Dutch-Canadian Reformed Schools in the 21st century: Successes and Limitations of Ethno-Religious Educational Pluralism

Mariia Alekseevskaia

Thesis submitted to the University of Ottawa
in partial Fulfillment of the requirements for the
Doctorate in Philosophy degree in Sociology

School of Sociological and Anthropological Studies
Faculty of Social Sciences
University of Ottawa

© Mariia Alekseevskaia, Ottawa, Canada, 2021

ABSTRACT

Faith-based schools have become a growing phenomenon in Canada in recent decades and a cause of public concern in the context of a pluralistic society, where immigrants are increasingly likely to create educational institutions that reflect their culture and faith. This thesis presents a case study of Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario established by Dutch post-war immigrants who are members of the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC). Most children in this community have gone through this school system, an important feature of this long-standing, ethno-religious, immigrant-origin community.

This thesis aims to examine how Canadian Reformed schools in the Province of Ontario have prepared their graduates for living in a diverse and pluralist Canadian society and their role in preserving the community's ethnic and religious identities. The research is based on the theories of retention of immigrant ethno-religious identity as well as the role of religious schools in promoting immigrant-origin students' ethical autonomy. Qualitative case study methodology was applied. The results are based on the analysis of sixty-four interviews with current and former members of the Reformed communities. Where possible, the results were triangulated by the content analysis of documents and mass media.

This thesis concludes that Canadian Reformed schools have had a significant impact on the preservation of the community's religious and ethnic identities. While Canadian Reformed schools have retained some level of self-isolation and a strict policy on the religious identity of both students and teachers, the findings reveal that the Ontario Canadian Reformed schools have evolved significantly in their five decades of existence. The tendency to shelter children is still present but principals and teachers generally aim to introduce current teaching strategies and develop standardized curriculum plans across the schools. Since their establishment, Canadian Reformed schools have encouraged students to discuss topical issues and develop their own

solutions to enhance critical thinking skills. Tolerance and compassion to individuals with a different worldview are being promoted. Several respondents identified areas for schools' improvement, including the need for a more inclusive and up-to-date curriculum, comprehensive school-based sex-education, a more profound level of understanding of religious tradition, reducing identity strain when exposed to the outside world, and high educational costs.

This thesis addresses a gap in the study of how Christian schools in Canada prepare their graduates for socio-political engagement and in scholarly knowledge about Dutch Reformed community. This study also aims to contribute to policy making because the findings identify the challenges that religious schools' graduates face and highlight the roles these schools play in bridging religious communities and the broader society.

Keywords: immigrant integration, religious school, Dutch Canadian, Canadian Reformed, ethnic identity, religious identity.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my great appreciation and sincere gratitude to my advisor Dr. Philippe Couton for the continuous support during my research. His guidance and constructive recommendations helped me in all the time of research and writing of this thesis.

I would like to acknowledge the guidance of Dr. Lori Beaman. Valuable advice and immense support given by Dr. Lori Beaman helped me to bring my study to its completion.

I am also grateful to Dr. Elke Winter and Dr. Kathleen Rodgers for agreeing to be on my committee and for their valuable comments.

I am profoundly grateful to each of my interviewees. This research would have been impossible without honest thoughts, critical comments, and experiences that they generously shared with me.

In addition, special thanks should be given to several friends and colleagues, including Delia Pop, Sossy Sahakian, Anke Patzelt, Sonya Dabir and Alla Berezhnaya. Your friendship has been incredibly valuable throughout the whole Ph.D. program and the process of conducting this research.

Last but not the least, I would like to thank my parents and my life partner Jésaël Lisiecki for their support and encouragement throughout my studies and life.

I dedicate this thesis to my mother and father who showed me the importance of commitment, discipline and perseverance and encouraged and helped me pursue my dreams.

Table of Contents

ABSTRACT ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iv
Chapter 1. Introduction and Context 1
1.1. The Background of post-war Dutch Reformed communities in Canada 1
1.2. My Personal Interest in the Thesis Topic 9
1.3. The Topicality and Structure of the Thesis 10
Chapter 2. Literature review and Theoretical framework 13
2.1. Interrelations between the concepts of "ethnicity", "race", "religion", "nationality", and "migration" 13
2.2. Religion in a multicultural and pluralist Canadian society 34
2.3. Faith-based schools: the right to exist 60
Chapter 3. Methodology 78
3.1. Multi-methods approach to a case study 78
3.2. Research philosophy: Constructivist paradigm 79
3.3. Design of the research 81
3.4. The relationships between the researcher and the researched 82
3.5. Methods of data collection 85
3.6. Access, ethical issues and informed consent 95
3.7. Data analysis 102
3.8. Restrictions/Limiting Conditions 104
Chapter 4. Dutch identity of Canadian Reformed Christians 106
4.1. Pillarization as a cause for the intertwinement of Dutch ethnicity and Reformed tradition 106
4.2. Constructing a Collective Memory 112
4.3. "Dutchness" as a problem 120
4.4. Symbolic ethnicity 125
4.5. Feeling of belonging 130
Chapter 5. Canadian Reformed schools: origins and challenges 136
5.1. Canadian Reformed perspective on faith-based school system: legal, philosophical, and theological arguments 136
5.2. Main challenges 156

5.3. Critical thinking skills 161
5.4. Gender & feminism in church and school 176
5.5. Homeschooling 191
5.6. Conclusion 196
Chapter 6. Schools' approach to religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue 199
6.1. Encountering religious and cultural pluralism 199
6.2. Christian-Muslim dialogue 206
6.3. Blessings Christian Church: membership and musical diversity 218
6.4. Islam in the classroom 226
Chapter 7. Sex education. Approaches to gender identity and sexual orientation 231
7.1. Sex-ed controversy 231
7.2. Who is using birth control? 245
7.3. Gender Identity 252
7.4. Bullying 263
7.5. Pornography 272
Chapter 8. Graduates' involvement in socio-political discourse 286
8.1. Evangelical Christians in Canada – trends in political views 286
8.2. Reformed theology and political involvement 290
8.3. Political ideas in Canadian Reformed schools 306
9. Conclusion 312
References 333
Appendices 384

Acronyms

CanRC	The Canadian Reformed Churches
CRCNA	The Christian Reformed Church in North America
URCNA	The United Reformed Churches in North America
FRCNA	The Free Reformed Churches of North America

In this thesis, the words "Reformed", "Dutch Reformed", "Reformed with Dutch roots", "Dutch Calvinist", "Canadian Reformed" will be broadly speaking referring to the Canadian Reformed community, members of which are predominantly of Dutch ancestry but prefer referring to themselves as Christians or Reformed Christian or Canadian Reformed individuals after the name of their Church. Also, for the sake of this study's clarity, I will refer to their schools as Canadian Reformed schools although the community members name them Christian schools.

Chapter 1. Introduction and Context

1.1. The Background of post-war Dutch Reformed communities in Canada

Sociologist Stephen Castles succinctly noted that "migration is one of the key sources of social transformation in the contemporary world" (Castles, 2002, p. 144). The process of migration has significantly changed the social, cultural, and religious compositions of both European and North American societies. Canada's population, with the exception of Indigenous peoples, "consists of immigrants and their direct descendants" (Anderson & Frideres, 1981, p. 130). There was massive immigration after World War II which changed the profile of the Canadian population. According to statistics, during the early post-war period alone (between 1946 and 1954) more than one million new Canadians arrived in the country (Burnet & Palmer, 1988, p. 40). In addition, because of the liberalization of immigration policies in the 1960s, there has been a significant increase in immigrants from all around the world. It has led to the formation of an ethnically and religiously diverse society and also the establishment of a robust set of institutions (churches, clubs, mass media, political parties) by ethnic and religious groups of immigrants. This institutional complexity includes educational institutions, in particular religious schools of different faiths.

Historically, religion and education were closely intertwined. In Canada, Christian Churches played a significant role in the establishment of education (Choquette, 2004; Dumont & Fahmy-Eid, 1986; Lupul, 1974; Magnuson, 1992; Sissons, 1959; Wilson, 1970). But the relationship between religion and education has been the subject of heated debates and frequent open conflicts from the very beginning of European presence in what is now Canada. One of the central conflicts was connected to the Catholic-Protestant struggle. As a result of these tensions, the *British North America Act,* 1867 guaranteed separate education for Roman Catholics in Upper Canada (the antecedent of Ontario), who were in the minority there, and for Protestants in Lower Canada (the

antecedent of Quebec). According to the Act, religious education became a provincial responsibility. Today, faith-based schools still receive some form of financial support from the government in most Canadian provinces. The province of Ontario, which this study focuses on, provides full funding only to Catholic schools and gives no funding at all to other faith-based schools (McDonough et al., 2013, pp. 5-6). All other faith-based schools operate as non-publicly funded independent schools.

Four main types of relationships between ethno-religious groups and education can be distinguished in Canada: 1) full participation in public schools with no attempts at creating additional educational structures; 2) the establishment of educational practices within the public system, ranging from remedial programs, adapted curricula, evening "language and culture" classes, etc. (Koh et al., 2017; Wu, 2005); 3) the creation of a more or less parallel school system – independent, separate or private schools; and 4) homeschooling, which often amounts to withdrawal from institutional education (Davies & Aurini, 2003; Bosetti & Van Pelt, 2017).

The focus of this research is on the third type, which has existed since the 19th century but increased rapidly due to massive immigration after World War II and the changes in the immigration legislation. Many recent immigrant-origin ethno-religious communities followed in the footsteps of Catholic and Protestant colonists and established robust sets of institutions, including faith-based schools. The contemporary ethno-religious landscape is, as a result, very diverse, resting on the foundational Catholic-Protestant compromise, further divided by the presence of French and English public school boards across the country, to which a succession of new immigrant-origin religious educational institutions was added during the past century. While there is lack of detailed, comparative and up-to-date quantitative data regarding faith-based schools in Canada and their student enrollment; by combining the existing resources, we can conclude that

there is an increase of the numerical and percentual student enrollment in independent schools; along with a diversification of faith-based school options across provinces. In 2013/14, "6.8 percent of total enrolments … in Canada's ten provinces" were provided by independent schools, and more than 48 per cent of independent schools had a religious orientation (Allison et al., 2016, p. iii). Some studies say that, in 2015, around 6.1 percent of school-aged students were enrolled in independent schools in Ontario and that half of this enrolment is in religious schools (Van Pelt & McLeod, 2017). The province requires very little from these schools in terms of compliance with curriculum or other regulation, except for high schools if they desire to grant the Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD) to enable university entrance (Van Pelt et al., 2017).

Religious institutions might serve as a significant tool in the process of settlement and integration of some immigrants (Connor, 2012; Hirschman, 2004; Seol & Lee, 2012; Warner, 2007). The establishment of immigrant religious institutions is a common way to pass on immigrants' heritage to their children, and therefore to ensure some degree of cultural reproduction (Warner & Wittner, 1998, p. 16) and construction of ethno-religious identities of newcomers. Religious schools can play a wide array of roles, depending on their history, recency, theological and cultural approaches, and other factors. This research focuses on the education system rather than other institutions (for example, family or church), because school is the most formal socializing agent, which can be impacted by the government and secular institutions.

My choice to investigate faith-based schooling is first of all explained by the growth of this phenomenon in Canada and secondly by the increase of public concerns relating to it. Despite the long history of faith-based schools in Canada, the current period, marked by the arrival of large new ethno-religious groups (Muslims and Sikhs, primarily), and by large flows of war refugees from many parts of the world, has seen rising concerns about the potential of ethno-religious

schools to isolate students from the mainstream and even foster conflict and intolerance. These concerns often focus on schools operated by the Muslim communities but also "'old strangers', ones that never were entirely accepted" (Beyer, 2012, p. 26), traditional Christians from various ethnic groups are among them. Thus, there are sociological, philosophical, and juridical debates about the existence of faith-based schools, their government financial support, and also the right and/or duty of the state to intervene in schools' curricula. To sum up, how immigrants and their descendants, whose religion plays a central role in their life, can articulate the functions of both a believer and a citizen, which level of accommodation should be appropriate and what the legislation relating to religious schools should look like are still unresolved questions.

Perspectives on the study of religious schools have been changing throughout the decades. Scholarly studies on faith-based schools, published in the 1950-70s, are mainly dedicated to the questions of why and how independent religious schools were established in Canada (O'Reilley, 1972; Silcox, 1960; Wilson et al., 1970). The sizable number of existing studies on Canadian religious schools, published in the 1980-90s, are mostly devoted to the discussion on whether the government should provide these schools with any funding (Bryk and al., 1993; Doerr & Menendez, 1991; Snik & De Jong, 1995). Scholarly publications of the last two decades, which coincided with a dramatic increase of ethnically and religiously diverse immigration, have been more interested in the questions of religious schools' ability to prepare their students for living in a Canadian multicultural and multi-religious society (Callan, 2009; Gutmann, 1999; Macedo, 2000; MacMullen, 2007). Today, a number of studies in the fields of sociology, religious studies and education are concerned about whether faith-based schools are able to shape graduates as "thoughtful and civically minded [individuals who are] concerned with personal growth and contributors to the public good" (Green et al., 2016, p. 5) and to "prepare graduates adequately for

life in the public square" (Green et al., 2016, p. 12). Current scholarship discusses whether religious schools educate graduates to "be informed citizens who value democratic participation and civic engagement" and "contribute to a peaceful, pluralistic, and cohesive society" (Green et al., 2016, p. 13) on the same level as public schools that are not affiliated with any religion. There are ongoing debates about replacing religious schools with public ones to transmit the same values to all Canadian children. Therefore, my thesis raises the following research question**: How do Canadian Reformed schools prepare their graduates to live in a diverse and pluralist society**?

To clarify the further reference to the studied community, the words "Reformed", "Dutch Reformed", "Reformed with Dutch roots", "Dutch Calvinist", "Canadian Reformed" will be broadly speaking referring to the Canadian Reformed community, members of which are predominantly of Dutch ancestry but prefer referring to themselves as Christians or Reformed Christian or Canadian Reformed individuals after the name of their Church. Also, for the sake of this study's clarity, I will refer to their schools as Canadian Reformed schools although the community members name them Christian schools.

In order to gain a better understanding of the faith-based schooling phenomenon and its influence on graduates' civic engagement, it is important to explore how various immigrant communities have approached the relationship between education and religion. My research focuses on post-war Dutch Reformed immigrants, who initially established the Canadian and American Reformed Churches (CanRC) in 1950 in Alberta. Today, CanRC has around 19,500 members across Canada; 11,572 of them are communicant members – those who have already made a public profession of faith; the rest are members by only baptism yet, usually children of the communicant members (*Yearbook Anno Domini 2020 Canadian and American Reformed Churches*). Still, this particular and numerically relatively small group of Dutch Reformed

Christians forms "a distinct entity within the Canadian mosaic" (Oosterhoff, 2006*b*, p. 109). They have founded and operated independent schools since 1955 (when the first school was established in New Westminster, BC) in British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, and Ontario. Today, there are twenty-seven schools in total with over 5,000 student population (LCRSS, 2019, p. 3). Fifteen schools are located in Ontario, two of which are secondary schools, that educate 2530 students, which is more than half of the total amount of students in all of Canada (LCRSS, 2019, p. 3). Although numerically the total number of students is not significant, in many congregations "an estimated 90 to 95 per cent of Canadian Reformed parents send their children" to these schools (Oosterhoff, 2006*b*, p. 112). The percentage might slightly vary in the 2020s given certain shifts in the community, including an increased openness towards accepting homeschooling.

The decision to create an independent system of institutions was encouraged by both religious and socio-political backgrounds of Dutch post-war immigrants. The Dutch were the fourth largest ethnic group associated with postwar immigration to Canada. Approximately 200,000 people left the Netherlands for Canada between 1946 and 1990 (Schryer, 1998, p. 1). However, as a result of the unique structure of Dutch society at the time of emigration, it seems impossible to research Dutch immigrants as a solid group sharing similar values and cultural traits. In fact, Dutch society was structured by a system called *pillarization* (that started at the end of the 19th century and lasted at least until the 1960s), which refers to the vertical separation of society "by cross-cutting class-based and religious cleavages into four dominant interest groups or blocs", namely: Catholics, Protestants, socialists, and liberals (Lijphart, 1968, p. 23). "[V]irtually all politically and socially relevant organizations and group affiliations" were formed around these four groups (p. 23). Most of the Protestant group was composed by Reformed Christians who experienced an intense development at the turn of the 20th century due to the neo-Calvinist

movement. The term neo-Calvinism "refers not so much to a theological system, but to an all-embracing world view which has a bearing on the whole of human life" (Wolters, 1983, p. 117), including science, education, and art. A founder of this movement and later a prime-minister of the Netherlands (1901 – 1905) Abraham Kuyper maintained the idea of pillarization by a theological concept *Sphere Sovereignty* and a statement that Reformed Christians should form their own entities within each of the spheres to fulfill Christian service in society (Goudzwaard, 1986, p. 159). The idea of pillarization and some of Kuyperian thoughts were transferred by Dutch Reformed immigrants in Canada. For example, while the majority of Dutch Canadian Catholics and non-Calvinist Protestants decided to belong to the existing Canadian churches, Dutch Calvinists founded a great variety of Reformed churches on the Canadian religious scene. Also, as in their homeland, Reformed Christians have built and sustained a set of their own institutions in Canada.

For Dutch Reformed Christians, education has been one of the most important pillarized activities. North American Calvinists do not refer to their schools as Calvinist, they call them Christian (De Boer & Oppewal, 1984, p. 161). In the words of William Jellema (1953), a Christian school is "both 'outgrowth' and prerequisite" (p. 32) of Calvinism. Being convinced that there cannot be "neutrality in any domain" (Ouweneel, 2014, p. 117), Calvinists maintain Christian schools as independent from state institutions, because, in their opinion, it is the "most efficient manner to preserve distinctive group ideals" (Jellema, 1953, p. 32) – neo-Calvinist world and life view. Moreover, the theorists of Reformed schools believe that "the religious and spiritual cannot exist in a void, in isolation from life" (Zylstra, 1997, p. 40). That is why Christian schooling is considered to be the institution which stands between "the church and practical life" (Zylstra, 1997, p. 40). Its main goal is to help its students and graduates to realize Calvinist principles in real life:

Christian education is "for Christian life, not just for Christian thought" (Wolterstorff, 1997*b*, p. 61). Its curriculum should not only provide an abstract understanding of concepts and problems, it is also supposed to offer "students reasons for acting in what the school judges to be the right way" (Wolterstorff, 1997*b*, p. 65).

In this thesis, Christian schools run by the Canadian Reformed community will be referred to as Canadian Reformed schools although it is not their formal title. The decision of the members of the Canadian Reformed Churches to have their own schools, which "were meant to be distinct not only from public schools, but also from other Christian schools" (Curriculum Coordinator Management Committee (CCMC), 2002, 2.2.1.6), is explained by the following reasons. First, according to the doctrine of the covenant, it is parents who are primarily responsible for education of their children. In the Reformed tradition, it has "implied the need for day schools that were owned by the parents and taught in accordance with the church's doctrine" (Oosterhoff, 2006*b*, p.112). A requirement for the schools to adhere to the theological doctrines of Canadian Reformed Churches explains why the Canadian Reformed Teachers College was established in 1981 with an aim to prepare teachers for this particular schooling system. Second, Canadian Reformed schools are seen as a means to protect students from "the influences of the public school" (Kingma, 2006, p. 19) and maintain the coherence of what is "taught in the home and church" (p. 18). There are four main principles on which this schooling system is built. They are the following: education provided there should be "confessional, covenantal, and antithetical in character, and is further characterized by a unity of purpose that is shared by the home, the school, and the church" (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.6). A detailed analysis of these characteristics will be completed in chapter 5.

1.2. My Personal Interest in the Thesis Topic

I came to the topic of Dutch Calvinists and their educational systems in Canada in 2014. However, my interest in the topic of religion and its influence on society started many years before, at the age of 15 when I first learnt about Max Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905) and was inspired by the analysis of the religious concepts' impact on economics. Later, during my Bachelor's degree in Journalism and work with various religious communities, including the Protestant groups, I learnt about John Calvin's followers in the 19th and 20th centuries. I was especially interested in the program of political and cultural renewal of the society coined by a Dutch theologian and statesman Abraham Kuyper who intended to prove that political modernization did not inevitably lead to the decay of religion. Some of his most remarkable adherents have developed neo-Calvinism in a Canadian scene. This is how I decided to study the role of neo-Calvinist ideas in Canadian society, and I devoted my Master's degree thesis to the analysis of neo-Calvinist theology and its influence on social and political decisions made by Dutch Calvinist communities across Canada. While the focus of the Master's thesis was mainly theological and historical, I made a short trip to Canada to make acquaintances with the communities which I studied and collect data for content analysis. During that trip, I met a few representatives of the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA). The latter group unites individuals from various Reformed Churches across Canada but was established by post-war Dutch immigrants who are members of the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC). Its main goals are in accordance with Abraham Kuyper's ideas developed at the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries. A significant involvement of the majority of the CanRC population into politics, personally or by donating to ARPA, as well as preservation of a set of institutions, including schools, shaped my interest in this particular community and encouraged me to focus my PhD research on this

particular group. Whenever and wherever I present my preliminary findings, I start my presentation by introducing Dutch Calvinism and contextualizing it in Canada. It has been a broad movement but has not gained much scholarly attention yet. Additionally, most of the studies conducted were historical and theological without focus on the contemporary situation in the community. Hence, my interest has been focused on the analysis of the role of this theological tradition in the development of Christian institutions in the Canadian context and the influence of one specific institution, school, in the involvement of the community's members in social and political life of Canada.

1.3. The Topicality and Structure of the Thesis

Existing studies on post-war Dutch Calvinist immigrants and their descendants explore the influence of Reformed Churches and neo-Calvinist thought on the process of cultural and structural assimilation of Dutch Reformed immigrants, and the theological particularities of their schools. However, the impact which these schools have on their graduates' engagement in socio-political life has not received a comprehensive treatment by scholars yet. Therefore, my thesis attempts to fill this scholarly gap. It traces how internal and external influences shaped the changes which occurred in Canadian Reformed schools during the last five decades. The research question of this thesis about how Canadian Reformed schools prepare their graduates to live in the Canadian diverse and pluralist society can be clarified by several sub-questions. They are the following: 1) What impact do Reformed schools have on the maintenance and reinforcement of ethno-religious identities of their graduates?; 2) To what extent do Canadian Reformed schools prevent or encourage their graduates' participation in political realm and search for solutions to various social issues?; 3) How do Canadian Reformed schools prepare their graduates for life in diverse and democratic society? Furthermore, it was recognized by the Canadian Reformed community

that "Canadian Reformed schools have not clearly articulated their philosophy of Reformed education as a comprehensive statement that links foundational principles and educational practice" (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.5.3). This thesis, therefore, contributes to a more solid and holistic understanding of the Canadian Reformed school system's pillars.

A study of the evolution of the Dutch Reformed immigrants' school system provides the information which is useful for the study of other ethno-religious groups which have settled in Canada and founded their day schools. This study gives a better insight into how immigrant groups, whose religion plays a central role in their life, adapt to Canadian society after graduating from a religious school; whether and how religious schools' graduates contribute to the public good of a multicultural society; how faith-based schooling evolves to adapt to the surrounding world.

This thesis employs a social constructionist approach, according to which meanings are constructed by the individuals while they interact with others. It is therefore a qualitative research, which draws heavily on semi-structured interviews in order to encourage participants to discuss how Reformed schools form the worldview of their students in a flexible and detailed manner. Sixty-four interviews with teachers, experts on Reformed education, and alumni graduated within different decades (from the 1980s to the 2010s) were conducted to trace how faith-based schooling has evolved and adapted to the surrounding world. This research is more extensive than previous studies on the Dutch Reformed communities because voices of ex-members of Canadian Reformed Churches are included. Additionally, the data gathered by interviews was triangulated with data obtained from policy, court, and church documents as well as Reformed printed and digital media that reflect theological and socio-political platforms of the Reformed schools. Curriculum changes on debated topics, such as contraception, gender identity and openness to interfaith dialogue, were also analyzed to trace the development of Reformed schooling throughout the last fifty years.

This doctoral thesis contains the following chapters. Chapter One is an Introduction to the thesis. Chapter Two outlines theories and provides an interdisciplinary literature review on religious schools in Canada. Chapter Three details the methods and techniques used to gather and interpret data for this thesis. Chapter Four explains how Dutch Calvinism has formed theological, sociological, and political visions of the Canadian Reformed Churches' members. Its particular focus is on ethnic identity of schools' graduates. Chapter Five first contextualizes schools of the Canadian Reformed communities in the general philosophical debate on the existence of religious schooling in a Canadian landscape; and second, it investigates and analyzes Canadian Reformed perspectives on the faith-based school system. Chapter Six explores how interfaith dialogue is perceived on the theological level and on a day-to-day basis and how graduates of Canadian Reformed schools have been prepared to live in a Canadian pluralist and multicultural society. Chapter Seven investigates the evolution of sex education in Canadian Reformed schools and how the topical issues related to sex education, including gender identity, have been presented there. Chapter Eight studies how Canadian Reformed schools have informed their students about social and political issues and effected their graduates' involvement in politics. Chapter Nine summarizes the findings of this case study and provides recommendations for further research.

Chapter 2. Literature review and Theoretical framework

The general question this thesis seeks to address concerns the role of ethno-religious educational institutions in immigrant-origin communities. The specific group of interest is Canada's Dutch Reformed community, but the topic is broad and is relevant to a large number of historical and contemporary cases. The literature potentially relevant to this topic is vast and covers many groups and experiences. This chapter therefore analyzes the interconnection between the concepts of "ethnicity", "religion", "nationality", and "migration"; presents perspectives on multiculturalism and pluralism; gives an insight into sociological discussions on faith-based schools and their ability to develop critical thinking skills and autonomy in their students.

2.1. Interrelations between the concepts of "ethnicity", "race", "religion", "nationality", and "migration"

Since the second part of the 20th century most Western countries have opened their borders to global migration. This has resulted in a number of new questions for these countries, such as: the coexistence of the principle of secularization and religious traditions in the public space, the retention of ethnic and religious identities, national self-identification of transnational (im)migrants, etc. Therefore, a study of schools established by ethno-religious communities requires a thorough understanding of the context in which these institutions have come into existence and how they have developed in the subsequent years. Because my research is devoted to Dutch Reformed immigrants in Canada and their descendants, I will consider the link between ethnicity (and race), religion, and nation (and nationalism). Adrian Hastings (1997) noted: "Ethnicity, nation, nationalism and religion are four distinct and determinative elements within European and world history. … These four are, moreover, so intimately linked that it is impossible,

I would maintain, to write the history of any of them at all adequately without at least a fair amount of discussion of the other three" (p. 1).

International migration has played a significant role in the rapid growth of diverse ethnic and religious communities in many parts of the world, including Canada (Massey et al., 1998; Reitz, 2014; Simmons, 2010). Over time, this migration resulted in the establishment of a robust set of institutions by these groups, in particular faith-based schools. Sociologists have paid significant attention to the role of schools in reinforcing religious identities and socializing the next generation (Gutmann, 1999; Marcotte, 2005; Mintz, 2013; Sikkink & Hill, 2006). Within the Canadian context, faith-based schools have come under scrutiny amid growing public concern about their potential to breed intolerance towards those who think and believe differently (Sweet, 1997; Zine, 2008). Hence, there is a serious concern on whether ethnically and/or religiously monolithic schools prepare their graduates to operate adequately in Canada's diverse and pluralist society. There is a long-standing concern on whether and how a faith-based school as a religious institution helps immigrants overcome a "disorienting, alienating experience" of immigration (Kivisto, 2014, p. 54) and facilitates their incorporation in the receiving society. In the following sub-sections, I am first going to present the concepts "religion", "ethnicity", "race", and "nation", and second, to analyze their relation to immigration.

2.1.1 Religion

Since the foundation of sociology as an independent discipline, religion has taken an important place in sociological works. In contrast to other approaches, sociological studies "focus on the interaction between religion and society" (Northcott, 1998, p. 193). The founding fathers of sociology (Émile Durkheim, Karl Marx and Max Weber) made significant contributions to the research on functions of religion, but it is questionable whether their theoretical findings can be

used "as explanations for the role of religion in modern societies" (Kehrer & Hardin, 1995, p. 323). This concern relates to the fact that in the second part of the twentieth century there was a "shift in the moral, political, religious, and philosophical reasoning", and modern sociology has moved from an interest in the "objective trends in the evolution of society" towards the study of "the subjective motives and aims of the actors" (Kehrer & Hardin, p. 321). As a result, since the 1950-60s new approaches to religion have been developed. Structural functionalism, which is influenced by Durkheim and developed by Talcott Parsons and his followers, considers that religion provides the society with core values and meaning of life and also helps reconcile personal systems with social ones (Parsons, 1973). Neo-Marxists claim that religion can be a tool for social change (Gonsalez, 2005; Gramsci, 1972; Northcott, 1998). Symbolic interactionism, which focuses on a micro-level analysis of the place of religion in people's everyday lives, contributed to an increase in the studies of new religious movements and the reasons of why a sizable number of people move from religious mainstream towards nontraditional religious movements (Barker, 1984; Lofland & Stark, 1965; Shupe & Bromley, 1994; Wallis, 1977; Wilson 1982).

During the last several decades, contemporary sociology of religion has experienced an intense debate on secularization theory. Secularization is a process in which "religion loses its dominance or social significance in society" (Northscott, 1998, p. 214). The principal theorists of secularization (Peter Berger, 1999; Steve Bruce, 2008; David Martin, 2005; Anthony Wallace, 1966; Bryan Wilson, 1982; and others) saw its main reason in the process of modernization. Whereas many sociologists opposed the "death of religion" thesis, they admitted that religion has become more personal and invisible (Luckmann, 1967) and optional in the market place (Foltz, 2007; Gauthier et al., 2011; Loy, 2007; Roof, 1993). However, in the 1980-90s, when it became visible that religion had not disappeared, a flood of criticism of the secularization thesis started.

Even one of the most prominent defenders of secularization theory Peter Berger (1999) admitted that "the world today is massively religious" (p. 9) and "those who neglect religion in their analyses of contemporary affairs do so at great peril" (p. 18). Furthermore, the role of religion "in movements of cultural and ethical resistance in late or postmodern societies in both the developed and developing worlds" (Northcott, 1998, p. 220) has been recognized (Bauman, 1993; Casanova, 2001; Giddens, 1990; Walzer, 2015).

As a result, some scholars (Boeve, 2007; Habermas, 2008) today use a postsecular approach asserting a return of religion in the public agenda and oppose the concept of secularization. For example, Jurgen Habermas (2008), whose view on religion has undergone significant changes throughout his career, notes that today, despite "the loss of function and the trend toward individualization … religious communities can obviously still claim a "seat" in the life of societies that are largely secularized" (p. 19). The literature on postsecularism is rapidly growing. Meanwhile, many prominent sociologists contest the "postsecular" concept for being vague and ambiguous. Thus, James Beckford (2012) gives a nuanced presentation of the meanings attributed to the "postsecular" concept and shows that "in some cases, [they are] incompatible with each other that it would make little sense to try to assess whether any particular country or region of the world had actually entered a postsecular age" (p. 13). The "postsecular" term is seen by some to be used as "a sort of third position that results from a dialectical relationship between the secular and the religious" (Rosati & Ferrara, 2010, p. 41) since there is no alternative to name the changing secularization paradigm.

At the same time, other scholars' position (Asad 2003; Calhoun et al., 2011) can be summarized by Mark Juergensmeyer: "A true "postsecular" attitude is one that rejects the dichotomy [between secular and religious]. It regards all public life to be at least potentially infused

with a moral and spiritual sensibility that is characteristic of what has been described as "religion" and regards religion as a stratum of morality and spirituality that is endemic to all forms of personal and public life" (2012, p. 462). Moreover, in this context, as Mikael Stenmark (2020) points out, the secularists, who aim to minimize the role of religion and vision the future of public space without religion, are just "a subgroup within the larger group of secular people" (p. 23); while religious groups' right for public presence is also supported by that part of the society that do not adhere to traditional religions. Stenmark (2020) reminds that there is a wide diversity of those who are not the "religious nones," but are "consciously or unconsciously searching for secular alternatives to traditional religions" (p. 23) within pluralistic societies characterized by "a veritable market in worldviews and moralities" coexisting and interacting. As a result, public space in contemporary Western society can be characterized by "a condition of co-presence of religious and secular viewpoints and practices, and accordingly it is not to be confused with a condition of de-secularization" (p. 41). British sociologist Grace Davie (2018) argues that a society can be fully modern and fully religious at the same time:

> At one and the same time European populations are becoming both more secular and more religiously diverse. The former is closely associated with the privatization of belief, a trend in line with classic understandings of secularization. The latter does the reverse: it enhances the public profile of religion not least in public debate. (p. 337)

This means that whatever terminology – secular or postsecular – is being used in regard to the current Canadian society, a shift of the role of the government in relation to religious groups has been emphasized. Thus, while the state was not supposed to "take a stand on religious issues" (Stenmark, 2020, p. 22), in order to support the secular state principle, a "radical redefinition of secularism" (p. 22) has been strongly requested. Mikael Stenmark (2020) concurs with Charles Taylor by saying: "The core idea of liberal democracy is, however, that the state should protect people in their belonging to *whatever* outlook or worldview they chose, and treat them equally

whatever their choice. … The state should, to the extent that it is possible, be neutral in respect to the different worldviews, conceptions of the good, or substantive ways of life that its citizens embrace" (p. 22). More discussion about Charles Taylor's vision of the government's role within liberal democracy will be provided below in the context of multiculturalism and religious identity recognition.

Religious diversity is significantly increased by immigration, and religion is seen as an important determinant of identity for many people, including a sizable number of immigrants (Hier & Bolaria, 2006; Kivisto, 2014; Mahtani, 2002; Robins, 1991; Romanucci-Ross & De Vos, 1995), and an influential force in the socio-political scene (Grzymala-Busse, 2015). However, it is impossible to ignore the rapid growth of the disaffiliated and the unaffiliated. The proportion of Canadians claiming to be non-religious, known as religious "Nones", is steadily increasing. According to the Canada Census and National Household Survey, the amount of non-affiliated has grown from 4% of the total population in 1971 to 8% in 1981, 13% in 1991, 17% in 2001, and stood at 23.6% in 2011 (Statistics Canada, 2011). The category "No Religious Affiliation" includes "all those who have No Religion, who identify themselves as Atheists or Agnostics, or who otherwise indicate that they aren't affiliated" (Clarke & Macdonald, 2017, p. 201). The rapid increase of the disaffiliated and the unaffiliated in Canada, that began in the 1960s with the cultural revolution, "marks a generational shift in religious identity" (p. 201). As Joel Thiessen's study (2016) shows, Canadian Nones, including those who perform private religious practices, "believe that they are more tolerant, inclusive, and open to a variety of perspectives in ways" than those who joined an institutionalized community of faith (p. 104). These Canadians seem to be "quite comfortable to believe without belonging, as Grace Davie puts it" (Clarke & Macdonald, 2017, p. 231).

Given the current religious landscape in Canada, which includes multiple groups of Nones (that represent approximately a quarter of the population) and religious believers, and the complexity of the "postsecular" concept, this research will rely on Beaumont's definition of the postsecular. This definition identifies "new interconnectivities between diverse social realities (presecular, secular, postsecular, trans-secular, for example) within neoliberal globalization that were limited by hitherto totalizing and prevailing notions of modernization and secularization" (2010, p. 7). Today, in the 21st century, we see not a replacement of Christianity by a secular culture, but "a plurality of life options and religions" (Boeve, 2007, p. 27), "a dynamic multi-religious society, full of complexity and ambiguity" (p. 26). Both religious and non-religious individuals and groups have an equal status. Moreover, "secularized citizens … should neither deny a truth potential to religious world views as a matter of principle, nor dispute the right of believing fellow citizens to make contributions to public discussions in religious language" (Habermas, 2008, p. 348). Therefore, religious and spiritual worldviews, which are often reflected in the public sphere and the existence of faith-based schools, should be taken seriously.

Furthermore, my research will rely on the social constructionist paradigm. This means that I will bear in mind an approach to "belief" as a socially constructed worldview (Beckford, 2003; Day, 2011) and "the varieties of meaning attributed to religion in social settings" (Beckford, 2003, p. 20). I will adhere to Beckford's statement that the concept of religion is "a second-order concept" that is constructed by an observer based on "the first-order beliefs, practices and experiences of human actors" (Beckford, p. 21). It means that the meaning of religion "has to be attributed by human being and is therefore variable" (p. 21). Hence, I will take into account how interviewees socially construct their understanding of their religious experience and their perception of their feelings and beliefs. I will also pay attention to the language which the

interviewees use. What this means is that I will follow Canadian scholars Paul Bramadat and David Seljak and opt for "a pragmatic and functional definition of religion"; that is why, [I] will critically accept and employ the language of the groups [I am] studying" (Bramadat, 2005, p. 12).

While some scholars predict that religion, like language, will be lost by new generations of immigrants, "more and more ethnic groups have been moving away from their traditional religious affiliation through the processes of conversion, secularization, and particularly intermarriage" (Anderson & Frideres, 1981, p. 125; Cottee, 2015); other scholars consider religion to be a consolidator of ethnic identity (Abramson, 1980; Beyer & Ramji, 2013; Hirschman, 2004; Kim, 2011; Mol, 1985; Smith, 1978, p. 1172). My research will rely on the approach of the second group of scholars who define religion as a "sacralization of identity", a tool to "reinforce personal integrity", "ritualize loyalty to … ethnic group" (Mol, 1985, pp. 96-97) and retain ethnic identity "based on an imagined relationship to [the] homeland" of immigrant group (Beyer & Ramji, 2013, p. 168). In order to investigate ethno-religious identity retention, I anticipate considering that the establishment of schools by Dutch Reformed immigrants "was not a reaction to any perceived lack of religion in the public schools, although the impulse for cultural isolation and a fear of secularization" (Rice & Van Harn, 1998, p. 52).

A key scholar in collective memory studies Maurice Halbwachs (1992) emphasizes that religious memory "does not preserve the past but reconstructs it with the aid of the material traces, rites, texts, and traditions left behind by that past, and … with the present" (p. 119). There is therefore a question of how immigrant religious groups in n-generation preserve their religious identity and to which extent. Numerous migration studies demonstrate that religion plays an important role for many immigrants. Charles Hirschman (2004) contends that functions of religion in immigrant communities can be summarized by three R's: "refuge, respectability, and resources"

(p. 1228). Peter Kivisto (2014) explains this formula: first, religion helps overcome the "disorienting, alienating experience" of immigration (p. 54). For example, "regular religious participation is associated with better emotional/mental health outcomes" (Connor, 2012, p. 130) in comparison with non-religious group involvement; second, religion facilitates an incorporation in the receiving society; third, religion is "a bridge between the culture of the homeland and that of the new setting, assisting immigrants to adjust to their new setting" (Kivisto, p. 57). Religious institutions serve as a significant tool in the process of settlement and integration of immigrants (Connor, 2012; Hirschman, 2004; Warner, 2007). The establishment of religious institutions is a common way to pass on immigrants' heritage to their children, and to therefore ensure some degree of cultural reproduction (Warner & Wittner, 1998, p. 16). Religious schools can play a wide array of roles in this process, depending on their history, recency, theological and cultural approaches, and other factors.

2.1.2 Ethnicity, Race and Nationalism in relation to Religion

There are various sociological approaches towards the interrelations between ethnic and religious identities – whether they are interdependent and equal or one of them is subordinate to the other. Research on religion is often disconnected from the literature on ethnicity.

Descriptive case studies of various ethno-religious groups (Kim, 2011; Smith, 1978) are numerous while the "theoretical understanding of ethnicity and religion remain disjointed" (Kim, 2011, p. 312). When ethnicity and religion overlap, religion is often "subsumed in ethnicity" (Ruane & Todd, 2011, p. 1), and "the specificity of the religious element can be ignored" (p. 2). The category "religion" has been frequently included in the category "ethnicity" (Chandra, 2004; Htun, 2004; Varshney, 2001) since Donald Horowitz's publication *Ethnic Groups in Conflict* in 1985. He claims that the concept "ethnicity" "easily embraces groups differentiated by color,

language, and religion; it covers "tribes", "races", "nationalities", and castes" (p. 53). The perspective, which fuses religion to ethnic identity, can be seen in various sociological studies. Dividing ethnic identity into two aspects, internal and external, Wsevolod Isajiw (1981) includes "cultural behaviour patterns, such as speaking an ethnic language" (p. 2) and "participation in ethnic institutional organizations, such as churches, schools, etc." (p. 3) in the external. A similar perspective is presented by Alan Anderson (1981) who identifies four main factors of ethnic identity: ethnic origin, mother tongue, ethnic-oriented religion, and folkways (p. 37). Yusuf Bangura (1994) defines objective and subjective characteristics of ethnic identities. The first one includes "language, religion, race, territory and culture", and each of them is "subject to interpretation by the subjective preferences of groups" (p. 16). For example, religion can be a distinctive feature of some ethnic groups, while "groups which subscribe to a common religion do not always belong to the same ethnic group, and vice versa" (p. 16). The same applies to language: "not all groups which share a common language feel they belong to the same ethnic group" (p. 16). For example, while language is termed as one of the significant features of ethnic identity (Berry, 1958, p. 54), it does not mean that a loss of traditional mother tongue by an ethnic group entails a loss of "its sense of identity" (Anderson, 1981, p. 40). Ethno-religious minorities tend to lose their languages eventually (Anderson, 1981; Isajiw, 1981). Even if a generation retains an ethnic language, the latter changes its function: "rather than being a means for practical communication, it becomes a symbol or means of identity reinforcement" (Isajiw, 1990, p. 56). As it was mentioned above, Dutch immigrants anticipated to become Canadians as soon as possible and English has become the main and eventually the only language for conversation both at home and during the church services. Therefore, a mother tongue will not be considered as a distinguishing feature of Dutch Reformed community.

