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Higher Education in Prisons: A Historical Analysis

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Abstract

This thesis provides an exploration and analysis of university education in prisons from a historical point of view. It examines how post-secondary education in prisons has reproduced dominant economic and cultural relations, but also how it can resist doing this. A qualitative research process is used to investigate the empirical research produced in this field. The primary method used is the analysis of the experiences and the voices of persons who have participated in higher education in prisons as students and teachers. The primary objective is to give a voice to prisoners as a traditionally oppressed group.

Past and current post-secondary education in Canadian prisons are examined, as are the problems encountered in both. An argument is made for an alternative form of education in prisons, with an emphasis on the pedagogy of Paulo Freire. Freire's work calls for the empowerment of the oppressed and argues that this is best done through participatory education. It is further argued that prisoners should be in charge of their own educational practices in order to counter the hegemony of correctional education's discourse.

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We must abandon completely the naïve faith, that school automatically liberates the mind and serves the cause of human progress; in fact, we know that it may serve any cause. [It] may serve tyranny as well as freedom, ignorance as well as enlightenment, falsehood as well as truth, war as well as peace, death as well as life. It may lead men and women to think they are free even as it rivets them in chains of bondage. Education is indeed a force of great power, particularly when the word is made to embrace all the agencies and organized processes for molding the mind, but whether it is good or evil depends, not on the laws of learning, but on the conception of life and civilization that gives it substance and direction. In the course of history, education has served every purpose and doctrine contrived by man [sic]. If it is to serve the cause of human freedom, it must be explicitly designed for that purpose.

(George S. Counts in Giroux and Freire, 1989:xiii)

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

Davidson (2000a:25) states that “for a considerable period of time historians and sociologists have examined how schools as relatively autonomous social institutions have reproduced and resisted dominate economic and cultural relations.... Little research on adult education with prisoners has taken up this perspective”. The intent of this thesis is to help fill this gap with an exploration and analysis of university education in prisons.

Davidson (1992) notes that amongst prisoners, the popularity of education is unequalled when compared to other programs. In a study conducted by Ayers et.al. (1979), former students of the University of Victoria program described it as “the only good thing about prison”, “the only constructive thing in prison”, and stated that it had “saved their sanity”. They also argued that it would be “a crime” if the program were to be cancelled. The current study centers on the following questions: What is the current situation concerning post-secondary education in prisons? To what extent does it exist, and in what forms? What was post-secondary education in prisons like in the past? What role does post-secondary education play in prisoners' lives? What theories are used to legitimize prison educational programs? Furthermore, who controls and defines what forms of education are available?

The underlying hypothesis is that past and current practices of university education in prisons have been and are inadequate. While providing prisoners with a higher education has great potential, this potential is not being pursued, especially given that on-site prison university education programs across Canada were cancelled by the Solicitor General in 1993. Even when programs did exist, however, they were

problematic in that they tended to focus on individual prisoners as problems, and attempted to ‘correct’ them, rather than focussing on the broader contextual framing of criminality. While educational programs in prisons are generally recognized as being ‘good’, ‘humane’, and a form of rehabilitation, they can also be seen as a means of controlling prisoners. As such, an argument will be made for an alternative form of higher education in prisons, with particular emphasis on the pedagogy of Paulo Freire. As Freire’s most renowned book title suggests, his is a Pedagogy of the Oppressed, and suited to those who have been deprived of their freedom and blocked in their aspirations. In contrast to the past means and current lack of opportunities in prison higher education, Freire’s pedagogy is much more promising, not only for prisoners, but also for society as a whole. It will further be argued that prisoners should be in charge of their own educational practices in order to challenge the hegemony of correctional education’s discourse.

To begin, past and current practices of post-secondary education in Canadian prisons are examined, as are the problems encountered in both. This provides a background, and locates the issue in its context. Education as a historical means of social control in general society is then examined. It is argued that education as a means of state control in larger society has largely influenced how education is used as means of controlling prisoners. A qualitative research process is used to investigate the experiences of prisoners, with the primary method being the analysis of documents, particularly those written by persons who have participated in university education as students and teachers. As already mentioned, a more radical, alternative solution will be proposed, calling for the empowerment of prisoners as an oppressed group. The latter

will focus upon libertarian pedagogy, with a particular emphasis on the work of Paulo Freire. While it is recognized that economic transformation is essential for real democracy, it is argued that prison education could provide a start, a place to build a project of possibility and a new vision of society.

Purpose of the Study

The primary objective of this thesis is to give voice to prisoners, a traditionally oppressed group. For the most part, prisoners have not been able to voice their opinions about the goals and structure of their education, which ironically has been rationalized as a response to their needs. What are the experiences of those who have received their post-secondary education while imprisoned? What are their thoughts and feelings about these experiences? What has their education meant to them? What has it done for them?

Giving voice to those who have traditionally been oppressed arises from the notion that "credibility and the right to be heard are differentially distributed..." (Becker, 1966:241). The greater one's power and authority, the more likely it is that the information one produces and/or distributes is likely to be regarded as credible by others. For example, the official views of the Correctional Service of Canada are likely to be considered as more credible by the general public than are the views of prisoners, for instance, or of any member of a poor and/or marginalized group. Dominant groups have greater ability to define 'reality', the way things 'really' are, than less powerful groups. The credibility of officials is often unquestioned as it is considered to be simply common sense. Official statements are considered to be materially grounded in everyday institutional practices, and are legitimated by the images of authority and science they provide. Prisoners, on the other hand, are most often given no credibility. Whether this

distortion is conscious or not, prisoners come to be viewed as “a mindless kind of animal whose behaviour is to be explained by omnipotent ‘scientists’ who interpret the prison situation in a so-called scientific, and thus valid, way” (Gaucher, 1974:4). Prisoners’ definitions of situations are considered to be irrational or nonsensical, and they are denied the possession of will or choice. This research, however, intends to give prisoners a voice.

Ideally, this research will constitute what Mathiesen (1974) refers to as *action research*. The purpose of action research is to build a bridge between new knowledge and practical action. Of primary concern to action research are political values, and attempts to improve conditions for a specified group, in this case prisoners. While information improves action, “the loyalty is towards the action, and not towards the theory” (Mathiesen, 1974:30). Prison education is considered to be an important element in the struggle of prisoners, as an oppressed group, for ‘equal rights’. Research in this area is important as a means of providing support for this struggle.

Definitions of Terms and Concepts

Prisoners, prisons, and post-secondary education are central concepts to this research. The following provides some clarification as to what these concepts signify in this study.

Post-secondary education refers primarily to university education. This study will only consider those who undertook at least part of their university education *while* in prison, although some may have begun their higher education prior to imprisonment, and others may have continued on after release. Post-secondary education also refers only to those programs that would normally, in the ‘outside’ world, grant students credits or

degrees.¹ Unofficial forms of education will be referred to in the latter part of the thesis. These will simply be called higher education or prison education.

Prisons herein refer to both provincial and federal institutions, although post-secondary education programs are for the most part limited to federal prisons. The more modern term "correctional facility" has been eschewed in place of "prisons". Similarly, the term "prisoners" is used rather than "inmates", as the former better describes their circumstances as individuals being held against their will, "locked behind bars, walls and fences, under constant surveillance, their every move regulated by guards operating under the authority of the state" (Faith, 1993:123). As noted by Faith (1993:122), "[p]rogressive prison planners, administrators and staff prefer the soft jargon to hardline language because it suggests a distinction between the brutal institutions of yore and modern penal philosophies". New terminology, however, does nothing to change the reality of living in prison. As noted by Little Rock Reed (1993:119), who writes from prison, "[t]his is a prison. We are prisoners. We are oppressed, dehumanized, repressed out of existence". The term "inmate" denotes disease, as though prisoners were all psychopaths receiving treatment. Prisoners tend to prefer the terms "prisoner" or "convict", and as this thesis is done to give them a voice, their position must be recognized. *Prisoners* will herein refer to anyone, male or female, who has served time in either a provincial or federal institution, for any length of time.

The terms *pedagogy* and *empowerment* are also central to this thesis. As Simon (1989) notes, the use of the term *pedagogy* may appear rather pretentious, but it is important to make the distinction between that and *teaching*. Teaching refers primarily to

¹ According to Jones (1992), administrators often refuse to grant prisoners credits, and also often oppose degree programs in prisons.

techniques and strategies used to meet predefined, given objectives. This, however, does not deal with other issues, such as what should be done in schools, or how practice can relate to future visions of community life. Pedagogy, on the other hand, is “a more complex and extensive term than teaching - referring to the integration in practice of particular curriculum content and design, classroom strategies and techniques, a time and space for the practice of those strategies and techniques, and evaluation purposes and methods” (Simon, 1989:135). More to the point, pedagogy proposes a political vision. Pedagogy is concerned with how students construct representations of themselves, others, and their environment. It centers around what students and others might do together, and what cultural politics their practices will support. Critical pedagogy, for example, “must raise questions of how we can work for the reconstruction of social imagination in the service of human freedom” (Giroux and Simon, 1989:239). Primary objectives include those of critique, teaching students to understand why things are the way they are and how they came to be so, as well as the enhancement of human capacities and social possibilities. According to Giroux and Simon (1989:238), pedagogy exists as a subordinate discourse, and is “often theorized as what is left after curriculum content is determined”.

As noted by Simon (1989:138), “[e]mpowerment literally means to give ability to, to permit or enable” (emphasis added). The notion of empowerment usually arises in the spirit of critique. Those who call for empowerment do so in the name of oppression, when unjust limitations are placed upon human action, feeling and thought. Such limitations deny the oppressed the ability to participate on equal terms with those that are

more privileged. Empowerment is thus called for to counter the power of the privileged, and to end the enforced silence of the oppressed. According to Simon (1989:138),

...[t]o empower is to enable those who have been silenced to speak. It is to enable the self-affirming expression of experiences mediated by one's history, language, and traditions. It is to enable those who have been marginalized economically and culturally to claim in both respects a status as full participating members of a community.

Through empowerment, the oppressed become able to attain their share of participation and authority. A pedagogy that empowers must provide an agenda that allows students to draw upon their own cultural resources. Only in this manner can multiple voices be fully expressed. A pedagogy for empowerment must also have a vision for the future, specifically the development of a just and compassionate society. Without this, a project would be empty and abstract.

The next chapter focuses upon past and current means of post-secondary education in Canadian prisons. As will be seen, official means of educating prisoners have not adopted empowering pedagogy. As noted by Simon (1989), the difference between pedagogy and teaching is that teaching primarily involves techniques and strategies used to meet predefined objectives, and not much else. In correctional education, this predefined objective has largely been to reduce recidivism rates. While correctional education has been concerned with how students construct representations of themselves, others and the environment, it has focussed on *changing* them so as to better fit into the status quo. Official prison education has not embraced a spirit of critique, nor a political vision.

Chapter Two

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION IN CANDIAN PRISONS: PAST AND PRESENT

University Education in Prisons: A Canadian Example¹

The most renowned university program for prisoners was developed at the University of Victoria, British Columbia (1972-1984), and later at Simon Fraser University (1984-1993), also in British Columbia. The program attracted world-wide attention, and became a model for other countries, including the United States, England, Australia, The Netherlands, and many others (Duguid, 1993:51). The program initiated from a doctoral research project by T.A.A. Parlett and quickly grew from a small project in the British Columbia Penitentiary (BCP) to a full four-year program operating in four prisons across the province.

The program began in as an experiment designed to test the effects of a humanities-based curriculum on prisoners. In 1972, the University of Victoria offered a few credit courses in literature and history to approximately 30 prisoners at the BCP. These prisoners were compared to a selected control group. Pre and post-tests proved promising, and the Correctional Service of Canada (CSC) contracted the University of Victoria to offer a small number of courses to prisoners at both the BCP (maximum security) and Matsqui Institution (minimum security).

In 1973, the majority of enrollments were at the BCP as Matsqui was just beginning the transition from a focus on drug treatment to a general prison. In 1976/1977 the Matsqui program expanded dramatically as large numbers of prisoners were

¹ As he is a primary author in the field of university education in prisons, the works of Stephen Duguid are used extensively in this chapter, and will also appear in others.

transferred from the BCP following a series of disturbances, riots and hostage takings. Also in 1976, the University of Victoria began offering a full four-year program at Matsqui Institution, which led to several men earning their Bachelor of Arts in prison (Duguid and Hoekema 1986:3).

When the BCP was closed in 1979, the program moved to Kent Institution, and was subsequently added to William Head (1980) and Mountain Institutions (1981) (Simon Fraser University, 1985). From 1976 to 1985, enrollments in the program rose steadily, from approximately 200 to 400. This increase occurred despite prison riots at the BC Penitentiary and Matsqui Institution, and a series of administrative shake-ups within the CSC (Duguid, 1988:9). As noted by Duguid (1993:56), “[e]ven a threatened cancellation due to fiscal restraint in 1983 was overturned thanks, almost completely to the strength of the program, the energy of its staff and the quality of its supporters in the community”. This reinstatement did, however, take many months of political maneuvering, lobbying, and vocal support from Adult Education groups across the country (Murphy, 1998:37). Following this cancellation and reinstatement, the University of Victoria Program was transferred to Simon Fraser University. A fee of twenty dollars per course was imposed, and many predicted that the program would collapse. It became more popular than ever (Duguid, 1988a:9).

The program operated on an open admissions policy, only dismissing those clearly incapable of university level work. This was determined through admission interviews or monitoring during the first few weeks. Prisoner students were faced with the same academic requirements as those on a regular university campus, including minimum course loads and grade point averages (Duguid, 1987).

When the University of Victoria first suggested offering courses in English Literature and History to prisoners at the British Columbia Penitentiary, those in charge of the program operated under the guise of the medical model. As noted by Duguid (1993:52), the medical model was a product of the scientific optimism of the post-war era, and was “based on a number of theories about human change, behaviour and development, the most salient being behaviourism or operant conditioning, therapeutic communities, and various drug/chemical interventions”. The program was meant to provide educational “treatment” to prisoners who were believed to suffer from certain deficits. The initial experiment at the British Columbia Penitentiary in 1972 was based on the work of T.A.A. Parlett (cited in Duguid, 1993:52), who claimed that there “is a small but positive correlation between moral knowledge and moral acts”. It was believed that upon teaching prisoners morality, their moral acts should increase, and their immoral acts should decrease. As Parlett believed that prisoners would reject the idea of being taught morality, any moral implications were hidden under what was considered a suitable vehicle, that being university classes. While this experimental approach was meant to be used only during the first years of the University program, from 1972 to 1974, staff continued to probe students for evidence of moral shifts via tests and interviews for several years after. Throughout the 1970s, correctional officials continued to maintain that education was a means of “moral reformation”, and necessary to prepare prisoners to act responsibly as conforming, law-abiding citizens upon release (Duguid, 1993). According to Duguid (1993:54), it was because of this focus on development and rehabilitation that the program was allowed to continue.

According to Duguid (1980a) English literature and history are the courses most apt to instill both cognitive and moral development. He argues that “[b]oth have the advantage of being broad-based disciplines concerned with argumentation, philosophy, ethics, analysis of data and both require the development of a strong sense of empathy” (1980a:10). Certain other courses, argues Duguid, serve similar purposes. For example, “anthropology attacks the ethnocentrism of the student and that in turn may relate to his egocentrism. Mathematics and physics challenge imbedded cognitive processes, forcing the student to consider other paradigms, other ways of receiving and organizing information. Philosophy acquaints the student with the complexity of what may have appeared to be simple truths” (Duguid,1980a:10).

It was believed that a liberal education would result in freeing prisoners from limitations of mind brought on by factors such as locale, family, peer groups, social class, national heritage, and prison. It was also believed that the liberal arts affect egocentrism, stability, notions of cause and effect, and self-control. Duguid (1987:109) argues that while a program must relate to the realities of prisoners’ lives, it should not, however, “pander to their situation or join with their self-perceived victimization”. Courses dealing specifically with crime, deviance or prisons were therefore initially avoided in the University of Victoria program.

Duguid notes that the liberal arts and humanities are relatively easy to offer in prisons, as they require no laboratories or complex equipment. Jones and d’Errico (1994), however, argue that the liberal arts dominated in prison university education because of an unwillingness to fund the broad spectrum of courses necessary for the attainment of specialized degrees. Security is also a consideration, as courses in the

sciences and others requiring specialized equipment are not likely to be allowed in prisons.

The Beginning of the End of University Education in Canadian Prisons

During the period between 1973 and 1993, the CSC underwent several transformations and periods of fiscal restraint, but the University program in British Columbia remained constant. Duguid (1993) notes that during the late 1970s and early 1980s, there was tension within the CSC between proponents of the medical model and proponents of the opportunities model². The latter argued that the damages caused by imprisonment should be reduced as much as possible by allowing prisoners to help themselves if they chose to do so, while the former advocated a stronger intervention into the lives, minds, and morals of prisoners (Duguid, 1993:53). During the early 1980's, the CSC adopted an opportunities model, wherein prisoners were to be provided with means to improve their educational, vocational, and social skills. It was believed that prisoners had been too lazy or unmotivated to obtain such skills, and that this was what lead to their criminal activity (Morse, 1973:18). The belief was that programs should help prisoners attain or regain positive attitudes towards themselves and the society to which they would eventually return (Duguid, 1993:61). As stated by Duguid (1993:53), this model was concerned with providing prisoners with opportunities upon release.

Duguid (1993:53) writes that the university program operated under both the cognitive deficiency and opportunities models. On one hand, the program was an opportunity in that it was available to all prisoners who qualified. Given its strong links with external universities, it also provided some feeling of distance from the prisons.

² Both models will be discussed in more detail in chapter four.

Ideally, the prison program was meant to be considered an off-campus program of the university. On the other hand, theory and research were continually based on the notions of cognitive and moral development through education (Duguid, 1993:53).

According to Duguid (1993:53), the period from 1975 to 1985 was a difficult decade. The university program in British Columbia, subversive to the correctional agenda, adopted a model of rational choice (Duguid, 1993:53). Moving away from both the psychology-based disease model, and the determinism of the sociological model, prisoners were now considered responsible for their actions. This responsibility was, however, limited by specific social, cultural, and psychological contexts. Primary emphasis was placed on the content of the prisoners' thinking, and on the socio-cultural context in which their thinking took place (Duguid, 1993:54). While it was believed that social environments and economic conditions could restrict the choices open to individuals, it was also believed that situations were not determinative of specific choices. The aim was to challenge the framework within which prisoners make decisions. The university program sought to provide prisoners with the opportunity to observe and react to situations in a variety of frameworks rather than the frameworks to which they were believed to be accustomed. According to Duguid (1993:56), the emphasis was on education and mutual respect (amongst administrators and students), rather than excessive concern about the prisoners' personal development and/or post-release behaviour.

By the mid-1980s, however, the situation began to change. In 1985, the CSC released the Sawatsky Report on offender programs, which heralded the dawn of a new

era. The report argued that the opportunities model largely contributed to instability in correctional programming. According to Sawatsky (then Acting Deputy Commissioner),

Because this model assumes the offender to be responsible, the staff have, regrettably, all too often seen their responsibility as being only to ensure that the offender is afforded program opportunities of his choice. The result of this orientation has seemingly created a 'window-shopping' mentality where inmates 'wander' or 'drift' in and out of programs without addressing key areas of need or seeing a particular program through to its completion (cited in Duguid, 1993:56).

Duguid (1993: 56) notes that in this report, one can clearly see evidence of an annoyance that prisoners might actually be free to choose their own programs.

According to Duguid (1993:57), "[o]ne can also hear in the words of the Sawatsky Report the beginning of the end for the university program". While post-secondary education was seen as providing long-term prisoners with the means to constructively pass time, it was not seen as essential. In the words of John Sawatsky, post-secondary education was a "...bit of luxury that we can no longer afford" (cited in Duguid, 1993:60).

The laissez-fair attitude had come to an end, and attention became centered on Ross and Fabiano's (1985) ideas surrounding thinking and cognitive factors. Murphy (1998:42) suggests that those who developed the university programs were actually complicit in its demise, given the theoretical premises upon which they originally sold their programming to the CSC in the first place. The emphasis placed on cognitive and moral deficiencies largely led to the downfall of university programs. Notions of "criminal thinking" renewed justification for prisons, and especially programs within prisons. This led to the designing and implementing of cognitive living skills programs

within prisons. The primary objectives of these programs include increasing “anti-criminal” thinking, and increasing acceptance of conventional rules and occupations.

The possibility of a university program that focussed on cognitive and moral development, however, was shot down in 1987 when the Solicitor General “discovered” illiteracy. With the large emphasis on literacy, the university program struggled simply to survive. Cognitive living skills programs, however, thrived throughout the late 1980s and early 1990s. The university program was given little attention, and began to suffer annual budget cuts.

Duguid (1993:58) argues that

The combination of a four-year struggle to justify higher education in a community obsessed with literacy, the shrinkage of program vitality due to budget cuts, the distractions of external projects, the concern to keep the principles of liberal education at the forefront, and the increasingly pervasive *ennui* characteristic of a 20-year-old activity meant the program was ill-positioned to meet the challenge of criminogenic factors (the new diagnosis) and “cog-skills” (the new cure).

As noted by Murphy (1998:38), a focus on quick-fix programs dealing with cognitive skills marked the beginning of the end of the post-secondary education in prisons. Davidson (1995a:xiii) also notes that “as literacy education expands exponentially, most of the prison higher education programs offered by approximately 300 colleges and universities across North America are being dismantled”. In 1993, all on-site post-secondary education programs were cancelled in Canada. Prisoners who now wish to obtain this level of education must either do so through correspondence or through day parole programs³.

³ Correspondence courses and day parole programs will be discussed later in this chapter.

Duguid (1993:51) notes that “[o]fficially, the program was the victim of financial constraints and shifting priorities”. In a letter written to the Dean of Arts at Simon Fraser University, a Deputy Commissioner for the CSC, John Duggan, wrote “...as we identify and prioritize the needs of our offender population, we conclude that we must reallocate our scarce resources to priority needs such as programming for violent offenders and substance abusers which more directly targets the criminogenic factors facing offenders” (cited in Duguid, 1993:51). Duguid identifies three primary themes in this reasoning: scarce resources, targeted needs, and criminogenic factors. He notes that the university program did cost money, was available to all prisoners who qualified, not just those with targeted needs, and did not address all identified criminogenic factors. Criminogenic factors believed to lead to crime included: substance abuse, anti-social and violent behaviour, illiteracy, mental illness, sexual deviancy and strong pro-criminal orientation (Duguid, 1993:59). A particularly influential reason for the emphasis on criminogenic factors is their likelihood to bring forth quantifiable numbers to politicians and public that demands hard evidence. Duguid (1993:60) argues that “processing large numbers of individual humans through set-piece modules...designed to re-design thinking is one of those ideas sure to create numbers....”⁴

Murphy (1998:40) criticizes the excuse of budget shortfalls, and argues that the money spent on university education was miniscule in comparison to other CSC expenses. The central issue was that university programming was not imperative to the CSC mandate of protecting the public. University courses were considered simply a frill,

⁴ According to the Manager of Education and Employment Programs of CSC (Barbe, 1999), the cancellations were also the result of a minimal amount of prisoners reaching the university level, as well as a lack of time on the part of prisoners to engage extensively in such programs.

an easily dispensed luxury. Murphy (1998:41) argues that “the economic argument is really only a cover for a number of ideological determinants”. The cancellation was really part of a power play where the CSC regained control of its programming. Oddly enough, it was argued that by targeting criminogenic factors, the CSC would do a better job at what the university program had always claimed to excel at: enhance rehabilitation and reduce recidivism rates.⁵ Targeting specific criminogenic factors was believed to be a much more direct and efficient means of achieving those goals.

Duguid (1993) cites long-time prisoners’ rights activist Claire Culhane (now deceased) in refuting the argument that post-secondary education programming was cancelled due to scarce resources. In referring to her work, Duguid states that “money is never the central issue when governments resist meeting needs or cancel programs. There is *always* money for what government *wants* to do. The real issue centers on priorities, policies, preferences and, unfortunately, sometimes even politics...” (1993:52). Given the conservative politics of the time, it is fitting that a university program be cancelled as something that “caters” too much to prisoners. The cancellation was but one part of a broader re-organization and series of cutbacks. Cost can not be considered a valid excuse, however, as money is always made available for more “law-and-order” or “just desserts”. As argued by Chan and Ericson (1983:229), in times of perceived fiscal crisis and/or a legitimacy crisis, “the government will push the criminal law to the forefront and use ‘law-and-order’ campaigns to secure popular support for its more general policies”. In order to reinforce its security, “the government may bolster criminal-control agencies via enabling legislation and manpower increases” (Chan and

⁵ For further discussion of recidivism rates, see chapter four.

Ericson, 1983:229". At the same time, other programs, like the University program, will suffer. An example of considerable influence was that of the Thatcher government in Britain which increased spending in the area of policing, while decreasing spending in the areas of health, education, and welfare (Chan and Ericson, 1983:229).

In the United States, a similar trend began in 1994, when prisoners were denied access to federal Pell Grants, their major source of funding for higher education. According to Taylor (1999:5), nearly half of the on-site post-secondary education programs in prisons across the United States closed down with the elimination of Pell Grants for prisoners. Of those that remained, half again reduced their curriculum offerings and/or enrollments considerably. According to a follow-up survey conducted by Tewksbury, Erickson and Taylor (cited in Taylor, 1999:5), programs and curriculum continued to erode three years after the loss of prisoners' Pell Grants.

The underlying rationale of the cancellation is that Pell Grants should first go to more "deserving" students or more specifically, those who have not been involved in the criminal justice system. Having been convicted of committing "crimes", prisoners are thought to be less eligible for the privilege of educational funding (Taylor, 1992, 1997). Under the principle of less eligibility, those who have been criminalized are "deemed less eligible to enjoy the same privileges of citizenship and standard of living possessed by the noncriminalized" (Morse, 1995:17). In order to deter offenders, it is believed that prison conditions should be dismal, that prisoners should have less than the least on the outside do. Right wing arguments against higher education in prison include the notion that prisoners should not be "molly-coddled", that prisons are a place for discipline and control. Such arguments claim that prisoners are being rewarded with opportunities that

are becoming increasingly unavailable to “law-abiding” citizens. Many argue that prisoners are receiving a privilege they do not deserve at the expense of taxpayers. As the fear of crime continues to grow, more punitive measures are called for, including the building of more prisons, the implementation of harsher sentences, and the elimination of various programs. This occurs despite clear evidence that a punitive, incarceration-based approach does not work.

As noted by Davidson (2000b:1), any program that does not outwardly assume a host of negative stereotypes about prisoners is generally considered to be romantic, unrealistic, and even loathsome. As prisoners (now known to the general public as “inmates”) connote images of violence and manipulation, it is believed that policies should carry some element of coercion. When prisoners “receive considerable public attention, social policy follows political expediencies and practices become more coercive” (Davidson, 2000b:9). During the “War on Crime”, politicians have learned not to give the appearance of being soft on crime (Como, 1999:9). In turn, the “fear of public and political reaction feeds into a tendency for conservative decision making among prison authorities” (Davidson, 1998:232).

Davidson (2000a:22) also argues that authorities prefer prison labour over education. Whereas prison industries and maintenance work produce revenue or reduce costs, education requires funding. In contrast with this argument, however, is the notion that the cost of providing higher education to prisoners would be minimal if one took into account lowered rates of recidivism and victimization, and the consequent savings from the prevention of re-arrest and re-imprisonment. As argued by The Center on Crime, Communities, and Culture (1997), the cost of higher education is insignificant in

comparison to the cost of damages incurred by crime. As noted by Taylor (1999:2), however, such arguments fall on deaf ears.

The results are not pleasant for prisoners. As noted by a prisoner-student at Mountain Institution, British Columbia, (cited as R.M. in Murphy, 1998), the drive to replace university education with treatment programs further removes links existing between prisoners and the rest of society. The drive for treatment also denies the ability of prisoners to develop individual skills and abilities, and instead focuses upon “positivist prescriptions for proper thinking, proper feeling, and proper living” (p.48). The result, argues R.M., is that prisoners become unable to think for themselves, and instead simply memorize norms rather than actually learning them. Liz Elliot⁶ also pointed out that while university programs provided prisoner with accreditation, treatment programs provide nothing for former prisoners to show potential employers upon release. Nothing, that is, except for proof that they have been in prison.

R.M. (in Murphy, 1998:49) further argues that administering treatment in such a closed system as a prison is “downright dangerous”. To begin with, he argues, psychologists and correctional staff have a vested interest in establishing long-term (and costly) treatment programs for prisoners. Furthermore, R.M. argues, as treatment progresses, further character flaws are likely to be “discovered”, thus calling for more programs. Most important, however, is that “prisoners will become dependent on others for their own social, moral, and psychological definitions” (Murphy, 1998:49).

⁶ Telephone interview, March 2000.

Post-Secondary Education in Canadian Prisons Today

Upon their arrival in prisons, prisoners undergo an educational assessment in order to establish their functional grade or achievement level in accordance with the national standardized measure of achievement. At this time, prisoners are also subjected to other educational assessments such as aptitude and interest testing. Provincially accredited or certified educational programs are then made available based on these needs and interests. Programs include Adult Basic Education, Secondary Level Education, Vocational Education, and Post-secondary Education, although the latter is only offered through correspondence. Upon arrival, approximately 65% of prisoners test below the Grade 8 level, and 82% below Grade 10 (CSC, 1999:1). As a result of these large percentages, Adult Basic Education is the educational priority of the CSC, and also maintains the highest enrollment levels. Secondary education comprises approximately 25% of participation in education programs, and vocational education comprises another 25%. According to the CSC, participation in post-secondary education comprises less than 10% of all prison education programs (CSC, 1996-97; 1999).

