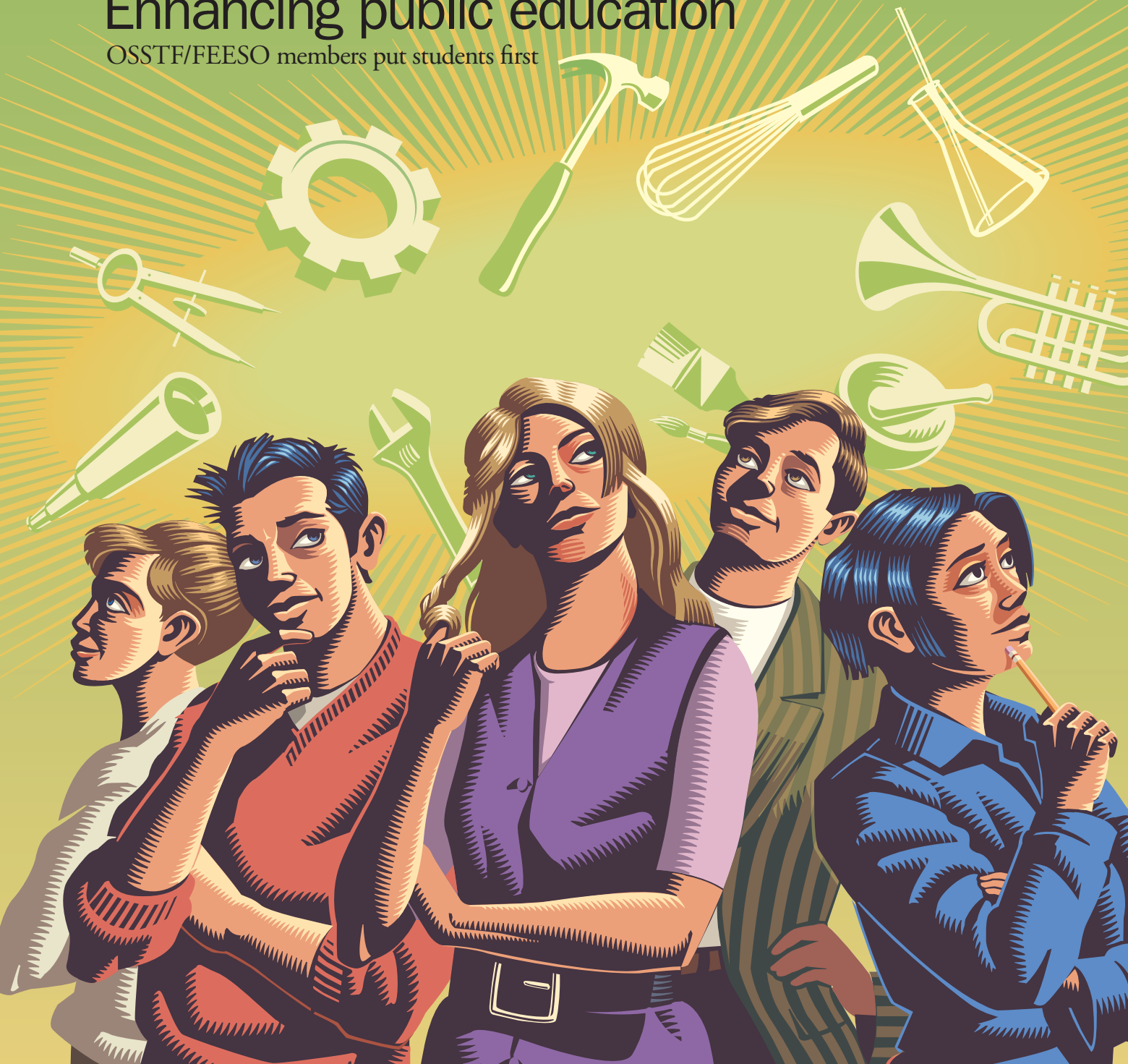


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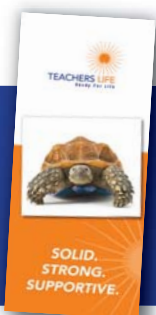
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Our members put students first

Real student success means more than test scores

Welcome to the newest redesign of *Education Forum*. In keeping with our new logo and branding, this magazine has also undergone a transformation to give it a fresh new look. We are delighted with the work that Fresh Art & Design has done in this regard. You will also notice that we have given “Outings,” formerly contained in the Forum Picks section, its own column and renamed it “Beyond the Classroom.”

This debut issue of the new design has a bit of a theme to it, and it dovetails beautifully with the new OSSTF/FEESO tagline “Protecting and enhancing public education.” OSSTF/FEESO has long been a promoter of student success. In fact, we had coined the name for this concept long before it was adopted by the Ontario Liberal Party for their education platform back in 2003. The OSSTF/FEESO Student Success Plan and its successor the Students First Plan are all about “giving students the academic, life and social skills that enable them to become confident individuals with a wide range of opportunities.”

The first pillar of the Students First Plan is to “give every student more options and a rich and well-rounded education by broadening the availability of academic and work-related courses delivered by qualified teachers.” This issue of *Education Forum* highlights a small sample of those unique and highly successful programs that our members have been delivering all along and that have further taken off with the current government’s focus on student success.

In the article “The Screaming Avocado Café,” chef turned secondary teacher Paul Finkelstein tells the tale of his culinary arts program that teaches students about healthy eating and which, as of the fall of 2004, opened an alterna-

tive cafeteria to compete head-to-head with the corporate-run cafeteria—and is flourishing.

Dave McCreary has contributed the article “Media Tek” which describes an innovative media arts program. This program, which has been in existence for more than ten years, allows students

empathy in children and adults.” First introduced in 1996 in Toronto, more than 107,000 students in Ontario, and over 279,000 students worldwide, have experienced this award-winning program. Graydon’s article describes how the program is supported by the educational team approach and how students benefit from it.

My own article, “In Praise of Trades,” celebrates the revival that technology programs are experiencing as a result of student success initiatives that are trying to address the shortage of skilled trades people. It emphasizes the fact that the skilled trades are an honourable and worthy post-secondary path for students and ought not to be looked down upon. The springboard for the article is Matthew B. Crawford’s recent book *Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work*, in which he argues that the skilled trades can be every bit as intellectually rewarding as the so-called “white collar” professions, and often more so.

Also in this issue you will find several other columns to get you thinking about what real student success is, and also what it isn’t. “Embodied Voices” by Rana Encol tells readers about teacher Brian Adduono’s popular *iDeology* program and annual writers’ conference that brings in published authors for hands-on workshops and evening speaking engagements. “Mind Over Merit” by Sean M. Douglas brings us another interesting perspective in our on-going examination of credit integrity. Finally, Adam Mercer in his article “The Luddites Were Right” wonders whether our fascination with gadgets and new computer technology hasn’t gone too far.

As always, the editorial team and I hope that you will find these articles informative and thought-provoking, and we welcome your comments and input. ☺

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qualified teachers

to explore a wide range of media experiences, from print journalism to documentary film-making and many students have gone on to post-secondary programs and ultimately careers in media.

“Roots of Empathy: An elegantly simple idea for world peace,” written by Kelly Graydon, describes this unique classroom-based program “whose mission is to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of



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Accorder la priorité aux élèves

La réussite réelle des élèves signifie plus que des résultats d'examen

Bienvenue à *Education Forum*, nouvellement redessiné. Tout comme notre nouveau logo et notre image de marque, cette revue a aussi subi une transformation afin de lui donner une nouvelle apparence. Nous sommes ravis du travail effectué en ce sens par *Fresh Art & Design*. Vous remarquerez aussi que nous avons accordé à « *Outings* » (sortie), inclus précédemment dans la section « *Forum Picks* », sa propre chronique et l'avons renommé « *Beyond the Classroom* » (Au-delà de la salle de classe).

Le lancement du nouveau concept pour cette revue fait partie d'une plus grande thématique qui concorde parfaitement avec le nouveau slogan d'OSSTF/FEESO « Protéger et faire avancer l'éducation publique ». Depuis très longtemps, OSSTF/FEESO fait la promotion de la réussite des élèves. En réalité, nous étions les premiers à retenir ce concept bien avant qu'il soit adopté par le Parti libéral de l'Ontario pour son programme électoral en matière d'éducation en 2003. Le « Programme de réussite des élèves » et son successeur le « Programme de priorité aux élèves » d'OSSTF/FEESO visent tous deux à « donner aux élèves les outils nécessaires pour exceller sur les plans académique et social et pour devenir des citoyens confiants qui ont accès à une gamme complète de possibilités pour faire face à la vie. »

Le premier pilier du Programme de priorité aux élèves est de « donner à chaque élève plus de choix et une éducation riche et bien équilibrée en augmentant la disponibilité des cours de matières scolaires et connexes à l'emploi offerts par du personnel enseignant qualifié. » Le présent numéro fait ressortir un petit échantillon de ces programmes très fructueux et uniques que nos membres offrent depuis le début et qui sont ensuite devenus très populaires grâce à la

concentration du gouvernement actuel sur la réussite des élèves.

Dans l'article « *The Screaming Avocado Café* », Paul Finkelstein raconte l'histoire de son programme d'arts culinaires qui enseigne aux élèves l'alimentation saine et, depuis l'automne 2004, qui a ouvert une deuxième cantine qui prospère et fait la concurrence à la cantine régulière.

Dave McCreary a rédigé l'article

« donner à chaque élève
plus de choix et une
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la disponibilité des cours
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et connexes à l'emploi
offerts par du personnel
enseignant qualifié »

« *Media Tek* » qui décrit un programme d'art médiatique novateur. Ce programme permet aux élèves de découvrir une grande gamme d'expériences avec les médias, allant des journaux aux films documentaires. Ayant suivi ce programme, plusieurs élèves ont poursuivi des études postsecondaires et des carrières dans le domaine des médias.

« Racines de l'empathie : Une idée simple et élégante pour la paix dans le monde », rédigé par Kelly Graydon, présente un programme unique enseigné en

classe dont « la mission est la création de sociétés plus humaines, pacifiques et empreintes de civilité par le développement de l'empathie chez les enfants et chez les adultes. » Lancé tout d'abord à Toronto en 1996, plus de 107 000 élèves ontariens et plus de 279 000 élèves dans le monde entier, ont participé à ce programme primé. L'article de Kelly Graydon décrit la façon dont le programme est appuyé par l'équipe scolaire et comment les élèves en profitent.

Mon article, « *In Praise of Trades* », marque le renouveau que connaissent les programmes de technologie découlant des initiatives de réussite des élèves qui tentent d'aborder la pénurie dans les métiers spécialisés. Il insiste sur le fait que les métiers spécialisés sont une avenue post-secondaire honorable et digne pour les élèves et que l'on ne devrait pas mépriser. Le tremplin de l'article est le récent livre de Matthew B. Crawford intitulé « *Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work* » dans lequel il affirme que les métiers spécialisés peuvent être aussi gratifiants sur le plan intellectuel que les professions communément appelées « cols blancs » et souvent beaucoup plus.

Aussi dans ce numéro : « *Embodied Voices* » informe les lecteurs sur une conférence annuelle des écrivains qui rassemble des auteurs publiés pour des ateliers pratiques et des discours en soirée. « *Mind Over Merit* » apporte une autre perspective intéressante au sujet de l'examen en cours sur l'intégrité des crédits. Enfin, « *The Luddites Were Right* » se demande si notre fascination pour les gadgets et la nouvelle technologie informatique n'est pas allée trop loin.

Comme toujours, l'équipe éditoriale et moi-même espérons que vous trouverez les articles de ce numéro aussi éducatifs qu'inspirants et nous attendons vos commentaires et points de vue. ☺

One Life...Many Gifts

Thank you for the honorarium made to Trillium Gift of Life Network and for the article "One Life...Many Gifts" (Winter, 2009).

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Your article helps Trillium Gift of Life Network further its goal of improving the organ and tissue donation system so that more lives can be saved. Thank you again for your support.

Frank Markel, PhD

President & CEO

Trillium Gift of Life Network

Bolivia's New Constitution

How could I have been unaware of Bolivia? The report by Raul Burbano (Spring, 2009) contained amazing information. I'm glad to get it, and proud of my union for supporting it and for publishing that article and putting it up on the website!

Judy Gilbert

District 12, Toronto

We welcome your letters

If you read something in *Education Forum* that you would like to comment on, please feel free to write to us. We are always happy to receive the input of our members about the features, columns and other content that we provide for you in each issue.

