way religious education in Ontario and Victoria was implemented is instructive in several ways. Firstly, it demonstrates that education policymakers in both places looked to England as a leading educational authority worthy of emulation. Ontarian and Victorian educators willingly utilized English materials and adopted most of the same provisions

of the English Education Act of 1944. In the case of Victoria, which implemented legislation several years later, this active imitation was particularly notable.

Secondly, leading policymakers, religious figures, and educators utilized similar justifications for religious education in both Ontario and Victoria. A strong undertone of their conversations was the notion that implementing Protestant religious education in the public schools was a critical means of protecting British-style democracy. It took a unique set of circumstances, particularly the sense of world peril brought on by the Second World War, and a high degree of consensus to pass this legislation. As we shall see in the next chapter, this consensus amongst educators and policymakers steadily eroded in the 1950s and (especially) the 1960s. As the identity of Britishness became less meaningful the underlying rationale for religious education seemed increasingly less credible, producing important and controversial reassessments of the place of religion in the schools two decades later.

NOTES

1. Sir Edmund Herring, "The Needs of the Nation," in *Speeches at a Conference of Headmasters*, J.R. Darling, ed. (Sydney: Waite & Bull, 1948), 5.
2. See Philip Buckner, "Whatever Happened to the British Empire?," *Journal of the Canadian Historical Association*, 4, 1993, 3–32; Philip Buckner, ed., *Canada and the End of Empire*; Philip Buckner with Francis eds., *Canada and the British World: Culture, Migration, and Identity* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Carl Bridge and Kent Fedorowich, eds., *The British World: Diaspora, Culture and Identity* (Portland: Frank Cass Publishers, 2003); Duncan Bell, *The Idea of Greater Britain* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2007); James Curran and Stuart Ward, *The Unknown Nation: Australia after Empire* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2010); Kate Darian-Smith, Patricia Grimshaw and Stuart Macintyre, *Britishness Abroad: Transnational Movements and Imperial Cultures* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 2007); Kevin Grant, Philippa Levine, Frank Trentmann, eds., *Beyond Sovereignty: Britain, Empire and Transnationalism, c. 1880–1950* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007); Stuart Ward, ed., *British Culture and the End of Empire* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2001).
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4. Marilyn Lake and Henry Reynolds, *Drawing the Global Colour Line: White Men's Countries and the International Challenge of Racial Equality* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2008).
5. C.P. Champion, *The Strange Demise of British Canada: The Liberals and Canadian Nationalism 1964–1968* (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2010); Curran and Ward, *The Unknown Nation*; José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945–1971* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Deryck Schreuder and Stuart Ward, *Australia's Empire* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008); Stuart Ward, *Australia and the British Embrace: The Demise of the Imperial Ideal* (Carlton, Vic: Melbourne University Press, 2001).
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7. John Dewey was a prolific writer and philosopher who produced important works on education throughout the first half of the twentieth century. For an example of his work, see *The School and Society* and *The Child and the Curriculum* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1915) or *Democracy and Education: An Introduction to the Philosophy of Education* (London: The Free Press, 1944).
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21. *Brief 64: Board of Christian Education of the United Church of Canada Submission to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, December 6, 1945, 2.
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23. *Ibid.*, 2.
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25. Hodgins, "Religious Education in the Public Schools," 1.
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27. Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 38.
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30. Roy Niblet, "The Religious Education Clauses of the 1944 Act: Aims, Hopes and Fulfillment," in A.G. Wedderspoon, ed., *Religious Education 1944-1984*, 20.
31. R.J.K. Freathy, "Ecclesiastical and Religious Factors Which Preserved Christian and Traditional Forms of Education for Citizenship in English Schools, 1934-1944," *Oxford Review of Education*, Vol. 33, No. 3, 375.
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33. E.R. McLean, "Religious Education in the Public Schools of Ontario: The Relation of Education and Religion," Ontario Inter-Church Committee on Weekday Religious Education, General Synod Archives: Anglican Church of Canada, Accession Number: GS75-104.

34. E.R. McLean, *Religion in Ontario Schools: Based on the Minutes of the Inter-Church Committee on Religious Education in Schools* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1965), 3.
35. *The Cambridgeshire Syllabus of Religious Teaching for Schools* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1939).
36. E.R. McLean, *Religion in Ontario Schools*, 45.
37. *Brief 69: Ontario Educational Association Submission to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, February 21, 1946, Archives of Ontario RG 18-131 Container 11, 1.
38. *Brief 69*, Ontario Education Association, 1.
39. *Ibid.*, 6-7.
40. *Ibid.*, 7.
41. *Ibid.*, 6.
42. *Ibid.*, 136-7.
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48. Lilian E. Cox, Mary Entwistle and Rotha M. Reed, *Stories of God and Jesus: Teacher's Guide to Religious Education Grade Two* (Toronto: The Ryerson Press, 1944), 60.
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51. Inter-Church Committee on Weekday Religious Education, *Brief 28 to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, September, 1945.
52. Morley, *Brief 103*, 7.
53. Gus Harris, *Brief 150: Submission of Gus Harris to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, January 12, 1946, 5.
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59. E.R. McLean, “Religious Education in the Public Schools of Ontario, 1956.” General Synod Archives: Anglican Church of Canada, M82-15, Series 34.
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 61. Charles Seager, *Brief 77: Church of England in the Ecclesiastical Province of Ontario*, Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, RG 18-131 Container 12, 6.
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 65. Abraham Feinberg, “For Children in a Democracy: Religious Instruction in the Public Schools of Ontario,” September, 1945, 2.
 66. *Ibid.*, 4.
 67. *Ibid.*
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 69. *Ibid.*, 11.
 70. *Ibid.*, 16.
 71. Hope, *Royal Commission on Education in the Province of Ontario*, 168.
 72. Feinberg, “For Children in a Democracy,” 13.
 73. *Ibid.*, 3.
 74. Catholic Bishops of Ontario, *Brief 196: Catholic Bishops of Ontario to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 2.
 75. *Ibid.*, 4–5.
 76. *Ibid.*, 9.
 77. Frederick Bronkema et al., “The Christian Faith and the Religion in Ontario Schools,” *Supplementary Statement to Brief 45 of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 4.
 78. *Ibid.*, *Brief 45*, 50.
 79. A.C. Cochrane et al., *Brief 45: Association for Religious Liberty*, October, 1946, 4.
 80. *Ibid.*, 1.
 81. Jewish Congress of Canada, *Brief 46*, 6.
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91. Victorian Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Session 150 (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1950), 2698.
92. *Ibid.*, 2709.
93. CCES, "Minutes of Meeting of the Council Tuesday 17th September, 1946," State Library of Victoria MS12019 Y Box 100.
94. *The Council for Christian Education in Schools Bulletin No. 2*, December, 1946. State Library of Victoria MS 12019 Box 97.
95. CCES, "Joint Council for Religious Instruction in State Schools Report and Balance Sheet for the Year Ended 21st December, 1943," State Library of Victoria MS 12019 Y Box 96.
96. Russell, *Report of the Committee on Religious Education in Victoria*, Melbourne: Government Printer, 1974, 7.
97. CCES, *The Agreed Syllabus* (Melbourne: Spectator Publishing Co Pty. Ltd., 1946), 2.
98. *Ibid.*, 2.
99. CCES, *Handbook for Teachers Based on the Agreed Syllabus of the Council for Christian Education in Schools (Victoria) Book 1 Grades 1 and 2* (Melbourne: Spectator Publishing Co. Pty. Ltd., 1946), 85.
100. *Ibid.*, 87.
101. L.J. Blake, *Vision and Realisation: A Centenary History of State Education in Victoria* (Melbourne: Education Department of Victoria, 1973).
102. CCES, Minutes of Meeting of the Council Tuesday 15th October, 1946, State Library of Victoria MS12019Y Box 100.
103. Letter from Kent Hughes, Minister of Public Instruction to Rev. H.R. Trenaman (Director, Council for Christian Education in Schools), 2 March, 1948, State Library of Victoria MS12019Y Box 100.
104. Hughes to H.R. Trenaman, 2 March, 1948.
105. CCES, Minutes of Special Meeting of the Council Tuesday 13 July, 1948, State Library of Victoria MS12019Y Box 100.
106. CCES, "Suggested Policy in Relation to Religious Instruction in State Schools," 1948, State Library of Victoria MS12019 Y Box 100.

107. The sources do not indicate any political reaction by the Jewish community in Victoria to the new religious instruction enactments. The Religious Instruction Act of 1950 specifically exempted Jewish children from compulsory attendance, significantly reducing the charge of discrimination. This is in obvious contrast to the situation in Ontario, where the Jewish community was highly organized and vociferous in their opposition to the Drew Regulations.
108. Archbishops and Bishops of the Catholic Church in Australia, *Christian Education in a Democratic Community* (Victoria: Renown Press, 1949), 3.
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113. Minutes of the Meeting of the Council for Christian Education in Schools, December 13, 1949. State Library of Victoria MS12019 Y Box 100.
114. Victoria Parliamentary Debates (Hansard) Session 150 (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1950), 2969.
115. *Ibid.*, 2698.
116. *Ibid.*, 2969.
117. *Ibid.*, 2713.
118. *Ibid.*, 2717.
119. *Ibid.*, 2721.
120. "More on Religious Instruction in State Schools," *Education Gazette and Teacher's Aid* Vol. LI, No. 6, June 21, 1951.
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An Identity Quagmire: Ontarian and Victorian Religious Education after 1950

1 INTRODUCTION

By 1950, religious instruction was a regular feature of the curriculum in Ontario, Canada and Victoria, Australia. Post-war educators in both cases wanted religion in the schools as a way to defend democracy and provide a moral core for the nation. They assumed students in the public schools (though not the Roman Catholic Separate Schools of Ontario) were predominantly Protestant. The new curricula used Protestant but non-denominational educational materials, contained an opt-out clause for dissenting students, and provided for two half-hour periods of instruction per week. The main difference between the Ontarian and Victorian systems was in the administration of the religious instruction curriculum. In Ontario, publicly employed teachers were allowed to offer religious instruction, but in the officially and legally secular Victorian system, an outside organization, the Council for Christian Education in Schools (CCES), developed and implemented the religious instruction curriculum for the Victorian Department of Education.

In the two decades that followed, both Australian and Canadian society changed in ways that made sustaining religious education challenging. As one influential Ontarian report argued, “Prosperity had induced a secular and materialistic spirit; Sunday School attendance was declining. Young people rebelled against the mores of their parents by new types of dress and behavior, overt delinquency, and the use of drugs.”¹ The report also

highlighted immigration as a major problem for religious education. Every year students from many different faiths entered the public education system in Ontario, thus undermining the Protestant homogeneity assumed by many educators in the 1940s. The post-war years witnessed similar changes in Australia, with immigration bringing large numbers of Greek Orthodox and Roman Catholic children into the public school system of the state.² These societal changes made it increasingly difficult to maintain the religious education curriculum created after the Second World War.

This chapter continues the story of religious education in Ontario and Victoria from the high point of religious education in the 1950s to the troublesome 1960s and 1970s, when educators increasingly criticized these courses, arguing that they indoctrinated students, ignored minority rights, and limited freedom of conscience. The chapter analyzes the major initiatives to keep religious education relevant in a dynamically changing society, one that had lost the consensus British identity that generated these courses in the first place. Religious education became a quagmire for educators in Ontario and Victoria, who lost faith in religious instruction but could not remove it from the curriculum.

2 EXPANSION, CHALLENGES, AND REFORM IN VICTORIAN RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

After the passage of the Victorian Education (Religious Instruction) Act of 1950, the CCES enjoyed a decade of expansion and public support. The organization won this support by emphasizing the necessity of religious instruction as a vital component of the Australian national identity. In their 1951 Annual Report, the CCES argued that “Christian Education in State Schools is a work of fundamental national importance which merits the support of all citizens.”³ Acting at the behest of the Department of Education, the CCES ushered in a new era for religious instruction in Victoria.

The CCES and the Victorian Department of Education were quick to implement the Act during the 1950 school year. They used voluntary instructors composed of both lay people and clergy to visit classrooms and teach the Agreed Syllabus for a half hour twice a week. By 1959, the CCES used 1,289 voluntary instructors who taught 400,000 primary school age children, and 114,000 secondary school children.⁴ In that year

the CCES, acting as the religious arm of the state educational system, reached approximately 85 percent of the children of Victoria. This was a remarkable achievement for the organization in such a short span of time.

The CCES did all this with a continued sense of urgency and mission. Members argued that the “agencies of civilization” included home, school, church, and state, determined “under God, the future of the race.”⁵ The Council also stressed the fundamentally British nature of their instruction. In their 1952 annual report, the CCES said their mission was to preserve “the Christian way of life which is our heritage as a nation within the British tradition.”⁶ Protestant Christianity continued to be seen as a primary bulwark of Australia, without which the ‘race’ would fail. Appeals to this particular part of the British tradition remained an effective strategy employed by the CCES.

The Council often justified its work in temporal rather than spiritual terms. In their 1954 Annual Report the CCES stated that their work resulted in an improved citizenry better able to uphold the values of Australian society.⁷ The CCES viewed religious instruction and character formation as inextricably linked, that one could not be accomplished without the other. And, for the most part, the Department of Education agreed. A.H. Ramsay, the Director of Education, proudly said in 1955 that religion had become “an essential part of education.”⁸

The Education Department of Victoria fully supported the CCES and attempted to aid the organization in their efforts at expansion. In 1955 A.H. Ramsay said the failure to remove the secular limitation from the Education Act in 1950 was “unfortunate.”⁹ In fact, in 1955 he gave his full-fledged support to the most important expansion of the CCES to date: chaplaincy. Chaplains were clergy appointed from one of the main Protestant churches in Victoria to serve in a full-time advisory capacity in secondary schools. Chaplains were, according to the CCES, better able to provide religious instruction and could also provide important pastoral care to students.¹⁰ A chaplain had to have a theological education, at least three years in some form of pastoral ministry, and be either an ordained minister or a deaconess in one of the seven constituent churches of the CCES.¹¹ Chaplains became an important component of the CCES program.

The Department of Education regarded the designating of chaplains a great success for several reasons. In the first place, the new position of chaplain did not require any new legislation. Since the framework for institutionalized religious education was already in place, chaplaincies were

established by a minor change in the regulations governing the Education Act. Secondly, the Department did not have to use its own personnel for chaplains. The CCES arranged it so that chaplains were appointed at the request of schools and with support from local churches.¹² Chaplaincies were funded mainly through local sources, but the government did offer grants on an occasional basis.

Once again, the Victorian Department of Education could reasonably claim on the one hand that it was meeting spiritual needs by providing more services, and on the other that it involved no state employees in the process, thus ensuring that the nominal title of secular was maintained. By 1957 Ramsay said with confidence, “[The] chaplain has become an integral part of the school staff, has been regarded as even closer to the boys than a teacher.”¹³ Whereas the CCES saw the primary duty of the chaplain as pastoral, the Department of Education praised their role as a sort of guidance counselor for students.

With the massive expansion in its operations, the CCES needed more funds to keep up with increasing expenditures. They needed to pay the salaries of chaplains, cover the cost of publications, and pay for some of the travel expenses of volunteer instructors. To generate these funds the CCES organized a major campaign in 1957. Along with many other prominent Victorian businessmen and government officials, Sir Edmund Herring, a former Lieutenant Governor, led the effort. The goal was to raise £100,000 for CCES staff and expenditures. By 1958, the CCES reported that their fundraising efforts raised £88,000 between 1958 and 1960¹⁴—impressive for a privately funded educational lobby group.

The expansion of CCES operations and increased financial support for the organization indicate widespread public support for the CCES in the 1950s. Victorian educators and citizens continued to believe that religion was integral to the process of education and that Protestant Christianity continued to form the moral center of the Australian nation. As we shall see, the 1960s brought significant challenges to the feasibility, practicability, and desirability of religious instruction in the schools. These challenges led to major changes and reforms to religious instruction in the 1970s, and a re-evaluation of the need for religious education to support the crumbling edifice of Britishness.

Even during the years of highest support in the 1950s, the CCES experienced the vexing problem of finding enough volunteers to staff the classrooms. In 1961 there were 3,010 instructors, about half of whom were lay people and half clergy or deaconesses in one of the constituent churches

of the CCES. While this might seem like an impressive number, the CCES complained they could only reach about 85 percent of students, which meant that about 60,000 students did not receive religious training.¹⁵ The uncovered regions were generally localized to a few metropolitan areas in which there was not enough local support. The Council said they needed another thousand volunteers to adequately cover Victorian schools.

Despite an increase in volunteers to 3,592 at its height in 1967, the CCES reached an ever lower number of children in primary schools each year. Even in 1967 the percentage of students receiving religious instruction had fallen to 77 percent of primary school children. But the much larger problem was finding volunteers for the secondary schools. In 1967, the CCES had only enough instructors to reach 69 percent of secondary schools.¹⁶ Staffing the secondary schools was a major problem for several reasons. More students than ever before were attending secondary schools, partially due to the baby boom generation and partially due to a paradigm shift in education in which children were expected to complete a secondary education.¹⁷

By the early 1970s the inability of the CCES to reach students became even more pronounced, particularly in the secondary schools. In 1971, the CCES only had enough instructors to reach 70 percent of primary schools and 43 percent of secondary schools.¹⁸ The Council recognized that increased enrollment in the secondary schools was not matched by an increase in chaplains or volunteers.¹⁹ The CCES simply could not meet the demands created by increased school enrollment.

Another demographic problem facing the CCES was the changing religious affiliation of newer students entering the Victorian school system. Post-war Australian immigration programs brought in large numbers of students who did not fit the British and Protestant student model that the CCES was formed to reach. Many of these immigrants settled in groups in urban areas. In fact, this was one of the reasons the CCES had problems finding volunteers in some areas of metropolitan Melbourne. They depended on a local volunteer population, but in regions with a high density of immigrants of other religious backgrounds volunteers were scarce.²⁰

Large numbers of Italians and Greeks began to enter the school system, few of whom were members of a Protestant constituent church of the CCES. The Italian population, largely consisting of Roman Catholic members, generally did not enter the private Catholic school system, preferring instead to attend the publicly funded schools. By 1970, the CCES

estimated that Roman Catholics comprised more than 10 percent of the school-aged population in the State of Victoria. This profoundly affected the ability of the CCES to claim that it met the needs of the entire public school community. One of the reasons for the initial success of the CCES was an assumption of religious homogeneity in Australian society, but it became increasingly clear that the post-war immigration boom brought this to an end.

One possible solution was to forge a new agreement with the Catholic Church in which the Agreed Syllabus could be modified and made acceptable to both Protestants and Catholics alike. But in 1968 Archbishop of Melbourne James Knox rejected this idea as “untimely and premature.”²¹ And indeed, the Catholic Church vehemently opposed some of the measures of the Education (Religious Instruction) Act. A particularly frustrating feature was the stipulation that Catholic or Jewish religious instruction could only occur when an Agreed Syllabus class was also taking place in the same school. Many of the schools with a large percentage of Catholic students were the same schools for which the CCES could not provide instructors, thus preventing Catholic religious instruction altogether.

By the mid-1960s this problem was so acute that the Education Department convened a special convention that Protestant, Catholic, and Jewish leaders all attended. Eventually they agreed that religious instruction could be offered even if a CCES instructor did not arrive as scheduled.²² But this only applied to occasions when CCES instructors failed to arrive on time. The Agreed Syllabus was still the legal basis for religious instruction in the state, and the CCES would not allow Catholic or Jewish instruction when there was no corresponding CCES instruction. Although CCES executive committee officials continued to discuss allowing instruction outside of the Agreed Syllabus, they wanted to maintain the regular form of religious instruction established in 1950.²³

The 1950 Act contained provisions for Protestants, Catholics, and Jews, but not for any other religious groups, some of whom began to demand representation in the public education system. The largest new religious group to enter the state was the Greek Orthodox Church. They demanded equal access to religious instruction for students of their faith. But the Education Department was against any more “breaking up” of classes.²⁴ The Greek Orthodox Church attempted and failed to attain equal status in 1965.

Altogether, the CCES faced a demographic crisis. It simply could not find enough volunteers to meet the incredible explosion in school

attendance, particularly at the secondary level. And though religious homogeneity had always been illusory, the high level of immigration into Victoria shattered the CCES's claim to be able to serve the entire community. With all these problems, the CCES counted more than ever on the support of the Education Department.

By the 1960s, though, educators began to question whether the religious instruction program served a useful purpose in Victorian society. In the 1940s there was a pervasive assumption amongst educators that religion was fundamentally necessary to form the moral core of the child in a British nation, thus preserving democracy and the national identity. Therefore it was assumed that religion should permeate the curriculum. By the 1960s this consensus began to unravel. A report by Ross Kimber in the Victorian *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* entitled "Values and the Social Studies" illustrated this point. Kimber argued that Australian society after the Second World War had become pluralistic and that there was no set of values on which everyone in society could agree.²⁵ Kimber argued that transmitting values to children implicated the state in a process of indoctrination and fundamentally undermined democracy. Kimber said that promoting one set of values would "deny the freedom of choice and the rational process of inquiry...to resort to indoctrination, which by definition is held to be inherently bad."²⁶ Though Kimber was referring to the social studies curriculum, the implications for religious instruction were clear. The CCES could no longer count on unwavering support from the Education Department.

In 1968 the CCES began the process of hiring a full-time curriculum officer to help put the organization more into line with contemporary educational opinion. Three years later they appointed J.C. Howells to the position, and his appointment had far reaching effects on the nature of religious instruction in Victoria. Howells quickly recognized a reality of the increasingly diverse society: "[The CCES can] no longer pretend that the children in our state schools are white, Anglo-Saxon and protestant."²⁷ He knew that in order to survive, the CCES would have to adapt to the changing social environment, and his time as curriculum officer was filled with change. The consensus of the 1940s that conflated Britishness, democracy, and religion was no longer sustainable. The demographic and educational challenges to religious instruction paved the way for an alternative vision for national unity based on tolerance and diversity rather than religion.

Howells believed the entire aim and structure of the CCES had to be transformed in the early 1970s in response to the changing demographic and pedagogical pressures on religious education in Victoria. He questioned the existing aims of the Council by suggesting they were no longer appropriate for a society that tolerated diversity of religion.²⁸ Howells argued that religious education should simply impart knowledge of religion to students with a particular focus on Protestant Christianity. But the program he envisioned would also encompass a study of world religion. Howells thought that studying world religions would allow students to “become informed, rational, and discriminating about the many expressions of religion in our pluralist community.”²⁹ This was a far cry from the CCES position in the 1940s which viewed Christianity as an integral force standing between Australia and the destruction of democracy.

Howells’ vision for a new mode of religious instruction was partially borne out in a new religious education curriculum entitled “Religion in Life.” Beginning in 1973 the CCES developed and published a new series of teachers’ manuals and guidebooks for religious instruction purposes. The series represented a dramatic change from the Agreed Syllabus published in 1946. The focus of “Religion in Life” was making religious instruction more amenable to contemporary educational theory. Indeed, the CCES even went so far as to make the distinction between religious instruction and religious education. ‘Religious instruction’ was characterized as forced indoctrination, whereas ‘religious education’ was simply the transmission of knowledge about religion to children. This change was necessary because a program based on “unreasoning dogmatism” would alienate children and their parents.³⁰ Yet, at the same time, “Religion in Life” reaffirmed the traditional purpose of religious instruction, namely, the spread of Protestant Christianity in the schools. The authors of the program recognized the tension between these two objectives but argued that both were desirable objectives in the classroom, writing: “It [Religion in Life] does take educational principles seriously...At the same time it is unashamedly a Christian program.”³¹ But the fact that the authors saw these two objectives as possibly antithetical represents a radical departure from the educational consensus of the immediate post-war era.

Whereas in the 1940s the avowed aim of religious instruction was the inculcation of ‘proper’ values, Howells wrote in the introduction to “Religion in Life” that the new program would encourage a personal journey of spiritual development while providing knowledge about the Christian faith.³² The goals were almost exclusively about personal

fulfillment. They had nothing to do with national identity or a transnational sense of shared Britishness. Indeed, there was no indication that Britishness was an objective of this new program whatsoever. To meet the changing needs of Victorian society, the CCES re-envisioned its stance as based at least somewhat on tolerance and diversity.

The “Religion in Life” program proved to be an enormous success for the CCES. One commentator noted in the 1980s that the program was extraordinarily popular, reaching more than one-quarter of a million students in 1979.³³ “Religion in Life” was used as an alternative of the Agreed Syllabus, but it did not totally replace it.