Correspondence Courses

Post-secondary education today is delivered to prisoners in Canada through correspondence courses. According to Barbe (1999), all federal institutions in Canada currently approve university correspondence courses. One likely motive is cost, as instruction through correspondence can be provided at a lower cost than providing actual on-site teachers. Both Leclerc Institution and the Federal Training Centre in Québec offer on-site CEGEP (college) courses as well. According to Denis Cantin (2000) of the Federal Training Centre, prisoners, if they are eligible and suitable for it,

may also take a leave without escort and attend a post-secondary institution outside of the prison.

Various prison officials across Canada stated that their prison offers correspondence courses at the undergraduate level. At Drumheller Institution (Alberta) for example, correspondence courses are offered at the undergraduate through Athabasca University⁷. At Drumheller, courses are also offered at the Basic Technology Level from the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology, and one course is offered from the Prairie Bible Institute. During the fiscal year 1999/2000, a total of seventeen courses were registered via these three institutions. According to the Chief of Education and Training at Drumheller, however, graduate and post-graduate courses are never funded via the prison (Mulgrew, 2000)⁸.

For descriptions of some of the post-secondary institutions in Canada that offer correspondence courses to prisoners, please see Appendix A. Jon Marc Taylor, a prisoner in the United States, has compiled the information in this appendix. It has since been discovered that Waterloo University provides correspondence courses in the Arts and Human Sciences to prisoners at Drummond Institution in Québec. Rosemont College also offers CEGEP correspondence courses to this prison. Similarly, the College Marie Victorin offers CEGEP courses to Québec prisoners. Most CEGEP courses are offered in the French language. The Open Learning Agency⁹ also provides

⁷ For more information on the correspondence courses offered at Athabasca University, see Appendix A.
⁸ Athabasca University does offer graduate courses through correspondence (see Appendix A), so it is assumed that prisoners must pay for these courses themselves.

⁹ The Open Learning Agency is a non-profit provider of educational and training services in British Columbia.

⁹ At Drumheller, however, there is an Educational Counsellor that assists prisoners in the registration process at post-secondary institutions in preparation for their release.

correspondence courses at the undergraduate level to prisoners at William Head Institution in British Columbia.

What type of courses are prisoners taking? At Drumheller Institution (Alberta) for example, registrations during the 1999/2000 fiscal year included courses in Economics, Sociology, Accounting, Nutrition, Marketing, Legal Studies, Administration, Technology Communications and Religious Studies. Courses in most prisons tend to center around the human sciences. While computer courses are offered at some institutions, such as Leclerc and the Federal Training Centre in Québec, the warden at Joyceville Institution in Ontario states that there may be restrictions in the type of computer science courses permitted (Morris, 2000).

How many prisoners are generally enrolled in correspondence courses each year? Of the ten prisons who responded upon being questioned, the average was five, although Drumheller was a little higher with eight in the 1999/2000 fiscal year, and Pittsburgh Institution (Ontario) and Saskatchewan Penitentiary were a little lower with only two.

The data on how often prisoners complete their courses varies. According to officials from Collins Bay Penitentiary and Leclerc Institution, prisoners may complete their courses, but rarely a whole program. Officials from the Federal Training Centre in Québec and Saskatchewan Penitentiary also state that prisoners are usually released before they can complete a degree. According to the Chief of Education and Training at Drumheller, however, approximately ninety percent of prisoners complete the courses they register in. The warden at Joyceville also agrees that the majority of prisoners complete their courses.

According to the warden at Drummond Institution (Québec), approximately half of all prisoners engaged in post-secondary education in prison go on to continue their education upon release. At Leclerc, approximately five to seven prisoners a year go on to complete their college education. Most prisons, however, do not know if prisoners continue their post-secondary education after they have been released. As noted by Mulgrew (2000) at Drumheller Institution, prisons are prevented from tracking released prisoners via the Privacy Act.¹⁰ All other institutions questioned kept no record of whether or not prisoners continue their post-secondary education upon release.

According to a 1994 CSC Commissioner's directive (#720), prisoners may be required to pay for their post-secondary education, either in part or in full. The prison may pay for part or full tuition based upon the following criteria:

- a. the offender meets all criteria for post-secondary education as established by the applicable Ministry of Education or any other educational organization recognized by the Ministry;
- b. the past educational record of the offender regarding completion of programs is considered satisfactory by the institution;
- c. the course is considered as a *priority* in his or her correctional plan;
- d. the course is from a recognized and accredited provincial education organization; and
- e. the payment of the participation of the offender is *within institutional budgetary limits* (1994:3; emphases added).

Prisoners, however, generally end up paying for their own education, "unless it can be demonstrated that the education addresses a very specific need" (CSC, 2000). Upon

¹⁰ At Drumheller, however, there is an Education Counselor that assists prisoners in the registration process at post-secondary institutions in preparation for their release.

questioning, five out of twelve officials in prisons throughout Canada stated that prisoners were solely responsible for the cost of their post-secondary education¹¹. According to the Acting Warden at Kent Institution (British Columbia), even this is conditional on the prison's approval, after possible safety and/or security issues are considered (Knopf, 2000). As noted by Liz Elliot¹², unless a prisoner's family can pay for their correspondence courses, it is next to impossible for them to afford a post-secondary education, as they certainly do not make enough money working in the prison to pay for it.

According to the Chief of Education and Training at Drumheller Institution (Alberta), prisoners pay for their education in most cases, but can obtain a Bursary with the assistance of the Educational Counsellor. Prior to funding consideration, a parole officer reviews the Correctional Treatment Plan of the prisoner and this officer makes a recommendation to the Educational Counsellor. Of the fourteen courses registered during the fiscal year (1999/2000) at Athabasca University, prisoners either paid or received a Bursary for twelve of the courses. The fee at Athabasca University is \$404 per course. The total cost this fiscal year for the CSC was \$1081 (Mulgrew, 2000). According to the warden of Drummond Institution (Québec), prisoners pay for their post-secondary education, but the prison gives them regular work pay when they are registered full-time with a minimum of four courses. At Drummond, a teacher is assigned on a part-time basis to facilitate the progress of the students. The cost for post-secondary education thus comes out of the prisoner pay budget as well as the education budget. The

¹¹ These include officials at Collins Bay (ON), Federal Training Centre (Qué.), Kent Institution (BC), Warkworth Institution (ON), and William Head Institution (BC).

¹² Telephone interview, March 2000.

warden believes the cost to be quite low for the prison (Poisson, 2000). The principal at Grande Cache Institution (Alberta) claims that prisoners are responsible for the costs of their post-secondary education, but the prison will give them up to \$300 to put towards their tuition upon completion of a course (Blanchet, 2000). The warden at Joyceville Institution (Ontario) also stated that prisoners are initially responsible for funding their post-secondary education. The cost of a post-secondary education course at Joyceville is \$770.00, plus the cost of textbooks. If prisoners do not have the means, they can apply for a Special Bursary Program through the Ontario Student Assistance Program. If a prisoner is denied, the prison will review the case, and depending on the review, may provide funding through the Education and Training budget. Alain Sirois, Chief of Employment and Education at Leclerc Institution (Qué.), contends that prisoners are given reimbursement from the CSC if they pass their courses. If they do not pass, they pay themselves. The on-site CEGEP courses cost \$3000 per prisoner per year, and correspondence courses cost between \$150-\$200 per course. Prisoners usually take two to four correspondence courses a year. At Pittsburgh Institution (Ontario), prisoners pay for their post-secondary education, but can apply for financial aid from the post-secondary institution they wish to take courses from. Competition is considerable though, as prisoners are competing with students on the outside (MacInnis, 2000). At Saskatchewan Penitentiary, prisoners pay unless it is part of their correctional plan (Moore, 2000).

With the exception of the Edmonton Institution for women, officials at the women's prisons across Canada did not respond to questions regarding the provision of post-secondary education. The Edmonton Institution for Women in Alberta offers

prisoners university and college courses both through correspondence and off-site (on-campus), provided the prisoner is eligible. Since the prison's inception in November of 1995, various women have taken correspondence courses via Athabasca University, but none have applied or been eligible to attend courses on campus. Correspondence courses are offered at the undergraduate level. While the number has varied, the Edmonton Institution for Women generally has two women enrolled in post-secondary courses. In total, there have been eight women to take post-secondary education courses at this prison. There are currently two women taking courses, both in the faculty of arts. One is studying Native Studies, and the other English. In the past, most courses taken have been introductory Arts courses, including English, Philosophy, Psychology, Religion, Anthropology, and French. One prisoner continued working on Business Management Certificate, which she had begun prior to imprisonment. Another prisoner took a set of three Pet and Animal Care courses through the outreach program at Olds College, also located in Alberta (Kordic, 2000; Dobbin, 2000).

While most of the prisoners at the Edmonton Institution for Women finish the class they are enrolled in, none have yet stayed in the prison long enough to have completed a degree. The women have all been released on parole before a three or four-year program can be completed. Of those who have taken courses on the inside, and since been released on parole, one out of three are continuing their studies on the outside.

While the cost of the courses varies, it is approximately \$300 to \$500 per semester. Since the prison does not fund university or college studies, the women have to pay for them on their own. In exceptional cases, women have paid for their courses by saving up

the money they make while in prison. Others have received Student Loan Financing or been eligible for a bursary from the Catholic Women's League.

According to Faith (1993), women at the Burnaby Correctional Centre for Women who qualify for higher education must do so through distance education, which they must pay for on their own. Faith (1993:157) notes that most women at the Burnaby prison do not engage in full-time education, partly because they cannot afford it. While women are paid to go to school, as they would be for a work assignment, it is the lowest paid of institutional options. According to Faith (1993:157), kitchen duty is the highest paid assignment, thus making it more desirable.

Impediments to Obtaining a University Education in Prison

In reviewing the past and present means of providing university education in prisons, it becomes evident that there are advantages and disadvantages to both. While the University of Victoria program did have a tendency to follow the correctional ethos, prisoners enjoyed it, performed well, and were at least provided with on-site instructors. With its demise in 1993, however, prisoners are now forced to take correspondence courses if they wish to obtain a post-secondary education, usually at a considerable cost.

Morris (1973)¹³ points to the numerous values of distance education. For example, it allows for instruction in prisons that have no teachers or classrooms. It also provides for those prisoners who are not allowed to leave their cells. Distance education allows for instruction on an individual basis, and permits students to go at their own pace. It also provides a variety of courses and meets a diversity of needs. For example, distance education provides higher-level courses, and courses wherein too few prisoners are

¹³ While Morris writes from the United States, his arguments can be applied to distance education in general.

interested to justify giving them on location. As noted by Lawrence (1994:40), distance education is also “least likely to disturb current social attitudes about what prisoners are supposed to be and do”.

Richards-Allerton (1994), however, points to the many problems with distance education in arguing that it does not allow for student-teacher interaction, classroom rapport, in-class discussions, or the opportunity for students to interact with those outside the prison system. Barr (1989), going beyond the definition of the teacher as a technician, argues that teachers are necessary to provide a love of subject matter, and overall, a love of learning in general. Taylor (1994:128), in discussing his experiences with correspondence courses, notes that “[t]here were no professors to answer direct questions and to set weekly deadlines, thus no sounding boards for complex or confusing ideas and no immediate incentive not to procrastinate”. Taylor (1994) also found the lack of classmate discussions and lectures by professors to be problematic as this meant there was nothing to fill in any missing points or arguments in textbooks.

As noted by Taylor (1999:6), “prisoner-students operate under a whole set of general and institutionally unique circumstances that the traditional correspondence student and thus administrator never faces”. For example, given that the students are prisoners, they are less apt to be able to make a telephone call to a teacher for assistance, clarification, or reassurance. Delays are also apt to occur in sending and receiving material (Locke and Galler, 1988). Also problematic with some correspondence courses is that they are only offered over the Internet. As Taylor (1999:7) notes, he does “not know of a single prison that offers access to the Internet to their prisoners”. Ennulat Wilson also notes that distance education requires a great deal of discipline and

motivation on the part of students. Distance learning may also create a sense of remoteness within students, as though they are receiving an “impersonal service from an impersonal behemoth” (1994:152). Evidence suggests, however that a return to on-site higher education in prisons may not be much of an improvement, not only for the social control issues that will be discussed in chapter four, but for various other reasons.

Williford (1994a:1) suggests that various issues and problems are common to prison higher education programs. As can be seen in the following arguments, both conflict and accommodation permeate the relationship between higher education and corrections. Jones (1992) notes that the atmosphere in which prison educational programs operate is often subject to variable attitudes among the correctional hierarchy. He argues that friction between higher learning and corrections can be attributed to conflicting aims, as the aim of corrections is one of custody and control, whereas the aim of education is freedom, growth, and self-actualization. Coffey (1994) furthers this argument by stating that prisons and universities/colleges are indeed at opposite extremes. To begin with, prisons are for the most part closed to the general public, and are often hidden away outside of city limits. They tend to be organized in a military fashion, and emphasize discipline, conformity and obedience. Within the prison, security is the foremost concern, not the transformation of prisoners' lives. Colleges and universities, on the other hand, are wide open, and are often in the center of a community. As Coffey (p.77) notes, "they foster inquiry, free speech, individuality, and growth. They often appear undisciplined and disordered. Knowledge, and empowerment through knowledge, is their main concern". Williford (1994b:70) argues that higher education

symbolically redefines prisoner-students "in ways that contradict the symbolic definitions that make up the goal of incarceration".

According to Jones, prisoners who engage in higher education are often subjected to harassment and terrorism by guards. These prisoners are accused of being arrogant, or of trying to 'con' the system. Jones argues that this resentment on the part of lower-level personnel is due to prisoners being politicized. Jones and d'Errico (1994:1) note that problems confronting the higher education of prisoners are most often ideological and moral, "arising in the tension between competing visions of what prisoners themselves *are*, and, accordingly, what prisons *should* or *ought* to be". Conflict also arises as prisoners in higher educational programs are receiving a benefit that is often beyond the reach of guards and their families.

Faith (1996) also notes that when outsiders (such as teachers) enter the prison, they can be perceived as threatening the routine of the institution, and the authority of the guards. Jones and d'Errico (1994) note that guards can become hostile when they perceive that teachers do not share their views on imprisonment and the role of staff in depriving prisoners. As noted by Coffey (1994), however, the cooperation of staff is absolutely necessary. Otherwise, students may not arrive on time, classrooms may not be open, and equipment may not be functioning. Instructors may also be subjected to harassment, may be forced into strip searches or long delays before being allowed to enter the prison, or may even be barred from the prison. Class materials may not reach their destination as a result of screening by guards, or may later be confiscated as contraband. Mason (1994) also notes that "[o]ur (Mary Baldwin College program, Virginia) survival rate must have had a magnetic effect on the officers' radios, because it

seemed the more we studied, the louder their radios got. At first this was a little distracting, and, as the semester progressed, it became extremely irritating". Jones and d'Errico, however, argue that it is important to remember that without the cooperation of prison officials, educational programs would not exist. Silva (1994:18) also argues that "colleges and universities are able to deliver education to prisoners precisely because prison administrators allow it and are generally supportive".

Many others problems arise within prison education. For example, "there are no teachers' unions or associations able to defend working conditions. Curricula change is not subject to intense debates among competing interests. There are no school boards prepared to fight for prison schools if the choice is between saving these schools and preserving more conventional programs" (Davidson, 1995:xiv). As a result of the ever-present threat of cutbacks, teachers are continuously forced to look elsewhere for employment. Student turnover is also high for various reasons. Often, there are few resources for practitioners to draw upon. Education programs in prisons do not offer much of what students on the outside are likely to consider necessary for higher education, such as comprehensive libraries, adequate computing facilities, and other educational resources. Locke and Galler (1988), for example, note that in 1987, when courses in library studies were being held at Collins Bay by Concordia University, texts required to complete the courses were not always available in the library, were too expensive to purchase, and were not available through interlibrary loan. Jones and d'Errico (1994:5) also note that recruiting competent teachers is "hindered by a general lack of awareness about prison higher education, geographical obstacles, and departmental lack of interest or outright opposition". This often leads to a reliance on

teachers who are inexperienced. Taylor (1994), when discussing on-site programs in the United States, also notes a lack of courses available to students of senior status, thus making it more difficult to fulfill one's major's requirements. Correspondence courses then become necessary.

Prisons, as a matter of course, tend not to be designed for the adequate education of prisoners. Many obstacles serve to subvert learning in such an environment. Often times, prisoner-students are scheduled to be elsewhere at the same time as a class. Kiser (1987) notes that for a variety of reasons, guards often bring prisoners to class late, and pick them up before class is over. For example, when cellblock counts run late, students are late for class, and in turn, may have to leave class in order to be present for a count. Students are sometimes withdrawn for visits, interviews, and punishments. If a prisoner-student is called to an administrative office or some other area, even tests must wait. Those prisoners locked in isolation units are deprived of their education. Lock-downs and staff disruptions also pose many problems for education programs. An entire program may be shut down if there is a disturbance, or even the expectation of one. Furthermore, the prison environment tends to be chaotic, noisy, stressful, and generally not conducive to study (Lawrence, 1994; Brodt and Hewitt, 1984). Taylor (1994), notes that as a prisoner-student, he had to study with radio headphones on in order to drown out noise, and also had to nap during the day so he could read in the quiet of the night. Taylor also notes the difficulties involved in converging with other students in order to form study groups, as meetings with over three prisoners (excluding sporting activities) were considered "illegal gatherings", unless a bible was present and conversations were of a religious nature.

Lawrence (1994:49) argues that transfers also often nullify prisoners' abilities to take courses. Germanotta (1995:112) notes that it is often the most promising students who are transferred, without regard for their educational interests. He also adds that prisoners who persevere and receive degrees are often transferred to prisons where there are no advanced educational services.¹⁴ Richard Cepulonis, for example, after having received his Bachelor of Arts within Walpole Prison, was refused transfer requests to other prisons where he might continue his education. He was also denied parole hearings when he became eligible, despite the fact that his crimes had occurred well over a decade previously, and he had since turned himself into a responsible and educated civil rights' advocate. As Ennulat Wilson (1994) argues, with so little incentive, it certainly is not easy being a student in prison.

McCarthy and McCarthy (1984) argue that study release programs, wherein prisoners are allowed to attend school on temporary release (sometimes supervised by a guard), are the best means of providing prisoners with quality education. University campuses can often provide updated equipment and technology where prisons cannot. It also greatly benefits prisoners when they are allowed to socialize with classmates and prisoners in the outside world. Furthermore, releasing prisoners on study release can reduce expenditures on teaching staff and equipment in prisons. Unfortunately, very few prisoners are

¹⁴ A brochure put forth by Simon Fraser University (1985) argues that the B.C. program was better able to deal with transfer problems, as at least half of the program's courses were offered in four out of five of the federal institutions, thus minimizing the potential for disruption.

deemed eligible for study release. Nor is this ever likely to be approved by the general public.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

Research Problematic

As stated by Berg (1998:23), "[r]esearch problems direct or drive the research enterprise". The guiding research problem of this study is the examination of the real-life experiences of those who have attained some post-secondary education while imprisoned in Canada. This problematic has led to the following questions: What are the experiences of those who have received their post-secondary education while imprisoned? What are their thoughts and feelings about these experiences? Were there any particular concerns or problems encountered during their experiences? What has their education meant to them? What has it done for them? These questions are guided by the following central question: How is post-secondary education being played out in prisons? Answering the latter question also entails an examination of the theories typically used to legitimize prison educational programs.

Action Research

As noted in the introductory chapter (page 3), this thesis constitutes what Mathiesen (1974) refers to as action research, as it calls for an improvement in the higher education of prisoners. Reinharz devotes a chapter of her 1992 text, Feminist Methods in Social Research to feminist action research. The author notes that many feminists argue that feminist research is inherently linked to action. Such feminists believe that research must not consist of simply mechanical observation, but rather research must be oriented towards social and individual change. Action or change-oriented research works to empower, liberate, and otherwise assist specific groups of people, in this case prisoners.

Research must “create new relationships, better laws, and improved institutions” (Reinharz, 1992:175).

Investigation solely for the purpose of investigation is inadequate. Researchers must not only provide evidence that there is a problem, but must also provide a plan for remedying it. This plan must explain how to make things happen, how to change social reality and make society more equitable. This is where Freire’s pedagogical methods come into play. While the meager university education provided to prisoners now is highly inadequate, the implementation of Freire’s methods would be much more empowering and liberating.

Reinharz (1992:191-194) notes that part of feminist action research involves *demystification*. Demystification refers to a change in consciousness that occurs in the relatively powerless, causing them to consider their situation in a new light (Reinharz, 1992:192). Reinharz argues that the very act of obtaining knowledge about certain groups of people creates the potential for change, simply because of the relative scarcity of research on them. As the needs and opinions of prisoners, for example, “are not known, their views have less influence on the conditions under which they live. Thus, the study of certain groups is political because it demystifies”, and raises consciousness (1992:191).

Feminists argue that societies are maintained by distorted ideologies. In demystifying the theory and practice of such societies, one must expose the contradictions and manipulations. A different form of understanding can therefore become a form of action. A political theory can become transformative if it helps

individuals to rethink their lives, reshape their possibilities, and resists official definitions of reality (Reinharz, 1992:192).

Research Design

Qualitative Research and Document Analysis

In comparison with quantitative methodology, a greater depth of understanding can often be achieved through qualitative research methods (p.2): "[Q]ualitative techniques allow researchers to share in the understandings and perceptions of others and to explore how people structure and give meaning to their daily lives" (Berg, 1998:7). For Van Maanen (1983:9) qualitative methodology seeks to describe, decode, and translate naturally occurring phenomena in the social world. According to this author, a qualitative researcher places figurative brackets around a domain of the social world (1983:9-10). Within these brackets are the territory to be examined and described. The research project in question focuses on university education in Canadian prisons. Two target populations will be examined. The first is mainstream North American culture, and its conventional typifications and taken for granted 'truths' in regards to prisoners/'criminals' and their relation to education. This exploration will primarily be done through a literature review. Having established the conventional typifications of prisoners in this regard, the social implications of these typifications will be analyzed using the second target population. The second target population consists of individuals, both male and female, who have experienced some degree of post-secondary education while in prison. Relations between conventional typifications of prisoners and education and the reported experiences of these individuals will be examined. These individuals, through their writings, will provide the crux of the information in regard to my research

questions. Through document analysis, information will be gathered on their reported experiences, what these reported experiences tell us about post-secondary education in Canadian prisons, and what the consequences are for prisoners.

At the heart of qualitative research is an interest in other individual's stories, as they are thought to be of considerable worth in and of themselves. Examining documents written by prisoner-students and their teachers is of particular experiential value as it allows researchers to access the perspectives of the participants, and consider the ways in which they see the content and pattern of their experiences (McCracken, 1989). These texts also provide much detail. Researchers are able to access not only the personal beliefs and thoughts of the participants, but are also often provided with detailed descriptions of situations, events, and interactions (Patton, 1980).

Documents put forth by various agencies have also been examined in order to gain further understanding of the current and past post-secondary education practices in Canadian prisons. These documents have given context to the study, and have informed analysis. Analytical questions included: What were the objectives of the Correctional Service of Canada in implementing post-secondary education programs in prisons? What did they expect to achieve? How was this played out in practice? Unfortunately, sources in this area have proven scarce. Most information tends to be self-serving to the Correctional Service of Canada.

It is important to keep in mind during this portion of the research that the social construction of information is something that absolutely cannot be taken for granted (Smith, 1990). Documents or texts, including those put forth by official organizations such as CSC, must be seen as constituents of social relations, and in particular, unequal

social relations. Smith argues that reasoning, “facticity”, rationality, and sense-making all must be investigated in relation to prevalent social practices. She argues that relations of ruling are always present in texts in underlying form. The result is the production of a one-sided version of the world. The subjects of many texts, in this case prisoners, are present in the representations of reality, but often have no voice in their making. Access to lived actualities is therefore lacking. It is for this reason that texts written by former prisoners themselves, as well as radical critics of education, such as Paulo Freire, have been chosen.

Validity and Reliability

To best produce experiential validity, this research will employ what Stanley and Wise (1990:22) refer to as a grounded inductive approach, as opposed to either deductive or inductive approaches. Within the deductive approach, the researcher "begins with broad theoretical generalizations and tests their ability to deal with specific instances of phenomena" (Palys, 1997:43). In this top-down approach, theory is used to guide research. In criticizing deductive research processes, Stanley and Wise argue that it is not "possible that theory is untainted by material experiences in the heads of theoreticians" (p.22). Inductivists also argue that "such theory is unlikely to be profound, and may represent little more than a premature imposition of theoretical blinders that says more about the theoretician than about the phenomenon under consideration" (Palys, 1997:49). Within inductive research, it is argued that one should begin by observing, and generate theories later. The belief is that theory should not be imposed upon a study, but should instead "emerge from, or be grounded in the context of everyday life" (Palys, 1997:43). In criticizing inductive research, Stanley and Wise argue that researchers do not begin a

study with an 'empty head'. Rather, they argue researchers' understandings are contextually specific, as they are temporally, intellectually, politically and emotionally grounded. Analyses and theories are thus inevitably grounded in the material experiences of the researcher (p.23). Stanley and Wise call for the use of grounded theorizing, which is derived from experience, and analytically entered into with an inquiring mind. The authors argue that such research is continually subject to revision, and is thus reflexive, self-reflexive, and accessible to everyone. Stanley and Wise refer to this as "feminist standpoint epistemology" (p.25), wherein research becomes not only located within, but also proceeds from the grounded analysis of real experiences. Knowledge comes to be derived from a committed feminist exploration of experiences of oppression, in this case, those of former prisoner-students. Stanley and Wise argue that this approach is scientifically preferable, as it is more complete and less distorted.

Within grounded theory (or any form of research, for that matter), data do not simply unfold. Rather, the researcher essentially composes a story that reflects herself as well as those observed. As Locke et. al. (1987), note, the interests and values of the researcher are frequently a particular source of motivation. The personal beliefs of the researcher often affect how a research problem is viewed, and might be expected to influence the interpretation of data. In order to best achieve reliability, one has to ensure that their own perspectives do not interfere with the process of data analysis, and also that they do not simply select those elements in the data which support their research goals and disregard those that do not. These dangers can best be avoided through sensitivity, awareness, and introspection. A researcher must examine their own thoughts and

feelings and also place themselves in the position of those they are studying. One is best able to avoid the problem by being aware of it.

Stanley and Wise (1990) also note that it is imperative to recognize and value difference and complexity while conducting research. The authors argue that one must engage in deconstruction in order to recognize both differences and similarities. Former prisoner-students may have a multiplicity of varying experiences. Being a prisoner and being subjected to the common experience of oppression does not mean all prisoners will necessarily have a common set of experiences. Furthermore, while prisoners may share experiences of oppression, they may not necessarily be the same experiences. As Reinharz (1992:252) argues in reference to women, prisoners can be alike in some ways, but dissimilar in others. The contexts within which different prisoners live, work, and make sense of their worlds differ widely. Prisoners' ages vary, as do their geographic locations. Economic situations, religious beliefs, sexual orientations, physical health, political persuasions, race, ethnicity and more all vary. Pre-carceral factors may play a role in the prison experience. For example, a prisoner from a troubled background with little formal education may experience things differently than another prisoner who is a middle-class University graduate.

As can be seen from the above examples, one must not assume that prisoners share one single reality. Assuming prisoners' oppression to be a single, determined state assumes that by definition, prisoners have no power. Stanley and Wise (1990) argue that oppression should be seen as a complex phenomenon, wherein the oppressed are only rarely totally powerless, as they are ordinarily equipped with a range of resources to fight back, whether these be verbal, interactional, or other.

Information Analysis

Analysis for this thesis will largely follow a model provided by Kirby and McKenna (1989:97), and will involve what the authors refer to as unmasking, creating, affirming, sharing and reconstructing. **Unmasking** involves questioning current knowledge, understanding who created this knowledge and why, as well as understanding whose meanings and experiences are being presented. **Creating** involves building knowledge out of the understanding that those on the margins (in this case prisoners) and those of the status quo experience things differently. **Affirming** involves understanding the ways in which those on the margins of society are kept invisible, and furthermore affirming those on the margins by remaining faithful to their experiences rather than exploiting them. **Sharing and reconstructing** involves creating knowledge for social change, combining knowledge with action.

This study looks at patterns and a network of interlocking messages and themes in the literature. In general, the design put forth by Kirby and McKenna involves examining data items and groupings and determining how and if they form patterns. This is done through constant comparisons until sections that belong together are identified and can be placed in category files. This is an ongoing process, especially as analysis and data collection overlap. As Locke et.al. note (1987:84), the "reduction, organization, manipulation, display, and, above all, contemplation of data are primary rather than secondary activities in this form of research". In this type of study, the self becomes the primary research instrument. Key indicators as to the role of post-secondary education in prisoner's lives will include among others issues, the composition of programs described, and the attitudes or thoughts and feelings of students and teachers. These are found in a

search of secondary data, empirical studies done by other researchers, as well as prisoners' voices in written testimonies and statements.

Chapter Four

EDUCATION AS A MEANS OF SOCIAL CONTROL

Order Theory and it's Approach to Education

As noted by Horton (1966:7), all theories define and explain behaviour from socially situated value positions. Horton separates existing theories into order and conflict models. As stated by Horton (1966:8), “order models imply an *anomy* theory of societal discontent and an *adjustment* definition of social deviation. Conflict models imply an *alienation* theory of discontent and a *growth* definition of deviation.”

The primary concern of an order model is the maintenance of the status quo. The order model views society as a unified system wherein everyone is to share culture and values. Order theorists hold a positive attitude toward the maintenance of social institutions. Balance, stability, authority and order are considered necessary for the social good, or social *health*. From this perspective, deviance is equated with non-conformity to institutionalized norms and is a form of *pathology*.