Wendy Anes Hirschegger

Editor, *Education Forum*

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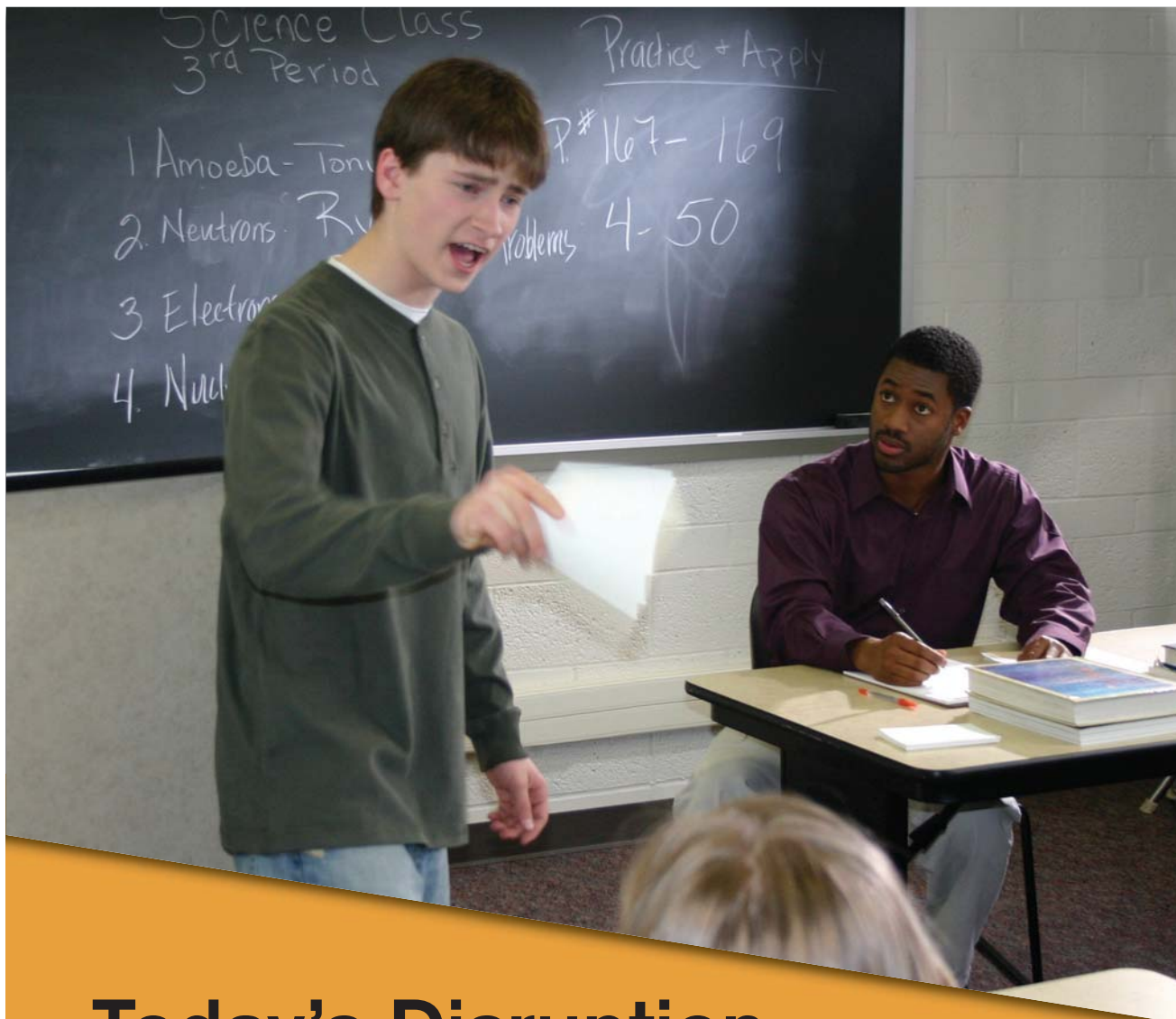
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Embodied voices

L3: A unique writers' conference



Novelist Andrew Pyper presented his “Essential Tips in Writing” workshop at L3 2009

AT the L3 2009: Writers' Conference at Barrie North Collegiate, Eleanor Wachtel, host of CBC Radio's *Writers & Company*, spoke of “disembodied voices”—radio travelling in waves through the air, coming to us through our radio speakers.

A similar phenomenon happens in schools. The clockwork timing of bells, voices over the PA, the balanced prose of textbooks, the literary canon peopled with writers from bygone eras—each serves to establish a certain discipline and curriculum with which staff and students must engage. In every classroom, one teacher has the task of negotiating between young people and the often-distant world of concepts and ideas dictated by such “disembodied voices.”

What if the teacher could summon the aid of Shakespeare when teaching *Hamlet*, Descartes when tackling philosophy, or Newton while performing a physics lab? Whimsical, but an idea

that may be not be so far-fetched. Brian Adduono, an English teacher at Barrie North Collegiate, has devoted the last two years developing the idea into the L3: Writers' Conference, where writers and personalities from broadcast and print share with students their experience and animate their work, instructing both inside the classroom and on the conference stage. The result is an annual two-day conference with more than 25 workshops on topics ranging from how to get published to career information, and two evening events.

Author Jay Ingram, host of the Discovery Channel's *Daily Planet*, liked the novelty of pairing the school setting with big names from the writing industry. “It's really great to be in a school gym at a literature conference,” he told a packed house on April 7 at L3 2009. Ingram went on to explain the difference between writing for TV and writing a book: “about 10,000 words!”

L3 stands for Language, Literacy and Literature. The concept is threefold, as is Adduono's *iDeology* program. *iDeology* bundles together three credits—grade 12 university preparation courses in English, Writers' Craft and Philosophy—in one semester, drawing in students interested in searching for self and a career in writing. The result is an intimate, one-classroom springboard for project-based assignments, curricular learning and projects such as L3.

“I've always felt it was important to bring authors and students together in a real and immediate way. After bringing several writers into my classroom as guest speakers, I realized that perhaps the best way to do this was to concentrate my efforts on one or two days in a conference-type setting,” said Adduono.

In April, L3 2009 featured Eric Walters as the daytime keynote speaker and Anthony De Sa (*Barnacle Love*), Eleanor Wachtel, Jay Ingram, Andrew Pyper (*The Killing Circle*), Priscila Uppal (author and poet), Mir Mahdavi (*Aftab*: Afghan journalist), Nino Ricci (*The Origin of Species*) and Alistair MacLeod (author and officer of the Order of Canada) in evening presentations that weaved together readings, lectures and students performing original poetry. Antanas Sileika (Humber School for Writers), Marty Gervais (Black Moss Press), Penguin Group, Exile Editions, PEN Canada and many others added their talents to the daytime workshops. Past presenters have included William Bell, Joy Kogawa, Erika Ritter, Ting-Xing Ye and Dr. Bruce Meyer.

Adduono books the presenters and rooms, but his students do everything else: design the program and tickets, solicit sponsors, decorate, make gift bags, share writing and host the Hospitality Room, which brings them into direct contact with industry professionals. This

year's *L3* conference attracted more than 1,000 attendants from the school and community over the two days, including 268 student delegates from across Simcoe County. Leah Burgess, an *iDeology* student who emceed this year's closing night, remarked, "I researched and met famous authors, got to be on stage as a hostess, attended two workshops, and even got to be on TV promoting the event. I think I grew as a person and I got a clearer sense of the publishing industry, which is my career goal."

Laurentian University's *University Partnership Centre* (UPC) at Georgian College is a primary partner in the conference and the *iDeology* program. The liaison was facilitated through Dr. Bruce Meyer, professor of English literature. He and psychology professor Dr. Arpin-Cribbe have brought university lecturers into Adduono's classroom, and in turn, Adduono's students attend university lectures.

A striking 70 per cent of first-year university students switch programs after their first year. Students need more

support in knowing what to expect, and more importantly, in knowing their own "selves" before graduation. By blurring the lines between three class periods while retaining the same teacher throughout, *iDeology* students receive the curriculum in a collaborative, project-based format. The focus is on cumulative learning and individual responsibility, rather than single-serving tests and assignments, which is an apt preview of the post-secondary experience, as well as the work force.

iDeology projects have included publishing a professional magazine, blogging on www.openbooktoronto.com, audio streaming, a debating tournament, a poetry slam, an online essay competition and creative writing portfolios.

Through the main theme of story and storytelling, students complement the study of literature with popular media such as film, music, advertising and other cultural forms with visits to Stratford, Filmport, CBC, and Citytv/MuchMusic. After digesting the ideas, students create their own stories, scripts

and performances. "Make it real/Make it relevant," says Adduono.

When students are empowered to engage critically with the dominant modes of culture, they are better equipped to challenge or reshape the mainstream discourse that pervades it.


In a similar vein, Barrie North CI offers a Specialist High Skills Major (SHSM) in *Broadcasting: TV/Film/Journalism*, spearheaded by David Fitt. This gives students the training, equipment and their own studio to produce innovative media such as a daily live newscast, VTV, which has replaced the morning announcements. This, and *L3*, two unique programs, have forged interdisciplinary links between *iDeology* students and VTV members; VTV has filmed, edited, packaged and produced *L3 on DVD*.

Mir Mahdavi, an Afghan writer in exile in Canada and evening presenter at *L3 2009*, thanks to sponsorship from PEN Canada, spoke of the significance of participation in any society: "We cannot import democracy; we need to create a culture of democracy." He asks that foreign-trained writers also be given the chance to contribute to Canada's literary culture.

The *L3 2009* conference closed with the sound of the sea—or rather, the undulating, deeply rhythmic voice and prose of Alistair Macleod, reading an excerpt from *The Boat*. During that reading it became unequivocally clear that human beings are powerful vehicles for storytelling, not only because of their intellect, but also because of their voices and bodies. Teaching ourselves—and our students—to harness this power might possibly integrate the world of myth and meaning with our everyday domestic, professional and educational lives.

L3 returns April 15–16, 2010 at Barrie North Collegiate and Georgian College Theatre. Confirmed presenters at press time include Robert J. Sawyer, Ian Brown, Ray Robertson and Molly Peacock. Contact Brian Adduono regarding both the conference and the *iDeology* Program at badduono@mail.scdsb.on.ca or 705-726-6541. ☞


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Rana Encol is an aspiring writer and student of literature at McGill University, and a former student at Barrie North Collegiate.



Mind over merit

The problem of perceived academic entitlement among students



IN 500 BC, Greek philosopher Heraclitus said that the only constant is change. Well, when do we start to take responsibility for those changes? To what extent do we allow change to transpire before being accountable for its results?

As society evolves, so do the ways in which individuals perceive the world. With these changing perceptions, however, has come the notion that what once was earned is now something to which one is entitled. Entitlement is the belief that one deserves to receive something regardless of the quality of effort, and academic entitlement exemplifies this notion.

Over the past decade, the computer age has offered an incomprehensible quantity of information that is available to us at any given moment and that continues to increase at an exponential rate; what we retain and our ability to use this information, however, has lessened dramatically. We live in an era where our expectations

far exceed the reality of what may necessarily be anticipated. This idea is evident to those who live in urban settings; studies have shown that those living in urban regions become agitated after having to wait for approximately three minutes. Many of us have been there, whether it's standing in line at the grocery store, hitting every red light en route to a destination, or sitting in traffic on a sweltering day. As we continually find methods to make our lives convenient and our expectations for convenience grow, we must ask the question, what are we sacrificing for all this convenience?

The answers are many. One sacrifice for this convenience is that over the past number of years, students have gradually begun to feel that they are able to achieve more by doing less; this myth, however, is beginning to take its toll in post-secondary school, and consequently, in the workplace. In the students' defence, being brought up in a culture that caters to

their every need at the push of a button hardly builds the necessary skills needed to absorb the values of respectful habits, strong work ethics and an ability to appreciate what it means to truly earn something. A survey of faculty and librarians from 22 Canadian universities, conducted by CTV (February & March, 2009) and the resulting article, "Profs say students lack maturity, feel entitled" (CTV, April 6, 2009), showed that there is a "definite decline in student preparedness." The article outlines a growing concern of those interviewed that students entering university today "are less prepared and have poorer research skills than students from three years ago," and they suggest that there is "a belief that good grades are an entitlement."

Who is to blame for this feeling of entitlement that some believe has reached epidemic proportions? Is it fair to hold the conveniences of society at fault? Or perhaps we have been pushed into this false sense of security by the same culture that offers credit to those with no money, excuses for those who are unsure of how to be accountable, and greater conveniences to those who are too indolent to appreciate the value of a process. Then again, looking for a scapegoat for every issue is in itself part of the greater problem, as entitlement is merely a symptom, or result, of a lack of effort.

A recent study by researchers at the University of California, Irvine, *Self-Entitled College Students: Contributions of Personality, Parenting, and Motivational Factors* (April 4, 2008), found that 66 per cent of students surveyed felt that if they explained that they were "trying hard," the professor should consider raising their grade; 33 per cent said that they expected B's just for attending lectures, while 40 per cent said they deserved a B just for completing the required reading.

A *National Post* article (Nov., 2008) reporting on this study suggests that “the mentality of students enrolling in post-secondary education is akin to shopping in a store where the customer is always right;” there is no longer a sense of accountability, but rather an expectation that they are entitled to receive without putting in the required effort.

There was a time when education was the most significant issue in a student’s life; now, however, the growing trend is that school is to be designed around everything else. There is a feeling of being overwhelmed by the pressures of what students face on a day-to-day basis. Professor Ellen Greenberger, lead author of the University of California study, suggests that the sense of entitlement could be related to increased parental pressure, competition among peers and family members and a heightened sense of achievement anxiety.

That said, the question must be asked: How is it that the Baby Boomers were not only able to sustain themselves with fewer conveniences, but in fact thrived? While there have been many thoughts

on the subject, one suggestion, by Jean M. Twenge, author of *Generation Me: Why Today’s Young Americans Are More Confident, Assertive, Entitled—and More Miserable than Ever Before* (2007), is that the era of entitlement is a direct result of an overly narcissistic generation of students, which, in turn, is the result of a socialization process that begins at birth.

Our culture has over-compensated the importance of self-value to such a degree that many individuals have created a false complex of the self that has become unrealistically self-centred. According to Twenge, our culture has become so inundated with the idea of “generation me” that “we are all winners”—when the reality is that there is a great difference between the efforts of a winner, and those of someone who falls short.