Some contemporary sociologists, especially those who focus on immigration studies, oppose this disregard of religion. Gerd Baumann (1999) proposes a multicultural triangle, the corners of which are state, ethnicity, and religion. Madeline Richards (1992) argues that it is "pointless to treat religion and ethnicity as separate and independent variables when in fact they are intertwined and inseparable" (p. 10). She adds that the "tendency to treat ethnicity and religion as separate variables is evident in analysis of religious trends in general and in writings of researchers who have argued that religious identification is replacing ethnic identity" (p. 10). Some other scholars (Bramadat & Seljak, 2008; Kivisto, 2014) also argue that there is a "mutual reinforcement of ethnic and religious identities" (Kivisto, 2014, p. 47). Moreover, it is hard for many individuals to make distinctions between their religious and ethnic identities; therefore, scholarly studies might also experience a challenge to make a clear division between the participants' ethnic and religious identities.

There are three main approaches to the concept of ethnicity. The first is the primordialist approach, which was popular until the 1970s; it is an essentialist theory, according to which "ethnicity is something given, ascribed at birth, deriving from the kin-and-clan-structure of human society, and hence something more or less fixed and permanent" (Isajiw, 1993*a*, p. 2). This thesis was shared by Clifford Geertz (1963), Harold Isaacs (1975), John Stack (1986), Van Den Berghe (1978), Shaw and Wong (1989), and Anthony Smith (1986). In contrast to primordialism that does not take into account social and political contexts in which ethnic groups are formed, the second approach, which applies an instrumentalist perspective, emphasizes "the role of ethnicity in the mediation of social relations and the negotiation of access to resources, primarily economic and political resources" (Jones, 1997, p. 72). The origins of the instrumentalist movement trace back to the works of Fredrik Barth (1969) and Abner Cohen (1974). Barth defines ethnic groups as a

"form of social organization" (1969, p. 13) and argues that "ethnic categories provide an organizational vessel that may be given varying amounts and forms of content in different socio-cultural systems" (p. 14). It means that ethnic groups are non-static and continuous, and therefore change over time; as a result, the content on which these groups draw is less important than the existence of their collective boundaries. Some scholars, for example, Haas, Miller and Castles (2020) argue that ethnic identity becomes meaningful in social and political terms "when it is linked to processes of boundary-drawing with other groups" (p. 78). It is often referred to the establishment of boundaries between dominant groups and minorities. As a result, "[b]ecoming an ethnic minority is not an automatic or necessary result of immigration, but rather the consequence of marginalization processes" (p. 78).

In comparison to the primordialist and instrumentalist perspectives that "continually refer to emotions or strategic calculations" (Green & Seher, 2003, p. 521), the third, constructivist, approach focuses on the influence of external processes on the establishment of various ethnic categories. From a constructivist point of view, ethnic groups are "fluid and originate within a set of social, economic and political processes" (Chandra, 2001, p. 7). Hence, Gerd Baumann (1999) compares "ethnicity" with wine: they are both "creations of human minds, skills, and plans – based on some natural ingredients, it is true, but far beyond anything that nature could ever do by itself" (p. 64). While both instrumentalist and constructivist approaches state that ethnicity is not a static and stable entity, there are differences between these two approaches. The former defines ethnicity within a rational choice framework; the latter focuses on human interactions that built a variety of ethnic choices rather than individual choices per se. A partial reason for that is because individuals construct or choose their ethnic identities "from a menu of existing choices. The menu is historically and culturally constructed, but individuals choose rationally from the items that are on

the menu at any given point' (Finnemore and Sikkink, 2001, p. 411). This thesis adheres to the idea that everyone has an ethnic identity or several ethnic identities (Fishman et al., 1985, p. 4; Smith, 1986, p. 27), and is framed within the constructivist paradigm that asserts that an ethnic category is flexible, dynamic, and multivocal and is constructed from a collection of social interactions.

In this regard, my theoretical framework will be based on the scholarship on ethnic retention across generations. A sizable number of studies (Phinney, 1990; Ting-Toomey, 1981) refers to the "third generation return" hypothesis offered by Marcus Hansen (1938) that is not supported by more recent results. According to Hansen's theory, first-generation immigrants maintain their ethnic identity while the second one moves away from the values of their heritage culture; but the third generation tends to return to its ethnic roots: "What the son wishes to forget the grandson wishes to remember" (Hansen, 1938, p. 9). This theory has been denied by many studies. Thus, Herbert Gans (1979) argues that even if the third generation returns to ancestral roots, they do not practice ethnic culture in the same way as their ancestors did. Gans introduces the concept of "symbolic ethnicity" which is "characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation" (p. 9): "cultural patterns are being "transformed into symbols", they are "visible and clear in meaning to large numbers of third generation ethnics", "without requiring undue interference in other aspects of life" (p. 9). Although "symbolic ethnicity can be viewed as an indicator of the persistence of ethnic groups and cultures" (p. 12), Gans does not believe that ethnic identity is a "permanent phenomenon" (p. 18). Van Dijk (1996) notices that symbolic ethnic identity is in fact subjective: "It refers to the individual's sense of belonging to a group or community", and, hence, depends on how this individual "defines a situation than on his or her actual level of participation in the community" (p. 176). Also, numerous studies conducted in the

1960s showed that only some representatives of the second generation remove from parental ethnic identity, not the whole generation (Kramer & Leventman, 1961). The studies of the 1970s started to look at this issue from another perspective: they demonstrated either a growing indifference of the second/third generation to their ancestral culture (Sharot, 1973) or a return to ethnicity in the result of discontent and ethnic/racial confrontation (Greeley, 1972; McCready, 1974).

Isajiw argues that "the second or third or consecutive generation actors" (1993b, p. 13) try to reconcile two identities together. As a result, they construct "their own identity from both, the culture and heritage of the broader society and that of their ancestral ethnic group" (Isajiw, 1993a, p. 16). That is why, according to Isajiw, a hyphenated identity is being formed (1993a, p. 16). A hyphenated identity has been in the focus of research on immigration during the last two decades. Many studies show that globalization, being one of the factors fostering migration, influence immigrants in different ways. On the one hand, it encourages dominant ethnic groups to have a "strong defensive reaction" against other cultures (Hall, 2006, p. 264), which they "feel threatened by" (p. 265); on the other — it produces "new positions of identification" and makes identities "more plural and diverse" (p. 265). As a result, some identities gravitate toward *Tradition*, which means an attempt to "restore the sense of … community and confidence that has collapsed in these modern or maybe postmodern times" (Robins, 1991, p. 22); other identities — toward *Translation*, which means to come to terms with "other cultures, other states, other histories, other experiences, traditions, peoples, and destinies" without assimilation (Said, 1989, p. 216). Focusing on the last tendency, contemporary sociologists discuss a formation of a hybrid identity that combines several traditions. According to some researchers, this cultural fusion can be "a powerful creative source", which makes new forms "more appropriate for late modernity rather than the old, embattled national identities of the past" (Hall, 2006, p. 266). Other scholars (Ben-Zion, 2014; Turner, 1969;

Zine, 2008) suggest that hybridity sometimes might lead to indeterminacy and double consciousness.

The concept of "ethnicity" is often analyzed in conjunction with "race". The latter means a socially constructed classification of people according to visible characteristics (such as skin colour or hair type). While throughout the 19th century there was a search for scientific proof of racial differences, social and cultural anthropologists of the twentieth century opposed seeing "race" as a natural category (Boas, 1940; Montagu, 1964) and insisted that "biological differences between races are small" (Boas, 1931, p. 6). However, as contemporary studies on racism (often employed in the intersectionality framework) point out, explicit and implicit discrimination or prejudice against visible minorities and the Indigenous population (in regard to employment, access to housing, etc.) still exist (Al-Solaylee, 2016; Bourassa et al., 2004; Clark et al., 1999; Driedger & Halli, 2000; Gee & Ford, 2011; Heldke & O'Connor, 2004; Jordan & Weedon, 1995; Sears et al., 2000; Zong, 1994). In addition, after September 11th, 2001, the level of discrimination against Muslims in Canada, and Muslim women in particular (Beaman, 2012b; Hamdani, Bhatti & Munawar, 2008; Rahnema, 2006), has increased. There are two reasons for this which could be referred to as the colour-class and strangers' theses. The first one assumes that "majority groups in the society identify nonwhites with the lowest social class mainly because of the historical relationships between whites and nonwhites"; the second one assumes that the nonwhite immigrants are seen as "archetypical strangers both in appearance and behavior", therefore, a reaction to them is "distrust, antipathy, and a resultant negative attitude" (Ramcharan, 1982, p. 88). Studies explain that immigrants of white ethnic groups are privileged with having more choices in comparison to racial minorities "whose lives are strongly influenced by their race or national origin regardless of how much they may choose not to identify themselves in terms of their ancestries"

(Waters, 1996, pp. 452-453). Hence, although many immigrants tend to reconcile the feeling of being Canadian and their ethnic heritage, it seems to be difficult for some of them because of the "dominant definitions of the national narrative as 'white'" (Mahtani, 2002, p. 86). As a result, some academics criticize multicultural policy which imposes immigrants to position their ethnic identity (Gwyn, 1996; Mahtani, 2002, p. 78): it reinforces crude cultural stereotypes (Mahtani, 2002, p. 75; Stratton, 1998, p. 97) and biases (Takasaki, 1991, p. 15), but does not recognize an equality between various groups (Brahmachari, 2004).

Dutch immigrants adapted to Canadian society quickly and were accepted well. As related studies show, a massive post-war migration from the Netherlands to Canada was favoured by the Canadian government which drew on northern Europeans to fill up the vast empty spaces in the country; the Dutch were also well received by Canadians because they "were of right "racial" stock, had a reputation for hard work and cleanliness, and were familiar with democratic institutions" (Balthazar et al., 1998, p. 92). Due to a smooth economic and social integration and "the acceptance of the Canadian public", "the return rate to the Netherlands has been exceedingly low over the past one hundred years, perhaps less than one percent" (Ganzevoort, 1998, para. 6). Based on the existing literature on Dutch Reformed immigrants, I argue that the concept of race is only relevant in so far as it positions Dutch post-war immigrants in a favourable way in the Canadian society. Being white meant that they have had some advantages and did not experience any racial discrimination by the predominantly white Canadian society.

Another identity category which is sometimes disregarded in ethno-religious studies is national identity. Many scholars emphasize that it is incorrect and impossible to explain nationalism "simply as a continuation of ethnicity [or religion] or a simple reflection of common history or language" (Calhoun, 1993, p. 211). As in case of ethnic identity, this thesis' theoretical

framework relies on modernist and post-modernist approaches to national identity that consider "nation" as an artificial construct (Bellamy, 2003; Gellner, 1983). A well-known representative of the post-modernist perspective, Benedict Anderson coined a definition of "nation" which has become one of the most popular among contemporary scholars. For Anderson (1991), a nation is "an imagined political community — and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign... all communities larger than primordial villages of face-to-face contact (and perhaps even these) are imagined" (pp. 5-7). Today, due to globalization, national identities are declining and being replaced by hybrid identities; thus, "modern nations are all cultural hybrids" (Hall, 2006, p. 257). As a result, sociologist often refer to contemporary immigrants as transmigrants (Basch, Schiller & Blanc, 1994; Kivisto, 2014; Massey et al., 2005) who are connected (politically, economically or culturally) to both the society of origin and the society of settlement. To sum up, there has been a shift from an attempt to specify what ethnicity or nation is "to attempts to specify how ethnicity ... and nation work" (Brubaker, 2009, p. 29).

In case of Dutch Reformed post-war immigrants, the development of their feeling of belonging to Canada occurred rapidly and smoothly. The existing literature confirms that most of Dutch immigrants "saw it as their mission to work for a "better" Canada; … orthodox Calvinists planned to make Canada into a "Christian country" (Schryer, 1998, p. 280). As a result, although Dutch Calvinists, who immigrated to Canada in the postwar period, preferred to establish "alternative, non-ecclesiastical institutional structures that reflected their distinctive Calvinist heritage" (Groenewold, 1991, p. 182), behaviorally they still endeavoured to assimilate. Therefore, they learnt English quickly (e.g., church services were soon offered only in English), and in terms of citizenship, they were keen to becoming Canadians. Considering Dutch Reformed post-war immigrants were interested in taking up Canadian citizenship and joining the Canadian nation, the

current communities' members usually have only Canadian citizenship. Hence, despite an established system of separate institutions, Dutch Reformed immigrants have integrated into Canadian society quickly, successfully and voluntarily, and became Canadians in terms of both nationality and active socio-political engagement. This might be one of the reasons why current members do not usually participate in Dutch clubs or events. Therefore, "nationalism" will not be an essential category for the analysis of Dutch Reformed Christians. It will be covered in strong connection to Dutch ethnicity that is symbolic in case of Dutch Reformed immigrants and reinforced by their religious identity rather than a recognition of Dutch nationality of their ancestors.

To summarize, this thesis focuses on ethnic rather than racial or national identity of Dutch immigrants. Being considered "white", and perceived well by their host society, the concept of race is less relevant for them. My theoretical approach considers the link between the concepts of "ethnicity" and "religion", which in case of the researched religious group co-exist and are closely interconnected, and religious identity serves as "an important source of intra-ethnic group differences" (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 178). Dutch Reformed Canadians are mentioned among those groups, such as Jews, "Quebecois, Mennonites, Native people", for which religious and ethnic identities are closely related (Van Dijk, 1996, p. 178). It is the Calvinist tradition that distinguishes the behaviour of Dutch Reformed immigrants from their fellow citizens and serves as a factor that helps preserve ethnicity throughout several generations living in Canada. As mentioned above, their endeavour to assimilate and become part of Canadian nation has also been encouraged by their religious identity. Chapter 4 of this thesis provides a detailed analysis of Dutch ethnic identity in North America and the role this identity plays in the life of Dutch Reformed immigrants in Canada.

2.1.3 The Role of faith-based schools in preserving ethnic and religious identities

Faith-based schools serve as an important source to preserve ethnic and religious identities. While public schools' advocates claim that keeping religion out of schools ensures the neutrality of these institutions, many representatives of religious groups argue that secularism of public schools is "involved in the establishment of a new value system" (Glendon, 2013, p. 39). Therefore, some ethno-/religious communities founded and run faith-based schools with the intention to preserve their religious or cultural identities.

The existing studies on the role of these faith-based schools mainly focus on the experiences of Catholic and Jewish schools in their attempt to maintain religious identity of their students and therefore the community. Catholic schools represent the largest piece of public and private religious schooling available in Canada. Numerous studies (Laplante, 1991; Nicolson, 1984) analyze how Catholic schools have served specific ethno-immigrant populations during several centuries in Canada and which challenges these schools have faced while trying to retain their unique identity. One of the largest ethnic groups being served by Catholic schools in Canada were Irish immigrants in the 19th century (Nicolson, 1984) and German immigrants in the 20th century (Grams, 2013; Paproski, 2011). Nowadays, the general trend identified both within and outside of Catholic schooling in Canada can be summarized as creeping secularization; and as a result, there is the crisis of credibility of Catholic schools across North America. In Quebec, where Catholic schooling was most important for identity retention during much of Canada's recent history, Catholic education has now lost much of its religious significance for the francophone part of the province. The reason for this is that several decades after the Quiet Revolution, Catholicism in Quebec seems to balance "between a culturalistic religious configuration – marked by an attachment to Catholicism which reflects identity more than religiosity – and the progressive transformation of this form of Catholicism in to a new one, more modest in numbers but more

practicing – resembling that which is found in more polarized, pluralist regimes of religiosity in the West and in Ontario (Nault and Meunier, 2017, p. 242). It means that francophone Quebecers who identify themselves as Catholic will soon "do so no longer in order to support the idea of a cultural differentiation with the rest of Canada, but rather because they truly identify with Catholicism as a religion" (p. 242) and will not use Catholicism as a source "for the defense of a national, local, ethnic or status-group culture" (Bruce, 2008, p. 31). Julia Martínez-Ariño and Solange Lefebvre (2016) show that the English-speaking Catholic community and institutions (church and schools) in Quebec have gone through "a less far-reaching and intense process of secularization" (p. 36) than French-speaking Catholics and "remains strongly attached to a more formal and clerical form of Catholicism" (p. 38). Being a minority in different senses (within the Francophone Quebec majority; within a highly secularized context; within the Canadian Protestant Anglophone majority; being committed Catholic within the nonpracticing Catholic majority), Anglophone Catholics in Quebec treat their religion as a highly important factor of their group identity (pp. 36-37).

Studies on Jewish schools, which have existed for more than a century, demonstrate that faith-based schools can provide their graduates with successful participation in the larger Canadian society. They show that graduates of Jewish day schools "have excelled in many professions and in business. Some have achieved great success in all three levels of government, the diplomatic corps, and the media" (Epstein, 2013, p. 40). Given the high level of education and integration into mainstream society that Jews have achieved in Canada, those schools have clearly not acted as a wedge between the Jewish society and the rest of the country. An important aspect of the Jewish educational experience is its great diversity and continued evolution. It's not, and never has been, a monolithic institution promoting a single, separate ethno-religious identity, but has rather

followed most of the important changes Canada has experienced during the same period (rising pluralism, the increased political assertiveness of Francophones, etc.). A recent comparative analysis of Muslim, Jewish and Steiner schools in Quebec concludes that religious schools serve as a bridge between the culture of home and parents and Quebecois society (Tremblay, 2014, p. 260). Jewish schools, Tremblay claims, have no intention to create a religious or external community (p. 236). Their main aim is to preserve the status of the Jewish community as both a minority and a part of the wider society (p. 236). Some parents also see religious schools as a means for family or moral socialization because they may transmit religious codes and traditions as well as the family's cultural heritage (270).

Some Muslim parents support Muslim schools in Canada while others do not find them beneficial for their children. The latter worry that Muslim schools "would reinforce the very religious and cultural practices that would highlight … differentness" of their children and would force isolation rather than integration of their children into new society (Memon, 2013, p. 81); or they feel that the schools are underdeveloped and lack "the amenities enjoyed by fully funded schools" (Zine, 2008, p. 266). The former appreciate the cultural congruence in Islamic schools (Zine, p. 272) so that their children are able to concentrate on the learning process "without constantly having to explain [their] lifestyle to others" (p. 273) and have consistency in the religious and cultural values nurtured in school and at home (Memon, 2013, p. 82). The number of private Muslim schools is growing in Canada which shows a demand in them.

To sum up, the abundant historical evidence on the Catholic schools that have served both French Canadians and later immigrant communities over the past two centuries reveals a not entirely unexpected pattern: ethno-religious schools serve a powerful role in ethnic retention, but that role is generally short lived. Catholic schooling was historically important for French

Canadians, but it has lost nearly all its significance today. Irish Catholics preserved their faith and identity in the face of adversity with an impressive educational system of their own, but only for one or two generations. The same can be said of German and other Catholic immigrants. Given that Catholic schools have the longest history of serving ethnic and religious minorities in Canada, this is an important pattern. In the case of Jewish experience, the ability of religious schools to maintain a strong sense of cultural and religious identity among their students is modest over the long term. Muslim schools are still new in Canada, and their role in the long-term maintenance of religious identity of various Muslim communities requires further scholarly research. Based on the previous research on Catholic, Jewish and Muslim schools, we can conclude that these schools do play a role in the retention of ethnic and religious identities of certain groups in Canada. So far, there is no research which explores how schools run by Canadian Reformed Christians retain the ethnic and religious identity of this group in Canada. This thesis aims to fill this gap.

2.2.Religion in a multicultural and pluralist Canadian society

2.2.1. Multiculturalism and religious pluralism

The term "Multiculturalism" is one of the complex concepts that do not have a strict or conventional definition and is interpreted differently in different fields of study in various parts of the world. Since Multiculturalism was adopted in Canada, Australia and some countries in Western Europe, it has been both widely applauded and harshly criticized by various groups of scholars. Multiculturalism is usually conceptualized in terms of "politics of recognition" (Taylor, 1994), "differentiated citizenship" (Kymlicka, 1995) or "the rights of ethno-cultural minorities" (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000). Multiculturalism means an official recognition of diversity on the policy level and/or adoption of a wide range of legal rights as well as "constitutional provisions for the accommodation of cultural differences" (Gozdecka et al., 2014, p. 53). As the scholars

explain, it may entail "providing funding for denominational schools, allowing cultural or religious dress codes and diets in public schools and workplaces, and the adaptation of specific regulations to exempt members of certain minority groups from requirements that are at odds with their culture" (p. 53). Others note that the concept of multiculturalism is too broad as it "has come to define both a society that is particularly diverse, usually because of immigration, and the policies necessary to manage such society. It thus embodies both a description of society and a prescription for dealing with it" (Malik, 2015, p. 21). Furthermore, as Sarah Song (2005) points out, some theorists of multiculturalism tend to see the cultures as "distinct wholes" while failing 'to capture a range of interactive dynamics" (p. 486); as a result, the culture' mainstream norms and practices are being accommodated which can reinforce gender and other inequalities.

The scholars studying multiculturalism emphasize that the latter in Western Europe differs from the one in the settler societies. In Europe, the multiculturalism intends to provide political accommodation to "all minority cultures defined first and foremost by reference to race, ethnicity or religion, and, additionally but more controversially, by reference to other group-defining characteristics such as nationality and aboriginality" (Meer & Modood, 2012, p. 181). There has been much controversy over multiculturalism policies in Western Europe after 9/11. Fleras (2014) points out that many European countries have experienced "a media-hyped moral panic over multiculturalism as the enemy of integration governance" (p. 355). Several Western European countries' political leaders, including of Great Britain, Germany and France, announced failure of multiculturalism because of the toleration of "inferior or incompatible values" (p. 355) held by some immigrant groups (Elver, 2012; Gilroy 2012; Hussain & Bagguley, 2012; Schiffer & Wagner, 2011). Multiculturalism as an approach is therefore criticized in Europe for "fostering social exclusion because of communal segregation, mutual incomprehension, immigrant

exclusion, and gender oppression by sacrificing women's rights in immigrant communities" (Fleras, p. 355). Muslim immigrants have become one of the main subjects of concern for a big part of the European population. A twofold argument has been used in Western European mass media: 1) "the death of multiculturalism discourse in the Dutch, German and British newspapers manifests an attempt to reinforce particular monoculturalism visions of a national identity through the sociocultural construction of the other, the Muslims"; 2) the death of multiculturalism discourse as well as stereotypes about Muslims vary from one national newspaper to another depending on "the rhetorical usages of national legacies" (Ossewaarde, 2014, p. 173). As a result, two trends are observed in Western Europe today. First, multiculturalism as "a governance framework for integrating immigrants" is being widely rejected (p. 355). Second, there is an attempt to rebrand multiculturalism to make it more inclusive and directed towards fostering a common identity. There are certain challenges with implementing the second point. The reason is that "[d]eeply essentialized notions of nation or culture still prevail in much of Europe, — resulting in societies that remain highly normative, assimilationist, and Eurocentric" (Fleras, 2009, p. 147). To provide an example, in the Netherlands, "emotions, feelings, norms and values, symbols and traditions (including religion) come to play a pivotal role in defining what can be expected of a Dutch citizen" (Duyvendak, 2011, p. 81). There, as in some other European counties, "exclusive boundaries for national belonging were once again stressed, by emphasizing the idea that the Dutch nation is defined by a common cultural heritage" (Boog, 2019, p. 1999).

In settler societies (including Canada, the United States, Australia and New Zealand), there is no room for a primordialist approach with its "authentic" ethnic groups (Foster, 2014, pp. 19-21), which is prevalent in Europe. For settler societies, where "immigration was integral to their founding and development as nations" (Freeman, 1995, p. 896), the historical memory and

"public's reaction to immigration and immigration policy" are much more positive than in European states (p. 896). Hence, as Foster points out, "genuine multiculturalism" is therefore "natural and organic" to Canada that is "undoubtedly pure social construction, realizing some dominant group's imaginary community" (p. 21).

Furthermore, there are certain differences in approach to multiculturalism between settler societies. Foster insists that in contrast to Canada with its remarkable genuine multiculturalism, Great Britain and Australia miss "some powerful sense of egalitarianism and that the society is under construction and that all hands have equal influence in fashioning what is in the works" (p. 36). Hence, both Great Britain and Australia expect that every newcomer assimilates into "an English nation" or "a special type of Australian" or British (p. 36). For Foster, multiculturalism and assimilation are incompatible (p. 33), while today in Europe, multiculturalism and integration are mutually exclusive (Fleras, 2014, p. 322). In Canada, Foster proclaims, multiculturalism is more than "ideology and theory"; it is "a way of being, an existence, that has to be the point of departure in any analysis of who we are as a people, what we want…" (p. 32). An idea of inclusive nation-building is promoted by Citizenship and Immigration Canada (renamed to Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada, IRCC, in 2015), which says that "Canadian multiculturalism is fundamental to our belief that all citizens are equal. Multiculturalism ensures that all citizens can keep their identities, can take pride in their ancestry, and have a sense of belonging" (2012, p. 1).

Critics of Canadian multiculturalism raise similar points to those expressed in European scholarship. It is argued that Canadian multiculturalism has become depoliticized and mainly celebrates cultural diversity. One of the most significant reasons for challenging multiculturalism is that it tends to portray society "as a horizontal space, in which there is no theoretical or analytical room for social relations of power and ruling" (Bannerji, 2000, p. 50); as a result, racism and

disadvantages experienced by visible minorities are being ignored. The discourse on diversity and ethnicity in Canada masks the discussion of race (Day, 2000, pp. 190-192) and avoids recognizing of "the critical intersection of institutional power and interpersonal forms of racism, demanding only tolerance at the interpersonal level of interaction" (Thobani, 2007, p. 160). Canadian scholar Sunera Thobani (2007) emphasizes that although multiculturalism has been popularly defined as opposite to historically long-standing assimilationist policies, "it has actually resulted in deeper assimilation of people of colour under white supervision" (p. 172). Himani Bannerji (2000) commented in the 1990s that in Canada, "whiteness extends into moral qualities of masculinity, possessive individualism and an ideology of capital and market" (p. 107). It corresponds with what Elke Winter (2015) points out that during the multiculturalism of the 21st century, Canada's Anglo-Saxon, White, Christian majority are painted in the media and government discourses as being able to "embrace diversity and tolerance" (p. 650), whereas certain ethnic cultures are being questioned. Visible minority groups still face serious social and economic challenges and disadvantages in Canada. Canadian novelist Neil Bissoondath, known as the author of *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada* (1994), where he compares Canadian policy of multiculturalism to cultural apartheid in South Africa, states that "[m]ulticulturalism is one of those policies through which guilt-ridden white liberals feel that they are expiating the political sins of their forefathers" (cited in Bergman, 1994, p. 34). Bissoondath (1994) insists that multiculturalism "has diminished all sense of Canadian values", creating a situation when the "ghetto is not an extreme of multiculturalism but its ideal — it encourages the wholesale retention of the past and aids in a hardening of hatreds" (p. 124). Sunera Thobani (2010) describes multicultural policies as an effective way to silence and even displace anti-racist discourse: "Multiculturalism has allowed for certain communities — people of colour — to be constructed

as cultural communities. Their culture is defined in very Orientalist and colonial ways — as static, they will always be that, they have always been that. And the culture has now become the only space from which people of colour can actually have participation in national political life; it's through this discourse of multiculturalism" (para.1). Thobani perceives multiculturalism as an instrument to maintain and uphold white supremacy that allows Canadians as "the nation to define itself as really bilingual and bicultural" (para. 5). Malik (2005) presents a concurring argument saying that while the perspectives of the proponents of multiculturalism (Charles Taylor, Will Kymlicka, Bhikhu Parekh, Tariq Modood, etc.) are rooted in the liberal Enlightenment tradition, they often become counter-Enlightenment and give "a distinctly illiberal sheen to the policies they advocate" (p. 367). For example, Malik says, the following uncomfortable questions should be asked to the advocates of multiculturalism and public accommodation: "Does this mean that schools should be forced to teach creationism because it is part of Christian fundamentalist culture? Or should public arrangements be adapted to reflect the belief of many cultures that homosexuality is a sin?" (p. 367). Another strong critical argument presented by Malik relates to the intention of multiculturalists to help the preservation of a variety of cultures, including those brought by recent immigrants. Concurring with Brian Barry who considers cultural inertia to be a tool to preserve traditions, Malik (2005) confronts a "modern, post-Enlightenment, phenomenon": "In the modern view, traditions are to be preserved not for pragmatic reasons but because such preservation is a social, political and moral good" (p. 369). To summarize, even pluralist societies promoting ethnic diversity within the public space "will never be entirely free from power relations and inequality as cultures, values, and other markers of 'ethnicity' do not exist independently from the collectivities that either promote or disqualify them" (Winter, 2011, p. 197).

Critics of Canadian multiculturalism are confronted by another group of scholars (Adams, 2007; Kymlicka, 2010; Reitz, 2009, etc.) that point out to those advantages of the multiculturalism implementation which are ignored by the critics. Foster (2014) points out that anti-multiculturalism criticism takes into consideration only one aspect of multiculturalism that is a "state formation" while blaming it for "the creation of ethnic ghettoes and the fragmenting of the nation-state" (p. 26). What the critics ignore is "the liberal spirit of multiculturalism that envisages a day of full liberty and equality, when in the same state individuals and minority groups will be full citizens, as free and as powerful as the majorities" (p. 26). Also, critics of multiculturalism in Canada are suggested to take closer attention to the several stages it has gone through: from ethnicity multiculturalism in the 1970s that sought "to eliminate discriminations anchored in ethnocultural prejudices" and to improve immigrants' integration while using their ethnicity differences; to equity multiculturalism in the 1980s, which intended to respond to existing racialization and lack of institutional inclusiveness (Fleras, 2014, pp. 331-332); to civic multiculturalism in the 1990s which focus was on "fostering a sense of belonging, an active involvement in community life and society" (Fleras, p. 333), and on "break[ing] down the ghettoization of multiculturalism" (Fry, 1997, p. 1); and to integrative multiculturalism from the mid-2000s that emerged as a response to global security concerns and aimed to build an "intercultural/interfaith understanding, … pride in Canadian history and society, respect for core democratic values, and equal opportunities for all Canadians through the removal of discriminatory obstacles" (Fleras, pp. 333-334). Fleras emphasizes that in comparison to the European experience, Canada has demonstrated significant results of the successful integration of immigrants through the multicultural policy framework. Thus, a growing number of newcomers and n-generations of immigrants that follow the latter policy choose to adopt Canadian identity, participate in Canadian institutions, learn the official

language(s), and forge inter-ethnic friendships (Fleras, p. 355; see also Berry, 2011; Kymlicka, 2010; Wright & Bloemraad, 2012). Kymlicka considers that multiculturalism urges the institutional integration of newcomers while avoiding separatism and minority nationalism. He also says that accommodations of ethnic minorities "encourage, pressure, even legally force immigrants to take steps towards integrating into society" (Kymlicka, 2001, p. 155). The problem identified by scholars working in the postcolonial framework is that a Canadian societal culture, in which immigrant groups are expected to integrate, is "derived from the country's colonial legacy and is therefore fundamentally unjust, and that it is equally unjust to expect immigrant groups to integrate into such a culture" (Lee, 2013, p. 24).

At the same time, one of the most arduous problems with living in a multicultural liberal democracy is how to negotiate "the contradictions of liberalism, with its individualism, and democracy, with its collective notions of majorities, common good, the sacrifice of individual selves, and the primacy of "we the people" in everything" (Foster, 2014, p. 254). Foster underlines that one of the main goals is to maintain Canada as a united country with "a single self-consciousness" (p. 256). But different societies coexist in a multicultural Canada (Foster, p. 256), and Canadians seem to be better at "talking the walk" than "walking the talk" (Bloemraad, 2011, p. 1132). Another contradiction is the coexistence of an official proclamation of "no official religion of the public sphere" and, at the same time, the continued importance of Judaeo-Christian precepts with "special statuses for Christmas, Easter…", etc. (Foster, p. 247). The Dutch Reformed community is actively involved in the discussion of this contradiction while claiming the significance of respecting the Judaeo-Christian heritage of Canada (Van Dam, 2012).

Furthermore, the relevance of the principle and policy of multiculturalism is being questioned by some scholars. For example, Steven Vertovec (2006) introduces the concept of

superdiversity to describe the current flows of immigrants who could be defined as "multiple-origin, transnationally connected, socio-economically differentiated and legally stratified" (p. 1). For this reason, conventional multiculturalism is "inadequate and often inappropriate" for dealing with diversified migrant groups because of being narrowly ethnicity-focused (Vertovec, 2006, p. 17).

To conclude, while analyzing the Dutch Christian immigrant community, this thesis addresses various issues related to multiculturalism, including the integration of the studied community and its perception of other newcomers of different ethnic and cultural backgrounds. Moreover, an interview guide contained several questions related to multiculturalism; and chapter 6 presents the perspectives of the Canadian Reformed community on new immigrants and how the concepts of religious pluralism and integration are introduced in Canadian Reformed schools.

2.2.2. Deep equality or religious accommodation?

Numerous studies devoted to multiculturalism emphasize that this policy has endeavoured to create "a mosaic of diverse cultures and ethnicities, a vibrant society ruled by liberal principles of freedom and equality" (Kymlicka, 2008, p. 13) and to facilitate "conditional inclusion of ethnically diverse immigrants (others) into … Canadian 'we'" (Winter, 2011, p. 92). Despite that multiculturalism, adopted as an official policy, "affirmed the value and dignity of all Canadian citizens regardless of their racial or ethnic origins, their language, or their religious affiliation" (Canadian Heritage, 1971, quoted in Sen, 2006, para.1), there is still "much uncertainty about the role of religion within the multiculturalism policy" (Kymlicka, 2008, p. 21).

Some scholars see a confrontation between multiculturalism and religion. For instance, for French sociologist Michel Wieviorka, "the question of religion involves primarily another

principle [than that implied in multiculturalism], namely the principle of secularism [laïcité]" (cited in Winter, 2014, p. 189). In contrast to France that adopted laïcité, in Canada, there is an assumption that there could be some space for religion in public space. This approach has remained controversial and been used differently in various provinces and applied differently depending on which religious group is being dealt with. The place of religion in public space will be discussed in detail in the next sub-section.

To achieve equality and "limit any infringement of the principle of equality" (Koussens, 2009, p. 205) in Canadian multicultural society, the principle of reasonable accommodation has been put into regular practice. Many scholars favour this principle because, in their opinion, it treats individuals in a differential manner in order to consider particular needs of ethnic and religious minorities and provide substantive equality (Jézéquel, 2006; Koussens, 2009; Kymlicka, 1998; Woehrling, 1998). Although the concept of reasonable accommodation had existed since the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms was adopted (1982), it came to light in 2008, when Gerard Bouchard and Charles Taylor, Co-Chairs of the Consultation Commission on Accommodation Practices Related to Cultural Differences in Quebec, released their report. This Commission "was set up by the Quebec government in response to public discontent concerning «reasonable accommodation» of religious and cultural practices" (Tremblay, 2009, para.1). A reasonable accommodation is defined as "a legal notion that stem from jurisprudence in the realm of labour and indicates a form of relaxation aimed at combating discrimination caused by the strict application of a norm, which, in certain of its effects, infringe on citizen's right to equality" (Bouchard & Taylor, 2008, p. 24).

At the same time, some scholars point out "the illusion of state neutrality" (Kymlicka, 1999) because "institutions often make decisions that can be advantageous for one group and cause

disadvantage for particular groups" (Agboola, 2012, para. 24). For example, states can "make decisions that implicitly titled towards the needs, interests and identities of the majority group which creates a range of burdens, barriers, stigmatizations, and exclusions for members of minority groups" (Kymlicka & Norman, 2000, p. 4). Therefore, a political philosopher Will Kymlicka (1995) emphasizes that "[j]ustice between groups requires that members of different groups are accorded different rights" (p. 47). The reason for this is that individuals cannot be socially equal unless their ethnic or cultural groups gain public affirmation and recognition (Young, 1990, p. 174). There are scholars who suggest changing the language of the approach to equality. They argue that tolerance and accommodation frameworks on the negotiation of religious difference create a hierarchical positioning of 'us' and 'them' (Beaman, 2012*a*), and "maintain a boundary of *otherness*" (Beaman, 2013, p. 121). Therefore, since social norms are "determined by more powerful groups in the society, with manageable concessions being made to those who are "different", the accommodation discourse will bring benefits to more powerful groups serving primarily "as a means of limiting how much difference "the powerful and the majority" must absorb" (Day & Brodsky, 1996, p. 435; see also Jakobsen & Pellegrini, 2004, p. 14; Wong, 2011).

While some researchers suggest rethinking the reasonable accommodation framework, Lori Beaman (2012a) argues that it would be better to move away from the concepts of "tolerance" and "accommodation" towards "deep equality". The latter category implies that a situation in which the accommodating group decides "who is "worthy" to receive accommodation and whether their beliefs are sincere or important enough to receive consideration" (Beaman, 2012a, para. 9) should be abandoned. Moreover, Beaman (2014) emphasizes that the "deep equality" model is not "a legal policy or social prescription"; it is "a process, enacted and owned by so-called ordinary people in everyday life" (p. 96). Deep equality indicates recognition of "the values of caring,

neighbourliness and shared humanity" (p. 98) within day-to-day interaction. Therefore, a day-to-day life can give an "insight into deep equality", because "people negotiate difference quite successfully on a daily basis" (Beaman, 2012a, para.10). The implementation of this principle of "deep equality" is clearly explained by Mia Lövheim and Mikael Stenmark (2020):

> This concept aims to capture a process in which religious difference is confronted, lived with, and negotiated in everyday life and which is characterized by agonistic respect and recognition of similarity rather than hostility and polarization. In order this ideal to be realized, [Beaman argues], scholars as well politicians … have to lean into, rather than disregard, the way people of different worldviews interact in various settings of day-to-day life. (p. 9)

Cecil Foster (2014) agrees that reasonable accommodation provokes contradictions because it is the dominant groups that usually propose and decide regarding the accommodations. Foster calls them "'reasonable' limits on the aspirations and achievements of the cultural outsiders, including newcomers and other people who are just *different*" (p. 11). While promoting "genuine multiculturalism", Cecil Foster argues that living in a society that is in a constant change and that has fluid and dynamic social orders is normal. Therefore, genuine multiculturalism means living "in the shadows of social death" because of the permanent changes of social structures, culture and norms (p. 13). Genuine multiculturalism "checks the tyranny in us as the collective, dominant power that might claim authority to force accommodation on strangers for any number of reasons: length of residence or superiority of language, sexuality, or religion – whatever forms of racialization and stratification that, by creating social hierarchies, can reasonably support superior claims to rights and entitlements of power over those it categorizes as different" (p. 12).

A clash between different minority groups' claims poses a challenge to realize "deep equality" in practice. For instance, the research conducted by Pamela Dickey Young (2015) highlights the conflict between religious schools' claims and legislation on non-discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Young states that the Alberta Government that allows parents to

withdraw their children from the classroom instruction on the "subject matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion, human sexuality or sexual orientation" (Alberta Human Rights Act) seems to consider only religious diversity to be good, but not sexual diversity. Chai R. Feldblum (2006) concurs that the government should not tolerate an exemption of religious groups from anti-discrimination laws, otherwise, it may give "a deep, intense and tangible hurt" to LGBTTQ2+ people (p. 119). An alternative view is expressed by Andrew Koppelmant (2006), who believes that "Feldblum's aspiration to create a world in which gay people need never fear insult" (p. 126) can only be realized if conservative Christians are required to be silent. But this approach is described by him as unacceptable: "This is the kind of sanction that is likely to drive dissenters into the closet. And, as gay people know so well, the closet is not a healthy place to be" (p. 146). As a result, he concludes, "the law, and more generally those wielding power in our society, should try to contain the tension between the two views, rather than trying to silence either" (p. 143). Young also reminds that "deep equality" means that a wide variety of voices should be heard and considered. Therefore, religious groups should be ready "to critique their own hegemonies" (2015, p. 62); otherwise, "one's own normative assumptions limit the humanity of others" (p. 62). Recent studies on Trinity Western University, TWU, (Beaman, 2005; Bramadat, 2016; Buckingham, 2012) and a variety of court decisions on this University's case about the right of the Trinity Western graduates to be accepted in the Law Societies and the TWU's right to gain accreditation for a new law school across Canadian provinces demonstrate a serious challenge to solve the conflict between the legislation on religious freedom and non-discrimination against LGBTTQ2+ people. The same problem is being faced by faith-based schools, including when they teach sexual health education (Callaghan, 2012; McDonough, 2012; Taylor & Peter, 2011). After the Supreme Court of Canada had denied accreditation of a law school "based on TWU's requirement that

students follow a strict code of conduct including abstinence from sex outside of heterosexual marriage" (Zimonjic, 2018, para.3), Andrew Bennett (at that time director of the religious freedom institute at the Christian-based think tank Cardus) said: "This is not a question of religious identity, it's not a question of sexual identity. It's a question of fundamental freedoms, and also about the freedom to live your faith publicly" (cited in Harris, 2018, para.23).

To conclude, a clash of different groups' interests in the Canadian liberal democratic space raises the question of whether and how religious groups may express their opinions in public discourse. While some theologians do not find space for religious groups within a pluralistic system, others support a diverse and multi-voice society. Thus, Alister McGrath (1992) asserts that "the pluralist agenda forces its advocates to adopt heretical views of Christ in order to meet its needs" (p. 488): for instance, to abandon the doctrines of incarnation and Trinity. Therefore, McGrath concludes, pluralism "discourages us from asking about truth" because "political correctness suggests that the idea of truth can approach intellectual fascism on account of its authoritarian overtones" (p. 499). For McGrath, pluralism and relativism are inevitably connected. That is why he refers to American philosopher Allan Bloom (1987) who claims that "the true believer is the real danger": they would think that they are "right at all": "openness — and the relativism that makes it the only plausible stance in the face of various claims to truth and the various ways of life and kinds of human beings — is the great insight of our times" (pp. 25-26). The same warnings were made by Reformed theologian Karl Barth who shared an idea of exclusivist pluralism: "If the Yes does not in some way contain No, it will not be the Yes of a confession. … If we have not the confidence to say *damnamus* [what we refuse], then we might as well omit the *credimus* [what we believe]" (1936, pp. 603, 631). It is supported by the statement

that Christian faithfulness demands "both affirmation of truth and denial of untruth" (Small, 2005, p. 11).