Social problems, deviance and conflict are believed to result from and promote anomie. Anomie refers to a “system imbalance or social disorganization – a lack of/or breakdown in social organization reflected in weakened social control, inadequate institutionalization of goals, inadequate means to achieve system goals, inadequate socialization, etc. ...anomy results in the failure of individuals to meet the maintenance of the social system” (Horton, 1966:9).

According to Merton (1967) this failure occurs when there is an imbalance between goals and means. The problems of prisoners, for example, are created by their exclusion from equal competition for dominant goals. Culturally defined goals, purposes

and interests are held out to be legitimate objectives for all members of society. In American society, for example, monetary success is a primary goal. Cultural structure also defines, regulates, and controls the acceptable means of reaching such goals. The choice of legitimate means for striving toward cultural goals is thus limited. Deviant behaviour occurs when there is a gap between culturally prescribed aspirations and socially structured avenues for realizing these aspirations. Merton (1967:110) argues that in cultures wherein there is much more emphasis placed upon the goals than the corresponding institutional procedures, the most effective procedure, whether it be legitimate or not, will be chosen. Merton argues (p.111) that cultural or personal exaggeration of the success goals causes people to stray from the rules. As this continues, anomie or normlessness occurs.

Merton identifies five different types of adaptation to culturally prescribed goals. The first and most common, is *conformity* to both cultural goals and institutionalized means. Merton (p.115) argues that if conformity were not so widely diffused, the stability and continuity of the society could not be maintained.

Innovation occurs when the individual has been assimilated to cultural goals, but has not internalized the institutional means for goal attainment. According to Merton (1967:119) deviance is a “normal” response when there is little access to conventional means for success. Merton (1967:119) argues that “the status of unskilled labor and the consequent low income cannot readily compete in *terms of established standards of worth* with the promises of power and high income from organized vice, rackets and crime” (italics in original).

Ritualism involves abandoning or at least scaling down cultural goals. As Merton (1967:123) observes, the ceaseless competitive struggle present in American capitalist society leads to acute status anxiety. By rejecting cultural goals, one's aspirations can more easily be met and anxiety can be relieved. While high ambitions lead to stress and frustrations, lower aspirations produce satisfaction and security. Although the ritualist does give up on cultural goals, he or she continues to abide by institutional norms. While the rejection of societal goals is not culturally preferred, it is not generally considered to be a social problem.

Retreatists reject both cultural goals and institutional means. According to Merton (1967:124), this form of adaptation is likely the least common. It includes, as examples, vagrants, chronic drunkards and drug addicts. Defeat and resignation result in these forms of escape from the requirements of society. As noted by Merton (1967:125), retreatists are strongly condemned by conventional representatives of society as non-productive liabilities.

Rebellion involves persons outside of the social structure seeking to bring forth change to society. Rebels are those who have been alienated from both dominant goals and means. They have either directly or vicariously experienced frustration, which has led them to reject their previous values. The source of these frustrations are located in the social structure, and an alternative structure is portrayed.

The failure to reach cultural goals is thought to reflect one's personal shortcomings or a lessening of withdrawal or ambition. Criticism is deflected from the social structure onto the individual who did not have full and equal access to opportunity. Order theorists propose to solve deviant adaptations through the extension of social

control and increased institutionalization of social system values. Those who follow the order model aim to “ameliorate” individuals and assimilate them to system needs. The goal is to encourage the “deviant” into “legitimate” social roles. This way, problems are solved without changing basic economic and political institutions.

Horton (1966:15) discusses how liberalists fall into the order theory category. Liberals believe in the power of socialization and conversion to dominant values. Given a minority, a prisoner for example, “the (American) liberal would transform him (sic) altogether by turning him (sic) into another American, another individual competing in an orderly fashion for cars, television sets, and identification with the American Creed” (Horton, 1966:16). As Horton (1966:20) notes, the liberal solution involves the “expansion of opportunities for mobility within the society and socialization of the deviant to expanding opportunities. Hence, the importance of education and job training; they are prime means to success and higher status.”

From a structural-functionalist or order theory perspective, Talcott Parsons argued in 1959 that schools serve two purposes. The first is to socialize students, and instill in them attitudes, knowledge, and skills necessary to live in society. Second, schools serve to allocate students to particular positions in the social order. This is done through grading and sorting students for the purposes of the labour market. From a structural-functionalist view of education, “structural processes such as crowds, power, praise, and the homogeneity of classroom tasks reproduce in students the dispositions necessary to cope with achievement, hierarchical work roles, and the patience and discipline required to function in the existing society” (Giroux, 1983:49). Indeed, it is argued that schools reflect society, and allow new generations to carry it forward in time (Gaskell, 1998).

The functionalist view of education is a happy one; it views education as benefiting both the individual and society. As noted by Gaskell (1998:322), “[i]t is particularly popular with those who are successful in school, because it suggests that what they learn is important, and that their success justifies their continuing privilege as adults”. This positive view of education, however, has been challenged by conflict theorists, particularly for ignoring the political and economic interests that are legitimized through schooling. It is argued that functionalists fail to “question the underlying logic that gives shape to the institutionalized relationship among power, knowledge, and classroom control” (Giroux, 1983:50).

Critical Approaches to Education

From a conflict perspective, society is not considered to be cohesive unit that functions for the benefit of all. Rather, society is seen as a site of struggle between different groups with differing amounts of power and resources. Conflict theorists argue that those with the most power are likely to control education and impose their interests upon it. Conflict theorists agree with functionalists that schools reflect what is required to be successful in society, but they take this further and argue that “this is the case only because the dominant classes control both the schools and the larger society and use them both to perpetuate their own power” (Gaskell, 1998:322). Schools do teach values and knowledge, and they do sort students. They do this, however, not for the common good, but for the greater good of capital and those already privileged. From this perspective, ‘truth’ does not reside in abstract definitions of principle, but is largely the outcome of power struggles that cannot be removed from either history or existing networks of social control (Giroux, 1989b).

A major critic of education in the eighteenth century, William Godwin (cited in Spring, 1975), argued that the state is able to spread its ideology into the schools in order to derive more political power. A primary goal of most educational systems, he argued, has been to internalize a set of beliefs within individuals, resulting in their unquestioned support of the existing social structure. Political and social order are maintained by instilling particular conceptions of law and morality. By controlling public opinion, the state is able to perpetuate its institutions and achieve continued support. As noted by Ericson (1987:25), in his discussion of instrumentalist models of the state, state institutions and civil institutions, such as schools and the media, “intersect to reproduce social, political, economic, and cultural consensus, ensuring that ‘right’ thinking and acting people support the prevailing order of things, the existing hierarchy, the status quo”. Social stratification is reinforced, but at the same time, political and social unrest is greatly reduced. The state is therefore not considered to be merely an arena for collective decision-making, but rather a “potent and autonomous organizational actors [sic] able to formulate and pursue goals not always harmonious with the demands of specific interest groups” (Ratner and McMullan, 1987:10).

Education and the Capitalist Economic System

Freire (Gadotti, 1994) argues that within institutionalized schools, technocratic reasoning is stressed, as are individualist and consumerist ethics. Education becomes a means of inculcating the capitalist ethic within individuals. Illich (1983) also writes of the hidden curriculum that permeates schooling. Within schools, people come to believe that bureaucracies guided by scientific knowledge are efficient and charitable, and that increased production leads to a better life. In actuality, Illich argues, schooling

encourages alienating production, a dependence on institutions and the self-defeating consumption of services, and a dependence on institutional ranking. Illich argues that schools do this in all countries, regardless of the prevailing ideology.

Francisco Ferrer, another major critic of institutionalized education (cited in Spring, 1975:22-24), also argues that systems of schooling are organized to maintain industrial society. Ferrer argues that the purpose of schooling has been to produce well-trained and well-controlled workers in the modern industrial state. In this sense, schooling “has a technological and rationalistic orientation which seeks social improvement through more orderly social planning and increased efficiency.... This model is concerned primarily with increased economic productivity and social stability” (Spring, 1975:130). Schools thus aim to produce obedient servants not only for the state, but the corporation as well. People become human resources functioning for the social machinery. As stated in Spring (1975:23), workers are trained to “be punctual, obedient, passive, and willing to accept their work and position”. Through education, individuals are trained to submit to authority, and doing the will of others becomes such a matter of course that habits of mind are formed. It is often argued that vocational and general tracks are those most likely to emphasize rule-following and close supervision, whereas college and university-bound tracks tend to lean toward a more open atmosphere, but still emphasize the internalization of norms and standards of control (Giroux, 1983).

According to American libertarian philosopher Paul Goodman (cited in Spring, 1975), the real function of schooling is to grade and market skills. Schooling is a process by which the individual is “stamped, graded, certified, and returned to society...[all] for the benefit of the ruling industrial élite” (Spring, 1975:56). Individuals are classified,

sorted, and shaped, then sent to their “proper” niches. McLaren (1997) also notes that this differential reproduction is based upon the lines of class, race, and gender injustices. Ferrer (Spring, 1975:23) argues that the notion that a government would create a system of education that would result in radical change to society is inconceivable. According to Ferrer (Spring, 1975:23), human emancipation cannot be achieved through national education, as the only concern of those working within the system is the enslavement of the individual. Freire (1997) argues that this is done through what he refers to as the “banking” method of education.

Freire and the “Banking” Method of Education

In many educational programs (in prison or otherwise¹), teachers often come from the middle or upper economic strata, and are members of the “educated elite” (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:67). From a Freirian perspective (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:67), such educators often possess a lack of confidence in students’ ability to think and to know, and thus treat them as passive recipients of knowledge. Teachers often simply assume students’ needs, and rarely take action to alter the status quo. As a result, oppression is not addressed, and changes do not occur (Dana and McMonagle, 1997).

Freire refers to traditional forms of education as the “banking” method. The idea is that students are objects into which knowledge is placed, rather than subjects engaged in a learning process. Within the banking method of education, it is the educator who knows, and the students who do not; it is the educator who speaks, and the students who listen; it is the educator who makes choices while those of the students are silenced

¹ While Freire does not address prison education specifically, his ideas and pedagogy are quite applicable. While prisoners are not the same as Brazilian peasants, both groups are oppressed. Freire’s work has been shown to be applicable in a variety of contexts. The following section refers to education and students in general, but could also be applied to prison education.

(Gadotti, 1994). While ignoring the development of critical thinking, banking systems function “fundamentally to kill our curiosity, or inquisitive spirit, and our creativity” (Freire, 1985:2). The banking method of education perceives people to be adaptable, manageable objects. Such programs rarely have anything to do with the real life of the student, and are usually an attempt to work on and change the student. This reflects the assumption that fundamental problems lie not within society, but within individuals. In the case of poverty, for example, the banking system assumes that the individual is poor because they do not know how to function properly in society. The same argument has been made for those who deviate from the laws. Through the banking system, attempts are made to change the individual so they can better conform. Models of what they should be like are presented to the oppressed. These models are shaped by the oppressors and serve to perpetuate the dominating order. As noted by Spring (1975:70), “both the content and moral imperatives of the banking method reflect the ideology of the ruling class”. Connolly (1980:70) also notes that “[p]ower is inseparable from education. Those who hold power define what education will be, its methods, programmes, and curriculum”. Connolly also argues that “[w]here the learner is defined as a passive object, a context is created wherein he or she becomes not only dependent, but also mute”...this results in a “culture of silence in which large numbers of people become trapped in an ignorance defined and imposed by others” (p.70). The educational system, argues Freire, is one of the major instruments responsible for this “culture of silence”.

Given that ideology shapes their knowledge, the people are in effect not using knowledge, but are themselves being used by their knowledge. The full development of human reasoning is thus denied, and injustice and inequality abound. Individuals become

learners, with no freedom of will, rather than creative persons. Freire (1997) argues that rather than being encouraged, and equipped with the ability to critically evaluate concrete reality, the dispossessed are “submerged” in a situation wherein this is practically impossible. The more (prisoner) students concentrate on storing the deposits given to them, the less likely they are to develop a critical consciousness which would result in their acting towards social change. The more people accept the passive roles assigned to them, the more they tend to adapt to the world as it is, and to the fragmented views that are deposited in their minds. The more critical thinking is minimized, the more the interests of the ruling are served, as they do not want the world to be revealed, nor do they want it transformed. While providing education appears to be a humanitarian act, it actually serves to preserve a profitable situation. The “humanism” serves to mask the effort made to turn people into automatons rather than fully human beings. While education is put forth as a means of solving social problems such as poverty, crime, and racism, essentially what it has done is make people feel as though they were doing something good without actually making any fundamental changes. When individuals are told they are the problem, and the social system is not blamed, the existing order of society is not threatened. As argued by Cohen (1985), the rhetoric of benevolence deflects criticism from larger problems. While education may be well intentioned, it ends up masking coercion. Education is really just another means of reproducing social order by creating docile and useful citizens.

According to Francois Guizot, a political leader in France in the 1840’s (cited in Spring, 1975), the guiding and dominating of the mind was formerly the terrain of the church, but this institution has given way to the role played by education (Guizot refers to

universities specifically). In more modern times, Ivan Illich (1983) also refers to the school as the new church. According to Illich, “[s]chool has become the world religion of a modernized proletariat, and makes futile promises of salvation to the poor of the technological age” (p.15). Illich argues that the school performs three functions that have historically been conducted by the church. The school, argues Illich, is simultaneously the repository of society’s myth, the institutionalization of contradictions surrounding that myth, and the location wherein the reproduction and veiling of the disparities between myth and reality occur.

Foucault and Education

Foucault (1995), in his text *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, refers to Jeremy Bentham's *Panopticon* prison design as a prime example of power and surveillance. Panopticon's design consists of a circular range of cells with windows on each side, and a central observation point. Bentham developed this technology to solve the problems of surveillance and discipline that arise when a large number of people are under the control of only a few. From the central tower, guards are able to observe everything prisoners do, thus giving the guards much power and control. Visibility and control are organized entirely around this dominating, overseeing gaze. Power becomes rigorous and meticulous, as guards are equipped with an all-seeing power.

The aim of Panopticon is not solely to punish individuals, but also to prevent them from committing any further wrongdoing by means of constant supervision. This arrangement is not only spatial however, as Panopticon affects participants’ mentality as well. Foucault refers to this as interiorisation. Power comes to be exercised over “individuals themselves, to their bodies, their gestures and all their daily actions”

(Foucault, 1980: 152). Foucault argues that prisoners will come to the point when they become their own overseers, exercising surveillance over themselves.

According to Foucault (cited in Collins, 1995), such techniques of surveillance, normalization (to be discussed below), and power relationships also serve to shape the practice of education. As are prisons and asylums, schools are institutions of moral and social regulation, replete with techniques of control, power, and knowledge. Foucault (Rabinow, 1984:17) argues that within the school, the docile body "may be subjected, used, transformed and improved". Within the school, there is a notion of a general rule to be followed. The rule "measures in quantitative terms and hierarchizes in terms of value the abilities, the level, the 'nature' of individuals. It introduces, through this 'value-giving' measure, the constraint of a conformity that must be achieved" (Foucault, 1995:183). The overall rule functions as a minimal threshold, an average to be expected, or as something to strive for. Under the gaze of this rule, individuals are separated, analyzed, and differentiated in order to best be put to use. Through such techniques, the school effectively renders individuals more governable. The rule *normalizes* people, but also serves to define difference or abnormality, which results in exclusion. Within the school, "[d]iscipline 'makes' individuals; it is the specific technique of a power that regards individuals both as objects and as instruments of its exercise" (Foucault, 1995:170). Foucault argues that such power, however, is not triumphant or omnipotent, but rather modest, and practiced through minor, but calculated and permanent, procedures. Indeed, the success of such power derives from the use of such simple techniques as hierarchical observation, normalizing judgement and their combination in the form of the examination.

The school, in its essence, has become an apparatus of examination. In referring to the examination, Foucault (1995:184) argues that “[i]t is a normalizing gaze, a surveillance that makes it possible to qualify, to classify and to punish. It establishes over individuals a visibility through which one differentiates them and judges them”. As noted by Hoskin (1990), the examination has also resulted in the quantifying of human qualities, with the advent of numerical values, such as 10/10, or 100%, and the intelligence quotient (IQ). Purpel (1989) argues that the practice of grading serves as an obstacle to the learning process, especially as it is arguably impossible to produce grades that are reliable and fair. According to Purpel (p.8), common practices currently surrounding the examination, such as multiple choice tests, cramming and memorizing, “are at best distracting, and at worst counter-productive to serious learning”. Furthermore, students come to be more concerned with grades than actual meaning. This produces anxiety, unhealthy competition, and sometimes cheating. Although it may be of dubious value, Purpel (1989:8) argues that grading is “absolutely vital to a culture that puts enormous stress on success, achievement, and individuality and to a system that requires social and economic inequality”.

Surveillance and examination are also applicable to teachers, as they too must be regularly examined by inspectors. As schools become more and more managerial/bureaucratic, control is further exerted over teacher’s work through the use of management techniques. Schooling is increasingly becoming subject to the logistics of market competition, leaving teachers with little say in any decision-making, and essentially making them powerless. The current focus is on having curricula prespecified in whole, in a manner that it is controlled by efficiency, cost effectiveness, and

accountability (Ball, 1990b). Giroux and McLaren (1989:xxiii) note that an emphasis on “standardized testing, massive accountability schemes for teacher evaluation, standardized curricula, and top-down, get-tough approaches to school discipline, has further contributed to the de-skilling and disempowerment of teachers”.

The examination (of both students and teachers) serves to leave behind it an archive of documentation. Individuals find themselves in a whole network of documents that capture and fix them. Referring to Foucault’s work, Collins (1995) argues that education in prisons not only accommodates the surveillance and control of prisoners, but is indeed integral to the panopticon. MacLean (1992) notes that the practice of education generates information about prisoners in terms of grades, progress reports, and written papers, thus leaving a considerable amount of information open to scrutiny. Everything a prisoner does becomes vulnerable to exposure and evaluation. Through documentation, individuals can be compared, groups described, collective facts characterized, and overall phenomena measured. As noted by Mayhew (1989:17), to administrators, “that is what prisons and prisoners are about: facts, figures, numbers, surveys, statistics, and paper. A thousand times more care and attention is given to these details than is ever awarded the individual inside the system”.

The individual thus became a describable, analyzable object in an attempt to maintain permanent records of individual features, particular evolutions, aptitudes and abilities. The creation and documentation of one’s biography comes to signify who one officially “is”. This works to substantiate an overall view of the person. In prison then, the stigma of being a ‘con’ becomes more official with the construction of more documentation. Whereas committing someone’s historiography to writing was

previously a procedure of heroization, it now functions on a regular basis as a means of control, objectification, and subjection (Foucault, 1995). It is for these reasons that Hoskin (1990:48) refers to education as “the perennial handmaiden of power, power’s supplement...its centre”.

Freire and Antidialogical Action

Freire (1997a) argues that forms of oppression are played out through what he refers to as antidialogical action. Freire is referring to the notion that oppressors very rarely engage in dialogue with, or acknowledge the needs of, the oppressed. As will be seen with the arguments of Freire, Reiman, and Mathiesen, antidialogical action functions in a manner to assure the maintenance of the status quo and structural functionalism.

In characterizing antidialogical action, Freire notes that one of its primary aims is to conquer others, namely the oppressed. In the act of conquest, the oppressors “attempt to destroy in the oppressed their quality as ‘considerers’ of the world” (Freire, 1997a:120). This is done “increasingly and by every means, from the toughest to the most refined, from the most repressive to the most solicitous (paternalism)” (Freire, 1997a:119). One such means is to mythicize the world. The world designed to increase alienation and passivity amongst the oppressed is presented as a fixed entity, to which people, as mere spectators, must adapt. Conquerors impose their objectives on others, so that the oppressed essentially become their possessions. As the oppressed internalize the imposed contours, they are effectively reduced to “things”. Freire (1997a) argues that antidialogue is necessary not only for economic oppression, but for cultural oppression as well. Furthermore, antidialogue is indispensable to the preservation of oppression.

Other myths deposited within individuals in order to maintain the status quo

include:

...the myth that the oppressive order is a 'free society'; the myth that all persons are free to work where they wish, that if they don't like their boss they can leave him and look for another job; the myth that this order respects human rights and is therefore worthy of esteem; the myth that anyone who is industrious can become an entrepreneur...; the myth of the universal right of education...; the myth of the equality of all individuals...; the myth of the heroism of the oppressor classes as defenders of 'Western Christian civilization' against 'materialist barbarism'; the myth of the charity and generosity of the elites...; the myth that the dominant elites, 'recognizing their duties', promote the advancement of the people, so that the people, in a gesture of gratitude, should accept the words of the elites and be conformed to them; the myth that rebellion is a sin against God; the myth of private property as fundamental to personal human development...; the myth of the industriousness of the oppressors and the laziness and dishonesty of the oppressed, as well as the myth of the natural inferiority of the latter and the superiority of the former (Freire, 1997a:121).

Freire (1997a) argues that these myths, as well as numerous others, are presented to the oppressed through well-organized propaganda and slogans, primarily through the mass "communications" media. Freire further notes the irony in such alienation being referred to as communication.

Freire (1997a) also argues that in order to remain in power, the oppressor minority divides the majority, and strives to keep it divided. In order to weaken the oppressed, and best serve their own interests, the oppressors work to isolate the oppressed, and to create rifts among them. This divide and rule dimension, argues Freire, is as old as oppression itself. It is perceived as necessary amongst the oppressors as the unification of the people would be a threat to their hegemony. While concepts such as unity, organization, and struggle are dangerous to the oppressors, they are put forth as dangerous to *everyone* in an attempt to reduce the likelihood of the liberation of the masses. Accordingly, any

actions that could awaken this need for unity are halted by any means possible, including violence.

One means of dividing the people is by breaking regions down into “local communities”, rather than considering them in their totality. The more this occurs, the more alienation and division are intensified. Freire (1997a) argues that such actions keep the oppressed from critically considering reality, and also make them less aware of the problems of the oppressed in other areas. Furthermore, only selected leaders are promoted, rather than the community as a whole. These leaders tend to preserve a state of alienation, and hinder critical consciousness and intervention, making unity even more difficult. Another means of keeping the people divided is by distributing benefits to some, but not others.

Those who consider actions that may lead to unity know that they will be “blacklisted”, possibly lose their job, as well as prospects for any other jobs. As such, they are rendered dependent, insecure, and permanently threatened - essentially enslaved and dehumanized. This is all so that the oppressors can “save their riches, their power, their way of life: the things that enable them to subjugate others” (Freire, 1997a:127).

Another characteristic of antidialogical action, argues Freire (1997a), is manipulation. It is through manipulation that the elites attempt to conform the masses to their objectives. This is largely done through the myths described earlier, as well as the myth of upward social mobility. Evidence of the acceptance of this myth is seen in the acceptance of the capitalist economic system. Manipulation, argues Freire (p.130), “like the conquest whose objectives it serves, attempts to anesthetize the people so they will not think”. Welfare programs, for example, act as an anesthetic by “distracting the

oppressed from the true causes of their problems and from the concrete solution of these problems” (p.133). Welfare programs also serve to further divide the people, as everyone hopes to get more benefits for themselves.

In regards to division and manipulation, Reiman (1998) discusses the utility of the criminal justice system (both in ideology and praxis) in creating and managing divisions. Reiman (1998:4) argues that while crime is an actual threat, a distorted image is portrayed to all that crime is primarily committed by the poor. He further argues (p.4) that “[t]he value of this *to those in positions of power* is that it deflects the discontent and potential hostility of Middle America away from the classes above them and toward the classes below them”. This “not only explains our dismal failure to make a significant dent in crime but also explains why the criminal justice system functions in a way that is biased against the poor at every stage from arrest to conviction” (Reiman, 1998:4). Even definitions of crime are concentrated primarily on acts more likely to be committed by poor, while equally or more dangerous acts of the élite are excluded or de-emphasized, despite the loss of thousands of lives and billions of dollars. This distorted image legitimizes the status quo “with its disparities of wealth, privilege, and opportunity and thus serves the interests of the rich and powerful in America – the very ones who could change criminal justice policy if they were really unhappy with it” (Reiman, 1998:4).

Reiman (1998:4) suggests we look at the criminal justice system “through the looking glass”. He argues that the system’s real goal is actually the reverse of its stated intentions. While the system claims to fight crime, it fails to do so for the benefit of the powerful. Reiman (1998:18) argues that the goal of criminal justice policy is not to reduce crime, but rather to maintain it. When looking through the looking glass, we see

that image prevails over reality. For this image to be believable, however, there must be some reality to back it up. Reiman (1998:5) argues that “[t]he system must actually fight crime - or at least some crime-but only enough to keep it from getting out of hand and to keep the struggle against crime vividly and dramatically in the public’s view-never enough to substantially reduce or eliminate crime”.

Reiman (1998:40) argues that given that the sources of crime are largely social and economic, the solutions to crime should be very obvious. The author (p150) argues that the causes of the failure to solve the problem are threefold. First, there is the failure to implement policies that may work to reduce crime. Second is the failure to identify as crimes the destructive acts of the rich and powerful. Third is the failure to eliminate economic bias in the criminal justice system, so that the poor continue to have a substantially greater chance than the rich of being arrested, charged, convicted, and penalized for their actions. Given that serious attempts are not made to rectify these failures, it becomes apparent that a high crime rate is actually accepted by those in power. The system’s failures are, however, only in the eyes of the victims; for those in control, they are a “roaring success” (Reiman, 1998:40).

Reiman (1998:151) argues that current criminal justice policy persists for two reasons. The first is that the failing system provides benefits for those with power, while imposing costs on those without power. With the sole emphasis on the crimes of the poor, an ideological message arises that serves to protect the wealth and privilege of the élite. Discontent and hostility become directed at the poor. In the process, people come to ignore the ways in which they are harmed, robbed, or killed by the acts of the affluent. The second reason for the persistence of current policy is that the criminal justice system

shapes the public's conception of what is dangerous, and this gives the impression that the harms it is fighting are the *real* threats to society. Thus, when people see that the system is not working, they simply demand more of the same: more police, prisons, longer sentences, and so forth. Harsher doses of "law and order" become directed mainly at the poorer classes. Society becomes more and more conservative, leaning even further away from a progressive demand for equality and an equitable distribution of wealth and power.

In Reiman's discussion of the implicit ideology of criminal justice (1998:156), he argues that the system "conveys a subtle yet powerful message in support of established institutions". By focussing on *individual* wrongdoers, the criminal justice system "*diverts our attention away from our institutions, away from consideration of whether our institutions themselves are wrong or unjust or indeed 'criminal'*" (Reiman, 1998:156, emphasis in original). By morally condemning individuals, the system ignores "the social order that may have either violated the individual's rights or dignity or literally pushed him or her to the brink of crime" (Reiman, 1998:158). Not only does the criminal justice system divert attention away from the injustices of social institutions, but these institutions are further bestowed with a mantle of neutrality. The message is portrayed that our institutions are not in need of questioning, that the justice of them is obvious, and not to be doubted. "Indeed, because it is deviations from these institutions that are crimes, the established institutions become the implicit standard of justice from which criminal deviations are measured" (Reiman, 1998:158).

Reiman (1998:164) argues that associations between crime and poverty do not mitigate the image of individual moral responsibility for crime. Rather the image is

portrayed that poverty is the result of an individual's poor character. Poverty is thought to be a sign of individual failing rather than a symptom of social and/or economic injustice. Reiman states that the clearest example of this is found in that aiding the poor is regarded as an act of charity, rather than an act of justice. The belief that people are poor because they deserve to be so draws attention away from the need for fundamental change in our social and economic institutions. Reiman (p.164) argues that "when the poor individual is found guilty of a crime, the criminal justice system acquits the society of its responsibility not only for crime *but for poverty as well.*"

Mathiesen's (1974) writings on the social functions of imprisonment also apply to Freire's discussion of division and manipulation. The first function of imprisonment discussed by Mathiesen (p.77) is the *expurgatory* function. In a capital economic system, productivity is of the essence. Criminalization and imprisonment are means of getting rid of those who are unproductive, partly because they create inefficiency in the system of production, and partly because they are a brutal reminder that our system of production is not so successful after all. From this perspective, "the rulers of the prison system are merely the executives of the expurgatory system in society" (Mathiesen, 1974:77). The second function of imprisonment, according to Mathiesen (p.77), is the *power-draining* function. Here, Mathiesen is referring to the notion that prisoners, being confined and isolated, are rendered completely powerless in relation to their rulers. The third function of imprisonment is the *diverting* function. Here, Mathiesen argues along the same lines as Reiman later did. Mathiesen (1974:77) argues that acts that endanger fellow human beings are largely committed by those with power in society. He gives the examples of pollution, the exploitation of labourers in a manner dangerous to their health, production

forms which ruin the life standard of the working class, and so forth. Punishment, however, is largely directed against the poor. The law is much more apt to criminalize their acts, and they also have less possibility of avoiding sanctions. Imprisonment then serves to divert attention away from the dangerous acts of those in power. This diversion is much supported by the mass media, who act as a selective filter in their portrayals of crime and prisoners to the public. The final function of imprisonment is *symbolic*. This refers to the stigmatization that occurs when one is imprisoned. Those on the outside are defined as better, more correct, more harmless, while those on the inside are painted as evil. Mathiesen (1974:77) notes that “‘disturbance’ of the social functions of imprisonment is met by considerable resistance, because it indirectly ‘disturbs’ some main features of the social order”.