It is no surprise that with trends being a constantly evolving characteristic of our society, many students have a preconceived notion of what they are expected to be, what they think they are, and how they want to be seen. If Twenge’s concept of narcissism is indeed true, then it is no wonder that so many students feel

The teacher voice on assessment project

Rosemary Clark, a retired OSSTF/FEESO Executive Assistant, has been hired by the Ontario Teachers’ Federation to work on the Ministry of Education funded research project entitled “The Teacher Voice on Assessment” (TVA). The research that is produced will help advance the OSSTF/FEESO position that the Ministry, through Boards, must offer the necessary professional development opportunities to ensure that the new Assessment Evaluation & Reporting policies are implemented in ways that respect the professionalism of teachers, are inclusive of the entire educational team and are pedagogically sound for all students.

This project will survey all secondary school teachers between January 1 and February 15, 2010 by way of an online survey tool. The proposed issues to be included in the survey are those that the OSSTF/FEESO’s Credit Integrity Work Group has been working on for the last two years.

The final report of the Credit Integrity Work Group can be found on the provincial website at www.osstf.on.ca/creditintegrity.

The OTF project will result in a resource booklet for secondary school teachers.

entitled to that which they have not effectively earned.

Whether the feeling of entitlement is indeed growing, or it is that we are simply becoming more aware of its presence, the research does allow us to suggest that academic entitlement is a serious issue. What remains to be seen is how educators and society will deal with it. Change might indeed be constant, but change will always carry the responsibility of being accountable for our past and our tomorrows. If nothing else, we must ask ourselves: do we want the doctors and lawyers and pilots of tomorrow merely to work hard, or do we want to know that they truly know what they are doing? ☺

Sean M. Douglas teaches English and English literature at Keswick High School in District 16, York Region.

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The Luddites were right

Technology under fire



I am neither technophile, nor technophobe. I have a cellphone because my wife wanted the thing, but I also have two computers and am something of an Internet gamer. What worries me about technology is not what it does, the ethics of its use or even the risks we all run being part of a global economy that connects almost every piece of personal information we have, exposing it to anyone who knows how to find it. What concerns me is the effects of technology on the students we see every day. I find it hard to escape the thought that in some regard the Luddites had the right idea, and it might be good for us, too, to take a step away from technology.

High school students, particularly in the senior “U” level courses, should be capable of basic academic research on any topic, using a variety of sources and techniques that bring them into contact with the widest base of knowledge possible. What we seem to have is an entire generation who believe that research starts

with Wikipedia and ends with Google. Yes, these are both powerful tools, and they make a decent starting point on a lot of topics, but they should not be the beginning and the end of research. When students are asked to include books in their resource list they often find one, but rarely crack the spine for any information. Finding a decent scholarly resource? Well that might happen with the high-end achievers, but most of the rest will not bother.

What happens when these same students grow up without having learned to question source material, when they have always taken it at face value? We teach them to find bias in books and newspaper articles, but they rarely apply that thought process to electronic source material they use. We try to make them question and debate, but to be meaningful that comes back to the research, which is more and more about technology and less and less about critical thinking.

Have you given any of your classes a

spelling test? I have, and I make a point of doing so in most classes at least once a semester because computers have killed students’ ability to spell, if indeed it ever existed. There is no doubt that extensive use of word processing programs has diminished my own ability to spell and I do catch myself rethinking even simple words when writing on the whiteboards in my classroom. As I write this, an officemate tells me that one of the student “leaders” in our school asked him how to spell the name of the city where we live. That is a sure sign of progress if ever there was one!

Similar things can be said of the mathematical ability of today’s average student. They can plug the numbers into a calculator, but sometimes there is a disconnect between the numbers and what they are doing, never mind why. Getting kids to understand the order in which to key numbers into the calculator and which operations keys to use is something we can do. Unfortunately, students do not often understand why the calculations work, which means that they have serious issues when it comes to being “creative” with math. Sometimes long division is a good thing.

Then there is the issue of technologies we do not want being used in the classroom. iPods, cellphones, BlackBerrys (how can kids afford all of the above?) are so much a part of students’ lives these days that they seem unable to function without them. But back to the Luddites—they broke the machines they hated, and I am sure many of us have had a moment in a classroom with the kid who does not understand why he can’t send his girlfriend six text messages where we share the Luddites’ pain (there would be a lot of satisfaction in taking a hammer to it—the phone, of course!).

One thing education offers is the op-

portunity to socialize, and in many ways teaching kids how to relate to each other is one of our most important tasks. It is hard not to wonder how much of that is undone by kids interacting so much over Facebook, MSN and personal blogs. The argument could certainly be made, and indeed it has with recent additions of “cyberbullying” to behaviour policies, that they are losing their ability to interact in a meaningful and caring way. Even worse is the increasing numbers of students who care more about a cyber relationship with someone hundreds or thousands of miles away than they do about their impact on the people sitting right next to them in a classroom.

The worst part of this whole scenario for the education system is that the public is under the impression that most of our job involves getting large amounts of information into the hands, and ultimately the minds, of our students. Sooner or later people will question the wisdom of having the system at all

if that is all there is to it, since almost everyone has the Internet at home. That dangerous train of thought is part of

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the reason ideas like “un-schooling” are floating around out there, as some parents honestly believe the school environment does more harm than good.

The Luddites lost their contest with machines, and I fear we may as well. Ministry directives continue to push us toward giving students credit for the things they already do, under the catch phrase of “media literacy,” while at the same time pushing us away from the repeated practice of basic spelling, reading and writing skills.

Last year, a teacher candidate told me his professor was suggesting that he design a geography lesson around using cellphones in class, and perhaps using the built-in GPS for another. With this kind of thing happening I suspect that we may lose the battle of trying to get students more prepared to understand why things work and how. Can we expect more when the Internet, the most powerful research tool we have ever built, is actually 70 per cent pornography in content? ☹

Adam Mercer is a teacher and head of Canadian and World Studies at RS McLaughlin CVI in Oshawa.

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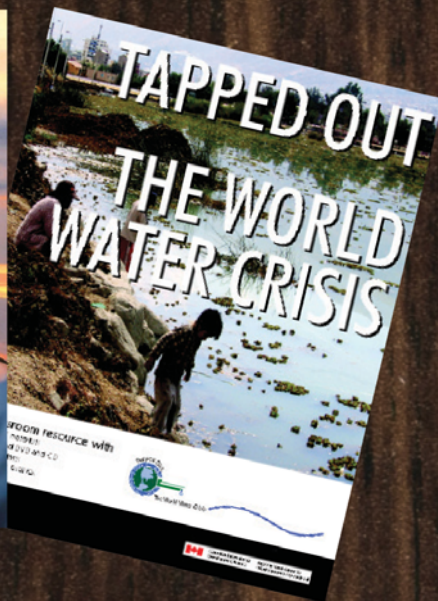
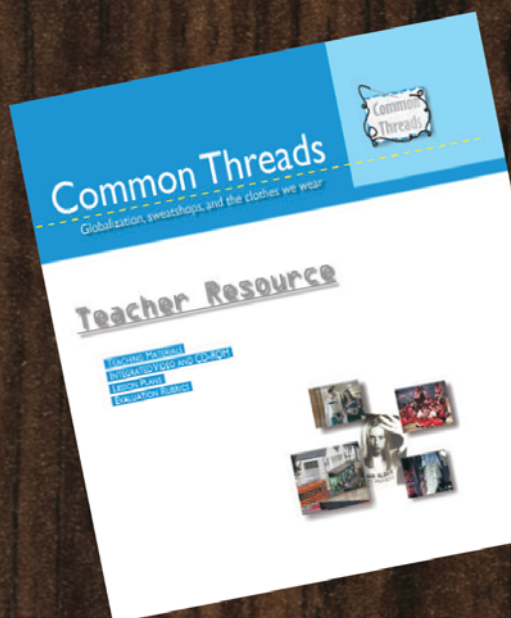
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In praise of trades

Rewarding career choices worthy of consideration

By Wendy Anes Hirschegger

One of my fond memories of grade 7 and 8 is that of our regular, though infrequent, trips to a neighbouring elementary school to take advantage of the shop and home ec facilities. These were lacking at my home school, so we all walked over; the boys were hustled off to experience industrial arts and the girls were taught how to use sewing machines and how to cook. Because my mom was a sewer, I was already familiar with using sewing machines and so I loved that part of grade 7 and 8. That was the early 1970's.

Similarly, my younger brothers also had industrial arts experiences and enjoyed taking woodworking classes throughout high school. The coffee table in my parents' family room was made by the elder of my two brothers as his grade 12 major project, and my youngest brother made his own dresser for his bedroom. When I got married, I had no idea what a great deal I was getting. My husband had had similar experiences in high school, and so he too has a good basic knowledge of a variety of technology areas—he can do basic car maintenance, construction, wiring, plumbing and cabinetry. In fact, now that Joe has a very well-equipped shop in the basement, I have been the happy recipient of the occasional new piece of furniture—a sideboard for the kitchen and a beautiful

ILLUSTRATION: GARY ALPHONSO/123 ART.COM



“Some supporters
of the school
[Timothy Eaton
Business and
Technical Institute]
claimed that a
lack of respect
for hands-on
learning and the
trades and lack
of proper
marketing
contributed
to the school’s
demise”



cabinet for the dining room, to name just a few.

Although none in my family went into the trades, we all gained a well-rounded education in both the traditional academic subjects and also the more “hands on” subject areas. While our experiences were a little one-sided in terms of gender—back then boys didn’t take family studies and girls didn’t take tech—we did, I believe, benefit from the experiences that we did have.

Fast forward to the mid-1990s. One of the many wrong-headed moves of the Harris Tories was the elimination of industrial arts and family studies from elementary schools, and as a consequence many of those facilities were dismantled and converted to other uses. And so, over the next eight years, secondary technology and family studies programs also began to suffer because the students entering grade 9 had not already had a taste of technology and family studies in grades 7 and 8.

To be fair, Ontario wasn’t alone in this respect. The Harris government was only following what was already happening in the United States. The popular notion at the time was that the wave of the future was the “knowledge economy” and therefore, all students had to be equipped to be able to cope and work in that future. And since a university education was best for that kind of worker, conventional wisdom led to trying to steer as many students as possible in that direction. The sad result? Technology programs became regarded as dumping grounds for those less academically inclined, and as a less than desirable pathway to a future.

As it turns out, though, this has been particularly shortsighted because now, across the province, and indeed across the country and even the continent, there is a critical shortage in the skilled trades. As is the case in many sectors, the retirements among skilled trades people are outpacing those coming into those trades. The skills shortage has finally caused politicians to take notice, and in the case of the current provincial government, there is now a resurgence of interest in the trades, and in technology programs. Programs such as Specialist High Skills Majors and reinvestments in

technology shops have resulted in more students taking an interest in the trades, and this is a very good thing.

Still, there is a long way to go. At the end of the last school year, the Toronto District School Board closed Timothy Eaton Business and Technical Institute. The *Daily Commercial and Construction Record*, in a May 12, 2009 article, reported that the school had a \$1 million, state-of-the-art woodworking classroom donated by private industry, and it also had industrial kitchens for teaching baking and cooking, a drywall shop and plumbing equipment. The school’s WoodLINKS program fed approximately 25 Toronto public high school students a year into the Ontario Youth Apprenticeship Program, a partner of the Carpenters Local 27 Joint Apprenticeship and Training Trust Fund. Through this program, grade 11 and grade 12 students from across the public board participated in specialized trades education, which allowed them to start working on post-secondary apprenticeship qualifications right away. A July 29, 2009 article in the same publication reporting that the Ministry of Education would be reviewing the closure, speculated that, “Some supporters of the school claimed that a lack of respect for hands-on learning and the trades and lack of proper marketing contributed to the school’s demise.”

Toronto Star columnist Jim Coyle, in his June 24, 2009 column “Head to trade school, Mr. Premier, to see creative economy at work” wrote, “The trade school is closing this week, even when its small classes, hands-on learning and focus on marketable skills should have made it a winner.” Indeed it should have, since this is exactly the kind of program that has been highlighted by the Ministry of Education in its student success initiatives. In trying to account for the closure, Coyle recommends that the Premier and every MPP read Matthew B. Crawford’s recent book *Shop Class as Soulcraft: An Inquiry into the Value of Work*. It sounded intriguing and so I picked it up.

It really is a fascinating book, and one that I think every teacher and education worker ought to read. It speaks not only of trades as a worthy vocation, but also of





their place in a well-rounded education. We do our students a genuine disservice by steering them away from what could be a very rewarding career, or simply an enjoyable pastime.

In his introduction, Crawford writes, “While manufacturing jobs have certainly left our shores to a disturbing degree, the manual trades have not. If you need a deck built, or your car fixed, the Chinese are of no help. Because they are in China. And in fact there are chronic labor shortages in both construction and auto repair.” How true. Indeed, many jobs have gone offshore and not just those in the manufacturing sector. Even some of the “knowledge economy” jobs are now out-sourced to places like India. When you call a 1-800 number to get technical help for a computer problem, for example, you could very well be talking to someone on the other side of the world. Even the tutor on the other end of online or telephone tutoring services may be

in another country. However, jobs that require the worker to be on-site and/or face-to-face with the consumer or client are not going to go away, and these are the very jobs that are in demand today.

Interestingly, Crawford knows intimately whereof he speaks. He has a PhD in political philosophy from the University of Chicago, and has worked in the knowledge economy in several capacities—among them, as a writer of abstracts of academic journal articles, and as the executive director of a Washington think-tank. In both cases, he found the work soulless and mind-numbing instead of intellectually stimulating. In the former, while he had anticipated learning a lot about a wide variety of academic subjects, it turned out that he had a quota to fill, x-number of abstracts per day, and the only quality control was that of grammar internal to the abstract alone, not whether the abstract did justice to the original article. In the case of the

Author and PhD Matthew B. Crawford prefers motorcycle repair work to his former “think-tank” job

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latter, he writes, “I would quickly learn that it was not to my taste. It was more concerned with the forms of inquiry than with the substance; the trappings of scholarship were used to put a scientific cover on positions arrived at otherwise. These positions served various interests, ideological or material. For example, part of my job consisted of making arguments about global warming that just happened to coincide with the positions taken by the oil companies that funded the think-tank.” In other words, he says his job was to “com[e] up with the best arguments money could buy.”