But even as the CCES prepared and distributed “Plan for Living,” it also called for reforms to the process of religious education in the state. In a formal request to the Education Department of Victoria in 1972, the CCES said change was necessary with the shift in educational attitudes towards religious education in Victoria.³⁴ The request mentioned the limited number of volunteers the organization used, the changing demographics in the schools, and the unfavorable climate of opinion amongst educators as reasons for reform. Howells said that the review should start by asking fundamental questions about the role of religion in the public schools.³⁵ The Education Department responded by appointing W.B. Russell, a former Deputy Director-General of Education, as chair of a committee tasked with conducting “a wide-ranging review of all matters relevant to religious education (R.I.) in State schools.”³⁶

The Russell Committee contained members from many different sectors of the educational establishment including government officials, teacher unions, and members of the CCES. The two main issues confronting the members of the committee were how to revise the program to be educationally sound, and how to make religious education favor Christianity in the face of the increasingly evident pluralism in Australian society?

In their first meeting, Russell outlined the main societal changes that, in his view, necessitated reform of the religious education program. These included a breakdown in subject barriers allowing religious education to occur in different areas across the curriculum, the lack of availability of volunteers to teach religious instruction, and the isolation of religious education instructors from regular educators.³⁷ For Russell, religion was a major component of the human experience and therefore deserved rigorous academic attention. The CCES, for all its good intentions, was not capable of producing highly trained educators with the knowledge and experience to effectively educate students in this important topic.

The Russell Report made the case that educational theory had moved beyond an evangelistic focus to a more inclusive, non-indoctrinating basis. Interestingly, though educators no longer thought about religious education as a fundamental part of Britishness, Britain was still used as evidence that religious education could be compatible with modern schooling. The report quoted the English Durham Report, *The Fourth R* (1969), as a prime example that religion could be a part of the regular curriculum.³⁸ The Russell Report argued: “Until recently, in both Britain and Australia, religious education and moral education have for practical purposes been regarded as the same thing,” but that educators in the 1970s accepted that these two subjects were separable.³⁹ The Russell Committee posited that one could educate about religion without necessarily using it as the only basis for morality in the classroom. The comparison with Britain indicates the Russell committee was not rejecting Britishness but rather attempting to keep up with educational standards in Britain and elsewhere in the English-speaking world.

Since educational theory had ostensibly moved beyond the old problems of sectarianism and indoctrination, the Russell Report held that the fundamental obstacle to a rich and rewarding religious education program was the secular clause in the Victorian Education Act. The committee believed that the clause actually prevented good education in religion.⁴⁰ Russell envisioned a new scheme by professional educators that would be on as sound an educational basis as any other subject.⁴¹ To the members of the Russell Committee, religious education could exhibit the same level of professionalism and academic rigor as other curricular content, and therefore legislative restrictions only served to inhibit educational progress.

The secular clause had to be removed because the Russell Report advocated religion as a major focus of study across the curriculum with state employees as the main instructors. The amateur instructors supplied by the CCES were, to the Russell Committee, totally inadequate to provide objective and sound education. Professional teachers using the latest educational techniques could avoid the older problems of indoctrination. The committee argued that indoctrination was not possible if religious education was provided by qualified teachers.⁴² Getting teachers involved with instruction in religion was a key goal of the Russell Report and necessitated legislative action.

The second and far more challenging issue facing the committee was the problem that diversity created for religious education. How could

Protestant Christianity be favored to the exclusion of other faiths? The committee recognized that Australia was more religiously plural than ever and, as a result, a new program in religious education needed to be made on a much broader educational basis.⁴³ Pluralism presented fundamental challenges to the traditional objectives of the school. The Report argued that pluralism necessitated moving towards an educational model that would not offend anyone's belief systems.⁴⁴ In many ways this generalized ethic worried the committee because the members feared it would create a society of "a loose amalgam of tepid individuals holding minimal generalized views."⁴⁵ For this reason the committee believed that the school alone could not bear the responsibility of creating a consensus worldview for Australian children. Churches and private organizations needed to play a much greater role in religious education.⁴⁶ The Russell Committee argued, contrary to educators in the 1940s and 1950s, that it was not the responsibility of the public school system to provide a working national identity to children.

At the same time, the Russell Committee did not advocate that the state could completely abandon a program in religious education. They noted a 1973 Gallup poll showing over 80 percent of Victorians believed that state schools should have an hour of religious coursework each week.⁴⁷ Although the committee clearly privileged expertise in educational theory, they still respected the obvious public approval of the religious instruction program.

But if the school should not provide a universally acceptable identity for children, what then was the role of religious education? The committee argued that a course in religious studies could actually lead to a better functioning pluralist society. The Russell Report held that religion could be studied without a need for proselytization or indoctrination. Indeed, "a religious education which explores the faiths of others with sensitivity and due respect can aid the development of mutual understanding and hence of peace."⁴⁸ Tolerance and respect were key objectives of their envisioned program.

The Russell Committee put on full display the many changes to both educational theory and to Victorian society evident in the late 1960s and early 1970s. The committee was receptive to the internal pressures of diversity and pluralism as well as international trends in educational theory. It called for a completely objective, professional course in religious studies that would promote tolerance of different beliefs. This represented a radical departure from the predominant thinking of the 1940s, which emphasized character training for democracy.

Though the Russell Report was an important philosophical document in educational circles, it turned out to be extraordinarily impractical politically. The main problem, unsurprisingly, was the secular instruction clause of the original Education Act of 1872. The report called for the deletion of the secular clause altogether. If this was not politically possible, the committee contended that their envisioned program could technically be seen as secular since they in no way advocated for a particular religion or denomination but instead promoted a wide-ranging acceptance of religious belief. The Russell Committee felt that the Minister of Education could define the term ‘secular’ to include the religious studies program they desired. The committee anticipated that the Crown Solicitor would weigh in with a legal opinion soon after the publication of the report. If the Crown Solicitor could not agree with their recommendations, then they would call for a formal amendment to the Education Act.

In 1976 the matter was submitted to J. Downey, Crown Solicitor of Victoria, for a formal legal opinion. Downey noted that there was no officially sanctioned definition of the word ‘secular’ in the original 1872 Education Act. He further disagreed with the Russell Committee’s opinion by pointing out that the current Minister of Education had absolutely no authority to define the term. Most damning of all, however, was Downey’s contention that the Russell Report’s vision of religious education would not be legally secular “and, therefore, could not lawfully be provided in State Schools by teachers within the meaning of that [Education] Act.”⁴⁹ Downey further argued that if the Minister went ahead and defined the new religious education program as technically ‘secular,’ then parents would not have the legal right to withdraw their children from such courses. This was because there was no legal basis to withdraw children from secular courses. This torpedoed another recommendation of the report. In total, then, the Downey Opinion powerfully refuted many of the major recommendations of the Russell Committee. The Minister of Education could technically have implemented the program in spite of the Downey Opinion, but would have left himself vulnerable to litigation had he chosen to do so.

Instead, the Minister of Education created another committee, this time chaired by C.O. Healey, to look into how the problem could be addressed. *A Consideration of the Recommendations of the Russell Report: Report of the Committee on Religious Education*, otherwise known as the Healey Report, effectively put to rest the entire plan of the Russell

Committee. The Healy committee received over 800 submissions from churches, organizations, and individuals throughout Victoria before they published their report. Though many sectors of Victorian society wanted to reform the religious education system, the Healey Report clearly showed that finding any kind of consensus on this issue was impossible in the mid-1970s.⁵⁰

For its part, the CCES fully supported the recommendations of the Russell Report as a practical solution for the problems they experienced in reaching all students in the state of Victoria.⁵¹ Although Howells had been advocating for a radically different program from the original Agreed Syllabus since his appointment as curriculum officer, this still represented a major turning point for the CCES. They were willing to allow the state to take over responsibility for religious instruction in a way that did not fully and explicitly favor the Christian religion.

The reaction of other religious groups was decidedly mixed. The Roman Catholic Church supported the Russell recommendations; the Greek Orthodox and Jewish communities did not support the Russell Report, however, on the grounds that their children would have to be removed from any class with such religious instruction, and that this would amount to discrimination.⁵²

The Victorian Teachers Union kept to its long-established policy of rejecting any proposed amendment to the secular clauses of the Education Act. The Technical Teachers Association of Victoria (TTAV) vehemently opposed the Russell recommendations, giving as a reason: "The objective study of religious beliefs in history is permissible and is in fact being done under the present [Education] Act."⁵³ In summing up the position of many of the individual submissions sent to the Healey committee, the author noted that most submissions protested the Russell Report.⁵⁴ Protests ranged from wanting to eliminate religion entirely from education to calls for an increase in training on the Bible.

The committee seriously considered changing the Education Act but found that removing or qualifying the secular clause would produce intense protest across the state.⁵⁵ Since any attempt "actually to delete the word 'secular' would be most impolitic," the Healey committee advised against accepting the Russell Report's recommendations.⁵⁶ But they were also unwilling to repeal the current system of religious instruction. The system established in the 1940s survived. Indeed, the Minister of Education in 1976 assured the Victorian Parliament that religious instruction would continue as it had since 1950 as long as local school communities chose to

support it.⁵⁷ Effectively, the contentious nature of the debate paralyzed the Department of Education, leaving it unable to effect significant reform.

For the CCES, this was a bitter blow. J.C. Howells issued a press release in 1978 which said, “I consider that the effect of the present situation is to indoctrinate our State school children into secularism. Religion is not being taken seriously in our State schools.”⁵⁸ The CCES continued to offer religious instruction and to distribute the “Religion in Life” program to Victorian students and to other Australian states, but it could not effect any more change politically to reform the system of religious education then in place.

The drama surrounding the Russell and Healey committees as well as the CCES response reveals a major shift in Victorian culture from the immediate aftermath of the Second World War. In the 1940s, educators and supporters of religious instruction believed the Australian nation survived as a result of a Protestant and democratic British inheritance. To protect and preserve the nation, they believed children needed to acquire the values of Christianity. But high levels of immigration, increasing cultural diversity, and changing educational theory in Australia shattered the perceived relationship between religion and national identity. Educators instead began to advocate for an inclusive program of religious studies that would dispassionately teach children about religion without proselytizing to them. They argued that this would create a more diverse and tolerant society in which people could talk reasonably about their differences. But they could not garner enough public support for their ideas to effect any significant legislative change. As a result, the system devised in the 1940s survived even after the CCES and Department of Education regarded it as ineffective and possibly harmful. In effect, the case of religious instruction reveals the loss of an identity centered on Britishness and the difficulty of finding a suitable replacement.

3 OSSIFICATION AND REFORM IN RELIGIOUS STUDIES IN ONTARIO

The case of Ontario presents a fascinating contrast to the Victorian experience of religious education. The main administrative difference in post-war religious instruction between the two systems was that in Ontario, the provincial education system administered the curriculum with regular

schoolteachers from Grades 1 to 6. Clergy were permitted in the classroom for Grades 7 and 8, but there was no formal curriculum for them to follow, and many schools had no program for those grades whatsoever. The Ontario Inter-Church Committee for Weekday Religious Education (OICC), unlike the CCES in Victoria, had no part in actually administering religious education, but it was important in liaising between churches and the Department of Education. In Ontario, the state had a much greater role in religious education than in Victoria. As this section will demonstrate, this structural difference created several problems for religious instruction and hastened calls for reform.

From the very beginning, there was vehement opposition to religious instruction in state schools by a vocal minority of Ontarians. Groups like the Jewish Congress of Canada and the Association for Religious Liberty continued their attacks on the Drew Regulations and brought negative attention to the Department of Education. Their critique of religious instruction, in some cases already well developed by the 1940s, became a major issue in the press and a constant source of irritation for the Department of Education. The critique by minority groups began to pick up steam in the 20 years following the Second World War as a result of the expansion of the education system. Immigration added approximately 50,000 students a year to the Ontario public school system.⁵⁹ These students came from a variety of religious backgrounds that did not fit well with the programs of the OICC. Much like in Victoria, the illusion of religious homogeneity was shattered by the early 1960s. Opposition to religious education became powerful much earlier in the Ontarian case.

In the 1950s and early 1960s authorities in education continued to conflate religious instruction with the national identity. In the 1952 Annual Report, the Minister of Education said the central objective of education was to create "loyal, intelligent, right-thinking, religious, and freedom-loving citizens."⁶⁰ But the Department of Education became increasingly concerned with preventing controversy at all costs, which effectively prevented any change to the system.

This tendency of avoiding conflict became evident in the early 1950s, when the OICC began to lobby for a formal expansion of the religious instruction curriculum into Grades 7 and 8. They cited the Hope Report of 1950, which lent its support to such an expansion.⁶¹ The Prime Minister of Ontario said in 1951 that the provincial government was not legally bound to the recommendations of the report.⁶² Since the Hope Report

did not bind the provincial government, the Department of Education saw no need to expand the system and risk causing further controversy.

This is not to say, however, that there was widespread discontent with the new religious instruction program. Few reliable statistics exist which indicate the popularity of the program in the 1950s, and those that do are open to interpretation. E.R. McLean from the OICC proudly noted that less than 1 percent of school boards requested an exemption from religious education. McLean argued that the lack of formal opposition indicated widespread approval for the system.⁶³ However, the Mackay Commission in the late 1960s argued that these figures were misleading because some school boards simply did not offer religious education without even bothering to ask for an exemption.⁶⁴ While that may be the case, it is nevertheless clear there were few problems with school boards opting out of the program *en masse*.

A 1949 survey of schoolteachers conducted throughout the Province by the General Board of for Religious Education of the Anglican Church indicated equally ambiguous results. The survey showed that 69 percent of rural teachers and 58 percent of urban teachers found the new religious education program “reasonably satisfactory,” the highest rank according to the terms of the survey.⁶⁵ Even with the dearth of reliable information, it is obvious the Drew Regulations were not universally popular and did not achieve the same level of acceptance as the Victorian system. There was a very vocal opposition to the religious instruction program, but there is little evidence of more widespread discontent with the program among students or their parents.

The OICC, for its part, continued to defend the role of religious instruction for the nation, and specifically for Canada’s British heritage. In a 1960 paper presented to the OICC, Dr. C.E. Silcox attempted to reaffirm the traditional role of the OICC of preserving Canadian identity. To Silcox, the formation of ‘proper’ values continued to be vital to the nation.⁶⁶ He dismissed the idea that religious instruction violated the rights of minorities because anyone who objected to religious instruction could opt out of the system. Therefore, “so long as the majority wish to have some integration of religion and education, the minority has no right to say to it ‘Thou shalt not.’”⁶⁷ Silcox and the OICC attempted to maintain the older notion of Britishness that privileged Protestantism as a vital part of the national identity, a task that became increasingly difficult during the 1960s.

But despite the best efforts of the OICC, the Ontario religious instruction program did not expand significantly during the 1950s and early 1960s. The OICC finally managed to publish teachers' guides for Grades 7 and 8, but this was the only change for religious instruction. The lack of expansion was in part the result of tepid support from the Department of Education. A 1961 statement by David Clee, the Assistant Superintendent of Curriculum in Ontario, revealed the attitude of the Department towards religious education. Clee made it clear that as a result of the increasingly powerful criticisms it received from minority groups in the province the Department of Education would in no way expand the system of religious instruction.⁶⁸ Clee still supported the idea of religion in the schools, but thought it politically inexpedient to enlarge or amend the Ontarian system. The controversial nature of religious education tended to inhibit any change to the curriculum.

Given the lack of support from the Department of Education, the OICC began to rethink its established policies. In 1963 they opened up a debate on the philosophy underpinning religious education. Rather than seek any kind of religious commitment, the OICC of the 1960s re-envisioned their purpose as helping students to evaluate religious truths.⁶⁹ The goal of preserving the British heritage of Canada with a specifically Protestant identity gradually fell out of favor as a priority for the organization.

Criticism of the religious instruction curriculum remained relatively consistent. On the one hand, various religious groups protested that conducting religious education in the schools violated the fundamental rights of minorities. On the other hand, many educators and Ontarian organizations began to question the role of the state in the process of character formation. They argued that there was a fine line between instilling values and indoctrination.

The fact that the Department of Education itself administered the courses left the provincial government open to criticism. As Ontarian society began to change dramatically due to immigration, this criticism increasingly led to calls for a major change in the curriculum. Non-British students arrived in large numbers throughout the 1950s and increased the number of pupils from non-traditional faiths. Much like in Victoria, Ontarian educational officials began to change their attitudes towards the value of religious instruction. As a result, in 1966 the Department of Education created the Committee on Religious Education in the Public Schools of the Province of Ontario to study the issue of religious education.⁷⁰ This committee, known as the Mackay Committee for its chair, J. Keillor Mackay, provides an important

glimpse into the Ontarian society of the 1960s, similar to the charge of the Russell Committee in Victoria. The Mackay Report came out in 1969 after having received almost 150 briefs from groups and educational authorities across the province as well as several hundred letters from concerned citizens.

The OICC presented a brief to the Mackay Committee calling for a revised religious instruction curriculum, imagining a modern program of religious instruction that would not alienate children of different faith traditions.⁷¹ Essentially, the OICC wanted to keep current with educational trends and circumvent any criticism from minority religious groups. The OICC held that religious instruction was not indoctrination but an opportunity for children to think about and grapple with the fundamental questions of life.⁷² The group urged the Mackay Committee to accept a religious education program acceptable to people of all faiths, one that would include beliefs from any source that would promote the spiritual growth of students.⁷³ The OICC suggested that such a program would draw extensively—but not exclusively—upon the Bible. With this brief the OICC fundamentally altered their position on religious education along similar lines as the CCES in preparation for the Russell Committee.

In their brief to the Mackay Committee, the Jewish Congress opposed the entire system of religious instruction, attacking the notion that religious instruction was a critical part of the Canadian heritage: “This is just not so...[The] present Ontario law in this regard is completely out of step with history.”⁷⁴ The Jewish Congress did not deny that Christianity had been important since the foundation of public education in Canada, but they believed that religious instruction as permitted by the *Drew Regulations* was incompatible with Canadian tradition. This stance was important, revealing that, for the Jewish Congress and for many other minority groups, the point was not to attack Britishness. In fact they believed that the *Drew Regulations* ran counter to the Canadian tradition of religious toleration, and that the true Canadian heritage born out of Britain allowed for diversity in religion.

The Jewish Congress also reiterated several concerns expressed in their 1945 brief. They criticized the Teachers’ Guides for leaving “a distorted impression of Judaism” with students in their formative years.⁷⁵ They also raised the objection that religious instruction violated their rights as a religious minority in Canadian society. They argued that “freedom of conscience is what democracy guarantees to the minority, despite the majority view.”⁷⁶ The best way to preserve democracy was to respect the rights of

minorities. But not only would maintaining the present system violate their rights as a group, it would seriously infringe on the individual's right to raise their child. The Jewish Congress said that religious education violated a parent's "right to guide his child in matters of belief about God and the Universe."⁷⁷ Inevitably, this type of instruction would cause major conflict within society.⁷⁸

The Jewish Congress' brief to the Mackay Committee bears a striking resemblance to their presentation before the Hope Commission 20 years earlier. They still accepted that religion was a major component of national identity, but stridently proclaimed it was not something the state should interfere with. In fact, many of the crucial points they argued had only been strengthened in the years since the Drew Regulations passed. But in 1966, as opposed to 1945, educators were more likely to listen to these complaints. This reflected a change in educational philosophy during the 1960s away from the more conservative traditional approach to Ontarian education. The members of the Mackay Committee believed that democracy depended upon an individual's freedom of choice, to seek out truth in the manner they thought best.⁷⁹ The role of the educator was not to instill proper values, but to provide a stimulating environment in which young people could make informed decisions for themselves. Effectively, the Mackay Committee rejected the original *raison d'être* for religious education of providing the religious core for democratic society.

The Mackay Committee also received several briefs praising religious education as exemplified by the Drew Regulations. In 1967 Marjorie Powys from the Milton District High School submitted her brief that passionately defended religious education in Ontario. She believed Christianity should pervade the entire curriculum. Opponents of the Drew Regulations, according to Powys, were an "insidious minority" attempting to destroy a great Canadian heritage.⁸⁰ The Pentecostal Assemblies of Canada likewise asserted the continuing value of religious education in creating and preserving a unique Canadian identity. They feared that "humanistic secularism" would destroy the educational system of the province, and play a major role in undermining Canadian civilization as well.⁸¹ To these groups, the protection of minority rights was already guaranteed with the so-called conscience clause of the Drew Regulations. The cost of eliminating religious instruction would simply be too high.

Arguably the most strident defender of religious education was The Christian Women's Council on Education of Toronto, led by Dorothy McGuire. McGuire argued that the right to religious freedom did not

grant a “license to destroy our rightful heritage and traditional way of life.”⁸² McGuire thought that since about 95 percent of Canadians were Christian according to the Canadian census, it continued to be appropriate to teach a non-denominational form of Christianity in the classroom.

There was such a variety of opinion on religious education in Ontario society that the Department of Education found itself in a very difficult situation. The Toronto Humanist Association pointed out that the larger problem with the Drew Regulations was their inapplicability in a pluralist society. They perceptively argued that the existing system of religious education alienated all sides:

It cannot satisfy our Jewish fellow citizens because it is based on Protestant Christianity; it cannot satisfy the adherents of the approximately 60 religious sects in Ontario, each of whom would like to see their own particular interpretation of the Christian religion fostered in the classroom. It cannot satisfy the Fundamentalists, nor those on the opposite end of the scale, the agnostics and atheists.⁸³

The Toronto Humanist Association correctly identified the Ministry of Education’s dilemma: how could one possibly please everyone in Ontario society with so many competing interests? Put another way, what place did religion have in the publicly funded school system of a pluralist society?

The defense of and opposition to the Drew Regulations in the late 1960s largely re-captured the controversy over the Hope Report. But there were a few crucial differences. For one thing, opponents and defenders rarely pointed to Britishness as an important justification for religion in the classroom. At another level, many organizations recognized that Canadian society had become much more diverse after the Second World War and that this necessitated a great deal of change. But there was still ambivalence and disagreement between groups on what exactly that change should look like.

There was no ambivalence, however, in the Mackay Committee’s judgment. They argued that to continue religious instruction as stated in the Drew Regulations would be to disregard important societal changes since World War II as well as put Ontario out of step with the educational world. Most importantly, “from a predominantly Anglo-Saxon Christian society, it [Ontario] has become a pluralistic one.”⁸⁴ The Drew Regulations, according to the report, did not reflect the rise of pluralism nor did they exemplify modern educational theory.

Philosophically, the committee unanimously agreed on three points: that education should care for the whole child, utilize the best and most up-to-date principles of child psychology, and be strictly anti-authoritarian, allowing freedom of choice wherever possible.⁸⁵ These educational positions heavily influenced their decisions as they sought to reform the religious education program in Ontario. The committee considered the possibility of reforming the religious instruction program, but ultimately found that it was not feasible to modify the extant curriculum in an acceptable way. They argued that there were simply too many problems with the Drew Regulations. Various groups had pointed out, "The present course is too superficial, too dogmatic; too emotional, too bland; too elementary, too abstract."⁸⁶ For these reasons, any cosmetic fix to religious instruction was not enough. The program had to be abandoned altogether.

The Mackay Committee then had to wrestle with the thorny problem of character training without religion. How could the school system provide an environment in which students could become morally upright without an appeal to divisive topics such as religion? Indeed, it could be argued that any attempt to enforce values was inherently controversial. Further, the committee left itself open to the problem of cultural relativism. How could you choose specific values that were worth more than others? Responding to these points, the Mackay Committee advocated a new course based on contemporary psychological research to form the character of Ontarian students. This program would not rely on the "sterile conformity to imposed rules of conduct" but would "flow from the mind and the soul" to produce children with the ability to function morally in contemporary society.⁸⁷

To accomplish this new program, the Mackay Committee was intellectually indebted to the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, an American psychologist who developed a theory of moral development. Kohlberg rejected relativistic arguments about morality, insisting instead that there were universal moral characteristics evident in human society. He argued that most humans used similar moral categories or principles, and that almost all people traveled through the same developmental stages to reach those concepts.⁸⁸ Kohlberg argued that the basis for all morality was justice and that it was possible to train students to internalize this concept for the good of society without resorting to indoctrination.

Taking their cue from Kohlberg, the Mackay Committee argued that the basis of morality was teaching children how to think in an acceptable way. Apparently unaware that they used the word itself in the definition,

the committee defined “a person’s morality [as] his growing ability to make moral judgments.”⁸⁹ The program in moral development would take place in all classes and would generally rely on hypothetical situations in which children were forced to make a values choice between two alternatives. As children grew in rational ability, they could reasonably be expected to make moral choices. The new program would be complete with information on all major world religions. This information would be presented to students in “a non-doctrinal” manner through the use of modern textbooks and other instructional materials.⁹⁰

To pursue this program, the Department of Education funded a Moral Development Project led by Clive Beck and Edmund Sullivan from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE). These two researchers explored the practical implications of the Kohlberg system. Beck and Sullivan argued that values were an inevitable fact of education and could in no way be totally divorced from education. Indeed, the primary purpose of education should be to provide students as much information and ideas as possible so that they could recognize and prevent indoctrination.⁹¹ Beck and Sullivan argued that the primary task of the school would be to help students formulate ultimate life goals.