Freire (1997a) argues that the final characteristic of antidiological action is that of cultural invasion. Like divisive tactics and manipulation, cultural invasion serves to meet the objectives of conquest. In this phenomenon, views are imposed upon the invaded, with no respect for their own potentialities and creativity. Cultural invasion is not only an instrument of domination, but is also a result. In the former sense it is deliberate and planned, in the latter, it is but a product of oppression.

Education, for example, is influenced by a rigid and oppressive social structure. Education therefore patterns its actions to meet the needs of the social structure, and works to transmit the myths of the latter. Students come to internalize these myths, and when they become professionals, tend to repeat the rigid patterns they learned, and themselves come to adhere to antidiological action. The effects of domination thus become the carriers, and oppression is preserved.

Hegemony

Whereas Freire's writings of antidiological action focus heavily on instrumentalism, one must keep in mind Gramsci's argument that the state is a "complexly structured totality", wherein the long-term interests of capitalism are indeed dominant, but "within which there is also evidence of a real responsiveness on the part of the state to the interests of labour and civil society as a whole" (Taylor, 1987:202). The labouring class accurately feels that it does have some influence with the state, and so consents to the existing form of domination. According to Gramsci (Taylor, 1987:203), acceptance of domination arises because the state does indeed respond to popular needs and demands. Domination is best achieved not through coercion, but through "the manufacture of consent", or hegemony (the universalization of capitalist class interests). As Foucault (1995:102-3) notes, quoting Servan (1767), "[a] stupid despot may constrain his slaves with iron chains; but a true politician binds them even more strongly by the chain of their own ideas...". As such, the reproduction of social order becomes more secure. Gramsci (Taylor, 1987:204) argues, however, that bourgeois rule is tenuous, and not an automatic condition. Rather, it requires a continuous and pervasive effort. As such, hegemonic control varies greatly from society to society.

Education as a Means of Social Control in Prisons

Throughout this chapter, it has been argued that education is but one of many forms of social control. Needless to say, social control also rears its head in post-secondary education in prisons, perhaps even more than usual. According to Alma Cota (cited in Faith, 1975:125), "the prison and education systems are really one system. Both institutions degrade and humiliate the person.... Both exist for the protection of society

and its property. Both institutions have tracking systems according to race and class. Both are used for stabilizing labor and branding inmates”. Furthermore, both institutions attempt to pacify students and prisoners; both are tools for enforcing conformity and docility.

MacLean (1992) questions whether some forms of educational programming in prisons should be considered in terms of personal development, or rather as forms of social control. MacLean argues that in many cases, education can be considered a means of prisoner control “under the guise of liberal, rehabilitative ideology” (1992:27). Gamberg and Thomson (1984:82) also note that rehabilitation can have “totalitarian” implications. A prison educator, for example, is still in some way a jailer. Liberal means lead totalitarian ends: obedience and compliance on the part of the prisoner.

MacLean (1992) also argues that even when couched in the realm of liberalism, education is never neutral, as educators are able to influence what is learned. As prisoners internalize the desired norms, they effectively become their own jailers. Support for these arguments is evidenced in the following section on the theoretical justifications for the provision of education to prisoners. The underlying assumption is that while education may be seen as an improvement in a prisoner’s lot, it can also be seen as an instrument of control in sustaining the prisoner’s relative position in the social hierarchy. In chapter two, it was noted that post-secondary education programs in prisons have tended to follow either a cognitive/moral deficiencies model, or an opportunities model. These two models will now be looked at more closely.

Theoretical Justifications for Prison Education

The form that prison educational programs take tends to be shaped by popular attitudes about crime, criminals, and the purposes of punishment (Jones and d'Errico, 1994). The following models provide rationales through which the education of prisoners has been legitimized. As will become evident, the opportunities model, and the cognitive deficiencies model contain overlapping concepts (Collins, 1995).

The Opportunities Model

The opportunities model became popular in the 1960s and 1970s and is rooted in functionalist theories (discussed at the beginning of this chapter). Davidson (1995b:3) notes that under this model, prisoners are thought to have offended as a result of a lack of academic, vocational, and social skills, which served to block legal opportunities. Education is a means of socialization and conversion to dominant values.

MacLean (1992: 21) notes that "with few exceptions, prison education is described as personal development: the acquisition of skills/knowledge which will be useful in getting a job, developing a new world view, and above all else staying out of trouble". Cordella (1995) also notes that education is most often used as a means of developing a prisoner's ability to work and thereby gain access to the dominant culture. As Coffey (1994: 74) argues, it is believed that higher education in prisons "will increase the likelihood that those who leave the prison will not return but will become productive citizens". This is the essence of the opportunities model.

The roots of the opportunities model lie in the reform model rather than the treatment rehabilitation model. The reform model commenced with religious instruction

and turned to vocational training in the post-war period. Now, as noted by Morris (1973:18), it is believed that education can provide a second chance “for the previously unmotivated person”.

According to Davidson, the opportunities model is now the official model used for educating prisoners across North America. Under the CSC, prisoners are provided with educational programming “to assist them to reintegrate into the community as law-abiding citizens” (CSC, 1996-1997:3). The CSC further argues that “where inmates do not have such knowledge and skills the chance is much greater that they will use the skills and knowledge of a deviant culture in efforts to cope with the world” (1999:3).

Jones (1992), however, states that higher education as a means of rehabilitation is limited in that, in avoiding public outcry, administrators often refrain from allowing programs that will be of use beyond the prison gates. The granting of credits for courses taken, as well as degree programs, are often opposed. Cordella further argues that the main reason education as a means of reintegration fails is that “reintegration is primarily determined by structural conditions rather than by an individual’s will and personal accomplishments” (1995:147). Assuming a labeling theory approach, Cordella argues that “the stigma of being a prisoner constitutes a ‘master status’, that negates whatever positive status may be achieved by earning a university degree” (1995:147). This master status as ‘criminal’ is difficult to remove and for many prisoners may be irreversible. Having been in prison, the former prisoner is often stigmatized as a lifetime member of the “criminal class”, and condemned to a life of poverty (Olson, 1996). The opportunities model also ignores that such problems are likely to be exacerbated for ex-prisoners who are non-Caucasian, and especially for those who are from low-income,

urban ‘slum’ neighbourhoods. This will further be discussed in chapter five with Rivera’s writings on the non-traditional approach to education.

The Cognitive Deficiencies Model

According to Davidson (1995b), the cognitive deficiencies model gained considerable support during the 1970s and early 1980s, and continues to have considerable influence on prison education. While this model is very similar to the opportunities model, and both may be considered order theories, it is just slightly different because of its medical orientation. Within this model, the offender is regarded as having a disorder as a result of his or her psychological and/or social history. Offenders are seen as deficient in cognitive, moral, social, and emotional development. This is believed to be a result of “a wide variety of environmental, familial, or cultural factors including abusive, overcontrolling, or undercontrolling parents, or a lack of exposure to individuals who model problem-solving skills or social perspective-taking. They may reflect inadequate training in communication or empathetic skills or a lack of emphasis on or reinforcement for problem-solving efforts in school” (Ross et.al., 1988:46).² The belief is that deficiencies can be treated with behavior modification or *normalizing* techniques. Education is thus provided as a means of (re)habilitation, a means to reduce recidivism rates by reshaping prisoners.

Ross and Fabiano (1985) argue that many offenders are action-oriented, and that rather than reflecting on their actions, they react impulsively. The authors argue that offenders often do not *think* effectively or insightfully. According to Ross and Fabiano,

² This section focuses largely on the work of Stephen Duguid, Robert Ross, and Elizabeth Fabiano. The work of these authors is inextricably linked (Duguid, 1993:57), and they each cite one another frequently.

"many offenders have never acquired critical reasoning skills and they evidence a host of thinking errors" (1985:9). Ross and Fabiano (1985:207) go as far as stating that prisons are "cognitive slums; ghettos of impoverished thinking and inadequate intellectual stimulation...". The authors go on to argue that prisoners' most common thinking error is to place blame for their actions on other people or circumstances beyond their control. Ross and Fabiano argue that offenders frequently use simplistic and illogical reasoning, as well as thinking that is shallow, narrow, inflexible and maladaptive. Accordingly, it is believed that offenders view the world in absolute terms, and fail to recognize complexities. Thus, offenders are thought to adopt immediate and simple solutions to complex problems (Porporino et.al., 1991).

Ross and Fabiano argue that "many offenders have not progressed beyond an ego-centric state of cognitive development" (1985:9). According to Freud, the id controls one's biological drives; the ego screens, controls, and directs the impulses of the latter; and the superego acts as one's conscience. From the perspective of psychoanalytic theory, criminal behaviour occurs when an individual fails to pass through the early stages of this development. This is thought to result in the superego being inadequately developed or deficient, leading to antisocial behaviour. According to Porporino et.al. (1991:3), those who have not progressed beyond the egocentric stage

...are unable (or fail) to distinguish between their own emotional states and thoughts and views and those of other people. Lacking this ability, they misread social expectations and misinterpret the actions and intentions of others. They also lack the ability to form acceptable relationships with people (including employers and spouses). This prevents them from developing appropriate means of dealing with interpersonal problems.

A cognitive deficiencies model is thus expected to have an impact on the prisoner's *thinking*. Targeted are the prisoner's reasoning, attributions, self-evaluations, expectations, his or her understanding and his or her appraisal of the world. According to Ross and Fabiano (1985:8), successful cognitive skills programs “increase the offender's reasoning skills, improve his sensitivity to the consequences of his behavior, teach him to stop and think before acting, increase his interpersonal problem-solving skills, broaden his view of the world, help him to develop alternative interpretations of social rules and social obligations, and help him to consider and comprehend the thoughts and feelings of other people”. The aim is to instill cognitive and moral development so that upon release, prisoners can function as ‘normal’ members of society.

MacLean (1992) notes that during the 1960s and 1970s, numerous post-secondary education programs were introduced in various countries. Douglas Ayers and Stephen Duguid developed a liberal arts program for prisoners at the University of Victoria, British Columbia, in 1972. Although only a few actually graduated with degrees, hundreds of prisoners attended the University of Victoria program during its years of operation, from 1972 to 1980. As mentioned previously, this program also became a model for many others, including those at William Head and Mountain Institutions³. Ayers and Duguid largely employed a cognitive-skills model. They believed that criminals were “deficient” in their problem-solving, interpersonal, and social skills, and that they suffered from cognitive and moral “developmental lags”, all of which were believed to impede one's functioning adequately in “straight society” (Ross and Fabiano, 1985: 23). According to Duguid, offenders' thinking had not developed past the stage of

³ See Molero, Garrido, and Esteban (1993) for an example of the influence of the cognitive deficiencies model in Spain.

adolescence. Duguid argued that offenders' thinking reflected the following characteristics: "reliance on authority, intolerance of ambiguity, rigidity, inability to see alternative solutions to problems, poor ability to role-play, poorly defined self-concept and extreme and polarized judgements" (Ross and Fabiano, 1985:23).

Ayers and Duguid employed Lawrence Kohlberg's cognitive development approach, based on a developmental model of human growth and maturation.⁴ It was assumed that prisoners had poorly developed moral reasoning caused by improper socialization, but could advance to a higher stage of development through cognitive and moral education. Once this was achieved, it was believed that the prisoner would be less likely to re-offend upon release. Duguid (1980a:8) argues that while cognitive development was "meant to improve the quality and clarity of the individual's perceptions through increasing sophistication of mental structures", moral development was "meant to affect how those perceptions [were] interpreted and acted upon". This training was thought to improve offenders' abilities to adapt to their environment, and thus reduce their chances of returning to a "criminal life-style" (Ross and Fabiano, 1985:177). Duguid (1980b:30) argues that "[t]he aim is by no means to produce saints, but rather to strive for a less egocentric individual with a more balanced vision of how the world works and the role and responsibilities of the individual within that world". One means of striving for this aim was by attempting to isolate the program from the prison atmosphere, and creating an alternate community within the prison. It is believed that by placing prisoner-students in social relationships with 'straight' persons, "unlike those

⁴ Ayers and Duguid's program was also based upon the work of Thomas Lickona, Yochelson and Samenow, as well as others.

[they] may have known before” (Duguid, 1980:30), their long-held beliefs may be changed.⁵

Critique of the Cognitive Deficiencies and Opportunities Models

The distinction between the cognitive deficiencies and opportunities models is minimal. Both models focus on questions of individual inadequacy and malintegration (Gamberg and Thomson, 1984). While the cognitive deficiencies approach looks at cognitive, moral, and social deficiencies, the opportunities model assumes prisoners to be unskilled, and that it is their fault they have not successfully integrated into the “straight” world because they have either given up on or rejected cultural goals. Both models attempt to correct the individual and are legitimized as means of reducing recidivism. Essentially, both assume something is wrong with the individual, attempt to repair the damage, and argue that this correction will lead to “good citizenship” (Collins, 1995). Prisoners come to be treated as objects, “things to be examined, treated, and cured” (Jones and d’Errico, 1994:15). Both models also serve to legitimate those who follow social norms and at the same time discredit other forms of behavior. In essence, “both are merely alternative strategies for an identical social goal” in that both attempt to correct individuals by socializing them into prescribed social norms and values (Gamberg and Thomson, 1984:29).

Both the opportunities and cognitive deficiencies models fit into what Horton (1966) refers to as *order theory*, as opposed to *conflict theory*. Those who follow an order model of society are conservative in their commitment to the existing social order.

⁵ In reference to the use of Kohlberg’s cognitive development approach, Collins (1995: 55) argues that while Kohlberg did argue that certain conditions could lead to retardation in cognitive and moral skills, he “never claimed that an improvement in moral, or practical reasoning would necessarily lead to a higher

As described at the beginning of this chapter, order theories are based on the idea of consensus. Theorists see society as being unified by a shared culture and agreement on values. In general, those who promote order models are committed to maintaining the status quo and equate deviance with non-conformity to institutionalized norms. As can be seen in the area of prison education, solutions to social problems often include the expansion of legitimate opportunities and the socialization of the “deviant” to dominant values. Education and job training are of prime importance, as they are believed to lead to success and higher status. Analyses of society that follow an order model are most likely to be expressed by professional establishments. Conflict theorists, however, claim to remain outside of, in opposition to, and marginal to established professions (Horton, 1966).

Conflict theorists reject the order model. From a conflict perspective, order analysis is simply a strategy used by elite persons to promote their own values and rationalize social control. Whereas order theorists see society as based on consensus, conflict theorists see a continuous political struggle between groups with opposing goals and perspectives. Whereas order theorists accept existing practices and values as standard, conflict theorists question their legitimacy. A key concept is alienation, which refers to a separation from a desired state, an inability to realize group and/or individual goals. Social problems are seen to arise from the exploitative and alienating practices of dominant groups. Rather than promoting the extension of social control, conflict theorists argue for the radical reorganization of society. Change is the response to alienation.

level of ethically informed action”. Rather, Collins argues that Kohlberg's theory was simply adapted by those such as Duguid, and made to 'fit' their specific program's needs.

The cognitive deficiencies and opportunities models of prisoner education clearly fall under order theory. These models ignore many factors. The individualistic approaches fail to adopt a fully social analysis of crime⁶. The varied nature of deviance is not considered, nor are power and social control (Clinard, 1995; Ratner, 1987). Individualistic approaches do not wish to truly empower prisoners, and major changes to the social system are not called for. MacLean questions whether such forms of educational programming should be considered in terms of personal development, or rather as a form of prisoner control “under the guise of liberal, rehabilitative ideology” (1992:27). Ericson (1987:28) also argues that whether something is portrayed as rehabilitation or punishment, the bottom line is social control. While rehabilitation is portrayed in a positive manner, this simply serves to ease public conscience for what is actually a “convenient administrative practice for suppression, even repression, of troublesome people”. Furthermore, Ratner (1987:7) argues that from the perspective of radical criminology, “[c]onservative and liberal criminologists are viewed as blocking social change and preventing the wider realization of social justice, since they divert political opposition and help to implement repressive government policies”.

By arguing that deviance is a result of deficiencies within the individual, what the opportunities and cognitive deficiencies models have done is “blame the victim”. Ryan (1971) argues that blaming the victim is an ideology used to justify changing individuals

⁶ Clinard (1974) notes, however, that theories, including individualistic ones, such as can be seen in the cognitive deficiencies and opportunities models, are constantly being modified, and that not everyone in a given field believes in, or follows the general approach used in her or his area. A more moderate view, for example, sees both biological and environmental factors as playing a role in generating delinquency. Clinard notes that traditional specialized approaches are starting to be abandoned, and that social factors are increasingly being taken into consideration.

as opposed to changing society. Within the cognitive deficiencies model of prison education, for example, education is used to change prisoners' ways of thinking, rather than change the structural conditions that are likely to have led to their imprisonment. While the failure of the prisoner is the primary focus of attention, other important factors are ignored, such as "unequal distribution of income, social stratification, political struggle, ethnic and racial group conflict, and inequality of power"(Ryan, 1971:14).

Ryan notes that the process of blaming the victim is often very subtle. He argues that victim-blaming is so central to contemporary social thought that it is hardly noticed. In a manner quite fitting to the cognitive deficiencies model of education, Ryan (1971:6) argues that "[v]ictim-blaming is cloaked in kindness and concern, and bears all the trappings and statistical furbelows of scientism; it is obscured by a perfumed haze of humanitarianism". Those who engage in blaming the victim do indeed often have a genuine concern for the victims. They often do so in good consciousness, and believe they have a genuine commitment to reform. As such, blaming the victim does not come forth as reactionary tactic, or a form of open prejudice. Rather, victim-blaming is an ideal, almost painless means of evading social problems. Ryan (1971:xv) argues that "the ideology of Blaming the Victim so distorts and disorients the thinking of the average concerned citizen that it becomes a primary barrier to effective social change". The humanitarian focus disguises this means of blocking social change. Injustices and inequalities can never be fully understood or eliminated until this ideology is shattered.

Chan and Ericson (1983:223) also suggest that good intentions are often translated into bad practice, and that alternatives may not end up being *genuine* alternatives. As noted by Cohen (1985:20), new programs are likely to become

supplements, rather than alternatives, thus expanding the scope of the prison system and the intensity of social control. Through programs such as education, the system simply enlarges itself and becomes more intrusive. Chan and Ericson (1983:223) cite Foucault in his argument that each successive reform strategy is simply “a refinement of the technology of punishment and redistribution of the power to punish”. Rothman (cited in Chan and Ericson, p.223) also argues that penal reforms are conveniently absorbed by various components of the prison system to further their own interests. Chan and Ericson (1983:224) note that studies suggest that “competing demands within the system work to serve the interests of wider bureaucratic control, functional convenience, and organizational survival”. Successes and failures thus become questionable. Who are they successes or failures for?

Chan and Ericson (1983:224-5) make note of the various crime control measures that have been used since the mid-eighteenth century, from hanging, corporal punishment, transportation and imprisonment to parole, counseling, diversion tactics, and so forth (these are a but a few examples). Many, many means have been used, but none have stopped crime. The authors note, however that “the perpetually expanding array of devices has given ever-increasing discretionary latitude to the agents of criminal control and the agencies they represent. These agencies sell themselves by claims that they can control the phenomenon; when they fail, they are given even more resources to control the phenomenon in an escalating spiral that has yet to be reversed” (Chan and Ericson, 1983:225). As a result, the state’s goal to reproduce discipline and punishment is fulfilled.

Programs such as prison education, however, make the system appear to be compassionate and thus serve to legitimate the criminal justice system. As noted by Cohen (1985), the rhetoric of benevolence buttresses a long-discredited system, deflects criticism, and justifies more of the same. Programs such as prison education, rather than undermining the functions of imprisonment, actually serve to facilitate its acceptance. While treatment programs such as education may be well intentioned, they simply end up being a masked form of coercion. As noted by Cohen (1985:38), benevolence ends up being a “monster in disguise”, and leaves us with wider, stronger, and different nets. Prison education becomes simply one in a number of means used to create docile and useful citizens, and functions to reproduce social order.

Mathiesen (1974) argues that the reproduction of social control can possibly be avoided if theories, or more generally, social order, is left unfinished, in sketch. ‘Unfinished’ refers to the idea that goals should remain non-integrated and without boundaries. Boundaries are to be abolished as they maintain the prevailing system. Within the unfinished, ambiguity is tolerated, rather than an emphasis on the status quo. The unfinished can be attained through engaging in action research, the purpose of which is to continuously build a bridge between new knowledge and practical action. Action research is geared toward social and individual change, and works to empower and liberate.

In referring to change and reversion, Mathiesen (1974:13) argues that “any attempt to change the existing order into something completely finished, a fully formed entity, is destined to fail...”. It is necessary that a long-range revolutionary goal be maintained, and continually returned to. This, however, is not very feasible, and certainly

has not been evidenced in practice. Through a process of absorption, practice often departs from the long-range goal. According to Mathiesen (1974:20), absorption involves at least three elements. Through *incorporation*, a new idea/theory is allowed only in reduced form from the beginning. Concentration on the long-range goal is thus rendered difficult. Through *initiation*, the rebel is initiated into the secrets of the system. As this communication is privileged, the rebel is thereby brought to silence. The third element involves *being held responsible* as a practitioner who performs duties for the system. While all types of absorption may be resisted through adherence to the long-range goal, all are difficult to elude, especially the third. Mathiesen argues (1974:20) that one cannot avoid one's responsibility for having led the development away from the long-range goal.

Mathiesen (1974:23) claims that striving for both short-term and long-term reform at the same time *is* possible, provided that the relationship is left open. Short-term goals must not be the final goals, but rather steps on the way to something that is unfinished. As long as reform is not limited in a simplified manner, there will be contradiction as well as competition within the system, leaving things open to change.

Mathiesen (1974:24) believes that the beginning of the unfinished takes place through the abolishment of the established order. Only by abolishing the finished can the unfinished begin to appear. Mathiesen (1974:25) argues, however, that reforms that are meant to improve may, through their adjustment to and legitimization of the prevailing order, postpone the abolition and the unfinished. Work for reform, no matter its good intentions, may end up strengthening the prevailing order. When boundaries are erased, however, they may also open the way for influence from other unwanted systems, which

the old system, with its boundaries, was able to keep out. Mathiesen (1974:28) therefore argues for a continually rotating transition to the unfinished. Work for abolition and the alternative of the unfinished must not only be a long-range goal, but must take place always, as directly and concretely as possible. Abolition must be a fairly immediate and constant objective. Mathiesen does, however, grant that this would not be easy.

This section has argued that the cognitive deficiencies and opportunities models are problematic for a variety of reasons. Among these is that neither model acknowledges that offender reintegration is primarily determined by social conditions rather than individual reasons. The emphasis on correctionalism is particularly problematic as it objectifies prisoners. Both models are simply too controlling. Also problematic with both the opportunities and cognitive deficiencies models is that rather than evaluating programs on their pedagogical merit, or students' ability to grasp new concepts, apply and criticize them, assessment is often concerned with measuring reductions in pathological conditions and recidivism.

Post-Secondary Education and Recidivism Rates

The research and literature on whether or not education affects recidivism is quite divided, and most of the evidence appears to be inconclusive. Faith (1996) argues that while recidivism is the most conventional means of measuring the success of a program, it might also be the most flawed. Taylor (1992) also argues that given the questionable methodology of much of the research done on post-secondary education and recidivism, the validity of the results are difficult to determine. For example, Thorpe et. al. (1984) argue that educational programs are only one component of a prisoner's experiences, and it is therefore difficult to identify the separate effects on post-release behavior.

Seashore and Haberfeld (1976) also argue that basing studies solely on recidivism rates provides an incomplete picture of the prisoners' lives. The authors note that an individual released from prison may generally act in a conforming manner for quite some time, but eventually be arrested and returned to prison for a single transgression, often times minor. Measuring the success of educational programs generally does not take into account the differing degrees of seriousness in offences. An individual being returned to prison for smoking marijuana, for example, should not indicate that an educational program was unsuccessful.

Furthermore, basing the success of educational programs on recidivism rates does not take into account differential treatment by law enforcement and supervisory agencies (parole and probation). Davidson (2000b) argues that the disproportionate number of minorities in prison is partly due to poverty and unemployment, but also to discriminatory criminal justice practices. Different individuals, upon committing offences of a similar degree of seriousness, have a different likelihood of being apprehended. While all types of people commit crime, the crimes of poor minorities are more apt to be noticed by the police and to result in arrest. Certain districts are subjected to more intense surveillance by police, thus increasing one's likelihood of being returned to prison. Rivera (1992:31) argues that in the United States, African American and Latin American districts are apt to experience the force of the police as "slave patrols". In Canada, aboriginals comprise three percent of the general population, but fifteen percent of the federal prison population (CSC, 2000). Davidson (2000b:8) argues that "as offenders move through the criminal justice system educated middle and upper class offenders are released or diverted to non-penal sanctions and the undereducated poor,

especially poor people of colour, are sentenced”. According to Davidson (2000b:8), indigent offenders receive longer sentences, and are denied probation or parole more than middle class offenders charged for the same offense.

Background factors in prisoners’ lives may also play a large role in whether or not they recidivate. Factors associated with non-recidivism include “social class, education, prior delinquency, employment experience, drug use, criminal record, type of offense, and so on” (Gamberg and Thomson, 1984:74). Arguably, those who are able to participate in higher education, or those who were chosen for such programs, may have been less likely to recidivate in the first place, and the programs themselves may have had little significant independent impact. Thorpe et. al. (1984) also argue that prisoners who complete educational programs may be more motivated and competent, which may be related to successful adjustment on the outside. Regardless, Faith (1996) argues that given the numerous obstacles facing former prisoners on the outside, recidivism should not be used as the only measure of whether or not a program is worthwhile.

As noted by Ross et. al. (1988), the success of a program is also dependent upon the characteristics of the staff and the nature of the relationship between the staff and prisoners/students. Findings also often indicate that prison education is related to lower rates of recidivism only when the education is extensive and occurs over a long period of time. As Duguid (1988a) notes, this is bad news for those searching for a ‘quick fix’. He also argues, however, that the logical and common sense conclusion tells us that there are no guarantees when it comes to lowering recidivism rates.

Some findings have indicated that programs may actually serve to produce more successful “criminals”. Murphy (1972) refers to this as “the well adjusted, well educated

dope fiend hypothesis". In a comparison study conducted at Matsqui Institution, British Columbia, in 1967, it was found that those prisoners provided with the better drug treatment program, including education, were more likely to recidivate. This group's "superiority in applied social communications ability combined with the superiority in applied academic ability did make a real difference in illegal employment, drug use, and other delinquent addict spheres" (Murphy, 1972:29). These abilities, not possessed by the control group, allowed prisoners to better compete for illegal employment opportunities and scarce drug supplies.

Taylor (1992) argues that despite these problems, the information that exists overwhelmingly points to the positive effects of higher education on recidivism. For example, Stevens (1998:33) conducted a study in the United States wherein he found that "inmates who earned baccalaureate degrees while incarcerated became law-abiding individuals significantly more often than inmates who had not advanced their education while incarcerated". Taylor notes that a 1981 study of the University of Victoria's prison college program found prisoner-student recidivism rates to be at 14%, compared to 52% for non-student prisoners. Some studies even claim a zero percent recidivism rate for prisoner-students, including those done on the Folsom Prison college program in 1983, and Boston University's program in 1986. According to Taylor (1999:1), writing from the United States, a series of recidivism studies in state after state began in the 1970s, revealing that the more education a prisoner earned, especially at the post-secondary level, the less likely he or she was to return to prison. With over two decades of research, Taylor notes that it is generally accepted that prisoners who earn a two-year Associate degree reduce their chances of recidivism by over half, to approximately twenty percent.

Those who earn a four-year Bachelor degree cut their chances of recidivating down to the single digit range. This research, argues Taylor (1999:1) has largely been ignored or belittled.

Nowhere else in correctional programming can such positive results be found (Taylor, 1992). Germanotta (1995) argues that given that few prisoner-students return to prison, the cancellation of university programs is particularly ironic. Rather than encourage something that has had such a positive impact, "the prison system continues to resist and destroy the very element that has demonstrably made a significant difference in turning human lives in new and constructive directions" (Germanotta, 1995:112).

Williford (1994a), however, argues that despite claims to the contrary, the post-secondary education of prisoners has never reached its goal of reducing recidivism. Jones (1992) also argues that there is no substantial evidence linking cognitive ability to 'criminality', nor has convincing evidence been brought forth to prove that higher education affects 'criminal' behaviour. Furthermore, Campbell (1994: 153) argues that "higher education practitioners in the prison must transcend the political and ideological forces that have dictated that recidivism constitutes the sole measure of program success or failure". Williford argues that education need not focus on correcting someone to be of value. Education provides individuals with the opportunity to improve themselves, to accomplish personal goals – essentially to learn and grow.

As can be seen in Williford (1994b:71-72), several questions have been raised that have been the cause of much tension in the area of prison education. Such questions revolve around whether or not higher education should adapt to the philosophy and practice of corrections. Included are the following questions, "Should higher education

simply provide prisoners with an opportunity to learn, or should it shape the possibilities of learning to conform with correctional wisdom about what a prisoner ought to be"?

"Should curriculum rationales reflect general social beliefs about prisoner-students, or should they reflect a desire to transcend those beliefs?" Williford later notes (p.123) that in their attempts to survive, education programs often do come to adopt the attitudes and values of corrections. In doing so, however, they risk losing one of the main bases of their appeal to prisoners, and therefore, the ultimate reason for their past successes. Jones argues that "entry into the prison milieu transforms the fundamental character of education. Its basic premises and values are undermined by the coercive environment in which it operates" (1992:17). He further argues that as education programs become integrated within corrections, they are in danger of "becoming complicit in a process that has historically done little but degrade and defile" (1992:17). The next chapter will argue that prison education must be removed from the structure of punishment and forced change and must be seen as an independent operation within the institution. A libertarian model of education provides a critique of the cognitive deficiencies and opportunities models, as well as an alternative.