At the same time, there are scholars and theologians who make a clear distinction between pluralism and relativism: while "relativism assumes a stance of openness", "pluralism assumes both openness *and* commitment" (Eck, 2014, p. 193). They (Chaplin, 2012; Lovin, 2012) oppose to those who consider that political discourse should be opened only for the "public reason" model. For instance, John Rawls states that a person who relies on religious reasons to justify a law may not appeal solely to these reasons. Chaplin (2012) argues that a statement that "religious reasons cannot stand alone" seems to be "exclusive and discriminatory" (p. 122). He says that religious citizens "may not be accused of lacking civic virtue if their political discourse includes reasons which are not recognizable as public reasons by other citizens" (p. 123). The only reason to restrain religious people on the type of political speech should be based not on *religious* reasons but on *non-political* reasons. The latter are the reasons that are "tangential to or incompatible with the very structural imperatives of the political community" (p. 123).

As the concept of multiculturalism, "pluralism" is also a socially constructed category whose meaning ranges from one society to another, depending on the historical context and existing policies and laws. Religious pluralism is, therefore, "not directly concerned with religion 'as such' but is focused on the political, cultural and social forces that push and pull the public expression of religions in various directions (Beckford, 2014, p. 24). To maintain religious pluralism, accommodation is needed. Benjamin Berger explains one of the reasons why the debate about the rights of religious communities in public space continues and sometimes escalates. Thus, while "[a]t the level of political and legal rhetoric" Canada seems to commit to "multiculturalism and the protection of plural cultural forms" (Berger, 2007, p. 279), in practice, when "pushed

through the filter of Canadian constitutional law", religion becomes "quintessentially private" (p. 301).

The conceptual framework of this thesis, which analyzes a traditional Christian community, will consider the studies on Christian pluralism, especially since the latter concept is important for Dutch Reformed theology. Referring to Catholic *subsidiarity* and neo-Calvinist (Reformed) *Sphere Sovereignty* theories, Jonathan Chaplin promotes a version of normative pluralism called "Christian communitarian pluralism". The latter concept echoes "procedural pluralism" (Williams, 2012), "principled pluralism" (Skillen, 1994), and "chartered pluralism" (Guinness, 1993). All these concepts imply that "the role of the state in a religiously diverse society is to maintain a public square equally open to contributions from many faiths rather than overtly to prefer or privilege any one of them, even Christianity" (Chaplin, 2008, p. 1). Otherwise, if religious groups do not have a right to be heard as representatives of their faith during the legislative process, then exclusivist secularism is being promoted that is "illiberal towards religious citizens and potentially damaging to liberal democracy," comments Chaplin (2009, p. 35).

Studies of the Dutch Reformed theology, and Kuyperian thought in particular, show the significance of "pluriformity" (Bratt, 2013; Mouw, 2012) for many post-war Dutch Reformed communities in Canada. A leader of the neo-Calvinist movement in the Netherlands Abraham Kuyper endorsed "pluralism under secularization but not secularism" (Bratt, 2013, p. 70). This approach means the maintenance of the plurality of viewpoints and cooperation between Christians and non-Christians in a pluralistic society. Kuyper was convinced that multiformity is an undeniable mark of a fresh and vigorous life (Mouw, 2012). Multiformity can be applied to any institution, including church and school.

2.2.3. Religion in the Public Space

The place of religion in education reflects some of the wider debates about religion and society. The two drastically opposite positions on the place of religious voices in public discourse can be termed "exclusive" and "inclusive", in the words of Kent Greenawalt (2001, pp. 401-422). The former claims that the government should stay neutral towards religion and encourage both citizens and legislators to adhere to the principle of secularism. Although religious grounds can be considered, the "final resolution to adopt a policy should be fully warranted by secular considerations and set forth as so justified" (Audi, 1990, p. 396). The "inclusive" position insists that exclusion of religious voices from public space is unfair towards religious members of the population and runs against the basic principles of a pluralistic democracy (Audi & Wolterstorff, 1997; Chaplin, 2012; Perry, 1988).

The current philosophical and sociological literature offers a broad spectrum of intermediate approaches claiming that public religious arguments should be accepted but with various constraints. There are two main median philosophical positions on the role of religion in public life: liberal and communitarian. The first one is closely associated with John Rawls. Relying on the notion of *public reason*[i], Rawls (1997) supports religious arguments to be presented in the public discussion if they are accompanied by rational and reasonable public arguments. The communitarian approach criticizes the liberal tradition for its limitations imposed on religion: government's proclaimed neutrality "confine[s] religion to private life and resist[s] a public role" (Sandel, 1993, p. 483). Jürgen Habermas (2005) straddles both liberal and communitarian approaches to take a mediating position. In contrast to Rawls, he refers to the "necessity of an institutional translational proviso as a way of immunizing the neutral and secular character of the state institutions by translating religious contributions into neutral/secular reasons before they make it to the level of the state's institutions and formal politics" (Arfi, 2015, p. 490).

The importance of having a voice in public space could be analyzed in the framework of *political recognition* developed by Charles Taylor. This concept asserts that "our identity is partly shaped by recognition or its absence, often by the misrecognition of others" (1994, p. 25). Hence, "nonrecognition or misrecognition can inflict harm, can be a form of oppression" (p. 25). Some members of religious minority groups admit that they feel "the only way their children can enter the public school system is by leaving their religious identity at the door" (Sweet, 1996, p. 12). In other words, "they are not recognized for who they are" (p. 12). This is one of the reasons why religious people prefer faith-based schools for their children. Laura Beth Bugg (2010) argues that religious freedom is restricted if the full exercise of religious practice is limited (p. 2).

To summarize, this brief synthesis of philosophical approaches to religious arguments in public discussions shows that the most balanced approach is presented by theorists adhering to an intermediate position. This fits with the observation that in most Western democracies, and in Canada in particular, religious parents frequently and legitimately participate in public discussions about faith-based schooling, and ethno-religious institutions have a rightful, but limited and contested place in a pluralistic society.

The starkest version of this debate is between secularism and its opponents, a near-existential dialogue that still permeates much of contemporary social life. Many of the most important public policy debates today are at the intersection of two positions: how is it possible to strike a balance between inevitably secular social processes and the enduring significance of religion? That is precisely how the debate about ethno-religious education usually unfolds. There are two polar views on religious schools. Some scholars consider that faith-based schools do not socialize students to the values which are necessary for living in a pluralistic society and induce social division among students and the adults they later become (Atkins, 2001; Callan, 2009;

Gutmann, 1999; Kymlicka, 2002). Some nuances should be considered though because the extent to which religious schools "promote inclusion and foster diversity depends on several factors, including what kind of religion the schools present and how the schools understand their educational and cultural responsibilities in relation to the wider society and the state" (Maddox, 2011, p. 170). Other scholars (Coons & Sugarman, 1999; Galston, 1995) counter that such schools "strengthen democracy and diversity by affording greater freedom of speech to parents and by encouraging a greater variety of political ideas and communities" (Godwin et al., 2004, pp. 1097-1098). But neither position, in their mainstream versions, would deny that religion has some role to play in education or conversely claim that all education should be based on Scripture. It is also equally true that education is one of the most problematic environments in which to strike the elusive secular/religious balance.

The political engagement of religious groups is a continuation of the discussion on which argument, solely secular or religiously informed, should be allowed in the political realm. Participation in political life by religious groups is often considered as a significant and visible indicator of their successful integration (especially if it relates to immigrant groups) into society. The next sub-section will provide a detailed analysis of immigrants' integration.

2.2.4. Feeling of belonging. Integration. Political and civic engagement

This thesis' theoretical framework heavily relies on Leo Driedger's *Conformity-Pluralist Conceptual Model* (*Appendix A*). It combines "a conformity-pluralism continuum with a voluntary-involuntary continuum" (Driedger, 2003, p. 31) and presents the ways immigrants accommodate in Canada. Besides *Cell A* (Melting Pot), *Cell B* (Ideal Anglo-Conformity), *Cell C* (Modified Assimilation), *Cell D* (Involuntary Pluralism), the model contains *Cell E* (Voluntary Pluralism), in which individuals and groups voluntarily seek "to remain separate from industrial

amalgamation into the national melting pot" (p. 34). The latter includes recent first-generation immigrants, French population that is highly concentrated in Quebec, religious minorities, among which are the Jews and Dutch Calvinists. Like other researchers of postwar Dutch Reformed immigrants (Van Dijk, 2001; Schryer, 1998), Driedger states that these individuals pursuing Voluntary Pluralism have separated "their economic and social lives" (2003, p. 39). They have tried to preserve their culture and ethnic institutions, and, at the same time, they have been competing well economically.

In this thesis, I consider the institutional completeness theory coined by Raymond Breton (1964). It is defined as a degree to which an "ethnic community could perform all the services required by its members" (Breton, 1964, p. 194). At the same time, I take into consideration the critique of Breton's statement that this degree depends on "the number of churches, welfare organizations, newspapers, and periodicals in each ethnic community" (p. 195) for being "enumerative" and ignoring some important characteristics of ethnic institutions (Pazstor, 2010; Roberts & Boldt, 1979;). For example, Breton "totally omits ethnic schools and voluntary associations" (Pazstor, 2010, p. 208).

The theoretical framework of this thesis refers to the institutional completeness theory being complemented by Lijphart's theory on the concept of pillarization. While taking into consideration critical remarks made by Van Schendelen (1983) and the explanations of the roots of depillarization developed by Marcel Maussen (2013), I use the pillarization theory for several reasons. It gives a key to a better understanding of the Dutch socio-political context of the first part of the 20th century when the predominant majority of Dutch immigrants came to Canada. Furthermore, the elements of pillarization in the Dutch Reformed community still serve themselves. Frans Schryer (1998) demonstrates that the post-war Dutch Reformed community

adhered to the idea of pillarization while they founded parallel institutions in Canada; Joanne Van Dijk (2004) emphasizes that Calvinists have had higher levels of institutional completeness – that is why, in contrast to Dutch Catholics, Dutch Reformed Christians have a wide net of segregated housing for old people. Hence, the institutional completeness of the Dutch Reformed immigrant group has been recognized in many studies: since their mass migration to Canada after World War II, "they have established four independent educational systems with over one hundred elementary and secondary schools, augmented by undergraduate and graduate institutions. They have founded health care facilities, newspapers, a former's association, a businessman's organization, a labour union and in recent years, a federal political party" (Fallon, 2000, p. 2). The time of Dutch emigration explains a significant difference between Dutch immigrants in the USA and Canada and the tendency of the latter to be "much more socially divided into separate philosophical/religious social groups" (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 52):

> Demographically, the Dutch in Canada largely immigrated following the Second World War leaving a very different Netherlands than most of the Dutch in the United States who had left in the nineteenth century and earlier twentieth century. The Netherlands the Canadian contingent left was a pillarised society that few of the nineteenth and early twentieth century immigrants could fully understand. This separated society created different ideas about how immigrant institutions should interact with the broader society. (Zwart, 2010, p. 142)

Nowadays, integration often serves as a thermometer of a successful society and a coherent settlement of immigrant groups. Malik raises a fair rhetorical question: "But what is it to be fully integrated?" (2005, p. 370). Adaptation of immigrants in Canada, as well as in the predominant part of Western Europe, is preferably seen by using the term "integration" rather than "assimilation". While the former permits immigrants to maintain their cultural identity, "assimilation is seen by many as entailing a loss of such identity" (Kivisto, 2014, p. 38). As mentioned above, since the multiculturalism policy was adopted in Canada, it has gone through some adjustments. One of them is related to the integration mechanisms. The principle of

inclusivity that has been promoted makes "immigrant diversities safe from society yet safe for society" (Fleras, 2015, p. 351). Referring to Fish (1997), Fleras explains that too much difference "may fatally destabilize integration governance", while too much unity can "create a stiffing one-size-fits-all leviathan" (p. 350). Instead of trying to fit every immigrant into the existing system, inclusivity model aims to modify the system itself "to ensure that no one is excluded" (p. 352).

Numerous sociological studies emphasize that cultural differences affect immigrants' incorporation into new society. Berry's theory of acculturation (1997) assumes that immigrant groups whose linguistic and religious backgrounds are of significant distance from those of the natives are likely to experience "the need for greater culture shedding and culture learning, and perhaps large differences trigger negative intergroup attitudes, and induce greater culture conflict leading to poorer adaptation" (p. 23). Transnationalism theory (Vertovec, 1999) posits that immigrants, "who maintain more ties with and identify more with their communities of origin, will also retain the normative outlook characteristic of these origins and thus, all other things equal, remain the most distinct from the mainstream" (Wimmer & Soehl, 2014, p. 147). However, a recent study (Wimmer, 2013) concludes that cultural difference is a consequence rather than a cause of adaptation processes: "legally disadvantaged or otherwise excluded immigrants start to diverge from the mainstream," "independent of the cultural distance between the country of origin and settlement or the dynamics of transnationalism" (p. 148). They do this through one of the following mechanisms: 1) "Members of excluded groups proceed more slowly on the path of acculturation because they are less inclined to invest in assimilative behavior, given that they will receive fewer returns"; 2) "disadvantaged immigrants and their children may actively oppose the host society's values and norms and develop a new, oppositional culture that selectively inverts the values held dear by the natives" (p. 148). New immigrants might experience blocked

acculturation in the form of "peer pressure from parents, siblings, extended family, and the community at large" (p. 177).

The feeling of belonging to a new homeland may correlate with the involvement in the social and/or political life of the country of destination. Interest in and level of involvement might depend on the historical and social contexts. For example, 9/11 has seriously influenced Canadian Muslims' involvement in Canadian politics. Hamdani Hussein and his colleagues (2008) argue that "until the early 1990s, the Muslim immigrant community in Canada played a marginal role in society and politics" (para. 1), being more interested in the affairs of their 'home countries'. Many scholars indicate that September 11th, 2001, subsequent events (for example, the 2004 invasion of Iraq), and "an atmosphere in which Muslims felt harassed and under suspicion" (para. 5) have brought this diverse group "to the forefront of national and international concern" (para. 3).

Even though Church and State are separated formally or informally in most Western countries, including Canada, Christian groups have been interested in and involved in politics on a variety of levels; some of them are running political parties, lobbying, voting or engaging in interest groups. This thesis focuses on a traditional, or evangelical branch of Protestantism (not mainline); therefore, research completed on the evangelical engagement with politics in Europe, the USA and Canada are of my interest. It is important to distinguish evangelical Christianity, which is in the focus of this thesis, from social conservatism and the 'Christian Right'. Jonathan Malloy (2011) explains that evangelical Christians are not always on the political right, and Canadian "evangelicals are less right-wing on economic issues than their American counterparts" (p. 332). Also, "issues of sexuality and reproduction" are often on their priority (p. 332).

Although Protestantism is an important cultural characteristic of Canadian society, the evangelical movement in Canada is far less active politically in comparison to the United States.

There are several reasons for this. First, statistics show that about 10–12% of Canadians are evangelical Christians while there are 25–33% of them in the USA (Hoover et al., 2002). Second, based on various comparative studies (Noll, 1997; Rawlyk, 1996; Reimer, 2003), Jonathan Malloy (2011) summarizes that "American nationalism and religion are closely intertwined, at times in an almost messianic sense of the city on the hill or a Calvinist sense of destiny, with phenomena like the civil rights movement inspired and driven considerably by religion" (p. 321). To clarify this, "American Christianity, as well as the other US-based religious communities that have adopted its institutional forms, have been dominated historically by the free-church model" (Sullivan & Beaman, 2013, p. 3); and there is therefore "little history of formal institution-to-institution, church-state cooperation of the British, European or even of the Canadian, kind" (p. 4). Third, American "relatively open texture of the sites for political action" (Bruce, 1998, p. 164) gives a greater opportunity to evangelical groups to pursue their interests. One of the conclusions of the comparative analysis of American and Canadian Evangelical Christian engagement in politics seems to be significant for this thesis. It posits that Canadian evangelism limits its activism to the "areas of sexuality and reproductive rights" (Malloy, 2011, p. 322). At the same time, recent studies show that Canadian evangelism has changed since the 2000s. For example, there has been "a growth of evangelical and truly 'Christian Right' pressure groups" in Canada (Malloy, p. 328) that is relevant for our study of the Reformed political action groups that gained significant development during the 21st century. Also, "the general upheaval of the Canadian party system in the 1990s allowed the growth of more evangelically influenced parties" (Malloy, p. 332), including the temporary establishment of the Reform Party and the Canadian Alliance Party.

There are numerous philosophical debates on proper involvement of religious groups into politics. Kent Greenawalt (1994) argues that "controversy begins when preaching goes beyond

morality to cover specific political conclusions" while, as he admits, "no sharp line divides morality from politics" (p. 155). Although Greenawalt identifies a church's recommendation to vote for a particular candidate or party as morally unacceptable (p. 155), the philosopher finds it trickier to answer whether the church could be allowed to lobby and participate in the political process. On the one hand, it can be perceived as "an aspect of living out the implications of one's responsibilities to other members of society" and distracting from "more central aspects of religious practice" (Greenawalt, p. 157). The political realm is not the field of expertise of religious institutions. Their political engagement may, therefore, make "political life harsher and more divisive" (p. 158). On the other hand, an independent political theory presents two arguments in favour of church's involvement. First, churches "should not be regarded as different from other nongovernmental organizations, and the legislative process is now replete with lobbying by such groups" (p. 157). Second, religious organizations usually take seriously public welfare; hence, they might serve as "a healthy corrective to self-interested pleadings" (p. 158).

Whether church literally or ideologically supports particular political stances, studies on Canadian elections show that religious affiliation and level of religiosity correlate with partisanship. The Reform Party's adherents are more likely to score high on indicators of Christian orthodoxy, followed by Conservatives, while "NDP, BQ, and Liberal attachments are negatively influenced by orthodox Christian belief" (Guth & Fraser, 2001, p. 55). A study released two decades later is consistent with that conclusion: those "who think religion is very important in their lives" tend "to vote more Conservative", and those for whom religion is not important often vote for NDP (Wilkins-Laflamme, 2016, p. 513). Thus, Wilkins-Laflamme summarizes that the prominent right-left split according to the level of religiosity makes "the Canadian political context closer to those of other Western democracies, including the US, where this religiosity cleavage has

also been found to be important in recent years (p. 513; see also: Beard et al., 2013; Bruce, 2003; Hunter, 1991; Layman, 2001; O'Neill, 2001; Raymond, 2011; Van der Brug et al., 2009). The studies that are significant for this thesis consider sociological and geographical contexts as important factors for analyzing the link between religious belonging and vote choice (Bélanger & Eagles, 2006; Blais, 2005; Johnston, 1985; Irvine, 1974; Irvine and Gold, 1980; Pammett, 1991). For example, "Catholics continued to be more likely to vote Liberal in the 1980s, 1990s and early 2000s, especially in areas where there are more Catholics, contexts in which their Liberal support is reinforced by others in their surrounding networks" (Wilkins-Laflamme, p. 502). Hence, "individuals of certain religious groups continue to be more likely to support certain parties which were prominent during their social and political upbringing" (p. 502).

Because my research examines the political engagement of the Canadian Reformed schools' graduates, the studies exploring religious groups' perspectives on participation in politics are of my interest. These are a few controversial questions related to this topic. First, it is unclear whether generalizations regarding religious communities' voice in political discourse apply to all religious groups. A finding that Christian schools' graduates are "less likely than their government school peers to be politically informed, that they may not be thinking through political issues as deeply as the government school graduates and perhaps are more superficially involved politically" (Pennings et al., 2012, p. 34) raises a question about whether it applies to graduates of all Christian schools. Second, despite the claims that Canadian Christian groups are not aligned with political parties (Grzymala-Busse, 2015; Stackhouse, 2000), some studies (McKeen, 2015) demonstrate that the Dutch Reformed community has close ties to the Christian Heritage Party (CHP).

One of the most important concepts for my analysis of Dutch Calvinists' participation in socio-political life is "common grace" (in comparison with special, or redemptive grace). It was of great importance for Abraham Kuyper and means that God reveals everywhere (Kuyper, 2009, p. 88). Through his understanding of "common grace", Kuyper saw the importance for his political party to cooperate with those politicians with whom they shared similar principles (with the General League of Roman Catholic Caucuses, for example). Historian James Bratt (1998) points out that "common grace was thus a theology of public responsibility, of Christians' shared humanity with the rest of the world" (p. 165). It was also, by the words of Romein, "the valve through which Kuyper pumped fresh air into his people" (Romein, 1971, p. 754). It means that Abraham Kuyper developed a clear understanding of "common good". Hence, "his policies were not for the exclusive benefit of the Calvinists, who were just one narrow segment of the population. Kuyper worked for the good of the nation, and he did so from a very clear theological conviction" (Himes, 2013, p. 16). To conclude, for Christians, "common good" means an effort to preserve Christian identity and, at the same time, to "respect and care for all others" (Pazmino, 2008, p. 269). A refusal of isolation and an endeavour to be active participants of socio-political life are supported by Reformed theology (Zylstra, 1997). While promoting an idea of government funding for any religious schools (not only Calvinist), Kuyper was also consistent with the principle of the common good and equal rights to all religious groups in the public space.

2.3. Faith-based schools: the right to exist

2.3.1. The (in)ability of religious schools to form responsible citizens

A faith-based school is defined as a school, which publicly self-identifies as "religious, openly affiliate[s] with a religious group, or [is] run by, or exclusively serve[s], a religious group or society" (Hiemstra & Brink, 2006, p. 1158). Although today "there is no single paradigm or

theory that dominates" in the sociology of education (Saha, 2008, p. 304), the predominant majority of sociologists would recognize the social significance of education and that school is an important tool of socialization (students "develop a sense of self and acquire the knowledge, skills, values, norms, and dispositions required to fulfill social roles" there (Barakett & Cleghorn, 2008, p. 112)). However, there is an ongoing debate about whether religious schools are able "to deliver an education that achieves the civic educational goals of a liberal democratic state," or, in other words, "to make good citizens" (MacMullen, 2007, p. 29). There is a serious concern about whether religious schools foster the central virtues of good liberal democratic citizens, which are "toleration, mutual respect, and a commitment to reciprocity" (MacMullen, p. 18). Some scholars have extreme views and claim that faith-based schools "serve only to promote prejudice, confusion, and division", and "can be deeply damaging, and even lethally divisive" (Dawkins, 2001, p. 17). Most researchers, though, identify both positive and negative outcomes of studying in religious schools.

Some consider that religious schools cannot educate their students as responsible and tolerant citizens because of the absence of an atmosphere of ethnic, religious, and cultural diversity in the class. Therefore, these scholars share John Dewey's adherence to a democratic model of schooling (1987), which brings children from various religious and cultural backgrounds together (Kymlicka, 2001; Pring, 2007; Sweet, 1996; Watson, 2013) and teaches them the moral value of civility not just talking about it, "but also by insisting that students sit beside students of different races and religions, and cooperate with them" (Kymlicka, 2002, p. 308). Furthermore, there are serious concerns regarding the ability of religious schools to provide students with adequate sexual health education. On the one hand, a liberal approach to sex education is unacceptable by some religious schools because of the presentation of certain behaviours as normal, which some religious

groups consider being sinful (Halstead, 1997, p. 319). On the other hand, it is doubtful that a refusal to provide students with sex education will protect them from contact with non-religious, liberal and secular attitudes towards sex (Halstead, 1997). Teaching of science, including evolution and sexual relations, is another reason for concern (Maddox, 2011, p. 180). Therefore, a lack of sex-ed in some faith-based schools and limitations put on the exposure to certain topics "may be harmful to the health of the student" or to "the academic potential of the student" (Mintz, 2013, p. 237). Facing contradictions between religious and biological approaches to the creation of Earth and human beings, students are challenged by "le chaos psychologique et intellectual, parfois dramatique" (Marcotte, 2005, p. 41).

On the other hand, there are various arguments in favour of faith-based schools. First, "no Canada-wide study shows whether students attending religious schools … actually had higher levels of prejudice in education" (Hiemstra, 1994, p. 205). In response to those, who characterize religious schools as a place of indoctrination and intolerance, a recent study demonstrates that the ability of modern Muslim schools to be "effective in creating balanced identities and in avoiding extremes" (Tiflati, 2016, p. 181) "can be regarded as itself a preventive measure to Islamic behavioral radicalization" (p. 180). Muslim schools in Quebec show that identity retention can be compatible with successful integration into broader society. Relying on Islamic tradition, they intend to prepare the first- and second-generation immigrant students for their acculturation and to decode the society in which they live (Tremblay, 2014, p. 260).

Secondly, some studies indicate that faith-based schools provide children with deep ethical and moral values (Brighouse, 2009; Glenn, 2011): they have "special regard to the needs of the poor, to the promotion of justice and to the welfare of the wider community" (Pring, 2007, p. 518). Evangelical Christians regard "focusing on their families and doing their best to pass on good

morals to their children as their primary, positive means of contributing to social change" (Smith, 2002, p. 167)

The third argument in favour of faith-based schools is their high quality of education: on average, they "perform better than public schools" (Patrinos, 2009, p. 20), because of "a better educational administration, a stronger value-oriented community between parents and schools" (Dronkers, 2001, p. 14). In addition, in contrast to public schools, faith-based schools have a high level of cultural congruence (a teacher's respect for the students' cultural background). It is an important and integral component of education policy (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Gay, 2002; Piquemal & Nickels, 2005; Zine, 2008), because when teaching is based on the lived experiences of the students, the latter "have higher interest appeal, and are learned more easily" (Gay, 2002, p. 106). Also, a culturally congruent education can help students avoid a life between two cultures which leads "to dissonance for these youth" (Zine, 2008, p. 4), and entails the "split personality syndrome" (Zine, 2008, p. 4; see also Berkhof, 1953; Kelly, 1997). However, some scholars believe that primary faith-based schools are beneficial for children because they provide them with congruent studies, but oppose secondary religious schools (Ackerman, 1980; Kymlicka, 2001; MacMullen, 2007) where development of critical thinking skills can be limited or restricted by religious doctrines and a lack of exposure to diversity.

Fourthly, there is an argument that the goals of civic education do not inevitably demand a "promotion of a particular conception of the good" (MacMullen, 2007, p. 29). Therefore, while civic virtues can be taught without teaching "civic humanism" (Rawls, 1993/1996, p. 206), students of faith-based schools can be equipped by these virtues.

The theoretical framework of this thesis also takes into consideration the works on education written by Reformed theorists and theologians. They insist that Reformed education,

along with public schooling, provides training of students for responsible citizenship as its function; besides it, Reformed schooling also focuses on teaching "to express a responsible human citizenship", but "in the spiritual kingdom of Christ" (Zylstra, 1997, p. 41). It is explained by that in accordance with Reformed theology, "the spiritual in us requires human fulfillment, human embodiment" (p. 40). As a result, the faith-based school curriculum provides students with answers and reasons for acting in the surrounding society "in what the school judges to be the right way" (Wolterstorff, 1997*b*, p. 65).

2.3.2. Individual autonomy and critical thinking

There are some debates about whether faith-based schools succeed in providing students with individual autonomy and whether their graduates experience successful integration. Autonomy is defined as "the capacity for critical rational reflection about one's ethical beliefs and values, including those that are foundational, and the commitment to practice this reflection on an ongoing basis" (MacMullen, 2007, p. 23). Most educational theorists are convinced that the state should provide all children with an education for personal autonomy (Gutmann, 1999; MacMullen, 2007). However, there is a paradox formulated by Stolzenberg, which highlights the challenge for the realization of autonomy in a liberal society: on the one hand, liberal theorists want to promote individuals' autonomy; on the other – they want not "to judge or to undermine diverse ways of life" (1992, p. 660). Hence, there is a reasonable inquiry about the limits of freedom of choice when it relates to the duty of the state to teach children the principle of autonomy despite that it contradicts their parents' vision.

Some scholars justify an endorsement of "the instrumental value of ethical autonomy in spite of the objections of religious parents and others" (MacMullen, 2007, p. 136). Furthermore, a situation that some children from traditional families are being torn "between the attitudes at home

and school" is seen as "a necessary and short-term evil" (p. 136). Also, some defenders of faith-based schools system admit that Christian parents and teachers should endeavour to nurture in children both "Christian commitment and normal autonomy" (Thiessen, 1993, p. 255): it will allow them to make a relatively "independent" choice for or against Christian commitment" (p. 255). Thus, being a defender of religious schools, Elmer Thiessen opposes indoctrination, which means that students are being taught to accept a set of beliefs uncritically. Thiessen considers that the development of critical thinking will help students grow in their understanding of their Christian faith, "in the ability to use Christian concepts, and in the ability to think from a Christian perspective" (1993, p. 260). Terence McLaughlin, a coherent defender of Catholic schools, asserts that "it is possible to harmonise the presentation of a particular set of religious beliefs with a concern for the development of the autonomy of the child" (1984, p. 82). This standpoint is opposed by the assumption that "strong religious socialization … can be detrimental to child's autonomy and is fraught "with grave risks of unintended indoctrination" (Callan, 2009, p. 10).

Additionally, a fear of excessive insularity is a recurrent concern in debates "about institutionalizing distinct minority education" (Couton, 1999, p. 151). For instance, a study of four of "Toronto's full-time oldest and largest Islamic schools" demonstrates that "the predominant conception of social justice … remains outward looking rather than inwardly critical" there (Memon, 2010, p. 109). Teachers avoid "controversial issues that are related to internal community dynamics" (Memon, p. 117). Such topics as "gendered roles, or culturally-informed racial stereotypes" (p. 117) are usually not being discussed in these schools.

At the same time, some scholars argue that for part of the population, the sense of belonging to a cultural group might be more significant than individual autonomy. Referring to the need to

respect the freedom of association, Kukathas (1992) proposes that the liberal state should tolerate Amish and the Roma parents' decision to keep their children out of school to preserve these groups' culture. The first counterargument to this standpoint is that it is debatable which groups may receive this permission for autonomy. The second is that cultural diversity is valuable not for its own sake, but only if cultural traditions are important for individuals (Kymlicka, 1989; MacMullen, 2007). Moreover, "the parental freedom to control the education of children can itself be a form of tyranny" (Macedo, 2000, p. 101), because "living as one prefers is not necessarily the same as living the best life for oneself" (MacMullen, 2007, p. 127). Therefore, recognizing cultural minority parents' right to design their children' education does not consider whether it is for the "best interests of those children" (MacMullen, p. 116). This discussion leads to the debates about the blurred distinction between child's interests and parental rights.

The studies analyzed show that although exposure to diversity (including gender diversity) is not always realized successfully, faith-based schools intend to prepare their students to be responsible citizens and respect others' points of view. Case studies about some schools, including Islamic institutions which have been in Canada only for a few decades, show the evolution of religious schools' attitude towards the promotion of civic and political engagement.

2.3.3. Parental rights theory

The theoretical framework of my research also considers the parental rights' argument in defense of the religious educational system existence. It correlates with the Reformed standpoint. Reformed theologians argue that God has made parents be "the responsible educators of the child" (Berkhof, 1953, p. 144). Others state that parents have the primary responsibility for educating their children (Crittenden, 1988; Eekelaar, 2001; Fionda, 2001; Gilles, 1996; 1997; Thiessen, 2001). Based on the works of Crittenden and Gilles, Thiessen sums up five arguments to support

the primacy of parental rights; they are: *biological argument*, *children's interest argument*, *parental interests argument, primary culture argument,* and *argument from liberalism.*

The majority of liberal theorists of education deny unlimited parental rights and consider that parents should share the rights to determine schooling with the state. Defenders of religious schools also do not exclude the role of the state in the process of education: the state may and should intervene when there is a case of neglect or abuse of children by their parents (MacMullen, 2007; Thiessen, 2001). The state should enforce "a compulsory education to a certain minimal level" to "develop the basic skills and competences necessary for normal human development and liberal citizenship" (Thiessen, 2001, p. 77). Gutmann qualifies this state obligation and promotes the principle of "nonrepression", which prevents "the state, and any group within it, from using education to restrict … rational deliberation or consideration of different ways of life" (1999, p. 44). Using the example of the Old Order Amish whose life "depends on resistance to rational deliberation" (Gutmann, 1999, p. 44), Gutmann emphasizes that while nonrepression puts some limit on democratic authority, it defends "future deliberative freedom of children" (p. 45).

2.3.4. Financial government support of religious schools

During the last several decades, there have been intense debates on the issue of government financial support of faith-based schools, given that it is unachievable to provide parents of all religious and spiritual worldviews with an opportunity to have their children studying in a publicly-funded faith school (Watson, 2013, p. 153). Today, many North American scholars favour the elimination of public funding to all religious schools. They follow the principle of the separation of state and church, although in Canada, an official separation of state and church has not been proclaimed (Doerr & Menendez, 1991), and despite an assumption that complete separation is possible only to some extent (Thiessen, 2001, p. 103). Many also argue that religious schools are

excluding institutions and recommend preferential funding to public schools (Ghitter, 1984; Shapiro, 1985).

On the other hand, defenders of public funding for religious schools claim that these schools fulfil the same secular goals as public schools: they teach students to be honest, kind, tolerant, and to contribute to the public good (Bryk and al., 1993; Thiessen, 2001). Religious people are described as "ordinary citizens who pay taxes and who deserve the same rights as those who don't claim to be religious" (Thiessen, 2001, p. 106). Therefore, if some of them want to educate their children "in accordance with public knowledge that is grounded in their deepest convictions", their desires should be satisfied (p. 107). Besides, one of the arguments in favour of government funding to faith-based schools is presented in the framework of the term "political recognition", because non-recognition of religious schools entails marginalization of their students "characterized as threats to the nation's well-being and being out of step with the modern world" (Van Arragon, 2011, p. 2). It is important to remember that "equal recognition is not just the appropriate mode for a healthy democratic society… its refusal can inflict damage on those who are denied it" (Taylor, 1994, p. 36).

Further, some studies distinguish which categories of faith-based schools may receive government funding. For instance, Geoffrey Short (2002), Johan De Jong and Ger Snik (1995) divide faith-based schools into moderate and strong and consider that only a moderate version of faith-based schooling can be compatible with liberal values of Western society. It is argued that while moderate schools might help the minority students assimilate into society better than non-religious schools, strong schools "encourage separation from the wider multi-racial society" (Ahmad, 2013, p. 215). A strong emphasis on religious identity may entail the adoption of "closed versions of culture or community" and a "refusal to engage with the difficult problems that arise

from trying to live with difference" (Hall, 1992, pp. 6-8). An alternative way of dividing religious schools into inclusive and exclusive was offered by Marion Maddox (2011). He argues that religious schools are inclusive if "they enable the survival and flourishing of cultures and ideas which would otherwise be drowned out by the dominant culture"; and exclusive "when they further entrench existing privilege, whether of resources or of ideology, or when they deliberately foster a culture that professes to stand outside or above the multicultural society" (p. 183).

Several studies analyze how religious schools are funded across Canada. Today, five provinces partially fund independent schools; they are British Columbia, Alberta, Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Quebec. Public funding for independent schools ranges "between 35 percent and 80 percent of public school per-student operating allocations" (McLeod & Hasan, 2017, p. 22). Ontario's legislation is considered to be the most contentious as it continues to follow "the original terms of Confederation" (McDonough et al., 2013, p. 6): there is full funding to Catholic schools and no funding at all for other faith-based schools (pp. 5-6). It has already led to several legal disputes and the UN Human Rights Committee's recognition that Ontario's funding model was discriminatory first in 1999 and again in 2005. Today, at least 60.6 percent of independent schools in Canada receive no government funding (Allison et al., 2016), keeping in mind that there are both public and non-public (private or independent) religious schools. Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario are not funded at all.

2.3.5. Homeschooling

According to a recent study of the Fraser Institute, "despite overall low shares of student enrolment, homeschooling[ii] has experienced strong growth in terms of absolute enrolment over the past five years in nine out of 10 provinces" (MacLeod, 2018, para. 6). In total numbers though, in 2011/12, while "over 5 million students were enrolled in public schools in Canada … 21,662

students were registered with provincial authorities as home schooled" (Van Pelt, 2015, p. 26). It means that only "about 0.4% of total government school enrolments" were official home-school enrolments (p. 26), the predominant number located in Alberta and Saskatchewan. At the same time, it is important to consider that there are also not officially registered home-schooled children because "some home-schooling parents do not enroll their children with the local or provincial authorities" (p. 26). To compare Canada to other countries, for example, in the USA, "homeschooling enrollment … jumped from almost nothing to around 3 % in the span of 40 years", and 6% - 12% of all students "will have been educated at home at some time in their K-12 educational careers" (Murphy, 2012, p. 1). The USA has experienced a dramatic increase of homeschooling enrollment from the 1970s to the early 2000s (Van Pelt, p. 26), but which might be declining a bit (Gaither, 2008, p. 204).

Existing studies show that although the minority of homeschooling parents are certified teachers (Ray, 2010, p. 14), statistically homeschooling students demonstrate higher scores in reading, writing and mathematics (Van Pelt, 2003). While this data might have some limitations and biases, several studies argue that the differences between homeschooling and public school students "were not simply the result of either the family's income or the mother's educational attainment" (Van Pelt, 2015, p. 12). Also, homeschooling seems to depress the negative factors of public schooling, including the racial tension that is visible in the public schools (Murphy, 2014, p. 257): "low-income children in homeschools often achieve at or above national norms while low-income children in public schools on average score considerably below national norms" (p. 256).

In Canada, homeschooling is legal in all ten provinces and three territories, but the regulations are different, "ranging from relaxed with little to no regulation (i.e., Ontario), to highly regulated (i.e. Alberta, Saskatchewan, and Quebec)" (Dukelow, 2018, p. 11). It was noticed that it

is easier to homeschool in Ontario due to a new policy (Policy/Program Memorandum No. 131) that allows boards of education "to deem that children are receiving satisfactory instruction at home simply by accepting notification from parents" (Aurini & Davies, 2005, p. 463). Moreover, Ontario government does not require homeschoolers "to follow traditional schooling methodologies" anymore and "recognizes homeschooling as 'a viable alternative to public education' that offers educational experiences that can be 'unique to each family'" (p. 463).

Home education may be attractive for parents for various reasons: some want "to maximize both the amount and the quality of time spent with their children in learning activities"; "to create a positive learning environment in which students can pursue special interests in depth" and not "to contend with the competition and peer pressure inherent in a classroom setting" (Luffman, 1997, p. 32); "to strengthen the bonds among family members" (Arai, 2000, p. 206). Also, a large group of home schoolers is from traditional Christian families who choose home schooling "to incorporate their own religious beliefs and values into all areas of the curriculum" (p. 32) and "to protect their children from what they believe to be the erosive effects of modernization and secularization" (Mayberry & Knowles, 1989, pp. 209-210).

There are concerns "about the average parent's ability to cover all areas of the curriculum", supported by the fact that no province/territory in Canada "has specific regulations regarding the qualifications of the homeschooling parent" (Luffman, 1997, p. 33). Also, "controversial evidence exists about the academic achievements of home schoolers" (Luffman, p. 41). Developed out "of the educational reforms of the '60s and '70s", homeschooling has given "rise to a philosophy of unschooling (or de-schooling): education based on the natural interests of children learning from all aspects of their lives" (Norman, 1999, p. 122).

Religious parents' right to provide their children with home-based education is guaranteed by the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms and some provincial and territorial regulations. But, in the words of writer David Guterson, homeschooling "can be a social danger" if it narrows a "child's experience for political, social, or religious purposes" (1993, p. 62). Denying access to knowledge about other worldviews deprives the opportunity to foster "an open mind and open heart" (p. 62) in children which are significant for living in a pluralistic and diverse society.

The discourse around parental rights and roles, as well homeschooling, has significantly changed since the start of the Covid-19 pandemic. Schools closures in Canada required parents to engage in their children's education since schools could not provide an adequate online education and requested a high level of parents' involvement, even homeschooling at some point. Furthermore, since the start of the pandemic interest in homeschooling and homeschool collectives have been growing across various provinces. In September 2020, Paul W. Bennett, a researcher in Canadian K-12 school education, concluded that the urgent need to restructure education has been revealed by the pandemic. He argues that "those closest to students must be given more responsibility for student learning and the quality of public education" meaning primarily parents and teachers at school (2020, para. 19). As discussed above, the latter have been often overlooked in the arguments against the existence of faith-based schools.

2.3.6. Dutch Reformed schools from a scholarly perspective

Referring to a Dutch-language book by T. Cnossen, a thorough study of Dutch Calvinists in Canada conducted by John Hiemstra (2005) shows that the majority of the Dutch Protestant immigrant communities chose one of three responses to public schools. They are the following: 1) to participate in public schools in order "to pursue integration into mainstream Christianity and institutions" to reach gradually full assimilation; 2) to establish "an isolating style of independent

schools" to shelter themselves "in pietistic Dutch enclaves" (Hiemstra, pp. 157-158); 3) to found independent Christian schools which could prepare children "to take their place in society" and equip them as citizens "to serve God and their nation" (Christian Action Foundation, 1966, pp. 1-2). Most of the Calvinists accepted the latter two approaches (Hiemstra, p. 158). Still, there were tensions between the latter two perspectives, pietistic and transforming, respectively, because parents were torn between the "desire to protect children from an evil society" and "to prepare them to be reformers of that society" (Van Brummelen, 1986, p. 263). "[W]hether one hoped to shelter their children from, or encourage their children to interact with, Canadian society and culture, the new Christian schools [organized by post-war Dutch Reformed immigrants] offered a means whereby religious, as well as ethnic, identity remained distinct" (Sikkema, 2010, p. 74). However, "the transforming Christian motive set the leading tone for these schools" (Van Brummelen, p. 265). It is partially explained by the fact that post-war Dutch immigrants brought the ideas about engagement with socio-political life and transformation of culture "through Christian institutions such as Christian schools" to Canada (Prinsen, 2000, p. 158). This contrasts with pietist ideas favouring isolation and separation from the world common among American Reformed communities that moved from the Netherlands mainly in the middle-late of the 19th century and were not impacted by Kuyperian thoughts. This explains different approaches to the curriculum in Reformed schools in the USA and Canada, particularly in the area of social studies: "Canadian curriculum work … in line with the Canadian national identity, has called for a pluralism that values diversity and sets out Christian alternatives and proposals" (Van Brummelen, p. 409).