The Mackay Report was an important document in the history of religious instruction in Ontario. The committee affirmed their commitment to a diverse society composed of many faiths and thereby rejected the older paradigm of Protestant Christianity being a crucial component of Britishness. Much like the Russell Committee in Victoria, the Mackay Committee’s primary objective was using contemporary educational theory to construct an innovative program in moral development. Unfortunately for the authors of the report, this is not where the parallels stop. Much like the Russell Report, the Mackay Report was also politically disastrous.

For the OICC, the Mackay Report was the last straw. In 1969, the organization held a series of meetings on its future. Participants noted that the Department of Education no longer consulted with them and that the Mackay Report “envisages no rapport with the Christian churches by Ontario professionals.”⁹² By 1970 the OICC voted to disband itself and hand over all funds to the newly created Ecumenical Study Commission (ESC), which was a combined Protestant and Roman Catholic organization designed to respond to the Mackay report and offer new recommendations to the Minister of Education.⁹³ The ESC became the official voice for the Christian churches of Ontario, both Protestant and Catholic.

In a 1971 pamphlet, the ESC set out its official position on religious education in Ontario. Though the group was not completely satisfied with the Drew Regulations, they opposed removing them before agreeing to a substitution for the curriculum.⁹⁴ They accepted that in a pluralistic society Christianity could not be privileged over other religions. Nevertheless, they believed that “Canada’s cultural and historical heritage is Christian, and it would be quite difficult to understand this heritage without some awareness of what Christianity has been, and still is, all about.”⁹⁵ This tension between a recognition of pluralism and a privileged place for Christianity became an entrenched feature of the debate on religious education in the public schools of Ontario for the next two decades.

For the ESC, by far the more important critique was on a philosophical level. They believed the Mackay Report fully embraced a position of moral relativism.⁹⁶ This was the lynchpin of the entire proposed course on moral development according to the Mackay committee. The ESC, for its part, believed strongly that “religion and morality are mutually interdependent.”⁹⁷ This argument was a version of an OICC argument of the 1940s: religion and character formation are inextricably linked.

Perhaps an even more potent argument, however, was that by denying religion in the classroom the Department was in effect privileging one set of values—secular humanism—over another, those of organized religion.⁹⁸ This proved to be an effective counterpoint because it took the logic of pluralism at face value: by promoting one philosophy (secular humanism) and denying religion a place at the table, the Department of Education was in fact only paying lip service to Ontarian diversity. They instead advocated a program which would be “neither sectarian nor indoctrinating, but aimed at total personal human development.”⁹⁹ The ESC even implied that the Ministry of Education, if it implemented the Mackay Report, would be denying Christians their inalienable human rights as parents to choose what type of education their children received.¹⁰⁰

The Jewish Congress viewed the Mackay Report as a major victory and was anxious to see it implemented as soon as possible. But the failure of the Ministry to make any definitive reforms became vexatious. They presented a brief to the Minister of Education in 1973, which complained that after four years no changes to the program of religious instruction had been enacted.¹⁰¹ Supporters and defenders of the Mackay Report were equally disappointed in the political inaction of the Ontarian Department of Education.

Given the wide diversity and strength of expressed public opinions concerning religious education, officials within the Department of Education faced a no-win situation. If they removed the religious education program, they would alienate large segments of the population. If they did not, they believed that they would offend religious minorities and also run counter to prevailing educational theory. The Mackay Report's alternative, constructing a values education program, received a great deal of criticism for discriminating against Christians and became equally difficult for the Department to execute. In 1975 the Director of the Curriculum Development Branch, W.E.P. Fleck, said, "[The inability] to come up with broadly acceptable programs in this field is an indication of the complexity of the problem."¹⁰²

Paralyzed by the conflicting groups in society, the Department of Education ended up doing nothing. Officials refused to enforce the Drew Regulations, but they made no formal move to have them removed from the books. The Department also continued to pursue the Moral Education Project at OISE, but they could not come to any agreement on what a fully fleshed-out program in moral development would look like. Much like the case of Victoria, the Department of Education in Ontario failed to find or construct a viable alternative to the strong consensus of the 1940s.

4 CONCLUSION

The long and controversial story of religion in the publicly funded schools of Ontario and Victoria reveals a great many similarities between the two geographically distant territories. Both Ontario and Victoria pushed through laws making religious education an entrenched feature of the curriculum at a time when nationalist feeling coincided with a perceived threat to the moral order of society. This legislation depended on an ecumenical agreement between the various mainline Protestant denominations and the illusion of religious homogeneity within society. It also depended on the notion that the Protestant faith was a crucial component of Britishness and therefore an important part of Canadian and Australian heritage. Not coincidentally, this legislation occurred within a short time of similar enactments in England. The legislation should be seen as a powerful response to perceived threats to Britishness.

The legislation prompted serious criticisms from minority religious groups that were effectively marginalized in the 1940s but which became

increasingly strident in the 1950s and '60s. These groups became influential as more and more religious minorities entered both Ontario and Victoria following massive immigration schemes in both countries. Proponents of religious education were no longer able to claim they were representing the needs of the entire society. Just as influentially, educators began to question the utility and morality of using religion as an educational tool. Many officials argued that character could be maintained without recourse to religion.

For all these reasons, both Ontario and Victoria set out to reform their systems of religious education within a short time of one another. Again not coincidentally, these major reform committees were formed soon after a similar committee was formed in England. The committees in Ontario, Victoria, and England no longer viewed Protestantism as the crucial cornerstone of the moral order which supported a global form of Britishness. Each of the committees advocated major reforms to the system that would make them more tolerant of other faiths.

But even though educators began to subscribe to the ideal of diversity in the classroom and came to view the programs of religious education in the 1940s as unsound, they found it impossible to enact any of their desired reforms in the 1970s. Indeed, the distinguishing feature separating educators in the 1940s and in the late 1960s to early 1970s is the fragmentation evident in the later period. Groups from across the political spectrum voiced a number of different opinions on the issue of religious education. In Canada, the Drew Regulations were on the statute books until the 1980s, when the courts of Ontario struck them down because they ran counter to the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.¹⁰³ In Victoria the Council for Christian Education in the Schools, today called Access Ministries, continues to provide religious education in many schools in the territory.¹⁰⁴

Post-war educators created a system privileging a narrow and exclusive identity centered on the Protestant religion. This vision for religion in the public school system was connected to a firm belief in a British racial and cultural heritage for Canadian and Australian society. In the following two decades, changes in educational theory and to society, particularly regarding the easing of immigration restrictions, lessened the importance of religious education in both Ontario and Victoria. As a result, educators in the late 1960s subscribed to different educational norms emphasizing tolerance and the undesirability of enforced belief in the classroom. Absent from the debate was any indication that the connection to Britain remained

relevant to contemporary Australian and Canadian society. By the mid-1970s educators in both territories found themselves without a consensus view of the role of religion in the classroom and unable to gain enough political support to enable any effective reforms.

NOTES

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The Stereotypical Classroom: Moving Towards Multiculturalism in Ontario and Victoria, 1945–1980

In the years immediately following World War II, educators in Victoria and Ontario repeatedly affirmed their belief in equality of educational opportunity.¹ The Ontarian Hope Commission in 1950 said, “In a democratic nation there must be equality of treatment” and that any indication of special favoritism would smack “of discrimination on the one hand, or special privilege on the other.”² Discrimination and racism were explicitly categorized as negative influences that would corrode the democratic norms of the Canadian nation. Indeed, the rhetoric of educators in this period indicated that each child, regardless of sex, creed, or race, would receive the same educational opportunities in the publicly funded school systems of Ontario and Victoria.

A closer look at the educational materials being produced in these territories reveals, perhaps unsurprisingly, that the reality simply did not match the rhetoric in the 1950s in either Victoria or Ontario. The educational systems in both cases promoted an idealized citizen who was white, culturally British, English-speaking, and ‘civilized.’ Textbooks and curricula made a variety of assumptions about who the ideal student was and who should be excluded from mainstream education. Immigrant, indigenous, and non-British students were either ignored or stereotyped in most primary and secondary textbooks as a result. José Igartua argues that “[post-war Canadian] history education as intended by the authors of

these textbooks was essentially designed to instill in the young the stereotypes prevalent in adult society.”³

The increasing demands placed on the education departments in the 1940s and 1950s tended to reinforce curricular conservatism and inhibit any significant reform of educational materials.⁴ The Ontarian and Victorian Departments of Education scrambled to build newer, more modern school buildings to accommodate the baby boom generation along with thousands of immigrants that began to seriously impact elementary schools in the 1950s. A much larger problem, however, was finding enough teachers to instruct the rising school-aged population. In both territories, standards were lowered to admit previously underqualified teachers to meet the growing demands. The 1949 Ontarian Education Department Annual Report stated that, out of necessity, they would allow several hundred people to teach without any professional training.⁵ The lack of properly trained teachers partly prevented widespread and imaginative reform.

By the mid-1960s, however, institutionalized discrimination within the education system came under serious challenge in Ontario. This was the result of several forces acting on the Department of Education at the same time. One was a pronounced shift in educational philosophy: Faced with an ever more diverse student population increasingly composed of immigrant children of non-British descent, educators began to question their role as transmitters of a normative cultural ideal. Ultimately, they turned towards multiculturalism and the celebration of diversity in Canadian culture as a logical response.

Coinciding with this newfound educational philosophy was the rise of several outside pressure groups exerting influence over the Department of Education. The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC) decided in 1965 to support a study on discrimination in textbooks. The report they produced was influential, and educational authorities systematically attempted to reduce or eliminate bias in their textbooks as a result. The 1960s also witnessed the Quiet Revolution in Quebec, which gave rise to an intense French Canadian nationalism that threatened the unity of the Canadian nation itself. Ontarian educators realized they needed to better care for students of French descent in their classrooms. Other groups such as the National Indian Brotherhood became involved in education at the same time. Together, these pressures rapidly created a dynamic transformation of the Ontarian education system.

In Victoria, changes fostering inclusivity happened more slowly. Particularly after the election of Gough Whitlam as prime minister in

1972, educators at the national level were receptive to changes in international educational opinion. In 1973 A.J. Grassby, the Australian Minister for Immigration, declared White Australia dead and proclaimed that the country would now celebrate multiculturalism. But in Victoria itself there were few powerful pressure groups exerting influence on educational practice. By the mid-1970s, some Victorian educators began to echo national sentiments and argued for a more inclusive and accepting classroom as the only appropriate response to a rapidly changing and ostensibly multicultural nation. By the end of the decade the reformist pressure from educators led to changes similar to those in Ontario. The lack of a vocal minority similar to the French in Canada delayed but did not stop changes in Victorian education.

This chapter examines the nature of inclusion and exclusion in the educational systems of Ontario and Victoria from the Second World War until the mid-1970s. Beyond pointing out the obvious problems with the rhetoric of equality, the analysis provides a window into the crucial period from the Second World War to the mid-1970s as educators finally came to grips with diversity in both Ontario and Victoria. It analyzes the ideal citizen as portrayed by Ontarian and Victorian classrooms after the Second World War and explores the treatment of groups considered outside the mainstream. Finally, it delineates early attempts to make educational materials and policy more inclusive of the broader Canadian and Australian populations. Who was a worthy citizen of the state and why? And how did this change in the tumultuous post-war decades?

1 THE EXCLUSIVITY OF THE CLASSROOM: 1930s–1965

From the curricular revisions of the 1930s to the late 1950s, educators in Ontario and Victoria constructed a specific vision for the ideal citizen that permeated their historical narratives and educational prescriptions. A consistent educational objective was to form the type of democratic student believed to be most desirable for Canadian and Australian society, and so educators frequently colored their historical narratives to favor certain groups over others. Most textbook authors, for instance, favored white and British historical actors over other groups. These preferences were most clearly revealed when covering groups considered outside the mainstream community. Immigrants and indigenous peoples in particular were treated as second-class citizens that did not truly belong in the country unless they conformed to the dominant white culture. Textbook and

curricular descriptions of outsider groups such as immigrants and indigenous peoples in Ontario and Victoria reveal the idealized identities constructed by textbook authors and the ways that education favored whites.⁶

Ontarian and Victorian textbooks during this period frequently accepted the notion that Europe was the center of advancement and civilization on the globe. Educational materials reflected this and devoted most of their historical narratives to explaining European history. Courses on modern history or world history were often dominated by detailed accounts of European political and cultural life, with other groups gaining only intermittent mention. Within these narratives, Canadian and Australian history only truly began with the exploration and settlement of Europeans. *Canada and the World* (1954), for instance, argued that North America was “at one time a silent wilderness, barely supporting a handful of native Indian tribes,” and that it was transformed by Europeans through “the application of great human energy and organization.”⁷ That same level of energy and organization allowed Europeans to construct large empires and dominate much of the globe. The authors asserted that European civilization was the most advanced in the world and that, by comparison, other cultures and peoples were far inferior. Texts were quick to point out European heritage for both Canada and Australia, and Eurocentrism was an entrenched feature of Ontarian and Victorian historical education.

Textbooks in Ontario and Victoria consistently argued that Britain was superior to other European countries and often assumed students were of British heritage, encouraging them to embody virtues typically considered British. In his 1939 work *Britain and the Empire*, E.L. Daniher of Ontario praised the British for being peculiarly suited to “public management.” He equivocated, saying he had “no intention of representing Britishers as supermen and saints” but continued praising British culture: “The fostering of the true democratic ideals of freedom, integrity, good-will and good-sportsmanship has been the service which the British people seem best fitted to render to humanity.”⁸ So while Daniher ostensibly did not wish to foster “racial pride,”⁹ he implicitly endorsed the British character as the model Canadian citizens should strive to emulate. Discussing the success of the Australian nation, Ernest Scott from the University of Melbourne praised the “Anglo-Saxon colonizing genius,” which typified “an intelligent and virile people.”¹⁰

Pride in the British character took many forms, one of which denigrated other European nations for their failures. Spain was particularly castigated for its imperial history. One Victorian textbook argued that the

story of Spanish imperialism was tragically replete “with ruthless Spanish actors, complete with rapiers and an exaggeratedly dramatic ferocity, entering the stage to plunder and destroy.”¹¹ World history textbooks from the 1930s to the 1950s frequently bought into the Black Legend of Spanish imperial rule.¹² Textbook authors reinforced a British identity, praising the many virtues of the British ‘race’ while castigating Britain’s imperial competitors.

The fact that Britain possessed a privileged status in Victorian textbooks should not be too surprising given the economic, political, and cultural attachment Australia continued to profess for Britain after the Second World War. But, for Ontario, granting Britain a privileged place in historical narratives doubled as a political statement that defied the French contribution to Canadian history. Most textbooks did not convey this explicitly. Indeed, authors ostensibly viewed the relationship between English-speakers and French-speakers as a partnership. Textbook author Aileen Garland argued that, despite their differences, “[English and French are] united by a common devotion to Canada, to our form of government, and to our way of life. All are now Canadians.”¹³ This is an interesting statement considering Garland accepted French culture only so long as it conformed to the Canadian form of government and ‘way of life,’ both of which were defined elsewhere in the work as inherently British.

In Canada, Britons and French were treated as two separate races, with the French gaining the most attention in the colonial period before the Seven Years War. José Igartua argues that French Canadians rarely appeared in history textbooks after the Rebellions of 1837.¹⁴ History texts relegated French Canada to the margins after the British takeover. The British, however, came across as progressive historical agents, propelling Canada towards greatness.

English-speaking Ontarian educators also attempted to limit education in French and for French-speaking Ontarians during this period. Efforts to limit French posed a significant political problem as a result of the British North America (BNA) Act of 1867, which mandated the preservation of a separate school system that divided schools in part by ethnic affiliation. The Hope Commission, which met from 1945 to 1950, tried to tackle the thorny issue of separate schools. One influential group that presented a brief to the Commission was the Inter-Church Committee on Protestant–Roman Catholic Relations. An explicit goal of the committee as stated was “to prevent Ontario becoming a French and Catholic State” and to ensure preferential treatment for the “choicest” settlers from the

British Isles: "It is paramount that these schools should be taken over if this predominantly British and Protestant province is to survive as such."¹⁵ With this in mind, the Inter-Church Committee was adamant that Roman Catholic separate schools be eliminated altogether, despite the clear stipulations of the BNA Act of 1867.

While not as extreme as the Inter-Church Committee on Protestant–Roman Catholic Relations, the Hope Commission also took issue with the Roman Catholic separate school system, asserting that a public school system should not support any particular church.¹⁶ The commission wanted to make it clear that French, while it could prove to be a useful second language, was not the most important language for Ontario public schools. English was the primary language of education in Ontario because Canada was not legally bilingual.¹⁷ The issue of language and public support for Roman Catholic schools proved to be so divisive that it involved a dissenting minority opinion within the ranks of the commission. This minority group argued that Roman Catholic children merited a fully Roman Catholic education and that public funding for separate schools should extend beyond elementary education. The majority of the commission argued that no extension of separate schools should take place beyond what existed in 1867. As a result, the dissenters justifiably claimed the Hope Commission discriminated against Roman Catholics by not providing them with the same support as the public schools.¹⁸ The failure of the Hope Commission to reach a consensus view on this issue seriously undermined the utility of the entire report, and little decisive action was taken on the issue for another quarter century.

In support of and in addition to Britishness, whiteness was also an explicit and key component of 'ideal citizenship' in both Victoria and Ontario. In educational materials, whiteness denoted civilization or progress and served as a crucial marker of both Canadian and Australian identity. Perhaps the most notable example of this type of emphasis on whiteness occurred in Victorian textbooks describing the White Australia Policy. "White Australia" was frequently mentioned in educational materials as being an important component of Australian identity, both protecting the 'Australian way of life' and ensuring the preservation of whiteness in Australia.

In the 1930s and early 1940s authors felt little need to justify the White Australia policy. A few textbooks, however, did attempt a defense of the controversial immigration policy. One common strategy defended the White Australia policy as a vital component protecting the rights of the

working man. K.R. Cramp argued that the policy aided trade unions by limiting the number of low-wage laborers.¹⁹ Cramp assumed that Asian laborers would always work for less than white workers and that the only way to establish trade unions would be to prevent Asian immigration entirely. *Australia and the Modern World* expanded this explanation to include a general argument about the Australian spirit. The textbook argued that a fundamental characteristic of Australian society was the material success of the working classes, whose condition was “superior to the living standards of neighbouring Asian countries” and even “superior to standards in the old world.”²⁰ In this sense Australian identity was predicated on superiority to neighboring Asian countries, but this superiority needed protection at all costs and that protection eventually came in the form of exclusionary immigration policies. The author, Lloyd Evans, argued that, along with the rise in Australian nationalism as a result of participation in the two World Wars, the idea of an ‘Australian standard of living’ was foundational to the Australian identity.

Textbooks in Victoria often used a generalized stereotype of Asians while constructing their analyses of the White Australia policy. R.H. Clayton typified these stereotypes in his 1952 book *Our Social System*. He pointed to two significant arguments about why Asians were anathema to the ‘Australian standard of living.’ Firstly, he claimed that nineteenth century Asians had such low standards that, if allowed to freely immigrate, they would drag Australia “down to their level.”²¹ This was a common stereotype that assumed Asian laborers would always be willing to work for less money than white Australians would accept. Rather than advocate labor laws mandating minimum wages, Australian politicians felt it was better to keep this cheaper work force out entirely.

Secondly, Clayton noted the fear that unrestricted immigration would overwhelm the mostly white society.²² The racial argument was by far the most important defense of White Australia. Ironically, Clayton contended that this was not about racism at all. He argued in fact that, “superiority, or inferiority, is not the point at issue.”²³ But the mere fact that they were so culturally dissimilar was reason enough to keep Asians out of Australia. Clayton believed that racial mixing would cause nothing but problems for Australian society and pointed to the myriad racial problems of South Africa and the United States as examples. Ultimately, according to Clayton, Australia should avoid the race problems of other countries by preventing any non-white immigration.²⁴ Clayton’s underlying assumption was that different races of mankind were incapable of mixing harmoniously. From this

vantage point, White Australia was a rational policy designed to preserve a homogenous, and therefore more peaceful, society.

For many historical narratives, White Australia served not only to protect working conditions and a nascent Australian identity but also to guarantee the preservation of European civilization. R.M. Crawford said the White Australia policy was designed to preserve a European culture “distinct from an Asiatic mould.”²⁵ He continued, “[Even though the policy] was sometimes crude and jingoistic, it did reflect the fact that the colonies were growing out of the colonial stage into that of the nation.”²⁶ For Crawford, Australian identity was inherently European and white, and therefore Asian laborers would have been a destabilizing force in Australian society. While he did not condone race-based prejudice, he nevertheless strongly intimated that Asians were not capable of being full citizens in Australian society.

Ironically, fears of Asian immigration spurred on an expansion of Australia’s own immigration policy after the Second World War, according to some textbooks. C.H. Wright noted a widespread agreement that Australia was underpopulated. This was a major problem because the people of South-East Asia “covet ... open spaces.”²⁷ To fend off the threat from Asia, Australia needed the ‘right kind’ of immigration, meaning white and preferably British. Immigration would fill “the fertile spots of the vast continent [and create] a pool of manpower for our armed forces,” and thereby ensure the safety of Australia.²⁸ For Wright, White Australia guaranteed that any prospective immigrants would be white but debates still emerged after the Second World War about non-British immigrants.

Another obvious point upon which textbook authors in both Ontario and Victoria constructed and defended the idea of whiteness was in the treatment of indigenous peoples. Many post-war texts, using a combination of racial and cultural arguments, compared aboriginal peoples unfavorably to European settlers. *The Story of Canada* devoted an entire section on it in “The White Man Comes to Canada.”²⁹ Europeans were all categorized as ‘white’ as opposed to indigenous societies, designated as ‘red.’ Donald Dickie argued that to use the great natural resources Canada possessed, the territory needed “civilized people.” Dickie explicitly stated that “the first civilized men who came to America were white.”³⁰ Dickie here used both a cultural and a racial argument in support of her work. In many post-World War II texts, whiteness was seen as a prerequisite for civilization and progress. The coming of the white

man was, from this perspective, the true beginning for both the Canadian and Australian nations.

As explicit racism gradually fell out of favor in the 1940s and '50s, the presence of implicitly racist cultural stereotypes came to predominate many textbooks. Many of the newer books relied on the concept of civilization instead of race to denigrate indigenous societies. But authors only occasionally felt the need to give a detailed examination of what 'civilization' actually meant. In a 1963 Victorian textbook author P.J. Palmer provided just such a detailed definition. He started with a basic definition of the concept, that civilization necessitated some form of writing, permanent settlement, and the ability to "produce objects of beauty and usefulness."³¹ The greatest threat to civilization according to Palmer was warfare, which was still endemic amongst nations, though civilized nations were able to maintain peace within their own borders.

Palmer saw a difficulty in drawing meaningful lines between civilized and uncivilized peoples, and declared that civilization might be better thought of as a sort of spectrum.³² Because the development of civilization was a gradual process, it was quite clear that civilization had been "carried further in some parts of the world than in others."³³ The explanation supported Palmer's assessment of 'levels' of civilization as exhibited amongst the peoples of the world, and many educators used a similar strategy. In most textbooks, European culture, which Australians and Canadians shared, was portrayed as the most advanced level of civilization.

While whiteness and civilization were important components of citizenship meriting a great deal of attention, another important aspect of the ideal citizen was rarely mentioned in textbooks of the 1930s and 1940s: gender. In general, women had little or no place in history textbooks. Instead, tales of great white men, with women always in subservient or submissive roles, were predominant. Several texts explicitly supported a family structure with the father as breadwinner and mother as homemaker.³⁴ A paper written in the late 1970s for the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* in Victoria argued that educational materials overwhelmingly reflected and promoted this bias: "[They presented] traditional roles of male dominance and success, and of female passivity and nurturance. Male characters are overwhelming more numerous than females."³⁵ Gender bias pervaded educational texts of the time.

Read as a group, the vast majority of historical texts from the 1930s to the early- to mid-1960s in Ontarian and Victorian classrooms portrayed

an idealized form of citizenship meant mainly for white, male, British children. There was a presumption of these being the proper characteristics of the most advanced or worthy citizens of the nation, and therefore the school would encourage students to acculturate to these norms. Groups outside of these normative parameters generally received negative treatment.

2 ASSIMILATIONIST POLICIES IN POSTWAR EDUCATION 1940–1965

So far, we have seen that the ideal citizen as portrayed by post-war textbooks in both Ontario and Victoria following World War II was white, British, Protestant, civilized, and male. But what about groups that fell outside of these categories? Textbooks used a variety of methods to be dismissive of immigrant communities, French Canadians, aborigines, and Indians. Many books simply ignored their contributions to Canadian and Australian society. These groups were often seen as impediments to historical progress. The only way they could be deemed worthy of significance was if they acculturated to the dominant society.