Disillusioned, he quit the think-tank after five months and opened up a motorcycle repair shop. To put himself through university, Crawford had worked as an electrician off and on and he had always had a fascination with vehicle repair. He explains how much thinking actually goes on in his bike shop when he is confronted by a motorcycle which doesn’t work and he tries to figure out why. “You come up with an imagined train of causes for manifest symptoms and judge their likelihood before tearing anything down.” Ultimately, he says, “[m]ost surprisingly, I often find manual work more engaging intellectually. This book is an attempt to understand why this should be so.”

Through the book, Crawford makes numerous observations about how our society developed from one which valued craftsmanship to one which became increasingly automated, and how that changed both the nature of work and how it was regarded, and how that in turn influenced our education system. With the advent of factory work, Crawford explains, federal funding in the United States for manual training came in two forms: as part of general education and as a separate vocational program, where only the former “emphasized the learning of aesthetic, mathematical, and physical principles through the manipulation of material things.” The vocational programs were meant to produce factory workers who would work without questioning, and who could be paid less. No wonder people tried to steer their kids away from such programs. But the problem is that not all manual work is mind-

less—the skilled trades certainly aren’t.

Fortunately, in Ontario anyway, there is a revitalization of technological education programs. The introduction in the newly released revised Technology Education curriculum documents indicate that, “To succeed in today’s society, students need to be effective problem solvers and critical thinkers, able to understand, question, and respond to the implications of technological innovation. Students who pursue careers in technology will also need these high-level skills to develop solutions to technological challenges or to provide the services required in their chosen fields. ...For students who do not choose to pursue careers in technology, technological education can provide knowledge and skills that will enhance their daily lives, whether by enabling them to work on home renovations or car repairs or by allowing them to pursue technological hobbies.”

Crawford explores his topic thoroughly, both in the work world and the education system. “Corporations portray themselves as results-based and performance-driven. But where there isn’t anything material being produced, objective standards for job performance are hard to come by.” When this type of theory is applied to education, there are similar problems; as Crawford points out: “When the point of education becomes the production of credentials rather than the cultivation of knowledge, it forfeits the motive recognized by Aristotle: ‘All human beings by nature desire to know.’ Students become intellectually disengaged.”

So, while Ontario is doing something very right by enhancing the image of technology education, the trades and their practitioners, its reliance on the so-called results-based data of EQAO test scores and other artificial numbers is still on the wrong track. Students aren’t widgets; they are human beings. We need to give them a well-rounded education that does not separate thinking from doing, whatever the subject area, and that allows them to live rich and satisfying lives intellectually, socially and economically. I think Matthew B. Crawford, who traded the think-tank for his motorcycle repair shop, would agree. ☺

“When the point of education becomes the production of credentials rather than the cultivation of knowledge, it forfeits the motive recognized by Aristotle: ‘All human beings by nature desire to know.’ Students become intellectually disengaged”



The screaming avocado café

A funky program successfully promoting healthy eating

By Paul Finkelstein

Stratford Northwestern is similar to many secondary schools in that vending machines and the corporate catering company's sugar-laden and deep-fried fare greet the 1,200 students as they stream into their home away from home for the day.

Lack of genuine government interest in the health and well-being of Ontario's youth, and parents' and guardians' waning interest in their children's diets (as they look for ways to ease their own busy schedules) have all combined to create problems for all of society.

However, in one big way, Stratford Northwestern is very different. School and board administration support has

allowed for the development of a funky, alternative eatery that serves not only healthy fare but also answers the question of "what students would choose" if they were educated in food preparation. The student-run cafeteria, The Screaming Avocado Café, along with our culinary arts classes have given us the answer.

The Avocado is an extension of a thriving, innovative culinary arts program that has grown to include more than 200 students each year, a large kitchen classroom, 3,000 square feet of organic garden complete with organic greenhouse, culinary club with national and international experiences, outreach





Students enjoy healthy and tasty meals in the fun and funky atmosphere of The Screaming Avocado Café, a student-run cafeteria

programs to elementary students, grade 10 on-line culinary credits, support from world-renowned chefs and a new organic farm project which just saw the harvest of 12,000 pounds of red fife wheat and which, this spring, will become home to Mud to Mouth, an elementary school garden project.

Traditionally, children have been discouraged from playing with their food—at Northwestern, we encourage them to do just that; they have been told to eat what is put in front of them—we allow them to have personal tastes. They are given the opportunity to challenge their own likes and dislikes and push

the envelope, to make their decisions on personal enjoyment.

This allowance for play has changed food for kids in our school and our community by taking it from something deep-fried, tired and unhealthy that temporarily fills the dull ache, into something fresh and exciting that makes preparation and eating a joy, not just fuel for life. One way we accomplish this is to teach fundamental and advanced culinary skills and how to read and execute recipes.

We are not a chefs' school. Instead, we have a simple goal—to help youth connect to food and develop the ability to prepare healthy meals from scratch. We

teach students to look in their fridges, pull out raw ingredients and prepare a meal; as opposed to grabbing a frozen, prefab, high-fat, low-health package from geometrically stacked boxes in their fridges and freezers.

I believe we have accomplished this, and more. On the way, we've learned a great deal ourselves, about students, the new family unit and much more that we could never have foreseen.

We knew that getting teenagers interested in fresh, homemade food was a lofty goal. After all, this generation's parents depend on fast food and fast food chains—they are the lost



generation of foodies. Many students are taught to optimize the space in the freezer to fit in more of the boxed, prefab products their parents purchase from the frozen food section. This would be an excellent skill-set for a career in building igloos or ice hotels, but not one that will result in a healthy Canadian population.

Today's youth is learning that food is something to throw in the oven and eat in minutes, with no regard for taste, fresh ingredients or nutrition, and that ease and minimal time constraint is key. They have no role models in the kitchen,

pare them for their families—to prepare healthy meals and enlighten their parents, grandparents and, in the future, their children about fresh, yummy food.

Once the enrolment in our culinary arts classes had grown to a level that allowed us to create more dedicated culinary space, The Screaming Avocado Café was the next step in the progression and provided an avenue to recoup some of the costs associated with running a full, hands-on program. With the food service contract up for renewal, we were able to negotiate a free market economy on the sale of food within the school.

down the hall at the cafeteria. Our ever-changing blackboard menu offers daily gourmet specials which range from the more commonplace pasta, sandwiches and pizzas to the more risky rabbit braised in white wine with olives, confit of duck, Moroccan lamb couscous, sushi, crispy frog legs and calamari—to name just a few.

If food is the soul of The Screaming Avocado, then atmosphere is its body—a funky, inviting environment where stale industrial gray walls are painted in red pepper, sweet pea and burnt caramel colours, where loud music is played, fur-

Along with the
ability to grow, cook
and appreciate food,
our students learn
that food is power
and an integral part
of a community



Students experience food from “seed-to-table” and enjoy every bite at lunch

have never tugged on apron strings and have never sat on a kitchen counter to roll out dough. They have never experienced the sense of satisfaction resulting from the preparation of a recipe with mom or dad, nana or poppa and then enjoying the fruits of their labour. Instead, their experience is lining up at big box stores waiting to try the new time saving item that can be prepared in five minutes.

Our challenge is to break this cycle. We see our students as the mega weapon in the battle. They are the cross generational tool of change. Their assignments are to take the recipes home and to pre-

The Screamer, as our clientele has affectionately named it, offers only healthy fare to the entire student and staff population. We link all of our specials to soups or salads and milk, juice or water, and our fruit and fruit salads are sold at cost. We don't sell pop, junk food, chips or pre-packaged products. We bake our own breads, grind our own beef and, when time permits, roll our pasta dough for a tender and delicious lasagna. We feed an average of 250 patrons every lunch hour and are putting serious pressure on the traditional french fries, burgers, chips and pop being offered

nishings are retro seats and second-hand lamps; a place where teachers and students feel at ease sitting together. This atmosphere allows for the slow enjoyment of a meal, to sit down with friends to debrief and chat and to slow down, relax and enjoy yummy, healthy food whether from the café or from home. The Screaming Avocado is teaching our students to enjoy food preparation and to take time to enjoy food and the positive interactions fostered as people eat together.

Fifty yards down the hall, in a courtyard enclosed by windows, our Seeds of

Change organic garden flourishes. Five silver maples were sacrificed in a shroud of secrecy late one evening to make it happen, along with community support, many student hours and help from a local organic farmer. The once unused space is now home to a vibrant garden classroom with 19 different heirloom vegetables. Students are afforded the seed-to-table experience too many of us lack. They plant, tend, weed and harvest.

Students wander from class, basket and knife in hand, gather ingredients for a Screaming special, return with their bounty and mud-covered hands ready to

and do taste workshops and demonstrate healthy snack alternatives to a keen audience eager to cook.

Along with the ability to grow, cook and appreciate food, our students learn that food is power and an integral part of a community. They explore the politics of bottled water and the evil effects pop companies have on the body and in communities globally. They hold fundraisers for local and global causes, donate to community events, volunteer at community kitchens (and at the New York City Food Bank for a day while on a culinary school trip) and provide meals to families in the community who have suffered losses. Students experience the power of food and learn about the haves and have-nots. Within our own school community, The Screaming Avocado Café has a lunch program that feeds students in need. A new program this year has The Screaming Avocado teaming up with local high schools, restaurants and community members to offer community meals on Monday nights for families in need.

This program and The Screaming Avocado would not survive were not for the dedication of the student volunteers. Whether it's to ensure the satisfaction of 250 lunch enthusiasts each day, the smooth running of the bi-weekly dinners, the success of evening catering gigs and weekend weddings, or the coffee that is always available for the Canadian Cancer Society overnight Relay for Life—it is all due to the enthusiastic presence of students.

We have instilled in the students a sense of ownership of the program. We facilitate, guide and foster their experience with experimentation, humour and at times, much needed sarcasm but in the end this is their space and their program.

With maturity, dedication and ownership comes the confidence to open up the world. Through the Culinary Club, an offshoot of the program, our gang has ventured to New York City and has

participated in Slow Food exchanges to British Columbia, Japan, Italy and Deline, NWT. On these trips they eagerly challenged their taste buds and represented Canadian youth with dignity.

Our school administration and board administrators are very progressive, believe in what we do and have confidence in their students. They support these journeys and all innovative programs that foster student learning. We have an incredible teaching team that is supportive and eager to help. The construction of the garden, ongoing care and maintenance of The Screaming Avocado is the students' responsibility, under the watchful eye of their teachers. Of course their hard work is rewarded with food.

All this being said, The Screaming Avocado still has to compete against the vending machines and the corporate catering companies' sugar-laden and deep-fried fare that tempts students daily. While we, and other similar food programs across the province educate our students on healthy food choices, we need help. Provincial governments and school boards need to take responsibility to ensure the health and well-being of all students in their care. By not only allowing, but in fact encouraging, the purchase of nutritionally poor snacks and beverages for their financial gain, the system to which we entrust our children for half their waking hours is falling short in its role as guardian. The provincial government needs to uphold its responsibility to students, parents and schools. By committing more funding to school boards, the need to flog junk food will diminish and the arguments against the banning of the machines and the fryers will become silent. ☺

Paul Finkelstein is a certified chef who teaches culinary arts in District 8, Avon Maitland. His program and The Screaming Avocado Café were featured in the 13-episode series "Fink" which aired on the Food Network in 2007.



Harvesting ingredients from the garden

prepare the dish. There is true satisfaction in watching the circle become complete.

Students become teachers with elementary students during hands-on tours of the Seeds of Change garden. Wandering through the space picking samples, learning about the different vegetables and organic farming, many get their first real connection to where food comes from. Their overflowing baskets of goodies are then brought into the Avocado and sampled to experience the freshness and flavour.

During the winter months our students travel to local elementary schools



Roots of empathy

An elegantly simple idea for world peace

By Kelly Graydon

The teacher looks up from where she is lying on the floor. She has difficulty focusing on the blurred faces surrounding her. She listens for a familiar voice or sound. From somewhere above her, she hears a loud cough. Tears form in her eyes, and as she begins to cry gentle hands pick her up. She recognizes the face that she can now see, the calming familiar scent, and the voice that quietly soothes her. Instantly, the teacher relaxes and within minutes, drifts off into a peaceful sleep.

The teacher, Claire, a 2-month-old girl, is the central teaching component in this classroom of kindergarten students participating in the Roots of Empathy (ROE) program.

Roots of Empathy is a classroom-based program whose mission is to build caring, peaceful and civil societies through the development of empathy in children and adults. It was introduced in two Toronto schools in 1996. ROE was designed for classes from kindergarten to grade 8. Evidence of the program's success lies in the reduction of violence and aggression among school children and the increase of social and emotional acceptance. (Research and effectiveness data are available at www.rootsofempathy.org.) Since 1996, more than 107,000 Ontario students have participated in the program, and it is now taught in nine provinces in Canada and in the US, New Zealand and in the UK on the Isle of Man.

Program founder Mary Gordon's journey toward the creation of Roots of Empathy started with her role as a mother and a kindergarten teacher and continued to develop in the parenting and literacy centres she later formed.