Several studies analyze the contribution of post-war Dutch neo-Calvinist immigrants (mainly members of Christian Reformed Church in North America, CRCNA) to the fight for

religious minorities' right to get government funding for their religious schools in Alberta and British Columbia provinces. They established independent Christian schools in Canada, because, for them, it is the "most efficient manner to preserve distinctive group ideals" (Jellema, 1953, p. 32), particularly a neo-Calvinist worldview, and to oppose public schools that have "enforced a superficial uniformity on the entire school population" (Hiemstra, 2005, p. 162). Reformed theorists believe that education is parents' responsibility, and the state's role is merely to "assist" them. Having some experience of political involvement in their motherland, Dutch Reformed immigrants applied the same approach in Canada. As mentioned above, in the Netherlands, the Anti-Revolutionary Party (organized by neo-Calvinists), in cooperation with the Christian Historical Union and the General League of Roman Catholic Caucuses, engineered the 1917 Dutch Agreement. It "provided equitable funding to a variety of religious and nonreligious school systems" (Mouw, 2012, p. 88), and is still enforced in the Netherlands. To achieve an extension of funding in Alberta, neo-Calvinists joined with some other religious groups to form the Association of Private Schools and Colleges of Alberta (APSCA). The neo-Calvinist community was also involved in intense political lobbying as an active member of the established in 1962 the Christian Action Foundation that "played a central role in this activity, informing and educating politicians, the media, and other influential persons" (Hiemstra, p. 164). Thanks to their political strategies and cooperation with other religious groups, the neo-Calvinist community therefore induced significant changes in the Alberta legislation. In 1967, Alberta extended funding to independent schools.

A similar approach was used in British Columbia, where in 1966, Dutch Calvinists joined with two other religious groups, which had private religious schools; they are representatives of Catholic schools and schools of the Church of England. "The associations representing the three

groups, totalling 121 schools, came together to form a joint lobby, the Federation of Independent School Associations" (FISA) (Barman, 1995, p. 15). For this reason, FISA was "extraordinarily capable and effective in promoting grass-roots activism among private-school supporters" (p. 15). Since 1977, religious schools in BC have been provided partial government funding, which was increased in 1989 up to 50 percent of the funding accorded to public schools. The changes in religious education in British Columbia demonstrated the extent to which "a small but determined vested-interest group could set public policy" (Downey, in Barman, p. 15).

Most studies on Reformed schools in Canada examine schools founded by members of Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) and are united under such associations as Christians Schools International (CSI) or the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools (OACS). Not much scholarship is devoted to the schools run by members of other Churches, including the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC). Although Kuyperians represented only part of post-war Dutch Reformed immigrants, a strong leadership role in the Calvinist school movement grew out mostly of Kuyperian groups that are mainly represented in the CRCNA. Prinsen's research (2000) reveals the evolution of the relationships between various Dutch Reformed denominations and their alliances and conflicts on the school question. While during the 1950-60s, some CanRC members were accommodated in CSI schools, since the 1950s they have established their own schools across Canada. The reason to this is that CSI schools were "too open to other Christian ideas as evidenced by liberal enrollment policies and the hiring of non-Calvinist teachers"; they "were losing their Calvinist distinctiveness" (Prinsen, p. 244). This thesis, devoted to Canadian Reformed schools, endeavours to fill the existing gap in the scholarship on Canadian Reformed community and demonstrate their role in the current debates and political fights for the rights of Christian schooling in Canada.

Most secular studies about Christian schools with Dutch Calvinist roots are historical analyses of the Dutch immigration's waves in North America and the ways Dutch immigrants integrated into American and Canadian societies (Fallon, 2000; Ganzevoort, 1988; Schryer, 1998). Taking into account public and denominational school system founded and flourished in the Netherlands since the end of the 19th century, these studies analyze the usage of Dutch experience in the establishment of Christian schools in North America (Van Brummelen, 1984); also, they show theological motivations on which religious schools have been based (Sikkema, 2010), and what are the theological and structural differences between schools of various Dutch Reformed denominations (Kits, 1988). Studies on Christian education conducted by Reformed theologians focus on the questions of how to teach in Christian schools; what the main features of a Christian teacher are; how to evaluate students' knowledge in Biblical studies; why it is important to educate children in a Christian school; they analyze the theological basis of Christian education and objectives of this education (Blomberg, 2012; De Boer & Oppewal, 1984; Spykman, 1980; Van Dyk, 2008). As a result, from the review of related literature, I may conclude that there is a scholarly gap in the critical analysis of how Christian schools organized by Dutch Calvinists prepare their graduates for a Canadian diverse and democratic society; and of the level of their graduates' engagement in socio-political life. I conduct an interdisciplinary study on the impact of ethno-religious community's school system on its graduates' integration into Canadian society and their socio-political participation.

To summarize, the conceptual framework of my thesis includes the theories of the persistence of immigrants' ethno-religious identity (Bangura, 1994; Hall, 2006; Zine, 2008), the role of religion in newcomers' adaptation to the receiving society (Foner & Alba, 2008; Hirschman, 2004; Laurence, 2012), religious pluralism discourse (Eck, 2014; Hutchison, 2003;

Hunter & Franz, 2006), and the role of religious schools in promoting immigrant-origin students' ethical autonomy (Gutmann, 1999; MacMullen, 2007).

The literature review demonstrates that there have been wide-ranging debates questioning the effectiveness of faith-based schooling. The theoretical framework of this thesis will consider the main arguments presented in existing sociological and theological literature in order to shape a qualitative study examining the functioning of Canadian Reformed schools' graduates in 21st-century Canada.

Chapter 3. Methodology

3.1. Multi-methods approach to a case study

The long-standing paradigm war, which has lasted in the social sciences since the 1960s, was largely replaced with a more "apolitical pragmatic paradigm in the post-1990 period" (Denzin et al., 2013, p. 3) that admitted the compatibility of quantitative and qualitative methods. I concur that no methodological practice has privileges over another. However, taking into consideration that this thesis explores a belief system, values, and behaviours of a particular ethno-religious community — graduates of private, predominantly Dutch, Reformed schools — in their everyday life, a qualitative approach seems to be the most appropriate. Hence, given the exploratory nature of this study and its intention to analyze "*how* social experience [such as integration of religious schools' graduates] is created and given meaning" (Denzin et al., p. 17), the research question will be addressed using qualitative methodology. The usage of qualitative methods will be more effective than quantitative ones in order "to obtain culturally specific information about the values … behaviors, and social contexts" (Mack et al., 2005, p. 1) of Dutch Reformed Christians in Canada that "are not experimentally examined or measured … in terms of quantity, amount, intensity, or frequency" (Denzin et al., 2013, p. 17). Also, being more flexible than quantitative methods, qualitative techniques will "allow greater spontaneity and adaptation of the interaction between the researcher and the study participant" (Mack et al., 2005, p. 4), and give a better insight into the complex reality of the Canadian Reformed communities with Dutch roots. As mentioned above, given the historical roots of this community's Christian schools, I am going to call them Canadian Reformed schools even though the official name of the schools usually includes a name (for example of Jean Calvin or a theologian or Aramean words such Maranatha, meaning "our Lord comes") and the word "Christian".

Because the study's intention is "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a bounded phenomenon" (Merriam, 1998, p. xiii) such as the Canadian Reformed school system in Ontario, the strategy for making this social inquiry is a qualitative case study. While a case study can be a method, in our case, it is a design framework for "an in-depth exploration from multiple perspectives of the complexity and uniqueness of a particular project, policy, institution, program or system in a 'real life'" (Simons, 2009, p. 21). Additionally, the case study approach has been chosen because this thesis about the Canadian Reformed schools' graduates relies on "inductive reasoning" and involves thick descriptive data (Willis, 2007, p. 239). This case study incorporates a variety of methods, which will be discussed later, and represents multi-methods qualitative research.

Also, I broadly adhere to contemporary discourse discouraging a strict distinction between qualitative and quantitative paradigms because "this binary positioning" makes "methodological diversity invisible" (Giddings, 2006, p. 119) and distracts from deeper issues related to knowledge production. I follow Creswell's stance that quantitative and qualitative research approaches "lie along a continuum" instead of being "completely separate approaches" (Creswell, 2012, p. xvii). In contrast to sociological discourse in the 1970s-80s, today, it is considered that qualitative and quantitative material can complement each other. As a result, research might contain elements of both qualitative and quantitative methods. Although this thesis cannot be identified as a mixed-methods study, some numerical data and limited quantitative evidence are included in this research.

3.2. Research philosophy: Constructivist paradigm

As a paradigm for understanding religious schools and their graduates' integration as social phenomena, I adhere to the constructivist paradigm. A paradigm is "the researcher's

epistemological, ontological, and methodological premises" (Denzin et al., 2013, p. 26), or "a basic set of beliefs that guides action" (Guba, 1990, p. 17). Canadian Reformed communities see school as "one side of triangle, the other sides being the church and home" (Ammerman, 1987, p. 175). The influences of these three social agents are intertwined; therefore, the constructivist paradigm, according to which "reality as we know it is constructed intersubjectively through the meanings and understandings developed socially and experientially" (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 103), seems to be appropriate for this project. The constructivist paradigm assumes a relativist ontology, a subjectivist epistemology, and "a naturalistic set of methodological procedures" (Denzin et al., p. 27); it means that multiple realities coexist, their understanding is the result of interactions with the surroundings, and the analysis is conducted in a natural setting. Epistemologically, I comply with interpretivists who, in contract to positivists assuming that "there is only one objective reality" that can be "determined through the systematic scientific methods of inquiry" (Ansari et al., 2016, p. 135), argue that the world "may be understood through the subjective meaning people assign to the social actions in a specific social setting" (p. 136). As a result, interpretivists tend to "interact with what is being researched in order to decrease the gap between the researcher and what is being researched" (p. 136).

Hence, I broadly adhere to the social constructivist thought (Berger & Luckmann, 1966) that seeks to "understand how social actors recognize, produce, and reproduce social actions and how they come to share an intersubjective understanding of specific life circumstances" (Schwandt, 2001, pp. 31-32). As a result, to examine the effect which religious schools exert on graduates' lifestyle and worldview, I rely on perceptions, understandings, and experiences of the participants. Therefore, the study's findings are created and constructed through the interactions between the researcher and the researched. However, truth is also a social construct, varying and changeable:

"a necessary truth is just a statement such that nobody has given us any interesting alternatives which would lead us to question it" (Rorty, 1979, p. 175). As a result, I paid particular attention to the terms which respondents used to describe their belief system, opinions, and experiences, and also the meanings which they ascribed to these notions, and what was accepted as truth by them. The constructivist paradigm "recognizes the importance of the subjective human creation of meaning but doesn't reject outright some notion of objectivity. Pluralism, not relativism, is stressed with focus on the circular dynamic tension of subject and object" (Crabtree & Miller, 1999, p. 10). Scholars emphasize that one of the advantages of this approach is "the close collaboration between the researcher and the participant while enabling participants to tell their stories" (Baxter & Jack, 2008, p. 545). The latter allows participants "to describe their views of reality" and gives the researcher a better understanding of the participants' actions (p. 545). This is the reason why semi-structured interviews have become the backbone of this research.

3.3. Design of the research

To design my study, I followed Sharan Merriam's guidance (1998) on identifying five steps of a qualitative case study. They include "conducting a literature review, constructing a theoretical framework, identifying a research problem, crafting and sharpening research questions, and selecting the sample (purposive sampling)" (Yazan, 2015, p. 141).

This thesis employs the constructivist grounded theory (Charmaz, 2006; Clarke, 2005) for interpreting the gathered data. In contrast to objectivist grounded theory (Aldiabat & Le Navenec, 2011; Glaser & Strauss, 1967), a social constructivist approach to grounded theory aims at "an interpretive understanding of the studied phenomenon that accounts for context" "instead of aiming to achieve parsimonious explanations and generalizations devoid of context" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 402). Also, according to the constructivist grounded theory, participants' views and voices

are integral to the analysis. The reflectivity of the researcher is crucial for employing the constructivist grounded approach because constructivist theorists emphasize that the researcher needs not just to "transcend experience but re-envis[age] it … bring[ing] fragments of fieldwork time, context and mood together in a colloquy of the author's several selves — reflecting, witnessing, wondering, accepting — all at once" (Charmaz & Mitchell, 1996, p. 299). As a result, this approach's particular feature is an improvisation of the researcher's methods and strategies (Charmaz, 2008, p. 403). As Stake (1995) explains, "the dependent variables are experientially rather than operationally defined," and "the independent variables are expected to develop in unexpected ways" (p. 41). This happens because a grounded theory assumes an inquiry "in which data collection and analysis reciprocally inform each other through an emergent iterative process" (Charmaz, 2013, p. 293). Thus, several changes and adjustments have been made throughout the research project, including the number of respondents and the requirement for socio-demographic characteristics of potential interviewees. Also, the first several interviews conducted encouraged me to choose the main themes for the research as well as extend interview questions on some topics that had not been originally considered to be central, for example, the topic of sexual health education in the Province of Ontario.

To sum up, I am consonant with Stake (1995) and Merriam (1998) in the idea of the simultaneous data collection and analysis. At the same time, it does not mean that "the analysis is finished when all the data have been collected – quite the opposite. The analysis becomes more intensive as the study progresses, and once all the data are in" (Merriam, p. 155).

3.4. The relationships between the researcher and the researched

"A social constructivist approach to grounded theory encourages researchers to make measured assessments of their methods and of themselves as researchers" (Charmaz, 2008, p. 408).

That is why it is crucial to reflect on the researcher – the researched relationship and the debate about insider / outsider position of the researcher. “L’objet de recherche comme un construit dépendant du chercheur mais aussi des sujets et de l’environnement étudiés” (Brusq, 2011, p. 188). Hence, I take into consideration that my knowledge and understanding of the world impact how I see and analyze the object: “le chercheur influence la situation qu'il étudie, il ajuste artificiellement la technique d'observation et de la participation aux situations” (p. 185). Therefore, a critical reflection on myself as a researcher is required. Besides informants’ voices, a distinctive voice of researcher’s selves come into play in the study. “The Other’s presence is directly connected to the writer’s self-presence in the text” (Denzin, 1994, p. 503). That is why I reflect on the knowledge construction processes to capture what shapes my worldview and how it influences my understanding of the community’s narrative.

The relationship between the researcher and the researched is widely recognized as a potential source of concern. Some scholars insist that researchers should be “members of the groups they study in order to have the subjective knowledge necessary to truly understand their life experiences” (Miller & Glassner, 2011, p. 131); others — that the existence of social differences between interviewer and interviewee may facilitate “respondents’ recognition of themselves as experts on their social worlds” (p. 132). However, ethical concerns might occur. One of the most complicated questions relates to the use of deceptive techniques. The most famous story illustrating this issue is the research about the Guineamen conducted by Carolyn Ellis (1986). The scholar never told the fishing families that she was using them for sociological research. In Ellis’s opinion, “deceiving her subjects was indispensable to her project’s success” (Allen, 1997, p. 32). A reasonable rhetorical question was raised by a sociologist Erich Goode: “Do you announce up front you’re a sociologist, say, when you’re studying drug dealers?” Another point

of view on the usage of deceptive techniques can be expressed by sociologist Kai Erikson who claims that "it is morally wrong to lie, and it also tends to distort research" (Allen, 1997, p. 33). In a short discussion of his method, entitled *The Atheist Anthropologist* (2006), Ruy Llera Blanes explores his reticence to hide his atheism and the rhetorical shifting which evolved between himself and participants to find mutual respect and fend off questions of the possibility of his own conversion. Blanes does not offer a general conclusion on how to manage this dilemma. Although, he underscores that "an ongoing reflexive and introspective process … should be central to all research activity" (p. 231) He says, "truth and honesty not only remain within one's own conscience, but arise from the dialogue between the anthropologist as participant and the anthropologist as observer" (p. 232).

Therefore, the ethical question is one of the most complex issues in the work of a social scientist, the solution of which should heed the context of the research and the status of the participants. I concur with those who consider that the researcher should take into account the circumstances, context, and individuality of an interviewer to decide whether to hide their position or to be honest with the respondent. Also, it is important to build trustworthy relations with participants while respecting each other's differences. In the case of my project, I think that there were no compelling reasons to hide my outsider status. However, I agree with Jody Miller and Barry Glassner (2011), who emphasize the significance of the manner the researcher presents themselves: it influences the "interviewees' ability and willingness to tell various sorts of stories" (p. 130). I think it was important to demonstrate to participants my knowledge of Calvinist theology and neo-Calvinist texts to be perceived by the researched as a person who comprehends their belief system. I believe that it also might have encouraged the community members to discuss complex issues, significant for their community, without serious doubts that they would be

understood, and help me with recruiting more participants. For me, as an outsider for the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches, it was surprising to see that the vast majority of the community members whom I met during the fieldwork were very welcoming to me when they learnt that I was doing a study about their community. Despite the fact that the church is homogenous, and the predominant majority of its members have Dutch roots, and I do not possess either of identities, it was not challenging to find participants for the study, and nobody tried to convert me. Moreover, many in-person interviews were conducted at participants' homes, because they wanted to introduce their family members and considered that it would be interesting and useful for my research to see how they live. Their hospitality demonstrated that I, as a researcher, was "welcomed into the participant's home as a guest" (Clarke, 2006, p. 22) rather than "tolerated as an inquisitor" (Finch, 1984, p. 73).

3.5. Methods of data collection

3.5.1. Semi-structured interviews

An adequate dialogue between the researcher and the researched could be ensured by qualitative methods, such as semi-structured individual interviews and an examination of policy literature, theological documents, and mass and social media. For this study, it was important to analyze how respondents identify themselves and define the role of Reformed schools in their life. Given the research question, it is hard to determine which factors — school or church or parents — influence a particular aspect of the graduate's life. Therefore, subjective views of participants play an important role in my research. My thesis draws heavily on semi-structured interviews. The fieldwork took place between March 2017 and March 2018. During that period, I conducted sixty-four interviews in total. Interviews helped me uncover Dutch Reformed Canadians' understanding of the importance of participation in society and their views on some current issues. The reason

for choosing a *semi-structured* interview is that it gives an opportunity to encourage participants to discuss in a free, flexible, and detailed manner. At the same time, a semi-structured interview allows regulating the order and topics of questions that will be discussed. However, follow-up questions will depend on the answers of interviewees. As a result, while the interview questions had been prepared before the fieldwork started, they were adjusted after several interviews had been conducted. The first few interviews provided me with a greater familiarity with experiences and perceptions of Dutch Reformed Christians and gave a clear understanding of which topics are central in their worldview and civic activism.

Before the fieldwork started, one of the significant parts of the interview guide contained questions on Dutch Reformed theology, including the works by a Dutch theologian and politician Abraham Kuyper. The few first interviews demonstrated that the majority of CanRC members have little or no knowledge on this topic and can barely define Kuyperian thought. As a result, the number of theological questions was reduced. At the same time, the opportunity to find former members of the community, who left the church because of their gender identity and sexual orientation, encouraged me to enrich the interview guide with the questions related to the domain of sex education and recruit more participants who do not identify themselves as heterosexual individuals. Also, semi-structured interviews enabled me to slightly change the interview questions for each particular interviewee depending on how the conversation was going and "to refocus the questions, or prompt for more information, if something interesting or novel emerges" (Baškarada, 2013, p. 8). I often used follow-up questions when the participant's answers were "vague or ambiguous", or if I wanted to gain more specific or in-depth information (Taylor-Powell & Camino, 2006). These follow-up questions, or probes, were designed to "make an interview question more specific and help direct the participant to the central issues of the study".

Spontaneous follow-up questions helped me "encourage the participant to say more" and might have "add[ed] richness and validity to the data because they help[ed] clarify the meaning of the issue or question for the participant" (Bolderston, 2012, p. 70). Hence, I clarified some information by asking why the person thought in a particular way or what they meant by saying a particular phrase or using a particular concept; and I also asked the respondents to provide examples for their statements. When respondents made rigid statements, for instance, regarding homosexuality, I created situational questions to encourage participants to reflect on how they would react and because of what reasons. Many of my spontaneous follow-up questions were asked during after-interview informal conversations when I had an opportunity to present some counter-arguments and ask for participants' opinions on them.

I intended to understand why Canadian Reformed Christians want their children/members of the community to study in their Reformed schools and what role of the state they see in the process of education. Interviews helped me "elicit the perceptions, meanings, and experiences of participants" (Williamson, 2006, p. 89) to examine the benefits and shortcomings of the education in Canadian Reformed schools and the challenges their graduates face. Also, an interview, which is "the main road to multiple realities" (Stake, 1995, p. 64), opened "various windows on different aspects" (Smith, 1998, p. 310) of their lives.

There is always a risk that "interviewees may be unwilling or may be uncomfortable sharing all" information (Marshall & Rossman, 1999, p. 110), or they may be unaware of some patterns that I hoped to explore. The researcher's interpersonal skills, as well as trustworthy relations between the researcher and the researched, can help unveil the participants' ideas or unique experiences. All but a few interviewees expressed both positive attitudes towards and their critique of Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario. Only one of the interviewees tried to present his school

experience in an exclusively positive manner. Although, after I politely interrupted him and told him that I was aware of some problems in the high school which he graduated, including adolescent pregnancy, drug usage and alcohol consumption by some of the students, he started feeling comfortable to talk about these and other issues.

3.5.2. Population and sampling techniques

In order to gain a thorough understanding of Canadian Reformed school education, I focused not only on Canadian Reformed schools but also took into consideration the learning and teaching atmosphere and programs of studies at the Covenant Teachers Reformed College (which prepares teachers for Canadian Reformed schools) and the Theological Canadian Reformed Seminary (which teaches future pastors who also have a significant impact on the worldview of parents, teachers, and students). The research population contains postwar Dutch Reformed immigrants and their descendants, who are members or former members of the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC), between 18 and 95 years old. Because the study focuses on Ontario, the participants are predominantly located in that province. A different number of representatives from each target group reflects the level of significance of each group for the research. Because this study's focus is on the graduates, they represent the main body of the research population. Given that the study intends to trace the evolution of the Canadian Reformed school system, the interviewees are both Dutch immigrants and their descendants, who graduated these schools at different decades, from the 1980s until 2017.

The first target group consists of 27 graduates from fifteen schools, organized by members of Canadian Reformed churches in Ontario. Three of the graduates interviewed are gay or transgender individuals. Eight participants are not affiliated with any religious institutions; four attend other than the Canadian Reformed church. Thus, in contrast to the previous studies on

Reformed communities with Dutch roots, my research includes the investigation of ex-members' views, which makes this study more reliable and reveal new perspectives. The second target group has ten current or retired teachers and principals of Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario. My focus was on the teachers specializing in subjects which are of interest to my research: Sociology, Religious Studies, Biology, and Health and Physical Education. The third target group are seven representatives of the staff of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, the Theological Canadian Reformed Seminary, and the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies. They include professors and members of the administration. The fourth target group are two parents who have not studied in these schools by themselves but decided to enroll their children there. This group is small because of the difficulty of reaching out to the first-generation immigrants and because the majority of interviewees of other target groups already have children in the studied schools. The latter was not identified in a separate target group as the result of the overlapping of their parental and another (a graduate, teacher, etc.) identity.

Furthermore, this thesis gives critical attention to the political engagement of Reformed schools' graduates. Therefore, I was interested in the activities of the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) and the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA). Both organizations are closely connected to the researched group. The CHP was established by a group of Dutch Reformed immigrants, who were tied to the Reformed political party in the Netherlands at the time of their emigration. Since its foundation, "the CHP membership has been disproportionately made up of Dutch-Canadians associated with Reformed or orthodox Calvinist" (Mckeen, 2015, p. 88). ARPA was organized by members of CanRC more than a half of century ago; a bit more than ten years ago, it was re-organized and became a national, very fast developing organization that unites members of several Reformed Churches. Its main aim is "to educate, equip, and encourage

Reformed Christians to political action and to bring a biblical perspective" to the civil authorities (ARPA Canada, n.d.*b*, para. 1). ARPA has been involved in various court processes defending the interests of Christian education; in the discussions on sex education in private schools and the change of the legislation on euthanasia; in pro-life movement's events; etc. Two of ARPA's representatives were interviewed for this research. They compose the fifth target group. However, no members of the CHP were interviewed because a doctoral thesis analyzing the "Dutchness" and Calvinist roots of this party was published in 2015 by Leah McKeen at Wilfrid Laurier University. It has served as a rich source of secondary data for my thesis.

In order to target a specific group of participants, this qualitative study used criterion-based sampling techniques; they are purposeful sampling and snowball sampling. Purposeful sampling technique is used "for the identification and selection of information-rich cases" (Palinkas et al., 2015, p. 534) that by their "…nature and substance will illuminate the inquiry question being investigated" (Patton, 2015, p. 265). This technique is applied for "selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest" (Palinkas et al., p. 534). This is how I found interviewees by sending official requests to Canadian Reformed schools and the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College. I also made acquaintances and recruited new participants at different Reformed Christian events, including conferences and meetings organized by members of CanRC, CRCNA or URCNA. They included but were not limited to the *Annual Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary Lecture Series* organized by the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary in Burlington, The *God and Government* conference organized by ARPA in Ottawa, and diverse activities within the *National March for Life* in Ottawa, because the researched group are pro-life advocates. The main goal of this sampling was to complete interviews that would help "identify important common patterns"

(Palinkas et al., p. 534), "highlight what is typical, normal or average," as well as identify and "capture major variations" (p. 536). For the latter reason, purposeful snowball strategy was used to "identify cases of interest from sampling people who know people that generally have similar characteristics who, in turn, know people, also with similar characteristics" (p. 535). As an example, this is how I recruited former members of the community, including individuals who self-identify as non-heterosexual individuals. Thus, to balance the purposeful sampling technique, I used a more random sampling of participants, called purposeful random, through the snowball technique, – I asked participants for recommended contacts at the end of interviews.

I am sure that the study was completed due to the rich contributions of the community. Knowing me as an outsider, many community members showed their interest and respect for my study. A researcher Leah McKeen, who conducted interviews with the CHP members, predominantly Reformed Christians of Dutch ancestry, marked that "[d]espite some stereotypes of social conservative Christians being distrusting of academia and "ivory tower" scholars, I sensed very little opposition by individual CHPers to partaking in this study" (2015, p. 21). I faced a similar positive reaction. However, I need to mention some challenges I faced, partially due to purposeful sampling. One of them is the underrepresentation of certain groups. The socio-demographic analysis of my participants demonstrates a drastic predominance of interviewees who completed post-secondary education; several of them have M.A./M.S. or Ph.D. degrees. I assume that many of McKeen's interviewees also had a high level of education and were interested in somebody's else Ph.D. project. Those of my participants, who have either a Master's or a Ph.D. degree, volunteered to provide me with details of their theses and were curious about the methodology of my project. My intention to have more participants from other socioeconomic

strata was partially achieved, but it was challenging. A few individuals whom I contacted refused or could not find time to participate in an interview.

I endeavoured to recruit an equal number of male and female participants in each of the target groups, but I was not always able to reach this objective. For some target groups, it is explained by an unequal gender representation at some leadership positions, including as a school principal or a member of the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA). However, in most target groups, the explanation of the disproportion in the number of male and female interviewees lies in the level of response to the interview invitations, which were sent to an equal amount of men and women. Thus, for example, although numerically the number of male school teachers outnumbered by female teachers; and gender ratio in the schools is close to approximate Canadian (ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education (%) in Canada was reported at 1.0033 % in 2018, according to the World Bank collection of development indicators; in *Canada - Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education*, n.d.), nine female and eighteen male graduates, ten male and five female teachers, professors and members of the League volunteered to be interviewed.

Target groups of participants were changed and adjusted during the fieldwork. First, the original number of interviewees in some target groups was decreased because of the overlap of the participants' identities. Practically all but a few teachers and representatives of the Canadian Reformed schools are graduates of the studied schools. Also, this number of interviews was enough because the saturation point was achieved, and the evidence was consistent and repetitive. It is important to mark that the saturation point was identified based not only on interviews; the data gathered by other methods were also taken into consideration. Alan Bryman (2012) recommended to "combine sampling, data collection and data analysis, rather than treating them

as separate stages in a linear process" (p. 18). Hence, I considered the sampling to be adequate when I reached "the point in coding when you find that no new codes occur in the data. There are mounting instances of the same codes, but no new ones" (Urquhart, 2012, p. 194), and "additional data do not lead to any new emergent themes" (Given, 2015, p. 78). Themes and topics for this thesis inductively emerged from the analysis of empirical work; as well as were informed by literature review.

While planning my fieldwork, I thought that my target groups covered all types of participants, which are significant for my research. During the interview process, I realized that adding interviewees from other Reformed Churches with Dutch roots would benefit my study. Thus, one of my thesis' sub-sections investigates the evolution of Dutch Reformed schools' approach to pluralism and openness to interfaith dialogue during the last five decades. Inclusion of experience in the interfaith dialogue of the Christian Reformed Churches in North America (CRCNA) and the United Reformed Church in North America (URCNA) adds new perspectives and a better understanding of Dutch Calvinist vision of interfaith relations. Nine members of CRCNA and two members of URCNA involved in Christian-Muslim dialogue were interviewed for this study.

3.5.3 Content analysis

To cross-check the data obtained, I triangulated the information gathered due to interviews with data collected through another method. I employed content analysis of policy, court and educational documents, which reflected theological and social platforms of the Reformed schools and the Reformed community's involvement in court proceedings devoted to religious schools. I also employed a thematic analysis (Boyatzis, 1998; Marshall & Rossman, 1999; Pawson, 1995) to analyze the Reformed printed mass media. The samples for this research were selected from *The*

Clarion – the Canadian Reformed magazine (established in 1964, published twice per month) that covers events in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches; the *Banner*, the official magazine of CRCNA, which has a monthly publication as well as an online content; from a magazine, *Comment*, and a newspaper, the *Christian Courier*, of which a significant part of the readership are members of CRCNA. Due to the wealth of information and time constraints of the study, the analysis was limited to the period from 2009 to 2019. I searched using the keywords related to my research: "Dutch," "Reformed," "Calvinist," and "Christian school". This resulted in a list of articles which comprise at least one of the keywords.

The analysis of these documents and mass media was supplemented by the content analysis of social media. It was important to pay attention to online space where the Canadian Reformed community members feel themselves more freely than in real life and may express their personal perspective in a more straight and honest manner than offline. It was necessary to investigate not only online life "by examining blogs, chat rooms, and other online interactions," but also to "notice the role online spaces play in the everyday lives" of community members (Hallett & Barber, 2014, p. 314) as it was proven that "individuals who engage in CMC [a computer-mediated communication] tend to be more involved in the local community (joining organizations, attending events, etc.) than those who do not participate online" (p. 316). I employed a content-analysis of ARPA's website and a Facebook group that provide information about ARPA's activities across Canada, and also give space for comments, usually made by the members of the Reformed Churches; the blog organized by representatives of CanRC (who disagree with their Church's stance on evolution) to discuss contradictory theological and social issues there (www.reformedacademic.blogspot.ca); Facebook pages of several Reformed Churches' youth members to gain a better insight into which topics and questions young generation of the Reformed

community is interested in; and a Facebook group uniting female members of CanRC to analyze their interests and main concerns. Furthermore, I paid particular attention to the social platforms organized by ex-members of the Reformed Churches (www.new.exchristian.net, www.leavethecanrc.blogspot.ca) to gain a more complex and diverse picture of the Reformed community and its faith-based school system. These blogs also helped me find interviewees for my study.

3.6. Access, ethical issues and informed consent

"The need for moral and ethical awareness" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 75) is a fundamental principle of scientific inquiry. Research ethics implies the principles that we use to make decisions about which practices are acceptable in any research project. My ethics proposal included a detailed description of the project's goals and methods, as well as identified the benefits of the research to the participants and the society, the potential risks for participants, and how participants' confidentiality and anonymity would be protected. It was reviewed and approved by the University of Ottawa's Research Ethics Board. The development of the ethics proposal allowed me to scrutinize my methods and helped me to design and conduct my research. The reflections on the research ethics "contribute[d] to ensuring that [my] research is viable and adheres to practices that [would] minimize the chances of [my] research causing harm to participants" (Hammett et al., 2015, p. 120). A written agreement between me as a researcher and each participant as an interviewee in the form of a consent form was developed. All participants were informed about the nature of the research and their right to withdraw from it at any time. Also, the consent form explained "the purpose of the research, the anticipated duration and extent of subjects' involvement … assurances of confidentiality, the potential risks and benefits to subjects,

and a means whereby subjects can gain further information from the investigator" (Schwandt, p. 74).

I kept in mind which potential harm my study might cause and tried to avoid it. After participants had been familiarized with the goals of the research and gave consent that they participate voluntarily, they were free to withdraw at any time and aware of the risks that the study might entail (Haggerty, 2004, p. 404). The guaranteed anonymity and confidentiality not only helped participants avoid some unpleasant situations inside their community if they unveiled the latter's shortcomings but also allowed them to feel more comfortable to criticize the Reformed school system than if they would do it openly. Several respondents mentioned that they were very glad to be interviewed for the study because they either had shared their concerns in the community but felt they were not heard or they did not want to "come out" with their more progressive ideas than their spouse or family members had. Therefore, while appreciating the trust which participants expressed towards me as a researcher, I was extremely thoughtful about protecting the confidentiality of the sources. To be precise, I adhere to that understanding that anonymity is "one form of confidentiality – that of keeping participants' identities secret", while confidentiality "also includes keeping private what is said by the participants, something only achievable through researchers choosing not to share parts of the data" (Saunders et al., 2015, p. 617). Studies say that "[m]aintaining confidentiality of participants' data in qualitative studies often requires more effort than in quantitative research" (Gray et al., 2016, p. 171).

Given the small size of the Canadian Reformed community and a high rate of endogamy there, confidentiality would not be achieved just through the anonymity of the participants. Therefore, except for the fact that identities of interviewees are safeguarded due to the code numbers that are used, part of the participants' personal information is presented in the thesis

anonymously *(Appendix A)*. First, a place of birth of participants is not revealed. The research might state whether the interviewee was born in Canada or in the Netherlands (to identify the generation of immigration) and whether the person is living now in Ontario or not. Second, only the field of studies and the domain in which the individual is currently working are indicated, without the identification of a specific educational institution or organization. Third, in the case of Target Group 1 (graduates), a decade of graduation is referred to instead of a year of graduation. In case of Target Groups 2 and 3 (current or retired teachers and principals; and the staff representatives of the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, the Theological Canadian Reformed Seminary, and the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies), it is indicated at which decade the individual works(ed) in a Canadian Reformed school / the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College / the Theological Seminary. In case of Target Group 4 (parents who did not graduate themselves a Canadian Reformed school, but their children have/had been enrolled), it is indicated at which decade or if currently children of the interviewed parents are (were) studying in Canadian Reformed schools. In case of Target Group 5 (ARPA's representatives), the research indicates at which decade or if currently the interviewee is a member of ARPA Canada. Hence, these decisions regarding the privacy of some information about the participants were made "while maintaining the richness and depth of the participants' perspectives" (Gray et al., p. 171). Therefore, although today there is a tendency in qualitative research to give participants pseudonyms because numbers are impersonal (Kitzinger & Samuel, 2014), I assigned all participants with an identifying number "00" instead of choosing a pseudonym for each interviewee due to following reasons. First, there is no storytelling, individual narrative or a detailed presentation of any participant; second, the use of numerical identifiers can make an easier reading of the text. The reason for the lack of 'voices' or storytelling is explained

by the need to ensure confidentiality and anonymity of participants who are members of a tightly knit community. Moreover, sometimes it was necessary to use two different identifying numbers for the same person to exclude "some potentially identifiable aspect of a narrative in some circumstances" (Saunders et al., 2015, p. 622). The reason is that a reader might recognize a person, especially if being part of a small community while combining a few extracts spoken by the same person, even when "neither extract on its own threaten[s] anonymity" (p. 621).

I took special precautions to ensure that the information relating to the participants' identity is stored appropriately. All tapes have been stored in the locked case and as password-protected documents on a secure PC.

Special attention was paid to the means of addressing sensitive and controversial topics such as sexual education, abortion, interfaith and intercultural relations, and political activism (Goodrum et al., 2007; Possick, 2009; Walls et al., 2010). Therefore, besides protecting the confidentiality of participants, I also anticipated the potential for the distress that some of the participants could experience during or after an interview. Thus, I assessed that there could be an anxiety that somebody in the community would realize who has released some negative information about that community, or some psychological discomfort after remembering some events or experiences from the participants' life. In order to respond to these situations, first, the participants were informed that they could stop interview process at any time and that confidentiality is guaranteed; second, in case of psychological discomfort, the participants would be referred to support groups, like online support groups Journey Free - Recovery from Harmful Religion, www.new.exchristian.net and also various Mood Disorders Mutual Support Groups in Ottawa, Hamilton or Burlington.

Furthermore, some studies show that the raising of sensitive topics in research might lead to both ethical ("institutional ethical approval, the inherent power disparity between the parties and the interviewer/interviewee relationship itself") and methodological challenges ("sample size and access, … appropriate questioning, the accurate and "truthful" representation of voice") (Fahie, 2014, p. 21). A "sensitive" study has previously been identified as a study that "potentially poses for those involved a substantial threat, the emergence of which renders problematic for the researcher and/or the researched the collection, holding and/or the dissemination of research data" (Lee & Renzetti, 1990, p. 512). Besides the potential for harm and threat, "sensitive" research also means engagement of various ethical issues, including but not limited to domestic violence, political activism, homicide and rape, mental health, death, traumatic childbirth, murder and abortion, and sexual health (Fahie, p. 21). Among sensitive topics raised in many interviews conducted for this study are pro-choice activism, sex education, birth control, abortion, euthanasia, and religious belief.

A semi-structured interview seems to be an appropriate method to study sensitive topics. This could be explained by suggesting that highly structured interviews would not allow "flexibility and follow-up questions" (McCarthy, 1998, p. 140), which could be necessary to facilitate a dialogue on a sensitive issue. At the same time, unstructured interviews with open-ended questions would not facilitate the discussion because for many people, it is difficult to talk about above-mentioned topics "freely and at length" (p. 140). In the case of this research, many participants seemed to be ready to discuss controversial topics because they got used to reflect on them by themselves or be asked about them by the outside-community individuals. At the same time, it was beneficial to attend some informal meetings and spend time after or before the interview with the participant and their family. Some participants felt freer while not being

recorded, and we could have a more informal discussion or even a debate. A few community members admitted that they liked to be challenged by controversial issues and non-Christian or secular arguments.

From my perspective as researcher, a few ethical challenges occurred because of the controversial issues addressed in the thesis. First, it is important to build rapport with the participants, because it would "enhance the researcher's access to the interviewees' lives" (Schmied et al., 2011, p. 13) and "produce non-hierarchical relationships" (Clarke, 2006, p. 21). Indicators of a successful rapport are "the depth and quality of information and experiences revealed by participants" (Schmied et al., 2011, p. 13). To build a trusting relationship, scholars argue that there should be a two-way exchange of personal information between a participant and a researcher. That is why I was prepared for the situation that I would need "to answer personal questions as well as ask them" (McCarthy, 1998, p. 141). In reality, nobody asked me any questions which made me feel uncomfortable. Many participants asked me about the reason for my immigration to Canada, and why and how not having Dutch roots I chose the topic of my thesis. Also, many conversations started or ended with an interviewee's question about my religious identity. I believe that my affiliation with one of the traditional Christian Churches benefited my relationship with the community members. Although, to be fair, nobody asked me complex theological or ideological questions to clarify my stance on a variety of controversial for Christians of different denominations questions, such as, but not limited to, abortion, euthanasia, same-sex relations, etc. Only once, when I was invited to conduct an interview at the home of one of the participants, his eleven or twelve-year-old daughter after knowing that I am of Russian descent asked me what I think about the current at that time American president Donald Trump. She was very serious in knowing about my political opinion. Her parents were a bit confused and

explained to their child that it was not polite to ask guests about their political views. However, for me, it was a sign that generalizations about predominant political views in traditional Christian communities are very wrong. To be honest with my interviewees, I did not position myself as an advocate of Christian communities or Canadian Reformed schools, or that "I am on their side". At the same time, I did not hide my theoretical framework and emphasized that I was interested in studying faith-based schools, the positive and negative outcomes they bring to their students and graduates rather than questioning their existence. I think it was important for all interviewees to know that my goal is to explore how the Canadian Reformed school system works and analyze its strong and weak sides rather than to address the issue of having religious schools in Canadian society. I also realized that many interviewees had seen value of this research for their own community in order to improve and adjust their schools to prepare their children better for succeeding in the modern Canadian society. Moreover, most interviewees asked me to share a link to my thesis when it is released because they are interested in reading how other members of their community answered my interview questions. I think this was one of the reasons why participants endeavoured to answer the questions honestly. While respecting and appreciating participant's trust in me as a researcher, at the same time I have been careful not to include those specific stories in the thesis which might uncover the interviewees' identities.

When possible, I tried to conduct as many interviews as possible in person. Slightly more than 60% of interviews were face-to-face, one-third of them were done in the family home, and two-thirds were conducted at work (the majority of the interviewees were teachers or professors, and interviews took place in educational institutions) and a few — in a public space such as a coffee shop. The rest of the interviews, mainly because of technical reasons (location of interviewees in another province/country or in an area not reachable by public transport), were

conducted via Skype and very rarely by phone. Given the sensitivity of the questions raised in the interview, I offered interviewees to choose a place for the meeting, "where they could most comfortably participate in an interview" (Schmied et al., 2011, p. 14). As mentioned above, the predominant majority, except for a few, were conducted in a private environment. A few interviewees asked their spouse to join them.