Aborigines in Australia and indigenous Canadians often bore the brunt of some of the harshest treatment in textbooks. In her 1950 textbook *The Great Adventure*, Donalda Dickie wrote a detailed analysis of indigenous relations in Canadian society. “[Prior to colonization,] in spite of their many good points, the Canadian Indians were still nomads, wanderers, and uncivilized people, although the people of Europe and Asia had long ago learned to farm.”³⁶ Dickie explained that expropriating indigenous lands was a justifiable act because these groups were too uncivilized to cultivate the land properly. Due to their lack of civilization, Canadian Indians could not properly utilize Canada’s land, and that “to use these gifts, Canada needed civilized people.”³⁷ This is reminiscent of older arguments about ‘empty land’ common to British imperial discourses since at least the seventeenth century development theory of *terra nullius* by prominent philosophers like John Locke. The theory held that property ownership was dependent on proper cultivation of the land.³⁸ Using this theory, Dickie justified settler colonialism and the harsh treatment of Canadian Indians.

Dickie’s account, which was representative of many of the textbooks in both Ontario and Victoria in the post-war era, emphasized the expropria-

tion of land as the key characteristic of the relationship between whites and indigenous peoples in early Canadian history:

The greatest gift we owe to the red men is our broad land which they allowed us to take over without making any great general war against us. When the white folk came as immigrants and began taking their lands from them, the Indians naturally tried to kill them and drive them away...³⁹

So natives more or less allowed white settlers to take their land without starting any great war, yet in the description of initial contact between whites and indigenous peoples, Dickie simultaneously asserted that Indians were not very warlike but were violent by nature. She implied that the Indians should be applauded for not sparking a major concerted effort against white immigrants, but as individuals and small groups they ‘naturally’ attempted to kill whites.

In these textbooks, aggression was generally blamed on indigenous societies rather than on the white settlers who encroached upon indigenous land. Violence was a common trope used to condemn indigenous peoples in many Ontarian textbooks. When committed by whites, however, violence was invariably justified. Dickie described a French massacre of Mohawk lands in the seventeenth century as excessively harsh, but went on to rationalize it. She explained how the French destroyed the food supply of the Mohawks, leaving them to starve over the winter. While conceding the punishment was “terrible” she deemed the overall policy successful, affording Canada 20 years of peace, as “everyone went about smiling, happy, full of hope for the future.”⁴⁰ White violence was excused because colonization was seen as the marker of progress. Dickie, like many textbook authors, saw Canadian history as the triumphant march of white civilization across the frozen wilderness. Native resistance to white encroachment, therefore, ran counter to the meta-narrative of Canadian success.

Many texts sought to describe the cultural exchange between Europeans and indigenous peoples in colonial Canada. They pointed out that indigenous Canadians taught settlers how to survive in the New World through hunting, trapping, developing snowshoes, canoes, and local medicines. Indigenous peoples typically only garnered praise in textbooks for instances where they contributed to the initial stages of European settlement. Interestingly, however, the benefits for indigenous Canadians coming from European culture were generally thought to occur much later. Dickie

argued: "In return for these gifts the white men tried to christianize the Indians, but did little towards civilizing them. Only in our own day has Canada begun to make citizens of her first settlers and to fit them into the national life."⁴¹ In the first wave of colonization, it was only necessary to eliminate and remove indigenous societies from Canadian lands. Once this had happened and Canadian potential had been truly unlocked, later generations were better able to take on the civilizing mission.

In most history textbooks of the 1940s and 1950s, Canadian Indians fell almost entirely out of view by the dawn of the nineteenth century. By that time, it was generally assumed that the only important actors were French and British colonists. Many textbooks spoke of the Métis Indians and the Riel Revolt, but generally in a context of Anglophone/Francophone rather than indigenous/white relations. When authors from the 1940s to the 1950s did speak of contemporary Indian culture, they generally emphasized the necessity of assimilation to the dominant white culture. George Brown stated that with the loss of buffalo herds natives had to settle or starve, opining that "the policy was a wise one but ... incredibly difficult for the Indians [facing] so sharp a change in their age-old habits."⁴² Despite the hardships visited upon Indians in this time, Brown still praised the Canadian record because in this period no large-scale violent conflicts took place such as what happened in the United States.⁴³ Brown implied that the Indians were resistant to progressive change and virtually unable to make progressive reforms even with beneficial white assistance.

Acculturation was a prominent theme in descriptions of indigenous Canadians. In her 1954 book *Canada Then and Now*, Aileen Garland argued that since hunting and fishing could no longer produce a viable lifestyle, Indians had to assimilate to the dominant European culture.⁴⁴ Garland asserted that the loss of Indian culture was mostly the unfortunate result of new diseases and the destruction of forest land. The only remaining option for indigenous peoples in Canada was to put aside their way of life in favor of the dominant white culture of Canada.

In sum, then, Canadian Indians were often portrayed as violent and primitive in Ontarian textbooks after the Second World War. Though they did assist white settlers at the point of initial contact, they were portrayed as only marginal historical actors afterwards. In the nineteenth and twentieth centuries they were more often seen as an impediment to white progress and success. The only practicable solution, as far as most textbook

authors were concerned, was for Indians to acculturate to the European cultural norms.

In Victoria, aborigines received even harsher treatment in most educational materials. Textbook authors generally dismissed aboriginal culture as completely irrelevant for a variety of reasons. One important reason (which gradually fell out of favor in the 1940s) was an assumption that aborigines were a “doomed race.”⁴⁵ In a 1934 series of articles entitled “Our Blackfellows,” *The School Paper* argued that “as a race, they [Aboriginal peoples] are dying out.”⁴⁶ This series detailed aboriginal culture as incredibly primitive and inconsequential. Their only praiseworthy trait was their ability to follow a track, but the writer countered that in contemporary times there were whites who could “follow a track as well as any blackfellow.”⁴⁷ *The School Paper* confidently predicted the end of aboriginal culture without giving any specific information on how or why this would happen.⁴⁸

In many Victorian post-war texts, aboriginal culture was deemed too primitive to warrant any significant historical attention. Indeed, on the ladder of human civilization aborigines were generally considered to be at the very lowest rung, far lower than most other indigenous societies. One author said in 1943, “In all that concerns Australian civilization the blackfellows, one hundred times less numerous already than the white men, are of no importance.”⁴⁹ Aboriginal culture was not deemed worthy of historical analysis because it was judged to be too inferior to European culture.

The presumption of inferiority was so deeply held that some authors categorized Australian aborigines as either the lowest race or a completely separate subspecies. One text in 1951 argued of Tasmanian aborigines:

[They were] were a race of food-gatherers, nothing more. Thus they remained. The passing centuries found them just the same with their brain power apparently stationary. So limited was it that, in spite of the daily toil for food, no thought for the morrow prompted saving a portion for the next day’s meal.⁵⁰

Another author argued that Australian aborigines were a completely different subspecies more closely related to Neanderthals.⁵¹ Ernest Scott in 1947 argued that Tasmanian aborigines “were different from those of the mainland,” going so far as to say they were a separate species that he called “homo tasmanianus.”⁵² Putting aborigines in these inferior categories

allowed them to be ignored or ridiculed in the vast majority of post-war Victorian textbooks.

In standard historical narratives, aborigines were relegated to a few small paragraphs at the beginning of the study and promptly ignored for the rest of the book. There were two events, however, where aboriginals appeared in the historical narratives: Batman's Treaty and the destruction of Tasmanian societies. These two cases are important because they provide insight into how educators portrayed Australian aborigines.

John Batman was an Australian businessman best known for exploring the land around present day Melbourne. In 1835 Batman famously signed a treaty with the Aborigines to obtain rights to their land for settlement.⁵³ The governor-general voided his treaty soon after it was created, and Batman died shortly thereafter with little to show for his efforts. But his treaty offers a unique vantage point from which to assess textbook interpretations of aborigines. It is most likely the case that the aborigines did not understand exactly what they were signing (the treaty was in English), and that the specific group of aborigines who signed the treaty had no authority to sell the land. But at the very least Batman's actions indicated that aborigines had a right to their land and could legally sell it. This went against the prevailing theory of *terra nullius*, which abrogated aboriginal land rights on the basis of their failure to properly cultivate the land.

G.V. Portus's 1934 book *Australia Since 1606* analyzed Batman's treaty at some length. Portus argued that the indigenous peoples eagerly accepted the blankets, knives, and other miscellaneous items Batman provided without realizing the import of what they were signing. He wrote, "They [aborigines] must have thought Batman was a fairy godmother."⁵⁴ Aborigines in this interpretation were treated as children incapable of making rational decisions, or even understanding major agreements like a treaty. After detailing the governor-general's rejection of the treaty, Portus wrote, "Although people laugh at his treaty, we must not forget that he did give the blacks something for the land he proposed to take. Other Australian pioneers just took it, and gave nothing in return."⁵⁵ Portus lauded a misguided Batman whose heart was in the right place. Throughout Portus' interpretation, however, was an assumption that aborigines could not possibly understand concepts of land ownership or legal documentation.

Another point at which aborigines showed up in educational textbooks of Victoria was the recounting of the elimination of aboriginal population of Van Dieman's Land (present day Tasmania).⁵⁶ After a series of clashes

between aborigines and settlers in the 1830s, several organized campaigns took place against the aboriginal population of Van Dieman's Land. After the so-called "Black War" in the early 1830s, the remaining 200 or so aboriginals were removed from Van Dieman's Land to Flinders Island. The island was unsuitable for long-term habitation and by 1876 the last remaining native Tasmanian died.

The conflict on Tasmania represented one of the few cases in which British colonialism came under direct attack in several Victorian textbooks. K.R. Cramp argued in 1941 that some native Tasmanians were shot without due cause, which precipitated a war.⁵⁷ Cramp clearly indicated that whites caused the hostilities. Professor of History at the University of Melbourne Ernest Scott agreed in a 1947 textbook, arguing that the natives of Tasmania were non-violent, and proclaiming, "The evidence is conclusive that the wrong-doing was on the side of the whites."⁵⁸ This was a remarkable admission of the failure of white colonialism within Australia's own borders. But its failure did not stop textbook authors from praising Australian society and European colonialism in general. This was just one case in which Australian colonists did not behave morally or correctly, but the acknowledgement of it did not lead to any general condemnation of settler colonialism in Australia.

Yet another group that did not fit neatly into the idealized citizen as envisaged by the educational materials in Ontario and Victoria were immigrants. Textbook authors of the time could hardly ignore the massive post-war immigration programs in both Australia and Canada. In 1947 Australia opened its borders to non-British European immigrants. Czechs, Poles, Ukrainians, Italians, and Greeks were allowed into the country. Fueled by immigration from Eastern and Southern Europe as well as Britain, the Australian population skyrocketed from 7.5 million in 1947 to 12.7 million in 1971.⁵⁹ Also in 1947, William Lyon Mackenzie King, the Prime Minister of Canada, opened the way for increased European immigration into Canada. Both Canada and Australia still favored British migrants and limited non-European immigration. But even with these restrictions, thousands of non-British Europeans flooded both countries, particularly urban areas such as Toronto and Melbourne.

Educators had to tread carefully when dealing with this issue of migrant education because it was politically sensitive in both countries. The authors of the *Ontarian Hope Report* in 1950 noted somewhat pessimistically that this rapid growth caused numerous problems for the educational system. Not only did it necessitate the swift expansion of physical facilities, but

also accommodations for, as the Hope Report explained, the many thousands of immigrants who did not know the language and culture.⁶⁰ Educators were aware of the major burdens that the post-war boom in immigration would place on the educational systems.

Some ethnic communities organized and demanded greater attention in the educational system. In 1946 the Ukrainian Canadian Committee of Ontario presented a brief to the Hope Commission with a stated aim to “[end instances where] silly and opprobrious remarks are made in an attitude of superiority which is quite mistaken.”⁶¹ The brief advocated for a major overhaul of the history curriculum that would emphasize the role of immigrants in the development of Canada and that they were, in fact, true Canadians.⁶² The Ukrainian Canadian Committee held that history should portray immigrants as an important component of the Canadian nation. Perhaps more presciently, however, their main aim was complete integration of all Canadian citizens, creating a common citizenship.⁶³

Immigrant communities also lobbied the Hope Commission against stereotyping in educational materials. Immigrants posed a logistical problem for educational authorities: instructing large numbers of students with little to no training in English. A more intractable problem was how to culturally absorb these non-British peoples. But despite being aware of the physical and cultural challenges immigrant children posed pedagogically, the Hope Report did not develop a plan to meet the needs of these students.

In the 20 years after the Second World War, the education departments in both Ontario and Victoria overwhelmingly followed a rigid assimilationist policy that only valued immigrant peoples when they adopted the British culture, which was considered ideal. This was particularly emphasized in Victoria since there was a widespread belief that Australia was a homogeneous British nation. Indeed, both departments adopted assimilation as a stated objective of the education of immigrant children. The Report of the Minister of Education in Victoria in 1950 described a typical class that emphasized the remedial acquisition of English, noting, “In general it is considered unnecessary to provide a lengthy course for any individual child; contact with Australian children is likely to produce rapid assimilation of the basic language idioms.”⁶⁴ Educators in the early 1950s believed that students would naturally acculturate to the dominant culture given time, and that therefore immigrant education required few resources.

By the mid-1950s educators took a harder look at migrant education. In his “Report on Primary Education,” Chief Inspector of Victorian

Schools J.G. Gannon differentiated between migrants from Britain and those from the rest of Europe. He posited that British migrant children fit in seamlessly, but others would have to acquire a working knowledge of English to enable them to make progress.⁶⁵ British migrants were still seen as the most desirable immigrant group to allow into Australian society. Nevertheless, Gannon praised the newcomers, saying that assimilation often proceeded swiftly, giving him hope they would “develop into excellent Australian citizens able to play a significant part in the future of our country.”⁶⁶ Immigrants could be welcomed with open arms into Victorian society as long as they adopted Australian ways, manners, slang, appearance, and outlook.

As a result of assimilationist policies, most historical narratives generally ignored the impact of immigrants in public life. In Canada, however, assimilation was sometimes used to emphasize British culture at the expense of French Canada. The Ontarian text *Canada and the World*, for instance, contended that nineteenth century immigrants “accepted Canadian ways of government and living and sent their children to Canadian schools.” Ultimately, this meant that the children of nineteenth century immigrants became a part of and added greatly to the strength of English-speaking Canada.⁶⁷ The author confidently claimed: “While Canadians of British origin now form less than half of the total population, the English-speaking group as a whole has thus been steadily increased by new Canadians.”⁶⁸ Immigrants assimilated into the more dynamic and important British culture rather than the more exclusive French territories. According to this interpretation, mass immigration only furthered the divide between English and French Canada.

For Ontarian and Victorian authors in the post-war period, immigrants were most valuable when they quickly and quietly assimilated into the dominant culture. A.B. Hodgetts’ *Decisive Decades* was one of the first texts to applaud the contributions of immigrant communities to Canadian society. He said that Eastern European immigrants were “the real heroes in the opening of Western Canada,” often taking the hardest jobs and doing the real work of expansion.⁶⁹ One reason for Hodgetts’ admiration of Eastern European migrants was his analysis of the Canadian West. Most Ontarian texts focused primarily on a political or constitutional history of Ontario and Quebec, with the story of Confederation at the center. Hodgetts, however, focused on the settlement of the west as a major theme in his social history of Canada. For Hodgetts, these immigrants were not simply grafted onto British culture but represented a vital part of

the Canadian nation. In many ways Hodgetts' work foreshadowed some of the social histories of Canadian society that emerged in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

Overall, the governing ethos of both the Ontario and Victorian education systems in the post-war generation was to transmit a set of purportedly universal values to children. Textbook and curriculum developers assumed a homogenous society that was white racially and British culturally. Groups outside of this definition were either ignored or received harsh treatment in educational materials. These principles remained in place well into the 1960s as educators had little inclination or time to reform curricula while coping with the massive post-war increases in enrollment. As we shall see in the next section, during the 1960s and 1970s momentum grew, culminating in sweeping reforms in both Ontario and Victoria. By the year 1980, the education systems in both territories embraced or at least espoused multiculturalism as a major goal of the state.

3 MOVING TOWARDS INCLUSION IN ONTARIAN CLASSROOMS

By the 1960s, the Department of Education in Ontario and in Victoria began to re-evaluate their aims and objectives in light of rapidly changing societies that made new demands on their education systems. New educational theories emphasized the goal of true equality of education for all Canadians and Australians. Eventually, after a shift in educational philosophy as well as increased pressure from minority groups, classrooms in both Ontario and Victoria became much more inclusive. Changes to textbooks and educational policy regarding other cultural groups began rapidly by the end of the decade in Ontario. In Victoria, where there were fewer pressure groups pushing on the education departments, change came much more slowly and was a product of the 1970s. But despite the chronological difference, education in both Ontario and Victoria became much more inclusive from the late 1960s onwards. Both Departments of Education replaced the assimilationist focus on the white British citizen with a multicultural approach.

In Ontario, major changes to the curriculum began in 1965 with two new projects that fundamentally altered the educational landscape of the province. The first was a statement of educational objectives summed up in the influential report *Living and Learning*. The second and perhaps more important change was the involvement of the Ontario Human

Rights Commission (OHRC) in educational affairs with the production of the important study of educational discrimination *Teaching Prejudice*. Together, these two works produced far-reaching consequences and signaled the beginning of a concerted effort to make multiculturalism a reality in the classroom.

It was no coincidence that the projects were initiated so closely together since William Davies, who became Minister of Education in 1962, arranged both. Together with the influential former teacher J.R. McCarthy, he attempted to completely restructure the way education was done in Ontario. Many educators and students were disappointed with the rigidity of the Robarts Plan of education, which gave students limited choices on the structure of their secondary education. Davies and McCarthy largely agreed with this critique and were receptive to progressive educational ideas popular with educational theorists of the time.⁷⁰ Davies' time as Minister of Education proved highly influential with major reforms coming one on top of another. Davies realized how politically important education was in the post-war era and used his innovative tenure as Minister of Education as a stepping stone for his political career. In 1971 he succeeded John P. Robarts as leader of the Conservative Party and acted as premier of Ontario from 1971 to 1985.

In June of 1965 the Ontario government approved the creation of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives in the Schools of Ontario, to be chaired by Justice Emmett Hall and L.A. Dennis. The Committee was given wide terms of reference to identify goals for education in the province and to create a plan by which they could be met. The committee held public hearings in Ottawa, Sudbury, London, and Toronto and received numerous briefs from organizations throughout the province. They also sent investigative teams to other countries to learn from other education systems and see what techniques could be adopted in Ontario. The committee believed strongly that change had to start with the governing philosophy of Ontarian education. As they put it in *Living and Learning*, their mission was to rid Ontario of "inflexible programs, outdated curricula, unrealistic regulations, regimented organization, and mistaken aims of education."⁷¹ The final report they produced in 1968 represented a paradigm shift in educational thinking.

The committee members contended that Ontario's size and influence made its educational system a cornerstone for Canadian culture and therefore put a grave responsibility upon educators in the province. Furthermore, they argued that education needed to be for *all* Canadians, not just the

white, male, British Canadians that the education system had up until then favored. *Living and Learning* argued that education needed to avoid an assimilationist melting pot formulation commonly associated with the United States. "Ontario has a major role, perhaps a decisive one, in holding Canada together, and its educational system has a prime responsibility and opportunity in this field."⁷² Such rhetoric conflating education with national destiny was reminiscent of the Hope Report (1950) in its sense of urgency. But unlike the Hope Commission, which focused primarily on traditional values, the Hall–Dennis Committee emphasized identity and diversity. Yet, even with this major difference it is clear that, to the Hall–Dennis Committee, education remained a primary bulwark of the nation.

A striking theme of *Living and Learning* was its insistence on inclusivity. Committee members recognized the difficulties of balancing the needs of what it called the two 'founding cultures,' English and French, with those of immigrant communities, and with the needs of Canadian indigenous peoples. They argued that the job of the education system was to bring "into harmony the two founding peoples with themselves and with those from other lands who have chosen to be Canadians," as well as with native Canadians.⁷³ Here the Hall–Dennis Committee declared it a specific aim to make education equally accessible for not only English and French students but also for immigrant and indigenous students. Although previous statements of educational objectives mentioned equality as a general goal, *Living and Learning* championed diversity rather than assimilation as a means to accomplish it.

One of the motivating factors behind the report was the committee's awareness of the tumultuous relations between Quebec and English-speaking Canada during the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s. They made it a stated goal to bring French-speaking students into the fold as equals and facilitate cross-cultural understanding with English-speaking students. The report stated, "[It is time to say to all Canadians that French is not a foreign language in Ontario schools."⁷⁴ They wanted to greatly expand the Ontarian system of language education and argued, "If this is part of the price of national unity then let Ontario pay it gladly."⁷⁵ This did not mean that the committee advocated universal bilingualism, but that more students should get the opportunity to achieve fluency in a second language.

More importantly, the Hall–Dennis Committee wanted to promote positive attitudes towards those who spoke different languages. Doing so would foster stronger intercultural relations and an attitude of inclusivity

within Canadian society.⁷⁶ They also committed Ontario to the system of separate schools that allowed the Catholic Church to run a completely separate yet publicly funded school system of its own. Although full funding for Catholic secondary education would not be achieved until the 1980s, the members of the Hall–Dennis Committee were much more willing to compromise with the French-speaking community than their predecessors in the Hope Commission a generation earlier.

The Hall–Dennis Committee also recognized the legitimacy and needs of immigrant communities within Ontario. Although the report repeatedly affirmed the position of English and French peoples as the founders of the nation, it also reflected an attempt to wrestle with the huge influx of non-white peoples into Ontario, and to Toronto in particular. The report noted the increased demographic presence of immigrant communities, rhetorically asking, “[Is now] the time to think not of Canadian biculturalism but of Canadian multiculturalism?”⁷⁷ The Department of Education was beginning to accept multiculturalism as a way to deal with the increasingly diverse Canadian community.

Yet another thing that stands out about the Hall–Dennis Committee and its report was its sympathetic treatment of the First Nations communities of Canada. The education of indigenous peoples was technically the responsibility of the federal government, and the government of Ontario had no policies relating directly to Indian students. *Living and Learning* noted, however, that living standards for native Canadians were incredibly low, and clearly the result of poor policy decisions.⁷⁸ The Hall–Dennis committee believed that with or without specific provincial policy, the Department of Education should take Indian children “under the total umbrella of Ontario’s educational policies and responsibilities, with Federal financial co-operation.”⁷⁹

The committee accepted several briefs and sought out research on the problem of educating Canadian Indians. André Renaud presented his research paper “Education of Indians” in October of 1967. He argued that education about Indian culture needed to become an important objective for the provincial education system. But there were two main problems involved. One was the problem of raising the level of Ontarian Indian education to an equal position with other children. The second problem was to raise the level of understanding and cultural sensitivity of the rest of the Ontarian population, noting, “The little they have learned about the first Canadians in schools, added to the information gathered from western movies, press reports and personal contacts, turns out to be

very shallow, negative and defeating.”⁸⁰ Renaud called for a major revision of contemporary textbooks to better provide for cross-cultural understanding.

Although the committee was certainly much more positive towards Canadian Indians than was any other educational body in the province, the Hall–Dennis plan to educate Ontarian Indian children still rested upon a presumption of superiority. *Living and Learning* stated that its aim was to “bridge the gap for an Indian child between a pre-industrial civilization and the 20th century technical age.”⁸¹ Because the committee considered Indian children as having begun at a low stage of civilization, it was clear that indigenous Canadians needed a separate educational system so that they could “begin their climb up the ladder to higher education from their own unique vantage points.”⁸² So despite the rhetoric of full equality, the authors of the Hall–Dennis Report still used the imagery of the ladder of civilization to describe the plight of Indian communities. On this ladder European industrial civilization clearly rested at the top, with Indian society struggling to reach their level of achievement.

Speaking of the Hall–Dennis Report, historian R.D. Gidney noted that “it largely reiterated views that were already the conventional wisdom amongst the devotees of progressive education.”⁸³ But regardless of how pioneering it was, the report proved to be enormously popular and influential, selling 60,000 copies within a year and a half of its publication.⁸⁴ More than any major official statement of educational policy, it advocated a more inclusive classroom and even paved the way for multicultural policies going forward. It did not completely eradicate Eurocentric assumptions of cultural superiority, but it did go a long way towards making diversity an official goal of the Ontario Department of Education.

Living and Learning embodied a radical shift in educational philosophy that took place in the 1960s in Ontario. Criticisms of the curricular conservatism that dominated the Department of Education in the 1950s earned a receptive hearing under William Davies as Minister of Education. In many ways *Living and Learning* was the most effective articulation of the dissatisfaction with the traditional goals of education. The report reflected “the disaffection of many young people and [portended] the wave of cultural upheaval of the late 1960s.”⁸⁵ The new philosophy emphasized the value of diversity rather than cultural assimilation as the major goal of Ontarian education.