Gordon has written a Canadian best-seller /CONTINUED ON PAGE 28

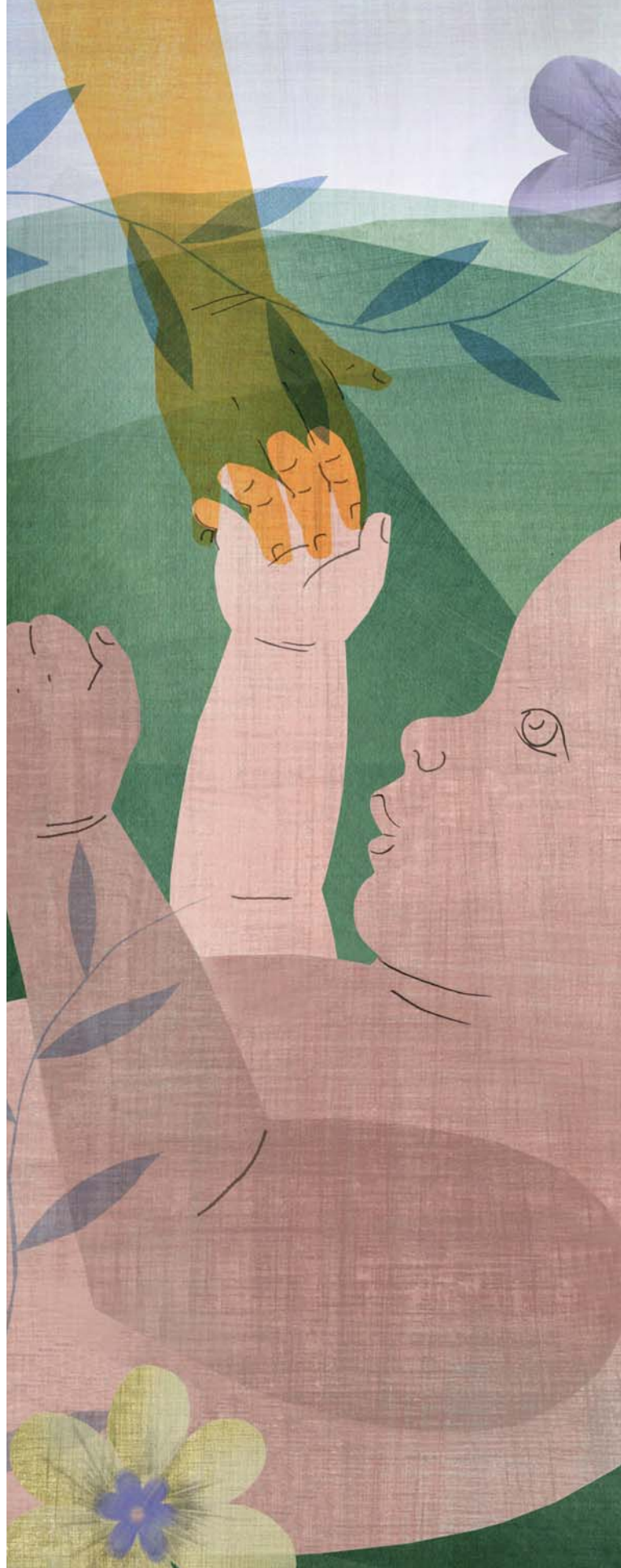


ILLUSTRATION: SANDRA DIONISI





Racines de l'empathie

Une idée simple et élégante pour la paix dans le monde

Par Kelly Graydon

L'enseignante, allongée sur le sol, lève les yeux, mais a du mal à se concentrer sur les visages flous qui l'entourent. Elle essaie de reconnaître une voix ou un son qui lui soient familiers et, quelque part au-dessus d'elle, une toux bruyante se fait entendre. Des larmes se forment dans ses yeux et elle se met à pleurer. Des bras la saisissent tendrement. Elle reconnaît le visage qu'elle peut maintenant distinguer, l'odeur familière, calmante, la voix douce et rassurante. Immédiatement, elle se détend et en quelques minutes s'endort paisiblement.

L'enseignante, c'est Claire, un bébé de 2 mois, l'élément central d'enseignement dans cette classe de jardin d'enfants, où les élèves participent au programme « Racines de l'empathie » (RDE).

« Racines de l'empathie » (en anglais *Roots of Empathy*) est un programme enseigné en classe. Sa mission est la création de sociétés plus humaines, pacifiques et empreintes de civilité par le développement de l'empathie chez les enfants et chez les adultes. Le programme a été adopté dans deux écoles de Toronto en 1996. Il est conçu pour les enfants d'âge scolaire, du jardin d'enfants à la huitième année. Son efficacité est démontrée par la réduction de la violence et de l'agression chez ces enfants et par une plus grande acceptation sociale et émotionnelle. Depuis 1996, plus de 107 000 élèves ontariens ont participé à ce programme, qui est maintenant enseigné dans neuf provinces du Canada et dans d'autres pays.

Le programme « Racines de l'empathie » a été fondé par une mère et enseignante de jardin d'enfants, Mary Gordon. Il s'est développé plus tard en centres d'éducation parentale et d'alphabétisation.

Mary Gordon est l'auteure de *Roots of Empathy*. /SUITE À LA PAGE 29

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 26/based on the program: *Roots of Empathy: Changing the World Child by Child* and she and her program have garnered worldwide support and accolades; most notably from the Dali Lama, who envisions Roots of Empathy as a path to world peace.

Soft-spoken Gordon speaks earnestly and without hesitation about her vision for society and the role that children will have in their own future. Recognizing that empathy for others lies at the core of humanity, she has created a solid program on the simple thought that if we understand someone else's point of view, and respect their feelings, aggressive behaviour is less likely to occur.

In addition to being recognized as an anti-bullying program, Roots of Empathy encompasses character building, human development, parenting, crime prevention, substance abuse prevention, infant injury prevention, child abuse prevention and anti-racism.

A green blanket is the recognized symbol of the program. It provides a natural boundary and observation area of Claire for the children seated around it. The blanket bears the logo of Roots of Empathy which is a strong, growing tree, with well-established roots. The roots reflect the program's focus on the importance of good parenting. Empathy, identifying with another's feelings or experience, allows greater acceptance and nurturing, counteracts experiences of violence, and is key to healthy parenting.

Claire and thousands of other Roots of Empathy babies, and their parents, are at the heart of the program. The nine themes covered over the school year include Crying, Caring and Planning, Emotions, Safety and Communicating. Each theme involves three visits, with the baby's family joining the classroom for the second visit. Certified instructors use a specialized curriculum that encourages students to observe the baby's behaviour and development, celebrate milestones and understand the baby's needs and temperament. Math, science, art, music, writing and language are incorporated into the ROE program to support grade level academic curriculum. Students learn that every experience can affect a baby, and that sensory stimulation is important to brain development. During the family visit the children ask questions and witness the necessary interaction between the baby and the parents. The children can often be seen snapping their fingers to simulate synaptic connections being made in the baby's brain.

Essential to the program is the establishment of a risk-free learning environment, where respect is promoted, all participation is validated, every child is included and a nurturing community is created. Children who have witnessed or experienced violence and aggression are provided a safe and supportive environment in which to express themselves.

The success of Roots of Empathy relies on teamwork. An enthusiastic classroom teacher maximizes the impact of the program by reinforcing the messages and content of ROE during and between each visit. Bulletin boards in the classroom or school hallway display ROE students' artwork and writing. Photos from the family visits and charts of the baby's milestones illustrating the social and emotional learning that is tak-

ing place are shared within the school community.

While Claire sleeps, the ROE Instructor prompts the children to speculate on what might have caused her to become upset and cry. As the children try to see the world from Claire's perspective, so begins the cognitive aspect of empathy. As the baby expresses emotions and her cues are interpreted, children learn the names of different feelings and are taught that all feelings are valid. Emotional literacy is reinforced when the perspective is then shifted back to the students, who are asked to share moments when they may have felt a similar emotion. Discussion ensues around how to cope with feelings and how we can help others in need.

This experiential and interactive approach to learning has been proven effective in engaging children who are withdrawn or indifferent. Engagement allows opportunity for understanding, and understanding provides the platform for change. ROE students who have been bullied, or who have bullied, discuss their feelings and problem solve with their peers without judgment or ridicule.


When a student was asked what empathy means, he said, "trying to feel what it's like being in the other person's shoes"



There are no wrong answers in an ROE classroom. To promote participation from every student, the instructor and teacher thank the students for their contributions rather than offer praise. Democracy is created through activities designed to incorporate consensus building and collaboration, and students are often seen offering support to one another, whether in small group settings, in the larger classroom setting or independently.

The lessons learned and discussions that take place in a Roots of Empathy program are proven to have a lasting effect. A high school student, a graduate from the program in his elementary school, speaks fondly of his ROE baby and the importance of accepting one another for who we are. When asked what empathy means, he says, "trying to feel what it's like being in the other person's shoes."

A simple thought...that could change the world.

For more information about Roots of Empathy, visit www.rootsofempathy.org. 

Kelly Graydon is a Child and Youth Worker at Timiskaming District Secondary School, District 1, Ontario North East, and a Certified Roots of Empathy Instructor.



SUITE DE LA PAGE 27/ *Changing the World Child by Child* (Les racines de l'empathie : Changer le monde, un enfant à la fois), ouvrage basé sur le programme et remarquable succès de librairie au Canada. L'auteure et son programme ont fait l'objet de multiples déclarations de soutien et d'approbation dans le monde entier. Il convient de citer en particulier le soutien exprimé par le Dalaï-lama, qui considère « Racines de l'empathie » comme une voie vers la paix mondiale.

De sa voix douce, Mary Gordon parle sans hésitation et avec passion de sa vision de société et du rôle que les enfants joueront dans leur propre avenir. Reconnaissant que l'empathie pour autrui est au cœur même de la nature humaine, elle a créé un programme robuste, basé sur la notion simple que notre comportement sera moins agressif si nous comprenons le point de vue de l'autre et si nous respectons ses sentiments.

Reconnu comme programme de lutte contre l'intimidation, « Racines de l'empathie » englobe aussi la formation du caractère, le développement humain, l'éducation des parents, la prévention du crime, l'abus de substances, le traumatisme des nourrissons et le mauvais traitement des enfants et la lutte contre le racisme.

Une couverture verte, symbole reconnu du programme, délimite naturellement le domaine de Claire et définit la zone d'observation pour les enfants assis tout autour. La couverture porte l'emblème de « Racines de l'empathie »; un arbre vigoureux aux racines bien établies. Les racines illustrent l'accent que le programme met sur les bons rapports parents-enfants. L'empathie, qui est l'aptitude à s'identifier aux sentiments ou à l'expérience d'autrui, permet de mieux accepter et soutenir les autres. Elle fait contrepoids à l'expérience de la violence et elle est indispensable aux relations saines entre parents et enfants.

Claire, les milliers d'autres bébés « Racines de l'empathie » et leurs parents sont au cœur même du programme. Neuf thèmes sont abordés au cours d'une année scolaire, en particulier Pleurs, Soins et Planification, Émotions, Sécurité et Communication. Chaque thème repose sur trois visites du bébé et de sa famille, la famille se joignant à la classe à la deuxième visite. En suivant un plan de cours spécialisé, l'institutrice agréée incite les enfants à observer le comportement du bébé et son développement, à célébrer ses progrès et à comprendre ses besoins et son tempérament. Les mathématiques, les sciences, la musique, l'écriture et le langage sont intégrés au programme RDE, en relation avec le programme d'études officiel pour l'année. Les élèves apprennent ainsi que chaque situation peut affecter le bébé et que la stimulation sensorielle est importante pour son développement cérébral. Lors de la visite de la famille, les enfants ont la possibilité de poser des questions et d'assister à l'interaction nécessaire entre bébé et parents. Souvent, les enfants font claquer leurs doigts pour simuler l'établissement de connexions synaptiques dans le cerveau du bébé.

Un élément essentiel du programme est l'établissement d'un environnement d'apprentissage sans risque, qui favorise le respect, où la participation est reconnue et qui englobe chaque enfant, créant une communauté de soutien mutuel. Les enfants qui ont assisté à des actes de violence et d'agression ou qui en ont fait l'expérience bénéficient d'un environnement

sécuritaire et favorable, où ils peuvent s'exprimer.

La réussite du programme « Racines de l'empathie » dépend d'un travail d'équipe. L'enseignante enthousiaste aide à maximiser les effets du programme RDE en renforçant les messages et le contenu durant les visites de la famille et entre chaque visite. Des panneaux d'affichage, placés dans la classe et dans le couloir de l'école, présentent les dessins et les écrits des élèves qui participent au programme, des photos des visites de la famille et des graphiques indiquant les principales étapes du développement du bébé, pour illustrer l'apprentissage social et affectif en progression et le faire connaître à toute l'école.

Pendant que Claire dort, l'institutrice RDE invite les enfants à s'interroger sur ce qui a pu la contrarier et causer ses pleurs. Pendant que les enfants tentent de voir le monde par les yeux de Claire, ils commencent l'apprentissage de l'aspect cognitif de l'empathie. En apprenant à interpréter les émotions et les signaux du bébé, les enfants découvrent le nom des différents sentiments et le fait que tous les sentiments sont valides. Leur capacité à interpréter les émotions est renforcée par un retour à leur propre perspective et par la mise en commun de moments où ils ont eux-mêmes éprouvé des émotions similaires. Une discussion s'amorce sur la manière de faire face aux sentiments et d'aider ceux qui ont des besoins affectifs.