3.7. Data analysis

All interviews were recorded on a portable digital recorder to increase the reliability of answers. I used NVivo software as a convenient way to store qualitative data and write memos for further analysis. It enabled me to sort gathered information in systematic order and to code it. I coded "largely at the descriptive level" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 27). Interviews conducted helped me identify the main topics for the thesis. Themes for the interviews' interpretation and analysis were developed after the fieldwork had been completed. In total, I collected several hundreds of pages of scanned chapters, articles, copies of blog posts, and other materials, and 129.5 hours of recorded interviews. The interviews lasted from thirty-five minutes to slightly more than three hours. The length of most interviews is between one hour fifteen minutes and two hours. Through the data collection and familiarity with the topic after transcribing the interviews, I used "categorical aggregation" (Stake, 1995) and identified the major recurring themes for the analysis; they are the following: "history of the schools' establishment", "pluralism", "Islam", "dialogue", "Dutchness", "identity retention", "parental role", "curriculum", "schools' funding", "politics", "sex-ed", "pro-life", "critical thinking", "evolution". I then used "direct interpretation" (Stake, 1995) to draw meaning from single instances and develop some generalizations. Interpretation, as "the act of clarifying, explicating, or explaining the meaning of some phenomenon" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 133), is considered to be "the primary characteristic of qualitative research" (Stake, p. 42),

because the researcher offers not the findings, but "assertions", according to Frederick Erickson (1986). Hence, the aim of the data analysis is "to generate these assertions, largely through induction" (Erickson, 1986, p. 96). It means that the interpretations presented in this thesis were constructed based on the participants' realities and my understanding of their realities. In alignment with the epistemology of this research, "reality is not an objective entity; rather, there are multiple interpretations of reality" (Merriam, 1998, p. 22). Therefore, for me as a researcher, it was important to explore and understand the way Canadian Reformed schools' graduates and representatives of their educational system "make sense of their world and their experiences in this world" (Yazan, 2015, p. 137). Given that the final product, the thesis, is "yet another interpretation by the researcher of others' views filtered through" their own" (Merriam, 1998, p. 22), I tried to be aware of the potential biases and reflected on my prejudgment while trying to distinguish "enabling from disabling prejudice" (Schwandt, 2001, p. 16).

We cannot deny that the researcher's worldview, values, expectations "influence the conduct and conclusions of the study" (Maxwell, 2009, p. 243). So, it can become a challenge for validity. In quantitative studies, "validity determines whether the research truly measures that which it was intended to measure or how truthful the research results are" (Bashir et al., 2008, p. 37). In contrast, some qualitative researchers argue that the term "validity" is not applicable to qualitative research. At the same time, they recognize the need for some qualifying check of their research. Although the ability to generalize findings to wider groups and circumstances is one of the most common tests of validity for quantitative research, in some cases, Patton (2001) says, generalizability can also be one of the criteria for a qualitative study. According to Merriam (1998), there are six strategies for improving validity. They are "triangulation, member checks, long-term observation, peer examination, participatory research, and disclosure of researcher bias" (Yazan,

p. 141). In the case of my thesis, some key theological aspects of the study were reviewed by a Canadian Reformed pastor. Also, this thesis allows "reviewers to trace from conclusions back to the initial research questions, or from questions to the conclusions" (Baškarada, 2013, p. 5) that confirms that the chain of evidence is maintained. Triangulation, as a typical strategy for improving the validity and reliability of qualitative research or evaluation of its findings, was also used in this research. It is one of the tools to reduce "the risk of chance associations and of systematic biases" (Maxwell, 2009, p. 245). It means a collection of information from a diverse range of individuals and settings, using a variety of methods.

3.8. Restrictions/Limiting Conditions

This research has some limitations. Firstly, this study is small-scaled and not statistically representative. However, it gives substantial insight into thoughts and worldviews of the researched group and explains their attitudes and behaviours. Secondly, the scope of this project is limited to the province of Ontario. This is because the vast majority of Dutch Reformed immigrants and their descendants settled and live in this province. Although "the distribution of the Dutch population is far more pervasive than the Christian Reformed group", "distinct clusters of both groups are evident in the south-east quadrant of the province" (Donovan et al., 2011, p. 340). Moreover, 15 out of 27 schools established by CanRC's members are located in Ontario (4 in Alberta; 6 in British Columbia; 2 in Manitoba); and 2,530 students are studying in Ontario Canadian Reformed schools out of 5,128 studying in Canadian Reformed schools in total (LCRSS, 2019, p. 3). Also, there are major differences in legislation on schooling across Canadian provinces. That is why a study across provinces would have to be comparative rather than a descriptive analysis of Reformed schools. In addition, for purely practical reasons, focusing only on the Ontario province gave me easier access to interviewees. However, there is a sizable number

of Canadian Reformed Christians in Alberta and British Columbia who have also graduated Canadian Reformed schools there. Some Canadian Reformed schools in Alberta have a close relationship with the local ARPA group. Therefore, there is clearly a need for further research of the Canadian Reformed schools' graduates outside Ontario to present a more complete picture of them.

Chapter 4. Dutch identity of Canadian Reformed Christians

4.1. Pillarization as a cause for the intertwinement of Dutch ethnicity and Reformed tradition

The ethnic identity of Dutch Protestant immigrants in North America has long had a deep religious foundation (Zwart, 2010). Despite the perception of Dutch immigrants by most Canadians as a single entity, the idea of "a homogeneous cohort of postwar Dutch immigrants … is a myth" (Schryer, 1998, p. 309). Previous studies of Dutch immigrants and their descendants, as well as my research, show that a statement by Robert Swierenga (1991) asserting that "economics explains the 'why' of immigration, but religion largely determines the 'how' of immigration and its effects" (p. 164) applies to Dutch Reformed immigrants whose ethnic identity is preserved by their religious foundation.

I strongly agree with Donald L. Horowitz, who underscores that although "ethnic identity is generally acquired at birth," "it is a matter of degree" (1975, p. 113). As a result, a study of ethnic groups requires an understanding of "the contextual character of ethnic identity" (p. 139) and the social context. Thus, there is a distinction between individual identity and social identity. I will study the social aspects of ethnic identity, keeping in mind that social identity is defined as "that *part* of an individual's self-concept which derives from his knowledge of his membership of a social group (or groups) together with the value and emotional significance attached to that membership" (Tajfel, 1981, p. 251). In order to narrow it to an ethnic identity, I would rely on the definition presented by Immanuel Wallerstein: "Membership in an ethnic group is a matter of social definition, an interplay of the self-definition of members and the definition of other groups" (1960, p. 131). Therefore, I will analyze individuals' perceptions of their ethnic identity as members of one particular ethnic group – the Dutch. I intend to trace the changes of this ethnic

group's boundaries throughout the generations of Dutch Reformed immigrants who are members of the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC).

One of the factors which can explain why Dutch Calvinists have retained their ethnic identity much longer than other immigrants with Dutch roots is their commitment to the idea of pillarization, which was present in the Netherlands at the time of their emigration. This term was coined by sociologist Jakob Pieter Kruijt and means a vertical separation of the Dutch society into "pillars" (*zuilen*) "by cross-cutting class-based and religious cleavages into four dominant interest groups or blocs around which 'virtually all politically and socially relevant organizations and group affiliations'" were formed (Lijphart, 1968, p. 23). Lijphart argues that from the end of the 19th century until the 1960s, four equal columns supported Dutch society, they are: Catholics, Protestants, socialists, and liberals. However, "only the Catholic and Protestant pillars provided the cradle-to-grave embeddedness" (Schrover, 2010, p. 332). The majority of the Protestant group was composed of Reformed Christians.

There are different theoretical explanations of "pillarization" in sociological and historical studies. Basing his ideas on the idea of pillarization, Arend Lijphart developed a theory of "consociational democracy". S. J. R. Noel (1971, p. 15) proposed an explanation of this theory and the politics of "fragmented but stable democracies" (in such countries as Austria, Belgium, the Netherlands and Switzerland) that is based on this theory. Noel underscores the importance of political elites, which overcome the effects of cultural fragmentation. He points out that, according to Lijphart, "given the existence of strong limited identities or subcultures, and the absence of a national consensus on symbols and goals, it becomes the task of the political leaders of these separate subcultures to practice accommodation at the elite level in order to maintain the national political system and make it work" (p. 16). Concurring with Lijphart, Marcel Maussen underlines

that pillarization contributed to the idea that "faith-based civil society organizations are an important aspect of a 'free society,' that society is inherently pluralistic and that liberal or secular organizations should not be privileged or disadvantaged over religious ones, and, finally, that 'neutrality' of the state implies the government acting in an even-handed way toward all different denominations" (2013, p. 9).

Maussen's explanations of the reasons of depillarization can represent the context in which Dutch Reformed Canadians live today. Maussen points out that the process of pillarization was fuelled by individualization, growing social mobility, "the emergence of new political cleavages (women's, Marxist, and students' movements)," new political parties, new mass media (television at that time and digital media today) and the decline in church membership (p. 9). Maussen recognizes one important societal change in Dutch society, which also takes place in contemporary Canada and which Reformed Dutch Canadians experience. "Post-war immigration introduced new forms of ethnic and religious diversity and especially growing importance of Islam. The 'diversification' of the religious landscape was further strengthened with the growing popularity of other Christian churches … and religious movements" (Maussen, p. 10). It means that in both the Netherlands and Canada, pillarization could not serve itself in its pure form, only in a changed and modified shape.

Several scholars have developed a detailed critique of Lijphart's theory. Among the most significant arguments presented by Van Schendelen are the following ones. First, he finds a lack of conceptual clarity in the key concepts used by Lijphart. Van Schendelen (1983) argues that Lijphart gives ambiguous definitions of "stability", "democracy", and "accommodation". Second, it is difficult to measure important elements of consociational democracy, because "the main concepts are loosely formulated" and "often based on implicit theoretical thinking" (p. 11). The

third point of critique can be expressed by the remark of Jurg Steiner, who called Lijphart's method "impressionistic" (p. 11). It means that Lijphart's study lacks scientific attributes: "both his study on the Netherlands and his cross-national analysis of plural societies are hardly based on results obtained after the application of methods and techniques of empirical research" (p. 11). Nevertheless, Lijphart's research is of interest to our study because, despite its shortcomings, it reflects a unique co-existence of parallel institutions that were performing the same tasks but for different religious or class-based groups for more than a half of a century, firstly in the Netherlands and afterwards for particular religious communities in Canada.

Van Dijk's investigation of an intra-ethnic difference in ethnic persistence among Dutch Canadians implies that Calvinists have had higher levels of self-sufficiency than other groups of Dutch immigrants. For instance, while the majority of Dutch Canadian Roman Catholics and non-Calvinist Protestants decided to belong to Canadian churches, Dutch Calvinists founded a great variety of Reformed Churches on the Canadian religious scene. Moreover, "[t]he Christian Reformed Church of North America and Christian immigration societies assisted Calvinists who wanted to keep their religious identity by living in enclaves" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 64). Catholic Church officials tried to prevent pillarization of Canadian society while resisting the creation of ethnic parishes (Van Dijk, 2001). Canadian bishops encouraged Dutch Roman Catholic immigrants toward rapid assimilation: "They wanted all Catholic immigrants from various ethnic backgrounds to join existing Catholic parishes and send their children to existing Catholic schools" (Van Dijk, p. 68). As a result, the Catholic Church was a "powerful de-ethnicizing force" (Palmer, 1975, p. 179), because, in Canada, "the Canadian Catholic hierarchy always had to be on the alert both for the development of ethnic churches and for any resultant discord between French-speaking and English-speaking church officials" (Van den Hoonaard, 1991, p. 54). This approach

fits with the broader ideology of the Roman Catholic Church before the Second Vatican Council (1962-1965): "[t]raditionally, the Vatican forbade the formation of separate churches based on language or ethnicity" (Schrover, 2010, p. 340). As a result, besides a few Dutch Canadian Catholic organizations established, Dutch Catholic parishes have never emerged in Canada despite the arrival of 60,000 Catholic immigrants from the Netherlands (Van Stekelenburg, 1983). This led to two different settlement patterns for Dutch immigrants: Catholics tended to assimilate rapidly, while Calvinists were following the idea of pillarization and created parallel institutions. These two groups never forged strong social ties, and therefore, never established a cohesive national Dutch community.

The realization of the principle of pillarization in Canada was inspired by Dutch Reformed theology. The idea of pillarization was influenced by *Sphere Sovereignty*, a famous work by Abraham Kuyper, the founder of neo-Calvinism and prime minister of the Netherlands from 1901–1905. According to Kuyper, if different spheres develop freely and remain mutually autonomous, humanity will flourish (Bratt, 2013, p. 130). For Kuyper, "each sphere has its own unique character, its own place in God's plan for the creation" (Mouw, 2011, p. 23) and its own function. A Kuyperian scholar Gordon J. Spykman describes this idea more precisely: "each sphere has its own identity, its own unique task, its own God-given prerogatives. On each God has conferred its own peculiar right of existence and reason for existence" (in Mouw, 2011, p. 24). In opposition to the idea of isolation, Abraham Kuyper furthermore asserts that Reformed Christians should form their own entities within each of these spheres and fulfill "their Christian service … within existing society" (Goudzwaard, 1986, p. 259). The idea of pillarization and other Kuyperian thoughts were transferred by Dutch immigrants and flourished to some extent in Canada. As in their homeland, Reformed Christians established their own organizations, educational institutions, newspapers,

farmers' association, businessmen's association, counselling agencies, a political party, etc. in Canada too. That is why for some time, mainly from the 1950s to 1980s, the autonomy of Dutch Reformed community could be defined by Raymond Breton's term "institutional completeness". This concept refers to a degree to which an "ethnic community could perform all the services required by its members" (Breton, 1964, p. 194). Some of these have served the Dutch Canadian community into the present, among them an extensive parallel schooling system.

Since the middle of the 19th century, Dutch American Protestants made a living as "an ethnic and religious community" (Ester, 2006, p. 25). An expert on Dutch immigration in North America, Robert Swierenga (2002) describes the 1920s and 1930s as the "'golden age' of Chicago's Dutch Calvinists" (p. 25). His description confirms the realization of the principle of pillarization in North America: "For professional services the Dutch preferred fellow church members": "most Dutch took their savings to Dutch-owned banks, bought homes through Dutch realtors, drew up their wills with Dutch attorneys, went to Dutch doctors and dentists", but, as consumers, they "patronized non-Dutch merchants if the price was right or they had no other option" (Swierenga, 2002, p. 26). The principle of pillarization might have had a stricter application in the Netherlands, as it is described in the lecture by Dutch historian D. J. van der Veen reminiscing on his experience of growing up in the Netherlands of the 1950s:

> I am Protestant by birth, and when I talk to my Catholic peers, it seems to us that we are from different countries.… When I was born, my mother was helped by a Protestant midwife. …I went to a Protestant school… we didn't go to the greengrocer next door, who was Catholic, because we imagined that the quality was no good and the prices exorbitant, but rather, we went several blocks away to the Protestant greengrocer where they had exactly the same things, but we believed that the quality and the prices were far better… we went to Protestant summer camps… and followed the Protestant radio, newspapers… (quoted in Taussig, 2009, p. 24).

The community, church, and education acted similarly as "the institutional pillars *par excellence* of Dutch American Protestant immigration groups" (Ester, p. 26). Thus, a "religiously and

ethnically based 'exclusive' local institutional infrastructure" (p. 25) guaranteed the community's isolationist character and maintained its ethnic homogeneity and religious heritage. Gradually, Dutch immigrants Americanized, however, "building and maintaining solid social networks [has remained a] culturally recognizable feature of many Dutch American communities" (p. 25).

Nevertheless, religious identity has played a much more important role than ethnic in the establishment of Dutch Reformed churches and certain organizations. Hans Krabbendam argues that "the stronger the religious identity of a group, the less it has a need for an explicit ethnic identity" (2003, p. 17). That is why Dutch American Protestants "were more interested in justifying their existence than in making ethnic statements" (Krabbendam, 2003, p. 17). As a result, "there is not much deeply rooted Dutch ethnicity behind the cultural paraphernalia of tulips, windmills, and Sinterklaas", Peter Ester says (2006, p. 27). Franc Schryer (1998) gives a similar conclusion to his study of Dutch immigrants in Ontario. He states that for the majority of Dutch Reformed Christians, faith rather than ethnicity is the main uniting feature of their communities. That is why religious communities title themselves Reformed (Canadian Reformed in our case) rather than Dutch or Dutch Reformed. At the same time, even though Dutch Canadian Calvinists often name their institutions "Christian" and refuse to label them "Dutch", "their non-Dutch neighbours continue to talk about 'Dutch schools' and 'Dutch churches' when talking about Reformed institutions" (Schryer, 1998, p. 286). Van Belle (1991) concurs: "those activities which the Reformed consider religious (participating in their church, maintaining Christian schools and Christian organizations), the average Canadian considers typically Dutch" (p. 330).

4.2. Constructing a Collective Memory

As previous studies on Dutch immigration show (and my research on Dutch Calvinists confirms), the second and subsequent generations of Dutch immigrants perceive their Dutch

ethnicity "overwhelmingly positive" (Van Belle, 1991, p. 323): "Being Dutch makes them feel unique. … it gives them roots" (p. 323). They "speak with pride about the way the Dutch suffered through the war, the way they hid the Jews, helped the hungry and refused to collaborate with the Nazis" (p. 323). The analysis of my interviews and conversations with CanRC members shows that many of them are proud of their Dutch ancestry. A recent graduate of the Canadian Reformed schooling system and a third-generation immigrant remembers his courageous grandparents who participated in the underground resistance movement, and that his Opa [grandfather] "was not afraid of death" (A15). He says that many members of the community experience pride of the first-generation Dutch immigrants and admire their sacrifices:

> …mainly farmers and workers moved from the Netherlands. They worked very hard, did successful businesses, started schools, churches and families, and in the next generation carried that on. Now there is the third generation – many go to university. There is a lot of feeling that we've done something good. (A15)

To the question about the benefits which Canadian Reformed schools and the community brought to Canadian society, many interviewees responded using similar words. They emphasized "hard work", "honesty", and strong traditional and family values:

> …all immigrants contributed significantly to this country, specifically our community. You cannot go anywhere without meeting our people. … One of the principal advisors of Harper [former prime minister of Canada] was one of our people. In all areas of life: hard-working, honest, tolerant, very few people in jail, stay away from drugs, very low incidence of marital problems … all because you have the right focus here, the right background. (A36)

Another interviewee points out that "many Canadian Reformed, who are in business, have employees working for them, and they are taking care of them" (A47). The respondent (A47) emphasizes honesty as one of the main significant features of the community members. That is why, another interviewee claims, he is very enthusiastic about how significant the contribution of the Canadian Reformed community to society could be and will be if and when their voluntarism and generosity are channeled to the outside their community mission work (A43). He says that

Canadian Reformed people are "generally very generous," and many of them have very strong leadership and organizational skills: "just regular people know how to start activities" (A43). The respondent (A43) believes that the community is moving towards that direction given the engagement of Streetlight Christian Church (see more details about this Church in chapter 5) and how many individual refugees were sponsored by Canadian Reformed people.

Furthermore, theological education has always been respected in the community. A participant (A43) noticed that there are Dutch books of poetry written by farmers. It is not accidental, he explained. He reminisced his father's youth of forty-fifty years ago and mentioned that "Canadian Reformed farm boys… knew how to write an essay" (A43). Every Friday night, they would have Bible study, and each of them was supposed at some point to do a presentation, lead and facilitate a discussion, then all of them were writing essays. An interviewee claimed that those young farmers had a high level of literacy and were "deep theological thinkers" (A43).

Although historical reviews emphasize that, in general, Dutch immigrants were welcomed in Canada because they were seen as hard-working immigrants of a "preferred" race that would assimilate quickly and benefit the country, the first-generation Dutch have mixed memories about how they were accepted, especially because of their strong accent. A second-generation Dutch member of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) shared:

> When [Dutch post-war] immigrants came here, they started with very little in terms of resources, so the focus was on survival. And a lot of stories that you would hear are stories about being discriminated against by the established circle of Canadian citizens. When they first came, they were called Dutcheese; they were given the lowest jobs; some gate-keeping was going on. But during the last 30 to 40 years, they've established themselves quite nicely. (A52)

Several years ago, Redeemer University College (organized by Dutch neo-Calvinists) in Ancaster, Ontario, "made a play derived from interviews with various Dutch immigrants. They put all the stories they gathered in one play, called *Stranger in the Land*. And this play tried to

communicate the general experience of immigrants when they first came. And it was very mixed" (A52). For the most part, "Dutch immigrants have generally been held in high regard by Canadians" and "have lived up to the clean, hard-working, law-abiding stereotype that Canadians have cherished for over a hundred years and have presented no real threat to the societal status quo" (Ganzevoort, 1998, p. 102). Hence, in comparison to other immigrant groups, the Dutch "have not suffered social, economic or political discrimination" (p. 102). Although their economic success "led to mild outbreaks of envy, their commitment to integration or even assimilation has blunted any significant opposition to their inclusion" (p. 102). Given these points and memories about the respectable and brave behaviour of Dutch ancestors during World War II and their dignified handling of the challenges faced after arrival to Canada, post-war Dutch immigrants and their descendants have constructed an honourable image of their community. This image has been fed by, on the whole, positive treatment by non-Dutch Canadians, especially since the second generation has integrated successfully. Because the social structure of the group forms the collective memory (Gensburger, 2016; Halbwachs, 1980), and "our memories are articulated together with the memories of others in the well-ordered interplay of reciprocal images" (Bastide, 2007 [1960], p. 343), it is both the Dutch Reformed community and the surrounding society that shaped the memory about post-war Dutch immigrants in Canada.

The topic of Dutch participation in and contribution to the victory in World War II is still vital in Dutch communities and the collective memory of Canadians. Canadian national media still pays attention to the ethnicity of Reformed congregations with a high concentration of post-war Dutch immigrants. It usually covers these congregations during the celebrations or issues of new books related to World War II. One of the main topics of newspaper articles are the settlement and integration of post-war immigrants in Canada (Dekkema, 2015, p. 6; De Jong, 2005, p. 18), and

the commemoration of the end of World War II (Gessell, 2008, p. 4; Hevesi, 2007, p. 24; Kleiss, 2006, p. 6; Polak, 2008, p. 4). There are numerous interviews with Dutch veterans who were on the front line or served on the home front. My research, however, shows that CanRC members return to the memories about World War II much more rarely than members of CRCNA. For example, Reformed media, produced predominantly by CRCNA members, periodically reminds that CRCNA congregations comprise a sizable number of individuals of Dutch ancestry across Canada and the USA whose families were touched by the war. The newspaper *Christian Courier* and an official magazine of the CRCNA, *The Banner* (a monthly publication with content available online as well), publish articles devoted to the history of oppression and occupation of the Netherlands during World War II, emphasizing the significant role the Reformed Church played in the settlement of post-war Dutch immigrants in Canada (Rang, 2015, pp. 1-2). They also include touching family stories, which give a better insight into the sufferings and struggles that the Dutch faced because of Nazi intervention.

While *Clarion - The Canadian Reformed Magazine* published by the members of the Canadian and American Reformed Churches (CanRC) also often alludes to the Dutch background of the communities, it usually discusses their theology and history rather than social life. For instance, a critical analysis of Dutch colonizers is presented in the historical articles in *Clarion*. A series of articles (2012) by a former pastor of the Providence Canadian Reformed Church (Hamilton, Ontario) Dr. Wes Bredenhof and a minister-emeritus of the Reformed Church in Groningen-West (the Netherlands) Dr. Leen Joosse described the "early Canadian [Reformed] Church history", and the difference between French and Dutch Calvinists. In this context, Bredenhof and Joosse elaborate on the relationship between colonizers and the Indigenous population:

> The French Huguenots in Canada had a unique self-understanding with regard to being Calvinists and how they interacted with First Nations during the seventeenth century. This was different from the Reformed Dutch in the new world. Whereas the Dutch focused on planting churches (for example, in today's New York State), French Calvinists were engaged merely in spreading the gospel in Canada. (Bredenhof & Joosse, 2012*a*, p. 232)

Bredenhof and Joosse further explain how Huguenot merchants, who "may have had the money to build and develop Reformed churches in Canada" in the 17th century, did not do it (2012*b*, p. 310). The reason is that in contrast to the Roman Catholic Church, which "fostered an ecclesiastical colonialism" and promoted "an aggressive … form of politicized Christianity in Canada that lasted centuries" (p. 310), Huguenots "did not aggressively promote their beliefs either by missionary efforts or with the sword" (p. 310).

Furthermore, several articles give a detailed explanation of the relations between the CanRC and their sister churches in the Netherlands, which often have a form of restricted contact. For example, a series of articles entitled *Developments in our Dutch Sister Churches and Lessons to be Learned* in the *Clarion* magazine points out to the "considerable obstacles to a closer relationship with the Netherlands Reformed Churches" (Van Dam, 2015*a*, p. 359). The reasons for numerous barriers to unity are seen by Van Dam in "the dominant civic culture" which impacts Dutch churches, among them are the following: a change of a worship service to make it "more user friendly and more appealing to outsiders" (2015*b*, p. 387) and "acceptance of scientific theory instead of the plain teaching of the Word of God in matters of evolution and creation" (p. 389). As a result, Van Dam infers, Dutch experience gives an important lesson to the CanRC "to be faithful to Scripture and vigilant with respect to cultural influences" (p. 387). A similar conclusion is presented in *Christian Renewal* in a review of a book published by Mees te Velde and Gerhard H. Visscher: "Our Dutch brothers have not adequately distinguished between pre-modern foundationalism (employed by Calvin, Beza, and post-Reformation scholastics) and modern foundationalism (essentially redefined and redirected by the Enlightenment). The former is rooted

in an appropriate application of reason for interpreting Scripture. The latter has provoked in our day a kind of perspectivalism in postmodern thought that yields intellectual relativism. This inadequate distinguishing leads to some false dilemmas" (Kloosterman, 2015, p. 20). The progressive mentality of the current Netherlands has become one of the reasons why CanRC members lean to identify themselves as Canadians rather than Dutch Canadians. A recent graduate says that since the Netherlands legalized euthanasia, she does not want to be associated with the Dutch (A5). The participant argues that for her, the homeland of her grandparents from both sides "is going down a hill", and she is "not very proud of the Netherlands" (A5). The strong position of Canadian Reformed Christians against euthanasia will be discussed in chapter 7. An encounter with current Dutch people allows the community members to see that the CanRC is much stricter than Reformed Christians in the contemporary Netherlands. Exchange programs between Dutch and Canadian Reformed schools demonstrate a significant difference between the Dutch Reformed immigrant community in Canada and the Reformed Christianity that has become much more progressive in the Netherlands:

> When I was going to Guido de Brès [High School], we had exchange students come from the Netherlands, and we were not actually aware of how strict we were. And, so, we actually had an incident. They had a band, and they decided to perform for school, and they sang *California Vacations*, which got a lot of negative backlash … So, I don't really know what the consequences were for them, because I was not part of it, but I know that they were reprimanded or punished somehow. (A6)

At the same time, there are some particular features that connect the CanRC to its Dutch background. One of them is that members are called to attend the worship twice on Sunday. The first service is usually in the morning, and the second one is after lunch. One of the worship services is to preach the Heidelberg Catechism: the sermon is devoted "to one of the fifty-two Lord's Days of the Heidelberg Catechism; thus, ministers cover the theological encyclopedia once per year" (Reid, 2017, p. 215). Some CanRC pastors explain it by that because Sunday is the

Lord's day. Hence, they criticize the Liberated churches in the Netherlands for that afternoon worship services are sparsely attended in comparison to the morning ones and for the fact that the catechism is not being preached in every church anymore (Moesker, 2017). Today there are a few CanRC pastors who would consider introducing one longer service on Sunday, taking into consideration that in certain congregations, commuting twice per day might be very inconvenient for families living far away from the church. There is another tradition that is inherently Dutch Reformed but perceived as simply Christian by the Canadian Reformed community. A thesis by Joanne Van Dijk (1996) mentions that an "almost exclusively Calvinist custom is reading the Bible at mealtimes": "Ninety-eight percent of [Dutch Canadian] Calvinist parents [first-generation immigrants] and 77.8 percent of Calvinist children [second-generation immigrants] observe this custom, but very few [Dutch] Catholics do so" (p. 173). Reading the Bible at mealtimes has been customary in many Dutch Reformed families since the 17th century (Schenkeveld, 1991, p. 39; see also Gadourek, 1956).

To sum up, Reformed printed media rarely use the word "Dutch", because these communities put faith first before their ethnic identity. Yet the Reformed tradition seems to consolidate and retain ethnic identity across several generations. Reformed Christians "were much more likely to marry within their faith and ethnic group and retained a higher level of ethnic identity" (Van Dijk, 2001, p. 70). A high level of endogamy in marriages still takes place in some Reformed Churches, including the CanRC. Professor of Dogmatology at Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary Jason Van Vliet explains that there is "strong encouragement to look for a husband or a wife in your own church community because then you will have a similar understanding of God, of children, of that how Church works" (2015). It relates to "the understanding of marriage and that husband, and a wife should, of course, love each other, but also

they should be spiritually and religiously on the same page" (Van Vliet, 2015). This explains why a high number of authors writing for Reformed magazines (*Clarion* is the most obvious example) have Dutch surnames. The last names of teachers in Canadian Reformed schools and the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, as well as of graduates (for instance, on the photographs hanging on the schools' walls such as Guido de Brès), similarly show that all but a few have Dutch last names – at least for now. The insularity of this Dutch community leads to the situation that in schools, students perceive each other "through whom you are related to" (A4). Many people are treated depending on which family they are from. One recent graduate believes that some of her classmates looked down at her, in her view, because she went to a public school before joining a Canadian Reformed school and also because she did not have a Dutch last name (A4).

4.3. "Dutchness" as a problem

Because of both the ecumenical and evangelical movements in the late 1970s through the 1980s, there was a call to rethink the ethnic identity in some Reformed denominations, which had grown due to massive post-war Dutch immigration and became ethnically diverse later. Thus, for example, Andrew Kuyvenhoven (1980), an editor of the *Banner*, the publication of the Christian Reformed Church (CRCNA), claimed that "it's time to burn the wooden shoes". Some CanRC congregations have become ethnically diverse too. An article about Cloverdale Canadian Reformed Church in Surrey, British Columbia, says that the "church directory reflects welcome variety with names like Chang, Burongo, Jubenvill, Shei, and Dong nestled comfortably among the Vans, Velds, and Hofs" (Vandergugten, 2014, p. 255). It might be explained that, demographically, Surrey differs drastically from Southern Ontario, where ethnic diversity is quite limited in Canadian Reformed churches. According to Census, with a population of 517,887 individuals, Surrey contains 14,815 people of Dutch origin and 102,065 individuals who identify

themselves as of East and Southeast Asian origins (Statistics Canada, 2016*b*). Regardless of possible biases, there has not been an antipathy to attract other ethnicities to the church since the CanRC was established:

> The desire to become diverse was evidenced in the earliest donation collection box – a red-roofed miniature church – that had painted on its roof in both Dutch and English, "Preach the gospel to every creature" (Mark 16:15). (Vandergugten, 2014, p. 254)

The majority of Canadian Reformed churches, especially in Ontario, have not yet realized this intention. Moreover, the "Dutchness" of the church has become a problem, according to some members, ex-members, and theologians of the CanRC. According to the research conducted by historian Frederica G. Oosterhoff, "the number of people joining the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) is smaller than those leaving them. The growth that the federation enjoys (an average of 2.9% per year over the past fifty-five years, but less than 1% over the last four) is the result of natural increase" (2006, p. 42). One of the main reasons why some members leave the CanRC for another (often another Reformed) church is "the ethnic colouring of the CanRC": it is seen as "too insular and isolationist"; "the entire CanRC community is perceived as part of a Dutch subculture. Especially young people often see this as a serious drawback" (Oosterhoff, 2006*a*, p. 43). This feature of the CanRC was confirmed by a former member who left the CanRC twenty years ago; he said that the church "had strong Dutch affiliation" (A13). Another ex-member, who left the CanRC ten years ago, remarks that while Reformed churches in the Netherlands have evolved, Dutch Reformed immigrants "who came [to Canada] in the 1950s are stuck to their roots, stuck to what was familiar to them at that time, and you see the ramifications of that today because the second and third and fourth generations don't have that connection and want to be a wider Canadian community and start to move away from that ideologies" (A9). As a result, an interviewee continues, "the community is maybe shifting its identity": young members have "started to identify more with Canadian identity than Dutch mentality" (A9). It is equally

interesting that several interviewees, including those who are involved in the Canadian Reformed schooling system, have children who have left the CanRC for other Reformed churches because of different causes; marriage to a person from another Christian community and insularity of the church are the most common reasons named by participants. Nevertheless, one teacher emphasizes that during the last two generations, the Church has become more Canadian, and "there is much more open-mindedness towards people not of Dutch background" (A7). The previous two generations, who organized the CanRC and established Canadian Reformed schools,

> …really wanted to protect their own people from secular influences as much as possible. And, so, you would send your kids to private schools so that you could control how exactly to teach them and keep them safe from the world's influences or even keep them safe from heresies or other Christian opinions. (A7)

During the last two generations, the situation has changed, partially due to social transformations:

> I think we see the trend where in order to make a living, in order to survive in this country, you have to go out of that [Canadian Reformed] environment, you must interact with others. If you want to go to industry or economics, or politics, or whatever profession, there are far more opportunities in the world outside the Dutch Reformed community. (A7)

Still, the insularity of the Canadian Reformed community is visible through its weak evangelical mission, which could potentially enrich the church by adding ethno-cultural diversity (it will be discussed in chapter 6) and a strong focus on its inward interests. Several interviewees likewise pointed out that the Canadian Reformed community thinks much about the community itself, and CanRC members volunteer for the community, in schools in particular, but not that much in the outside world. One of the reasons for this is that many members of the Canadian Reformed community are very busy keeping schools going:

> They all work hard to maintain the system – it's great because it's good Christian training for the children. At the same time, unfortunately, as a result, we don't have a lot of natural contact with people in our neighbourhood, in our city. (A40)

While the Blessings Church (one of the CanRC's congregations in Hamilton) tries "to reach out more purposefully to the society in Hamilton", "the other congregations," one of the interviewees

says, "would agree that we have that calling … but [they do not have] the same urge to actually do it" (A40). Several respondents mentioned the Canadian Reformed community's self-centeredness as a serious barrier that the Church and its members should recognize and start addressing. One of the respondents explains that "a neo-Calvinistic community is often an intellectual experience" that lacks "personal relationship with Christ", evangelization, and hunger for diversity of the community (A34).

Having an independent seminary is an idea that traces its roots back to the Netherlands. The Theological Education Committee of the Deputies for Ecclesiastical Unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches (2003) argued that 2 Timothy 2:2 (*And the things you have heard me say in the presence of many witnesses entrust to reliable men who will also be qualified to teach others*. (NIV)) was a matter of serious discussion in the Netherlands:

> This is also the only Scripture that is specifically mentioned in the official account of the discussions that led to the decision of the 1891 Synod of the churches of the Secession to maintain the principle that the church is called to maintain their own training for the ministry of the Word. (Theological Education Committee of the Deputies for Ecclesiastical Unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches, 2003, p. 1)

Therefore, the document concludes, "those holding office in the church must train office bearers for the church. Office bearers ordained by the church work on behalf of the church" (p. 3). According to one of the study participants, Canadian Reformed school teachers tend to "quote people that they agree with" (A34). As a result, while they are teaching, they refer to those theologians that they studied in the theological college or heard from a minister. Among those mentioned by the participant are Herman Bavinck[iii] and Albert Wolters[iv] (A34). The objective of creating independent schools and hiring only those teachers who are CanRC members and graduated the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College can be explained by the same reasons as the establishment of a seminary in Hamilton. The schools are still oriented towards teaching children of the Canadian Reformed community:

> And they [parents] … feel that if you open the doors to Evangelical Christians or Baptists or to the other denominations, then that Reformed niche will be lost. …If you have a group of four families of Reformed Baptists, for example, sitting in the room, and you want to say, "…because the Canadian Reformed doctrine says that infant baptism shows the grace of God better," that is hard to do when you have others with a different worldview. (A32)

While it is recognized as a strong feature of the Canadian Reformed educational institutions because they provide "an incredible sense of community" and commitment to the Reformed worldview, some interviewees find the intention to keep schools only for the community problematic. A graduate of a Canadian Reformed school of the 1990s and currently a member of another Reformed church explains that the decision to keep schools only for the members of the CanRC, the United Reformed Church in North America (URCNA) and Free Reformed Church of North America (FRCNA), with a few exceptions in the current schools, is "driven more by fear than driven by a particular vision"; and is also an endeavour to orient themselves towards what "a grandfather said fifty years ago" (A25):

> …because of a strong focus on theology, I am not sure that they are cutting edge educationally. … I am not sure that they have a vision for effective, dynamic, Christ-centered education. (A25)

As a result, this interviewee disagrees with the exclusivity of the Canadian Reformed school system:

> I always think, "how could they give these gifts away, the gift of Christ-centered education? How could they not bless others with this gift?!" I think, their narrow focus to be just a tiny denominational school is a strength because there is a strong sense of community and support. I think there could be a bigger blessing to both other Christians and even to the broader community. But I am probably in the minority in that. (A25)

Members or former members of the CanRC, who went through the Christian Reformed educational system in either Hamilton District Christian High School or Redeemer University College (predominantly led by members of the Christian Reformed Church) or elsewhere, often express their interest in opening schools to a broader community. The reason for this is the perceived openness of the Christian Reformed Church (CRC) and its community to the world as they adhere to their Kuyperian heritage. A detailed comparative analysis of the differences between the CanRC

and the CRCNA is presented in chapter 6. Some other interviewees state that it is important to require teachers to be members of either the Canadian Reformed or United Reformed churches while the student population should not be limited. The latter condition is supported by an argument that Canadian Reformed children will benefit if they are exposed to diversity: they will be better prepared for living in Canadian society, because, as the respondent comments, "it is not healthy to grow up not having a Black or a Chinese friend" (A44). One of the consequences of the Canadian Reformed schools' closeness is the preservation of Dutch ethnicity in schools.

To conclude, a few participants mentioned that the Dutch background of their Christian community could not be forgotten:

> …we came from Holland. And you find strength just in working together, living together, also in faith together. … Then you have a Dutch community … in Canada, and it continues through the generations. But now we have the fourth generation of immigrants. It's a big question: how do we maintain our strength that we have as a Christian community? We don't want to be Dutch, we want to be Christian, but we … have Dutch background… (A40).

4.4. Symbolic ethnicity

The majority of the interviewees do not see the current connection between the Canadian Reformed community and the Netherlands and show little interest in the "Dutchness" of the church. Ethnic identity does resurface. As one of the respondents puts it, "when the World Cup is on, then we would cheer for the Netherlands" (A18). In Canadian Reformed schools, students study about the Netherlands just a bit during the church history class (A18). While there are still exchange programs with Dutch schools, they can sometimes yield unexpected results: a respondent mentioned that recently a few Dutch exchange students in a Canadian Reformed high school surprised the teachers by their much more liberal stance than that of the Canadian Reformed Churches.

I concur with sociologists who underscore that some aspects of ethnicity evolve across generations and depend on historical and socio-political contexts (Breton et al., 1977, p. 198; Nahirney & Fishman, 1965). For instance, Dutch Canadians exchanged their language for English very quickly. In contrast to the USA, where churches "maintained the use of the Dutch language" for a long time, Dutch Calvinist churches in Canada demonstrated "the quick and almost immediate transition to at least using some English" (Zwart, 2010, p. 148). Although some denominations tried to preserve the Dutch tongue (for instance, the Netherlands Reformed Congregations – NRC) "as an instrument to slow down the process of Americanization" (van Marle, 2006, p. 126), most Dutch immigrants endeavoured to become part of North American society and not to stay in complete isolation. So, if some churches still have services in Dutch, it is only for the first generation of immigrants. The language was "connected with the phase of settlement," not theology (Krabbendam & Harinck, 2006, p. 13).

In North America, "preaching, teaching, and religious reading were conducted in Dutch until well into the eighteenth century" (Van Lieburg, 2009, p. 163). "The weakening of the relationship between Holland and America" (p. 164) was one of the factors in the dominance of English culture. Also, every immigrant group has to adapt in some way to the new society. As a result, even "orthodox Protestants sacrificed the native tongue to the common English" (Krabbendam & Harinck, p. 13). While the RCA and the CRCNA had pastors coming from the Netherlands (which entailed preservation of Dutch language for some time), later, American and Canadian seminaries were established to prepare pastors in North America. For instance, a second-generation Dutch immigrant says:

> I can speak Dutch, but, it's interesting, I speak more in the dialect which we immigrated to Canada with. When I come to the Netherlands, I see that now the language is different, it has changed. I'm still speaking in the old language. As to my children, I would like them to know Dutch. But they don't have a lot of interest in it. However, three of them

> participated in the exchange program between Canadian [Reformed] and Dutch Christian schools and travelled to Holland for four weeks. Then students from Holland came here for four weeks. So, they did feel their roots there. And one of my daughters, J., likes to come to Holland in the summer to visit her host family. But, for instance, the children of my cousin want to go to the Netherlands to living there. But I think it's a rare situation here, in the Dutch community. (A50)

One of the reasons why the Dutch language has been preserved for some time in the CanRC is because the texts of "old writers" — theologians from the seventieth and eighteenth centuries (van Marle, 2006, p. 127) — are only in Dutch. A current pastor says:

> There was a very strong desire in the community among Dutch immigrants to be Canadians, not to be Dutchmen who happened to live in Canada. And they recognized that they still have a Dutch accent, they still like Dutch cuisine, but in their mindset, most of them have become Canadians. My father is a very good example. He came here, and he was determined that he would not speak Dutch in his house. I told my father later that I regretted his decision: he could have grown us up to be bilingual. But he considered that we were a Canadian family, so we shouldn't speak Dutch in the family. It was kept secret from the children that my parents spoke in Dutch. But later, I started on my own to learn Dutch because I wanted to become a pastor, and I knew that a lot of good theological books were in Dutch. And we, with other students, asked old people to teach us Dutch grammar. But that was an exception. In the community as a whole, there was not a strong desire to keep up the Dutch language. (A49)

The CanRC has strong roots in Dutch theology, although the church's members do not always know and recognize it: "Of course, Reformed socio-political ideas are more Dutch, under the influence of Abraham Kuyper. But even in our community, if you ask the members whom they associate a Reformed church with, they will not say "Kuyper", I am sure they would say "John Calvin"" (A49). Nevertheless, one of the seminary professors interviewed said that while a few decades ago, Dutch theology, even if translated in English, was crucial for the community, today, the orientation of both students and professors is much less towards the Netherlands. The connections have become much stronger with North America. This, however, means that the CanRC does not follow the path of the Liberated Church in the Netherlands. First, the CanRC is a part of the Reformed ecumenicity movement in North America, which is different from Europe.