But, despite the revolution in attitudes within the Department of Education, most educational materials lagged behind the emerging

philosophy and continued to emphasize the more traditional objectives, attitudes, and stereotypes of the 1950s. How could equality reign in the classroom when most educational materials continued to stereotype non-British cultures? It is at this point that an outside legal group became important in the discussion of inclusion in the classroom of Ontario. In 1958, the Ontario Legislature appointed a Human Rights Commission to oversee the enforcement of their anti-discrimination legislation.⁸⁶

For the early part of its existence, the Ontario Human Rights Committee (OHRC) focused mainly on discrimination in employment practices. By 1965, however, the OHRC had received numerous complaints from citizens about discriminatory educational materials and decided to act. It approached the Minister of Education Davies with an idea for a project that would examine discrimination in textbooks and curriculum. The request fit in well with Davies' interest in a more tolerant and diverse system of education for Ontario. In a 1965 statement to the Ontarian legislature, Davies signaled his support for the study:

[It will focus on] removing material which may be offensive to any of the groups which make up our multi-national family, but more important, to make sure that our textbooks do contain the type of material which does full justice to the contribution of many peoples to the development of our Province and Nation.⁸⁷

Although the idea originated in 1965, the project did not get off the ground until 1967, when the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE) created a small task force under the leadership of Garnet McDiarmid in the Curriculum Department to carry out this study.⁸⁸ The report that McDiarmid and graduate student David Pratt generated in 1971, entitled *Teaching Prejudice: A Content Analysis of Social Studies Textbooks Authorized for Use in Ontario*, had far-reaching ramifications for Ontarian education.

Before the project had even gotten underway it stirred up controversy amongst educators. Several professors from the History of Education Department at the University of Western Ontario, which included the influential education scholar R.H. Stamp, questioned the nature of the study. Though they applauded the intentions of the study, they were nevertheless concerned about the scrutiny that would be brought to bear on textbooks, expressing their concern this way: "Judgments defining precisely what constitutes an insulting reference to any racial minority are

extremely complex at best, and perhaps impossible to delineate at worst.”⁸⁹ How could one precisely define when authors were discriminating? their members asked. Would school libraries also be purged of “offensive materials”? And how possibly to judge whether omissions from textbooks were offensive or not? In the end, Stamp and his fellow professors argued that the study, though well meaning, should be stopped before it became “an uncontrollable witch-hunt.”⁹⁰

Four days later, Daniel Hill from the OHRC and Garnet McDiarmid published their response in the *Globe and Mail*. They were incredulous at having been publicly attacked by professors who had not contacted them about the study in the first place. But, beyond that, they argued that the OHRC believed textbooks should be critically analyzed to ensure they represented Ontarian society properly.⁹¹ The letter to the editor concluded with a defense of the “rigorous obligations of scientific inquiry,” which they believed the study followed.⁹² Because the study was professionally controversial amongst educators in Ontario from its inception, McDiarmid had to be extremely careful how he approached the project.

For subject matter, the authors chose to limit their work to an analysis of a few groups, including “Jews, immigrants Moslems, Negroes, and American Indians”⁹³ with Christians acting as a control group. In their analysis of critical issues in Canadian history, they examined numerous potentially controversial topics including the Acadian deportation, conscription, the contemporary Canadian Indian, race, British rule in Ireland, U.S. Civil Rights, and Canadian legislation against discrimination. Although the authors admitted they had to considerably narrow the scope of their study, they believed these groups and issues would underscore many of the areas of bias in Ontarian textbooks.

Philosophically, the authors took the position that although some bias might be inevitable in textbooks, “there is no place in a healthy society for negative bias—the condemnation, in either explicit or implicit terms, of one group by another.”⁹⁴ They argued that it was the dominant culture that set norms for society, including the perception of other cultures. School textbooks, therefore, frequently promoted the dominant groups by denigrating other groups that did not conform to the dominant norms.⁹⁵ *Teaching Prejudice* sought to remove bias and thereby promote equality as a major goal of educational practice.

Teaching Prejudice contained a number of important conclusions regarding bias in school textbooks. In their study of groups, the authors

found that Christians and Jews received the most favorable treatment, and that Negroes and Indians received the harshest. The reader was “most likely to encounter in textbooks devoted Christians, great Jews, hardworking immigrants, infidel Moslems, primitive Negroes and savage Indians.”⁹⁶ This was an important theme of the entire work, which repeatedly pointed out the shabby treatment that Canadian indigenous peoples and Africans received in Ontarian textbooks.

McDiarmid and Pratt spent a great deal of time analyzing the position of Canadian Indians in the study. They noted that “an overwhelming number [of Indians] were portrayed as primitive and unskilled; not infrequently ... shown as aggressive and hostile as well.”⁹⁷ *Teaching Prejudice* contended that many texts presented accurate facts but failed to provide context for them. For instance, McDiarmid and Pratt pointed out how “in the past Indians were, on occasion, fierce warriors who took scalps... the texts seldom note that on occasion Christians also took scalps.”⁹⁸ Overall, the authors of *Teaching Prejudice* argued thus: “Indians are the native people of this country and [the fact] that their children are required to read these texts compounds the immorality of such treatment.”⁹⁹ The sympathetic treatment given to minority groups was representative of new attitudes sweeping through the Ontario Department of Education, standing in stark contrast to prevailing attitudes from the 1930s to the 1950s.

For McDiarmid and Pratt, a major underlying issue regarding the treatment of all non-British groups was that “the spirit of Empire” continued to march “bravely through the pages of many textbooks.”¹⁰⁰ This was a particularly difficult problem because textbook authors often subsequently held to “the tacit assumption that non-Western cultures are almost universally backward.”¹⁰¹ As a result, stereotypes of non-Western cultures remained endemic in Ontarian texts. The ‘happy slave’ and the ‘white man’s burden’ were still common tropes found in Ontarian historical narratives. McDiarmid and Pratt thought these were dangerous prejudices that needed to be eliminated from all educational materials.

Teaching Prejudice concluded with a number of recommendations to address the issue of bias in contemporary textbooks. Publishers needed to make revisions in all texts that they identified as biased. Even more important, however, was their contention that many textbooks omitted important facts about other peoples or cultures, enabling bias through omission. To correct this, *Teaching Prejudice* advocated commissioning new books that would “provide scholarly and up-to-date information on the history and status of minority groups in Canada and elsewhere.”¹⁰² This was a

major recommendation and eventually sanctioned by the Ontario Department of Education.

As a result of the recommendations of *Teaching Prejudice*, the Curriculum Branch of the Department of Education, formed in 1972, developed techniques to more effectively screen textbooks and set guidelines for publishers to produce more balanced educational materials. By 1975 W.E.P. Fleck from the Curriculum Branch could confidently claim, "The Ontario Ministry of Education has increased its vigilance on the policy of non-bias in teaching materials to the point that most textbook publishers are very sensitive to this area."¹⁰³ The Department of Education attempted to ensure that textbooks contained as little objectionable material as possible.

Taken together, *Teaching Prejudice* and *Living and Learning* are representative of a sea change in Ontario education. Rather than the white, civilized, assimilating culture advocated in the 1940s and 1950s, they envisioned a diverse culture that celebrated the many communities in Canadian society. This was a momentous metamorphosis in educational philosophy, one which also represented a political stance taken by the Department of Education. Educators in the late 1960s promoted an entirely different sort of society. Tolerance and understanding became major objectives of education.

These sweeping reforms came about for several reasons. One was intense pressure from outside groups. Immigrant communities, religious minorities, and women all exerted their influence on the Ontario Department of Education to promote a more inclusive form of education. Along with the department, the politically savvy William Davies paid attention to these groups and actively sought ways to address their grievances. Many of the reforms envisioned in the late 1960s were not implemented until the mid-1970s during a minority government in Ontario. The ruling Conservative party needed every vote they could get, and appeasing advocacy groups proved politically expedient.¹⁰⁴

But, as R.D. Gidney points out, "politicians responded not only to political exigencies but also to what appeared to be conclusive research and compelling argument."¹⁰⁵ These outside pressures coincided with a revolution in educational philosophy that questioned the ability of the education system to fulfill its traditional role of passing on a set of coherent and unanimous societal values to the next generation. Responding to all of these pressures, the Department of Education initiated wide-ranging reforms to actively ensure equality of educational opportunity in the province.

Educators in the late 1960s and early 1970s were also intensely aware of the frayed relationship with Quebec that continued to polarize the national political landscape. Language policy, already a contentious issue in state politics, became even more hotly contested with the rise of the multicultural ideal. As in the 1940s, the major battleground was over French language instruction. In 1973 new legislation passed which offered “concrete suggestions for the creation of French-language instructional units.”¹⁰⁶ Educators began to approve more French language textbooks for Circular 14 than ever before. Language training for immigrants was extended, but this mainly applied to adult immigrants. The overwhelming focus of the educational system remained on the teaching of English, but other languages were making their way into the classroom faster than ever before.

Another major educational objective of the early 1970s was engaging Ontarian Indians in education. Part of this effort had to do with the actions of the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB), which in 1972 produced a policy paper entitled *Indian Control over Indian Education*, which demanded “the right to direct the education of our children.”¹⁰⁷ The National Indian Brotherhood sought to produce curricula that would develop a strong sense of Indian identity; it demanded greater control over education because, “The gap between our people and those who have chosen, often gladly, to join us as residents of this beautiful and bountiful country, is vast.”¹⁰⁸ The NIB envisioned a program that heavily emphasized Indian history and culture and fostered tolerance in Canadian communities. They called for the removal of offensive textbooks and the inclusion of Indian representatives in local policymaking bodies. The Canadian federal government approved this paper as an official policy in 1973.

Partly in response to this national demand for greater inclusion of Indian culture, the Ontario Department of Education produced a new curriculum for kindergarten to grade six entitled “People of Native Ancestry.” The committee to design the new curriculum began meeting in 1973 and contracted out research duties to the Canadian Association in Support of Native Peoples. The aim of the new guidelines was to “advance the Native child’s positive self-concept by exposing him to the history, culture, attainments of the Native people, and the contributions of the Native people to non-Indian society.”¹⁰⁹ The committee produced the first full curriculum in 1975, with guidelines for later grades coming out in 1977 and 1981.

The committee's early meetings were filled with conversations about the nature of the indigenous child, and his or her learning abilities. An early draft of the curriculum suggested that there was an essential philosophy of life within each native Canadian that influenced their thoughts and actions. "[No matter their appearance,] these personality traits may seem to have changed but nevertheless they prevail in their inner beings."¹⁰ The statement contained the presumption, still prevalent amongst educators, that the indigenous student was inescapably defined by their culture. Level of education, location, and personal affiliation were not judged to be nearly as important as cultural heritage. So even a group as inclusive and affirming as the People of Native Ancestry Committee believed that indigenous children were defined at birth by their culture.

Eurocentrism persisted in a reduced form in many educational materials, but by the early 1970s Ontarian education changed its focus from an explicitly assimilationist Anglocentric education system to one that actively embraced multiculturalism as its governing paradigm. This was the result of intense lobbying from numerous minority groups including immigrants, Franco-Ontarians, women, and religious minorities who wanted more inclusivity in the classroom. All of this occurred during the high point of decolonization throughout the British Empire, making the attachment to the old Anglocentric ideas seem dated and anachronistic. Educators chose to create and embrace new educational philosophies that touted diversity and tolerance as the most important goals for the Ontarian education system.

4 PAVING THE WAY FOR DIVERSITY IN VICTORIA

Education in Victoria presents an important counterexample to that of Ontario. In the Ontarian case, there was a confluence of events including a desire to placate the Franco-Ontarian community in the midst of the Quiet Revolution, the actions of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, and the pressure from several other groups which initiated change and made the classroom more inclusive in the mid to late 1960s. In Victoria, educators in the 1960s were aware of international trends in educational theory moving towards a greater acceptance of diversity, but there was little outside pressure to change the system. There were no influential pressure groups such as the French in Canada to propel the Department of Education towards change. However, changes to educational philosophy did begin to affect the nature of education in the state. But whereas

these changes began in the mid-1960s and culminated in the early- to mid-1970s in Ontario, they were of only minimal importance in Victoria until the early 1970s. It was not until the late 1970s that inclusion and multiculturalism became the official goals of educators in the state.

Tracing the development of multicultural thinking in Victorian education must begin with an analysis of major trends in educational thinking. In 1969 Lindsay Thompson, the Minister of Education in Victoria, wrote a book entitled *Looking Ahead in Education*, which laid out the main objectives in the state for the foreseeable future. Thompson argued "there should be true equality of educational opportunity" in Victoria regardless of race or class.¹¹¹ He contended that the state education system needed to instill the right kind of values and citizenship training in order to keep Australia strong. And, he wanted to emphasize the traits of "integrity, tolerance, unselfishness, a capacity for service and a respect for law and order" in young people."¹¹² This was reminiscent of educators in the aftermath of the Second World War, but Thompson did advocate tolerance as a main goal of the education system. Thompson's emphasis on values as a central pillar of education was a major preoccupation of educators in Victoria more generally. By the early 1970s, however, a debate emerged about the nature of values in the classroom.

Thompson's work showed that during the mid- to late-1960s the Victorian Department of Education began to seriously re-think the organization of the curriculum. Educators wanted to inject more up-to-date research and a process of continuous revision in the creation of curricula. One of the results of their attempts at modernization was the publication in 1965 of the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin*. Although some curriculum research had been published in forums such as the *Education Gazette*, the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* was designed to provide Victorian educators with regular and systematic access to cutting edge pedagogical research.¹¹³ This publication contained the latest methods, techniques, and philosophies that educators in Australia created or borrowed from elsewhere. The *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* served as a bell-weather for changes in educational thought in the state. It provided a wealth of information on efforts within the state to provide a more inclusive environment for students.

By 1970, serious debate cropped up in the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* about the nature of education in Victoria. Educators began to question the supposedly homogenous nature of Australian society and call for a more diverse attitude to take over in educational circles. The debate

started with the realization of the pervasiveness of value judgments in the classroom. An article entitled “Education for Girls: Family-and-Home or Family-Plus-Work?” in 1970 noted the tendency to emphasize only two alternatives for female education: either they were prepared for home life or prepared for home life in addition to a place in the workforce. Indeed the author, Elizabeth Rouch, was clearly aware that “the old assumptions” about gender roles in society had been challenged. But the key here was the recognition that gender roles rested upon underlying assumptions of societal values towards the roles of men and women in the workforce and in the home.¹¹⁴ The author thought that either approach was laden with value judgments, and that there was no societal consensus on which option was correct. Lindsay Thompson wanted to instill values into the classroom, but educators began to question the ability of the state education system in a diverse community to proclaim a set of universal values.

The debate on the nature of values in education continued to be a popular theme in the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* for much of the early 1970s. In a 1971 article comparing the social studies program of the 1950s to the 1970s, Sheila Kydd questioned the basic assumptions about the purpose of programs in the social studies. Kydd recognized that social studies in the 1950s provided a broad overview of geography, history of the British Commonwealth, and “something of the way of life of some of the other peoples of the world taken in a rather over-simplified and stereotyped way.”¹¹⁵ Kydd rejected the idea that social studies should be indoctrinating children with patriotism. Rather, she believed that the central idea behind social studies was to form an informed and critical perspective rather than adopt a particular set of beliefs and values.¹¹⁶ Indeed, many educators began to take up this argument. Help children develop their rational faculties and let them make value decisions themselves. This avoided the pitfalls of indoctrination that educators found increasingly problematic.

The following year Ross Kimber took Kydd’s argument one step further, connecting a rejection of indoctrination in social studies with an acceptance of pluralism in Australian society. Kimber first made the claim that democracy rested upon an individual’s intellectual freedom, which led to “a strong argument for belief in the autonomy of an individual’s value system.”¹¹⁷ Kimber argued that Australia had become a pluralistic society in which many different value systems existed. Logically, therefore, there was no unified set of values that the education system could confer to students.¹¹⁸ And since there was no unified set of values, the school could not

force students to accept a consensus value system agreeable to all parties. Kimber's solution was much like that of Sheila Kydd: that the school system should simply train children to develop rational thought. Once they were capable of thinking rationally, they would be able to uphold democracy by being intelligent and informed citizens in a diverse community.

In a compelling 1974 article about the harmful effects that many geography classes had on impressionable children, Kevin Blachford argued that educational materials remained biased and did not reflect contemporary educational standards. The article, "Geographic Education for Spaceship Earth," sought to develop a more accurate understanding of global geography. Blachford argued that most geography texts continued to operate under the deterministic notion of progress that ranked human societies according to their ability to manipulate their physical environment. He also criticized them for using outdated material and for stereotyping different societies, saying that this was still an effort to instill nationalist values into young people. In the end, he advocated "a refinement of the mental maps held by each person and an opposition to spatial prejudices, such as the point of view which regards the local or familiar as necessarily the best, or, indeed, the only worthwhile condition."¹¹⁹ Blachford was one of the first to connect the recognition of value judgments in schools with the production of textbooks.

Within Victoria itself, this debate was mostly academic in nature. But the debate on values and diversity in Australia was not limited to Victoria. The election of the Gough Whitlam government in 1972 began a period of major reforms across the board in the early 1970s. The Whitlam government quietly ended the White Australia Policy, which made it possible to recognize pluralism in Australian society.¹²⁰ The Whitlam government also endorsed multiculturalism as the new policy of Australia, which put an immense amount of pressure on state education systems to follow suit. The pressure from the national level finally prompted action within the Victorian educational system. Indeed, the Victorian case was quite different from that of Ontario, where educators grasped the importance of multiculturalism and called for it even before explicit federal government approval. Victoria, on the other hand, lagged behind in the development of multicultural ideals.

In 1973 A.J. Grassby, the Minister for Immigration, published his influential speech *A Multi-Cultural Society for the Future*, in which he envisioned an Australian society that embraced its diversity. He recognized the major demographic and cultural changes that had altered Australian

society.¹²¹ Indeed, Grassby went even further, saying, “On the first Australia Day the vast majority of Australians were black.”¹²² In saying this he was one of the first to officially give Aboriginal peoples a significant place in Australian history, but also powerfully critiqued the myth of Australian homogeneity as a British nation. He was adamant that “the social and cultural rights of migrant Australians are just as compelling as the rights of other Australians.”¹²³ However, he noted with chagrin that, despite the diversity that had always been present in Australia, few acknowledged the importance of pluralism to the nation.¹²⁴ He argued a conspiracy of silence existed that ignored the impact of non-Britons on Australian society.

At a later point in the speech, Grassby seriously criticized the educational systems of Australia. He said that it was clear that migrants did not receive equality of treatment in education. He further charged schools in migrant areas “with failure to provide a curriculum ... culturally and linguistically relevant to the needs of migrant children.”¹²⁵ This was a powerful critique that Victorian educators eventually took to heart.

Lorna Lippman’s influential *The Aim Is Understanding* also came out in 1973, which specifically addressed the need of Australian multicultural education. She stated matter of factly, “White Anglo-Saxon Australia is no longer a tenable proposition”¹²⁶ and noted that immigrants, aborigines, and other minority groups continuously experienced prejudice and discrimination in their everyday lives. Lippmann discussed the nature of prejudice and its transmission throughout Australian society at length. She argued that the whole atmosphere of education needed to embrace the presence and significance of minority children.¹²⁷ Lippman’s work was influential in educational circles, pushing educators to actively eliminate prejudice in the classroom.

Victorian educators eventually began to echo these national sentiments and lambast the educational system’s failure to address the needs of a diverse community. A survey of research by Veronica Schwarz argued that most children “emerge from our schools confined within the limits of their race, class, and sex characteristics, largely reproducing the social structure generation after generation.” The net effect of this was to ensure that the most privileged group remained “white, middle or upper class, urban, English-speaking, and male.”¹²⁸ Schwarz was particularly concerned about equality in female education, noting that although a great deal had been said about sexism, little action had been taken on the matter. Educators in Victoria became much more concerned with many

of the same social issues as their counterparts in Ontario by the mid-1970s. But unlike in Ontario this was not primarily the result of intense internal pressure from organized advocacy groups. Instead, the new reforms were the result of pressure from the federal government of Australia as well as a recognition of international trends in educational theory.

Given the internal debates about the role of values in education as well as the external challenges posed by Grassby and Lippman, educators in Victoria began to look at underprivileged groups and seek out ways to make educational materials more acceptable to them. The Victorian Department of Education commissioned studies about the status of groups such as aborigines and migrants. Several organizations formed such as the Victorian Association for Multicultural Education (VAME) and the Social Education Materials Project (SEMP) that began to lobby for greater inclusiveness in the classroom in the state of Victoria. These groups and projects were nowhere near as powerful as the numerous lobby groups in Ontario, but their development in Victoria was nonetheless a significant sign that the Anglocentric ideal was waning in influence.

The Department of Education in Victoria began to take the task of education for immigrant children more seriously beginning in the early 1960s. In 1963, it created the Migrant Education Branch to consolidate statewide efforts in that field. The overwhelming focus was on teaching migrants to speak English and to acculturate them to the dominant society. As a 1968 report in the *Curriculum and Research Bulletin* pointed out: "Social formulas and situations concerning the Australian 'way of life' have been included to assist with the gradual assimilation of the migrants into a new environment."¹²⁹ As in the case of Ontario in the 1950s, the dominant motivation behind migrant education in Victoria was still to assimilate migrants into the dominant (British) culture. The presumption was that socializing migrant children with Australian-born children would inevitably lead to acculturation with minimal interference from the Department of Education.

In 1974, the Department of Education commissioned a study entitled the *Report of the Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density*. The report noted that "there was little evidence of any systematic recognition of the cultural heritage of migrant students in the learning programs."¹³⁰ Philosophically, the authors of the report argued that Australia was in fact a multicultural country, which necessarily implied a rejection of a 'melting

pot' theory and a system of Anglo-conformity. Therefore, it concluded, schools with large numbers of migrant children "cannot continue to function, as most do, at present, in the narrow assimilationist mould."¹³¹ The report focused on educating teachers who would hopefully make their classrooms more inclusive.

Teachers responsible for immigrant students were also concerned about making classrooms more inclusive. In 1970 the Victorian Association for the Teaching of English as a Second or Foreign Language (TESL) emerged to band TESL teachers together in a professional organization. Soon thereafter they amalgamated with the Association of Teachers of Adult Migrants, concerning themselves with all aspects of migrant education. At first the group was primarily concerned with teaching techniques and was used as a professional support group for specialized teaching. But by 1974 the group had grown "beyond questions of TESL methodology techniques and linguistics, to consideration of who our students were and their relationships to schools and society because of the effect of these factors on their English Language Learning."¹³² They therefore changed their name to the Victorian Association for Multicultural Education (VAME), and advocated for the complete revision of the curriculum to accommodate the immigrant community.

Much like the authors of the *Report of the Inquiry into Schools of High Migrant Density*, the members of VAME came to the conclusion that learning English was not the only problem facing immigrant communities. In fact, they argued that a lack of English "was and is extended into a myth to cover up the realities of ethnic and class segmentation of Australian society."¹³³ They saw language as a social tool used as a gateway to success in Australian society. TESL teachers needed to accept the multicultural ideal and "keep TESL out of the broom cupboard, out of the assimilationist remedial/compensatory category, in mainstream curricula, organization and decision making and on the public policy agenda."¹³⁴ VAME was not an especially powerful or large organization, but it lobbied the state for years attempting to get migrant education more in line with multicultural ideals.

During the late 1960s and 1970s the Victorian Department of Education also began to look into the state of aboriginal education. In 1965 the government of Victoria set up the Aboriginal Education Incentive Scholarship (AEISF). These scholarships were designed for aboriginal children aged 14 or older to keep them in school beyond the compulsory school leaving age. The scholarships did not statistically alter

the rate of school leaving amongst aboriginal children, but it was hoped this initiative would raise social awareness about the myriad problems faced by aboriginal children in the classroom.¹³⁵

The AEISF scholarships generated quite a bit of interest in aboriginal education, so the Victorian Ministry of Aboriginal Affairs along with the Department of Education decided to commission a major study in 1969. The main reason for the study was to examine the persistent tendency of aboriginal children to leave school much earlier than the statistical average. The study argued that this tendency "left potentially very competent Aboriginal children with their full potential unrealized, and ... produced a larger proportion of relatively uneducated Aboriginals than in the population as a whole, thus contributing to the stereotype of ethnic inferiority."¹³⁶ The investigation took about a decade to finish because there was no reliable information on the aboriginal school-aged population they could draw upon, and census figures were notoriously unreliable for aborigines.