Cette approche expérientielle et interactive de l'apprentissage s'est montrée efficace en amenant à s'impliquer des enfants qui, autrement, se seraient repliés sur eux-mêmes ou seraient restés indifférents. La participation leur donne l'occasion de comprendre et c'est la compréhension qui est à la base de tout changement. Les élèves du programme RDE qui ont fait l'objet ou qui ont été à l'origine d'intimidation sont capables de discuter de leurs sentiments pour résoudre leurs problèmes avec leurs pairs, sans être jugés ni ridiculisés. Dans une classe RDE, il n'y a pas de mauvaise réponse. Pour promouvoir la participation de chaque élève, l'institutrice et l'enseignante remercient les élèves de leur contribution, au lieu de les féliciter. La démocratie est créée par le biais d'activités conçues pour intégrer la concertation et la collaboration et on peut voir des élèves s'entraider et travailler ensemble, en petits groupes, avec toute la classe ou indépendamment.

Les leçons apprises et les échanges qui ont eu lieu durant un programme « Racines de l'empathie » ont un effet durable. Un élève du secondaire, qui a participé au programme à l'élémentaire, parle encore affectueusement de « son » bébé RDE et de l'importance qu'il y a « de nous accepter les uns les autres pour ce que nous sommes. » Lorsqu'on lui a demandé ce que le mot empathie évoquait pour lui, il a déclaré : « C'est essayer de se mettre à la place de l'autre. »

Une pensée simple...qui pourrait changer le monde.

On peut trouver d'autres renseignements sur le programme « *Roots of Empathy*/Racines de l'empathie » au site Web: www.rootsofempathy.org. ☺

Kelly Graydon est technicienne en éducation spécialisée à l'école secondaire Timiskaming District, du District 1, Ontario North East; elle est institutrice agréée « *Roots of Empathy*/Racines de l'empathie ».



Media tek

A unique and intensive media program for students

By Dave McCreary

Twelve years ago, my wife Danielle Curtis and I created the Media Technology program, which we call Media Tek, at Pauline Johnson Collegiate in Brantford. Danielle and I met at the newspaper offices of the University of Western Ontario back in the early 1990s. Danielle was the entertainment editor and I was the graphics editor at the *Gazette*. We've been together ever since, learning, teaching and coaching for the last 18 years.

We had the pleasure of working with many great writers and reporters while at the *Gazette*. Scott Feschuk, a columnist for *Macleans*, was our editor-in-chief. His brother Dave, sports columnist for the *Toronto Star*, was our sports editor. Elliotte Friedman, sports broadcaster for the CBC, served as editor-in-chief in later years. Another friend and co-worker back then was Mike Drolet who is now a national and international reporter for Global News.

"We are always intrigued with the careers of our now 'famous friends' in the

media. But the funny thing is that when we get together with them they have a thousand questions for us about teaching. Who knew that teachers' lives were so interesting?" says Danielle.

The atmosphere at the paper was professional, yet fun, with many late nights and frantic deadlines. Danielle and I often found ourselves torn between potential careers in journalism or education. When we decided to go to teachers' college we never imagined that we would get the opportunity to teach a program that would tap into our media roots.

In the winter of 1997, I was hired as an English teacher at Pauline Johnson Collegiate. The principal and the English department head (Jane Enticknap and Gerry Watts, respectively) had other plans for me, though, because that September I found myself laying the groundwork for the course that would shape my entire teaching career.

Jane and Gerry's concept was to offer an

ILLUSTRATION: JOHN WEBSTER/121 ART.COM



Students

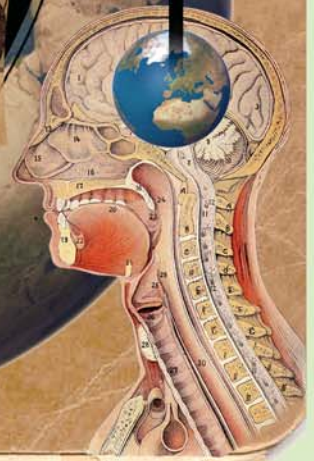
The Duryea Wildcats closed their 1950 season with a total wins out of 9 games played.

There was a touchdown that didn't count!!

The following week, our score was 28-0. The tator and Wildcat's down.

The bler the Class of 1950 to all and to Coach Kelly. and since

Class of 1950 to all and to Coach Kelly. and since



intensive journalism class that would produce the school's newspaper and graphic design products for the school. It became a year-long course that ran for two periods a day—a big commitment for the students who enrolled, and as it turned out, a big commitment for me. We needed someone else on board, so in the second year of the program, Danielle was hired.

The Media Tek course now encompasses news and feature writing, photography, graphic design and layout, and an increasing amount of video journalism. The technology keeps getting better and easier to use, not to mention more affordable. When we started out, we used VCRs, switchers, cassette players and

classes were producing. We took on the yearbook and the year-end sports video; we took on a major role in the school's Christmas assembly and we took over the "PJ Gladiators" event. In recent years, we've designed logos, t-shirts, newsletters and posters for the school and various community groups. We have worked with the John Noble Home, Habitat for Humanity, the Brant Opera Guild, environmental groups and several local elementary schools. Kristin Wilson, now a graphic/web/game designer, says, "Media Tek doesn't just have students working in the classroom; it gets them involved in the school and community. I felt so accomplished to know that my

students advertise and promote it; they run tryouts, recruit teachers, make signs, posters and tickets, sell food and design the actual events (e.g. jousting with giant Q-tips, running an obstacle course while being pelted with tennis balls). It's a big, stressful production that leaves them physically and mentally exhausted, but in the end they feel rewarded when they see how much fun the staff and students had and how much the school appreciates their efforts.

Many Media Tekkers find success in the school yearbook. They take all of the photographs, write captions, lay out the pages, and also sell the advertising space that keeps the book's budget in the black

...students get to try every area of media production before they choose a focus for post-secondary. We also try to teach the transferable skills that will benefit the students who don't pursue media as a career



Commodore 64 monitors to edit our videos. The process was time consuming and gruelling. Now, with a handful of basic computers and cameras, students produce award-winning videos and documentaries. Lan Tran, now a sound editor for IMAX films says, "The Media Technology courses at PJ gave me the perfect opportunity to explore interests that weren't previously a part of the average high school curriculum. These courses gave me a foundation of knowledge that I was able to apply later in life, in school as well as work. Programs like this help students keep up with emerging technology, stay socially savvy and learn responsible media manipulation."

At the outset we struggled to fill the class as nobody knew what it was about. After a couple of years, students started to notice the work that the Media Tek

work would have a memorable impact on those outside the course."

The program gives students the chance to explore a whole range of different media experiences. One of the first things they do is conduct interviews for the school newspaper and the news section on the school website. At first it can be a challenge for shy students but many of them later tell us how much it helped to boost their confidence in other areas of their lives.

Media 'Tekkers' also spend a lot of time working in groups to produce projects for the rest of the school and the community. They learn to communicate and compromise in order to get the job done. "PJ Gladiators" is a multi-day event in which the students of Pauline Johnson go head-to-head against their teachers, much like on the original "American Gladiators" television show. Media Tek

each year. Students are sometimes surprised by how much they enjoy doing sales. It's a tough job, but a realistic one, where they experience rejection, but also success—if they are willing to make their call-backs and follow-ups. After the sales period they then design the client's ads, then fax or email them back for corrections or approval. It's a long process that tests their patience and focus.

The class has been producing more and more videos over the years. Darryl Stawychny, now a feature film editor, says, "Media Tek was the first program to point me in the direction of my career. During that time in my life I was lost—I always knew I wanted to work in film, but I never thought it was feasible, living in Brantford. Taking these courses at a young age gave me a huge advantage in college courses when working on feature films."



Current Media Tekkers shoot and edit “streeters” and news stories that are broadcast in the cafeteria and on the school website. They also produce the year-end sports video that has become a must-see for all the school’s athletes, coaches, parents and fans. The biggest video project of the year, however, is the documentary. In small production groups, they are given three months to research, interview, film and edit a non-fiction video. Over the years, subjects have included a Brantford rep hockey team, the ‘Ford Plant’ (a local music venue), the city’s new skateboard park, the plight of Brantford’s struggling downtown, an inside look at the Cal-edonia protests at their outset and even



Dave McCreary (far left) and Danielle Curtis (far right) and a class of Media Tekkers meet Rick Mercer while on set at CBC studios

one of our school’s custodial characters. They learn that interesting stories and compelling characters are everywhere, if they are willing to look for them.

The Media Tek course demands a lot of time and hard work, but we also try to have fun while we learn. We have taken the class on many trips, mainly to destinations in Toronto—live tapings of “The Royal Canadian Air Farce,” “The Ron James Show” and “The Mercer Report” (the class met Rick Mercer and the cast of the “Air Farce”) and tours of the CBC studios and Citytv. Students have participated in documentary workshops at The National Film Board and the students were in the audience for live Much-

Music shows. We tour universities and colleges that offer media based programs, like York University, Ryerson University and Sheridan College. And, we visit our local schools—Mohawk College and the Brantford campus of Wilfrid Laurier University. A couple of years ago, we travelled to Ottawa where Brantford’s MP gave us a tour of parliament.

Not surprisingly, many of our graduates go on to attend York, Ryerson and Sheridan to study film, television and radio broadcasting, sound editing, graphic design, illustration, photography and marketing. It’s validating to hear how easy their first semester in post-secondary is because of the foundation they got in Media Tek. “Taking the Media Tek program at PJ gave me the skills I needed to begin a career in journalism. It was the most important program I took in high school. Without it I would never have found my passion and got off to such a fast start in university and a career in print journalism,” says Paige Desmond, a print and Internet journalist.

We provide a broad-based approach in that students try every area of media production before they choose a focus for post-secondary. We teach transferable skills that will benefit the students who don’t pursue media as a career. Students who have gone into other fields, like education, business, social work and medicine often tell us that they have benefitted from the intensive language study, computer skills and practical, problem-solving abilities gained with us, which they now use constantly. Media Tek alumnus Robin Sharp says, “Danielle and Dave constantly allowed students like me to be as creative as possible while still learning and developing essential technical skills. The basic skills that I acquired during my time in Media Tek built the foundation for my success as a food, lifestyle and travel photographer in Toronto.”

The program is always evolving—it definitely keeps us on our toes. After just a few years as strictly a Pauline Johnson program, we got the go-ahead from the school board to make it into a magnet

course. This allowed us to draw students from the other Brantford public high schools who were looking for just such a specialized field of study. And, two years ago, we were granted a Specialist High Skills Major by the Ministry of Education. Now students can bundle the Media Tek program with additional credits in photography, graphic design, video production and marketing to receive a special “red seal” diploma and recognition from media programs at colleges and universities.

Another component of the program, co-op placement, can be a huge benefit for a student who is passionate about the media. Our Specialist High Skills Major students study at the Brantford *Expositor*, the local Rogers Cable studio, the local radio station (CKPC), and numerous graphic design and printing companies in town. They are placed with sign companies, marketing firms and sound studios. We are eternally grateful to these local businesses for the opportunities they give our students.

In 2007 we held a Media Tek reunion to celebrate the program’s tenth anniversary. More than 100 Media Tek grads returned to see their old classmates and visit the school. It was amazing to see them all again and catch up on their lives. The funny part was that some of them were no longer kids—they were the same age as we were when we taught them! Another interesting thing was that Media Tek alumni, now working for the Brantford *Expositor* and Rogers Cable, covered the event for the press. After all the challenges, hard work and good times, everything seemed to come full circle for us on that day.

“Media Tek is a huge part of our lives. We love the curriculum, the kids and the technology. We give and give to it, but it continually gives back. I can’t imagine a more rewarding course to teach,” says Danielle. ☺

Dave McCreary and his wife Danielle Curtis teach at Pauline Johnson Collegiate & Vocational School in Brantford, and are members of District 23, Grand Erie.



A Canadian experience in Europe

Rebecca Grimes is an OSSTF/FEESO member who teaches Core and Immersion French at Centre Wellington District High School, in Fergus.

She and 20 other French-speaking teachers from across Canada travelled to the Canadian Battlefields of the First and Second World Wars in Belgium and Northern France with the Historica Foundation of Canada, in the summer of 2008. Rebecca's tour was the first to be offered in French.

The Historica Foundation, with the support of Veterans Affairs Canada, offers this tour to history teachers to help enrich their understanding of the Canadian involvement in the two world wars and, through them, to enrich the understanding of Canadian students. For more information, visit the website at www.historica.ca.





(Clockwise from above) The St. Julien memorial, also known as the Brooding Soldier, sits in a quiet corner near the main road surrounded by the battlefields of the Second Battle of Ypres. A tombstone for five unknown Canadian soldiers of the Great War found in the Tyne Cot Cemetery near Ypres. A German Bunker at Pointe Du Hoc showing the German point of view on D-Day. An Allied memorial at Juno Beach with the French and Canadian flags flying in the background. The Maison de Queen's Own Rifles was one of the first homes (if not the first) liberated by the Canadians during the invasion of Normandy on D-Day, June 6, 1944.



Resurrection of the Dead Sea Scrolls

Piecing together a link to our past

If you are looking for a fascinating and intriguing experience, then a visit to the Royal Ontario Museum (ROM) is always a good choice. From now until the new year, there is an even better reason to visit. Their display of the Dead Sea Scrolls is an opportunity to see one of the greatest archaeological finds of the 20th century—the earliest record of biblical patriarchs and prophets known to Judaism, Christianity and Islam.

The scrolls sat for 2,000 years in caves overlooking the salt-laden waters of the Dead Sea in the Judean Desert near the site of Khirbet. Until their discovery 60 years ago, the Scrolls remained untouched by light and most elements. Now the public has a chance to see the many rarely- and never-before-





Clockwise from far left:
Qumran Pottery;
Aerial photo of Qumran
(Khirbet Qumran), the
archaeological site closest
to the caves where the
scrolls were discovered;
Psalms, 11Q5, Scroll type:
Biblical text, 1st century
CE (1-50 CE), Language:
Hebrew



seen Scrolls, as well as extraordinary 2,000-year-old artifacts of the period in an original ROM exhibition.