Second, there is a more orthodox scholarship in North America than in Europe (Rev. Jack Moesker, 2017).

As mentioned before, the attitude towards ethnicity varies depending on the generation. Also, as it was mentioned in the literature review (chapter 2), racial identity influences the way and for how long ethnicity is being preserved. A recent study by Herbert Gans (2014) emphasizes that "even before the end of the twentieth century, it seemed likely that the LGEs [late generation ethnics] themselves had disappeared or would eventually do so" (p. 2). However, although some ethnic groups are "no longer … visible on the national scene", "the total disappearance of the current LGEs may take a quite a while" (p. 2). On the individual level, n-generation immigrants might construct their ethnic identity without participation in existing ethnic organizations or practicing an ethnic culture (Gans, 1994, p. 578). Hence, Herbert Gans introduces the concept of "symbolic ethnicity" (1979) which is "characterized by a nostalgic allegiance to the culture of the immigrant generation, or that of the old country; a love for and a pride in a tradition that can be felt without having to be incorporated in everyday behavior" (p. 9). Although, says Gans, symbolic ethnicity may emerge among immigrants, it is more likely to be common among the third generation (p. 13). For instance, being born in Canada, the n-generation of Dutch immigrants in the CanRC have a positive view of some symbols of Dutch ethnicity such as: "the cosy atmosphere in Dutch Canadian homes, soup on Sunday, wooden shoes, etc." (Van Belle, 1991, p. 324). Also, as a visible example, Gans refers to ethnic food as a source of ethnic symbols. Like in many other ethnic communities, ethnic food has survived many generations of Dutch Calvinists. Even those interviewees who consider themselves to be Canadian told about their love of Dutch meals. For example, a second-generation immigrant says that although "we are a part of the Canadian community, [w]e like Dutch food, especially we eat a lot of potatoes" (A50). A CanRC pastor who

is a second-generation immigrant, confirms: "As to Dutch cuisine, even now the third and fourth generations know it. For instance, Dutch people cook *oliebollen* (these are Dutch donuts); it's special for New Year's Eve. And I don't know how many generations will make *oliebollen*, because it's not only following Dutch tradition; it's very tasty" (A49). Furthermore, members of the CanRC know Dutch words titling food so that even in the *Clarion* magazine, these words are not being translated to English. Thus, during a celebration at Cloverdale Canadian Reformed Church, "there was food, lots of food, also vintage: gevulde speculaas, almond filled mocha tarts, stroop wafels, and bowls of droppies and peppermints!" (Vandergugten, 2014, p. 254). Another respondent comments that Duthness "comes out in little ways" (A43). For example, in the *Clarion* magazine, the back page used to have a rubric called "soup and buns". The respondent says that only a Dutch person would understand it. He says that on Saturdays, Dutch women would make a soup, and a lot of Dutch people, including the young generation, would eat it with a bun (A43). Another example given by this respondent is that many Canadian Reformed people, because of a Dutch habit, would eat dessert before lunch, "this is the way they got raised" (A43).

Dutchness can also be found in particular features of the character of Canadian Reformed community members:

> A couple of years ago, I went to Holland with my Dad…. There are certain things when you go to Holland that [make you think]: Oh wow, we still do a lot of these things – there is still the connection in terms of your food, and I even think how they look at life, their work ethic, …how they do not talk about emotions. (A34)

This interviewee mentioned that Dutch Reformed people do not talk a lot about sex (A34), and this might be just one of the reasons of the community's perspective on how to teach sex-ed. It will be discussed in detail in chapter 7.

Graduates of the 1990s experience a stronger Dutchness in the community than graduates of the last two decades. One of the reasons is that the former graduates' parents are more likely to

be first-generation immigrants and have maintained their Dutch heritage at home. One respondent told about a strong but implicit influence of Dutch culture on the Canadian Reformed community, which has made it distinct from other Christian communities:

> Back in the 1950s, they worked very hard, made significant sacrifices to establish their churches because they needed a very specific type of Christianity, in their minds …and that could be accomplished if they started a Canadian Reformed church. … And added to this is Dutch culture, the Dutch personality. …My grandparents are all Dutch, and my mother would make a joke about this: in a very stoic Dutch tradition, you don't talk about things like death, religion or sex. You know that they are there, but you just pretend that they don't exist. There's a real stoicism to the Dutch character. This translates in the way we worship in our churches – very-very prescribed mass or worship. … I am not saying that it is bad, it is just very particular. But we're not called Dutch, we are called Canadian. But we have tremendous influence of Dutch culture. (A38)

4.5. Feeling of belonging

As historical studies show, Calvinist immigrants from the Netherlands perceived their move to North America and "subsequent building of institutions … [as] the work of a God who had the whole world in his hands" (Zwart, p. 138). Dutch Calvinists thought that they were called to make Canada a better place. "The Red Deer Alberta Christian Reformed Church's twenty-fifth anniversary book [1976] noted how 'the Lord used this movement [the migration] to build a church in Canada'" (Zwart, p. 139). Hence, both the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Dutch Calvinist immigrants believed that "God wanted them to go to North America and wanted them to establish themselves in the institutions of the ethnic group" (p. 139). This approach has been maintained by Calvinists of the Canadian Reformed Churches until nowadays. They still maintain their schools that train their children "not just for a Dutch community; we train them for the world" (A8).

The participants state that Dutch influence is being felt mainly at home and in church rather than in school. Many interviewees remember that when they were children, they would sing Dutch songs, and they read Dutch books to their children (A6). A pastor of the CanRC, also a second-generation immigrant, confirms this:

> …my children perceive themselves to be Canadian. And I don't find a lot of young people in the community searching for their identity. Their identity is in their faith, in their family, in their Canadian citizenship. They don't need to go to the Netherlands to find their identity. But we in our community are reading to children some Dutch books, already translated in English. … But these books are not in the first place; they are not a must. We don't think that they should be read to the children in order to teach them Dutch heritage. These books are something, which we enjoy as we enjoy Dutch cuisine. The grandparents were familiar with these books, and they wanted to share them with their children and grandchildren because they knew these books. (A49)

Because many teachers in Canadian Reformed schools are from the Netherlands or of Dutch ancestry, they would talk a bit about the Netherlands and Dutch culture, but it is not prescribed in the curriculum (A6). Another recent graduate mentioned that there was not much Dutch influence in the school, and there was not a focus on the history of the Canadian Reformed Churches; the discussion was predominantly about Christianity overall and the Reformed tradition in particular (A39).

Websites of some CanRC's congregations provide sufficient evidence of their identification with Canada rather than with Dutch roots:

> After World War II, there was a large increase in people from the Netherlands who immigrated to Canada and the USA. The Canadian Reformed Churches came into being with these immigrants. … As some may consider us a "Dutch" church, it might be good to mention that while a majority of the members are descended from these Dutch immigrants, we are thoroughly Canadian and have members from diverse cultural backgrounds. (Providence Canadian Reformed Church, n.d., para.3)

Many participants, when asked about their ethnic identity, without hesitation, identified themselves as Canadians or Canadians with Dutch roots. Some mentioned that they perceived themselves to be Canadian but were aware of their Dutch ancestry. The latter is visible through the certain foods they eat, that come from their Dutch background, or through an interest to visit primarily Holland above other European countries (A40). Similar results were observed by Joanne Van Dijk, who studied both Catholic and Calvinist Dutch post-war immigrants: "Most of the elderly respondents have made some progress in the transition from one reference group to another,

and now think of themselves as Dutch Canadians. However, as one would expect, more parents than children think of themselves as Dutch or as Dutch Canadians. …very few of the children see themselves as Dutch, and the majority said that they were Dutch Canadians, Canadians of Dutch descent, or Canadian children of Dutch parents" (1996, pp. 176-177). The steady diminishing of Dutch identity among second-generation immigrants is explained by the fact that Dutch immigrants embraced the English language and Canada as their country (A40). The predominant majority of interviewees are proud Canadians for "what we offer as a nation" (A42). One current teacher says: "I live in a country that is amazing; it is beautiful, and it is large. I am relatively well-to-do. We are a country that is very affluent. I know that there are people who are not affluent, but I think that they could be" (A40). Another second-generation participant says that she is happy living in Canada: "I always say 'thank you' to my parents for coming here. Why exactly, I don't know. I know that church life here is better. Just I think in the Netherlands, they have fallen away from God's way. We are stricter, more conservative. But I think here conservatism will also overcome…" (A50). As it is the case for many other Canadian residents (and even for sociologists), it was hard for respondents to define what being a Canadian means. The majority of answers given resembled those provided by secular Canadians. Politeness, a welcoming environment, and tolerance were among the characteristics most often mentioned. One of the graduates shared:

> I really like being Canadian. I like travelling…. Being Canadian – a lot of the world kind of respects you because you are polite and open-minded. … everyone when you are travelling [says], "Oh, you are Canadian!" and they immediately have a good impression of you. (A4)

There is no evidence of nostalgic feelings for the Netherlands or a desire for a physical return there. Also, a profound sense of belonging to Canada and the absence of discriminatory practices against the second and subsequent generations of Dutch Reformed immigrants, who are

white European and have English as their native language, are another crucial cause for gradual termination of ethnic identity:

> In the absence of constant and enduring emphasis on ethnic identity, such as the defensive identity that is second nature to members of racial and ethnic groups subject to prejudice, discrimination and physical attack, LGE [late generation ethnics] identity is apt to be an ephemeral reality. Sometimes, it may even be little more than a label. (Gans, 2014, p. 5)

Ethnic identities can be expressed in actions and feelings, but late generation ethnics, Gans concludes, "probably stick almost entirely to feelings" (2014, p. 6). Even regarding Dutch cheese, a private Facebook group created by women from the CanRC shows that women who have Dutch surnames encourage their female community members to buy local Canadian cheese in order to "support our local farmers" or "Canadian dairy farmers", because "that may become more important now that supply management is at stake". Only a few people might mention that "Canadians don't know how to make a really good Dutch Gouda".

However, in contrast to CRCNA members, members of the CanRC do not usually have much interaction with recent newcomers, although several Canadian Reformed churches have sponsored Syrian refugees, both Christian and Muslim. Posts on the ARPA website partially reflect CanRC members' attitudes regarding immigration to Canada and towards specific groups of immigrants. One of the posts refers to the study conducted by the Fraser Institute which concludes that, in the short term, while "immigrants and all Canadians on average consume roughly the same value of government services", because "under Canada's welfare-state regime personal income tax rates are progressive", "the immigrants with these low incomes on average pay only a little more than half what all Canadians pay" (Grubel & Grady, 2011, p. 40). As a result, "the total fiscal cost to the government of recent immigrants ranges from $16.3 billion to $23.6 billion annually" (p. 40). The suggestion is to replace the current way of selecting immigrants based mainly on their professional skills, knowledge of official languages, and level of education with the "reliance on

legitimate job offers issued by approved Canadian employers" (p. 41). It suggests changing the policy allowing family members as landed immigrants, because "the humanitarian argument in favour of family-class immigrants has won and… the economic arguments against it have been ignored" (p. 38). The reason mentioned is that they often become a burden on the Canadian economy. The article mentions that parents and grandparents usually have only a few years left to work and pay taxes; "[s]iblings often do not possess the qualities needed to become economic immigrants and are thus likely to become a burden on Canadian taxpayers. Otherwise, they could have entered Canada as economic immigrants" (pp. 37-38). This approach is important for the analysis given that the studied community has a recent immigration history. The majority of CanRC members have either parents or grandparents who left the Netherlands for Canada. This topic of attitude towards *others* will be discussed in chapter 6, which also touches on Christian-Muslim dialogue.

To conclude, in the case of Dutch Reformed immigrants, religion — specifically Calvinism — has been the reinforcing ethnic identity. However, symbolic aspects of "Dutchness" have been preserved in the Canadian Reformed community independently of the community's strong educational institutions, including Dutch games and food. Many outsiders still perceive institutions built by the community as being Dutch, including Canadian Reformed schools. A high level of endogamy in the community is a significant reason for that. For example, a political party established in 1987 by Dutch Reformed immigrants, the Christian Heritage Party (CHP), is still associated with Dutch ethnicity. This political party will be discussed in more detail in chapter 8. While a recent study by Herbert Gans (2014) warns sociologists to avoid neglecting the predictable end of late-generation European ethnicity in North America, he admits that those communities that have not experienced much of ethnic intermarriages and "still bear identifiable ethnic names and

are therefore so identified by strangers might be reminded" (p. 3) of their ethnic heritage. The Canadian Reformed community seems to be a good example of such groups. The components of this group's ethnic identity, though, seem to be largely symbolic. While significant aspects of ethnic identity remain, most have faded away, as is the usual pattern for multigenerational ethno-immigrant groups. Religion has played an interesting double-edged sword role in this process: it continues to bind the community together to a significant degree, but since the homeland culture (of the Netherlands) has digressed so much from the preferred social and political values of many Dutch Reformed Canadians, it has prompted some to reject "Dutchness" as an identity. This is not an unprecedented phenomenon, with many historical migrant groups rejecting what they see as the declining or corrupt homeland faith and culture. Most interesting for this study is how the ethno-religious educational system constructed by Dutch immigrants has dealt with this complex and evolving communal reality over generations. This is what the next chapters discuss.

Chapter 5. Canadian Reformed schools: origins and challenges

5.1. Canadian Reformed perspective on faith-based school system: legal, philosophical, and theological arguments

5.1.1. Historical overview

As mentioned in chapter 2, the reason why Canadian Reformed Christians, most of whom are of Dutch descent, wish to have separate Christian schools can be traced back to the Netherlands' history of "a century long struggle … to set up their own educational institutions and … [gain] financial equality with their secular counterparts" (Sikkema, 2010, abstract; see also Peetoom, 1983; Prinsen, 2000). Thus, the first Schools Act (1806) in the Netherlands "provided an excellent basis for building up a system of public primary schools" (Kossmann, 1978, p. 96) and made Dutch schools shift "from Calvinist, biblically-based teaching, to teaching with a more generic focus on virtues and proper moral conduct" (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 32). Because the education did not adhere anymore to the Reformed doctrines, it motivated the Reformed groups to become involved in discussions and political campaigns to change this situation. In the 1870s, Dutch neo-Calvinist historian and politician Groen van Prinsterer, later followed by Abraham Kuyper, promoted a "facultative division at the state school" (Van Prinsterer, 1876, cited in Van Essen & Lubbegienna, 1990, p. 84). By that van Prinsterer meant an establishment of government funded separate schools for every religious denomination. What is important to emphasize is that he supported the rights of all religious communities rather than only his own dominant, Calvinist group. After a series of political debates and the coalition of the Anti-Revolutionary Party organized by van Prinsterer with other political parties to lobby their interest in separate schools, the 1917 legislation adopted an equal funding for both public and religious schools. To summarize, Glenn (2011) distinguishes three periods of school struggles, or *schoolstrijd*, in the Netherlands:

> …from 1830 to 1848 it was about challenging the state monopoly in the name of educational freedom; from 1848 to 1857 it was about the character of public schools, whether they would be Christian or not; while from 1857 to 1917 it was about the effort to put private Christian schools on the same footing with public schools. (p. 127)

Some researchers argue that the 1917 schools reform served as an impulse for a more intense development of the pillarization principle in Dutch society:

> State funding further institutionalized existing social divisions that had been developing for over a century in the Netherlands. The funding of schools meant that each group could reinforce its beliefs and raise its own leaders to maintain their social groups. Pillarization, or *verzuiling*, was firmly entrenched in Dutch society. (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 37)

Fallon (2000) correctly notices that the studies, which explore why Dutch Reformed people have formed a counterculture as an alternative to mainstream Canadian society, conclude that the Reformed experience "is but the Canadian transplantation of a neo-Calvinist, Kuyperian philosophy", but they focus "almost exclusively on the largest of the Reformed denominations, the Christian Reformed" (p. 8). Fallon laments that "the image of high minded immigrants consistently applying Kuyperian philosophy to Canadian society is just a little too tidy, too uncomfortably filo-pietistic" (p. 8). While it is recognized that the Dutch Orthodox Reformed immigrant group in Canada was not a monolithic entity, the predominant majority of studies on Dutch Reformed immigrants in North America relate to the Dutch Orthodox Reformed Christians that joined the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA). In fact, under the Reformed umbrella there has been a wide diversity of Dutch Orthodox Reformed Churches in Canada, including the "Reformed Church of America (now known as the Reformed Church of Canada), the Canadian Reformed Churches (sometimes referred to as the Liberated or Article 31 Churches), the Protestant Reformed, the Netherlands Reformed Congregations, the Free Reformed, and the Orthodox or United Christian Reformed" (Fallon, p. 4). One of the possible reasons is the proportion of neo-Calvinists to the rest of Dutch postwar immigrants:

> Koops (2010) found that of the Reformed people who immigrated, almost 20% were members of the Gereformeerde Kerk [many followers of which joined the CRCNA]. Although members of the Gereformeerde Kerk accounted for only 7% of the Dutch population at the time, they made up roughly one fifth of all Dutch immigrants to Canada. (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 43)

The literature review presented in chapter 2 shows that many studies on Dutch Reformed immigrants in Canada focus on Christian Reformed communities that were influenced by Kuyperian views and illustrate their adherence to an all-embracing "life- and world-view" (Kuyper, 1898/2009, p. 11). While Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches federation has also been influenced by neo-Calvinism, it disagrees with certain Kuyperian ideas. The comparison of the CanRC to the CRCNA in this thesis is therefore necessary and inevitable and will be presented in more detail in chapter 6.

Sikkema's research (2010) shows that the goals of the schools established by Canadian Reformed and Christian Reformed individuals differ in important aspects. Abraham Kuyper encouraged his followers to adjust Calvinist theology to the modern time: "[w]hat the descendants of the old Dutch Calvinists as well as of the Pilgrim fathers have to do, is not to copy the past, as if Calvinism were a petrifaction, but to go back to the living root of the Calvinist plant, to clean and to water it and so to cause it to bud and to blossom once more, now fully in accordance with our actual life in these modern times, and with the demands of the times to come" (1898/2009, p. 171). As a result, Christian schools organized by CRCNA members emphasize cultural engagement and cultural transformation (Sikkema, 2010). They intend to prepare their students for their involvement in the reformation of culture (Sikkema, 2010). This seems to be one of the crucial differences between these schools and those built and run by Canadian Reformed Christians. Without referring to Canadian Reformed schools particularly, Sikkema contrasts Christian Reformed educational institutions with evangelical counterparts, the identity of which is characterized by pietism, "a rather strict moral and legalistic code of conduct and dress" (Prinsen, 2000, p. 10). Although cultural

isolation and pietistic withdrawal from the world are seen as common features of the pre-Kuyperian Christian Reformed community (mainly located in the USA where Dutch Reformed people immigrated during the 19th century), they can also be found in the Canadian Reformed federation and in some Christian Reformed communities in Canada. Sikkema (2010) argues that for some members of the CRCNA, "isolation is still considered to be the strength.... But whether or not such isolation refers to a separation from the world on the peripheries of their communities or to a necessary separation from the worldliness infiltrating such communities remains a matter of debate" (p. 101). A CRCNA interviewee stated that once the neo-Calvinist theologian and politician Groen van Prinsterer stated that "our power lies in our isolation". By that he meant that everybody needs a nurturing base in order to grow into society. But this nurturing base must not be an absolute container of all of life. It must be the launching pad for the rest of life" (A54). The interviewee recognizes that some members of both the CRCNA and CanRC interpret the statement in the following way: "the bubble is to last forever; we are secure only in the bubble" (A54). Therefore, they "need Christian schools to protect … kids rather than to launch [them]" (A54). According to the interviewee, the CanRC might have it as a theological principle to integrate, but, still, there are not enough people in the community who would be interested in realizing it in practice. The interviewee, who without doubt has a strong Kuyperian worldview and is interested in engaging with the world for bringing the common good, says that "we [all] need to learn living in grace rather than perfection, living in community rather than isolation and purity. … God puts us together to learn from each other" (A54). He believes that an isolationist attitude will eventually break down, if not because of theological reasons, then due to "socializing that is happening in our society and church as the millennials are more socialized than indoctrinated" (A54).

There is still some uncertainty as to why Canadian Reformed schools were established and what precisely constitutes their main philosophical basis (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.2; Stoffels, 2012). Some sociologists (Schryer, 1998) suggest that the decision of Canadian Reformed church members to establish their own schools could be explained by the history of pillarization in the Netherlands (the concept of *pillarization* is analyzed in detail in the section 4.1). Reformed theologians oppose this theory, arguing that "whoever speaks of 'Dutch schools' or is of the opinion that we want to have 'our own' schools because that is the idea which we brought along when immigrating into Canada, proves thereby that he does not have the slightest idea of the specific character of a Reformed school and of the reasons why Reformed people pay double rather than send their children to an allegedly neutral public school" (Van Oene, 1975, p. 227). Furthermore, the data shows that members of the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt) (GKNv) (Reformed Churches of the Netherlands – Liberated), which split from the Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (GKN) in 1944[v], and members of the Canadian Reformed Churches, which was organized mainly by immigrants from the GKNv in 1950 in Lethbridge, Alberta, established and developed single-federation Reformed schools simultaneously in the Netherlands and in North America. Thus, in the Netherlands, the first Liberated school occurred nine years after the Liberation, in 1953. "After 1953 the growth was rapid in the Netherlands, with there being fifty-five Liberated schools in the Netherlands by 1967/68. In Canada, there were six schools by 1967/68" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369). Theorists of Reformed education say that there are two reasons why members of the CanRC and their counterparts back in the Netherlands founded their own schools. First, it is "the parents' baptismal promise" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 370). Parents are considered to have "the first responsibility for guiding children" (CARE, 2004, p. 21). Second, it

is "the need for unity between home, church, and school, or as one person called it, referring to Ecclesiastes 4:12, the three-fold cord" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 370).

In the book *Vrijmaking – Wederkeer* (translated as *Liberation – Return*), H. Veldman (2003) notices that one of the primary reasons the GKNv schools were established is because GKNv members opened (or re-opened) "the significance of the covenant, the baptismal promises, and the implications that they had for the unity of the home, church, and school" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369). "[N]o one should think that Christian education is optional for Reformed believers. We find this emphasized in article 58 of our Church Order:

> The consistory shall ensure that the parents, to the best of their ability, have their children attend a school where the instruction given is in harmony with the Word of God as the church has summarized it in her confessions." (Bredenhof, 2014, para.4)

Therefore, in Reformed schools, "your child is educated in a way that fits with their position in the covenant of grace" (para. 5). Wes Bredenhof, pastor of the Free Reformed Church, Launceston, Tasmania, warns that this cannot happen in a public school, because although some teachers might have a Christian worldview, "it is a system dominated by a worldly and anti-Christian philosophy of education from the earliest levels to the highest" (para. 5). Therefore, Bredenhof says, "faithful parents of covenant children will always place enormous value on Christian education and even make great sacrifices to make it happen" because they want their children "to honour God and acknowledge him in all their ways from their youngest years" (para. 5). Moreover, from a Reformed perspective, God's covenant with mankind has two sides, namely, a promise and a demand. The former is realized through baptism: "At baptism God promised to accept the baptized as His child" (Soleiman, 2012, p. 16). "But only later when they could take up the promise of true belief and show the role of the Covenant in their lives could they be declared Christian in the true meaning of the word" (pp. 16–17). Therefore, Soleiman comments, in order to understand their Christian faith properly, "education was always a main emphasis of the Reformed church" (p. 17).

The importance of the covenant for the Reformed community explains how Dutch ethnicity has been preserved there throughout the generations of immigrants:

> A natural consequence of its covenantal theology is its continued Dutch ethnicity. Dutch ethnicity: not maintained by a dogged resolve to maintain its language, not maintained by an interest to rekindle the old Dutch lifestyle, not maintained by cultural tours and excursions to the homeland to keep in touch with Dutch culture and kinfolk, but maintained by the theology it preaches. Doctrine and life do come together after all. (Huisken, 2006, p. 87)

Michael Fallon (2000) believes that the Dutch Reformed decision to establish separate schools was guided by their understanding of the concept of covenant:

> If we do believe that the Dutch Reformed that came to Canada conceived of themselves as Covenant people, we need to know how this perception influenced their behaviour. … This argument goes a long way to explaining the proclivity of the Reformed to keep other communities at arm's length while socializing and marrying mainly within their community. (pp. 173-174)

Another reason for establishing separate schools can be defined as an ethical conflict: "if you cannot sit in church with someone, how can you cooperate in a school with them?" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369). Because of the theological struggles back in the Netherlands, for "many GKNv immigrants, the CRCNA was equal in their minds to the GKN" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369), even though the CRCNA members might have not seen themselves from this perspective. Therefore, they "either hesitated or were convinced that they should not join [the CRCNA] at all" (VanOene, 1975, p. 57). Additionally, a leader of the Liberation, Dr. Klaas Schilder, "recommended that GKNv immigrants consider joining the Protestant Reformed Churches in light of the CRC position on several issues" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369). The CRCNA on its side required the GKNv immigrants, who were willing to join the church, not to "agitate the differences which existed amongst the Gereformeerden in the Netherlands" (VanOene, 1999, p. 371). GKNv immigrants also had some difficulties with fully agreeing with the Protestant Reformed Churches, because the Synod of 1950

stressed that "only the Word of God and the Confession are binding" while the doctrine of the covenant, which is of a great importance for GKNv, is not binding (VanOene, 1975, p. 67).

A contemporary representative of the Canadian Reformed Churches says that pillarization might have been one of the reasons which motivated the community members to establish separate schools in Canada, although the impulse was habitual and still not fully recognized. A lack of strict philosophical basis for Canadian Reformed schools is explained by this interviewee as an argument in favour of the pillarization argument:

> I don't know whether schools were established with the model of pillarization in mind. It is what just happened. … People would probably attribute the reasons for doing things like establishing Christian schools and establishing a political party on other theological basis. … It's a long tradition in the Netherlands. Kuyper was very involved with Christian schools. And after the Liberation, those who decided to be Schilder's started their own schools. They were no longer partnering with other Christians. And this is very into-pillarization whether you like it or not. … These people just did whatever they did in Holland, and it was not with a lot of thought; it was a default position… (A44)

Content analysis of Reformed media as well as interviews confirm that many members of the Canadian Reformed Churches have supported and promoted an idea of the triangle: church – home – school. This explains why CanRC members did not trust the staff of CRCNA schools, which Canadian Reformed children had joined before Canadian Reformed schools were established: "Staff in those schools were not required to be specifically Reformed, and GKNv people felt that was not consistent with an integrated understanding of unity of faith" (Stoffels, 2012, p. 370). Conversely, "if all staff must be CanRC members, then you as a school society member can be comforted that you have effective control of the direction of the school in this crucial area" (p. 372).

In sum, the central idea that education is the responsibility of the parents and that the state's role is merely to "assist" them is still widely shared by Reformed Christians in Canada. Kuyper insisted that public schools were unable to be neutral. He argued that they were "sect school(s) of

Modernism" and that "naturalism in the curriculum and state monopoly over children made the whole system 'satanic'" (Bratt, 2013, p. 70). Being also a politician, Kuyper promoted the idea of "a free church and a free church school in a free land" (a motto of Kuyper's weekly newspaper *De Heraut*). Because of the divide between Christians and secular society, Kuyper believed that Christians should "form collective entities within each of the spheres in order to make our confessions to God's sovereignty concrete: art guilds, political parties, farmers' federations, laborers' associations" (Mouw, 2011, p. 42) that were "distinct from and parallel to secular or public institutions" (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 41). Hence, Kuyper promoted structural pluralism: for him, "diversity, respect for differences and real freedom do not exist unless they are allowed to develop communal or institutional form in a particular society" (Vriend, 1992, p. 7). Therefore, he shaped the theological and "philosophical groundwork upon which his followers would engage society through the development of distinctly Christian social organizations and institutions" (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 42).

Lastly, a reason, which according to Canadian Reformed Christians should not be seen as primary for starting a separate school system, is the reason of protection. It might be a logical consequence of the communities' endeavour to realize baptismal promises as they understand them and reach unity between home, church, and school (Stoffels, 2012, p. 372). However, the reason "to isolate the children to maintain the 'purity' of the church community" because "the CanRC think they are the only true church" (p. 370) was mainly expressed by non-CanRC interviewees. "…They need to paint us black in order for themselves" to look better, said a CRCNA member (A54). Although Reformed media does not admit that it has ever insisted that the CanRC federation is the only true church, a graduate and current teacher remembers that in the 1990s the teacher would draw a line on a board, "and from this line you had all the branches going off in different

directions. There were Roman Catholics, they were off back, and there were the Baptists, the Mennonites, the Christian Reformed Church, and always through the line at the end there was the Canadian Reformed Church, the last true Church. … That is no longer a model by which we teach about other religions. Now… when people disagree with you, you need to treat them with gentleness, and kindness, and understanding" (A32). Today, another respondent says, "kids have more questions" than before. Moreover, they "question fundamental things that before were just accepted" (A43). It seems that with access to the internet and more exposure of the community members to the outside world, Canadian Reformed people "began to lose some of their denominational loyalty to the Canadian Reformed Church" (A43).

Some CanRC members argue that the above mentioned argument does not represent the worldview of the majority, and the protective attitude was more a consequence rather than a cause of establishing CanRC schools. A graduate of the 1970s points out that this attitude existed but now is gone: "We used to think that truth is only in our church. Ridiculous concepts fell apart; it is inevitable because [we have become] more open-minded" (A36). However, the historians of Reformed education in Canada admit that the early immigrants of the 1950s saw having their "own schools as a protection from the influences of the public school and as distinct from the general Christian schools" (Kingma, 2006, p. 19). Furthermore, a respondent who went through both Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools by the 1990s and who currently works in this school system says:

> Historically, the fear really was that if you have children from other faiths, they will go on to marry each other. … There is a belief that you should marry someone that is one with you in the Lord. And the school, being a place where a lot of relationships begin. … That was one of the main reasons that has shifted now, and so now the third-generation parents in our school system ... are a little bit more open to having other students in the school, but what they like about the closed system, or the church-based system, is the fact that there is a unity between the home, the church, and the school, not just the fact that it is a Christian school, but the fact that the school mirrors both the church and the home in its Reformed

> worldview. And [parents] … feel that if you open the doors to Evangelical Christians or Baptists or to other denominations, then that Reformed niche will be lost. … If you have a group of four families of Reformed Baptists, for example, siting in the room and you want to say, because the Canadian Reformed doctrine says that infant baptism shows the grace of God better, that is hard to do when you have others with a different worldview. (A32)

5.1.2. The fundamental principles of Canadian Reformed schools

Today, over 5,000 students are enrolled in the schools (LCRSS, 2019, p. 3) founded by members of Canadian and American Reformed Churches (CanRC), and these schools employ approximately 300 full-time teachers (Stoffels, 2012, p. 369). In Ontario, as mentioned above, there are fifteen Canadian Reformed schools which enroll 2,530 students (LCRSS, 2019, p. 3). Two of them are high schools: Guido de Brès Christian High School (located in Hamilton) and Emmanuel Christian High School (located in Fergus). In 1965, the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies (LCRSS) was organized to "support Reformed Christian schools in Ontario" was incorporated as a not-for-profit organization in 2016 to assist "its member school societies by providing organizational, administrative, and educational resource support" (LCRSS, n.d., para. 1).

The basis for education and instruction in all CanRC schools is, as for the Canadian Reformed Church, "the Three Forms of Unity, namely, the Heidelberg Catechism, the Belgic Confession and the Canons of Dort" (Emmanuel Christian High School, 2017, p. 2). This unity in by-laws distinguishes Canadian Reformed schools from inter-denominational Christian schools (A12). Therefore, there are strict regulations relating to hiring and enrolment. Thus, "enrolment in the school is open to children or foster children of the parents of the supporting community who are members of the Canadian Reformed Churches or of other churches with whom ecclesiastical fellowship is maintained" (Guido de Brès Canadian Reformed High School Society, 2019, p. 31). Among the sister churches is the United Reformed Church of North America (URCNA) that split

from CRCNA in 1996 because of disagreement on the church's stance on "cultural issues concerning evolution, feminism, and homosexuality" (Sikkema, 2010, p. 82).

Contemporary theorists of Reformed education emphasize the importance of having a clear policy regarding the enrolment in order to avoid any legal issues. They refer to the decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada on the case of the Trinity Western University (TWU), when "The B.C. College of Teachers wanted to disallow TWU from obtaining permission to grant teacher training certificates based on the fact that TWU was discriminating against homosexuals", because according to the admission policy, neither students nor staff could "engage in behaviour that is against biblical principles, including homosexual relations" (Heemskerk, 2017*a*, pp. 1–2). In 2001, the Supreme Court of Canada ruled in favour of TWU. The reasoning for this is that religious institutions, including schools, are protected by the Human Rights Code "even when the guidelines used for membership mean that certain protected segments of the population are discriminated against" (Heemskerk, 2017*a*, p. 1):

> The rights under Part I to equal treatment with respect to services and facilities, with or without accommodation, are not infringed where membership or participation in a religious, philanthropic, educational, fraternal or social institution or organization that is primarily engaged in serving the interests of persons identified by a prohibited ground of discrimination is restricted to persons who are similarly identified. (R.S.O. 1990, c. H.19, s. 18; 2006, c. 19, Sched. B, s. 10)

LCRSS coordinator (at the time of writing and now the Principal of Guido de Brès Christian High School) Jason Heemskerk warns that an absence of a "written definition about what a board will use to approve or refuse non-member enrolment" can be "dangerous for our schools" (2017*a*, p. 1). *The H.S. vs The Private Academy* case demonstrates "that 'board discretion' is not specific enough to protect a Christian school from the expense of a full Human Rights Tribunal hearing" (2017*a*, p. 3). Therefore, Heemskerk concludes, a school "has to be able to say that enrolment is declined because the applicant does not fit a clearly defined constituency for whom the school operates";

otherwise, the school cannot be protected by Section 18 of the Human Rights Code (Heemskerk, 2017*a*, p. 3). Strict requirements of Canadian Reformed schools regarding the enrolment lead to the situation that endogamy of the schools' student population and staff is still very high. However, because of financial issues and low enrolment in areas where the Canadian Reformed communities are small (Ottawa is an example), schools have recently agreed to enroll children from other denominations. Teachers and parents interviewed say that it works pretty well, and students from other Christian denominations integrate successfully and are admitted well by their peers (from interview with A8).

There are some issues connected to these enrolment changes. Thus, "from thirty to thirty-five percent of the schools' budgets … are made up by outside donors — people who had children in school but now do not, who have not had children in school yet or people who have never had children, they are regular monthly membership paying members" (A32). Accepting students from other denominations might make schools lose support from the non-tuition paying members (who will not see the Canadian Reformed school as a community school anymore), which is significant for the schools' financial survival. A teacher in a Canadian Reformed school recalls the situation with the Christian Reformed schools which, in order to fix declining enrolment, have opened the doors to students of other denominations:

> What is actually done in the vast majority of cases is it made it very difficult for them [the Christian Reformed schools] to maintain any support other than from tuition-paying members. And we … see the reason for that is that they lost their unity with their church. (A 32)

At the same time, the question of government funding is not on agenda for Canadian Reformed Christians anymore. Although in 1997, Canadian Reformed schools along with other faith-based schools in Ontario tried to achieve government funding equal to the support of Roman Catholic schools, today, the vast majority of parents do not want any government funding:

> Before they had funding, the Roman Catholic schools … had control over the program, who attended. As soon as they receive funding, that turns into that they no longer have control over who is attending, no longer have control over the curriculum; they lost a lot of what used to make them a real separate school. …they have a hard time with maintaining a traditional Roman Catholic worldview in the school. (A32)

As mentioned in the introduction, according to CanRC members, there are four main characteristics of Reformed education. They were listed by Judy Kingma, a professor at the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College. First, Canadian Reformed schools are confessional in character. This means that religious doctrines (Scripture in this case) are "foundational for the content of the instruction given in a Reformed school" and "the basis for the context within which teachers and students interact and work" (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.6.1). On a practical level, teachers aim to show students that "all things in the created world have their being and purpose in God and can be truly known only in relation to" God (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.6.1). It means that teachers infuse the Reformed perspective through their lessons:

> What they teach may not have an obvious or tied to Reformed worldview, but it is all talked about out of a Reformed worldview. … Even your science lessons on electricity: you study how it works and why it works, and you will do it with a mind to how it benefits creation, how we can use it... And that is done from a Reformed worldview. (A32)

Second, the schools are required to be covenantal in character because they are oriented towards covenant children and endeavour to equip them "with skills and knowledge" and to nurture them "in godliness that they might love God above all else and their neighbour as themselves" (CCMC, 2002, 2.2.1.6.2). Third, the antithetical[vi] character of the schools signifies that "the school, together with the home and the church, instructs and equips covenant children in and for the service of the Lord in all areas of life" (2.2.1.6.3). Fourth, referring to the triangle, which was mentioned above, "Reformed schools are characterized by a unity of purpose that is shared by the home, the school, and the church" (2.2.1.6.4). These three institutions have different tasks but a common purpose. The theorists of Reformed education argue that "when home, school, and church are united in this

aim, the work of the one institution has life-giving consequences for the spiritual well-being of the others" (2.2.1.6.4).

Parents are assigned a key role in their children's education. This statement was emphasized or at least mentioned by the majority of interviewees. One CanRC member argues that "just because you have a Christian school, it does not mean that the children that are going to this school are going to be Christians" (A31). Therefore, "parents are the ones who primarily have the responsibility and promises in the baptism … that they are going to raise their child to the best of their ability to know the Lord and to live according to His ways. … the schools back the parents" (A30). Also, the interviewee warns that parents should not just send their kids "to school and let teachers raise [their] kids. There should be conversations at home" (A30). The importance of involving parents in the educational process and letting them be aware of the curriculum and have a voice in the context of curriculum changes is often underlined by the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA), an organization that represents a Reformed worldview. André Schutten, Director of Law and Policy at ARPA Canada, responded to the announcement of Ontario Minister of Education Lisa Thompson about improvements to the provincial curriculum:

> Education is a parental responsibility. And it was encouraging to hear the Minister recognize parents as the primary educators of their children and we were encouraged to hear the Minister discuss the importance of parents knowing who is teaching what to their children. The Minster's assurance that the curriculum will be available for parents to see and opt to take their children out of any material they deem inappropriate is a welcome change. (ARPA Canada, 2019*b*, para. 4)

CanRC schools were established and have been run by parents. They are therefore considered to be parental schools. Handouts issued by these schools give a clearer understanding of why they were established and how the triangle is expected to work. A document issued by Emmanuel Christian High School insists that the "founding fathers" of this school "recognized that there must be unity in what children are taught at home, in church and in school. Furthermore,

they were convinced that reformed education was a necessity and not an option because the LORD demands that parents instruct their children in the fear of His Name… The school assists parents in carrying out the task they promised to fulfill at the baptism of their children" (Emmanuel Christian High School, 2017, p. 2). Thus, the school aims:

- To assist the parents in enabling and encouraging students to fulfill their cultural tasks in this world, both now and later in life.
- To assist the parents in revealing and declaring to the children their triune God who wishes to be known by them so that they may rightly confess and serve Him in their given office.
- To assist the parents in the instruction of their children in these important areas of knowledge: Bible and confessions, arts, Canadian and world studies, language, mathematics, physical education and science.
- To assist the parents in their task of bringing up their children in the fear of the Lord.

(Emmanuel Christian High School, pp. 2–3).

Parents have a strong voice in these schools:

> In our system, the parents on the board or even education committee can outvote the principal, because the parents hold the ultimate authority. … In the end, the authority of the school is in the hands of the board and the direction of the school is in the hands of the education committee in terms of curriculum… (A32)

The leadership of parents in the schools ends up "with a beautiful balance" (A32), says one respondent, because parents have to work together to have their views heard and understood. They might represent various sides of the spectrum of Canadian Reformed viewpoints:

> People who are insular and protective of the Reformed worldview have a different way of doing things than people who feel that worldview should be spread wide and broad… And then they need to work together. People in the middle work to facilitate the discussion. And it is working well … because both sides need to be balanced. …a board chair is a key [person]… to balance those tensions that would come up in a school where you have a diverse range of understandings of what should be happening. The principal is another balancer because he is the one who will generally have to talk with the students and deal with a lot of parents one on one. (A32)

Despite the tensions, a teacher at the Canadian Reformed school system insists that because parents

> have the same underlying truth… as long as you have the patience to talk things out, it is not a problem to come to an understanding and come to a workable solution. …when there is a disagreement, the first place to go is the Scripture. That does not mean everything can be black and white. … You need to work through it. Also, … we all hold to the same confessions. (A32)

As Abraham Kuyper emphasized that each domain has its own task, while school, home and church have the same ultimate goal, which is "to equip the children of the covenant for a life of obedient and thankful service in that covenant" (Emmanuel Christian High School, 2017, p. 2), the task of the school is distinct from the other two sides of the triangle. School is supposed to complete the academic aspects of the task. By using a particular school curriculum, which equips "children for work in a variety of settings", school structure, which provides "a structured environment for the development of disciplined work habits" and "opportunities for children to work together", and "teacher expertise and example" that help students "make responsible academic and career choices", the school realizes its task to provide academic training of the youth (CARE, 2004, p. 22). If there are any tensions between these three domains, they should be solved through dialogue: "because life is one, there will be considerable overlap between home and school in the area of guidance. …Cooperation and open dialogue between home and school are an important part of a good school guidance program" (CARE, 2004, p. 22).