The main aim of the survey, conducted by Marion M. de Lemos, was to gather information about aboriginal students. De Lemos argued that aboriginal children tended to perform poorly in almost every quantifiable aspect of education.¹³⁷ The study also found that a much higher percentage of aboriginal children came from low socio-economic backgrounds, which the investigators felt was a major factor in the early school leaving age. Though aboriginal children tended to fare poorly in most quantifiable categories of learning, De Lemos believed this was not the result of any inability on the part of aboriginal children to learn. The findings on aboriginal school performance were the first real guide for policymakers hoping to identify needs in the aboriginal community and produce better educational outcomes for these children.

The federal government of Australia also became involved in making Victorian classrooms more inclusive. The Curriculum Development Centre (CDC) in Canberra organized local Social Education Materials Projects (SEMPs), which were staffed by Victorian educators and produced materials more in line with contemporary educational theory. SEMP's were initiated as early as 1974 but took quite some time testing their materials for use in schools with little diversity in order to facilitate cross-cultural understanding with other groups.

Two of SEMP's first works, *Different Things to Different People* and *Aborigines and Europeans*, were designed to give students an understanding of contemporary problems between cultures and to make understanding

easier. The first of these works recognized the importance of multiculturalism while noting: "School curricula generally still reflect an Anglo-Australian bias and express assimilationist attitudes in respect to the Australian Community."¹³⁸ The work had three objectives: to give students what they called a minimal level of ethnic literacy (meaning an understanding of other cultures); to foster some knowledge of the diversity and cultural heritage of Australian society as a whole; and to foster in young children a commitment towards tolerance.¹³⁹ Their second publication on aborigines was an effort to chart the relationship between European settlers and aboriginal Australians. The SEMP creators contacted several aboriginal leaders and used a wide variety of primary sources for this work. Ultimately, the authors hoped to give students an understanding of how ethnocentrism worked throughout Australian history, coloring the interactions between aboriginals and Europeans.

By 1979 the government of Victoria set out to create a new official education policy for schools in the state, one that would be more representative of new educational ideals. Multicultural values were for the first time embodied within an official pronouncement of educational policy. One of the main objectives according to the *White Paper on Strategies and Structures for Education in Victorian Government Schools* was for students "to recognize and accept both the diversity of our community and the widely agreed values and structures within it."¹⁴⁰ With this statement the Department of Education walked a fine line. The transmission of cultural values remained an important priority, but the document also recognized that "values are changing..., tolerance of other views is expected, and ... the values of minority groups should receive appropriate attention."¹⁴¹ The school system for the first time officially recognized the difficulty of transmitting cultural values in a diverse community.

Two years later, P.J. Creed authored a report for the Victorian Education Department envisioning a long-term plan for education in the state entitled "The Nature of the Educational Task in 1991 and Beyond." He devoted an entire section to the growth of multiculturalism in Victorian schools. The report argued that multiculturalism required a major commitment to language training.¹⁴² He noted the difficulties such programs would cost in terms of setting new timetables, providing staff, and obtaining enough resources to do an adequate job. In the end, Creed flatly stated, "Underlying all of these considerations must be the realization that the costs of promoting multiculturalism are much higher than those of maintaining a mono-culture."¹⁴³ This was not a celebration of diversity

similar to what the Ontario Ministry of Education pronounced with *Living and Learning*, but the Victorian commitment to multiculturalism was still a major step forward from the Anglocentric assimilationist policies of the post-World War II generation.

In fact, by the mid-1980s there was a much broader commitment to multiculturalism than was the case in the tumultuous 1970s. John Cain, the Premier of Victoria, said as much in a speech on education in 1986. He argued that from the 1930s the curriculum was “biased against working people, women, aborigines and social reform.”¹⁴⁴ He pointed out the numerous government initiatives to develop and implement new curricula for aboriginal children, and to educate non-aboriginal children about the many cultures within Australian society. He still argued that teachers had the responsibility to instill pride in the nation and in Australian democracy, saying, “It is unashamedly the philosophy and the example of my government to propagate them.”¹⁴⁵ In many ways the government of Victoria wanted to celebrate a time of universal values while furthering tolerance through diversity. It was a delicate balance, but one that offered the promise of greater inclusion in Victorian classrooms.

5 CONCLUSION

By 1980 the education departments of Ontario and Victoria committed themselves to a multicultural ideal. This stance was decidedly different from that of the immediate post-war years, which heavily emphasized conformity to Britishness as a major objective of education. Educators no longer saw homogeneity as the primary guarantor of democracy but recognized that pluralism should be tolerated and, perhaps, embraced as a crucial educational objective.

But even though the major shifts in educational thinking appear similar, there are several places of contrast between these two systems. The most obvious difference was chronological. Educators in Ontario embraced the notion of cultural pluralism as early as the mid-1960s, whereas Victoria took until the mid- to late-1970s to begin implementing significant reforms. The differences in timing can be attributed to the much greater amount of pressure exerted on the Ontario Departments of Education to initiate reforms.

The Ontario Department of Education faced increasing advocacy from a number of groups. Educators were willing to make concessions towards Franco-Ontarians in light of the Quiet Revolution happening in Quebec.

Thanks to the involvement of the Ontario Human Rights Commission, educators were also ready to grapple with issues of prejudice and discrimination more broadly. These outside pressures on the Department of Education corresponded to a shift in educational philosophy emphasizing diversity and tolerance rather than conformity and assimilation as major objectives. For the most part, the major changes in education occurred with little outside pressure on the Ontarian education system.

In Victoria, by contrast, there were few powerful pressure groups acting on the state government to further enact significant changes. In fact, the major proponent of multiculturalism was the federal government of Australia, which pressured the states to follow suit. Although there was significant debate on the proper role of the school in a modern society, Victorian educators only partially embraced the notion of diversity. The 1980 White Paper was a testament to their willingness to accept diversity and yet still attempt to maintain and enforce a common set of societal values. Change was homegrown and deeply rooted in Ontarian education, whereas many changes happened outside of Victoria's control and produced only limited reform to meet new federal requirements.

Though it is unquestionable that the education departments in both territories underwent major transformations in philosophy and in practice, it is quite clear that full equality was not achieved in either case by 1980. In the case of Ontario the new curricula for indigenous Canadians rested upon the presumption of indigenous cultural inferiority. In Victoria many educational reformers consistently noted the persistence of Anglocentrism in the classroom. The Victorian Education Department remained committed to maintaining a set of agreed upon values as a central educational objective despite the realization by many Victorian educators that diversity prevented consensus opinions.

Attempting to eliminate bias in educational materials also proved an intractable problem. Although both departments set up review procedures to make sure publications contained fewer stereotypes, such reforms were meaningless unless individual teachers were willing to foster tolerance within the classroom. Ken Montgomery points to a deeper problem in his analysis of Canadian textbooks. Montgomery found that Canadian textbooks began touting the Canadian state as completely anti-racist. He argues that "this depiction of Canada as a space of vanquished and managed racism, or, indeed, as a space of antiracist achievement perpetuates mythologies of white settler benevolence while it at once obscures the banal racisms upon and through which the nation state is built and

rebuilt.”¹⁴⁶ Montgomery argues that while racism certainly became less overt in the late 1960s, textbooks remain structured in such a way as to perpetuate white superiority. So although great strides were made from the late 1960s to the late 1970s in both Victorian and Ontarian education, much was left undone, and the goal of true equality of education remained as elusive as ever.

NOTES

1. See, for instance, Council of Public Education of Victoria, *Report on Educational Reform and Development in Victoria* (Melbourne: Government Printer, 1945), 7.
2. John Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1950), 644.
3. José Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution: National Identities in English Canada, 1945–1971* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 88.
4. For more on this, see Chap. 2.
5. *Report of the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario* (Toronto: Government Printer, 1950), 6.
6. Textbooks are notoriously difficult to access because they are only infrequently kept and stored in archives. The sample of textbooks used in this book included more than 65 textbooks authorized for use in Victoria, and more than 45 authorized for use in Ontario from 1930–1970 (all of which are listed in the bibliography). All of the textbooks accessed were from the disciplines of history, geography, civics, or social studies meant for primary and secondary school children. This number does not include multiple editions typical of textbooks, which I accessed whenever possible. Textbooks from Victoria mainly came from the Alfred Deakin Prime Ministerial Library’s Australian School Textbooks Collection, and in Ontario from the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education’s Ontario Textbook Collection.
7. George Brown, J.M.S. Careless, eds., *Canada and the World* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1954), 66.
8. E.L. Daniher, *Britain and the Empire (From 1603)* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Company, Ltd., 1939), 329.
9. Authors in this era often conflated the terms ‘race,’ ‘ethnicity,’ and ‘culture.’ They were frequently used interchangeably and could denote cultural background as well as genetic inheritance. Indeed, even the 1967 official Ontario Report *Living and Learning* called the French and English the two ‘founding races’ of Canada. *Living and Learning: The Report of the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives of Education in the Schools of Ontario* (Toronto: Newton Publishing Company, 1968).

10. Ernest Scott, *A Short History of Australia* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1947), 294.
11. James Mainwaring, *Man and His World: The Evolution of the Modern World* (London: George Phillip & Son Ltd., 1955), 19.
12. For a detailed look at the history of the Black Legend as well as a comparison of Spanish and British imperialism, see J.H. Elliott, *Empires of the Atlantic World: Britain and Spain in America, 1492–1830* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2006).
13. Aileen Garland, *Canada Then and Now* (Canada: The Macmillan Company of Canada Ltd., 1954), 144.
14. Igartua, *The Other Quiet Revolution*, 88.
15. Inter-Church Committee on Protestant-Roman Catholic Relations, *A Brief on Protestant-Roman Catholic Relations*, Brief 113 to the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario, Archives of Ontario, RG 18–131 Container 14, 64.
16. Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 643. This stance was ironic considering the Hope Commission also supported compulsory religious instruction, a position they defended by pointing to the supposed inter-denominational approach of their new program of religious training. Franco-Ontarians largely opposed this system.
17. *Ibid.*, 564.
18. Hope, *Report of the Royal Commission on Education in Ontario*, 784.
19. K.R. Cramp, *A Story of the Australian People* (Melbourne: Whitcombe and Tombs Pty. Ltd., 1941), 208.
20. Lloyd Evans, *Australia and the Modern World* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire Pty. Ltd., 1957), 164.
21. R.H. Clayton, *Our Social System* (Melbourne: Robertson & Mullens, 1952), 157.
22. *Ibid.*
23. *Ibid.*, 159.
24. *Ibid.*
25. R.M. Crawford, *Ourselves and the Pacific* (Melbourne: Melbourne University Press, 1945), 220.
26. *Ibid.*, 220.
27. Wright, *The Australian Citizen*, 123.
28. *Ibid.*, 123.
29. George W. Brown, Eleanor Harman, Marsh Jeanneret, *The Story of Canada* (Toronto: The Copp Clark Co., Ltd., 1950).
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CHAPTER 7

Finding Historical Meaning without Britain

In a 1975 letter to Minister of Education Thomas Wells, concerned Ontarian citizen Janet Trueman expressed her frustration that British history would be removed from the high school curriculum because “[students] were to be deprived of a thorough grounding in our British heritage—a heritage which belongs to all of us regardless of our different backgrounds.”¹ Trueman’s complaints came in response to a thorough revision of the Ontario curriculum in the 1970s that eliminated British history as a separate course of study for the Ontario public school system. A few weeks later Wells replied, saying, “Obviously, our British heritage is a most important component of such a study.” But he suggested that students should also be aware of contributions from French Canadians and native Canadians. The point of history education was to “help students develop an increased awareness of the multi-cultural nature of Canada’s heritage.”² British history would no longer receive a special place in Ontarian classrooms. Wells pointed out that the four main areas of focus—Canadians, Canadians and Americans, Canada’s Multi-Cultural Heritage, and Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns—adequately situated Canadian history into a global context while promoting the uniqueness of the Canadian experience. For the first time since the inception of the public school system in the nineteenth century, the history curricula focused more on the internal development and populace of

Canada than on external political and cultural relations to construct and explain the national identity.

This brief correspondence illustrates major efforts in the 1970s to rewrite Canadian historical narratives without relying on Britain or Britishness. In previous educational materials the external relationship with Britain was crucial for Canadian self-understanding. Wells' response in the 1970s, however, indicated that the Ontario Department of Education wanted educators to refocus on internal Canadian concerns, and particularly on the multicultural heritage of the Canadian state. Although Victorian educators did not go quite so far in changing their historical curriculum, they too attempted to find new explanatory frameworks for Australian and world history as the evidence of British disinterest in the empire mounted.

This chapter focuses on the growing marginality of Britishness to Ontarian and Victorian historical narratives. By the 1950s and early 1960s the external relationship with Britain increasingly lost space in curricula and textbooks to analyses of the United States and the United Nations. Ultimately, as the Anglocentric ideas of Britishness seemed increasingly out of date, educators in the 1960s and '70s attempted to reimagine the national identity through the development of the vaguely defined concept of multiculturalism.

The first section explores the increasing significance of the United States in Canadian and Australian historical narratives. Diplomatic, political, and cultural ties to the U.S. became far more important in both countries as Britain emerged from World War II as a second-rate world power. Relations with the United States were highly complicated for educators in Ontario, where there was a fear of encroaching American cultural influence, but it was still clear that the U.S. was vital to Canadian economic and political security. Australian educators began to argue that the only way to ensure American protection was to support the foreign policy of the United States, no matter the cost. Australian participation in Vietnam and a major change in federal politics with the election of Gough Whitlam, however, proved to be a major catalyst for more critical stances towards America. The focus on the United States often came at the cost of attention to British history in both Ontario and Victoria, reflecting educators' awareness of Britain's increasing irrelevance to Canadian and Australian foreign policy.

The second section provides more evidence of Britain's marginality to historical narratives in Ontario through an examination of Canadian

participation in the League of Nations and the United Nations. Many Canadian educators argued that participation in the League of Nations was a milestone for Canadian national development, world importance, and influence. To these educators, full Canadian participation in the League was the culmination of Canada's drive towards maturity and full nationhood. Although they consistently mentioned international organizations, Australian educators were generally more skeptical of the role of the League of Nations and subsequently the United Nations in maintaining global security. The section ends with a detailed discussion of textbook views on the Suez Canal Crisis of 1956 and its resolution with a U.N. peacekeeping force. The crisis put Britain's weakness on full display and proved particularly divisive in Canadian society. Textbook depictions of the event are therefore especially useful in highlighting the changing views on Britain and the British Empire.

The final section investigates the Victorian and Ontarian turn towards multiculturalism and national history to replace Britishness in the curriculum. Ontarian authors in the late 1960s began advocating the development of Canadian Studies as the only way to produce a truly unifying national identity. These texts did not ignore the role of Britain in the development of Canada, but they heavily emphasized the uniqueness of the Canadian experience and the development of multiculturalism. At the same time, Victorian educators in the 1970s began to embrace cultural pluralism as an important goal for Australian identity. This was a major step towards deemphasizing the British heritage that was so vital to previous historical narratives. Crucially, this was the first time educators in both countries constructed historical narratives with the national identity framed in an internal context, rather than seek it out in an international setting. It is no coincidence that this happened once educators realized that Britishness no longer seemed a viable framework for Canadian and Australian identity.

1 UNCLE SAM INSTEAD OF JOHN BULL?

The Second World War produced a major shift in global power away from European nations and towards the U.S. and the U.S.S.R.³ During the war British resources were almost completely drained, and the U.K. was unable to properly defend large portions of the empire.⁴ Even after the war, Britain was hard pressed to service the massive national debt and became increasingly incapable of offering security to the empire.⁵ As a result of its

financial and strategic weakness, both Britain and the Empire became largely dependent on U.S. protection and financial assistance. The relationship with the United States became a major theme in educational circles in both Ontario and Victoria as educators attempted to explain the increasing importance of the United States.

Despite the growing Canadian political and economic reliance on the U.S., Ontarian texts in the 1940s often ignored their neighbor to the south. In 1947 the American Council of Education, in cooperation with the Canadian Educational Association and the Canadian Teachers' Federation, published a study examining the treatment of American and Canadian history in the classrooms of both countries. The study contended that Canadian texts showed little attention to relations with America, specifically pointing at British history texts: "Little, and in some cases no, material is included on Canadian-American relations."⁶ The study also argued that Canadian texts focused far too much on conflict and war between the two countries. On the whole the picture painted by this study showed mutual inattention and ignorance between Canadian and American educational materials.

Ontarian portrayals of the political and cultural relationship between Canada and the United States were complicated. On the one hand, textbooks often mentioned the importance of relations with their southern neighbors. But on the other, authors consistently sought to use the American example as a foil from which to assert Canadian identity. And the fear of assimilation into American culture or politics was a consistent theme in Ontarian educational materials for decades.

As demonstrated in Chap. 3, during and immediately after the Second World War Canadian authors continued to show pride in their heritage as a British nation. In fact, some authors argued that Canada's Britishness was what distinguished it from the United States. George Brown's *Building the Canadian Nation* argued, "Canada is unique among American countries in the way in which it has come to nationhood."⁷ Continued participation in the British Empire was often seen as a boon for Canadian history. Canada gained distinction by eschewing revolution to achieve political independence. The nineteenth century achievement of responsible government without a revolution, therefore, was a seminal moment distinguishing Canadian history from the history of the U.S.

By the time of the Second World War, many Canadian educators wrote that the triangular relationship between the U.S., the U.K., and Canada

gave the latter a much greater influence over world affairs than its small population would otherwise warrant. Brown explained that, as a senior member of the Commonwealth and geographically adjacent to the United States, “Canada was in a position to exert a far greater influence than Canadians themselves realized.”⁸ This theory of Canada acting as a middleman came to be called the ‘lynchpin theory.’ Historian George Richardson argues this theory “made a virtue out of Canada’s lack of a strong identity of its own, while at the same time assigning Canada a role that increased its international status.”⁹ By conveniently linking cultural and historical attachment to Britain with the geographical proximity to North America, the lynchpin theory is a perfect example of both the external focus of Canadian identity and the complex relationship with the United States in the immediate post-war era.

During and immediately after the war, Victorian educators were less ambivalent about the relationship with the United States than their Ontarian counterparts. Educators recognized the increasing importance of the United States on a strategic level and accordingly gave the United States a more important role in the classroom. In 1942 the Victorian publication *The School Paper* began publishing a series of articles entitled “The American Scene” to introduce Grades Seven and Eight students to American history and culture. The production of this series of articles is instructive in and of itself because it demonstrated that Victorian educators understood the increasing importance of Australian–American relations.

However, when writing about the United States the authors of “The American Scene” consistently used Britain as a reference point for understanding America. This was demonstrated nicely in the initial article of the series, which began by declaring: “Australians are for the most part of British race,” and that the United States was founded in much the same way. Because of a shared origin point and similarities of race, the authors claimed the two nations had much in common culturally: “[The people of the United States] are lovers of freedom, as Australians, and indeed all British people, are.”¹⁰ These reasons are telling. For one thing, Americans were deemed important because they were originally British. Later articles in the series noted that America became a “melting pot,” incorporating races from around the world, but here it is assumed that the bedrock of the population of the United States was British. The biological similarity was deemed important, as it created a sense of shared heritage between the two countries.

The opening article in “The American Scene” series also declared the U.S. culturally similar to Australia because of their history of settler colonialism. Later articles in the series traced the development of the American West, the South and the Civil War, and American business practices, pointing to similarities in settler culture. The United States did not always receive praise, but even negative aspects of American society were given a positive spin, as found in one article by L.L. Morgenstein, in which he argued that the frontier spirit could still be found in American culture, “even though the frontier conditions are gone and the stock of the pioneer has been fused with other racial stocks.”¹¹ And though American culture was acknowledged as similar to the familiar British culture, most of the articles credited the Americans frontier settler mentality for their history, rather than any stereotypically British characteristics in the founders. So the authors of this series could claim Americans were, in some essentials, very British, but in other ways—including their belief in meritocracy and their distaste for rank and formality, they were very *un*-British, but in ways that Australians could identify with and accept.

Altogether, Victorians dealt with the increased importance of America in wartime much differently than Ontarians. There was no fear of an identity crisis as there was in Ontario. Australians did not need to toe the line between an external attachment to Britain or possible assimilation into the United States. Australians remained absolutely committed to a British identity. In the same year *The School Paper* published “The American Scene,” it also published articles on Cecil Rhodes and one entitled “The Empire United: A Masque for Empire Day,” both of which loudly proclaimed the continued Australian attachment to the United Kingdom.¹² The United States was greeted warmly as an important ally that most Australians could like and understand, precisely because educators viewed it as a proud ally of the British tradition. *The School Paper* reprinted an article from *The Children’s Newspaper* by Arthur Mee which talked about the Declaration of Independence and the Magna Carta as “Two Old Friends.” Mee proudly declared, “We shall be clothed, strengthened, purified, in the splendor of freedom, with these old friends looking out together in the world again.”¹³

However, given the differences between Ontarian and Victorian responses to American aid during the Second World War, it is surprising that the writers of “The American Scene” ended in much the same way as George Brown’s Ontarian textbook. The final article in the series argued that Australia could “play some part in bringing about that close co-operation between the two

great branches of the English-speaking race which alone seems to give a promise of a better world in the future.”¹⁴ Although the lynchpin theory never became as prevalent in Victoria as it did in Ontario, it is nevertheless instructive that a wartime author articulated a variant of this theory as a tool to educate children on the benefits of the American relationship.

Following the war, Victorian authors began to argue for a paradigm shift in the way Australians looked at their place in the world. University of Melbourne Professor of History R.M. Crawford, in his textbook *Ourselves and the Pacific*, described this shift in strategic thinking. According to Crawford, Australia and New Zealand had remained relatively isolated from Asian nations geographically close to them, but their isolation became problematic in the twentieth century.¹⁵ Increasingly, Crawford argued that Australian lives would be influenced “more and more by what happens in Chungking or Tokio, Honolulu or Washington.”¹⁶ What Crawford and others advocated was a paradigm shift in thinking about the Australian identity. Australia should be thought of as European by tradition and culture but should be situated geo-strategically according to its location as a Pacific nation.

The transformation in geo-strategic identity increased the value of the relationship with the United States. *Ourselves and the Pacific* recounted short histories of the United States, China, Japan, and colonialism in Asia. Even though Crawford argued for an awareness and understanding of the Pacific region, it is clear that he thought Europe and the United States were the most important actors in world history. He argued that Europe and America created a “dynamo” where “both people and business have poured out with irresistible force into all the corners of the earth.”¹⁷ Together, Americans and Europeans would be responsible for maintaining permanent peace after the Second World War.

When talking about non-European actors in the Pacific region, Crawford’s work detailed the possible areas of future conflict between culturally European nations like Australia and New Zealand and the nations of Asia. Crawford noted that many peoples of Southeast Asia showed “apathy and even hostility” towards the Allies. In fact, according to Crawford, culturally Asian nations posed a major security threat to the Australian nation.¹⁸ So despite ostensibly giving greater emphasis to Asian history, *Ourselves and the Pacific* still claimed that, for Australia, relations with Britain and the United States remained vital.

Crawford’s work in the 1940s was an early example of a major trend evident in Victorian texts for the next decade and a half. Textbook author

Norman Harper argued that Australians were “inextricably linked with Asia.”¹⁹ The language indicated that Australians did not willingly make this choice but engaged with Asia only out of a motivation for self-preservation. Indeed, the general principle was presented this way: “Since Australia cannot escape her geographical position, Australians must learn to understand and live with their Asian neighbours.”²⁰ Of all the nations of the Pacific that merited closer attention, the United States was the most important. Textbooks began to show greater attention to the United States as a pivotal Australian ally.

The 1950s remained a time of ambivalence towards the United States in Ontario, but there was an increasing recognition that more American content was necessary in the schools. The 1958 curriculum for the Intermediate Division (Grades Seven and Eight) illustrated this point nicely. History courses focused on Canadian development and British history, but it would now include “events and movements in the history of the United States ... significant for Canadians.”²¹ Later on in the curriculum document the Department of Education listed several reasons why American content should be included in Canadian courses. These reasons included the close geographical proximity of the United States to Canada, shared British origin and language, and similarities in democratic forms of government.²² The fact that the Department felt the need to justify increased American content does seem to indicate, however, that many educators saw no need for more information on Canada’s southerly neighbor.

In order to increase American content, the Ontario Department of Education revised the history and social studies curricula. In the late 1930s and the 1940s, Grades Seven through Ten alternated between British or Commonwealth history and Canadian history. The central aim was to ground students in the constitutional history of Canada and Canada’s place within the British Empire. By the late 1950s the British content had been reduced to one year and the Canadian content increased proportionately.²³ The new courses reflected departmental guidelines that significantly expanded content about the United States. This structural decision reflected the political reality of the 1950s in which the United States had become a much more important ally than Great Britain.