The Dead Sea Scrolls are a collection of ancient writings containing apocryphal manuscripts, prayers, biblical commentary, hymns, and religious laws, and include the earliest written sources for the Hebrew Bible (Christian Old Testament), as well as other less well-known writings. They link us directly to the formative years of Judaism and Christianity. In turn, the Jewish and Christian scriptural traditions are recognized in Islam. Those familiar with the Jewish or Christian Bible will recognize figures in the Qur'an such as Abraham, Moses and Noah. The Scrolls are important to Judaism, Christianity and Islam because they contain the earliest accounts of biblical patriarchs and prophets who are known to all three of the Abrahamic faiths.

Dating from around 250 Before Common Era (BCE) to 68 Common



Era (CE), the Scrolls include some 207 biblical manuscripts representing nearly all of the books in the Hebrew Bible. Ap-

proximately 900 Scrolls were discovered, some almost entirely preserved and others in fragments. Together, they comprise one of the most important collections of writings ever discovered. Prior to the discovery of the Scrolls, the oldest known copies of biblical texts were written 1,000 years later.

The ROM's Dead Sea Scrolls Project builds bridges between the past and present unlike ever before. The Museum chose to use the term "project" rather than "exhibition" to emphasize the scope of programming and partnerships that accompany the exhibition experience. The presence of the Dead Sea Scrolls in Ontario creates the opportunity for an extended public conversation about shared roots and diverging paths. It invites us to explore how much our cultures and religions have in common, and what marks us as distinctive.

ROM staff is travelling throughout Ontario presenting a summary of the Dead Sea Scrolls Project to schools, cultural centres and religious organizations. School groups who visit the ROM are lead back in time to ancient Judea by ROM staff. Their Dead Sea Scrolls Project 60 minute lesson for grades 9–12 includes direct links to curriculum for World History, World Religions, Literacy, Science and Social Sciences developed in cooperation with the Ministry of Education. Cost is \$12 per person, taxes included. To book a school visit, or for more information, call 416-586-5801 or email: schoolv@rom.on.ca.

To highlight the importance of the Scrolls, the ROM is hosting a series of courses, workshops, lectures, symposia and debates. For example, Family Days offer hands-on activities inspired by the Scrolls such as decoding ancient text, digging for buried artifacts and exploring life in the time of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

This installation is the second of two three-month rotations, and runs to January 3, 2010. For more details and visiting hours, go to www.rom.on.ca/scrolls/index.php or call 416-586-8000. ☺





Clockwise from opposite top left: View of the Dead Sea; Gospel Book from the Byzantine Empire, late 11th or early 12th century; an assortment of glass flasks and beakers from the 1st-3rd centuries CE

Keeping you in the loop

Reviews, conferences, PD opportunities, and other items of interest

BOOK REVIEW

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities

by Arch Haslett

Published by General Store

Publishing House, 2009

272 pages, \$24.95

Reviewed by Louise Derry

Arch Haslett's book exposes his personal journey of physical loss and his subsequent struggle to recover emotional and moral fortitude. A former Toronto area high school teacher who became disabled in 1988 at the age of 49, Haslett laments the loss of the career by which he defined himself. However, rather than withdrawing to isolation and self-pity, Haslett displays a quality of intuitive communication which allows him to find meaning in his milieu.

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities is Haslett's narrative of survival through chronic illness and his discovery of spirituality and its many levels. Although his approach to finding inner peace is disparate at times, Haslett advocates that the disabled discover a purpose for living. He works his way through various levels of philosophy, starting with a belief in the power of inanimate objects and finally arrives at a mature metaphysical truth. As his disability progresses, sympathy builds as to his plight and his search for a meaning to life.

Each chapter reflects different stages of Haslett's life, which, for those with a long-term illness, might prove of great

help as a reference tool. His style is simple and sensitive, which involves the reader in his struggle to be "normal." Haslett's travels around the world appear somewhat narcissistic, regardless of the hardships he encounters. A definite positive quality found throughout his book is Haslett's immense respect for the women who share his life, however briefly. The reader discovers a personality that reaches new depths as the narrative develops, and as Haslett gains inner strength through pain.

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities illustrates how a disabling condition can help an individual develop moral character.

Louise Derry, Membership Services Officer in the District 25, Ottawa-Carleton office, deals with LTD and WSIB issues for the teachers' bargaining unit in that district.

CRITIQUE DE LIVRE

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities par Arch Haslett

Publié par General Store

Publishing House, 2009

272 pages, 24,95 \$

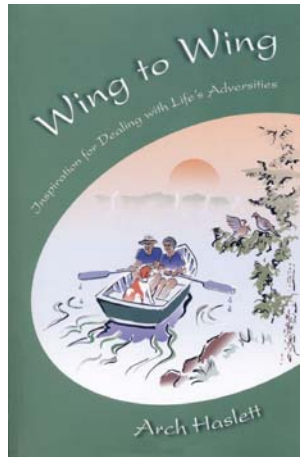
Critique par Louise Derry

Dans son livre, Arch Haslett décrit son parcours personnel et sa lutte pour se re-

mettre, tant sur le plan moral qu'émotif, suite à son handicap. Ancien enseignant au niveau secondaire de la région de Toronto devenu handicapé en 1998 à l'âge de 49 ans, Arch Haslett pleure la perte de sa carrière par laquelle il se définissait. Son handicap lui sert de béquilles sur lesquelles il s'appuie. Plutôt que de se retirer dans l'isolement et l'apitoiement, Arch Haslett manifeste une qualité de communication intuitive qui lui permet de trouver un sens à la vie.

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities est un récit de survie face à la maladie chronique. Il décrit la découverte de la spiritualité dans ses différentes formes. Bien que son approche pour trouver la paix intérieure soit disparate par moment, Arch prône la recherche de raison d'être lorsqu'on est handicapé; il explore divers niveaux philosophiques en commençant par la croyance en la puissance des objets inertes pour en arriver enfin à une vérité absolue. Durant la description de l'évolution de son handicap, le lecteur développe une certaine empathie face à la situation difficile d'Arch et à sa recherche pour trouver un sens à la vie.

Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities est divisé en chapitres qui représentent les différentes étapes de la vie d'Arch, ce qui encourage la relecture de sections pertinentes lorsque le lecteur lui-même fait face à une maladie de longue durée. Son style est simple et témoigne de sensibilité, ce qui permet au lecteur de s'identifier à sa lutte pour devenir « normal. » Le parcours d'Arch autour du monde semble quelque peu narcissique sans égard aux épreuves qu'il a traversées. Tout au long de son livre, on trouve une qualité positive précise, l'immense respect d'Arch Haslett pour les femmes qui partagent sa vie, même si ce n'est que pour de courtes périodes. Le lecteur découvre sa personnalité qui, au fur et à mesure que le récit se poursuit, devient plus nuancée. On devient témoins du développement de sa force intérieure engendrée par la douleur.



Pour ceux qui ont vécu une maladie invalidante, *Wing to Wing: Inspiration for Dealing with Life's Adversities* montre comment des difficultés physiques incapacitantes peuvent engendrer le développement de la force morale. ☺

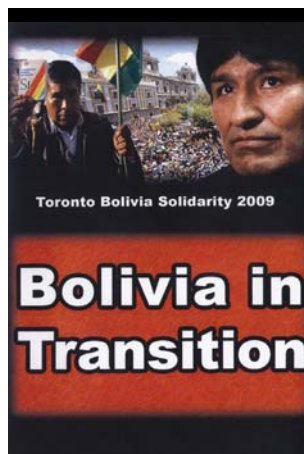
Louise Derry, agente des services aux membres au bureau du District 25, Ottawa-Carleton, traite des cas d'ILD et de la CSPAAT pour l'unité de négociation du personnel enseignant de ce district.

DVD REVIEW

Bolivia in Transition, 2009
Produced by Toronto Bolivia Solidarity
\$10; 20 minutes
Reviewed by Roger Langen

OSSTF/FEESO, like the British Columbia Teachers' Federation, has long taken an interest in international education and human rights issues. Our affiliation with the Canadian Labour Congress in 1996 has been a factor, and we have readily taken up many opportunities for political action and solidarity on the world stage.

Several Canadian unions, including OSSTF/FEESO, are listed in the credits for the short documentary. At 20 minutes, it is classroom-friendly and a welcome resource to facilitate discussion on global issues.



Tapped Out: The World Water Crisis is a Bolivia-focused curriculum resource in OSSTF/FEESO's Common Threads series. Though related, *Bolivia in Transition* deals with the much larger subject of Bolivia's political transformation into an Indigenous state. Bolivia joins Venezuela, Argentina, Brazil and Uruguay among others, in a political upheaval known as the Bolivarian Revolution, a spectacular renaissance of native self-assertion, reclamation of land, resources and pride against first Spanish, then American intervention. This renaissance was the topic of "Bolivia's New Constitution" (*Education Forum*, Spring 2009).

The DVD focuses on the January 2009 referendum to approve the new constitution of Bolivia, which was

Curriculum connections — *Bolivia in Transition*

This 20 minute DVD would make a compelling addition to the curriculum in the following courses:

- CHT30—World History since 1900: Global & Regional Perspectives
- CHA3U—American History, and the Canadian and World Studies course
- CIA4U—Analyzing Current Economic Issues
- HSB4M—Challenge & Change in Society
- CGD3M—The Americas: Geographical Patterns and Issues
- CGW4U—Canadian & World Issues: A Geographic Analysis
- CPW4U—Canadian & World Politics
- BBB4M or 4E—Introduction to International Business
- Civics, Law, Philosophy, Media Studies and Native Studies, including the new NDW4M—Indigenous Peoples in a Global Context and the forthcoming Indigenous Peoples in the Information Age
- Genocide: Historical and Contemporary Implications, where "in-groups" and "out-groups" and the roles of "perpetrator/victim/bystander/rescuer/opportunist resister" are analyzed (TDSB).

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written to express Indigenous values of harmony, relationship with the land, and participatory democracy. The director and narrator, Raul Burbano, interviews both supporters and foes of this momentous undertaking. In the former we hear the long-suppressed, humble voices of Indigenous men and women, like Silvia Lazarte, President of the Constituent Assembly, who describes herself simply as a "peasant woman;" in the latter we hear the patronizing, smooth-talking and visibly angry voices of the privileged minority. President Evo Morales is "just a baker," says a wealthy landowner. "They don't believe in God," says another of the Indigenous people and their non-Catholic beliefs. But Bolivia is "a wake-up call for the world," says yet another, admiring the change. "We are writing the pages of our own history."

From *Bolivia in Transition*, let us give Gilberto the last word. "Greetings to the Canadian people!" he says, looking directly into the camera. "Look at me," he adds gently. "The face I have is an Indian face." And he tells the story of how as a young man he thought his Spanish surname made him white, until a Brazilian student laughed at him, saying, "But look at your face! You are an Indian. You will always be an Indian!" That day, Gilberto said, "I took consciousness."

Our solidarity with such people and events is our consciousness too.

Bolivia in Transition is available from Toronto Bolivia Solidarity, email: torontoboliviasolidarity@gmail.com. ☎

Roger Langen is the former vice-chair of the provincial Human Rights Committee and is an executive officer in District 12, Toronto.

WEBSITE REVIEW

Family Literacy Day


www.FamilyLiteracyDay.ca

Family Literacy Day® (FLD) was created by ABC CANADA Literacy Foundation and Honda Canada in 1999 to promote the importance of reading and learning together as a family all year round, and is celebrated annually on January 27. In support of this initiative, ABC Canada has devoted a special section of its website to provide information and support materials, much of which is available in both English and French.

The 2010 FLD theme is "Singing for Literacy." The website explains: "Singing as a family is a great literacy activity because it provides a joyful way to expand spoken vocabulary and creates a strong bond. Singing allows you to learn patterns of words, rhymes and rhythms, and is strongly connected to language skills."

The Promotional Materials section presents a variety of items to download, for free. Materials already posted are the Certificate of Appreciation and Certificate of Participation; additional items, including bookmarks, posters, a tips/activity sheet and an activity book, will soon be available to download, also for free.

Details about the annual Munsch at Home writing contest are also already posted. This year's contest requires that at least one child and one parent or guardian be involved in writing the story (with the child as the primary author), that the story be no longer than 250 words, and that the story have a singing theme to tie in with the 2010 FLD theme. This may be of particular interest to OSSTF/FEESO members who are instructors in adult education programs and who may wish to bring the contest to the attention of their adult students who have children. The contest deadline is 5 p.m., December 11, 2009.



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Photo © Laura M. Osteen

The Tips and Activities page has more downloadable sheets of tips, activities and games that can be used by parents, teachers and education workers in order to celebrate Family Literacy Day on January 27, or used everyday—simply for the love of reading.

Beyond the information and resources available for Family Literacy Day, ABC Canada's website also provides a wealth of additional information about adult literacy and workplace literacy. /WAH ☺

CONFERENCES

November 27, 2009

Region 3 (London)

April 30, 2010

Region 1 (Thunder Bay)

May 14, 2010

Region 2 (Sudbury)

OSSTF/FEESO Regional Symposia

“Managing Change: Art or Science?” presented by Lee-Anne McAlear, helps members develop strategies for managing change in their personal and professional lives.

A symposium for our French-speaking members takes place May 14, 2010 in Sudbury. Speaker Marc André Morel presents “Destiné à réussir dans un monde en changement.”