Chapter Five

CRITICAL PEDAGOGY AND PRISON EDUCATION

Libertarian Theories of Education

Radical/libertarian pedagogy has its roots in Marxist thought, and according to Spring (1975), is best expressed in the modern work of Paulo Freire. A central theme in the development of radical education is the notion that the primary purpose of schools has been to shape the moral and social beliefs of the general population for the benefit of the dominant élite. It is argued that the goals and methods of education have tended to mirror the goals and interests of the powerful class.

Radical attempts to create new systems of education are put forth to provide people with a means of achieving freedom from domination and ideological control, and a means of overcoming human alienation. It is argued that rather than being a form of domination, education can become a practice of freedom. Upon transformation, it is believed that education can contribute to a more loving, just, and saner world. Of prime importance is liberation for all. As Purpel (1989:30) argues, this includes “liberation from hunger, disease, fear, bigotry, war, ignorance, and all other barriers to a life of joy, abundance, and meaning for every single person in the world”.

In order to achieve this, a pedagogy must work to “identify the ways in which the complex associations of habits, relations, meanings, desires, representations, and self-images are organized around the construction of gender, race, class, ethnicity, and age considerations in the production of different forms of subjectivity and ways of life” (Giroux, 1989b:142). Giroux (1989b) argues that subjectivity is largely constructed through language. Language and power are believed to intersect to legitimate the

ideologies of specific groups. Giroux (p.143) argues that “[i]ntimately related to power, language functions to both position and constitute the way that teachers and students define, mediate, and understand their relation to each other, school knowledge, the institution of schooling, and the larger society”.

Not only must education be critical, and work to deconstruct various myths, but at the same time it must affirm, commit and advocate (Purpel, 1989). Of great importance to the liberation of the oppressed is that they become aware of their situation of being oppressed. Education for the liberation and empowerment of prisoners, for example, “is an exercise in counter-hegemony that calls for a more equitable and transformative share in social power and decision-making” (Faith, 1996:182). The primary goal of libertarian education is “to provide opportunities for all citizens to participate fully in the cultural, political, and economic life of the nation and the world” (Stokes, 1997:218). A primary aim “is getting people to the point of truly owning their minds” (Spring, 1975:11). The concept of ownership of self “extends the idea of freedom, taking it beyond its usual meaning of political liberty and equality before the law, and emphasizing control over one’s beliefs and actions” (Spring, 1975:33). Within this true form of liberty, there is no imposed and internalized authority guiding one’s actions. As stated in McLaren (1997:123), “[t]his is a mission that is not simply Freirian, but immanently human”.

Within this transformative education, teachers come to be considered as intellectuals rather than professionals or technicians. As argued by Giroux and McLaren (1989:xxiii),

...this means viewing teachers as professionals who are able and willing to reflect upon the ideological principles that inform their practice, who connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues, and who work together to share ideas, exercise power over the conditions of their

labor, and embody in their teaching a vision of a better and more human life.

Teachers become bearers of critical knowledge, and are able to articulate and problematize their relationships with students, subject matter, and the wider community. This is in direct contradiction to the dominant means of teaching, wherein teachers are not much more than public servants, whose primary role is to simply implement pedagogical practice, rather than conceptualize it. In their role as transformative intellectuals, teachers are also faced with the task of educating students to take risks, and to struggle within ongoing relations of power in order to promote a more humane and democratic future (Giroux, 1989b).

Within this form of education, those who have been traditionally oppressed, such as minorities, women, and in this case, prisoners, gain the opportunity to have their voices heard and legitimated, whereas before they had been silenced. People become able to speak of their own histories, cultures, experiences, and traditions (Giroux and Freire, 1989). Furthermore, it is recognized that “[t]he voices that characterize various groups of students are not of one piece, reducible merely to the categories of class, race, or gender; they are produced within cultural formations that create historically constituted subject-positions which are often shifting and multiple” (Giroux, 1989b:142-3). While diversity is respected, solidarity can still be attained “in the principles of trust, sharing, and a commitment to improving the quality of human life” (Giroux and McLaren, 1989:xxiv).

Education becomes a “‘perpetual outlaw’, forever challenging the rule of the privileged few, forever instilling in the oppressed a sense of outrage, forever providing the intellectual and moral tools for overturning dominant social relationships” (Gintis,

1989:51). An implicit assumption is that changes in methods of education can contribute to a radical transformation of society. Libertarian education teaches students to be critical, to understand that the world is socially constructed, and thus can be changed. By raising levels of consciousness, it is believed that thought and learning can be linked to social change. One who is aware of the social forces propelling them, and is conscious of the nature of these forces is best able to break free from historical oppression and participate in the radical change of oneself and the rest of society. This praxis of thought and action could largely result in the reduction of human fragmentation and alienation (Spring, 1975).

Libertarian theories of education in general, including the works of Paulo Freire, are based upon the belief that any successful change to the social structure depends in part upon changes in the character structure and attitudes of the population in question. Essentially, “a new society cannot be born unless a new person is born that can function within it” (Spring, 1975:9). Radical pedagogy is thus largely concerned with forms of socialization that encourage revolutionary action and non-authoritarianism. As stated by Spring (1975:14), this is a search “for an educational system...that will create a non-authoritarian person who will not obediently accept the dictates of the political and social system and who will demand greater personal control and choice”. Such individuals will demand a form of social organization that provides a maximum amount of individual control and freedom.

Freireian Pedagogy

It is argued here that empowerment through education can best be achieved following the work of Brazilian educator Paulo Freire. Freire draws from the writings of

Erich Fromm, Louis Althusser, Mao, Martin Luther King, Ché Guevara, and many others. The unifying thread in Freire's work is a call for critical consciousness as a means of emancipation (Freire, 1973). In the struggle for liberation the oppressed must break from the structures put in place by the government and society in general. Prisoners, for example, "must first learn not to perceive of themselves as ignorant outsiders with an inferior culture to that of the dominating class" (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:67).

Whereas antidiological methods focus on conquest, division, manipulation, and cultural invasion, Freire's dialogical methods emphasize collaboration, union, organization, and cultural synthesis. A central tenet to Freirean pedagogy is the participation of students. Students, together with their teachers, must be able to contribute to the formation of the curriculum and the selection of texts. Students must be able to express themselves, have their voices heard, and have their life stories become primary learning material (Collins, 1995). Within this form of pedagogy, everyone's experiences come to be considered and explored through dialogue. Whereas banking education resists dialogue, Freirian pedagogy regards it as necessary in the unveiling of reality.

Herein, "[s]tudents become not receptacles for knowledge but 'critical co-investigators' working together with their 'teacher' to learn new truths about their situation" (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:68). Rather than having one person teach (this includes self-teaching), people teach one another. As such, education becomes non-hierarchical. Educators are no longer "teachers", but rather co-ordinators of the class¹, which is formed in a circular manner. Teachers become educator-educatees, and students

¹Illich (1983) argues that this position as leader, however, does not depend on the person being right.

become educatee-educators. Rather than simply dispensing information to be memorized, teachers ‘fuse’ with the oppressed students in order to develop the conditions necessary for a radical social project. Essentially, the two become partners which as a matter of course, the banking system will not accept. Freire is careful to note, however, that the teacher and student are *not* equal. The teacher is indeed different from the student, but this difference is not antagonistic or based on authoritarianism, as it is in the banking method of education (Gadotti, 1994). Freire (1995) writes that the efforts of the educator must coincide with those of the students to engage in critical thinking and the quest for mutual humanization. To do so, the educator must have a profound trust in the people, and in their creative power. Following these techniques, a new version of the world is to be learned, including a critique of current circumstances, and an attempt to overcome these circumstances (Gadotti, 1994).

Under this model, teachers are also freed as they become aware that they are "capable of dialogue in spite of the strait jacket imposed by the role of educator as one who knows" (Freire, 1973:ix). The mark of a successful educator becomes not skill in persuasion (which Freire refers to as an insidious form of propaganda), but the ability to dialogue with students in a mode of reciprocity. While teachers are not to be authoritarian, nor can they be complete romanticists who deny the role of serious teaching. Rather than being totally permissive, the teacher must to some degree “act to guide the learner to new understandings through serious, critical study and reflection” (Stokes, 1997:218). The educator’s role is to propose problems about certain situations, and help students to develop a more critical understanding of their reality. In order to do this properly, teachers must first critically reflect upon their own lived experiences and

the sources of their own knowledge. Teachers must be willing to re-consider their earlier ideas as the students express their own considerations.

Freire (1973:ix) argues that a student must problematize "the natural, cultural and historical reality in which s/he is immersed". Problematizing is described as the opposite of the technocrat's problem-solving approach. In the latter, an expert distances him/herself from reality, analyzes this reality into component parts, "devises means for resolving difficulties in the most efficient way, and then dictates a strategy or policy" (Freire, 1973:ix). Such a problem-solving approach ignores human experience by reducing it to treatment dimensions, as a mere difficulty to be solved. Problematizing, on the other hand, emphasizes real human experience, and in the process generates critical consciousness as a means of empowering the oppressed to alter their relations with social forces. While both the banking method and problematizing attempt to change individuals in some way, problematizing focuses on empowering rather than oppressing. Whereas banking education treats students as objects, problematizing education treats them as critical thinkers. Whereas banking education inhibits creative power and works to mythicize reality, problematizing involves the constant unveiling of reality. Banking education works to submerge consciousness, problem-posing strives for the emergence of consciousness and the critical intervention in reality. Under Freirean pedagogy, prisoners are confronted with critical assessments of their problems, and are encouraged to help themselves, to become agents of their own destiny. Responsibility is considered a fundamental necessity.

Another central tenet to Freire's pedagogy is that when reading text, one must always be critical. Rather than passively accepting the words of the author, one must

critically evaluate text, and be prepared to question and doubt its content. Freire also notes that both oppressors and revolutionaries can make use of science and technology. At the service of the former, however, science and technology are used to reduce the oppressed to mere “things” or objects. At the service of the latter, they are used to promote humanization, as the oppressed are no longer objects, but subjects.

Integral to Freire’s work is the concept of humanity. The primary goal of Freire’s pedagogy is to provide a humanistic education to the dominated and oppressed. With the concept of humanization, Freire refers to “a process by which each person becomes conscious of the social forces working upon him or her, reflects upon those forces, and becomes capable of transforming the world. To be human is to be an actor who makes choices and seeks to guide one’s own destiny. To be free, to be an actor, means knowing who one is and how one has been shaped by the surrounding social world” (Spring, 1975:63).

Dehumanization, on the other hand, is an expression of injustice, alienation, domination, and exploitation. Dehumanization marks those whose humanity has been stolen. Within a dehumanized society, individuals are simply acted upon by history, and lack self-awareness and a consciousness of social forces that determine their existence. Freire refers to this as a culture of silence.

Illich (1983) also argues for a radical transformation of education. Illich argues that an educational revolution must be guided by the following goals:

1. Freedom of access to things (such as ideas and texts) through the abolition of the control people and institutions now hold over education.
2. Freedom to share skills; freedom to exercise or teach them upon request.

3. The liberation of the critical and creative resources of persons through the freedom to call and hold meetings. Presently, this ability is largely monopolized by institutions that claim to speak for people.
4. The liberation of the individual from the obligation to shape his expectations to those of an established profession, through the provision of choice in choosing one's teacher or adviser.

In Illich's work, however, one encounters considerable pessimism in that the author believes traditional schools should be destroyed, therefore "deschooling" society. Within the non-institutionalized form of education Illich calls for, learning is left entirely up to the individual. Illich argues that a student's educational path should be her or his own to follow, with a program becoming recognizable only in retrospect. In this way, individuals would contact those he desired to learn from through various networks. Educators would only give periodic advice, options for methods, assistance in setting new goals, and aid in difficulties. Educators would therefore also be able to do more as they choose, rather than simply teaching an agenda put forth before them. More time would also be available for educators to focus on their own work. Gadotti (1994), however, argues that Illich's proposal would only be possible after basic schooling had already occurred. Gadotti goes on to argue that in Freire, we find much more optimism. Schooling does not have to be destroyed, but rather changed. Once this change has occurred, the transformation of society becomes possible.

As discussed in previous chapters, Mathiesen (1974) also calls for action research that is geared toward social and individual change, and works to empower and liberate. Mathiesen argues that this would be possible if theories, or more generally, social order were to be left unfinished, in sketch. Within the unfinished, goals remain non-integrated and without boundaries, as boundaries serve to maintain the prevailing system. Rather

than emphasizing the status quo, as do order theories, the unfinished tolerates ambiguity. Mathiesen (1974:13) argues that “any attempt to change the existing order into something completely finished, a fully formed entity, is destined to fail...”. A long-range revolutionary goal must be maintained.

Mathiesen notes, however, that maintaining a long-range revolutionary goal is not very realistic, and has certainly never been evidenced in practice. This is due to a process of absorption, which according to Mathiesen (1974:20) involves at least three elements. Concentration on the long-range goal becomes difficult through a process of *incorporation*, wherein a new idea or theory is introduced only in reduced form from the very beginning. Through *initiation*, persons attempting to introduce change (Merton’s rebels) are initiated into the secrets of the prevailing system. Given that this communication is considered privileged, the rebel is brought to silence. The third element involves *being held responsible* as someone who performs duties for the system. In the process, one also becomes responsible for having steered away from the long-range goal.

It is essential to libertarian forms of education that educational methods not become separate from radical political and social ideology. If methods are introduced on their own, they will likely be quickly absorbed by the existing system, as have previous models of higher education in prisons. While new techniques may be used, they will only result in the old objectives of control and discipline. “If education is pursued *without* a conscious radical perspective, it will do nothing but serve the existing social order” (Spring, 1975:134). Radical education will become not an alternative, but a supplement, expanding the scope and intensity of social control (Cohen, 1985:20). In

their search to obtain humanity, the oppressed must be careful not to in turn become the oppressors, but rather the restorers of humanity.

Critique of Freire's Pedagogy

Silvia Maria Manfredi (cited in Gadotti, 1994) criticizes Freire in that he does not make explicit the type of society he would like to see constructed. "Moreover, he doesn't clarify the nature of the revolution which he would like to unleash and the socioeconomic bases that should support the new power structure" (p.128). Manfredi therefore argues that Freire is idealistic.

Freire, however, argues that his vision "is no idealistic dream spun out of a mind ideologically enamored of dialogue or of critical consciousness" (Freire, 1973:xiii). As argued by Giroux (1985) in his introduction to Freire's text *The Politics of Education*, Freire's analysis is concrete in that it originates with collective individuals in their historical settings and looks to the particularities of their oppression. Education for critical consciousness is seen as the only option available in a world characterized by domination. Giroux argues that Freire's pedagogy "is utopian only in the sense that it refuses to surrender to the risks and dangers that face all challenges to dominant power structures" (Freire, 1985:xvii).

By not making explicit the type of society he would like to see constructed, Freire is engaging in what Mathiesen (1974) refers to as the unfinished (as discussed in the previous section). Mathiesen argues that striving for both short-term and long-term reform is possible, and not utopian, as long as goals are left open. This can be achieved by continuously engaging in societal action research, wherein knowledge becomes a bridge for action. Mathiesen argues that as long as reform is not limited in a simplified

manner, there will be contradiction as well as competition within the system, leaving things open to change. Scheerer (1986) also remarks that a trend toward decentralization and human interests is becoming evident, even among the political class. He notes that “often social innovations develop at the system’s fringes before invading the cores” (p.18).

Sheth and Dei (1997) argue that while Freire’s contributions remain unquestionable, his work has left many people absent, including women, nonwhites, nonheterosexuals, and the disabled. Stefanos (1997) argues that Freire focuses predominantly on class-based oppression, while other forms of oppression, such as that of women, are subsumed under this general heading. Ladson-Billings (1997) also argues that critical theory/pedagogy fails to adequately address the question of race. She argues that “discourse about race is denied and muted in analysis of educational and social inequality” (p.127). In doing so, Ladson-Billings argues, critical pedagogy has contributed to marginalization.

In the introduction to Freire’s text *The Politics of Education: Culture, Power, and Liberation*, however, Henry Giroux notes that Freire has argued that “domination cannot be reduced exclusively to a form of class domination” (1985:xii). Giroux also notes that Freire “rejects the idea that there is a universalized form of oppression” (p.xii). Rather, Freire recognizes a multiplicity of social relations, and diverse forms of domination, suffering, collective struggle and resistance. By doing so, Freire has stepped outside of an orthodox Marxist analysis. Freire (1997:309) refutes arguments such as those put forth by Sheth and Dei by stating “[w]hat I do provide is a general framework that calls for a deep respect for the Other along the lines of race and gender. What I do provide,

while avoiding universalizing oppression, is the possibility for the educator to use my discussions and theorizing about oppression and apply them to a specific context". As such, Freire's pedagogy has proven applicable to the education of prisoners. Freire argues that while he may not focus on marked specifics of oppression, he is more concerned with oppression in general. In his view, he is not ignoring any form of oppression, but is instead looking at all forms in their totality.

In regards to the criticisms that his work is male-oriented, Freire argues that one must place his work within its historical and cultural context. Freire (Freire and Macedo, 1993) readily admits that his early work was primarily centered along the lines of class and race. He argues, however, that "the knowledge base with respect to gender oppression we have today, thanks to the great and comprehensive work of feminists, was not available to me then nor was it available to many women" (Freire and Macedo, 1993:173). He notes that during the 1970s, feminists did not criticize his work. It is only in the 1990s that feminists are criticizing his early work, which he feels is wrong given that history had not yet given him the proper tools. His engagement with the feminist movement, however, caused him to take a closer look at gender. He states that "[s]ince the 1970s I have learned much from feminism and have come to define my work as feminist, seeing feminism closely connected to the process of self-reflexivity and political action for human freedom" (Freire, 1993:x). Since the first publication of Pedagogy of the Oppressed, Freire has attempted to rid his work of all language demeaning to women. More to the point, as bell hooks (1993) argues, while Freire's early writing may have used sexist language, this blind spot should not overshadow anyone's capacity to learn from his insights.

Indeed, Freire's work constitutes what Stanley and Wise (1990:25) refer to as "feminist standpoint epistemology". As Freire has argued, his work has inevitably been grounded in his own material experiences. His understandings have been contextually specific, as they have been temporally, intellectually, politically and emotionally grounded. Grounded theorizing, argue Stanley and Wise, is derived from experience, and analytically entered into with an inquiring mind. Grounded research is continually subject to revision, as Freire's has been, and is thus reflexive, self-reflexive, and accessible to everyone. Stanley and Wise argue that this type of approach to knowledge is scientifically preferable, as it is more complete and less distorted.

Others have argued that Freire's work is irrelevant in a North American context, that his experiences with Brazilian peasants cannot be translated in complex, industrial Western countries. Freire refutes this by arguing that because of the variety of the experiences he describes, his work has international applicability. Gadotti (1994) writes that Freire's theories have been enriched with various experiences from many countries. Freire also argues that the Third World can actually be found in the First World, such as in the ghettos of the United States, for example. Similarities can be found in both worlds, including class domination, racial discrimination, and linguistic chauvinism. A prime example is found in the large percentage of young black men and Latino that are under some form of custody in the United States. (Rivera, 1992, 1995). In Canada, indigenous people comprise 3 percent of our general population, but 15 percent of the population in federal prisons (Correctional Service of Canada, 2000). As the oppressed/oppressor relationship exists throughout the world, so can Freire's pedagogy. Indeed, Freire's work has been practiced in California, for example, with the Santa Cruz Women's Prison

Project. Other examples of radical education can be seen in the work of the Nontraditionalists in New York, and the Irish Republican prisoners of war in Long Kesh, Ireland. These and other examples of prisoners who have worked to empower themselves through participatory education will be examined in this chapter under the heading “Examples of Radical Education in Prisons”.

Freire’s work is particularly applicable to prisoners, as they are highly representative of disenfranchised and minority groups. Prisoners are especially apt to understand oppression, as they are most likely to have been marginalized and to have experienced firsthand the differential application of the law. Freire argues that “only those who are historically ‘immersed’ in the complex forms of oppression...can identify the special garb worn by ‘cultural silence’” (1973:x). Sbarbaro (1995:142) argues that “when large numbers of an oppressed group are incarcerated together, they are positioned to raise their consciousness and to challenge their conditions of confinement”. Such action is highly dependent upon the strength of the resistance to the dominant ideology, as well as the support of outside organizations. Tiyo Attallah Salah-EL, an African American currently imprisoned in the United States of America, states that the racism and classism reflected in current imprisonment rates, along with the building of yet more prisons, angers him. Yet, he says he refuses to yield to a feeling of helplessness. Instead, he says he is transforming his anger and frustration into action by means of education. Through education, he argues, the long-term goal of transforming the criminal justice system can occur. “It may be possible that a large segment of prisoners, by educating themselves, can bring about constructive change in the penal system” (1992:48). Most importantly, however, prisoners are able to transform themselves through education. In

his words, prisoners can “move towards attaining dignity, self-esteem, self-direction, self-empowerment, and academic freedom” (1992:46). Joseph McCormick furthers this argument by stating that “hope is found in beating the system, the smart way.... Educated cons have reason to lift their heads in self-assurance. We are better able to articulate our needs, better able to negotiate collectively, better able to see a future for ourselves.... Education is the ultimate way to beat the system” (1993: 20,22).

Furthermore, education has the ability to be creative, critical, and political regardless of the context. To say that Latin American education alone can be this way does not make much sense. Turning theory into practice, and students into subjects rather than passive recipients of knowledge, whether it be in literacy training, university or any type of education, should be *universal*. Freire does not argue, however that his work can be adapted in a grid-like fashion to any context. Rather, he provides a metalanguage that must be critically appropriated in different settings. Freire stresses that his experiences should be *re-created*, rather than *transplanted*. Freire does not deny that there may be limitations imposed by different cultures, politics, and ideologies (Freire, 1985).

It has also been argued that “attributing a pedagogical role to a revolutionary party carries with it the danger of a manipulation of the masses” (Freire, 1985:159). Freire argues, however, that the methods of a revolutionary party and those of a reactionary party are entirely different. The pedagogy of a revolutionary party can never be the same as those of a reactionary party in that reactionary parties must, of necessity, avoid the development of class consciousness among the oppressed. In contrast, the development of class consciousness is one of the primary goals of a revolutionary party. Whereas oppression occurs at the level of “things”, the unity of the oppressed occurs at a

human level. In order for a humanizing pedagogy to be effective, a revolutionary leadership must engage in a permanent relationship of dialogue with the oppressed. Furthermore, argues Freire (1997b), propaganda, management, and manipulation, all of which are forms of domination, cannot be used in the process of humanization. Revolutionary education must entail what Mathiesen (1974) and Reinhartz (1992) refer to as action research (as discussed in chapter three of this text). Action research intervenes with the intent of demystification and political illumination. Action research is oriented towards social change through the empowerment and liberation of oppressed groups, not through their manipulation.

As stated in Spring (1975:79), however, “there is an assumption in Freire’s method that people will *want* to become self-aware and that once this is accomplished, they will act in their own interests and in a *rational* manner. For what if people resist real freedom and self-awareness?” As an example, people may prefer the security of conformity provided by an authoritarian state. Foucault, for example, is very pessimistic about the possibilities of resistance as people are so enmeshed in power relations that they are hardly conscious of it, and may not understand it (Marshall, 1990). Freire (1997a) himself notes that not only is the oppressor “housed” within the people, but that stimulated by the oppressor, the oppressed may place responsibility for their state on God. It is therefore unlikely that the people “will seek their own liberation – an act of rebellion which they may view as a disobedient violation of the will of God, as an unwarranted confrontation with destiny” (1997a:144). Furthermore argues Freire, “as long as the oppressor ‘within’ the oppressed is stronger than they themselves are, their natural fear of freedom may lead them to denounce the revolutionary leaders instead”

(1997a:150). This may lead not only to desertion, but also to betrayal of the cause. As Freire argues (p.156), “[i]n order for the oppressed to unite, they must first cut the umbilical cord of magic and myth which binds them to the world of oppression...”.

Gaucher (1987) and Taylor (1987) remark on the lack of resistance in the face of the domination practiced by the bourgeois state in Canada. According to Taylor, the bourgeois class in Canada appears to have been much more successful in managing social order than it has elsewhere. He notes that “...in Canada there is an overwhelming tendency towards consensus and integration. The instances of class conflict that do occur never even threaten to disrupt the routine function of the system” (Taylor, 1987:208). The existence of little ideological or institutional conflict between the two major political parties provides one example as *both* parties are bourgeois parties. There have been variations amongst the provinces, however, as oppositional labour has been more popular in British Columbia, for example, than it has in New Brunswick or Newfoundland, where bourgeois hegemony is much more secure. Regardless of these variations, support for socialist programs and ideas is certainly not optimistic.

As Davidson (1995b) questions, “why would anyone imagine there is space for critical discourse within a total institution when it is plausible to claim that protest informed by critique in the non-prison world has been made improbable with the materialization of modernism?” Given that technicism and a drive for massive accumulations of wealth have colonized other areas, such as schools, homes, and the media, why should prisons be any different? Why could protest be best articulated here? Davidson argues that it is because prisons, as total institutions, are sites of opposition. He also argues, however, that “[t]here is no need to romanticize this opposition, to portray

prisoners as ‘primitive rebels’ or ‘eternal protesters’, or to see teachers as an ‘intellectual vanguard’(1995b:10)”. In reality, there are only a minority of prisoners who will likely be willing to take on such opposition. Most prisoners are conservative, holding fast to the American Dream, and are more likely to blame their imprisonment on personal failures or bad luck than structural inequality. The next section, however, looks at how smaller sections of prisoners have empowered themselves by employing radical pedagogy.

Education as a Revolutionary Form of Empowerment for Prisoners

As noted by Davidson (2000b:13-14), millions of immigrants from southern and central Europe were exploited during the early twentieth century with the dramatic growth of corporate capitalism in North America. Given the terrible living and working conditions, radical political parties and industrial unions became popular. Militant political activities and strikes were dealt with through either the deportation or imprisonment of leaders. As such, a number of socialists and anarchists brought their political campaigns into prisons. These prisoners taught politics and distributed literature from radical organizations amongst other prisoners. Articles were written on class struggle and prisons, and were distributed in the radical literature. While prison officials attempted censorship and isolation, this proved impossible in overcrowded prisons where prisoners had to work and live together.

Later, when ‘professional’ teachers were hired, prison schools lost their political/radical focus (Davidson, 1992). Cordella notes that today, most prisoners view education as functional, a means of reintegrating themselves into the dominant society.

For a much smaller group, however, “education represents the possibility of enhancing their critical understanding of the dominant culture and its alternatives” (1995:151).

As was discussed in chapter four, higher education in prisons, when implemented officially, becomes co-opted by the system and does nothing but further the control of prisoners. Radical, empowering education was certainly not implemented within the officially sanctioned education programs. Rather, prisoners were labeled deficient, and attempts were made to domesticate them rather than politicize them. Any form of education that takes into account the repression and marginalization of particular groups of people, and tries to move them out of and beyond their subordinated positions is not likely to happen within an officially sanctioned educational program. Julian Stone, a Norfolk, Massachusetts prisoner who organized a course in jailhouse lawyering, argues that prisoner education be kept separate from official programs because otherwise “the principal would be in a position to dictate what materials would be used to teach the course, who would be suitable students, how the class would be organized, who would teach, and how students would be evaluated” (cited in Davidson, 2000b:27).

As happened in 1993, prison higher education that is dependent upon agreements between universities and prisons can be taken away when it is politically or fiscally expedient to do so. Prisoners’ self education, however, *belongs* to them, and can be sustained even in the most repressive of conditions. Education therefore must remain independent (Davidson, 2000b:29).

The rest of this chapter looks at the possibilities for higher education in prisons outside the constraints of official mandates. While an emphasis is on prisoners’ own educational practices, this does not rule out the possibilities for outside educators to form

alliances with prisoners. Actually, links to the outside are necessary, as prisoners' struggles must be linked to struggles on the outside. This way, a stronger force is created and liberation becomes a little more realistic. Stone (cited in Davidson, 2000a:26) also notes that support for prisoners' own education from outsiders, such as law students in his case, contribute to the prisoners' credibility and keeps them current and effective. Outsiders are also an asset as they can promote and disseminate the writings of prisoners amongst a wide audience, thus giving prisoners a voice on the outside². Publishing from the outside also avoids prison censorship, as well as other problems that plagued the penal press, such as prisoner transfers and segregation (Davidson, 2000b:22).

The following section will examine some examples of prisoners who have organized themselves for radical education. The section will include a discussion on prisoners organizing in general, with a review of the writings of Abd al Bari (1994) and Robert Gaucher (1991a, 1991b). An example of radical pedagogy in a women's prison will be examined with the case of the Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project (Karlene Faith, 1993, 1995, and 1996). The self-education of political prisoners is also examined with a discussion of Irish Republican prisoners of war, who developed an educational strategy to empower themselves and end their oppression (Dana and McMonagle, 1997). The radical education of specific minority groups will be looked at through the work of Little Rock Reed (1990; Aboriginal prisoners), Malcolm X (Germanotta, 1995 and Franklin, 1978; Black Americans), and Juan Rivera (1992, 1995; African and Latin American prisoners).

² See the Journal of Prisoners on Prisons for an example.