As a result of departmental action and external events, Ontario texts in the 1950s became more attentive to issues regarding the United States and certainly to the rise of American power. But some textbook authors continued to assert that it was Canada’s attachment to Britishness that made it so important. George Brown’s 1953 work *Canada and the*

Americas asserted that Canada's identity was proudly American but also European and especially British. Brown argued that the British North America Act (1867), profoundly influenced by the American example, set Canada apart from the more traditional forms of British style parliamentary democracy. On the other hand, Canada's peaceful transition to self-government within the British Empire set it apart from all other American nations. He wrote, "Canada has the best record for peace and order in the Americas,[avoiding] the many dictatorships and revolutions of Latin America[and]the [United States'] bloody civil war."²⁴ It was the push and pull between Canada's geographical position in America and its cultural attachment to Britain that created a unique national identity.

By the 1960s Victorian educators began to suggest that the United States was a more important ally to Australia than Great Britain. In part this reflected the continued effort on the part of educators to consider Australia as an Asian or Pacific nation rather than a European one. In a 1966 series of articles entitled "Australia in the World Today," *The School Paper* provided a detailed view of Australia's participation in global affairs. The anonymous author argued firstly, "[Students will realize] that Australia's dependence on Britain has lessened, although as a member of the British Commonwealth of Nations we still feel strong ties with the 'mother' country."²⁵ As a result of this, the author continued that Australia needed to partner with the United States to maintain good relations with the other nations of Asia.²⁶ Continued engagement with the Pacific region was the only viable path towards safety and security, by this view, and the United States was Australia's most important Pacific ally.

Australian educators often emphasized that the spread of communism necessitated additional Australian involvement in the region. Because numerous Asian nations became communist, Australia remained in grave peril. As one textbook ominously noted, "Australia, with eleven million people on a large island continent, is situated quite close to communistic China with seven hundred million people."²⁷ Concerns about Asian communism were woven together with the older fear of a dangerously overpopulated Asia. The fear of "Asian hordes" overrunning the thinly populated Australian continent continued to be a prominent theme in Australian texts. The racial arguments of the past combined with the ideological threat communism posed profoundly influenced historical narratives in Victorian public schools during the 1950s and 1960s.

In the global context of the Cold War, the alliance with the United States was more important than ever. Articles in *The School Paper* argued

that Australian involvement with the U.S. was purely about the ideological protection of democracy. The South East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) was the cornerstone of Australian foreign policy because it guaranteed safety and security for Australia. "Australia in the World Today" argued, "Because our greatest ally in these troubles is the United States of America we must be prepared to assist her if she agrees to assist us."²⁸ With this logic the article defended the escalating involvement of Australia in the conflict in Vietnam. From the author's vantage point, relations with the U.S. were the cornerstone of Australian policy.

For many Victorian texts, the security concerns evident since the Second World War continued to be a prominent theme. The fear of losing the U.S. as an ally was so great that educators sometimes advocated an absolute stance of support for American foreign policy. P.F. Connole wrote in 1961, "In the future we could face invasion from Communist Imperialism, probably controlled from China."²⁹ Because of this, "[Australia has to] prove to America that we are really worth defending."³⁰ The threat of being overwhelmed by Asia and the paramount need for American protection overrode all other concerns.

As a result of the perceived danger from Asia, the attachment to the United States became a central focus of many Australian historical texts. In 1964, educator D.E. Edgar made the case that the U.S. was more interested in the Pacific region than was Great Britain.³¹ But he also asked some poignant questions about how much and how far Australia should follow the American lead. One reason for this soul-searching was the fear that Australia was not worth defending. Edgar pointed out that although Australia had a great deal of strategic value in the Second World War, new air routes and new military bases on islands in the Pacific lessened Australia's importance. So much so that he argued, "In the event of another war United States support for Australia may not be so quick to come; we are, after all, a small nation of little real importance in world politics."³² Edgar argued that strict neutrality might be better for Australia in the long run rather than a slavish devotion to the United States. But many 1960s textbooks continued to advocate unquestioning support for American foreign policy.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Ontarian authors adjusted their historical narratives to give greater weight to changing relations with the United States and the importance of the Cold War. In 1962 historians Hugh Peart and John Shaffter wrote a text called *The Winds of Change: A History of Canada and Canadians in the Twentieth Century*, which was illustrative of some

general trends. The authors argued that by virtue of its geographical location, it was simply impossible for Canada to be neutral in the Cold War. Because of this, and because of the many similarities between the two cultures, he wrote, "It is comforting for Canadians to realize that their great neighbour is a friendly power and herself badly in need of friends in a turbulent world."³³ As in the Australian case, educational materials viewed the relationship with the United States as vital for Canadian security.

When talking about the global Canadian identity, however, Peart and Schaffter chose to create a more contemporary version of the lynchpin theory. They said that, as the Cold War dominated the geopolitical scene, the Commonwealth offered "one more hope for the salvation of mankind," that could perhaps promote peace and stability despite the ideological conflict of the Cold War. They further noted, "[Of course] Canada, the eldest daughter in this unique family of nations, must inevitably play a leading part,"³⁴ So despite the fact that British power had waned considerably, Peart and Schaffter still considered the Commonwealth a vital force in international politics capable of breaking through the tension of the Cold War. With this framework British weakness was in some ways a good thing because it allowed Canada to play a greater leadership role in the Commonwealth.

Although Peart and Schaffter took a positive view of Canadian participation in the Commonwealth, textbooks later in the decade were more pessimistic. To the authors of *Canada: Unity in Diversity*, the continued importance of the Commonwealth was the only means by which Canada could avoid being completely submerged in American politics. Indeed, the authors argued that "left alone in international affairs Canada would have few alternatives to following in the wake of the United States."³⁵ The authors simultaneously appreciated the strategic security and economic vitality that the U.S. offered, but continued to fear cultural assimilation. So, while Australian authors placed increasing emphasis on close relations with the United States, Canadian authors were more wary and reticent to place their faith in relations with America.

The close identification with the U.S. shown by Victorian textbooks continued into the early 1970s. K.M. Adams' *Twentieth Century Australia*, for instance, argued that Australian foreign policy was almost totally aligned with that of the United States.³⁶ But later on in the decade some authors questioned the seemingly unending opposition to communism and the unstinting support of American foreign policy. *Australia and the*

World in the Twentieth Century, for instance, argued that the election of Gough Whitlam “shed much of the old fear of Communism, together with the domino theory.”³⁷ The authors held that Whitlam’s foreign policy significantly bettered relations with neighboring Asian states and thereby improved Australian security. In fact, their argument suggested that strict support for American foreign policy put Australia at greater risk.

Analyzed comparatively, Ontarian and Victorian textbook treatments of the United States reveal a great deal about perceptions of diminished British importance to Canadian and Australian society. In the 1940s and 1950s, authors in both places slowly came to grips with the fact that Britain could no longer be counted on as a primary ally because of its post-war economic weakness. This was a particular shock to Australian educators, who began to completely re-evaluate the nature of their historical narratives and promote a paradigm shift to the Asia/Pacific region. In this context the United States seemed a natural partner and ally that could offer security. Textbook authors justified the increasingly friendly relations by noting the shared British heritage of Australia and the United States.

Canadian authors in the 1960s treated the increased importance of the United States as almost inevitable, but frequently clung to the idea that their continued involvement in the Commonwealth prevented cultural assimilation and simultaneously granted Canada more international influence and prestige. Ontarian curricula in the 1960s argued that the history of the United States and of Great Britain were both necessary for Canadian students. The stated objective for Grade Ten was a study “of the history of Canada in the twentieth century with particular emphasis on Canada’s relationship with Great Britain and the United States in the world setting.”³⁸ This indicated recognition on the part of educators of the vastly increased importance of the United States for Canadian international relations while still maintaining the importance of the British heritage.

In the eyes of many Victorian authors in the 1970s, Australian involvement in Vietnam earned them the distrust and enmity of their Asian neighbors and thereby decreased their security.³⁹ The absolute faith in American policy they had shown in the 1960s seemed outdated. Many authors saw the election of Gough Whitlam as a welcome shift away from American predominance in Australian affairs. In Ontario, the old fears of American cultural assimilation only grew in the 1960s, and the textbook treatment of the United States became far less positive. But the United States was still featured in historical narratives, increasingly at the expense of content about Britain. For all the tensions involved in the complicated

relationship with the United States, that relationship slowly became much more relevant to educators than the relationship with Britain or the Commonwealth.

2 THE LEAGUE, THE U.N., AND SUEZ IN THE CLASSROOM

From the 1930s onwards, Victorian and Ontarian educational materials incorporated the League of Nations and the United Nations into their historical narratives, often noting how important they were for Australian or Canadian society. But the emphasis was very different in Ontarian texts than in Victorian educational materials, and both sets of narratives reflect key shifts in the ways educators and policymakers chose to represent the world to students. For most Ontarian authors, inclusion in these organizations signified Canada's growing independence in foreign affairs. Victorian authors often viewed the UN with skepticism as an organization incapable of living up to its own lofty ideals. Educators in both places devoted significant, and increasing, space in their historical narratives to these international organizations, once again highlighting the rising importance of non-British external relationships after the Second World War.

In the interwar period Ontarian authors, while still fully committed to the ideals of Britishness and the Commonwealth, often wrote of the vital importance of the League of Nations to the national Canadian identity. W.M. Stewart Wallace wrote in 1930 that the absence of the United States meant, "Canada has become there [within the League of Nations] the interpreter of North American opinion," giving the nation "an exceptional influence."⁴⁰ For Wallace, then, the League of Nations offered Canadians an influence out of proportion to their small population. In another text Wallace stated that the League was the primary hope for international peace and that Canada had a responsibility to strengthen the League as much as it could.⁴¹ Although the Commonwealth still received much more attention in his narratives, Wallace clearly thought of the League of Nations as an important location for Canadian global power and influence.

But for Ontarian textbooks the most important aspect of the League of Nations was its symbolic significance in the process of increasing Canadian autonomy. Many authors pointed out that Canadian sacrifices during the First World War had earned the Dominion more independence from Britain. As E.L. Daniher pointed out in 1939, Canadian participation in the Versailles Conference as well as its inclusion as a full member in the League

signified that Canada had moved “into full nationhood.”⁴² W.M. Stewart Wallace echoed this sentiment, stating, “Canada thus obtained, with her sister Dominions, the recognition of her national status.”⁴³ In many historical narratives from this period, the development of Canadian autonomy was a central theme. Canadian participation within the League of Nations was a major step in the development of the Canadian nation.

Interwar texts in Victoria rarely emphasized the League of Nations, preferring instead to focus almost exclusively on the shared history of Britain, Australia, and the empire. In his text *Australia Since 1606*, G.V. Portus argued that Australian participation in the Commonwealth was far more important than in the League of Nations. He said that the Commonwealth provided protection and security and could serve as an exemplar of international cooperation to the League of Nations.⁴⁴ Indeed, not only was the Commonwealth far more important than the League, but Portus held that the new international organization should be modeled on the experience of Britain and the Dominions.

When Victorian educational materials did mention the importance of the League of Nations, they typically did so in the context of security. For most interwar authors, the main function of the League of Nations was the prevention of another World War. Indeed, *The School Paper* argued in 1933 that one of the main purposes of the League was “to redeem the human mind from the errors that led to war. Armaments must be reduced, secret alliances discouraged, suspicion removed.”⁴⁵ International peace was a prominent theme in Anzac Day articles, and later writings suggested that peace would only come about through mutual understanding. A 1937 article noted a great deal of skepticism towards the League of Nations and the strained international climate of the late 1930s.⁴⁶ But the author still claimed that the best way towards peace was continued cooperation and the furtherance of mutual understanding and toleration.

Interwar textbook authors in Ontario and Victoria held distinctly different views on the importance of international organizations. For Canadians the League of Nations offered a forum to wield influence without American interference and on an equal footing with Great Britain. Canadian participation in the League was also important because it signified increased autonomy for Canadians. For Victorians the League was largely irrelevant next to Australian participation within the Commonwealth. Victorians were reluctant to embrace increasing autonomy from Britain, preferring instead to emphasize the remaining cultural, political, and economic links with Britain. The only value the League of Nations possessed

was in the promotion of peace. These varying interpretations affirmed the Canadian desire to find an independent voice in international affairs and the Australian desire to stay comfortably tucked within the British fold. Both Ontarian and Victorian educators used external criteria when informing students about the national identity or purpose. But educators in Ontario focused primarily on political relationships whereas educators in Victoria focused largely on the cultural and genetic relationship with Britain. In part, this explains why Canadians were quicker to abandon Britishness than their Australian counterparts.

The divergent opinions on the League of Nations largely carried over to the new United Nations after the war. George Brown's 1946 text *Building the Canadian Nation* made a passionate case for continued Canadian international engagement. He argued the benefits of Canada's unique dual French and English heritage, combined with Canadian participation in the Commonwealth: "[The nation] may be able to contribute something in solving the world's problems of language and race, which are becoming increasingly difficult ... she [Canada] can help in realizing the ideal of international co-operation."⁴⁷ In effect, Canada 'grew up' by participating in world affairs. For Brown, participation in the UN was not a vital part of increasing Canadian autonomy, but he did suggest that Canadian history served to make the country a valuable player on the world stage. The Canadian experience of francophone and anglophone coexistence gave the country a unique ability to understand the growing racial and cultural tensions around the globe.

Brown's work echoed a theme running throughout many texts in the 1940s and '50s: Canada's unique historical development made the nation far more important than its small population would otherwise permit. In a later text he and several University of Toronto co-authors argued that "it is safe to say that no other country of 15 million has as much influence on world affairs as Canada has."⁴⁸ Participation in the United Nations was a vital aspect of this world importance. In *Canada and the World*, Brown and his co-authors confidently declared, "While the U.N. has been important to Canada, our country has also been important to the U.N."⁴⁹ Texts in this time period certainly viewed Canadian participation in the U.N. as important but continued to emphasize Canadian activity in the Commonwealth as even more significant.⁵⁰

By the early 1950s educators emphasized Canadian engagement in the United Nations as integral to Canadian world relevance. The Grade XII course in World History mandated quite a bit of attention to the United

Nations in a section entitled “the World since 1945.” The curricula argued that students needed to learn about the responsibilities of democracy, which included utilizing organizations like the United Nations to promote peace.⁵¹ The United Nations was, in this account, a component of Canadian citizenship, demanding loyalty and duty from the young pupils. Subsequent educational materials in Ontario had to offer information and support for the United Nations.

In contrast to their Ontarian counterparts, many Victorian authors continued to largely ignore the world significance of the United Nations. By this view the U.N. was only important if it could prevent international conflict. But after perceived failures of the League to accomplish this lofty goal, there was a healthy dose of skepticism about the new organization. For example, *The School Paper* published an article in 1948 entitled “Can the World Banish War?” in which the author argued that “the nations were not ready for the League of Nations.”⁵² The article highlighted the role of UNESCO in peace promotion through education. But the titular question remained open, and the article claimed, “Man, in spite of claiming to be more civilized than ever before, has not yet learned to understand and to live in peace with his neighbours.”⁵³ The subtext of the article indicated that, except through the process of education, Australia received little benefit from participation in the United Nations.

When texts in Victoria did choose to promote the United Nations, they did so within the context of the world importance of the British Empire. R.H. Clayton in his 1952 *Our Social System* placed the United Nations on a list of major accomplishments of the British.⁵⁴ Australian participation in the U.N., then, was fully in accord with the British tradition. But because of this association, Clayton needed to defend the record of the U.N. more than previous authors. He argued that the role of the U.N. extended beyond the preservation of peace. He cited the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights as a major achievement, though he recognized, “No one would pretend that all the member states have established rights in practice.”⁵⁵ Even if the Declaration could not be fully enacted, it was an important step for humanity. So, although the U.N. would ultimately be judged by its ability to preserve peace, “It behooves us to consider the success which has been achieved in other departments of life.”⁵⁶ Although Clayton’s interpretation was not dominant in post-war textbooks, it is instructive that he chose to link the United Nations with Britain.

The late 1950s and early 1960s witnessed major changes in the perception of the United Nations in both Ontario and Victoria. Textbooks in

Ontario began to reflect a widespread distrust of its effectiveness, which led eventually to a decreased emphasis on that international organization. The text *Our Modern World*, for instance, argued forcefully that “the United Nations was not strong enough to maintain a universal system of security on which all nations could confidently rely for their protection.”⁵⁷ The authors of the work still maintained that the U.N. was useful in other ways and continued to conduct very important work. They even argued that the U.N. remained invaluable “for restraining the contending rivals in the Cold War” towards nuclear war.⁵⁸ The U.N. remained an important forum for Canadian action and influence but was emphasized far less than before in Ontarian historical narratives.

The increasing skepticism about the effectiveness of the United Nations is surprising considering that one of Canada’s greatest diplomatic successes occurred within the U.N. The Suez Canal Crisis began in 1956, when the Israeli army, with the full knowledge of the British and French governments, invaded Egypt. The plan was for the British and French to ‘liberate’ the Suez Canal zone and regain control over that vital waterway. Although the plan was a military success, the United States did not support the action for fear of worsening relations with Middle Eastern nations. The Eisenhower administration placed a great deal of pressure on Anthony Eden, the Prime Minister of Britain, to withdraw. Ultimately, the British and French did just that in humiliating fashion. Historians generally regard the Suez Canal Crisis as a pivotal event in the history of the British Empire, accelerating decolonization and illustrating Britain’s reduction to the ranks of a second-class power.⁵⁹

The crisis was particularly divisive in Canada, which played a key role in the negotiations resolving the crisis. Lester Pearson, the Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs, played a role in initiating the first United Nations Emergency Force (UNEF). The UNEF took control over the Suez Canal Zone after the withdrawal of the British, French, and Israeli forces. Though he won wide international regard for his actions, including a Nobel Peace Prize in 1957, many English-speaking Canadians thought that Pearson betrayed the British with his actions. The Suez Canal Crisis became, therefore, a controversial historical event for many educators in Ontario.⁶⁰

A.B. Hodgetts’ 1960 work *Decisive Decades* was one of the first Ontarian texts to produce a detailed narrative of the events of the Suez Canal Crisis. In fact, he wrote the book in large part because he believed the public debate surrounding the crisis revealed widespread ignorance of

Canadian history. He argued that Canadians involved in the public debate over the situation “revealed either a strange lack of historical knowledge and perspective or a willingness to ‘use’ history to support their own particular position.”⁶¹ Hodgetts argued that the United Nations had “very little real power” because of its reliance on the signatory powers.⁶² For him the real hero of the crisis was Lester Pearson, who “took the lead among the nations in bringing the hostilities to an end.”⁶³ Although he did not believe Britain deserved all of the blame, neither did he support the actions of American statesmen. Overall, he argued that the only laudable actor was a Canadian acting out of purely Canadian interests.

Hodgett’s interpretation of the Suez Canal Crisis set the trend for other textbooks describing the event for the next decade and a half. The 1970 work *Challenge and Survival: The History of Canada* argued that “Canada gained the admiration of the world and prestige as the world’s peace-broker. She showed herself a middle power, unaligned to either Britain or the United States and seeming to be the leader of the smaller nations.”⁶⁴ The authors fully supported the actions of the foreign minister, if for no other reason than that it amplified Canadian prestige globally. But even though many texts emphasized the pivotal role Pearson played in defusing the crisis, few had any kind words to say about the United Nations. The skepticism exhibited by many texts in the 1950s remained despite this important Canadian achievement.

Victorian educational materials generally ignored the importance of the Suez Canal Crisis, with few texts even mentioning the event until the late 1960s. This omission is surprising since the history curricula in Victoria still called for large quantities of British history. But even texts that were solely focused on British history, such as the 1965 work *Triumph and Tribulation*, chose to ignore the importance of Suez.⁶⁵ This omission is notable because of the obvious significance of the crisis for British interests in the Pacific.⁶⁶

The Suez Canal Crisis was a pivotal event in the decline of the British Empire that dramatically put Britain’s weakness on display. Canadian and Australian views on the Crisis were obviously complicated by their continued cultural attachment to Britain. What was clear, however, was that Britain was less important politically and economically than ever before, and that the external conditions of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that had given rise to the concept of Britishness were gone for good. By the mid- to late-1960s educators began the arduous process of creating a new narrative that no longer relied on Britishness as a central feature of national identity.

3 MULTICULTURALISM AS AN INTERNAL SOURCE FOR IDENTITY

Victorian and Ontarian educators experienced a profound crisis of historical identity by the late 1960s and early 1970s. Due to the historical diminution of global British power, educators could no longer point to Great Britain or joint membership in a British family of nations as a source of national pride. Within Australian and Canadian societies, educators grappled with the ethnic, cultural, and religious diversity that two decades of high immigration brought to Canadian and Australian society. Historical narratives could no longer realistically presume that students were white, Protestant, and of British origin. Educators needed to devise a new way of explaining identity in Canada and Australia, preferably a sustainable identity independent of highly variable external political or cultural affiliations. It was in this context of an identity crisis that many educators attempted to create a national narrative focusing primarily on multiculturalism.

Following the Second World War, an important feature of English-speaking Canadian historical narratives was the external focus of national identity common throughout the late nineteenth and early- to mid-twentieth centuries. Textbooks focused on white males in positions of political authority, relegating women, indigenous Canadians, and non-Anglo populations to the margins.⁶⁷ The predominant topic was constitutional history focusing on the Confederation of Canada as the pivotal event of Canadian history. The story after Confederation was often about the increasing autonomy of Canada within the empire. Key components of national identity in Canadian history were frequently wrapped up in international criteria, particularly in imperial relations.⁶⁸ As decolonization progressed in the 1960s, however, relying on historical narratives with imperialism at their heart seemed more and more out of touch.

The Quiet Revolution in the province of Quebec created another important challenge to the English-speaking Canadian identity centered on Britishness. The Quiet Revolution is a general term to describe a wide range of social and political changes to Quebec following the Second World War. French-speaking intellectuals and public officials “rejected traditional Catholic values in favour of secularism and statism.”⁶⁹ The major changes to society began with the election of the Liberal leader Jean Lesage in Quebec’s parliament. Lesage campaigned under the slogan “*maîtrisez chez nous*,” or “masters in our own house,” demanding greater provincial rights. Old structures in society were swept away in favor of a

new and interventionist state determined to protect French culture through an absolute insistence on the preservation of the French language in the province of Quebec. This is a crucial point because language replaced religion as the organizing force behind the francophone identity, making language policy a highly contentious issue throughout the post-war era.⁷⁰

By the mid-1970s the Parti Québécois, led by René Lévesque, won the provincial election advocating greater autonomy from the rest of Canada. In 1977 the provincial government passed *The Charter of the French Language* (Bill 101) made French the official language of the province and was hailed as a major triumph for Canadian francophone nationalism. By 1980, Lévesque organized a referendum on the question of sovereignty for Quebec. His opponent was Pierre Trudeau, also a native of Quebec, who, according to scholar Kenneth McRoberts, “insisted that accommodation of Quebec nationalism was unnecessary, wrong-headed and, in fact, immoral,” advocating instead for pan-Canadian unity.⁷¹ Ultimately, the referendum failed to pass in 1980, but the rancor generated by the contentious debates over the place of Quebec in Canadian politics remains.

The Quiet Revolution had widespread ramifications for educators in English-speaking Canada. The influential national Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism (B&B Commission) made several recommendations for Canadian society in its 1969 report. As the name would suggest, the Commission recommended that Canada become both officially bilingual and bicultural. Pierre Trudeau made bilingualism a reality in 1969, but he ultimately favored multiculturalism rather than biculturalism. The B&B Commission produced an entire volume of its major report on issues of education. The report contended, “Equal partnership in education implies equivalent educational opportunities for Francophones and Anglophones alike,” importantly implying a “special concern” for minority populations.⁷² Educators throughout the province were encouraged to provide special attention to the teaching of minority languages and cultures.

All of this serves as the context for the internal Canadian political scene that profoundly influenced English Canadian educators in the post-war period.⁷³ Education was an important component of the English Canadian response to the Quiet Revolution. This was particularly true of historical narratives being distributed in schools, as educators realized more than ever before the extreme divide between francophone and anglophone views on the history of the nation. The internal challenge posed by the

Quiet Revolution, two decades of high non-British immigration, and the external collapse of the British Empire prompted many educators in Ontario to rethink their views on the national identity.

A.B. Hodgetts became a leader in the movement to create a united vision for Canadian identity with the publication of his book *What Culture? What Heritage?: A Study of Civic Education in Canada*. The book was a joint project between the Trinity College School, which funded Hodgetts' National History Project, and the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education. The information contained in *What Culture? What Heritage?* derived from a variety of sources throughout Canada. Hodgetts and the National History Project interviewed teachers and students, conducted a national survey to ascertain public attitudes towards history courses, and relied heavily on classroom observation for their data. All this information lent the study a great deal of credibility as it weighed in on the subject of Canadian studies. Historian of education George Tomkins argues that the work might in fact "conveniently mark the birth of the formal Canadian Studies movement" because it became a bestseller and raised public consciousness about history education as never before.⁷⁴

What Culture? What Heritage? was a response to two challenges to the establishment of a unifying Canadian identity. Facing the loss of external identity with the collapse of the British Empire and a threat to internal Canadian political unity from the Quiet Revolution, Hodgetts argued that educators needed to completely revise the nature of historical pedagogy to ensure a cohesive national identity.⁷⁵ He noticed an "apparent lack of understanding and sense of national purpose among Canadians."⁷⁶ Hodgetts thought that history courses taught throughout Canada emphasized regional rather than national narratives and that this dangerously eroded the possibility of a unifying national identity.