From the time of the establishment of Canadian Reformed schools and the formation of the triangle model (church – school – home) until today, there have been those who disagreed with an idea of having a separate school system. Some respondents are reluctant to defend Canadian Reformed schools as an incredibly significant institute: while it "is not essential, it is probably helpful. If you want to remove one [part of the triangle], remove the school. The two other factors are of more influence" (A30). Also, there are those who disagreed with the establishment of a new elementary school in Ottawa:

> I think it is strange that they started their own school. ... Deep down there was a cultural reason: we grew up with it, so, we should do that too. And we can do it. And we can get money from other Canadian Reformed churches so that we can do it. … I think, if you are in southern Ontario and you got lots of different churches that can fill those schools, then that can be a positive thing. (A 44)

Nevertheless, although some Canadian Reformed church members do not consider having a separate school system to be reasonable, especially in the context of the tiny Canadian Reformed community in Ottawa, it seems that the idea of having CanRC schools still prevails, but some flexibility has been developed. For instance, some schools, including the Ambassador school (Ottawa) and Ebenezer Christian School (Chatham) admit students from other denominations.

As to the curriculum, a LCRSS committee called the Curriculum Assistance to Reformed Education (CARE), in existence since the 1970s, structures and monitors the curriculum development. Nevertheless, many subjects are still being taught differently in various Canadian Reformed schools, and different resources and materials are being used by the teachers. In 2017, Jason Heemskerk admitted that "no one school in the League (elementary or secondary) really has a complete picture of the program and resources other schools are using throughout the grades. (Even though the course codes at the high school level are the same, resources and rationales are still developed in house.)" (2017*b*, p. 1). Therefore, the League is working on the document that may become the groundwork to encourage "schools who are members of the League [to] develop a common curriculum to the extent that we are all teaching the same topics at the same grade levels" (Heemskerk, 2017*b*, p. 1). Certain work in several areas of elementary schools' teaching has been already done. Thus, schools agreed to use common programs for the following subjects, which are: Memory Work, Bible History, Church History (at least for grades 1-4) (Heemskerk, 2017*b*, p. 1), and also Language arts. A Canadian Reformed teacher confirmed that "in things like Social Studies, or Language, or Arts, it is all over the map – some schools do own things" (A66), but CARE has built a conceptual framework for social studies on "how to teach social studies from a Reformed Christian worldview, and … with a purpose of trying to get schools on the same page" (A66).

Regarding high schools, although they use the resources that are "largely unique to the individual school", the League coordinator Jason Heemskerk says that they "are better aligned [than elementary schools] since they need to follow ministry guidelines and pass inspections to be allowed to issue credits toward the Ontario Secondary School Diploma" (2017*b*, p. 1). Furthermore, a teacher interviewed mentioned, CARE pays close attention to the curriculum documents that the Ontario Ministry of Education produces for several reasons:

> First of all, there is a lot of smart people doing this stuff. These documents are solid. From the educational perspective, the way the government was working with the document *Growing Success* [by the Ontario Ministry of Education], when you read it even as a Reformed educator, this makes sense, this is good teaching. So, we see the value of intellectual work that is being done. … The other part is that … because Ontario is a fairly large province, if the Ministry of Education wants to teach something like Medieval studies in Grade 6, all the publishers are going to publish materials for Grade 6. It … makes sense for us from a practical standpoint to move along with the Ministry of Education when they do curriculum changes. (A66)

While there are serious theoretical debates about the impact of religious schools on graduates' further performance in the society, one of interviewees fairly notices that "it is hard to do an experiment" in order to check that Canadian Reformed schools "have a big impact", although he believes this statement is true (A36). Numerous academic studies admit the difficulty in determining "the effectiveness of Christian schools in passing along or encouraging the faith" (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 55), and especially in dividing the impact of schools from the effect of family, peers and religious institution. Moreover, according to recent studies, in North America, "individuals perceive their parents as the most important influence on their religiosity" (Spilka et al., 2009, p. 115), therefore, the role of religious schools is secondary to the parents. "Religious socialization in the home is of vital importance, along with continuous (or secondary) religious socialization in church and at school", says Vermeer (2009, p. 201). Some studies though declare the importance of religious schooling for nurturing and preservation of faith in the youth:

> The school environment, and particularly whether one's schoolmates are more or less inclined toward religion and its expression, also matters for both youth religious service attendance and how important they consider religion in their own lives. The overall level of religiosity within the school … displays consistently stronger relationships with adolescent religiosity than does the status of being a religious school. (Regnerus et al., 2004, p. 35)

Another issue that is at the center of debates in sociological studies of education is which schools are of the most importance: elementary or high schools. The question about whether Canadian Reformed elementary or high schools are more important was not answered quickly and without doubts by any of respondents. For the vast majority it was a difficult choice to make. It should be noted that all but two Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario are elementary. One of the reasons for this is that high school is more resource-intensive (at least in terms of the number of staff), and these two high schools are regional schools, drawing from a number of local elementary Canadian Reformed elementary schools. Therefore, the community cannot afford as many high schools as elementary. However, even with the current number of elementary schools, "still you can have grade one students who are in the bus over two hours per day; it is a lot for little kids" (A30). The reason for this is that many students live in rural areas and are spread out.

A few respondents firmly argued that an elementary school is more important because it is foundational for developing one's value system and a person's faith. A recent graduate said that he appreciated having a Reformed education at the elementary level much more than the high school. He finds elementary school more helpful, including theologically: "from grade one to grade three, every week you would memorize different texts from the Bible, different songs or hymns… I remember them very well. At grade 7 and 8, you start learning the catechism, and you have daily devotions. … Teachers take the time to pray with the kids, even asking for specific requests" (A30). Hence, the elementary school has much emphasis on theology. Another respondent says: "elementary school is considered to be the critical part of Christian education, because this is the

time when children are the most impressionable" (A2). At the same time, according to some other respondents, high school was not that theologically-centered. A graduate of the 1990s says that Guido de Brès was very focused on doctrine while his interdenominational Christian school provided a "good integration of faith into learning; they would be graded differently if you integrate faith into assignment. I don't recall it in Guido. … [In Guido], there was no … character development. Maybe it was not the school's responsibility; it was left for home" (A25).

5.2. Main challenges

Since its establishment, the Canadian Reformed schooling system has experienced a variety of challenges. This section will provide a general overview of the most serious concerns regarding Canadian Reformed schools that current teachers or graduates of different decades have observed. First, even though the majority of members of the Canadian Reformed community are not interested in government funding, as mentioned in the previous section, some parents find it financially difficult to cover school expenses or they doubt the value of these high expenses. At the same time, for some interviewees, the cost does not seem that high since the tuition fees are assessed per family rather than per child. One of the main questions being asked by those parents who doubt Canadian Reformed schooling is why to favour these schools over interdenominational Christian schools, especially if choices of equipment and courses can be richer and better in the latter ones.

Another serious issue that concerns people in the Canadian Reformed community and relates to the financial aspect is whether Canadian Reformed schools should open their doors to students of other denominations. While this question will be discussed in detail in chapter 6, it is worth mentioning this issue in this section. If there is not a clear answer to the question: "who are we as a Canadian Reformed school?", then there is a serious lack of responses to the inquiry about

why these schools do not accept children who are not members of CanRC or sister churches. Hence, on the one hand, welcoming some other religious groups into Canadian Reformed schools might help these schools to benefit financially and reduce the tuition fees for the community members; on the other hand, the continued existence of Canadian Reformed schools may be questionable if their distinctiveness becomes blurry and more flexible.

One of the most serious shortcomings that Canadian Reformed schools have been struggling with since the beginning and that was touched on by several interviewees is the quality of teaching. A few participants mentioned that while in the past Canadian Reformed schooling intended to train students "as cheap as possible", it is not the case anymore (A32). Hence, although the expertise and qualifications of teachers was at times a serious problem a few decades ago, the situation has improved significantly. A graduate of the 1970s compares the teachers of his time with the current ones in the school his grandchildren attend: "Teaching was relatively poor and primitive. Now we have art, music, French (francophone) teachers … all sorts of programs, day trips, sports activities…" (A36). Many interviewees of the last two decades mentioned that their Canadian Reformed high schools were strong academically. A non-affiliated graduate of the 2000s says that after experiencing a Canadian Reformed school, the curriculum in a public school seemed "oversimplified" (A6). There is a coherent comment by a non-affiliated graduate of the 2010s who compares his homework in a Canadian Reformed school to the studies of his friend from a Catholic school. He concludes that, overall, the educational style [in Canadian Reformed schools] is much better than in many public and Catholic schools (A2). Another recent graduate, who is a former member of the CanRC, also recognizes strong elements of his schooling experience: "I was taught proper writing. So, when I went to the University, my understanding of how to write an essay was high, superior to most of my public school colleagues" (A9). A respondent's counterpart, who is

also a graduate of the 2000s and also attends a church other than Canadian Reformed, admits that the community's "immersion in text culture that focused on the words … really shaped [his] approach in thinking. [He] was putting sentences together in the way it was shaped in the form of preaching of the community and the voice of the preacher is proclaiming" (A22).

Nevertheless, there are a few issues of concern regarding current teaching. First, many teachers, according to one of the principals, do not have experience of working in any schools other than Canadian Reformed. Several interviewees who are current teachers in Canadian Reformed schools and have gone through a secular university mentioned the differences between Christian and secular post-graduate studies in education and the strong sides of the latter. One respondent notices that in a secular university, there is an understanding of "contemporary educational language, understanding of design, system of writing curriculum" (A38), while those colleagues who gained professional expertise in education only through the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College (CCRTC) "don't understand that language" (A38). "Pure academics don't make good teachers", he concedes (A38). However, the interviewee argues that if the college receives accreditation to offer a two-year Bachelor program in education[vii], then "all the teachers who go there will have to have a university degree first". He sees that as a significant tool for potential improvement of teachers' skills. (In contrast to some other provinces, Ontario does not require principals and teachers in private school "to be certified by the Ontario College of Teachers" (Ontario Ministry of Education, n.d., para. 4[viii]) or go through a secular post-graduate university.) The respondent highlights that "being a Reformed teacher does not require you to go to a Reformed college. Being a Reformed person makes you a good teacher… I would potentially replace this word [Reformed] with Christian" (A38). The historical study by Canadian Reformed theologian Rev. W. W. J. VanOene (1975) though states:

> It is generally felt by the teachers as well as by the school boards that it takes more to be a truly Reformed teacher than to have one's diploma and just to add to that some knowledge of Holy Writ and of the History of the Church. … members of the Faculty of the Theological College in Hamilton [before the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College was founded] took upon themselves the burden of giving courses to teachers to prepare the latter better for their task. (p. 215)

Furthermore, some difficulties emerge because schools are tied closely to the churches: "the same people who help with church governance … help with schools governance. They try to run a school like a church. I find it to be unfortunate", says an interviewee (A38). Also, local churches' mentality is reflected in the schools, particularly because Canadian Reformed schools are run by parents who are members of these churches; they form these churches and become shaped by them. Hence, while being aware that it is a generalization, participants observe the difference between rural and urban churches that schools mirror as well:

> I really felt the difference: a real sense of greater conservative thought in rural schools, … like how things happened to be done in the past, resistance to change, … worship in these churches – they are very traditional, and in some sense, there is a little bit self-righteousness. They look down at people who try to be contemporary. And to me, the translation from this church mentality to the school is that some rural elementary schools … are very satisfied with traditional teaching. (A38)

An interviewee, who met students and graduates from high schools in Hamilton and Fergus, says that at Guido, there seemed to be "a lot of social, pleasant things that were not that much in Fergus" (A31). A recent graduate of Fergus admits that while he grew up and was studying in the countryside "so far away from everything", "you come so innocent", and in Guido "you are joining a lot of different communities" (A30). He condemns the fact that some city kids would bring experience from the tough neighbourhoods they come from, "more often it would be drugs" (A30). The respondent emphasizes that he does not mean that "it would be best to be rural", because urban kids sometimes were wiser and had more experience (A30).

However, traditional methods of teachings are still prevalent in both urban and rural schools, and a principal shared that he challenges teachers to change the ways they teach. He

encourages teachers to know how other school systems are working, "what contemporary education is about, what are the benefits of traditional methods" (A64). He also recommends teachers in his schools to engage students in the learning process and use "authentic learning experiences" (A64):

> We have to … develop some skills in critical thinking, in analyzing, understanding that there is more than one position — it is an essential part of education. This is what I talk about with my staff when I talk about the 21st-century learning. Curriculum is not a bundle of facts that should be memorized — this is a traditional view on education … I think, [in] contemporary education … you have all this information by a finger click, all you need is to Google. So, would you need to memorize two centuries of history if you can find it in two seconds on your smartphone?! …. A critical [thinking] skill is what the 21st-century students need. There is room for traditional methods and memorization of certain things; there is always fundamental knowledge that you need but along the way, … we started to learn how to grow in critical thinking. (A64)

Lastly, the school environment is an important concern for some graduates. An interviewee, who had a secular elementary education and joined a Canadian Reformed high school and later identified as a gay individual, has negative memories about the atmosphere in the class. She generally characterizes her high school classmates as close-minded and says that "everyone in school tries to prove that they are more Christian than you… Everyone is very judgmental. … I thought that by going to a Christian school, I'd be surrounded by loving people. They are not that loving" while "in public school people love you for who you are", said the participant (A4). The struggle of being anything other than a cisgender person in a Canadian Reformed context will be analyzed in chapter 7.

There are a few other important challenges that Canadian Reformed schools experience that have not been covered in this section. These challenges are of concern for other religious and non-religious schools too. First, how are schools able to promote and develop students' critical thinking skills? Second, do religious schools promote the idea of gender equality and if so, how? Third, do Canadian Reformed schools shape engaged citizens prepared for life in a pluralist and

multicultural society? The first two questions will be covered in the following sections while the third question will be examined thoroughly in chapters 6 and 8.

5.3. Critical thinking skills

All but a few interviewees admitted that Canadian Reformed schools foster a strong religious worldview in their students. Even those who have left the Canadian Reformed Churches for another denomination or became non-affiliated, recognize that "understanding of God's Word [is] instilled in the schools" (A32). A current teacher describes integration of the Bible program in detail:

> In elementary schools, we set up the Bible program. The vision is to run through all Bible stories three times by the time you are in grade 8: at grades 1 and 2 you skip a few stories…; at grades 3, 4, 5 you are looking at most of the stories if not all of them, and you are hearing all those stories, you are working with the details of those stories you learn …; in the upper grades you start talking about the impact those stories have… what the Lord is teaching people through these stories. … If you don't have this foundation, when you come in a high school and you need to talk more topically, … if you don't have that background of knowing the stories well, you don't get that much out of it. (A32)

This respondent admits that all these stories can be taught in church and at home, and individuals, who have had only an elementary or only a high school Christian education or neither of them, might "stay with the church and live a Christian live" (A32). An interviewee states that a firm understanding of Scripture due to studying in a Canadian Reformed school is helpful for maintaining and strengthening one's faith. This respondent emphasizes that "running through a school system where the Bible is being taught every day" and having classmates with a similar worldview shape and impact future graduates significantly: "Even if you reject it [this worldview], you are still shaped by this through your life" (A32). This point can be illustrated by the case of a graduate who went through both Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools and left the CanRC later. He admits: "I am no longer Canadian Reformed. But there are definitely stripes of neo-Calvinism in my ideology... My work ethic is Calvinist. But even … if I don't agree with their

religious principles, some of the ideologies still resonate. I believe that there is a moral responsibility for all humans to live life as their best self" (A9). Although, in the case of the majority of interviewees, it is hard to distinguish the roles played by the church, parents and school and assess the importance of a school in shaping their faith. Many (but not all) Canadian Reformed members attend or have attended Canadian Reformed high schools, according to most of the respondents.

That being said, while Scriptural knowledge and understanding of Reformed theology seem to be taught at a high level, there is not much time devoted to providing students with practical knowledge and explanation of how to live out Christian theology (A17). Thus, one respondent admits that some Canadian Reformed community members do not know why they stay as members of this particular community: "That is something that we need to be aware of, and I think that the minister is aware of it, and they are trying to dialogue with young people who are having questions... Young people, especially in high school, … they are asking questions. They start thinking critically" (A31). She emphasizes that critical thinking is a crucial skill because "you need to be able to know why you believe what you believe in; you need to learn how to create an argument" (A31) and not just believe certain agencies, whether church, or government, or parents (A31). Additionally, a participant insists that current schools should be less academic and more practical, because many students don't aim at university, especially those living in the rural areas. Another respondent's answer aligns with the previous. He says that Canadian Reformed schools are "very good at fundamentals" but have weaknesses in certain areas mainly because of the financial cost (A36).

Furthermore, several graduates from the 1990s, 2000s and 2010s argued that although education was much stronger in a Canadian Reformed high school than in a public high school, in

social and cultural aspects public school was much better. One of a few interviewees who graduated in the 1970s remembers that when he joined a public high school, socialization was very difficult, partially because in his previous (Canadian Reformed) school he had not had the same extracurricular and sports activities: given financial reasons, "participation in everything else [had been] limited" (A36). A graduate of the 1980s admits that he and his brother had difficult time in transitioning to the secular school. First, he did not have "many cultural references", because he was "highly restricted in what to watch" at home (for example, movies that have erotic scenes), and, second, he was not part of the same social groups as his new classmates were, because he had not had much communication with people outside the church (A13). At the same time, it is important to locate those memories into a specific time context; the Canadian Reformed community has been significantly influenced by the outside world since the 2000s, and the generation of recent and current students is being exposed to the outside world, including through the Internet and pop culture:

> There is also an interesting cultural shift in the community between my experience and what you see today. During the last two decades, the community has evolved slightly. When I was growing up, we didn't have TV in the house, we didn't have permission to listen to any sort of contemporary cultural influences — so, no music, no movies, no TV shows, even the movies, which we were allowed to watch, had to be completely curated. … As soon as there was any sort of swear words, or disrespect, or even saying 'Oh my gosh'— it would be turned off, and the parents would be disturbed. (A9)

Access to some classical literature was also limited in some families: "Even things like *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, still one of my favorite pieces, was something which I wasn't allowed to read in my community" (A9). But the interviewee read this piece of literature anyway by borrowing it in the library and hiding it from his parents.

As in many public schools, some students in Canadian Reformed schools have had access to drugs and alcohol. A graduate of the 1990s mentions that in Guido, he had exposure to alcohol

and drugs: "If you want to participate, there would be people [to join]" (A23). All these activities were carefully hidden from the adults. At the same time, after he had joined a public high school, he noticed that students were trusted more there: "there were less top-down sort of control in place on the students" (for example, in terms of class attendance), there was an atmosphere with "more freedom and less authoritarian control" (A23).

One of the main concerns about religious schools, which has already been raised in chapter 2, is the ability of these schools to foster critical thinking skills in their students. A graduate of the 1990s felt "prepared to engage in critical thinking and dialogue at the university level" based on his Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools education (A23):

> …at the University, I was much ahead of my classmates in understanding different perspectives. When I went to university, everybody was thinking in the same manner… We [in Canadian Reformed community] think very differently in our faith perspective… but need to be aware of how other people think, that Catholics think another way [for example]. You are very conscious that there are several perspectives. The teacher needs to say what others think, they cannot pretend that there are no other perspectives on the topics. (A23)

At the same time, a current member of CanRC considers that in comparison to thirty years ago, Canadian Reformed community is "turning away from critical thinking to simple thinking, even among the [church] leaders" (A14). The respondent insists that the church has "become less careful, less nuanced, less involved with scholarship, and more fundamentalist" (A14). He argues that "many teachers in this [Canadian Reformed] system feel that they need … to be very careful, and they choose to do what the majority of the community is comfortable with, not to challenge, not even to suggest other ways of thinking" (A14). As a result, the distance between the general mentality of Canadian Reformed and other Christians and society as a whole has been growing (A14). Most community members still attend the same school and many work with community members: "they hardly knew anyone outside their circle until about 20 years ago. I am not sure that it has changed very much. There is not much academic drive among those people. The reason

for working is to support the family and support the church and support the schools", explains the interviewee (A14). A graduate of late 2000s agrees that people in the community are very driven: "if they want to afford these schools, … [it often means] starting a company – because it's the only way they can make enough money to send their kids to the [Canadian Reformed] school. …and they are ready to sacrifice" (A30). Hence, a few respondents mentioned that there is not much Kuyperian sense in the Canadian Reformed community yet: there is not often "I work because I see I can make contributions to the society, I have certain skills I want to share, I want to help the Kingdom of God broadly … there is much inward-looking mentality… they are very comfortable with this" (A14).

One of the main challenges experienced by graduates of different decades is the transition to a secular educational institution, either a public school or a secular university. Besides the cultural shock which some graduates experienced, some of them faced a crisis of faith. Although Christian apologetics[ix] is currently taught in Canadian Reformed high schools, there is still a reasonable fear that the faith will be challenged, and the general attitude of the community is to keep some distance from non-Reformed Christians:

> It did take me long to realize that you don't have to be a Reformed Christian to be a good moral person. You might not be a Christian at all. It shook my faith in fact for a few years. … The realization that there are nice, kind, morally-centered people who never stepped in a church. It took a while to realize that. (A32)

Now, this interviewee, who is currently involved in the Canadian Reformed educational system, teaches his children that "there are people that are evil and do terrible things" and there are people who do good things (A32) regardless of their religion. Another CanRC member comments that Canadian Reformed people "are not trained to discuss their views outside the church" (A14) and that their level of knowledge of apologetics does not seem to be strong: "all this education put on these children in these schools and church is not significant enough to give

graduates the strength to defend their views"; the lack of confidence is "partially based on reality that the graduates are not able to defend the Reformed faith, the Reformed worldview" (A14). A current teacher disagrees with the latter statement:

> I believe in the value of working together as a single Reformed community to educate children … in a Reformed worldview. There are other Christian schools – they do a wonderful job of bringing Gospel. They have a niche filled. Our schools are set up to serve our church community, and we do an excellent job… students are prepared to go to university with a firm foundation. Will their faith be challenged? Yes, it will. Will they have tools to meet this challenge? Yes. All three [school, church and family] are working on the same direction [to prepare them for this challenge]. (A32)

Another respondent points out that it is very comforting for the child to grow up with a consistent philosophy. He himself felt sometimes uncomfortable in a public high school: "You really feel awful, because you are a student and there is a teacher saying something you really don't believe in. And there is a disconnect, and you feel literally awful, physically awful… It is very hard to be in the system when somebody in authority tells you something that is directly the opposite of what your mother and father said. It is hard especially when you are younger. It is almost a form of abuse…" (A36). It is a consistent and coherent upbringing that is seen by scholars (Zine, 2008) as one of the main benefits of faith-based schooling. A graduate of the 1970s, who currently has some of his grandchildren in a Canadian Reformed school, says that he sees the community school as "almost a way to socializing the children so that when they meet on Sunday [during the service], they are not strangers to each other. So, they see each other during the week and on Sunday they're reinforcing that [relationships]. I can see it on my own grandkids" (A36). A graduate of the 2000s considers that the reason the community is "supporting separate schools is because they keep children away from the temptations of the world. As soon as children are exposed to secular education, they start challenging the ideology of this community. Particularly in my graduating high school class, it became a generation shift … in my generation, at least 10%

of the class has left the church after we went to university or anything outside the community" (A9).

Are Canadian Reformed students being provided with autonomy of thinking? A current parent says: "as parents, we promised at baptism that we'd teach children religious doctrines, and I don't apologize for it. So, if somebody wants to title it indoctrination, okay; I am teaching them a religion" (A47). A graduate of the 1990s adds that in school, "we were called to distinguish what is right and wrong. … Do I have autonomy? From the biblical point of view, I don't have autonomy, I am a child of God. … I have a will, but also, I am His child; He is the ultimate authority. …from a secular point of view, it is different" (A42). A rigid "no" to the possibility of providing a child with autonomy and simultaneously fostering a particular religious faith in them was expressed by some researchers, including a secular scholar John White (1982): "if a parent has an obligation to bring up his child as a morally autonomous person, he cannot at the same time have the right to indoctrinate him" (p. 166). This statement was opposed by philosopher Terence McLaughlin (1984) who presumes a legitimacy of parental strategy that is aiming an autonomy via faith. He assumes that "it is possible to harmonise the presentation of a particular set of religious beliefs with a concern for the development of the autonomy of the child" (McLaughlin, 1990, p. 24).

Another topic that is often discussed by the critics of religious education is whether and how evolution is being taught. At the turn of the 20th century, when neo-Calvinism emerged, "Kuyper, Schilder, Bavinck and others allowed an old earth, but none professed evolution", and young-earth and old-earth evolutionists were represented on the pages of the *Clarion* magazine until 2010, when the magazine apparently chose in favour of young-earth creationism and started "attacks on both old-earth creationism and theistic evolution" (Reformed Academic, 2010,

para. 1). This shift is explained by American evangelical influences. As a result, "most schools, as well as the Theological College, appear to teach it, and neither pastors nor teachers publicly admit to a different position, no matter what their private opinion" is (para. 3). This censorship instituted by *Clarion* led to the establishment of a blog called *Reformed Academic* by some members of the Canadian Reformed churches (who disagree with how their church federation's current implied stance on evolution) to discuss contradictory theological and social issues there. Among the blog's authors are Jitse van der Meer, Tony Jelsma, Freda Oosterhoff, and Arnold Sikkema. A historian, Frederika Oosterhoff commented on a post about teaching evolution at schools: "Darwinism indeed constitutes a serious challenge for us all, but I don't believe that this challenge will go away if we simply declare the evidence to be spurious, for it isn't. Nor do I believe that, as you seem to suggest, the rise and influence of the theory can be explained simply by hatred of religion" (Reformed Academic, 2009, para. 9). Her additional argument is that "it is better that we honestly prepare students in our own schools for what they will encounter at the university than to send them on with the idea that science is all make-believe, the work of darkness. That won't help them once they have left the safety of our schools… hiding our heads in the sand does not frighten the enemy away" (Reformed Academic, 2009, para. 151). A graduate of a Canadian Reformed high school, where he was trained "to believe that the end of the 19th century marked a radical departure from truth in all disciplines", David DeJong asks a rhetorical question in the comment to the same post about teaching evolution: "But does anyone think Freud cannot teach Christians something about psychology? Should we not take a more balanced approach to the paradigm shift of the end of the nineteenth century?" (Reformed Academic, 2009, para. 30). Frederica Oosterhoff encourages teachers, education committees, parents, and pastors to have a serious discussion about evolution. The question is about how much time they will need to open this discussion. A CanRC

member is convinced that economic reasons might force the community to change its attitude towards evolution: "if you don't have operating funds to survive, you're forced to do things in a different way" (A14). He is sure that "it would be harder and harder to convince people to pay school tuition fees, because parents are always concerned about the quality and price of education" (A14). Only if these schools attract people from outside their denomination because of a high quality education they provide (as we see on the example of Muslims going to Catholic schools in Ontario), these schools will "have a chance to survive" (A14). Otherwise, "the most likely scenario is that this community will eventually have Sunday schools or after-school activities" (A14). A current teacher and graduate of the 2000s admits that after graduating Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools he did not know much about evolutionism: "Now we talk about it in science class. There is more openness in the community to ask complex questions" (A17). This teacher points out that although he understands the protectionist mindset of some parents and teachers, there is a necessity for conversation about complex questions and for looking at subjects from different perspectives by "playing the devil's advocate" (A17). Otherwise "you don't prepare them [children] for the world other than your Christian community, and [contentious] things happen in the community too" (A17). Some respondents shared positive experiences of studying evolution and pointed out that some students might had just missed a chance to study it. A graduate of the 2010s mentions that they were told about evolution in grade 9 science class, but they studied it in detail in biology class in high school, which was not mandatory in the province of Ontario (A37). The respondent notices that the teacher would not present evolution in a judgmental manner but would "bring it back to our faith and ground it" (A37).

A graduate of the 2000s laments that the Canadian Reformed schools' and community's creationist "shoebox" prevented him from certain explorations: "…my curiosity was being stifled

and my creativity was not given the freedom to express itself. So, as far as it goes, it [evolution] is still an open question people are hesitant to talk about … because what they are afraid of… [is the questioning of the] veracity of scripture… For them, every word of Scripture is true, literally, most of the time, which, I suppose, gives people a sense of stability" (A22). That being said, a graduate of the 1970s does not consider the discussion about evolution to be central. For him, the theory of evolution is "our world's miracle, everything is happening for a reason", and you cannot do an experiment. Hence, "both camps want me to make a stand; it's irrelevant, it's [Earth] infinitely young and old" (A36).

Critical thinking skills can also be shaped by encouraging students to apply gained knowledge to practice, for example, while reflecting on current events. The Reformed Studies course in a Canadian Reformed high school involves reading newspapers and asking students to reflect on how to respond to current events in a Christian manner. A graduate of the 1990s remembers that they were talking a lot about troubled time in the Balkans: "In terms of struggles in Bosnia, it was interesting to see … how evil we can be to each other. And there was very little support. Now there are many more avenues to help, then … we could [only] pray for people in trouble." (A32) Among other issues discussed in class were abortion regulations and referendum in Quebec. For example, one of assignments was to discuss abortion "from the position of somebody who was raped" (A18). The teacher explained that his intention was to help students become more sensitive while talking about such topic as abortion (A18). Another graduate, of the 1970s, remembers that the teacher would bring *the Globe and Mail* and the *Hamilton Spectator* into class to show students that "these are two views of the world, and they were different" (A36). He says that the teacher explained that "information depends on who is giving it to you, and you need to double check the sources" (A36). This graduate argues that giving students an

understanding of the fact that newspapers are politically charged serves as a tool to develop critical thinking skills. He states that he gained an understanding that the information one gets from any mass media "has been filtered through somebody's eyes" (A36), and therefore it is always "important to know where the information is coming from" (A36), while today, he says, "even … at the university level, kids believe everything they read in a textbook.… That's very scary" (A36).

Another serious challenge that denominational schools might face is how to communicate with the surrounding world. The community still questions the "impact of the society worldview", how to approach different lifestyles and how to "help students navigate through" them (A32). A teacher emphasizes that nowadays the community has "a better understanding of God's grace in our life. There is nobody who is unbroken" (A32). Another teacher says that one of the main current challenges is to teach the Bible to students while "the society is so different from a Christian worldview" (A40). The biggest challenge, as the respondent points out, is to "help students live in accordance with God's will but still … love people who don't live according to God's will" (A40). She doubts that this attitude was promoted forty years ago, but today "our world is so much smaller", and "now our students go all over. Forty years ago, many stayed where they were" (A40). According to this respondent, "it is hard to live as a Christian and deal with people who are not Christian" (A40), so, some strategies should be provided by the school. This approach correlates with the shift from inwardness and insularity that have been common for the Canadian Reformed community. A graduate of the 1990s admits that over the decades Canadian Reformed schools have shifted from being "us-versus-them" and a "greenhouse that … protects from the outside" world to becoming more in-the-world (A42). He concludes that current Canadian Reformed schools prepare students for the world outside the community: "For example, there was a low percentage of students who went to secular university in my class, it was 20%, today the

majority, 89–90%, instead of getting a job, go to university [or college]. It seems, there is more confidence in going into the world" (A42). These assumed percentage also correlate with an overall shift in Canadian society where more and more individuals pursue higher education. Thus, according to Statistics Canada (2017*a*), "in 2016, more than half (54%) of Canadians aged 25 to 64 had either college or university qualifications, up from 48.3% in 2006."

Insularity and inwardness have been an integral feature of the Canadian Reformed community for a long time. A graduate of the 2000s admits that Canadian Reformed schooling was extremely sheltered at her time: "We did not have a lot of friends or a lot of interaction with the people who were not part of our church community. So, we would hear about people outside our community but… they would always be outside" (A6). At the same time, while in a public school "people openly had sex, smoked pot or cigarettes", students at Canadian Reformed school "hid it if they did it" (A6). As a current educator notes, Canadian Reformed people have a tendency to "be aware of what's going on in the world but not to be involved" (A29). If the involvement happens, it often relates to the community. Thus, he says, Canadian Reformed community members established a set of schools and various organizations, for example, to take care of disabled people. They have all been oriented towards Canadian Reformed individuals. Since recently, he points out, the community has started looking outwards and established a summer Bible camp called Campfire, which gathers unchurched children and children from different Christian schools; ARPA Canada involves various Reformed Christian denominations (A29). A current teacher points out that today the community has become less insular and more focused away from itself (A21); students are more involved in volunteering and politics through local ARPA groups (A21). A current teacher says that teachers should "be more deliberate in exposing our children to the [city] community and encourage parents to make children more involved in the

community" (A38). For instance, in Hamilton, many of those students, who participate in sports leagues, are part of the city leagues (A38). A recent graduate summarizes:

> This is a new evolution in the community. Before that they [Canadian Reformed members] would just live their life, go to school in their community, they would work for someone else who is in this community. So, from cradle to grave, you conduct your entire life within this community. Since recently, the Canadian Reformed Church is reaching out into the world, trying to pursue evangelism which takes advantage of an open culture. …they promote their public policy ideas. (A9)

The respondent thinks that the immigrant mentality is one of the main reasons why it took a while for CanRC members to bring their voice to the public space: "In a new country, they tried to stay true to themselves and at the same time adjust to a new life" (A9).

Lastly, a significant indicator of whether and how critical thinking is being formed and developed is which questions can be asked in the classroom. Several interviewees of various decades of graduation mentioned how challenging and difficult it was to ask controversial questions in class. A graduate of the 2000s remembers that when she asked a teacher about something in the Bible which she disagreed with, "the whole class would be battling against me because they wanted to look good" (A4). While coming out later in her life, this participant had previously raised a question about homosexuality in class and received "a lot of judgement" (A4). She rhetorically inquires during the interview: "People say you cannot ask questions about God — but then how can you learn?!" (A4). She says that Canadian Reformed schools and churches would answer that you just need to believe. Another graduate of the 2000s shared a similar comment. She said that she had a lot of questions, like the following: "why is homosexuality so bad? … Why is it so evil if two people love each other?" (A6). Today, this participant is non-affiliated and lives in same-sex relationship. She says that she disagreed with the Christian theology which she was taught at school: "We were taught that God is in control of everything: …am I just a Barbie girl?

… Why does He make me sin? … Everything that God makes is right. We heard a lot of being a sheep. In a secular world, it is an insult" (A6).

A current teacher opposes the critical statements by saying that critical thinking is an integral part of teaching in Canadian Reformed schools. Besides theological studies, schools, she says, teach students everything that you need "to become your own person. … You need to study the world for yourself and make up your own mind. You don't believe just because we told you to but because you accepted it for yourself" (A41). A graduate of the 1990s says that teachers were usually very open to answering students' questions, while sometimes it was other students who "don't like when you challenge their worldview" (A24). Today, the situation is slightly improving in some Canadian Reformed schools at least because "Hamilton is more diverse than twenty years ago", and schools have "a lot of emphasis on anti-bullying" strategies (A 24).

To summarize, all but a few participants mentioned that contemporary parents expect a Canadian Reformed school to offer more than just a worldview; they also expect a quality education for their children. This is one of the reasons why various challenges that Canadian Reformed schools or students have faced have already been addressed or are being currently discussed.

One of the topics that was touched on only by one interviewee (A2), who is a recent graduate, is the lack of attention given by the Canadian Reformed community to mental health issues. He says that some teachers did not believe that ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder) "is a thing" and were hostile towards his learning: "They think that it is a discipline problem rather than a real mental disorder" (A2). The respondent recognizes that some positive changes have occurred in recent years. One of them is the replacement of an educator with the additional role of a high school counsellor by a professional counsellor. There is also a slight shift

in the community towards greater awareness of mental health. For example, in addition to the Christian Counselling Centre founded by members of Canadian Reformed Churches and some other Christian Churches, there are also Streetlight ministries supported and overseen by the Ancaster Canadian Reformed Church and aimed to reach out to people in the community who may experience severe poverty and mental health issues (Streetlight Ministries is located in the Beasley neighbourhood in Hamilton, one of Canada's lowest income areas by postal code). While some participants mentioned that there had been an increase of conferences for church leaders that address mental health, one can barely find discussions about mental health in Canadian Reformed media.

While this research does not aim at presenting a detailed comparative analysis of the CanRC and the CRCNA, an overview of approaches to mental health by other Reformed Churches in Canada, including the CRCNA, would enrich the understanding of the Canadian Reformed community. A content analysis of Canadian Reformed sources shows that, for example, *Clarion* magazine builds a connection between homosexual relations and mental health issues while the most common mention of mental health by ARPA Canada is in the context of discussion about euthanasia and palliative care. The CRCNA offers a variety of resources on mental health, including on its official website. Officially, the CRCNA has started addressing mental illness and overcoming stigma since 2010 when Synod 2010 encouraged "Christian Reformed churches, classes, ministries, and institutions to sponsor events to observe Disability Week … with a suggested focus on mental health issues" (Meehan, 2010, para. 2). After providing references to the alarming statistics of the amount of individuals, including students, suffering from a variety of mental problems, the *Disability Concerns Network* forum (located on the CRCNA website) concludes the post with the following rhetorical questions: "Shouldn't we be talking about this?

What do we need to do to talk about mental health and mental illness in our churches in a way that people feel safe and loved and accepted and cared for?" (Disability Concerns, 2014, para. 5). The CRCNA has recently been offering workshops for youth to address "addiction, social media, suicide, and depression" (CRCNA, 2019, para. 3). It also provides a link to *Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders* (2015) that was produced by "The Mental Health and Faith Community Partnership, a collaboration between psychiatrists and clergy aimed at fostering a dialogue between the two fields, reducing stigma, and accounting for medical and spiritual dimensions as people seek care" (Disability Concerns, 2015, para. 1). As we will also see in the analysis of interfaith dialogue in chapter 6, the CRCNA seems to be more up to date regarding some current issues and topics and, in some aspects, has a more progressive approach than the CanRC.

5.4. Gender & feminism in church and school

5.4.1. Female roles defined by community

The Canadian Reformed Church is a traditional Christian church, where one "may never see a woman in the pulpit, or, if women are allowed to speak at the front of the church, they are not usually permitted to become senior pastors or interpret the Bible" (Bramadat, 2000, p. 90). Hence, the CanRC, as other traditional Christian denominations, asserts complementarian gender roles and states that "men and women are 'equal but different' — created equal before God, but different in power and roles" (Lobbezoo, 2014, pp. 96-97). The CanRC recognizes two genders and the different roles that are given to men and women: "God created both genders in the beginning to image accurately what God was like (Gen 1:26, 27). … This basic equality, though, does not exclude the fact that men and women have been assigned different roles in God's world and kingdom. This pertains also to marriage" (Smithville Canadian Reformed Church, n.d.*a*, para. 4). The latter is emphasized by Canadian Reformed pastor Peter Holtvluwer (2011):

> The Lord … frees you from the pressure to be your own authority and instead provides the grace to submit to your husband's authority. He liberates you from ungodly opinions about marriage and children so that you can be a free mother in your home, happily raising however many children He may give you, joyfully managing the affairs of your family so that your husband has full confidence in you. … You don't need to be reduced to a "partner" or merely a "friend" for your husband, for you are something greater: his one and only Christian bride! According to God's Word, you are your husband's lover and unique helper, complementing him where he lacks and being one unit with him as His covenant wife for God's glory! (para. 40)

Paul Bramadat (2000) provides a succinct summary:

> …it is nonetheless possible to highlight some common themes in conventional evangelical constructions of female gender. There are surely exceptions to this norm, but until the latter stages of the current century, most evangelical women have followed the pattern one might expect from women in male-dominated religious or cultural institutions. That is, evangelical women have generally understood themselves primarily as mothers and wives and only exceptionally as independent career women. As Bendroth [1993, p. 96] observes, historically, "The doctrine of submission, with its heavy emphasis on marriage, assumed that the proper sphere of the Christian woman was the home; outside activities were clearly secondary". (p. 92)

At the same time, the CanRC warns women against losing or giving up their will and identity:

> …in her effort to respect her husband, the wife could become silent and compliant, always submissively doing what (she thinks) her husband would prefer. At bottom, he has become her idol—and then her role has morphed from being a helper to being an enabler. She's forgotten that her husband invariably is a sinner, and so in its time most certainly in need of resistance, correction and even admonition. Here the wife needs to repent of becoming a servant. (Smithville Canadian Reformed Church, n.d.*a*, para. 15)

The importance of a woman to a man is highlighted by referring to "the excellent wife of Prov 31: 'she opens her mouth with wisdom, and the teaching of kindness is on her tongue' (vs 26). Such words indeed make a man grow" (Smithville Canadian Reformed Church, n.d.*a*, para. 16). The author emphasizes:

> I write this as a man of the 21st century. There is a part of me that wants to insist that the woman should be her own person, also in marriage. To do that, though, I'd have to stomp upon the authority of Scripture. Since I can't do that, I need to accept that God created the "woman for the man". (Smithville Canadian Reformed Church, n.d.*a*, para. 19)

A recent graduate says that in the church a woman does not have a leadership role; she defers to the man who would speak for her. According to this interviewee, the same culture is seen in the

schools, while some other respondents disputed this statement. The interviewee acknowledges that this culture had not bothered him until he did some critical thinking, and "now I find it deeply unsettling because: what are we doing with all these talented people, trying to force them into the mould of motherhood when maybe it's not what they are made for! They may have a brilliant mind, but they are not allowed to use it, or they feel that using it would be too risky" (A22). The respondent thinks that therefore a lot of resources are being wasted. He admits that he "felt personally harmed by this ideology and saw how it was harming for fully exploring their potential" (A22). As in many other aspects, more changes around women's roles and women's rights in school and in the community overall are inevitable, at least because many teachers at Guido de Brès are members of the most progressive Canadian Reformed church, Blessings Christian Church (Hamilton), said one of respondents - A22. A detailed analysis of this particular church will be presented in chapter 6.