Examples of Radical Education in Prisons

Organizing in Prison

al Bari (1994), a prisoner since released from the Indiana prison system, lays out a plan for prisoners to organize themselves. While his work refers primarily to African Americans, he stresses that a mass of prisoners must come together. His work has thus been included in this section as an example of how prisoners in general can organize themselves.

al Bari (1994:12) argues that the extensive repression that prisoners experience in what he refers to as “slave kamps”³, has created conditions that will allow prisoners to create a mass movement to beat the system. al Bari (1994:12) maintains that the massive energies and potentials resting dormant within prisoners can be identified, cultivated, and organized so as to become unified and directed toward confronting their captivity. al Bari also believes that organizing for mobilization on the inside must be linked to the struggles in society at large. The author argues (p.12) that “bearing in mind that prisons are part of the capitalist-imperialist system and serve the role of an instrument of oppression used by the State on oppressed and colonized peoples, we must impress upon ourselves and the others that these kamps cannot be “removed” until the overthrow of the system”.

al Bari sets out a plan as to how prisoners can go about educating one another. In order to organize, writes al Bari (1994:12), a network must be constructed, of dedicated, disciplined, and committed individuals, in place amongst the separate units in the prison. A systematic process must then be developed to analyze experiences of oppression and

³ Revolutionaries, to represent evidence of racism, often replace the letter ‘c’ with ‘k’ for the Ku Klux Klan.

then stimulate and organize the prisoners to overcome this oppression in a mass way.

The plan can only be effective by involving the *mass* of prisoners. This requires creating or strengthening lines of communication amongst prisoners, and changing the “I” to “We”. A sense of responsibility to one another is necessary, as is commitment towards the politics to be preached. Committees should be formed, each with a specialized area of focus. al Bari (1994:13) suggests:

...“an internal affairs” committee that will act as a go-between with the opposition should this be necessary; a “public relations committee” that will organize contacting groups on the outside to convey our plight and struggle to them, as well as to collect donations of stamps and envelopes for this purpose; a “political education committee” that will take over and conduct political education etc., as well as work on general awareness project, (secretly hanging up fliers, etc.); a “legal affairs committee” that will begin to look at the issues of the program and devise ways and means to confront and secure whatever of our “rights” as can be secured through the state and federal legal system; and a “grievance committee” that will assist prisoners to file grievances and internal complaints when these activities are necessary.

al Bari (1994:12) states that the oppression experienced by prisoners on a daily basis must be tied into the socio-economic-political contradictions of society as a whole. He argues that the development of such links within prisoners’ consciousness should be pursued in an aggressive and disciplined manner through strategy sessions and regular reports given within each tier (or however the prisoners happen to be separated). This activity should be documented, and reports relayed to outside networks. These reports should highlight all issues that violate the rights of prisoners, or state or federal law. Martens (1994:4), a Canadian prisoner, notes that past attempts at organization have resulted in involuntary transfers, or worse⁴. As a result, prisoners will have to connect

⁴ For further discussion of this issue, see the section of this chapter entitled “Problems Encountered when Engaging in Radical Education”.

with outside groups within universities, government social agencies and legal groups such as the Law Union.

Gaucher (1991a, 1991b) provides specific examples of how prisoners have organized themselves in their attempts to conquer repressive prison conditions. Gaucher (1991a) writes of Prison Justice Day (August 10th), an outcome of the organized political action of a group of Canadian prisoners, the Odyssey Group (formed in 1976). Prison Justice Day (PJD) originated in response to the violence and oppression present in Millhaven Penitentiary during the 1970s. It is a day of remembrance for those who have died in prison, and also a day in which prisoners stand together to present their concerns and demands. It has become a national tradition inside and outside of Canada's prisons. As Gaucher (1991a:93-94) remarks, "the success of the Odyssey Group's Prison Justice Day initiative exemplifies the outside directed nature of prisoner politics and the ability of prisoners to effect change. It should give strength to prisoners and their outside supporters and encouragement in their struggles for rights and against penal oppression."

Odyssey consisted of fifteen members on the inside, and another fifteen outside guests allowed to attend their meetings. The group met weekly from September 1976 to October 1982, and was in contact with numerous outside organizations, individuals, and members of the mass media. Two groups that were of particular support were the Ottawa Civil Liberties Association and sociology students from Queen's University. Prison rights activist Claire Culhane also became a strong supporter of Odyssey initiatives.

In their concern for prisoners' rights, Odyssey exemplified a group of politically conscious prisoners opposed to violent means of protest. Instead, they favoured non-violent tactics to effect change. Their protests were heard through briefs, hearings, and

management efficiency studies that were prepared and circulated. The group aimed to bring to the attention of the public the gross injustices of the Correctional Service of Canada, the criminal justice system, and all other services related to prisons. “Their strategy was to prepare briefs and analytical statements on prison conditions and justice issues, and to publicize them through group meetings with outsiders and through widespread distribution of their newsletter” (Gaucher, 1991a:96).

PJD originated in Millhaven on August 10, 1975, the first anniversary of the death of Eddie Nolan, who committed suicide in solitary confinement in Millhaven’s Special Handling Unit (SHU). Prisoners commemorated his death with a hunger strike and a day of mourning. Six prisoners in the SHU also began a hunger strike that lasted for eighteen days. By the following August, it had become an established memorial day for prisoners to pay tribute to those who have died in Canada’s prisons.⁵ The list of casualties continues to grow as a result of poor medical attention, the desperation of prisoners, and the brutal consequences of a custodial system.

PJD also came to represent the demand for prisoners’ rights. The focus became not just on those who had died, but the conditions that lead to prison deaths, especially SHUs and solitary confinement. Other demands have included the right to meaningful work with fair wages; useful education and training; proper medical attention; freedom of speech and religion; free and adequate legal services; the right to independent review of all prison decision making and conditions; the right to vote; the right to form a union;

⁵The death of Bobby Landers also came to exemplify the focus of PJD. As a prisoners’ right activist, Landers had suffered both physical and psychological violence, ending in his death from a heart attack in Millhaven’s SHU, due to a lack of medical attention.

adequate fire safety standards; open visits and correspondence; and the right to natural justice and due process.

Gaucher (1991a:100) states that “by 1979, virtually all federal maximum security prisons were solidly represented and the proportion of federal prisoners taking part continued to grow through 1981. This was paralleled by growing national recognition and support outside the prisons walls.” Outsiders showed their support by holding vigils and demonstrations, including press conferences and the presentation of briefs outlining prisoners’ concerns and demands.

Gaucher argues that while the political consciousness and struggles of Canadian prisoners is largely denied or ignored by Canadian criminologists and social scientists, prisoners can still educate and radicalize the public in regards to the nature of criminal justice and penal oppression via the penal press. Odyssey’s principle vehicle for educating the public was their newsletter, whose purpose was to portray the voices of Millhaven’s prisoners. The aim of the newsletter was to inform both the prison population and those on the outside what their thoughts, goals and accomplishments were. The first issue was released in August 1978. Thirteen additional issues of what was to be a bi-monthly publication were published over the next four years. While the first six were published on schedule, administrative censorship and obstruction led to a more sporadic output and smaller publications. In total, there were eight editors and fifty-five contributors to the newsletters, including men and women from other prisons. The two initial editors, Howie Brown (also the group’s original chairperson) and George

Watson, were both transferred, Brown after the first issue, and Watson after the first year.⁶ Gaucher (1991a:98) states that

...much of the writing and analysis in this publication is highly politicized, going beyond the liberal consensus version of prison critique and penal reform, locating the 'prison problem' within the exploitative and oppressive context of the dominant capitalist order. Major issues addressed included: SHUs; the concept of 'dangerousness' and administrative segregation; prison violence, suicide and death; the power and control of custodial staff and their union; involuntary transfers; mandatory supervision and parole; the double standard of 'social justice' in Canada; the absurdity of 'rehabilitation' in prison, especially maximum security prisons like Millhaven; and most prominently, prisoners' rights.

Odyssey's success in influencing those on the outside was successful. As an example, The Church Council on Justice and Corrections used a brief prepared by the group in their lobbying efforts to stop the use of Special Handling Units and segregation. Bobby Paul (cited in Gaucher, 1991a:107) also remarks on how prisoners have been able to effect change within the prison system. For example, prisoners in solitary confinement are now served meals, when many years had been spent on bread and water. This did not just occur because someone in the Canadian Penitentiary Service decided it should be changed, but rather "was brought to people's attention with blood, literally with blood" (p.107) – that of those who died in solitary confinement. As Gaucher (1991a:107) states, "the types of political activities in which the Odyssey Group, PJD, and prisoners' public education have engaged remain major means of effecting such changes."

Canada's First Nations prisoners, for example, have achieved considerable gains since the 1960s. Gaucher (1991b: 136) states that "the development of Native

⁶ Gaucher (1991a:99) states that the Canadian Penitentiary Service transferred numerous prisoners in an attempt to break up Odyssey and prison solidarity at Millhaven. Fortunately, it did not work. After years of harassing prisoners who took part in PJD, including taking away privileges and 'good' time for the general population, and segregation and involuntary transfers for the leaders, the CSC stopped issuing their 'performance notices' in 1988, although prisoners who refused to work were docked a day's pay.

Brotherhoods and Sisterhoods in Canadian prisons is related the general strengthening of aboriginal communities and involves close ties between the two groups. This has led to major changes for Native prisoners, including access to elders and spiritual adviser, and the development of Native-organized and culturally appropriate programs". While state suppression of Aboriginal dissent, and the overrepresentation of Aboriginals in Canadian prisons cannot be denied, their development of a political consciousness must also be acknowledged.

Since the civil rights movement of the 1960s, prisoners in the United States have also begun to use legal means to challenge prison conditions and policies. This is another example of a non-violent form of resistance. Through the courts, prisoners have been able to turn 'privileges' into expected rights, and have established minimal standards (Gaucher, 1991b:137).

Gaucher (1991b) also remarks on how outside support of prisoners' struggles has led to considerable results since the mid-1970s. For example, traditional penal press type publications have been resurrected by outside supporters and grassroots political groups. These groups combine theorized analyses with prisoners' analyses in order to portray the prison as a major vehicle for state suppression of dissent. Canadian groups who have supported prisoners' initiatives in resisting state repression through publications have included: the Prisoners' Rights Office of Montreal, the Vancouver Prisoners' Rights Committee; the Wimmin Prisoners' Rights Survival Network and the Canadian Alliance in Solidarity with Native People, in Toronto. Groups in the United States include Freedom Now, the American Indian Movement, and Anarchist Black Cross (Gaucher, 1991b:136). A number of organizations have also provided support and publicity for

political cases such as the Conspiracy Resistance Case, the Ohio Seven, Puerto Rican Prisoners of War, Leonard Peltier and Mumia Abu-Jamal; and issues such as the Marion Lockdown and Prison Justice Day (Gaucher, 1991b:136).

The Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project

Davidson (2000b:25) notes that “arguably, the most extensive attempt at a participatory model was the Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project” (SCWPP). Faith (1993, 1995, and 1996) describes how Freire's pedagogy was used by the SCWPP, which developed at the California Institution for Women (CIW) and lasted from 1972 to 1976. According to Faith (1996), this was the first university-level course offered in a prison for women. Many people from all over the state volunteered, including community activists, graduate and law students, artists, performers, and university faculty from several different universities, many of whom were feminists and/or other revolutionaries.

The History of Consciousness graduate program and Community Studies at the University of California helped to sponsor the program, but many of the funds came out of the volunteers' pockets, individual donations, grants from small progressive foundations, and fund-raising events. Publishers and Santa Cruz bookstores donated textbooks, and IBM donated a typewriter. The University of California agreed to provide the prisoner-students credit on a Pass/No Record basis.

While the SCWPP was officially incorporated into the prison, it still constituted participatory education because prisoners had a say in all that occurred. Faith (1993:287) notes that most of the instructors in the program “adhered to a philosophy of education which was holistic, student-centered and praxis-oriented, whereby theory was informed by practice with an explicit commitment to social change”. According to Faith

(1993:288), “circle discussions, films and other audiovisual aids, exercises in verbal and written communications, and open critiques of one another’s work replaced hierarchical classroom orderings and lecture formats”⁷. As Freire’s pedagogy dictates, teachers and students worked together to raise critical questions and critique conventional texts. The prisoners themselves either initiated or were consulted about every decision concerning curriculum. The women’s priorities not only affected, but often dictated the program’s direction. Faith argues that as a result, “potential antagonisms based on real power differences of culture, class, race, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation and social status were deconstructed through the unifying processes of building the program” (1993:313).

Each credit course consisted of from four to twelve all-day workshops, which were held on weekends so that prison work assignments were not disrupted. Although many of the women would not have qualified for university under regular criteria, they were allowed into the program as mature students. Anyone was allowed to enroll, provided her security level allowed her to be in the general population. Faith (1993:282) notes that at any given time, approximately one hundred women, one sixth of the prison population, were enrolled in classes, which were referred to as “workshops”. Several hundred other women, comprising the majority of the prison population, participated in informal workshops and attended concerts and other events.

The overarching topic of the program was “Women in Society”, and reading materials were used from anthropology, literature, law, psychology, sociology, history,

⁷ Some instructors conducted courses primarily by mail, but after a time, some of the women had difficulty keeping up with their work. Without personal contact, the women lost their incentive, and either became absorbed in the regular weekend workshops or dropped out altogether (Faith, 1993:295).

and anything that had been published by Second Wave feminists to that time. Class discussions, reading, and writing assignments all encouraged women to look to their life histories to inform their analysis. Topics primarily focussed on the family, schooling, racism, women and the law, and “myself as a woman”.

As integral as the courses and cultural events that took place in the prison was the advocacy work for prisoners done on the outside. Community outgrowth resulted in a network of support groups, through which women could attain assistance in remaining out of prison. The focus was on practical issues, such as helping the women find jobs and housing, regaining child custody, and attaining admission to college or university. Women on parole also found necessary emotional support through these contacts (Faith, 1993:314).

Faith (1996) argues that state policies rarely serve to empower the least powerful populations. It is also rare that educators in prisons adopt grassroots initiatives such as those enacted with the SCWPP. In opposition to traditional penal philosophy, the SCWPP did not assume that prisoners were in need of rehabilitation any more than anyone else in society was. Faith (1993:286) argues that “[u]nlike the conservatism of most prison education programs in the 1990s, we began on the premise that it is not people in prisons who need to change so much as society itself”. The project was premised on the notion that crime is socially constructed, the criminal justice system is discriminatory, and that those least socially empowered are those most apt to be criminalized. Patriarchal gender roles were rejected. Those in charge of SCWPP did not presume to be more informed than the prisoners, and despite popular mythology, the prisoners were not assumed to be less intelligent than anyone else.

Behind the SCWPP was the notion that all those involved, including the prisoners, those in charge, and volunteers, should be critically aware of social reality, and furthermore, gain the confidence to act upon this awareness. The purpose of SCWPP was as much to raise social consciousness as it was to provide prisoners with marketable skills. The SCWPP “challenged the relationship of criminal justice to social divisions based on class and race”, and “generated understanding of abuses of power based on institutionalized hierarchies or authority” (1996:180). At the same time, the prisoners were shown the values of collective and community support in increasing their abilities and opportunities, despite structural obstacles. For an example of the curriculum, see Appendix B.

Faith states that following Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed", women in the prison engaged in dialogue with one another, and with their teachers, and became able to locate and name themselves in their social context. These women "refined their understandings (consciousness) of how society is constructed, and they gained insights into how they could individually and collectively challenge their exclusions through political (as opposed to criminal) activism" (Faith, 1995: 189). Through such a process, “African-American women who studied African-American history became advocates of Black Power. Women who wore the cloak of lifetime poverty gained class consciousness and an energizing commitment to social change. Women who had been raped and battered gained feminist consciousness and a basis for unity with other women. Women who were mute from years of silencing found their voices” (1995:189).

Faith (1993:312-113) quotes several comments from teachers in the program. The following are some examples:

The classes brought a good analysis to the prison. We set a context which helped people move from anger at themselves, individual guards or the prison, or even the “middle class”, to an understanding of the system of capitalism, its relations to other institutions and what might have to be done to overcome it.

Education seems to offer the best hope for individual women to rise above class oppression, defy racial discrimination, or approach some more equal competitive level with men.

Faith (1993:283) notes that throughout the first year of the program, both CIW administrators and the California Department of Corrections were publicly appreciative of the program, especially given that funds were coming from elsewhere. Faith (1993:284) is careful to note that much of the staff of CIW was supportive. From the beginning, however, attitudes of the guards were mixed. Those few guards who had gone to college or university themselves, agreed that education was a sensible use of prison time. Others argued that prisoners were stupid, and could not be educated. Another argument was that prisoners should not be receiving what was perceived as a reward for their crimes. Faith (1993:284) notes that while the warden of CIW was sympathetic to the cause of the program, some male members of her staff were resentful of the instructors and volunteers, referring to them as “commie-hippie perverts” or “weird, radical kooks”. According to them, the prisoners were “criminals”, and should be treated as a breed apart. Books with radical cover titles or graphics were confiscated, especially those authored by Karl Marx, George Jackson, other former or present prisoners, or any writer associated with left or Black Power politics. As a solution, the instructors tore off the covers of all paperbacks brought into the prison.

After the first year was over, resentment also grew among the high-ranked security administrators, and it became a struggle to keep the program active. On

occasion, volunteers committed mistakes resulting in breaches of prison regulations or protocol and a temporary cancellation of the program. Whenever this occurred, program coordinators and volunteers dedicated their spare time to public education, fund-raising through protest rallies, community meetings and forums, the media and cultural events.

Faith (1993:283) argues that the program was successful from the perspective of the prisoner-students based upon the following evidence:

...their consistent attendance; recruitment of other prisoners to the program; active involvement in guiding the program's direction; enthusiasm expressed directly to outsiders and indirectly through the prison grapevine; prisoners' sustained contact with outsiders following their release from CIW; and, the positive correlation between involvement in the program and chances for a successful parole (of approximately 100 women of one cohort who completed credit courses, within five years only five recidivated, compared to the usual recidivism rate of over 70 percent).

Faith (1993) quotes several of the women's responses. The following are representative examples:

You have allowed us to grow and expand through this class and that was a real compliment to us. We don't usually grow in here. We die in here. This has been fantastic (p.296).

My plans for parole have changed because of the workshops. When I get out I will be going to college (p.296).

Faith notes that a number of women went on to achieve significant academic goals upon release. Most of the women went on to lead productive lives in a variety of occupations. Furthermore, many became important allies in work for social change (Faith 1993:322).

According to Faith, the program had as much educational value for the volunteers as it did for the prisoners, as they received an education in the politics of punishment. "The volunteers came to understand who is in prison, and why, beyond the fact of having been convicted of breaking a law" (1996:179). They came to understand the power of the state, as well as the total lack of control prisoner's have over their own lives. Those

without prior knowledge of the criminal justice system became aware of how they had been confined by self-serving dichotomies, such as good people versus bad people, and the right way to live versus the wrong way. In her 1995 article, Faith (p.189) notes that:

The Santa Cruz Workshops come to symbolize resistance by insiders and outsiders alike to shame, blame, condemnation, labeling, and powerlessness. Cumulatively and collectively, the workshops, through the conduits of knowledge sharing, culture, artistry, and friendship promoted analysis in place of shame, responsibility in place of blame, solidarity in place of condemnation, unity in place of labeling, and the nurturance of power *with* (contra power *over*) in place of perceived powerlessness. Outsiders who came in with stereotypes of people in prison cast them off. Insiders who held stereotypes of professors, students, socialists, feminists, and Jews likewise “turned their heads around”.

Faith (1993:309) states that there was no single incident that resulted in the 1976 demise of the Santa Cruz program, but rather a combination of political and organizational shifts. A new warden was appointed, who was formerly a department store marketing director, and had no prior experience in corrections. She did not approve of the program, and was strongly supported in this decision by the male officer in charge of security, who had opposed the program from the beginning. Only the law course was allowed to continue, because prisons were then under public and judicial pressure to ensure prisoners were informed of their legal rights. Even this course was soon phased out. Concurrent with the demise of the SCWPP, many other volunteer groups were forced to cease their work in CIW, including conventionally conservative religious and arts and crafts groups.

Irish Republican Prisoners of War at Long Kesh, Northern Ireland⁸

Dana and McMonagle (1997) also describe an application of radical pedagogy in their recounting of the informal educational system used by prisoners in the H-Blocks at Long Kesh, Northern Ireland. The prisoners formed a system of self-education where revolutionary ideas could be developed and tested through discussion and passed on to others within the Irish Republican movement. The prisoners believed in their own ability to transform their situation, and accepted responsibility for their own liberation. As noted by Dana and McMonagle (1997:73), "the education that takes place in the H-Blocks empowers the prisoners to work for the end of their own oppression".

With a desire to share their culture as well as to learn more about their political struggle, Irish Republican prisoners developed a strategy to combat the hegemony of the English worldview. When large numbers of Irish were arrested and interned beginning in 1971, those prisoners of war (POWs) that knew Irish Gaelic or other subjects, such as history and politics, began to share their knowledge with others. This changed dramatically, however, when a new prison system was built in 1976, with traditional cells, resulting in the segregation of the prisoners. As they refused to conform to prison rules, Irish Republicans were also denied free association and other "privileges" granted to other prisoners. As a result, their classes came to an end. Rather than admitting defeat, however, prisoners began shouting to one another through doors, out windows, and along water pipes. "In this way a slow process was established where all men in a wing could share information by repeating it along the line until everyone was included" (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:69).

⁸ While the educational practices of the Irish Republican prisoners were linked to a political struggle on the outside, Dana and McMonagle's account does not mention any links between the prisoners and those on the

After five years of protests and hunger strikes, the British government granted many of the prisoners' demands, including the right to associate with one another, and access to study materials. Nevertheless, the prisoners refused to adopt a hierarchical educational system. Regardless of one's position outside the prison, no one was considered more or less important than another, and each prisoner was expected to contribute to the best of his abilities. A facilitator was present only to keep things on track. As such, prisoners were not forced to sit and receive information from experts who were removed from the scene of the struggle. Rather, everyone was both teacher and student. Nor was information and knowledge static and pre-determined, but instead was constantly updated and developed through the prisoners' experiences and analyses.

In the H-Blocks, each Republican wing sponsored different subjects of interest to the prisoners, including classes in jail history, political ideologies, Irish language, and historical analysis. Each class was usually led by two men who facilitated discussion and were in charge of ensuring that all avenues and sides of any given topic were adequately explored and debated. For new prisoners who wished to consider themselves political prisoners, the first and only compulsory class was Jail History. This class covered the history of Republican prisoners in Long Kesh. It was mandatory because it defined what being a prisoner of war was all about, and examined the importance of struggle within the H-Blocks. According to Dana and McMonagle (1997:70), "in this class, men discuss the prisoners' successful struggle for *de facto* political status and better living conditions for all Republicans held in prison in Northern Ireland". Prisoners learned they could continue to struggle despite imprisonment, and that the loss of physical freedom did not

mean defeat. Their work simply had to take on a different form and operate within a different context (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:71).

The political ideologies class was more theoretical, and examined ideologies such as capitalism, socialism, liberalism and fascism. The course was usually composed of approximately eight men who studied one of the ideologies each week and debated its positive and negative aspects (Dana and McMonagle, 1997:71). As Dana and McMonagle note, “this way they have a better grasp on different methods of government and economic systems, making it easier to consider the ramifications of those which the Republican movement espouses”.

Irish language classes were of crucial importance in the resistance to the prison regime because most prison officials did not understand the language. Prisoners took advantage of this and conveyed information about the prison and the guards to other prisoners in Irish. While a facilitator guided the language classes, everyone was responsible for himself, and everyone was encouraged to test each other.

According to Dana and McMonagle (1997:72), the Historical Analysis class “is perhaps the most important to the Republicans, for in many ways participating in this group helps solidify their own ideas on struggle and helps form their dynamic ideology”. This class worked in the form of a discussion/debate circle, and “allows POWs to explore the history behind incidents in the period 1966-1986, such as the civil rights marches, the fall of Stormont, internment, the hunger strikes and Bloody Sunday”. Again, approximately eight men participated in the class, and two men per week took turns covering and assigning readings. The group examined each topic from all sides, “trying to determine what happened, why the event happened the way it did, and engaging in

debate to decide if the Republican movement could have done anything differently and what lessons can be learned from the event". All perspectives were held up to scrutiny, and prisoners often discovered new aspects that had not been previously considered. At least one of the men in the wing usually had been a participant or witness to the event discussed, bringing a human side to the academic discussions.

Aside from the classes, there was also a Sinn Féin Cumann on each wing, which means a gathering of some of the more politically active men. According to Dana and McMonagle (1997:73), "this group sponsors at least one discussion a month on a variety of current events and issues important to the men as a whole". Topics included crime and punishment, sectarianism, and the role of the Irish language and culture in the struggle.

The Radical Education of Minority Groups

Little Rock Reed: Education the Aboriginal Way

Little Rock Reed (1990) writes of the imposition of Church and State that is often inherent in prison 'rehabilitative' programs. Such programs fail to take cultural factors into account, and thus do not work for prisoners of other cultures (Reed refers specifically to Aboriginals with substance abuse problems). Programs designed by non-indigenous people are generally based on Western schools of thought and have little to do with aboriginal values and beliefs.⁹ As Reed (1990:12) states, "the failure of non-Indian programs to successfully treat Indian substance-abuse problems has been well-documented".

The failure of traditional approaches to education to acknowledge holistic concepts is evidenced in the medical model, for example, wherein breaking a law is

⁹ For a comparison of Anglo and Native AA Steps, as well as a comparison of typical Anglo and Aboriginal values, please see Appendix C.

thought to be the result of a sickness, of which the prisoner could be treated and returned to the community, cured of her/his disease. Reed (1990:24) argues that it must be recognized that these 'diseases' are manifested by societies. The troubles of indigenous persons cannot be addressed as isolated problems, but must be viewed in the cultural context - past, present, and future.

Reed calls for the integration of traditional aboriginal forms of healing practices into programs that include aboriginal prisoners. The involvement of indigenous persons and staff are imperative to the success of the programs. At the very least, persons involved must have some knowledge of the historical and contemporary realities facing indigenous people, and the differences between Aboriginal and Anglo values. It must be recognized that any type of program that emphasizes white middle-class values is not only improper, but also antagonistic to Aboriginal prisoners. Reed (1990:19) argues that

repeated displays of insensitivity and indifference to the laws and to the basic human needs of the prisoners by prison officials such as those who force Indians into programs that propagate philosophies, values, principles and beliefs that clash with those of Indians serve only to enhance the alienation of the Indians and make them more bitter and resentful toward the society those prison officials represent. In other words, such practices not only fail to rehabilitate, but to the contrary, they serve to increase conflict (and undoubtedly the criminal recidivism rates).

In order for a program to be effective, it must refamiliarize Aboriginal prisoners with the traditional values of their culture, and then strengthen those cultural values and norms. While the Judeo-Christian approach to Alcoholics Anonymous, for example, dwells upon the negative aspects of alcohol, the United Native Alcohol Program (UNAP) focuses on the strength of the traditional ways of Aboriginals. Rather than focusing on negative case histories, UNAP accentuates the positive nature and spiritual strengths of

mankind. It must also be recognized that the more an Aboriginal prisoner is involved with their own education, the more effective it will be.

Malcolm X and Individual Education

While the previous examples demonstrate groups of prisoners educating themselves, a prime example of one prisoner educating himself is that of Malcolm X, who participated only minimally in formal educational activities in prison. Instead, he educated himself, with some assistance from friends and brothers in the Muslim community. Germanotta argues that this type of education can be considered legitimate, provided some degree of self-transformation has occurred, regardless of a lack of formal accrediting or licensing. A transformation did indeed occur with Malcolm X, as he left prison as one of the world's most articulate spokespersons on racism.

Described by a prison psychiatrist as “confused” and “incoherent”, Malcolm X rose to extraordinary heights in the empowerment of the black community. Malcolm X was able to reveal the “upside-down” structure of the United States political economy, and reveal the culture that made it seem rational and just (Franklin, 1978:238). As noted by Franklin (p.239), Malcolm X was one of the first “common” criminals to disclose the notion that “the biggest criminals in America control it and that the people in prison are merely their most brutalized victims”. Today, Malcolm X remains an inspiration to many.

Malcolm X educated himself by means of self-discipline, a growing intellectual curiosity, a spiritual awakening, and an intense search for his identity, which he then realized was intimately linked with black history. Malcolm argues that he had no desire to attain a status symbol in the form of a degree from a college. Later, when asked to

name his alma matter, Malcolm X's reply was "books". From books, he learned about "the deafness, dumbness and blindness that was afflicting the black race in America" (Malcolm X, in Germanotta, 1995:109). Malcolm X's self-education was largely politically and religiously motivated. As noted by Germanotta(1995:119), "[h]is experience of the prison along with his growing realization of the extraordinary impact of white domination on the mental productions of humankind, led him to a self-initiated critical pedagogy...". While he was "rehabilitated", it was not by the system, but in opposition to it.

Rivera and the Nontraditional Approach

In chapter four, it was stated that the opportunities model approach to prison education is meant to provide prisoners with skills that will allow them to reintegrate into the dominant society. Rivera (1992), a prisoner and educator in New York, argues that this traditional approach to prison education, being Eurocentric, white, and middle-class, assumes that anyone is able to 'fit in' to the outside world. As Rivera (1995:159) notes, "the high rate of incarceration of minorities suggests that something is wrong with the way we address our social and criminal justice problems". Rivera calls for a nontraditional approach that acknowledges the perspectives of others, and also recognizes that these 'others' are often not accepted in a Eurocentric society¹⁰. The nontraditional perspective acknowledges and takes into account institutionalized racism, sexism, and classism. Within the curricula, fundamental differences between cultures must also be taken into account since they concern every aspect of a prisoner's life.

¹⁰ Rivera's articles refer specifically to those of African and Latin American descent, and the poor.