For more information, visit the website at www.osstf.on.ca [Training/OSSTF/FEESO Conferences].

December 10–12, 2009

Language for a Changing World
TESL Ontario

Sheraton Centre Toronto

This conference features more than 165 concurrent sessions, ongoing Technology Fair presentations, three Research Symposia, five plenary speakers and an impressive selection of exhibitors. The annual panel discussion includes representatives from Citizenship and Immigration Canada, the Ontario Ministry of Citizenship, Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities

and the Ministry of Education. For full details and conference registration information, visit www.teslontario.org.

February 18–20, 2010

Instructional Decision Making

Ontario Association for

Mathematics Education

Holiday Inn Select—Toronto Airport

The 2010 Mathematics Leadership conference is an opportunity for teacher leaders to investigate ways to make instructional decisions in mathematics by building community through focused discussions on instructional design. The fee includes all sessions, accommodation and meals. For more information, visit www.oame.on.ca.

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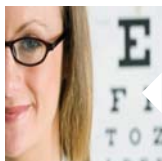
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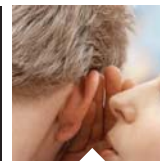
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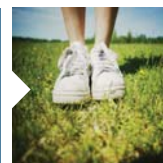
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February 24–27, 2010

Step Up to Your Passion: Learn.

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Ontario Library Association Super Conference

Metro Toronto Convention Centre

The Ontario Library Association is Canada's largest library organization and OLA's Super Conference is Canada's largest continuing education event in librarianship. Within the Super Conference event is the country's largest library tradeshow. The program is a tribute to the ability of OLA members to balance cutting edge and practical in a way that satisfies an increasingly diverse number of member interests and needs.

For more information, visit the website at www.accessola.com.osla.

March 25–27, 2010

Active Learning/

L'Apprentissage actif

Ontario Modern Languages

Teachers Association

DoubleTree by Hilton—Toronto

Airport Hotel

Keynote speaker is Karen Hume, author of *Start Where They Are—Differentiating for Success with the Young Adolescent*.

In more than 20 years as an educator, she has been a teacher, administrator, Student Success Leader and author.

For more information, visit the website at omlta.org.

OTHER PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Professional Learning

PD Video Series

Ontario Teachers' Federation

"PD on demand" is digitally streamed video, print and web PD programs. OTF and the Visual Education Centre, Canada's leading distributor of PD video, offer programs for kindergarten to grade 12. These programs cover most subject areas including arts, education, foreign languages, history, literature, language arts, mathematics, science, social studies and other professional development topics such as ADHD and conflict management. Programs are free and may be reviewed 24 hours a day, for group sessions or personal enrichment. Access requires Windows Media Player for Mac or PC, with JavaScript enabled.

For more details and a list of programs available, visit www.otffeo.on.ca/english/pro_video.php.

E-Learning Webinars

E-Learning Ontario

Webinars—web-based, or Internet-based seminars—differ from regular seminars in that they do not require participants to travel to a physical location; only that they visit a specific website at a specific time. All e-Learning Ontario webinars have been recorded and archived for anywhere/anytime access. Webinars can be searched by topic or by calendar; each webinar is 45 minutes in length. Topics include:

- What is e-learning?
- E-learning resources for your students
- How the Ontario Educational Resource Bank (OERB) Can Support Credit Recovery and Credit Rescue
- Using the Discussions Tool Effectively
- Using the Ontario Educational Resource Bank (OERB) for Differentiated Instruction in Grades 7–12

For more information, visit the website at www.elearningontario.ca/eng/strategy/prof_dev.aspx.

OSSTF/FEESO Financial Assistance Awards for Further Education

Are you an OSSTF/FEESO member looking to further your education? If so, you may be interested in applying for an OSSTF/FEESO scholarship or bursary.

The following awards are available:

Brick Robb Memorial Scholarship for Educational Research:

Designed to assist members with doctoral studies on a full-time basis at a university of their choice.

Dr. S.G.B. Robinson Travelling Fellowship:

Provides the opportunity for a member to travel for the purpose of serving education. It will not normally be awarded for studies toward a degree.

J.W. Ansley Memorial Award for Educational Research:

Designed to assist members to pursue educational research projects of a practical nature which are currently topical and the results of which will primarily benefit the classroom practitioner and/or educational programs or curriculum.

OSSTF/FEESO Educational Enhancement Scholarships:

Designed to assist members with their studies at a university or community college of their choice, leading to a first undergraduate degree or diploma or in gaining a secondary school diploma from a publicly funded secondary school.

S. Hunter Henry Memorial Fellowship:

Designed to assist members with full-time studies at a university of their choice.

Federation Family Bursaries:

Ten bursaries of \$1,500 each are awarded each year. The applicant must be a child or ward of a member and must have applied to enter a publicly-funded post-secondary college, university or apprenticeship program (and later must attend that program).

For more information about eligibility requirements for each of these awards, the deadlines for application and online application forms, visit www.osstf.on.ca [Services/Awards]. ☺

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**Last word****by Ken Coran, President****Mot de la fin****par Ken Coran, président**

Protecting and enhancing public education

OSSTF/FEESO's mandate—90 years and counting

With a new school year well underway, I want to express my best wishes to all OSSTF/FEESO members for a good year, and to welcome to OSSTF/FEESO our newest members from the Wilfrid Laurier University Staff Association who voted to join us in September.

As OSSTF/FEESO celebrates its 90th anniversary this year, we honour the strength, tenacity and dedication upon which OSSTF/FEESO was founded, and we continue the tradition of nurturing and supporting the leaders of tomorrow who will continue to offer the best protection for our members and do everything possible to protect and enhance public education in Ontario.

We have many issues and challenges to deal with and our leaders need to be prepared to confront them from a position of strength. As such, the Annual Meeting of the Provincial Assembly (AMPA) in March 2009 approved an ambitious Action Plan for 2009–2010 to help prepare our leaders of tomorrow, as well as focus on the issues important to our members. To that end, we are conducting an extensive review of our organization, how we operate and deliver services to our members.

Last year, OSSTF/FEESO's first equity survey was launched at Summer Leadership. Since then, over 1,000 surveys have been returned from provincial-level OSSTF/FEESO bodies. The data provide a solid foundation for analysis. This school year, surveying will reach out into district and bargaining unit structures. During the 2010–2011 school year, if necessary, we will make recommendations to AMPA 2011 to address any barriers that are identified. We ask for your continued support of this project as we seek to make OSSTF/FEESO inclusive and supportive of all.

The current Liberal government has adopted the following as its mandate for education: "The Ministry of Education strives to promote a strong, vibrant, publicly funded education system that is focused on three goals: high levels of student achievement, reduced gaps in student achievement and high levels of public confidence." As always, when issues and legislation arise which will affect our members or public education, OSSTF/FEESO consults widely and prepares

Protéger et faire avancer l'éducation publique

OSSTF/FEESO : 90 ans d'histoire et ça continue

EN célébrant cette année le 90^e anniversaire d'OSSTF/FEESO, nous soulignons la force, la ténacité et l'engagement sur lesquels OSSTF/FEESO a été fondé et nous poursuivons la tradition de former et de soutenir les dirigeants de demain qui continueront à offrir la meilleure protection à nos membres et à faire tout ce qui est possible pour protéger et faire avancer l'éducation publique en Ontario.

Nous faisons face à plusieurs défis et les dirigeants doivent être prêts à les affronter avec vigueur. À ce titre, la Réunion annuelle de l'Assemblée provinciale (RAAP) en mars 2009 a approuvé un plan d'action ambitieux pour 2009–2010 dans le but d'aider à préparer nos dirigeants de demain ainsi qu'à nous concentrer sur les dossiers importants pour nos membres. Nous menons à cette fin un examen approfondi de notre organisation, de notre fonctionnement et de la prestation des services à nos membres.

L'an dernier, OSSTF/FEESO a lancé son premier sondage en matière d'égalité à l'occasion du Leadership d'été. Depuis ce temps, les groupes d'OSSTF/FEESO à l'échelle provinciale, y compris les conférences, les comités, la RAAP et le Conseil provincial, ont retourné plus d'un millier de sondages. Le taux de retour est élevé et les données recueillies jettent des bases solides pour l'analyse. Pendant l'année scolaire 2010–2011, les unités et districts seront sondés et le groupe de travail examinera les réponses reçues à tous les paliers de l'organisation et, au besoin, soumettra des recommandations à la RAAP 2011 dans le but d'aborder les obstacles qui ont été déterminés. Nous demandons votre soutien continu dans ce projet qui cherche à nous rendre encore plus inclusif et appuyant de tous.

Lors de son élection, le gouvernement Libéral a résumé l'orientation qu'il entendait prendre : « L'important est de ne jamais perdre de vue l'amélioration des résultats des élèves et de porter une attention plus soutenue que jamais aux pratiques efficaces. Nous avons un public qui a des attentes très élevées pour nos écoles. Nous devons leur prouver jour après jour qu'ils obtiennent le maximum de nos écoles et que nous avons un engagement ferme envers l'amélioration continue. » Comme toujours, OSSTF/FEESO surveille, examine, consulte, planifie, prépare et agit dès que surgissent des dossiers et des lois qui auront des



thoughtful responses to communicate OSSTF/FEESO positions to the government.

On June 15, the Report of the Early Learning Advisor to the Premier, *With Our Best Future in Mind*, was released. Dr. Charles Pascal recommended a well-researched model for early learning in Ontario that includes full day learning for four- and five-year-olds. OSSTF/FEESO strongly supports school boards offering a full day early-learning program staffed by qualified teachers and early childhood educators and supported by the full education team. As the government moves forward with this initiative, OSSTF/FEESO will ensure that the concept of the full education team is kept in the forefront.

One area in which we have been successful is that of credit integrity. To answer the concern that some students were bypassing more rigorous courses in public high schools, and essentially “buying credits” from private schools, OSSTF/FEESO successfully lobbied the government to have student transcripts include notation of the letter “P” when the credit was earned in a ministry-inspected private school.

Bargaining continues. In fact, by the time you read this article, the members of the District 12 Teachers’ Bargaining Unit and the District 35 Support Staff University of Ottawa Bargaining Unit will have ratified tentative agreements arrived at over the summer. Congratulations to the negotiating teams for both units.

With those two contracts in, at press time OSSTF/FEESO has just one bargaining unit left without a collective agreement. The Faculty Association of the Royal Conservatory of Music, which joined OSSTF/FEESO last year, is still in the process of bargaining its first contract. Of course, this unit has our full support as they work toward achieving their first collective agreement.

If the past 90 years have taught us anything, it is that these and other challenges will continue, and that OSSTF/FEESO is well-prepared to meet them. Our recipe for success is simple: Plan. Prepare. Involve our leaders and members from all over the province. Execute the plan with confidence and discipline, and finally, Evaluate the effectiveness of the plan.

We will continue follow that recipe. It has been OSSTF/FEESO’s strength for the last 90 years, and ensures that we will continue to lead the way in protecting and enhancing public education in Ontario in the future. ☺

répercussions sur nos membres ou sur l’éducation publique.

Le 15 juin, le rapport présenté au premier ministre par le conseiller spécial en apprentissage préscolaire, intitulé « Dans l’optique de notre meilleur avenir » a été publié. Le docteur Charles Pascal a recommandé un modèle révolutionnaire et bien documenté pour l’apprentissage à temps plein pour les enfants de quatre et cinq ans. OSSTF/FEESO soutient fortement les conseils scolaires qui offrent des programmes d’apprentissage préscolaire à temps plein présentés par du personnel enseignant et des éducateurs de la petite enfance qualifiés et appuyés par une équipe scolaire complète. Puisque le gouvernement poursuit cette initiative, OSSTF/FEESO s’assurera que le concept de l’équipe scolaire complète reste au premier plan.

L’intégrité des crédits est l’un des domaines où nous avons

réussi. Puisque nous étions préoccupés que certains élèves dérogeaient à des cours plus rigoureux dans les écoles secondaires publiques et, au fond, « achetaient des crédits » auprès des écoles privées, OSSTF/FEESO a persuadé le gouvernement d’inclure la notation « P » au Relevé de notes des élèves lorsque le crédit a été obtenu dans une école privée inspectée par le ministère.

En matière de négociation, lorsque vous lirez cet article, les membres de l’unité de négociation du personnel enseignant du District 12 et celle du personnel de soutien de l’Université d’Ottawa du District 35 auront ratifié leurs conventions collectives conclues au cours de l’été. Félicitations aux équipes de négociation des deux unités.

Malgré la négociation de ces deux conventions collectives, à la

rédaction de cet article, il restait encore une unité de négociation sans convention collective, soit le *Royal Conservatory of Music*. J’offre à cette unité de négociation notre soutien continu dans leurs efforts afin de conclure leur première convention collective.

Si les 90 dernières années nous avaient appris une chose, ce serait que ces défis et les autres se poursuivront et qu’OSSTF/FEESO est bien préparé à les relever. Notre recette du succès est simple : Planifier. Préparer. Intéresser nos dirigeants et les membres de partout en province. Exécuter le plan avec confiance et discipline et enfin, évaluer la réussite du plan.

Nous allons continuer à suivre cette recette. C’est la force d’OSSTF/FEESO depuis les 90 dernières années qui fait en sorte que nous continuerons à tracer la voie pour protéger et faire avancer l’éducation publique en Ontario dans le futur. ☺

As the government moves
forward with this initiative,
OSSTF/FEESO will ensure that
the concept of the full education
team is kept in the forefront

Puisque le gouvernement
poursuit cette initiative, OSSTF/
FEESO s’assurera que le
concept de l’équipe scolaire
complète reste au premier plan



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