What Culture? What Heritage? pointed out the widespread negative perception of Canadian history in the public, and he blamed the schools. Hodgetts' main criticism was that history teaching had become hopelessly outdated. The work stated that most courses on Canadian history "plod along the same worn-out paths, relying on materials and techniques that have been questioned...for several decades."⁷⁷ Very few classes taught any history beyond the Statute of Westminster in 1931. He noted that "we are continuing to teach a white, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant political and constitutional history of Canada."⁷⁸ Ultimately, the attachment to constitutional history made the vast majority of Canadian history courses inaccessible to the average student. This was despite the fact that there were readily

available contemporary histories that went beyond the narrow confines of traditional history to embrace the rich cultural and social history of Canada as well as its political history.

In addition to the subject matter being outdated, Hodgetts thought the teaching techniques used by most teachers of history and social studies were not reflective of contemporary pedagogical thought. He lamented that so much of the funds given to schools were not given to the teaching of Canadian Studies. Most teachers had little other than chalk, a blackboard, and an outdated textbook. Not only that but the teachers themselves were unprepared to foster critical thinking in students, generally relying on rote memorization as the centerpiece of most history courses. Ultimately, he concluded, "[Canadian studies courses] do not nurture advanced intellectual skills, they do not transfer knowledge that is useful to the individual as a citizen or to his society, and they do not encourage an understanding and appreciation of a great many aspects of our cultural heritage."⁷⁹ Hodgetts castigated provincial education departments for ignoring the widespread and necessary calls for reform made by many educators and citizen groups.

But what would replace the older version of history taught in the schools? Hodgetts did not have a completely fleshed out version of history of his own. He argued instead that there were numerous issues of identity that needed to be teased out by historians before Canadian history could be fully understood. He did have one major suggestion for all new Canadian Studies courses: the use of multiculturalism as an organizing principle for historical narratives. If this happened, Hodgetts believed a Canadian identity could be promoted without resorting to excessive or xenophobic nationalism. He viewed a history "closely geared to the pluralistic, multiracial nature of our society" which offered "a completely new, valid and perhaps even an exciting approach to the frustrating, much-abused search for a Canadian identity."⁸⁰ Rather than the Anglocentric histories of the past, Hodgetts called for a completely pluralistic historical narrative. Using cultural and social history to embrace the numerous peoples making up the Canadian nation would, ideally, produce an internally focused national identity that all Canadians could agree upon.

In his summation, Hodgetts called for an ambitious program of national curricular development. The new program would be focused on the unique problems faced by the "almost limitless diversity of [Canada's] open, pluralistic society."⁸¹ A major challenge of such a movement would

be to bridge the gap between French Canadian histories and English Canadian histories. If Canadian studies were not truly national in scope, he said, “[The] chances for tolerance, understanding and accommodation between French- and English-speaking Canadians are remote.”⁸² But if educators across Canada could work together to create a truly national historical narrative, Canadian Studies could be a powerful tool to build up a narrative unique to the Canadian experience and independent of any changeable external political relationships.

The highly influential national Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism echoed Hodgetts’ concern over the major divide between English- and French-speaking Canadian histories with the publication of its volume on education in 1969. The commission conducted a review of textbooks and found “two versions of Canadian history—an English version and a French version.”⁸³ The French texts focused primarily on the pre-Conquest era and the survival of French culture. The English texts focused on the political development of Canada after the British takeover in 1763. Unlike *What Culture? What Heritage?*, however, the B&B Commission did not support a national consensus view of history. The authors of the report asserted, “It is certainly not our intention to suggest an authorized version of Canadian duality.”⁸⁴ They argued instead that both English- and French-speaking historians needed to be far more sensitive to opposing viewpoints and historical interpretations.

Notwithstanding the concerns over the feasibility of a truly national historical narrative, the ideas of the National History Project quickly gained support in Ontario. Even before the publication of *What Culture? What Heritage?* Hodgetts presented a brief to the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives in Ontario in which he discussed most of his findings and ideas. He argued that the main idea behind any course in Canadian studies should have been the Canadian identity, and that Canadian Studies needed to be a major area of focus in the schools of Ontario.⁸⁵ The Committee endorsed these ideas in their influential report *Living and Learning* published in 1968. The report quoted The National History Project Report at length, and fully supported the idea that history curricula in Canada should “establish a national identity reflecting its multi-cultural nature and its bicultural base, and ... develop a national spirit that transcends the bounds of narrow nationalism, [and] demand that the traditional methods of teaching historical content give way to a fresh approach.”⁸⁶ This statement mirrored Hodgetts’ position arguing for a transcendent national narrative that avoided the pitfalls of both nationalism and

provincialism. Among the official recommendations of the committee were several suggestions for reforming the history curricula in order to foster “healthy patriotism” and promote an awareness of contemporary affairs.⁸⁷ They also recommended changes to ensure the continued publication of Canadian educational materials so that a Canadian identity in education could be emphasized.

Together, *What Culture? What Heritage?* and *Living and Learning* became enormously influential in Ontarian education circles and set the stage for major revisions to the history curriculum in Ontario. Both studies gave voice to a sense of urgency felt by many educators worried about the lack of a cohesive Canadian identity. *Living and Learning* observed, “Canadians seem to feel a certain uncertainty about their national unity.”⁸⁸ Educators were keenly aware that the older ideas of Canadian identity which centered on Britishness were no longer viable. They were also aware that the Quiet Revolution made it necessary to fundamentally bridge the gap between French- and English-speaking Canadian historical narratives. The history classroom would remain the site at which the educational elite sought to define and pass on their version of Canada to the next generation.

These trends in official educational thinking became entrenched within curricula produced in the mid-1970s. This is most evident in the new guidelines for the Intermediate years (Grades Seven through Ten) where educators completely revised the program of historical study. The new program focused intensely on Canadian history. Rather than the old system of alternating between Canadian content and either American or British material, the entire program focused on Canada. In Grades Seven and Eight there was a two-year program on “The Story of Canada and Canadians” that served as a baseline of knowledge about Canadian history. Prominent themes in the course focused on immigration, Confederation, exploration, and the influence of the United States on Canadian history. For the next two years students took “Contemporary Canadian and World Concerns” in either Grade Nine or Ten, and had the additional option of taking a course entitled “Canada’s Multi-cultural Heritage.” The main themes for the former course were to develop an understanding of Canadian government, law, and the responsibilities of citizenship in Canada as well as an in-depth examination of contemporary issues. “Canada’s Multi-Cultural Heritage” was designed to be “a study of the roots of [its] cultural heritage,” one which included British, French, Indian, and immigrant influences on Canadian culture.⁸⁹

The new Intermediate Program represented a sharp break from the past because for the first time British history was not an independent subject of the public school curriculum. The focus was squarely on developing and reinforcing a Canadian identity based on the multicultural heritage of the nation. The main objective of the revamped courses was to help students “acquire a greater sense of pride in Canada,”⁹⁰ one that was rooted mainly in the unique heritage of Canada’s peoples rather than Canadian participation within the British Empire or Commonwealth.

Although a break from the past, the new curriculum did not articulate a truly national brand of history and so fell short of the aspirations of Hodgetts and the National History Project. In fact, there was seemingly little departure from the content of previous historical narratives on Canadian history. The new curricula largely ignored the impact of French Canada after the British took over in 1763 and devoted large amounts of time to an examination of Canadian political, legal, and constitutional history. In Grades Nine and Ten there was a completely new focus on Canada’s multicultural heritage that emphasized the contributions of non-Anglos to Canadian society. But overall, the Canadian Studies movement of the late 1960s and 1970s did not establish guidelines for a cohesive national identity in historical narratives as articulated by Hodgetts and the Provincial Committee on Aims and Objectives.⁹¹

In Victoria, historical pedagogy certainly changed during the 1960s and 1970s, but the changes were nowhere near as abrupt or sweeping as those experienced in Ontario. There are two main reasons the changes were not as great in Victoria. In the first place, Australians were much slower to come to terms with the dissolution of the British Empire than their Canadian counterparts. Stuart Ward argues that Australia did not begin the process of disengaging from empire until the British decision to enter the European Economic Community in the 1960s.⁹² The symbols of Britishness and empire were so pervasive in the Australian imagination that it took quite some time for the impact of decolonization to fully register.

Secondly, Australians did not have a powerful and cohesive internal challenge to national identity such as the French nationalist movement produced in Canada. The sense of urgency experienced by A.B. Hodgetts was not evident in the Victorian case. However, there were numerous non-British immigrant communities that began to advocate for change to the curricula. In particular, these groups argued for more widespread language courses and the elimination of assimilationist attitudes in educational

circles. The Victorian Association for Multicultural Education (VAME), for instance, argued that curricula needed to change in schools with a high migrant population to promote “self-respect and mutual respect among the students.”⁹³ Educators slowly began to respond to these demands, particularly after the official declaration of Australian multiculturalism in 1972.

In the late 1960s, Australian history was an important topic in Victorian schools, but one of many important topics students had to choose from. In the annual report on secondary education, educator R.A. Reed discussed the range of topics students could choose from, including “British history, modern European history, American history, and Asian history in the fifth year, with eighteenth century history, European history (Western Europe about 1300 to 1600), and Australian history in the sixth year.”⁹⁴ Advanced secondary students had a range of options to study from, but there was no enhanced focus on the development of the Australian nation similar to the Canadian Studies movement in Ontario.

In fact, Victorian educators in the 1960s and 1970s began to argue that the development of civic pride or national patriotism was not an acceptable goal for the public school system. In an article comparing social studies in the 1950s with that of the 1970s, educator Sheila Kydd unequivocally argued that teaching ‘good citizenship’ was ineffective because it remained unclear exactly what a good citizen was. She characterized earlier attempts at instilling values as ‘indoctrination,’ arguing instead for an approach emphasizing the development of critical thinking and rational thought.⁹⁵ From this perspective, good citizenship in Australia could only be achieved if rational inquiry were the main focus of Victorian curricula. Several textbook authors began to respond to these calls for value-free sources for students with their works in the 1970s. *Australia and the World in the Twentieth Century*, for instance, argued that “history [could] help provide young people with explanations necessary to solving their own problems of self-understanding.”⁹⁶ Rather than giving students the right sort of ideas about the nation, the major objective of the book was to provide a framework for teenagers to understand the world in which they lived.

Educators in Victoria were not nearly as concerned with fostering a unique national identity as were their Ontarian counterparts. But, beginning in the 1970s, many Victorian educators attached great importance to the promotion of multiculturalism. In 1972 the federal government proclaimed Australia to be officially multicultural, but educators struggled to live up to this claim. A group of educators from the La Trobe University

School of Education wrote a book entitled *Curriculum and Culture: Schooling in a Pluralist Society* in 1977 attempting to describe how teachers could embrace multiculturalism. The authors argued that the acceptance of cultural pluralism was a vital mission for Australian society because “for democracy to retain its credibility it must accommodate pluralism.”⁹⁷ Pluralism became a call-to-arms for educators throughout the 1970s.

But how exactly could teachers promote “a healthy social ecology, one free of pollutants of prejudice, discrimination and disrespect for persons?”⁹⁸ One way was to re-examine the histories Australian children were taught in the classrooms. Crucially, educators wanted to establish that Australian homogeneity had always been a myth. *Curriculum and Culture* forcefully argued, “Australia has not been a homogeneous society since 1788.”⁹⁹ This was an important point because even as late as the 1970s many texts continued to remain fixed on an assimilationist model demanding conformity to an idealized version of Britishness. The Social Education Materials Project (SEMP) Committee team agreed, arguing that “school curricula generally still reflect an Anglo-Australian bias and express assimilationist attitudes in respect to the Australian Community.”¹⁰⁰ Many educators advocated for more access to language training and at least some advocated more careful screening of educational materials for children.

The Victorian Department of Education tentatively put policies in place to foster Australian multiculturalism. A published series of papers came out in 1981 that gave an official explanation of Departmental policy on multiculturalism. The report “The Nature of the Educational Task in 1991 and Beyond” argued that multiculturalism would be one of the major educational challenges of the next decade. The author wrote that multiculturalism started with language maintenance, but also necessitated the creation of “appropriate materials which depict the cultures of predominant ethnic groups in Australia.”¹⁰¹ Overall, the report presented a challenge to educators in the province who, after a decade of official multiculturalism, still found it illusory in the classroom. Multiculturalism became official policy well before it could be an educational reality.

Ontarian and Victorian educators responded to the increasing anachronism of Britishness by attempting to implement multiculturalism in the classroom. Early attempts to do so were often difficult because there was no clear definition of what it meant for Canada and Australia to be multicultural nations. Educators created a range of practical measures to reduce discrimination and ensure that educational materials contained no stereotypes, but the fuzzy concept of multiculturalism lacked the conceptual

clarity of its Anglocentric predecessor, making it difficult to devise a new consensus historical narrative for Canadian and Australian schools.

4 CONCLUSION

Both Canadian and Australian educators struggled to replace Britishness in their historical narratives in the late 1960s and 1970s. In Ontario, educators responded to the rise of French Canadian nationalism and the decline of the British Empire by calling for a renewed focus on the uniqueness and grandeur of Canadian history. To do so, some called for the gap between French- and English-speaking versions of the national history to be bridged, while others simply called for more sensitivity to opposing viewpoints. Australian educators were not immediately faced with rival interpretations of the nation's past but did have to deal with the newfound reality of cultural pluralism. Whereas Canadians had a long history of reconciling two distinct cultural groups, Australian educators had transmitted the idea of cultural homogeneity for decades. The Australian embrace of cultural pluralism was an initial attempt to de-emphasize the British connection and focus instead on the uniqueness of the Australian heritage. Ontarian educators went further towards creating a completely internal national identity by the late 1970s, but neither they nor Victorian educators were able to successfully generate a consensus view of the national identity in a post-British world.

The move to multiculturalism presented educators with an opportunity to replace Britishness and construct a new national identity in the process. But the abandonment of Anglocentrism in Ontarian and Victorian classrooms in the 1960s and 1970s did not solve the problems of creating and maintaining a unique Canadian or Australian identity in the public school systems. Educators in both places embraced multiculturalism or cultural pluralism as convenient replacements for the previous attachment to Britishness, but there were many questions left unanswered. First among these: what exactly did multiculturalism mean? No consensus view of the term or the ideology behind it emerged right away to guide educators in making new materials for the classroom.

In fact, some educators came to doubt the intentions behind multiculturalism altogether. In 1981 Brian Bullivant argued that "multiculturalism, in all its confusion, may be a subtle way of appearing to give members of ethnocultural groups what they want in education while in reality giving them little that will enhance their life chances, because a great deal of

multicultural education emphasizes only life styles, in a safe, bland and politically neutral panacea.”¹⁰² Ontarian and Victorian educators continued to wrestle with the pedagogical implications of multiculturalism, which hindered their ability to create a new version of the national identity.

Educators in Victoria and Ontario were much more comfortable with rejecting the ideology of Britishness than they were at constructing a new version of the national identity to replace it. They continued to struggle with the basic problems of defining terms and producing proper curricular materials well into the 1980s and 1990s. In 1990 the Canadian book *Innovative Multicultural Teaching* declared that multicultural education had made significant strides, as curricula now included many different people groups. The report noted that what was needed was “a sound educational approach on which to base school practices ... and materials [to] help students to learn to reason responsibly about the complex issues inherent in a pluralistic society are required.”¹⁰³

Overall, immediate progress in reducing outright discrimination and fostering greater inclusion in classrooms was possible, but finding a long-term identity that would satisfy the numerous groups that made up Australian and Canadian society remained a distant goal. The major changes of the late 1960s and the 1970s signaled the final and permanent shift away from an identity centered on Britain and Britishness. They did not, however, signal the beginning of a new consensus understanding of what it meant to be a Canadian or an Australian.

NOTES

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17. *Ibid.*, 133.
18. *Ibid.*, 263.
19. Norman Harper, *Our Pacific Neighbours* (Melbourne: F.W. Cheshire, 1960), ix.
20. *Ibid.*, 406.
21. Ontario Department of Education, “History Intermediate Division Grades 7 and 8” (Toronto: Government Printer, 1959), 2.
22. In fact, the curricular document particularly emphasized the British connection: “The populations of the two countries are predominantly of British origin. Their democratic outlooks and their political institutions (although the latter differ widely in many respects) are developments of the British political system and of the English common law.” “History Intermediate Divisions Grades 7 and 8,” 5.
23. For more on British history in the curriculum, see Chap. 3.
24. George Brown, ed., *Canada and the Americas* (Toronto: J.M. Dent & Sons (Canada) Ltd., 1953), 447.

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26. *Ibid.*, 37.
27. "Australia and the World Today," *The School Paper Forms 1 and 2*, No. 749 (February, 1966), 4.
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Conclusion

In an important curricular document produced in 1975 called *The Formative Years*, the Ontario Ministry of Education laid out the fundamental tenets of education in the province. Listed among the major objectives and goals was a new emphasis on Canadian Studies, in which students were expected to develop an appreciation of Canadian culture and a pride in the nation. The document made two points that, together, indicate a significant transformation in educational goals. The first declared that students should become “acquainted with the historical roots of the community and culture of his or her origin,” and the second suggested that students needed to “appreciate the points of view of ethnic and cultural groups other than his or her own.”¹ The document firmly supported and encouraged the fostering of nationalist pride in Canada and simultaneously embraced the cultural pluralism of the Canadian people.

The Formative Years embodied a profoundly new understanding of Canadian national identity. Assimilation to an Anglocentric paradigm had been the normative ideal in education since the nineteenth century. Many Canadians and Australians had thought of themselves as heirs to the British Empire and Britons in their own right. The educational materials of the 1930s through the early 1960s reflected the centrality of Britain and the British Empire to Canadian and Australian identity. By embracing multiculturalism in the 1970s, educators and policymakers forged an entirely new path that rejected their foundational ideology centered on

Britishness. This book analyzed the beginning stages of this transformation as it took place in the primary and secondary education systems of Ontario, and compared it to a remarkably similar identity transformation that occurred in Victoria, Australia.

Several important conclusions can be drawn from officially sanctioned educational materials produced by Ontario and Victoria, especially the following four points. First, an identity centered on Britishness was still alive and well in the mid-twentieth century in both Ontario and Victoria. As it was promoted in the schools, this British identity took on several forms. Educational materials portrayed an idealized Canadian and Australian citizen who was white, British, Protestant, 'civilized,' and male. Groups outside of these categories, including aboriginal or First Nations peoples, immigrants, Asians, French Canadians, and women, were largely ignored or stereotyped in most historical narratives distributed to children in this period. The consensus amongst educators through the 1950s was to emphasize assimilation as a major goal of the education system.

Crucially, this British identity was not an anachronistic nineteenth century ideal, but it continued to be a useful and malleable concept that educators propagated through the first half of the twentieth century. This study reveals that educators were very aware of Britain's diminished world importance, but for a variety of pedagogical and political reasons continued to find the concept of Britishness useful in the classroom. They continued to center their historical narratives on participation in the British Empire and lauded the imperial record well into the 1960s. In fact, it was not until the 1970s that Britain lost its pride of place within historical curricula and narratives in most Ontarian and Victorian schools.

Second, by the 1960s the unique transnational identity centered on Britishness was challenged in both Australia and Canada as never before. This change happened for two principle reasons in both countries, and a third in the case of Ontario. The first reason was the influx of non-Britons to both Australia and Canada. Both countries established massive immigration programs following the Second World War. These migrants first came from war-torn regions in Eastern and Central Europe, bringing with them languages, customs, and ideas that did not necessarily accord with established norms in Canada and Australia. Britishness as an organizing principle only worked when there was a presumption of cultural homogeneity, and this presumption gradually broke down in the face of large-scale immigration. In Ontario, the belief in Anglo-Saxon superiority was

complicated further by the Quiet Revolution in French Canada. The third factor was decolonization. The external collapse of the British Empire forced local educational elites in both Ontario and Victoria to reconstruct a new historical narrative based on contemporary perceptions of national interests. In effect, claiming to be British ceased to make sense when the British Empire itself was disappearing.

This analysis challenges the standard narrative of twentieth century identity formation in both Canada and Australia. Scholars in Canada typically emphasize the internal factors leading to the abandonment of an ethnic sense of Britishness, while scholars of Australia typically only emphasize the collapse of the British Empire.² This project underscores the need to look transnationally at the profoundly destabilizing cultural effects of decolonization as well as at the dramatic demographic and social changes in both countries in the 20 years after the Second World War.

Thirdly, this book emphasized the importance of religious education to the pedagogical protection of Britishness and democracy. In the 1940s educators in England, Ontario, and Victoria overcame legal and political barriers to put religious education formally into the curriculum. This happened largely because officials felt that fascism and communism threatened Britishness abroad, and poor church attendance and failing moral standards threatened Britishness domestically. It was made possible with a consensus among English-speaking Protestants and educators who believed the education system had to promote Protestantism to support British style democracy. The system of religious education was vehemently opposed in Ontario by religious minorities, particularly by the Jewish Congress of Canada and the Catholic Bishops of Ontario. This opposition was largely ignored in the 1940s but proved to be a catalyst for change in the 1960s.

By the late 1960s there was a great deal of dissatisfaction with the system of religious education in both places. In Ontario, this reflected changes in educational theory that regarded religious education as indoctrination. In Victoria, the system of religious education was privatized to an outside group, making the problems vastly different. The driving force behind calls for reform was the inability of the Council of Christian Education in the Schools to keep up with the massive expansion of the school system precipitated by the baby boom and by the high levels of immigration sustained in the decades after the Second World War. In the late 1960s both Ontario and Victoria launched commissions to replace the older system of religious education. Both commissions were ultimately

unable to effect any real change due to strident opposition, mainly from religious minorities. The consensus of the war years was gone for good.

The controversy surrounding religious education in the schools of Ontario and Victoria continued long after the major conferences of the late 1960s. In Ontario, the legal basis of the Drew Regulations came under attack after the passage of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. After a series of court cases, it was determined that "one could teach about religion but ... must not give primacy to any one faith in doing so, or indulge in any activity which might be construed as indoctrination, or confessional instruction."³ In Victoria, the Council of Christian Education in Schools, renamed Access Ministries, remains an active participant in educational affairs. As one might expect, their role in education continues to generate controversy and it is a major source of friction with several groups, most notably the Victorian Humanist Association. Other religious faiths are able to conduct religious education in Victorian schools, but Access Ministries and its 4000 volunteers administer 96 percent of the religious education in the state.⁴

Although scholars have studied aspects of religious education in both locations, this book was the first to examine the many parallels between the legislation on religious education in England, Ontario, and Victoria. With this comparative lens in place, it is clear that religious education was an important transnational tool used to both define and protect Britishness in the settlement empire. The story of religious education vividly demonstrates both the profound support for Britishness in the war years through the 1950s and the confused identity crisis that resulted from the adoption of multiculturalism.

Finally, this work shows how the rhetoric of multiculturalism offered a solution to the identity crisis brought on by the collapse of the British Empire in both Ontario and Victoria. Educators eagerly adopted multiculturalism as a centerpiece for national history that no longer relied on an external political relationship to provide meaning. Minority groups, including indigenous Canadians, aboriginal Australians, and immigrants, were finally given a place in historical narratives. But the adoption of multiculturalism was also problematic because it proved to be a confusing concept. What exactly did it mean to be a multicultural nation? The British identity was certainly torn down, but it was replaced by a nebulous idea that did not adequately define what it meant to be a Canadian or Australian. Historian Ken Montgomery, for example, has suggested that Canada's adoption of multiculturalism was a way to mask white supremacy by

developing what he calls the “anti-racist state.”⁵ Educators were never again able to articulate a consensus national identity as they had in the war years of the 1940s. This interpretation complicates our understanding of identity formation in both Canada and Australia by emphasizing the ambiguity of post-Britishness official discourses.

In the primary and secondary schools of Victoria and Ontario, Britishness was slowly phased out as an organizing principle as it became less and less useful to articulate the national identity to students. Educators and Department of Education officials could no longer count on a British identity being acceptable to even a simple majority of citizens, and so Britishness was removed from historical narratives and course curricula. The many parallels between the educational experience of Ontario and Victoria suggest a shared pattern of identity construction in both Canada and Australia. Imperialism shaped these school systems in myriad ways, and the imperial legacy continues to cause controversy even as both Canada and Australia embrace multiculturalism.

NOTES

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VPRS – Victoria Public Records Series

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