Rivera writes from Fishkill Correctional Facility, New York, where a group of prisoners have called for a nontraditional, community-specific approach to education. Reconciliation is a primary goal of the Nontraditional Approach. “The aim is to have the ex-prisoner and the community reintegrated to the benefit of both and to prevent further destruction” (Rivera, 1995:160). The needs of the offender are linked with those of the community. The program arose from an observation that there is often a direct relationship between certain high-crime areas and prison populations. Rivera (1992:30) argues that this is due to a prevalence of “crime generative factors” in certain areas, such as “family breakdown, poor health care, substandard housing, under-education, high unemployment, drugs, (and) discrimination”, which are the “root causes of our problems”. Such factors cause despair and learned helplessness. Rivera argues that traditional approaches to prison education typically fail to take these root causes into account, and instead lay blame upon the individual offender, claiming that there is something wrong with them. This is evidenced in the opportunities model, wherein prisoners are considered to be poorly socialized and/or unskilled. With the focus on individual failures, social factors are ignored. A non-traditional approach, on the other hand, acknowledges socio-economic conditions and their role in crime.

Rivera argues that criminogenic factors can be addressed through courses in basic civic and community politics. Rather than rehabilitation, the focus becomes empowerment as prisoners gain insight into the problems of their communities. “Only when prisoners understand the actual conditions of their communities can they help to confront and overcome racist policies that work against minorities” (Rivera, 1995:161). Such an approach, argues Rivera (1992:30), “allows individuals to transform themselves

from what they were to what they can become.... In place of the helplessness poor people often feel, a sense of control over their future is instilled in them and this empowerment works to transform a criminal mentality into a progressive and law-abiding one...”.

Traditional approaches generally do not address the cultures of the majority of prisoners. As discussed in the previous chapter, traditional education tends to follow order theory, and is concerned with maintaining the status quo. Standard education programs require prisoners to relinquish their old customs and assimilate to the dominant value system. Rivera (1995:161) argues that all schools, whether inside or out, must have a curriculum that is culturally specific to its student population. Courses must be made available in the history, philosophy, and social economy of ethnic groups. Rivera argues that African and Latin American history courses, for example, should be available in all educational programs, as he believes that these will instill a sense of self-worth in prisoners of these origins, something that Eurocentric approaches do not provide. Such classes would also help prisoners build a sense of identity with their own communities and build the foundation upon which structural changes can be made with minority-specific needs as the primary consideration.

Rivera and others¹¹ have created three classes that they believe should serve as models for other prison education programs. The model classes have been named “*Conciencia*” (Latinocentric), “Resurrection” (Afrocentric), and “Liberation”(Liberation Theology). The courses are designed to teach basic knowledge about ethnocentricity and liberation theology. Classes are sponsored by sympathetic institutional organizations,

¹¹ At the time of Rivera’s 1995 writing, classes had also been established at Sullivan Correctional Facility, Eastern Correctional Facility, and Great Meadows Correctional Facility.

such as Hispanics United for Progress, a prisoner organization that sponsors cultural events. All of the classes last for twenty-five weeks, but each of the instructors has developed their own curricula to address the specific needs of the group. Rivera, for example, has incorporated five weeks of parenting skills into his Conciencia class. All classes, however, involve purging stages and culturally specific history segments. All classes also include a historical account of how prisons in New York developed, in an attempt to teach prisoners an appreciation for the struggles of past prisoners. While teaching methods differ according to needs, all generally involve both lecture and discussion. Although the courses do not constitute formal schooling, most of prisoner/instructors have undergraduate degrees, and some advanced degrees. The participation of outside speakers and grass-roots groups from the community are particularly helpful, given that the state of the community is the root of the problem, and that which must be changed.

According to Rivera, these courses address the responsibilities prisoners have to themselves and to their communities. As a result of these classes, argues Rivera, prisoners will have a new vision of themselves and of the purpose and direction their lives should take. According to Rivera (1992:31), the classes take into consideration three important factors.

The first factor resembles Merton's (1967) arguments about the disparity between culturally imposed goals and legitimate means, and the consequent deviation. The Nontraditional Approach believes that crime generative attitudes are created by socio-economic conditions within the community. Rivera (1992:31) argues that these attitudes arise "when a distinct people experiences segregation, injustice, inferior education, and

the force of the police as the slave patrols. This happens when people are deprived of community control, political control, and economic independence". The attitude that "making it in society" must be achieved in any way possible thus arises, as does disrespect for the law. Unlike traditional education, however, the Nontraditional approach does not foster students' longing to fit the European model. In traditional forms of prison education, prisoners "are taught to value and seek conventional symbols of success, such as money and material possessions, which for most of us can be gained only illegally and often through crime committed against a member of one's own ethnic group. Hence, the attitude that illegal activity is all right becomes a norm, worthy of imitation by community youth who glamorize it as heroic" (Rivera, 1995:165). Like traditional approaches to prison education, the Nontraditional Approach is concerned that offenders gain a law-abiding attitude. They take this further, however, and argue that prisoners must become aware of the social, political, and economic conditions that have kept them struggling for survival. The Nontraditionalists hope that upon release, prisoners will not only work to benefit themselves, but their communities as well.

The second factor that must be taken into account, argues Rivera (1992:31-32), is the ethnicity of the prisoner. Rivera argues that a longing to fit in with the rest of society places individuals of other ethnicity on a collision course with the "white man's law". According to Rivera, individuals attempt to make up for their failure to fit in by acquiring symbols of success, money, and material possessions illegally. Rivera argues that the attitude that illegal activity is all right is developed in such circumstances. Since ethnicity is central to the problem of crime, it must become a part of the prison education curriculum. Rivera (1992:32) argues that studying issues of ethnicity will help prisoners

deal with their status as second-class citizens. Through historical awareness, positive self-esteem must be developed in an attempt to get past stereotypes and stigmas. An understanding of ethnic status should challenge the feeling of powerlessness that keeps people from doing something to change their present conditions.

Third, argues Rivera, prison education programs must have a sense of community. He argues (1992:32) that “having a sense of community empowers prisoners because it links them with groups in the community and teaches them how their community operates”. Community concepts must be studied, including the impact crime generative factors have on community empowerment movements. The prisoners must gain insight as to how they fit into the community, and also develop a concern for the community and the people in it.

In his *Conciencia* classes, Rivera (1992:32) advocates a series of purges to help create a “new” person. These purging stages include emotional purging, educational purging, and social purging, all of which are meant to help the prisoners deal with the negative influences that have become embedded within their personalities. The purging classes are held in an open discussion manner. The emotional purging stage addresses racism, sexism, hate, vanity, and desires. The negative and positive aspects of machismo are also examined. Educational purging involves eliminating the effects of mis-education, including all-white history and traditional, Eurocentric learning. Re-education includes acknowledging one’s own history and non-traditional knowledge. According to Rivera (1992:33), the social purging stage is the most important in coming to understand why one is the way they are, and how they came to be that way. This stage involves changing one’s social perspective and the conceptualization of one’s reality. This is

where prisoners begin to overcome the stereotypes and stigmas created for them.

According to Rivera, it is these stereotypes and stigmas that underlie all of the prisoners' psychosocial problems. Rivera (p.33) argues that prisoners must come to understand the labeling process and its effects so that they can redefine their own reality and focus on changing conditions in their communities.

Rivera (1995:159-160) also argues that communities need to participate in resolving problems of crime, punishment, and rehabilitation. In New York, a Community Justice Center was established outside the prison in 1993 in order to extend the Nontraditional Approach into the community. Through this not-for-profit center, an ex-prisoner who helped to found the Nontraditional Approach attempts to generate community support for the program. The agency works to disseminate its ideas through community education. For example, the center teaches the tenets of the Nontraditional Approach to youths before they get in trouble with the law. The center also "calls for a reevaluation of state criminal and social justice policies, with an emphasis on prisons, and for a redistribution of state budget expenditures in accord with the community-specific approach" (Rivera, 1995:170).

Rivera (1995:163) also states that the Black and Puerto Rican Legislative Caucus has been particularly important to the promotion of the Nontraditional program. "The caucus permits us to reveal to legislators the direct relationship between prisons and our communities. They hear testimony on the effectiveness of current state policies and programs and on prisoners' efforts to develop programs that improve the life chances of black and Latino prisoners. We are able to establish links with caucus members and gather their support for the Nontraditional approach" (Rivera, 1995:163).

Morse (1995) argues that Rivera perhaps naively assumes that such a program will render ex-prisoners invincible to any external influences that may have led them to imprisonment in the first place. As Morse (1995) notes, the conditions of the neighborhood they return to are not likely to have improved, but rather to have further deteriorated, thus increasing the likelihood of recidivism. Morse (1995) further argues that once an ex-prisoner returns to the community, he or she is likely to discover that his or her portfolio of prison program certificates is not likely to lead to anything in the outside world but mistrust and suspicion for having been an offender. Morse argues that this is likely to result in feelings of anger and frustration in the ex-prisoner, and consequently lead to further recidivism and the creation of a never-ending cycle. Morse argues that believing ex-prisoners will be readily accepted into an unwilling society is simply idealism. To counter this, a non-traditional approach to education must not only focus on prisoners and their communities, but must work to overcome injustice in society at large, especially racial injustice. Not only must prisoners be educated, but all citizens.

Currie (1993) makes a similar argument, with specific reference to drug abuse in the United States. Currie (1993:3) argues the drug problem has only grown worse since the war on drugs began. As a result of the war on drugs, prisons have overflowed, and the number of people criminalized has skyrocketed, especially among minorities and the poor. At the same time, solutions have become even farther away.

Currie (1993:4) refers to the drug problem in certain communities as endemic, rather than an epidemic, because it is “an illness which has become deeply entrenched in a population and stubbornly resists eradication”. Currie (1993:4) argues that “drug abuse on the American scale reflects deeper structural problems in our economy and society”.

This is especially evident as drug abuse tends to be concentrated among certain groups, but not others. Drug abuse can not be viewed as solely a medical problem, nor a law enforcement problem, but rather a *social* problem that must be confronted at its social roots.

Currie (1993:5) argues that the attempts to control drug abuse through the criminal justice system and medical “treatment” (including voluntary or forced hospitalization) have been a primary cause in the failure to reduce the problem. These attempts are fundamentally wrong, as they attribute addiction to factors inherent within the individual’s makeup. Currie (1993:51) argues that only when it is recognized that destructive community settings lead to drug abuse will any headway be made. While energy and resources have been spent on fighting the *symptoms* of the drug crisis, addressing the *causes* has been avoided. While declaring war on the symptoms of drug abuse may be more politically attractive, it has ultimately been far more costly, as the causes have been allowed to fester.

According to Currie (1993:40), it is long residence in a deprived area that is most apt to lead to drug addiction. Drugs are but one symptom among many in areas of economic deprivation, and cultural and familial disintegration. At the root of addiction lie poverty and racial discrimination. Segregation and discrimination have withheld poor and minority persons from the opportunity to identify with, or achieve status positions in the larger society. Employment problems may not necessarily mean a complete lack of jobs for everyone, but certainly the likelihood that most will only attain low-wage, low-status labour. Joblessness and entrapment in low-wage, unstable work also lead to drug abuse in an indirect manner-through their negative impact on the stability of families and

entire neighbourhoods. Such conditions weaken families so that their capacity to provide some protection against the lures of drugs is eroded. As a result, many people begin using drugs long before they are old enough to even apply for a job (Currie, 1993:90-91).

Not only do poverty, unemployment, and the bleakness of confinement in meaningless occupations affect drug abuse, but also relative poverty in an affluent society with a single-minded emphasis on mass consumption and material success. Aside from an adequate income, also lacking are the “fundamental requirements of a sense of challenge, place, and purpose, a stable and respected identity” (Currie, 1993:67). Drug abuse results from profound pessimism, alienation, and a feeling that one’s chances in life will never improve. Here we see great similarities to Merton (1967)’s arguments regarding cultural goals and the unequal access in achieving them. Currie’s drug addicts fit into what Merton (1967:124) refers to as *retreatists*. Merton argues that in defeat and resignation, retreatists reject both cultural goals and institutional means. By becoming drug addicts, for example, retreatists escape from the requirements of society.

Unlike Merton (1967), who argued that forms of retreat, such as drug addiction, are individual acts, Currie argues that using drugs is also a means of conforming to local peer culture, as in many deprived neighbourhoods drugs are a part of the social landscape, to which residents are inevitably exposed. According to Currie (1993:58), drugs are not only an individual response, but rather a collective solution to restricted opportunities and broken lives. Nor are drugs an isolated problem; according to Currie (1993:69), they are part of a syndrome that includes family disintegration, delinquency, and alcohol abuse.

The war on drugs has resulted in the massive “prisonization” of the disadvantaged young. Currie (1993:19) argues that the prison system “has become our principal public agency for disadvantaged young men – their chief source of publicly supported housing and one of their most important sources of employment, nutrition, and medical care”. Much more money goes toward housing the poor in prison than toward providing them with public housing. The long-term social costs of this massive imprisonment, however, involve much more than monetary costs. In the name of the drug war, entire communities have been decimated, and large numbers of young Americans have been relegated to the margins of productive society. The extensive amounts of public funds spent on imprisonment results in few resources being available for constructive after-release programs.

As does Morse (1995), Currie (1993:70) notes that imprisonment does nothing to change the conditions facing prisoners upon release. Currie (1993:70) argues that “the social pressures and deficits that underlay addiction would accordingly be no less strong—and probably stronger, since the addict now carried the stigmas and disabilities of the ex-convict and would have an even slimmer chance of achieving a sufficiently respectable or rewarding place in the world of work to counter the powerful lures of drugs and the hustling life”.

According to Currie (1993:45), prevention must focus on helping those who are personally damaged and environmentally deprived to become healthy. Legitimate opportunities for a meaningful life must be made available for those who want it. Nothing less than visionary measures will address the root causes of drug abuse. First, Currie (1993:71) argues, what drug addicts need in the long run are changed lives:

broader opportunities for employment and respectable incomes, and full participation in the surrounding society. Currie (1993:149) argues for an emphasis on three separate principles: the reintegration of drug abusers into productive life, the reduction of harm, and the promotion of community safety.

Currie (1993:282) argues that the required strategy “entails nothing less than altering an entire process of social development—one that has excluded millions of Americans from a productive and respected role in our common life, eroded the strengths of families and communities, and blighted the prospects of an entire generation”. Drug addicts need a wider range of help that would enable them to cope with the multitude of obstacles faced in inner cities. Short-term medical or psychiatric treatment are not adequate. Currie (1993:56) argues that the only enduring solution to the problem is the comprehensive rebuilding of communities’ basic institutions. Broader efforts need to be made toward integration, the provision of better opportunities, as well as better tools for taking advantage of these opportunities. It must also be acknowledged that “the drug crisis reflects a deeper crisis of culture and spirit, of family and community, as well as of material well-being. We must accordingly strive to re-create a sense of purpose and participation, of contribution to a common enterprise, of membership in a sustaining society” (Currie, 1993:282). Currie (p.282) calls for a strategy of inclusion to replace the one of exclusion that currently exists. He clarifies this on pages 282-283:

A strategy of inclusion is not the same thing as simply redistributing income to the disadvantaged or providing after-the-fact social services to those who have been damaged by their exclusion-or their parents’ exclusion-from a sustaining place in the society around them. It is an effort to forestall social pathologies by guaranteeing a fundamental level of economic and social participation. To be sure, that is a tall order. But it is not beyond our reach.

A movement must be created that will be intent on changing deprivation and discrimination. Prisoners who have undergone a non-traditional education can be hired upon release to staff new community services in education, health care, employment, and cultural activities. Crucial services that have previously been neglected could therefore be provided (Currie, 1993:72-73).

Currie (1993:324) argues that “financing a strategy of inclusion is a political and moral issue, not simply an economic one”. In terms of economics, a strategy of inclusion would very likely pay for itself. The cost of inclusion would likely be much cheaper than the amounts spent to contain the destructive consequences of mass social exclusion and deprivation. Currie (1993:325) argues:

What we generally ignore in conventional discussions of social spending is the fundamental truth that inequality is expensive. The waste of productive potential and rampant social pathology that invariably go with it are among the most costly items on any budget, and they have now mounted to the point where state and local governments can no longer bear the burden. As we’ve seen, the result is a vicious cycle; reactive spending to repair damage we could have prevented makes it impossible to find resources for preventive programs. And thus we spiral endlessly downwards. Reversing that cycle is therefore not only socially progressive but economically urgent.

Problems Encountered when Engaging in Radical Education

It can very well be expected that radical education cannot easily be implemented into prisons. As stated by a prisoner cited in Davidson (2000b:23), “most prisoner’s organized education is what Prison officials call a Threat to security, Revolutionary, Gang involvement, etc and often the response is harassment, transfers from the institution to...the Super Max and Indefinite Segregation”. The following are examples of some of the troubles radicals have been faced with.

Taylor (1998:70) provides an example of repression at the hands of the Department of Corrections (DOC) at the 1500-man, maximum security Indiana State Reformatory. In the fall of 1991, a rumour spread throughout the prison population that the prisoners in the lockup unit were going to be sent to the state's new maximum restraint unit. Some of the older prisoners, who were also college students, came up with a unique and powerful protest. They met during recreation, meals, and work assignments to formulate their plan, which resulted in the Unity Walk. In a display of solidarity, prisoners walked in peaceful unit formations around the drill ground during their assigned recreation periods for a period of three days.

The Unity Walk was a completely non-violent protest, and not a single rule was broken. Regardless, the commissioner of the DOC ordered the entire prison locked down for seven months. The initial reason given for the lock down was to investigate the demonstration. After two weeks of cell-confinement with no visits or phone calls, the "most exhaustive shakedown of the reformatory in 15 years was conducted" (Taylor, 1998:74). After a month-long search, the DOC dramatically displayed approximately fifty "weapons" that had been confiscated. According to Taylor, a third of these were not even weapons, but tattoo guns, teachers' scissors, and screwdrivers used for maintenance. Added to this, many of the "weapons" had been confiscated months, if not years, before the shakedown occurred. Regardless, the weapons became the new reason for the continuing lock down, supposedly for the protection of the staff and prisoners.

The goal of the administration was now to identify and isolate prison "predators". By mid-February, a separate unit held approximately 150 identified "predators", half of whom were the older, college educated prisoners who had avoided a potentially bloody,

costly and violent riot with their idea for the Unity Walk. Meanwhile, the younger prisoners who had originally agitated for anarchy, but were otherwise persuaded by the older prisoners, were left in the general population. Taylor (1998) concludes that while the DOC succeeded in breaking the spirit of the prisoners, we must also acknowledge that the prisoners succeeded beyond their wildest dreams in shaking the administrative complacency of the DOC. The sense of power that resulted from the prisoners' unification gave the prisoners an important sense of control. The feeling of having befuddled the powers that controlled their lives, while fleeting, was nevertheless exhilarating.

Several other prisoners have written of the repression experienced at the Indiana State Prison. In the early morning hours of June 6, 1996, ten Afrikan prisoners at the were taken from their beds, "stripped naked, shackled and chained, and paraded in front of arriving employees, visitors, etc., by heavily armed guards and shipped to Indiana's famous sensory deprivation unit – M.C.C.-Supermax" (Shakur, 1996:1). These were prisoners who had been active in anti-authoritarian, anti-death penalty organizing and politics. All have histories of standing up for human dignity, or fighting for the basic human rights routinely denied to prisoners. All have worked to transform the criminal lifestyles of others into progressive ones. They have also worked to better themselves, to find ways to heal and reconstruct their lives in an atmosphere that does nothing but try to kill one's spirit and will. According to Shakur (1996:1), an Indiana state prisoner, such tactics were taken against the prisoners to send a message out to the anti-genocide/death penalty supporters of Ziyon Yisrayah, a prisoner later killed by the state on July 18th. Following the incident on June 6th, the prison was locked down, and a mass

reclassification was instituted, resulting in honour dorns or harsher treatment for anyone interested in organizing around prison conditions. According to Camara (in Olatunji et.al., 1996:3), this was in attempt to establish classism in the prison and foster divisions amongst the prisoners.

The ten prisoners were given sentences in maximum security units ranging from one to five years. According to state-issued media reports, these means were taken in order to keep the peace, but Shakur (1996:1) argues that the charges of conspiracy to riot, attempt to riot, and threatening are without evidence or merit. According to Shakur, the Department of Corrections manufactured evidence in order to frame the ten prisoners. He further argues that the only “threat to the peace” are the jack-booted, baton-wielding mercenary kkkops carrying out murder, beatings and the like” (p.1).

Olatunji (1996:1), a prisoner in Indiana, writes of the pressures, persecutions, and prosecutions that face Black prisoners who attempt to rehabilitate themselves. Ironically, argues Olatunji, institutions that are meant to correct anti-social behaviour are punishing those who have decided to become responsible. Malik (in Olatunji et.al., 1994:1), another Indiana prisoner, states that he adopted a revolutionary ideology and began to work to raise the consciousness of other prisoners about their history, prison conditions and confinement. He argues that because of this work, he was harassed by prisoncrats, and eventually classified for placement in the Maximum Restraint Unit. His situation, Malik argues, is but one example of the historical practice of singling out and isolating potential leaders. Camara (in Olatunji et.al., 1994:1) writes of a similar situation. He argues that because of his commitment to reversing the destruction that holds prisoners in its clutches, the prison administration at Indiana State Prison has targeted him and others

for isolation and disciplinary action. According to Camara (p.1), this is an attempt on the part of administrators to hold back a growing emergence of responsible, progressive-minded prisoners. In conclusion, Camara (p.3) argues that prisoners must go on to break “free of the mental, emotional and physical slavery that was ordained upon them by a society of genocidal oppressors”.¹²

Another problem arises in the area of funding. As radical approaches to education are likely to be met with much resistance, it follows that the funding of such approaches will be difficult. Reed (1990:16), for example, writes that “programs are being met with resistance not only by most prison administrators but by funding agencies upon whom the Indian people must rely for assistance in keeping the programs alive in Indian communities”. The following are some suggestions to help out with funding.

After prisoners became ineligible for Pell Grants in the United States, Jon Marc Taylor (1999:4) suggested that rebate funds from the Inmate Collect Calling Phone System at Missouri Correctional Institute (totaling several million dollars annually) be allocated to refinance post-secondary education in Missouri prisons. If higher education were funded by prisoners’ phone calls, not a single tax dollar would be lost. A grassroots lobbying campaign began, and for the last three years, the goal of reinstituting fully funded post-secondary education in prisons has gone before General Assembly sessions of the Missouri Legislature. At the time of Taylor’s 1999 writing of the Guerilla Handbook, appeals had not yet been successful.

¹² For another example, see Judicial Process Commission (1998) “Persecution of an Inmate Activist”, Justicia, June 1998, First Bulletin.

Liz Elliot¹³ suggests that to make prison higher education courses more economically viable, students from outside universities should be allowed to take the courses in the prisons. This way, the outside students would get the experience of having been in a prison. Prisoners would also benefit from having contact with people from the outside world.

Kenneth Como (1999:9), writing from the Minnesota Correctional Facility, describes a practice used in Texas. Texas prisoners who wish to obtain a post-secondary education are given funding in the form of a loan, which they must pay back upon release. As Como (1999:9) notes, “because the funding is not a grant, it eliminates the presumption that by breaking the law, prisoners will receive a free education at the tax payer’s expense”.

Conclusion to Chapter Five

This chapter opened with a review of libertarian theories of education. It was argued that education has traditionally mirrored the goals and interests of the powerful. Radical education, on the other hand, provides people with a means of achieving freedom from domination and ideological control. Libertarian theorists argue that education must be critical and work to deconstruct various myths. At the same time, it must affirm, commit and advocate. Education for liberation and empowerment calls for a more equitable and transformative share in social power and decision-making. Education must provide *all* people with the opportunity to participate fully in cultural, political and economic life. Liberation theorists argue that changes in methods of education can contribute to a transformation of society. As students break free from their historical

¹³ Telephone interview, March 2000.

oppression, they become better able to instigate a form of social organization that would provide a maximum amount of individual control and freedom.

It was argued that empowerment through education could best be achieved by following the pedagogy of Paulo Freire. Freire's methods emphasize collaboration, union, organization, and cultural synthesis. The participation of students is imperative. Within Freirian pedagogy, students come to have their voices heard and their life experiences become primary learning material. As students and educators work together, education becomes non-hierarchical. Rather than teaching, educators become coordinators of the class. Within Freirian pedagogy, a new version of the world is to be learned, including a critique of current circumstances, and an attempt to overcome these circumstances. The quest is for humanization.

Freire's work constitutes what Mathiesen (1974) refers to as societal action research. Societal action research is geared toward individual and social change, and works to empower and liberate. Mathiesen argues that this would best be achieved if goals were left unfinished and a long-range revolutionary goal maintained. While, possible, this process is very difficult due to the threat of absorption into the prevailing system. It is essential that educational methods not become separate from radical perspective.

In refuting various critiques against Freire's work, we see that Freire actually provides a general framework that can be applied in many circumstances. As oppression occurs throughout the world, so can Freire's pedagogy. It is particularly applicable to prisoners. The presence of radical education in prisons is evidenced in a variety of examples, including those described in this chapter. While prisoners engaging in radical

education are apt to encounter many difficulties in the face of state repression, it *is* possible to do so.

Chapter 6

CONCLUSION

Theory and Action

Freire's theory of education, while on the one hand rooted in the language of critique, is also rooted in the language of possibility. Radical critics provide a useful model to analyze traditional educational ideology. In contrast to the conservative belief that schools transmit objective knowledge, critics look to underlying hidden interests, the overrepresentation of dominant culture, and selective emphases and exclusions.

Challenging the dominant assumption that schools are a major mechanism for the development of a democratic and egalitarian social order, radical critics look to schooling as a powerful instrument used for the reproduction of capitalist relations of production, as well as for legitimating the ideologies of everyday life. Rather than viewing schools as simply instructional sites, radical critics point to "the transmission and reproduction of a dominant culture in schools, with its selective ordering and privileging of specific forms of language, modes of reasoning, social relations, and cultural forms and experiences" (Giroux in Freire, 1985:xv). While schooling gives privilege to and confirms the culture of those students from the privileged classes, it also serves to exclude, insult, and discredit the histories, experiences, and dreams of subordinate groups. Also in contrast to the popular belief that schools are neutral sites, radical critics argue that through selective grants, certification policies, and legal powers, the state shapes the practice of schooling in the interests of the dominant. In sum, it is argued that schools are agencies of social, economic, and cultural reproduction.

Some left critics, however, fail to develop any alternative practices, and thus offer no hope. By focussing on the way schools *are*, these critics have failed to focus on how

schools *should be*. As noted by Giroux (1989b: 130), “radical educators have theorized primarily *about* schools as agencies of domination, and, as such, they have seldom concerned themselves with the possibility of constructing new, alternative approaches to school organization, curricula, and classroom social relations”. By merely focussing on schools as reproductive sites, radical critics have offered no argument for a counterhegemonic struggle and ideological contestation. Instead, it is argued that given the amount of domination found within, schools cannot possibly become sites of political intervention.

Rather than simply focussing upon criticisms and Orwellian pessimism and leaving it at that, Friere goes further by making hope attainable. Education becomes a means of action and change by merging critique and possibility. Whereas the new sociology of education begins with an analysis of political, economic, and cultural reproduction, Freire’s analysis begins by looking at production, at how individuals construct their voices and validate their experiences within specific settings. From Freire’s perspective, domination must be decoded, challenged, and transformed through the ongoing discourse, experiences, and histories of the oppressed themselves. In his shift from discourse and critique to hope and engagement, Freire has developed a comprehensive pedagogy (Freire, 1985) and has provided what Mathiesen (1974) and Reinharz (1992) refer to as action research. Action research bridges the gap between knowledge and action. As noted by Reinharz (1992), action research consists not only of observation, but also of intervention with the intent of political illumination. Action research works to empower, liberate, and otherwise assist specific groups of people.

As noted by Freire (1985:156), “[c]ut off from practice, theory becomes a simple verbalism. Separated from theory, practice is nothing but blind activism”. Similarly, Cohen concludes his (1990) article "Intellectual Scepticism and Political Commitment: The Case of Radical Criminology" with a poem by Brecht, entitled "In Praise of Doubt", wherein the author condemns not only "...*the thoughtless who never doubt*", but also "...*the thoughtful who never act*". Essentially, as William James wrote, "a difference that makes no difference is no difference at all".

The work of the Santa Cruz Women’s Prison Project, the Irish Republican prisoners of war and the Nontraditionalists all qualify as action research. They demonstrate that prison education does have the ability to create alternatives to the curricula of the opportunities and cognitive deficiencies models, and at the same time "counter the correctional ethos in the very heart of the panopticon" (Collins, 1994:61). Each example developed alternative approaches to educational organization, curricula, and classroom social relations. All call for a struggle against ideology and hegemony, and all call for the empowerment of prisoners as an oppressed group.

The SCWPP was a form of action research as it raised social consciousness in all those involved, including prisoners, educators, and volunteers. The prisoners learned how they could individually and collectively challenge their exclusions through political activism. The SCWPP worked not only to empower those in prison, but also those women who had been released. As integral as the courses and cultural events that took place in the prison was the advocacy work for prisoners done on the outside. Community outgrowth resulted in a network of support groups, through which women could attain assistance in remaining out of prison. The focus was on practical issues, such as helping

the women find jobs and housing, regaining child custody, and attaining admission to college or university. Women on parole also found necessary emotional support through these contacts (Faith, 1993:314). Due to the SCWPP, a number of women went on to achieve significant academic and occupational goals after release and many became advocates for social change.

The Irish Republican prisoners of war also worked towards ending their own repression by forming a system of self-education wherein revolutionary ideas could be developed and discussed. A hierarchical system of education was not accepted, and all were expected to participate and share their own views. Prisoners shared their culture, learned more about their political struggle, and combated the hegemony of the English worldview.

Rivera (1992) calls for a nontraditional approach to prison education that is oriented toward community action. Due to the relationship between high crime areas and prison populations, the needs of prisoners are linked to those of their communities. Rather than focussing on rehabilitation, a non-traditional approach would focus on empowerment as prisoners gain insight into the problems of their communities. Rivera's approach attempts to change prisoners' perspectives of themselves by giving them a sense of self-worth, as well as a sense of self-control over their future.

Morse (1995) takes this a step further and argues that education must not only focus on prisoners and their communities, but must work to overcome injustice in society at large. Currie (1993:56) argues that this can only be done through the comprehensive rebuilding of societies' basic institutions. Broader efforts must be taken toward integration and the provision of better opportunities. Currie (1993:282) argues that we

must “strive to re-create a sense of purpose and participation, of contribution to a common enterprise, of membership in a sustaining society”.

Reform as Another Instrument of the Dominant?

As has been discussed throughout this thesis, any type of reform in the criminal justice arena is likely to lead to a widening of the net of social control. Following this argument, criminal justice reforms “must be seen for what they really are: a set of partisan social, economic, political, and cultural instruments, the underlying purpose of which is the reproduction of domination ‘over lower orders’ under the guise of progress or benevolence” (McMullan, 1987:244). As noted in Ericson (1987), while state agents may occasionally take actions against the interests of the élite, the end purpose is always to maintain the status quo. Any particular reform is simply the favorite program of a particular interest group at a particular time. Ericson (1987:26) argues that given that “the bulk of present-day reformers are agents of government, reforms are the latest adjustments to serve state interests on behalf of the status quo”. Furthermore, “the idea of progress is largely a vehicle for making people think that reforms are in the ‘public interest’, that is, that they are improvements (p.26)”.

Such analyzing, however, results in despair. It also ignores that laws do to some extent curb the power of the dominant, and furthermore, that not all consequences of the rule of law are negative for the dominated. In a similar manner, reform has the ability to make substantive change in the criminal justice system regardless of whether or not it is sponsored by bourgeois rule. From a structuralist perspective, not all reforms are in the interests of a thoroughly bourgeois order, nor are the state and the law perceived to be mere weapons in the hands of the bourgeois. The state is perceived as organizing and

mediating class relations on behalf of, rather than at the behest of, capitalism. The state therefore has some degree of autonomy from direct control and manipulation of the dominant groups. As noted by McMullan (1987), it is because of this that programs and agencies such as rape-crisis centres, informal justice projects, and prisoners' organizations exist. McMullan argues that such programs do not solely exist to widen the net of control. He argues that "[g]ains have been registered, despite an overall system bent on trying to eliminate or contain these changes" (1987:249). Furthermore, "[a]lternative services, resources, contacts, and therapies tied to the strategic use of social control have opened up wider opportunities for social improvement and social solidarity" (p.250). As Mathiesen (1974) argues, as long as goals remain open and unfinished, and long-range revolutionary strategies are maintained, absorption into the net of control can be avoided. Mathiesen argues that as long as reform is not limited in a simplified manner, there will be contradiction and competition within the system, thus making change possible.

As such, it is hoped that positive alternatives can indeed arise in the area of prison education without being subverted into a correctional agenda and widening the net of social control. This thesis in itself, however, cannot produce change on its own. While it could serve as a starting point, collective action is needed. Arguably, changes would best be made with the use of Freire's pedagogy, as it provides for the empowerment of prisoners rather than their oppression. It also encourages students to continually problematize and unveil critical reality. Freire's pedagogy strives for the emergence of consciousness within students, as well as critical intervention, not the maintenance of the status quo. Most importantly, students become the agents of their own destiny. If an

emphasis is placed on prisoners' own education, rather than official programs, no one but the prisoners can dictate what materials will be used, who can participate, or how a class will be organized. If prisoners' education *belongs* to them, it will be more resistant to a correctional agenda, and cannot be easily taken away (at least without undue force).

Any attempts to introduce critical pedagogy in prisons, however, are destined for an ongoing struggle. Discipline and punishment have been found more beneficial to the state in controlling those it has criminalized. As Mathiesen (1974:77) notes, the primary functions of imprisonment include (1) getting rid of those who are unproductive; (2) rendering prisoners powerless in relation to their rulers; (3) diverting attention away from the acts of those in power and (4) stigmatizing prisoners as evil and defining those who have not been criminalized as better, more correct, and more harmless. Any disturbance of these social functions is likely to be met with considerable resistance as it would be disturbing some main features of social order.

It appears as though notions of crime and criminals will need to change drastically before Freire's pedagogy can be implemented, at least at an official level. Official implementation is not likely to occur under current political, social, and economic conditions. As noted by Germanotta (1995:120), "[t]he degree to which formalized education coincides with human transformation, especially in prison settings, is dependent on the strategies of prison educators and on social and historical factors-that is, the degree to which any one society has truly committed itself to the full development of *all* of its citizens".

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Appendix A:

Examples of University Courses Offered to Prisoners in Canada¹

¹ Compiled by Jon Marc Taylor (1999) Prisoners' *Guerrilla Handbook* to Correspondence Programs in the United States and Canada: High School, Vocational, Paralegal and College Courses, Brunswick, Maine: Audenreed Press.

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
1 University Drive
Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3
Canada
1-800-788-9041
www.athabascau.ca
auinfo@athabascau.ca

FOUNDED: 1971 (Catalog Info: 1998-99)

ACCREDITATION: Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada
Canadian Association of Distance Education
Association of Commonwealth Universities

EXTERNAL DEGREE: Bachelor of Administration in:
General, Industrial Relations, Management, Public
Administration, Organization, Health Administration
Bachelor of Arts in: (90 & 120 hours)
Anthropology, Canadian Studies, Psychology, Women's
Studies, Sociology, History, French Labour Studies
Bachelor of Arts in: (90 hours)
Commerce, General Studies, Science, Science in Computing &
Information Systems, Nursing (Post-RN), Professional Arts
Post-Diploma Programs in:
Accounting, Advanced Accounting, Administration, Computers
& Management Information Systems, Labour Studies, Labour
Relations, Information Systems, Health Development
Administration, Public Administration, English Language
Studies, French Language Proficiency, Home Health Nursing

TUITION: \$92.00 per hour / \$50.00 Out-Country fee per course
\$7.00 student fee per course

TEXT COSTS: \$75.00 materials fee per course

TIME LIMITS: 13-weeks per three hour course

TRANSFER HOURS: ????

COURSES: Over 400; order catalog for curriculum listings

COMMENTS: Good tuition rates for in-country students. Extensive
offerings in: Anthropology, Economics, Psychology,
Sociology. Good catalog.

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
Distance Education Program
Continuing Education Division
Room 188, Continuing Education Complex
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2
Canada
1-888-216-7011 (Canada)
[http://www.umanitoba.ca/CONED/](http://www.umanitoba.ca/CONED/stuvces_ced@umanitoba.ca)
stuvces_ced@umanitoba.ca

FOUNDED: 19?? (Catalog Info: 1998-1999)

ACCREDITATION: ????

EXTERNAL DEGREE: Bachelor of Arts (3-year) (90 hours)
Majors: Canadian Studies, History, Political Science

TUITION: \$113.00 per hour

TEXT COSTS: \$25.00 to \$170.00 per course

TIME LIMITS: Maximum: thirteen-weeks per three-hour course
Maximum: twenty-six-weeks per six-hour course

TRANSFER HOURS: Yes: Up to 60 hours

COURSES: Anthropology (2) Classics (1) Economics (5) English (3)
French (1) Geography (7) History (7) Philosophy (3)
Political Science (7) Psychology (10) Religion (2)
Sociology (6) Education (4) Nursing (12) Recreation Studies
(2) Biology (1) Geological Science (4) Math (3)
Microbiology (1) Statistics (1) Social Work (12)

COMMENTS: Good tuition rates for U.S. students considering exchange rates. Extensive offerings in: Nursing, Psychology, Social Work.

UNIVERSITY OF SASKATCHEWAN

**Office Registrar
105 Administration Place
Saskatchewan, SK S7N 5A2**

Canada

306-966-5563

<http://www.usask.ca>

exttcred@usak.ca

FOUNDED: 19?? (Catalog Info: 1998-1999)

ACCREDITATION: ????

EXTERNAL DEGREE: Bachelor of Science in Nursing***

TUITION: \$100.00 to \$115.00 per hour (In-Country)
(Out-Country) 2.15 x In-Country rate

TEXT COSTS: Not Listed: Materials \$15.00 to \$40.00 per course

TIME LIMITS: semester-based

TRANSFER HOURS: ????

COURSES: Anthropology (1) Archaeology (1) Computer Science (2)
Economics (2) English (1) French (1) Geography (7) Geology
(2) History (1) Music (1) Native Studies (2) Philosophy (1)
Psychology (3) Religious Studies (1) Sociology (9)
Continuing Education (2) Curriculum Studies (3) Indian &
Northern Education (1) Microbiology (1)

COMMENTS: *** Requires nursing "diploma" to enroll. Call
306-966-6231 for more information.

UNIVERSITY OF WINDSOR
Division of Continuing Education
Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4
Canada
1-800-263-1242 (Canada)
<http://www.uwindsor.ca/coned>
coned@uwindsor.ca

FOUNDED: 19?? (Catalog Info: 1998-99)

ACCREDITATION: ????

EXTERNAL DEGREE: Bachelor of Commerce (120 hours)
Bachelor of Science (90 hours)
Bachelor of Commerce (60 hours)
(for those possessing 3-year Baccalaureates)
Bachelor of Business Studies (39 hours)
(for those possessing 3-year Accounting degrees)

TUITION: \$115.00 per hour (In-Country) / \$80.00 per course fee
\$???? per hour (Out-Country)

TEXT COSTS: Not Listed

TIME LIMITS: Maximum: thirteen-weeks

TRANSFER HOURS: Yes:

COURSES: English (1) Philosophy (1) Religious Studies (1) Social
Sciences (2) Economics (4) Political Science (2) Sociology
(2) General Science (1) Geology (1) Math (1) Nursing (2)
Statistics (1) Accounting (13) Management & Labour Studies
(5) Finance (5) Management Science (4) Marketing (2)
Business Strategy & Entrepreneurship (2)

COMMENTS: Average tuition rates. Extensive offerings in: Accounting.

ATHABASCA UNIVERSITY
1 University Drive
Athabasca, AB T9S 3A3
Canada
1-800-788-9041
www.athabascau.ca
auinfo@athabascau.ca

FOUNDED:	1971	(Catalog Info: 1998-99)
ACCREDITATION:	Association of Universities & Colleges of Canada Canadian Association of Distance Education Association of Commonwealth Universities	
EXTERNAL DEGREE:	<u>Masters of Distance Education</u> <u>Master of Business Administration in:</u> <u>Masters of Business Administration</u> <u>Advanced Graduate Diplomas in:</u> Management Community Nursing Practice	
TUITION:	\$92.00 per hour / \$50.00 Out-Country fee per course \$7.00 student fee per course	
TEXT COSTS:	\$75.00 materials fee per course	
TIME LIMITS:	13-weeks per three hour course	
TRANSFER HOURS:	????	
COURSES:	Over 400; order catalog for curriculum listings	
COMMENTS:	Excellent tuition rates for in-country students. Very good tuition rates for out-country students. Good catalog.	

UNIVERSITY OF MANITOBA
Distance Education Program
Continuing Education Division
Room 188, Continuing Education Complex
Winnipeg, Manitoba R3T 2N2
Canada
1-888-216-7011 (Canada)
<http://www.umanitoba.ca/CONED/>
stuvces_ced@umanitoba.ca

FOUNDED:	19??	(Catalog Info: 1998-1999)
ACCREDITATION:	????	
EXTERNAL DEGREE:	NONE	
TUITION:	\$113.00 per hour	
TEXT COSTS:	\$50.00 to \$125.00 per course	
TIME LIMITS:	Maximum: thirteen-weeks per three-hour course Maximum: twentysix-weeks per six-hour course	
TRANSFER HOURS:	Yes: Up to 60 hours	
COURSES:	Education (9)	
COMMENTS:	Excellent tuition rates for U.S. students considering exchange rates. Good tuition rates for Canadian students.	

Appendix B:

Example of the Curriculum Offered at the Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project¹

¹ As described by Faith, Karlene (1993) Unruly Women, Vancouver: Press Gang Publishers.

brief description of the courses offered during the term October-June 1973-74:

1. **WOMEN AND THE LAW.** Organized by Catherine Cusic, with law students Tanya Neiman, Abigail Ginsberg, Judith Kurtz, Ann Grogan, Peggy Baker, Chris Epifania, Ellen Chaitin, Mary Brutocao, Judy Meyer and many others, the course was officially taught by Professor of Law and Assistant Dean at Hastings College of the Law, Wynne Bunyan. She was assisted in rotation by twelve feminist law students (one of whom, Mary Morgan, was later the first self-identified lesbian to be appointed to a municipal judgeship). A boon to jailhouse lawyers at CIW, this course included units on the following: criminal procedure; sentencing; prisoners' legal rights; post-conviction remedies; legal aspects of health care; women and family law; and, outside legal rights concerned with landlord-tenant relations, discrimination, welfare and consumer risks. In addition to imparting useful legal knowledge, this course was singularly successful in demystifying the reasons so many of the women were in prison.

2. **ETHNIC STUDIES.** Taught by Bill Moore, a leader in the Bay Area African-American community, with seven assistants, male and female, this course included historical and sociological perspectives on Third World women in the U.S., including Native women, Chicanas, Asian-Americans and African-Americans. This was an exceptionally popular course, in part due to the high ratio of minority women within the prison, many of whom had direct input into the issues to be studied. (The vast majority of guards and other prison staff were white, at a time when the Black Panthers and other Third World struggle groups were posing a challenge to racist traditions in law enforcement; not surprisingly, then, the guards had strong concerns about our offering this course.) One of the most popular units, among black and white students alike, was the audiovisual history of Black music and its influences on American culture, taught by media and music scholar Bill Barlow.

3. **RADICAL PSYCHOLOGY.** Taught by a progressive Santa Cruz therapist, Theo Alter, with three female assistants, this course critically examined assumptions and practices of then-dominant schools of psychology, psychoanalysis and psychotherapy, including Freud, Jung, Transactional Analysis, Gestalt and Reality Therapy. A fundamental principle of both

effect changes in the construction of knowledge and the analysis of experience. Circle discussions, films and other audiovisual aids, exercises in verbal and written communications, and open critiques of one another's work replaced hierarchical classroom orderings and lecture formats. In these "student-centred" groups, the prisoners themselves often took initiative for material to be covered or for presentations drawing on their experiences prior to or during incarceration. A minority of the instructors in the program took more didactic or traditional pedagogic approaches in setting up their prison classrooms, with authoritative lectures, formal presentations and conventional methods of examination. In our teaching methods, then, we were relatively autonomous, just as was true on the university campus.

Educational and cultural programs established by the Santa Cruz Women's Prison Project and the University of California were known in the prison, generically, as the "Santa Cruz Workshops." Each credit course consisted of a series of from four to twelve all-day workshops held in the school building on weekends so as to not interfere with the prison work assignments. Special entertainment events, which we called our "celebrations," were held in the recreation room or the prison gymnasium on Saturday and Sunday evenings. Non-credit workshops were generally one-time events which engaged the interest of many women in the prison who were not initially interested in taking courses for credit but who, as a result of contact with the program, gained confidence and enrolled in credit courses in subsequent terms. Prior to each new term, posters were placed throughout the prison "campus," in each of the cell blocks and in all the work and recreation areas, to announce upcoming courses and cultural events. Any woman in the prison was eligible to enrol unless her security level did not permit her to be with the "open" population. The majority of enrollees had not completed high school, as was true of the prison population at large, but many had since completed adult education courses and had otherwise shown interest in advanced education. Attendance varied according to the degree to which a course was a "hot topic"; commonly about a hundred women at any given time would be involved in courses for credit. Every weekend we were at the prison from 8 a.m. to 9:30 p.m. both Saturday and Sunday.

The curriculum offered to women enrolled in the academic component of the Santa Cruz workshops changed from one year to the next (with some courses repeated), depending on availability of instructors and students' stated interests. As an example of the curriculum, following is a

radical psychology and feminism in the 1970s was that "the personal is political," thus problems of alienation and power relations were examined in the context of the political economy as it affects society's "mental health." The course was designed to provide a safe and nurturing learning environment whereby women could identify trouble areas in their own emotional lives and gain insights into how best to resolve them with appropriate support.

4. POLITICS: U.S. INSTITUTIONS AND POLITICAL CONSCIOUSNESS. The instructor of this course, Michael Rotkin, had been a political mentor to many of us involved in the SCWPP and to the Santa Cruz community at large. In 1979 he was elected to the City Council and later became the first self-declared socialist-feminist city mayor in the USA. This high-enrolment course, repeated over several terms, was taught by Michael with five male and female guest speakers/assistants (including economist John Isbister and sociologist William Domhoff). They challenged students to formulate analyses of capitalism as the underlying institution of North American political structure, with attention to the evolution of monopoly capitalism and economic stagnation in the 20th century. Critical analysis focused on the role of the state in setting and implementing social policy relative to schools, the family, prisons, welfare, the tax structure and income distribution. This course was particularly satisfying to those few women, generally well-educated, who were serving time for political crimes, and who welcomed the opportunity to engage in dialogue and analysis with other critical thinkers. But the instructor was equally impressed "by women in the prison who had never had a formal education." Continuing in his words,

They'd read difficult texts that undergraduates on campus wouldn't touch. They thought through the readings on a critical level, and I attribute their ability partly to their being in prison. The level of their work was as high as in any class I've taught at the university. The classes were as intellectually challenging as some graduate seminars. Their ability to deal with abstraction was evident—except when someone was on thorazine! (M. Rotkin, course evaluation, 1976)

Michael's view was echoed by virtually all the volunteer instructors who taught university-level courses with women in the prison.

5. CREATIVE ARTS. This course was taught and organized by Catherine Cusic and Debra Miller, key coordinators of the SCWPP, who offered a broad survey of the creative arts in part to introduce the women, many of them artists themselves, to some of the woman-identified art and culture that was proliferating in the "free" world. Units focused on music, dance, drama, art, photography, film, mime and puppetry, with over thirty guest performers and speakers. For their final assignment, students were required to create their own artistic piece—painting, sculpture, ceramics, photography, music or dramatic presentation.

In addition to the workshops for registered students, there were well-attended shows where guest artists performed or displayed their work, to which all the women in the prison were invited. Music performances, the highlights of each weekend the SCWPP was at the prison, introduced the women to a wide range of talent and inspiration, including performers from the just emerging "women's music" network. Over time, our prison concerts were held not only at CIW but also at county jails and federal prisons, under the sponsorship of an outgrowth project, Music Inside/Out, coordinated by Debra Miller, Laraine Goodman and myself. Among the featured musicians were the following: Margie Adam, Rebecca Adams, Gwen Avery, Bonnie Bramlett, Linda Carpenter, David Carradine, Meg Christian, Lacy J. Dalton, Tret Fure, Cathy Gates, Infinite Sound (Roland Young and Glenn Howell), Diane Lindsay, Country Joe McDonald, June Millington, Holly Near, Pauline Oliveros, Vicki Randle, Jackie Robbins, George Stavis, Linda Tillery, Mary Watkins and Cris Williamson. In addition to the concerts, there were special performances by the Miss Alice Stone Ladies Society Orchestra, the Santa Cruz Home-Grown Puppets (with Barbara Franklin, Anthony Eschbach, Barbara Gregory, Scott Soares and Tarey Dunn), filmmakers who presented their works, such as Frances Reid of Iris Films (who also served as one of the SCWPP coordinators), and poets, including Pat Parker and Judy Grahn. We also showed films almost every weekend on a broad range of political and cultural themes, such as: labour struggles; many facets of women's liberation; resistance movements of political minority groups (African-American, Natives, Chicanos and so on); health care in China; the Indochina peace campaign; and welfare rights.

These cultural events were a joyful and uplifting contrast to the numbing lethargy induced by day-to-day prison routine. Often they were an opportunity for women who had learned to love other women to celebrate those feelings. According to the type of performance, some events were

were spiritually calming. Women of varied cultural heritage expanded their appreciation of the arts through this course; they also got in touch with their feelings, renewed their hopes for the future, and found camaraderie and friendship among both insiders and outsiders.

6. ON BEING A WOMAN. Jeanne Gallick, one of the founders of the SCWPP, was the instructor for this course, working with thirteen female assistants plus members of the Berkeley-Oakland Women's Union. With numerous audiovisual aids, including slides, films, poetry and music, the course presented a potpourri of cultural, economic and political dimensions of being a woman, with specific topics as follows: women and their bodies; Third World women and human rights; depictions of women in literature and the media; class analysis of the women's movement; feminism as political ideology; women, money and power; the state and the family (taught by influential political activist Michael Strange); Sappho and "female homosexuality" in ancient Greece vis-à-vis 20th century lesbians; and, women in South East Asia and the effects of the Vietnam war (with author Arlene Eisen-Bergman as guest speaker). The course presented a powerful array of new ways of thinking about women and their many identities; in effect it constituted an early "Women's Studies 101."

7. DRUG USE IN U.S. CULTURE. Almost half the women in the prison had been convicted of illegal drug offences, so this course was indisputably relevant to their preoccupations. Taught by Josette Mondanaro, M.D., Director of the California Health Department Substance Abuse Programs, the course included the following topics: the process of "getting high"; the politics and economics of drug distribution and use; effects on babies born to mothers addicted to heroin or methadone; the physical effects of "downers," including alcohol, barbiturates, sedatives and tranquilizers; the physical effects of "uppers," including amphetamines and hallucinatory pharmacological drugs; the relationship of drugs to prostitution (with Margot St. James, founder of COYOTE—Call Off Your Old Tired Ethics—as a guest speaker); the effects of race, sex and class on drugs of "choice"; analysis of drug abuse treatment programs; the uses of law and the criminal justice system in responding to drug use; and, confronting addiction. One topic that couldn't be critically addressed, given the context, was the pervasive extent to which women in prison were dependent on prescription drugs distributed (legally) to addicts within the institution.

8. CREATIVE WRITING AND LITERATURE. One of the ways some women in CIW maintained their sense of private space or "sanity" was to keep a prison diary or to write poetry or short stories for the prisoner newsletter, *The Clarion*. This course, which was team-taught on a tutorial basis coordinated by Ellen Rifkin (Fischman), encouraged this writing activity. The first section of the course focused on writing skills in the genres of informational articles, poetry, short stories, plays, essays, and autobiography. Tutors offered critical feedback and the students shared their writings with one another and discussed and evaluated one another's work in a supportive classroom environment. The second section of the course introduced the students to literary analysis and criticism in a variety of workshops, with such foci as the interpretation of modern fiction, which explored writers of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds, and primal myths, a study of pre-literature stories of gods and goddesses with themes such as metamorphosis, matriarchal and patriarchal cycles, initiation, rebirth and death. Because dreams have been a rich source of mythic materials, students in this workshop kept written collections of their dreams and examined their usefulness as signifiers of "essential" experience.

Numerous participants in this course were thought by the instructors to have distinct writing talent. Debra Miller, one of the SCWPP coordinators, later gathered a number of these women for a poetry project, which produced a self-published collection of their work. (After what seemed like endless debates on what to call their book, they settled on *no title at all is better than a title like that!*) Among these prison poets was Norma Stafford, whose work garnered expansive praise from instructors and sister-prisoners alike. With the co-sponsorship of the SCWPP and the San Francisco Unitarian-Universalist church she later self-published a collection titled *Dear Somebody* (1975), from which the following is excerpted:

*Lying in your captive labor bed
womb straining sweat pouring
you deliver your child
within these concrete walls and steel bars
because your infant is born of you/in here
she is labeled numbered and her mug-shot is taken
before she has breathed before the cord is cut
she has a number and she is called criminal
but you and I know you have delivered to us*

*I hear your deep woman's laughter
ring out through every cell block
and my heart is strengthened
my courage renewed because you are here
just as you are everywhere noble warrior
goddess of Death to the Power
giver of life sweet sweet woman soldier.*

* * *

In addition to the courses described above, many other popular courses and workshops were presented through the four years of the project. These courses and instructors, included:

ART HISTORY *Rory White, Mary Bargion*
THE ART OF MIDWIFERY *Cheryl Anderson, Kimberly Clouse*
ART THERAPY *Georgia Griffin, Joan Hertzberg, Coeleen Kiebert*
CHICANA CULTURE AND COMMUNITY STUDIES *Katia Panas,
Mary Thomas, Maggie Martinez*
COMMUNITY CHILDCARE *Michael Strange, Mary K. Blackmon*
CONTEMPORARY CHINA *Lois Goldfrank*
COUNSELING TECHNIQUES *Jeannette Danaan*
CREATIVE WRITING *Naomi Clark*
DANCE/THEATRE *Suzanne Hellmuth*
DRAWING AND PAINTING *Rachel Ross, Andra Moore*
DREAM INTERPRETATION *Ken Critiqui*
THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT *Barbara Whitaker*
FAMILY AND ETHNICITY *Nancy Stoller*
FEMALE SEXUALITY *Karen Rian*
FEMINIST ART AND VIDEO PRODUCTION *Frances Reid*
FOLKTALES *David Burks*
JOURNALISM *Paul Krassner*
LATIN AMERICAN STUDIES *Rafael Guzman, Ruth MacKay*
LITERATURE *Madeleine Burnside, Jim Peabody,
Madeline Moore (Hummel), Ellen Rifkin, Alice Harriman*
MEDICINE AND SOCIETY *Nancy Stoller, Laurie Hauer*
MUSIC AS SOCIAL EXPRESSION *George Stavis*
NATIVE WOMEN AND CULTURE *Dana Smith-Hedge, Jim Willis,
Corky Willis*

PLAYWRITING *Linda Kline, Amielle Zemach*
POLITICAL THEORY *Bro Adams, Arnie Fischman, Dan Wagman*
POLITICS AND MINORITY GROUPS *Diane Lewis, Leslie Patrick-Stamp*
POLITICS OF CULTURE *Alice Kaiser*
READING SKILLS *Mary Hoover*
SEX ROLES *Susan Hubble*
SEXISM AND RACISM *Sally Douglas*
SOCIAL THEORY *Barry Katz*
SURVEY OF THE BLUES *Bill Barlow*
WOMEN AND ECONOMICS *Candace Falk*
WOMEN AND FILM *Jacqueline Christeve, Lorraine Kahn*
WOMEN IN U.S. HISTORY *Pamela Allen*
WOMEN'S HEALTH ISSUES *Nancy Smith, Cindy Talbot*

Apart from offering regular courses, the program matched women who wanted to do independent studies or who needed academic assistance with volunteer tutors from the History of Consciousness graduate program and from the community. Barry Katz, Sally Popkey, Anne Plone and Maya Stuart were among the instructors who went to the prison to meet their students and prepare their program of study, but whose teaching was primarily conducted by mail. There was considerable initial enthusiasm for the correspondence tutorials, and dedication from the instructors, but we found over time that some of the women had difficulty keeping up with their work in this mode. They wanted or needed more personal contact and lost their incentive after some months. Some of these women became absorbed into the regular weekend workshops and others dropped out altogether.

Overall, the response of the students to the courses, the "extra-curricular" activities and the contact with the volunteers was consistently positive, as indicated in the following sampling of comments:

You have allowed us to grow and expand through this class and that was a real compliment to us. We don't usually grow in here. We die in here. This has been fantastic.

My plans for parole have changed because of the workshops. When I get out I will be going to college.

Appendix C:

Comparison of Anglo and Native AA Steps

And

Comparison of Anglo and Native American Values¹

¹ As shown in Reed (1990) "Rehabilitation: Contrasting Cultural Perspectives and The Imposition of Church and State, Journal of Prisoners on Prisons, II, 2, p. 13.

Table 1: Comparison of Anglo and Native AA Steps

	<i>Anglo AA Step</i>	<i>The Native Step</i>
Step 2	We come to believe that a Power greater than ourselves can restore us to sanity.	We come to believe that the Power of the Pipe is greater than ourselves and can restore us to our Culture and Heritage.
Step 5	We admit to God, to Ourselves, and to another human being, the exact nature of our wrongs.	We acknowledge to the Great Spirit, to ourselves, and to the Native American Brotherhood, our struggles against the tide and its manifest destiny.
Step 6	We are entirely ready to have God remove all these defects of character.	Be entirely ready for the Great Spirit to remove all the defects of an alien culture.
Step 8	Make a list of all persons we have harmed and become willing to make amends to them all.	Make a list of all the harm that has come to our people from Demon Alcohol, and become willing to make amends to them all.
Step 11	Seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with God as we understand Him, praying only for knowledge of His will for us and the power to carry that out.	Seek through prayer and meditation to improve our conscious contact with the Equality and Brotherhood of all Mother Earth's children and the Great Balancing Harmony of the Total Universe. ⁹

Table 2: Comparison of Anglo and Native American Values

<i>Native American</i>	<i>Anglo American</i>
Uncritical attitude	Critical attitude
Cooperation	Competition
Sharing	Ownership
Humble	Outgoing if not arrogant
Happiness	Success
Honor elders	No respect for elders
Silence	Verbalism
Tribal values	Individualism
Simplicity	Complexity and sophistication
Tradition	Innovation
Spiritual values	Material values
Learning from elders	Learning in schools
Few rules	Multiplicity of laws
Mysticism	Empiricism
Smallness	Bigness
Natural medicine	Synthetic medicine
Unity of animal kingdom with humanity	Separateness of animal kingdom from Humanity
Accept others as they are	Change or proselytize others