A former member of the CanRC, Chuck Eelhart (2013) states in the blog that the CanRC is very patriarchal: "Women only have rights through their men. They are allowed to teach in schools but have no real place other than subservience in the church hierarchy" (para. 8). This situation has been covered in Paul Bramadat's ethnographic study (2000) of the Inter-Varsity Christian Fellowship (IVCF) at McMaster University that is "a group that espouses fundamentalist interpretations of the Bible, women's roles, the age of the earth, alcohol consumption, and sexual ethics" (abstract). The research shows that "the moral permissivism and feminism that are integral components of this institution also disparage the conservative gender roles embraced by most female evangelical students" (Bramadat, p. 95). For example, one respondent who is a member of the CanRC, "where women are prohibited not only from preaching but also from voting on issues of church policy and administration", felt "caught between the worlds of her traditional faith and

her secular education" (p. 95). As a result, some evangelical women experience gender-specific alienation because of "the disjuncture between their faith, which models conservative gender roles for women, and the university, which at least officially (if not always actually) encourages so-called progressive roles" (p. 95). Paul Bramadat shows that in women's studies classes, "evangelical women have to endure their non-Christian classmates' allegations that evangelicalism or, for that matter, Christianity itself is oppressive to women" (p. 95). Helen, a student at McMaster University and a member of the CanRC, shared that during women's studies classes she realized that her beliefs are different from most people around here:

> I don't say much when people are talking [critically about Christianity] because I know from experience that I'll get jumped on. One woman asked me how I could even be a Christian at all. She asked how I could experience the love of a God who oppresses women. I just couldn't think of any answers. (p. 95)

The interviews conducted for this thesis show that after gaining a university degree, many CanRC members keep friendships predominantly with their fellow church members and do not stay in touch with their former classmates. A common situation is described by Bramadat:

> …the shock of being accused by non-Christians of belonging to an oppressive tradition may inspire these women [female students] to reject the new secular social context they have just entered and thereby deepen their alienation from their more fully egalitarian peers and the university as a whole. (p. 98)

Historical research about a Free Reformed Church community in Southern Ontario in 1950–1976 by Corrina C. Lobbezoo (2014) reflects some of the tendencies that can still be observed in the CanRC today. The thesis concludes:

> Studying women in the FRC [the Free Reformed Churches of North America] reveals that resistance to change, the social pressure of the community, the church, and personal faith were elements that kept the Free Reformed community isolated and insular. …I argue that FRC women, particularly married women with children, helped to build and maintain an insular, isolated community in their work, home and church. They did so by fulfilling their gendered roles according to personal faith, community norms and the church's teachings, which were articulated more frequently between 1966 and 1976 in response to second-wave feminism. (p. 94)

What we can currently observe in the Canadian Reformed community reflects the description found in the research on the FRC community in the 1950-70s. The FRC members believed that "women should not … work, but that women could … work under the following circumstances: part-time, in a time of extreme need, only while the children were in school and under the auspices of a family business or a husband's work" (p. 94). Also, Lobbezoo's thesis makes a fair point that the fact that FRC women spent much of their time in their homes meant that overall they "had less exposure to 'the world' than if they had all worked in secular environments," and they maintained strong ties with family and church members, which "served as social glue to the church community" (pp. 94-95). Ministers and media emphasized the importance of maintaining current gender role divisions. "Much of these three categories falls under what other historians have termed 'social reproduction,' including household activities, unremunerated work, kinship work or maintaining friendships, biological reproduction and caring" (p. 95).

The Smithville Canadian Reformed Church website (n.d.*b*) touches on a pressing question: "if women can and do serve effectively in boardrooms across the nation, why should they not serve in church boards (also known as Consistory, or sometimes Council)?" (para. 7). The author offers a few factors for consideration:

> Already … we're seeing sisters in the congregations receiving places in school boards to a greater degree than was the case in the past. Perhaps that means that we are slowly getting comfortable with the idea of women in positions of leadership. … The Student Leadership Team in Guido de Brès High School has more females amongst its members than males. In fact, the last few years have seen more female presidents than males. … So there's my question: how would you go about justifying that women in the boardroom is OK while insisting that women ought not to receive a place in the consistory room? … The two passages from Paul where the apostle forbade women from teaching in church (as listed above; 1 Cor 14:34 and 1 Tim 2:12) only make sense if the churches to which Paul was writing his instruction actually dabbled with (or perhaps had) women taking positions of leadership in church. In that context the apostle gave his emphatic instruction that women were not to speak in church. It would seem to me, then, that those texts speak very pointedly to the situation developing in our nation. ... The solution is instead that the stronger gender (yes, see 1 Peter 3:7) dare to step up to embrace responsibility and give such leadership

> that the family feels safe and secure. In our culture — in the church too — too many men are wimping out from the challenges of stretching themselves. That means boys aren't seeing dads modelling what the boys need to become. In turn that means that in time to come family, church and society will not have strong leaders. And someone will have to fill the vacuum. (Smithville Canadian Reformed Church, n.d.*b*, para. 9-26)

Furthermore, the Canadian Reformed Church has extended women's rights in recent years. Thus, in 2013, Synod reversed the decision of the previous, 2010 Synod that allowed local churches to decide whether female members could vote for office bearers. The former stated that "churches should return to the voting practice as it officially was before 2010, namely, male communicant members only voting" (Nordeman, 2014, p. 439). The 2016 Synod returned back to the 2010 decision (Bredenhof, 2016). Later, the 2019 Synod confirmed the decision by denying appealing the 2016 decision "to leave the matter of women voting in the freedom of the local church" (p. 52). It has created a real backlash among the believers. One of the reasons to this, says a Canadian Reformed blogger Ryan Smith (2012), is that it has led to many complex questions, an answer for which cannot be found easily:

> Imagine if two of these churches permit women to vote and one does not. The one church that does not permit women to vote will appeal to the more traditional and conservative person, while the other two will appeal to the less traditional and more liberal. A member could then pick the church which has the views and the practices that he or she prefers. Is this biblical? I am not a proponent of homogeneity (all churches being exactly the same) as I see the good in our differences, but when it comes to controversial matters such as this, we need synod to be stronger and take a stand on it. … So by that line of reasoning it would sound like I am saying that only men should vote. Ideally yes, but at the same time…not at all. If there is a widow in the congregation, is she not now the head of her home? Should she not have a vote? Or should she now simply trust in the Lord's goodness to provide an overseer for her? A single lady who is not living at home…is she the head of her home? Should she not vote? Or is she still subject to her father's authority? What if her father is dead? Can she vote? In my mind there should be one vote per family and that vote should be submitted by the spiritual head of the home, in most cases that means men. I am sure that my view will never be accepted, since women can already nominate and object. … I am concerned that those who want to see female office bearers will grab a hold of this synodical decision and use it as a catalyst to further their cause of worldly feminism within the church. (para. 3-8)

Another Reformed blogger, Wes Bredenhof, a pastor of the Free Reformed Church in Tasmania, opposes the statement above: "My view on this has not changed. I remain convinced that there are no sound, biblical, confessional, or church political arguments that can be brought to bear against allowing female communicant members to participate in elections for office bearers. I understand that some local churches believe differently about it and thus I think the approach of Synod 2010 (buttressed now by GS 2016) is the best approach — really, it's the only approach that can be justified" (2016, para. 3).

John Byl, professor emeritus at Trinity Western University, BC, explains that the Bible teaches that women "are not to have authority over men" (1 Tim. 2:12). As a result, Reformed churches have excluded women from voting "primarily because the congregational vote, having a decisive effect to which the council is bound, was seen to be an exercise of authority" (Byl, 2011, para. 2). At the same time, for example, Dr. J. Visscher contends that the congregational vote merely declares a preference rather than exercising any authority (2011, p. 113). Likewise, Dr. C. Van Dam asserts that the vote is merely "advisory, simply stating a preference, leaving the final decision to the consistory with the deacons" (2011, p. 234).

In short, contrary to Synod 2010, Reformed church polity has historically considered that the congregational vote is an exercise of authority (Byl, 2011, para. 2). The main problem here is that although women "are allowed to participate in the nomination process", when the election comes, "they are excluded". Then when the approbation process comes, they are again permitted to participate. "A woman is free to bring a lawful objection to the appointment of an office bearer, even if her husband should not be in agreement. Odd. Inconsistent. Who ever heard of an election where those allowed to nominate and approbate were not permitted to vote? Include them altogether or exclude them altogether", states Bredenhof (2010, para. 6). Moreover, Bredenhof

notices that he has never seen that "a woman could submit a letter with names that is completely in disagreement with the letter that her husband sent" (para. 6). Despite Synod's decisions of 2013 and 2016, high controversy around women's rights in the church shows that the attitude towards women's roles has significantly shifted. Wes Bredenhof (2010) makes a precise observation:

> The days of far-reaching Canadian Reformed homogeneity are over. Maybe that will be a good thing. Maybe we've all been the same for too long. One of our Reformed forefathers said that it's the devil who wants us all to be the same. Whatever you may think of that, imagine the city with two Canadian Reformed churches: one allows women to vote, the other not. Unless borders are strictly enforced (which we all know to be impossible), this cannot but contribute to the development of what are called "modalities." In simpler terms, it means that a certain kind of person goes to a certain kind of Canadian Reformed Church. He or she picks the church that has the mindset or the practices that he or she favours. With the passing of this decision, we can expect to see this trend developing in the years ahead. It already happens to a certain extent, but it will happen more. (para. 4)

Blessings church in Hamilton is the best example.

At the same time, Bredenhof (2010) warns church members not to be naïve. While there are members of the Canadian Reformed Churches who would like to see women in ecclesiastical office "up till now, they could make no credible argument for their position. How can you plausibly argue for women in office when your church federation doesn't even allow women to vote? It would be like a woman running for Parliament before 1919, when women were finally granted suffrage in Canada. The camel is now inching his way to the tent" (para. 9). Bredenhof warns that even those, like the British theologian and Anglican bishop N. T. Wright, who are described as Reformed and highly regarded by some Canadian Reformed Christians, can be proponents of women's ordination:

> the issue of women's ordination is not where it ends. … The same hermeneutic that results in the ordination of women leads to the abandonment of the gospel. As Grudem puts it, "Those who adopt an evangelical feminist position 'buy into' an interlocking system of interpretation that will relentlessly erode the authority of Scripture in our churches" (262). Where the authority of Scripture is eroded, you can be sure that the gospel is in grave danger too" (para. 12).

The Canadian Reformed community stresses the importance of the role of a mother for the family. Hence, the Canadian Reformed community still has a sentiment in favour of a stay-at-home mother at least until children grow up, although not all families, especially in urban areas, follow or can follow this expectation. A decreasing number of children per family, financial reasons, as well as feminist ideas motivate more and more female members of the CanRC to pursue a career. Daycares are still highly criticized by Reformed communities. G. Bilkes (1973), cited in the historical study on the Free Reformed community in Canada in the 1950–70s, shares their concern about mothers who worked "while other ladies [took] care of their children" (p. 2). Sophie, Saskia, and Lien, who were interviewed by Lobbezoo (2014), echoed that thought:

> The daycare centre might not be "bad," said Saskia, but "they get brought up by strangers." Said Sophie, "I don't agree with women working when they have small children. They shouldn't go to babysitters because they're only small once. That's what I don't like." Lien agreed. With both parents working, she believed nobody would have time for the children, who were sent to daycare, and disconnected from the mother on a daily basis. In some cases, she conceded, it might be necessary for the mother to work. But was it "good for the family"? No. (p. 99)

Much of ARPA's attention has been devoted to the topic of daycare for the past several years, especially during the tensions between the Conservative party's decision to provide parents with $100 a month for every child under six and the Liberal government's plan to expand subsidized daycare. Thus, ARPA Canada refers to Sweden's universally accessible, government-funded daycare system:

> while direct causation has been difficult to prove, many Swedish health-care professionals point to the lack of parental involvement beyond the first 16 months as a primary contributing factor. Psychosomatic disorders and mild psychological problems are escalating among Swedish youth at a faster rate than in any of 11 comparable European countries. Such disorders have tripled among girls over the last 25 years. Education outcomes in Swedish schools have fallen from the top position 30 years ago, to merely average amongst OECD nations today. Behaviour problems in Swedish classrooms are among the worst in Europe". (Himmelstrand, cited in ARPA Canada, 2011*a*, para. 5)

Therefore, Himmelstrand concludes, "making childrearing a state responsibility has not proven to be a success. Put simply, parents are willing to sacrifice more for their children than any government where childcare is just one budgetary item among many. Canadians should carefully consider all of the available facts before looking to Sweden as a model for childcare" (para. 9). ARPA also refers to the local experience, primarily discussing the situation in Quebec. A *Maclean's* article posted on ARPA's website reminds that in 1997, Quebec "implemented a low-cost universal childcare policy along the lines of the European model. … Nothing like it has been tried anywhere else in North America" (Geddes, 2011, para. 2). Findings of three Montreal studies of how "the rapid expansion of $7-a-day daycare seems to be reflected in Quebec kids' scores on a school-readiness test" show that "the effects of the program are found to be negative for five-year-olds and less convincingly negative for four-year-olds" (para. 3). One possible reason, the researchers say, is that "children are simply spending too much time, especially when they are under age three, in daycare for the [Quebec childcare] policy to have any positive effect" (para. 3).

ARPA also re-posted *Maclean's* article called *How Dutch women got to be the happiest in the world* (2011) in order to dispel the myth that women have to "be full-time employed and climbing to the top of the corporate ladder in order to be happy" (ARPA, 2011*c*, para. 1). The article says that in the Netherlands the percentage of women that are employed part-time is more than three times higher than Canada, and Dutch women showed "evidence of personal freedom and a commitment to a balanced lifestyle" (Ward, 2011, para. 2). They make this choice despite the call of some to be "out with the part-time feminism!" (para. 4). The article refers to the finding of Ellen de Bruin's book *Dutch Women Don't Get Depressed* (2008) that "Dutch women rank consistently low, compared to those in other Western countries, in terms of representation in top positions in business and government — and rank consistently near the top in terms of happiness

and well-being" (Ward, 2011, para. 6). This description of a Dutch woman in the Netherlands might reflect the situation with women in the Canadian Reformed community: "She loves to work part-time and does not earn as much as her husband, but she's fine with that — he takes care of the bills" (Ward, 2011, para. 6). Hence, Sarah Sands, of the U.K.'s *Independent*, writes, "perhaps [Dutch women] are happy because they don't feel guilty for falling short of perfection. We are torn to shreds between the American and the Mediterranean models of womanhood. On one hand, we are boardroom feminists expecting equality of expectation and outcome. On the other, we are matriarchs, wanting to run model kitchens and walk through meadows with bands of children" (Ward, 2011, para. 8).

At the same time, the Canadian Reformed community is growing in its recognition of the complexity of mother's roles and the difficulties that female members of the community might experience in the result of diverse types of pressure and increasing amount of expectations from them. Thus, Canadian Reformed blogger and pastor Peter H. Holtvluwer (2011) tries to help his female readers to cope with those factors that might be oppressive towards them. Holtvluwer distinguishes different types of pressure, including (but not limited to) those from the inside, from the outside, from the Lord, from the community and worldly views. Holtvluwer admits that along with experiencing the fear of what "other church women are thinking about my looks, my dress, my hair style or (in the case of mothers) my children" (para. 33) because "the idol of community approval is never far away!" (para. 37), the contemporary society's "feminist movement has pushed our culture into ranking motherhood several notches down the list of life occupations for a woman with marriage even lower" (para. 29) and "makes you feel embarrassed and backward for marrying in your early 20s, for having children soon after and being a stay-at-home mom" (para. 30). Also, a woman who is committed to a part-time job might feel that she is seen as "a

poor wife and mother, even though she is intent on keeping her family as her number one focus" (para. 34). However, while Holtvluwer encourages women to distinguish between true guilt that "occurs when we have violated one of God's commands" from false guilt that "occurs when we have violated some merely human precept or expectation" (para. 53), he highlights that "if you are married, your first obligation lies with your husband and children" (para. 60). He summarizes that "we should be living members in the church and active citizens in our communities, but it must be in balance with being faithful wives and mothers at home while finding time to commune with our Saviour as His daughter" (para. 50).

However, there is limited discussion of the consequences of divorce on women. Their financial status could be significantly affected by, for example, a huge unemployment gap or limited career advancement opportunities because of continuous part-time work. Even though the divorce rate is quite low in the Canadian Reformed community, as the author of this thesis heard during the research project, some divorced women in the community have gone through serious financial hardship and had to take on low-skilled and low-paid jobs.

5.4.2. Female career choices

North American evangelicalism was not significantly influenced by the feminist movement until the 1960s–70s when "neo-evangelicals took up issues of gender" and "had provided no strong, public feminine voice or rhetoric of sexual equality" (Bendroth, 1993, p. 120). What is more, many fundamentalists and conservative evangelicals perceived feminism "as another form of secularizing modernism" (Bruland, 1989, p. 144). As a result, "feminist ideals penetrated the evangelical leadership slowly" (Bendroth, 1993, p. 120). Nowadays, Paul Bramadat points out, while the "different but equal status of women is still a major element" of the evangelical movement, and they "negotiate between their faith and feminism, the role of women within

conservative Protestantism is gradually becoming a significant and problematic component of … discourse" (p. 93). We can observe that in the current Canadian Reformed community, more and more female graduates pursue a university degree and choose a professional career rather than being a stay-at-home mom.

Several interviewees mentioned that in contrast to previous decades, the number of Canadian Reformed school graduates that pursue a post-secondary education is growing, including the number of female students. A recent graduate says that out of 120 students, roughly one third went to university, one third to college, and one third preferred to work straight after leaving school; a lot of graduates choose to pursue a professional degree (A30). Only one interviewee, who is a current teacher, mentioned that in comparison to a few years ago, "less people go to university" and "a lot of students go straight to work", including landscaping, which is what many male students prefer (A21). This interviewee assumes that one of the reasons for these changes is the shift in the value system of the Canadian Reformed community, including among the young generation, towards materialist ideals (A21). The teacher interviewed stated that when students look at the university fees, they complain about the high cost although it is decent in comparison to the USA (A21). Also, in line with their secular peers, they got used "to hav[ing] everything at home and they want it" for themselves (A21), but economically the current generation cannot afford the same lifestyle as their parents did (Elliott & Reynolds III, 2014). Pastor Holtvluwer warns against obsession with materialist values by saying that "our identity does not hinge on whether we are up to date with the latest sit-coms, movies, books, iPods, iPhones or Wii games; or whether we frequent acceptable restaurants and go south for vacations — we already have pre-paid access to paradise through the precious blood of the Lamb of God!" (2011, para. 51). He

explains that while "none of these things in themselves is ungodly … it's what's driving us to get these things that's often the problem" (para. 52).

A teacher in a Canadian Reformed school says that "boys are laid back in high school, they let girls be strong", "boys take a little bit longer" to become mature and take leadership positions (A21). The gender ratio at ARPA youth conferences in Ottawa confirms that young Reformed women are interested in politics, and at least half of the youth from across Canada who came to this conference were female students. Although we cannot use it as a source to analyze Canadian Reformed schools particularly, because ARPA Canada unites various Reformed denominations, we can conclude that Reformed women in general have become significantly more politically active. A current teacher notices that today there are many women in politics who have children. Moreover, since the number of children per Canadian Reformed family is dropping (A21), it is more likely for women to join the labour force. So, while in rural areas there are still many stay-at-home moms, in urban Canadian Reformed families, both parents usually work. Moreover, there is a shift in the new generation which does not rush to get married in order to get intimacy: "I don't think now that's the case" (A21).

Respondents say that teachers do not tell female students to "just be a mother, don't study" (A38). Several participants, including male and female, marked that "education is never wasted" (A38), and it is good to be an educated mother (A31):

> …education is extremely important just for building character, to know who God is and who we are as people. And it's useful not just if you use it for a job but if you use it to benefit people in your life. Education is not just pragmatic; it is more than that. It makes me a better wife and mother eventually. (A31)

A mother, who has education, says one of current teachers, will have critical thinking skills and be able to speak to her children about the issues of the day (A38). Additionally, an interviewee noted, a rush of a young woman to get married or a confidence in being married and, therefore, an

avoidance to think about material needs might lead to unwanted consequences and possible disappointments later (A38). At the same time, from the conversations with community members it becomes clear that the main role of a woman, if marriage and giving birth happens, is the role of mother:

> That being said, if someone gets married and has children, there can be no higher calling than being a mother. … I highlight the role of a mother in the family as one of the most important leaders in our country because … I know, it's a traditional style of family … it's a pillar of our society. It is one of the key features that's made North America so prosperous... (A38)

One current teacher highlights the concept of "women's roles." She says that some graduates who have post-secondary education or do not but become stay-at-home moms "might want to be moms. This what the Lord gives them … Being a nurse is a natural choice, Jordan Peterson says. … Some girls do business too" (A41). Also, she thinks that there is no problem in doing part-time work and gives an example of being a part-time lawyer (A41). However, when a teacher discusses career opportunities with her high school students, she mentions that career does not mean only a job occupation; "it involves everything of who you are" and can refer to volunteer, paid, or unpaid work, as well as family relations (A21). Hence, since one of the career choices is that of being a mother, "you can still consider it an option if you are a girl" (A21). A graduate of the 2000s confirms that being a "stay-at-home dad would be highly unusual in Canadian Reformed circles" (A30). Moreover, according to the Bible, "it is the man's role to go out and to work. It's part of the Christian mandate" (A30). At the same time, the respondent remembers that "in a high school, there was an expectation that some if not most women will be in the workforce. I would not say that it was negative to be a stay-at-home mom, but there is almost an expectation that they should go for further education" (A30). Regarding the choice of profession, there are four main professional streams that are being suggested by career advisors and being followed by many high school graduates in cases where "you are not sure what you want to do" (A30). A recent graduate

says that "if you are a guy and you are not completely sure what you want to do, …you should go to school for business or become an engineer" (A30); "if you a girl, you should do nursing or be a teacher" (A30). Female graduates often pursue a nursing career because it more or less guarantees job (A21) that allows taking breaks like several maternity leaves; male graduates often prefer doing landscaping or construction work in their own community. But it does not seem healthy to stay in the same community for one's whole life, a teacher says (A21). Common professions pursued by Canadian Reformed community members correlate with those preferred by the members of the Free Reformed Church, as reflected in the above mentioned historical study. Lobbezoo (2014) summarizes that "vocations or careers considered appropriate for FRC women were limited to care-giving, homemaking, or assisting positions, such as nursing, teaching, cleaning, secretarial or taking care of children" (p. 100).

At the same time, when it comes to schools, many teachers are women with different types of marital and family status. They include single, married, and married with children women. According to research participants, when a teacher is needed unexpectedly, the school would often reach out to the stay-at-home women in the community to see if and how they could help out.

5.5. Homeschooling

Although less than half of one percent of students are homeschooled in Canada (Van Pelt, 2015), there is a number of families in the Canadian Reformed community that prefer home-based education for a variety of reasons, including financial. Without doubt, one of the most recently covered stories on homeschooling in Ontario relates to Sam Oosterhoff, a 19-year-old homeschool graduate, who has become the youngest Member of Provincial Parliament in Ontario in 2016. A member of a Canadian Reformed church, Oosterhoff ran as a pro-life and pro-family politician, winning 54% of the vote in the Niagara West-Glanbrook riding (Laurence, 2016, para. 2). During

his election campaign, Oosterhoff promised that he would "be a voice for common-sense, pro-family policies and concerns", would "never waver in my support of parents as primary educators", and would "strive to ensure that parental rights are respected in education" (in Laurence, para. 6). Thus, Jack Fonseca of Campaign Life Coalition (CLC) pointed out that "opposing Kathleen Wynne's radical sex [education] curriculum was a winning strategy for Niagara West-Glanbrook" (in Laurence, para. 10). At the same time, some mass media publications and public commentators claimed Sam Oosterhoff was ineligible for the post he gained and for working on school education after he was appointed as a parliamentary assistant to Minister of Education Lisa Thompson. For example, *The Star*'s columnist Martin Regg Cohn (2016) questions the "credibility and competence" of Sam Oosterhoff (para. 14), partially because he was home-schooled by a traditional Christian family. This argument would face opposition by many Christian authors. For example, Executive Vice President of Christian think tank *Cardus* Ray Pennings (2016) insists that "[l]iving in a healthy pluralistic society … requires us to understand and give place to people different than ourselves, even as we engage in legitimate argument about what the public good looks like and why we might differ with each other" (para. 8). Additionally, Cardus Education Survey (2016) concludes that while religious homeschool graduates are "increasingly more likely to see the society as hostile to their values" in comparison to public school graduates (Green et al., 2016, p. 6), they are "as engaged with political life as their peers from public schools" (p. 6) and "feel more prepared for a job and for relationships, and for a vital religious life" than public school graduates (p. 59).

Meanwhile, the attitude to homeschooling in the Canadian Reformed community has been changing over time, but stigmatization and suspicion of homeschooling can still be observed there. One of the reasons is the importance of private schools that have been established by the

community and supported by all but a few community members. Keith Sikkema's MEd thesis (2004) clarifies this tension: "…home schoolers in the NPCR [Niagara Peninsula Canadian Reformed] community are deviant by departing from the established standard of sending their children to JCS [John Calvin School, a Canadian Reformed school that was started in 1964]; and … they would progress towards transgression if they were to actively recruit or broadcast the validity and viability of their approach" (p. 25). Although the number of Canadian Reformed families that choose homeschooling has grown since the 1990s, and "currently, more than 10% of families do so" (Sikkema, 2004, p. 10), homeschooling is seen as a "symbolic, moral, and spiritual withdrawal from the community" (p. 10). Hence, Sikkema observes, "home schoolers and day schoolers are said to socialize in different corners of the church parking lot, sit on opposite sides of the church aisle, and experience emotional conflict" (p. 10). The Canadian Reformed community appears to fail "to avoid the false dilemma of *Christian school* or *home school,* Van Dam (2000, p. 35) identified: Despite home schoolers' claims, he deems it dubious to conclude that home schooling is more Biblical than day schooling" (Sikkema, p. 10).

A lecturer at the Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College, Keith Sikkema defends the rights of homeschooling parents and highlights a serious problem that the community experiences and that was mentioned by some interviewees. One respondent points out that Canadian Reformed schools have become an extension of the church, and there is an "undue emphasis on 'the triangle of home, church, and school … to support the school, even though the Bible gives the responsibility (to raise the children) squarely to the parents'" (p. 94). Keith Sikkema's study reveals that

> Home schoolers noted the unintended offense their choice gives. Despite attempts not to antagonize people, Karen and Jerry's decision to home school was interpreted as a confrontation and people gave them "the cold shoulder." Stan and Rebekah could have a "rational, frank, and tolerant dialogue" about home schooling with some people; but others

> were offended by their rejection of the parents' sacrifice, or when she said that "most mothers can home school when it is done prayerfully." … People had labeled them [homeschoolers] as isolationists or claiming superiority, as holding that everyone should do it, or that the school is not good enough. (p. 98)

An article by Schouten (1996) in the *Clarion* magazine warns that sometimes homeschools fall into "an insular mentality" and "self-isolation" that entails absolutizing and idolatry of family (p. 416). A recent article by the *Gospel Coalition* emphasizes a few key benefits of homeschooling and encourages Christian parents to think carefully, and if they choose homeschooling, to do it for solid reasons rather than out of fear. Thus, the article warns parents that they should not opt for homeschooling if they just fear that "something bad will happen to our children. Our children will have bad things happen to them whether we homeschool or not" (Fox, 2016, para. 6); or if they consider homeschooling as a tool to guarantee their children's salvation (para. 7); or "if everyone around you is homeschooling and you're not, it can feel like you're less of a Christian for not doing so" (para. 8).

While I did not originally intend to interview homeschool graduates, there were a few participants, spouses of school graduates or school graduates who currently homeschool their children. One of the interviewees who was homeschooled until the 2010s described several benefits that homeschooling brings to both the student and their family as a whole. Among the positive aspects of homeschooling, she mentioned academic flexibility, a flexible schedule that allowed her to be a year ahead academically, and having time to volunteer, work and meet different people (A31). This experience, she reflects, "was beneficial in transition":

> I was very surprised that a lot of my peers were not really engaging as much, not just [Canadian Reformed] school peers, when I went to work — kids who were in public school. They did not really seem to have a work ethic and did not know how to relate to customers. … Another thing, I think, when you are homeschooled, you are kind of forced to speak to people. You are forced to make connections, because you are not in a room with the same people for twelve years. It kind of helps to integrate into society. But it's different for everyone. (A31)

A quantitative study conducted by *Cardus* reveals that religious homeschool graduates "report feeling helpless in dealing with life's problems to the same degree as their peers in the public school" (Green, 2016, p. 29). So, an above-mentioned interviewee (A31) might be not a rare example of gaining a successful balance of academic life and social maturity. However, the *Cardus* study also shows that religious homeschool graduates tend to build strong social bonds with those who "share their religion, have the same religious beliefs, attend religious services, and actually attend the same congregation as the respondent," which might be "a reason for concern if these graduates are not developing close ties from within the broader social fabric" (p. 29). To conclude, "religious homeschool graduates are the most likely to have friends with similar religious views, which is another form of encapsulation. Overall, however, the other religious independent sectors produce graduates with a diversity of social ties in and outside of religious communities" (Green, 2016, p. 30). A current homeschooling parent, a member of the CanRC, describes homeschooling as a tool to expose her children to a greater variety of opinions and people than they could experience in a Canadian Reformed school, but at the same time to control and guide their spiritual development that she would not be able to do if they were to go to a public school:

> What I really like about our homeschool group is that there is nobody from my church at this point. You just get a more diverse range of opinions on different issues and parenting, and I think that it's healthier for my children as well to be exposed not just to the very narrow understanding that maybe our church has about what it means to be in the world and to be involved in your community. (A41)

This respondent admits that first she was not too keen on homeschooling, because her "experience with homeschooled kids was that they are a bit odd, not socially adapted" (A41). After reading some scholarly literature and materials about homeschooling, as well as having faced some issues with their local school, she realized that she would like to try homeschooling for several of her children. For her, the benefits of home-based education include "flexibility and the amazing

influence parents can have", an opportunity not to have academic gaps because of medical absence, an opportunity for the children to socialize with their siblings, other children, as well as adults (A41). She adds that in contrast to the school, if any accident or conflict happens during homeschooling, "I know what really happened" (A41). She also recognizes some challenges of home-based education that would not take place if her children were going to a regular school. For example, she says she is "still more mom than a teacher" to her child (A41), and sometimes discipline and conversation about the child's attitude takes a lot of time and effort. At the same time, homeschooling gives her a chance to know better what her child really feels. For example, if the child does not want to read: "If she were in school, she might have read. But this attitude [a desire to read] does live in her heart, and it's good that I'm here to deal with it" (A41).

5.6. Conclusion

To conclude, this part of the research is coherent with previous studies about other Dutch Reformed communities showing that their social activities and institutions were not perceived by them as Dutch:

> It was a reality rooted in principle and faith, not ethnicity. In Canada, however, such social action was not the norm and it soon became viewed as a Dutch ethnic activity rather than an outworking of religious conviction. (Teeuwsen, 2016, p. 48)

For the Canadian Reformed community, as other groups of Dutch Reformed background, it is the Reformed faith that shapes their worldview and lifestyle. As this study shows, theological reasons as well the Dutch background of recent post-war immigrants, who remembered school struggles in the Netherlands, influenced the decision of Canadian Reformed individuals to set up a separate school system in Canada. Being strongly committed to their faith and aiming to use schools as a tool to foster religious knowledge in their children and strengthening their Reformed faith, the

Canadian Reformed community has made significant steps towards raising current issues in the classroom and finding ways to address them.

As this chapter has shown, during the last two decades, schools underwent important changes in the curriculum, extracurricular activities, and approaches to discussing complex issues. The analysis of interview data demonstrates that critical thinking skills were a priority for Canadian Reformed schools since their establishment. While the tendency to shelter children and protect them from the outside community is still present, especially in the rural areas, on the whole schools recognize the challenges they face in the 21st century and aim to introduce effective teaching strategies and develop standardized curriculum plans across schools. However, standardizing curricula could provoke much resistance and debates. The differences across schools, depending on their location (the most simplified division would be urban – rural), are significant. One respondent raised a fair question: Should this standardized curriculum feed or challenge the existing biases? (A43). While he prefers the latter, he is against imposing a curriculum, because, he says, "parents are to decide what is best for their children" (A43); and parents do have a strong voice in the Canadian Reformed schools. What could be better, he added, is to develop critical thinking skills of church members by pastors, and then parents might make different decisions regarding school curriculum in the future (A43).

A recent graduate mentioned that "having a Christian educational way was definitely extremely beneficial", and teachers in the Canadian Reformed schools "had a very deep care for their students" (A30). The reasons for the latter statement are that probably because "they are of Christian faith and it is a close community, and they know the students very well. … They care for you more than just as a person, but they care for your soul, and … deeper than you would have

with unbelievers" (A30). Also, as it was already showed in section 5.3, Canadian Reformed schools provide students with a strong academic training.

However, although teachers demonstrate a willingness to answer students' questions on controversial topics, some respondents faced hostility and bullying from their peers when they asked uncomfortable questions in the classroom. Keeping in mind all the achievements of the Canadian Reformed schooling including, but not limited to, a strong academic training, many participants find much room for necessary improvement. The topics which are of main concern are the following: cultural readiness along with understanding of apologetics by graduates to integrate smoothly and successfully in a secular university environment; intercultural communication skills and graduates' interest in building relations outside the community; and the cost of the schools. While it was noticed by only a few respondents (all of whom are former members of the Canadian Reformed Church), it is worth mentioning that there is a perceived lack of opportunities for women to apply their full potential in a career path. Motherhood is seen as the main role of a married woman who has children. Other complex topics which were raised, such as how and in which scope to provide sex education in Christian schools, how these schools encourage students to be politically engaged, as well as whether graduates are open to interfaith dialogue, will be provided with a more detailed analysis in the following sections.

Chapter 6. Schools' approach to religious pluralism and interfaith dialogue

6.1. Encountering religious and cultural pluralism

A good indicator of how Canadian Reformed schools have become more inclusive in recent decades is the significant evolution of the curriculum and teaching practices related to different cultures and religions. This chapter presents the evidence that fleshes out this statement. While the interview questions were formulated as a general inquiry about participants' attitudes towards different religious traditions and how various religions have been presented in the classroom, the topic of Islam is central in this chapter. The reasons for this are obvious. The rapid increase in the number of Muslim immigrants, as well as the influx of recent refugees from predominantly Muslim countries, have been followed by an upsurge of anti-Muslim sentiments in the Western world during the last several decades. Given this, the topic of Islam and the growth of the Muslim population in Canada is widely discussed in society and the media, and the Canadian Reformed community is no exception. As a result, many respondents provided more details about Islam and relations with Muslims than about any other religious traditions. Hence, it seems that this topic is more relevant to the contemporary community in comparison to other belief systems.

Whether Canadian Reformed Christians agree or disagree with a more inclusive school program, today many of them admit that "multiculturalism is nice" (A40); moreover, "it is a reality we need to deal with" (A40), and it is the world which the schools' graduates are going to live in. One of the teachers, who has a missionary background, emphasizes the importance of multiculturalism policy in Canada: "When you allow people into the country, they should understand what freedom of religion is. This is number one for me: you are a Christian, you can be a Christian; you are a Muslim, you can be a Muslim — but you respect each other. That is such an important value that you need in the society, otherwise, you have … fights" (A41).

A graduate of a Canadian Reformed school of the 1990s, who is currently involved in the school system, remembers that when this was taught at school,

> the teacher would draw a line, a line was a future, and from this line you had all the branches going off in different directions. There were Roman Catholics, they were off back, and there were the Baptists, the Mennonites, the Christian Reformed Church, and always through the line at the end there was the Canadian Reformed Church, the last true Church. …That has shifted. That is no longer a model by which we teach about other religions. Now, I think it is more in lines with 1 Peter 2 or 3 when it talks about when people disagree with you, you need to treat them with gentleness and kindness and understanding… That's much more a way we work to talk about other denominations, Christian denominations especially. (A32)

A graduate of the 2000s remembers that during the Catechism class, it was explained that for Catholics, "the Eucharist is a divine representation of Christ's body in a physical form that makes them Christ ideologists. So, we were told as little children that Catholics think that they are eating a part of Christ, and that makes them wrong" (A9). Comparing teaching in the 1980s and 1990s with the schools of the 21st century, we can see that there has been much more exposure to different cultures and belief systems during the last two decades. Students at Canadian Reformed schools learn about various religious traditions, mainly within the World Religions class (around grades 11 and 12). Like in many public schools, within a *World Religions* course, students choose a particular religious tradition and conduct a study about it, usually in a group of two, and then present their results in class. In contrast to public schools, students of the Canadian Reformed schooling system compare a chosen belief system to Christianity in general and the Canadian Reformed tradition in particular. This way of studying other religions has a long tradition in Canadian Reformed schools. A graduate of the 1990s remembers that for a school project, they were supposed to interview an individual of a different faith, and this interviewee and his partner had a conversation with a few people from the Salvation Army (A30). Although this assignment gave them a better understanding of different religious traditions, the interviewee considers that the project had several aims; they were to build awareness of other religions and to indicate what

makes the Canadian Reformed Church unique (A30). This school graduate argues that it was a way of "teaching critical thoughts from our particular belief system" (A30). Another graduate of the 1990s agrees that "visiting a mosque or talking to Muslim kids would be a great experience for high school kids" (A31). One of the graduates in the 2000s defined his education on other religious traditions at Guido de Brès very stringently. He told that within the *World Religions* course, "the focus was on … what was wrong with" other religions: "We were taught to be critical of other communities, but not to be self-critical" (A22). Another person, who also graduated in the 2000s says that there were "very little comparative religious studies", and there was no "real understanding of what Islam is in a contemporary or historical sense" (A9). Nowadays, teachers of World Religions courses arrange visits to a Hindu temple, a mosque, or a synagogue. One of Guido de Brès Christian High School's teachers explains:

> We have had some people start a conversation about former Muslims. … But … at a high school level, it is very superficial. … These students don't know a lot about Islam, they have their preconceived knowledge and stereotypes. We are trying to disabuse them from those things firstly…. (A42)

To help current students overcome their misunderstandings about Muslim traditions is very important, says the teacher:

> more and more, they [the students] see Islam in the culture around. And I think we need to be careful in teaching it in a way that students are sensitive to words…. Although we don't apologize for distinguishing between the tenets of Christianity and Islam, we don't want them to be nasty or to stereotype Islam, or [think] that all adherents to Islam are terrorists. (A42)

This teacher says that a visit to a mosque and sharing a meal with Muslims there was an effective strategy to help students see the humanity of Muslims:

> They saw these people as kind, genuine human beings, who are not scary at all. I think it's important to have a relationship with the people rather than just watch the news and see the negative aspects. You need to treat them as human beings who sincerely believe in something. (A42)

Islam is being discussed in elementary schools too, even though it is not included in the official curriculum. Thus, a principal of one of elementary schools developed a unit on Islam, because it is important to tell students that the assumption that Islam is a bad religion is a myth (A8). An interviewee said that he discussed with students "the differences between us" (A8), but at the same time, he always emphasized "that God made us free people, and we live in Canada" where there is freedom of religion (A8). Therefore, this teacher intended to foster in students a feeling of "respect for different religions, different cultures even if you do not necessarily agree with those religions" (A8) and, in particular, "have respect and appreciation for [Muslims] as individuals and for contributions" (A8), which they have made to the society.

How a school approaches religious pluralism and exposure to different religions depends significantly on who is teaching Social Sciences or Religious Studies and who the principal of the school is at a particular time. Thus, in contrast to the above-mentioned position, a principal of another school demonstrated a very different approach to the topic of Islam. This person also argues that "we teach our students that every person on this Earth is an image-bearer — believer or non-believer—we are all created in the image of God. … This is an underlying foundation. Everybody has value. That is why we treat everybody respectfully and kindly and generously regardless of who they are and what they are doing" (A65). This interviewee, however, questions whether it is necessary to focus on Islam and relations with Muslims in class and highlight them while teaching about other religious traditions. In this person's understanding of the Quran, there is much negative emphasis on infidels there (A65). Furthermore, some teachers and parents think that teaching about Islam would be appropriate at the high school level rather than in an elementary school (A36).

It is important to mention that, according to interviews, many members of the community form their attitude to Muslims basing on what they have read, watched, or heard. For example, a principal of one of the schools had "never interacted with a Muslim" (A65), so it would be very hard for this person to talk about Muslims. Also, a fear of Muslims comes sometimes from school colleagues. One respondent stated that a husband of one of the teachers is a former Muslim, and this teacher shared with her colleagues that "she is scared of his family because of what has been said" (A67).

One of the topics within the theme of multiculturalism in Canada, which was least touched on by the interviewees, is attitudes towards Indigenous peoples. ARPA's website has a few posts regarding Indigenous populations in the *Multiculturalism* rubric. The main focus of these posts is on the apologies over the residential school system in Canada and the reconciliation and the healing process. Only a few interviewees mentioned the Indigenous population. It seems that the main reasons for this are that many members of the community are not exposed to the Indigenous peoples whose population is low in Southern Ontario. Another potential reason is that the CanRC was not involved in the running of residential schools; hence, it was not active in recognizing past mistakes; and, lastly, Indigenous people, like many other non-Dutch individuals, rarely join the CanRC. The discussion of discrimination against Indigenous peoples in Canada is integrated into some Literature classes when the teacher shows students the parallel between racism in the USA presented in some books to the situation in the Canadian context. One of the teachers interviewed includes information about Indigenous peoples in the social studies class. Otherwise, she says, "in many minds, there are no Indigenous people if they do not come to the CanRC" (A 41). Also, because a commitment to gospel-sharing is an inherent part of being a Christian, this teacher says that she is happy that the Bible was translated into Cree, Eastern James Bay dialect in 2016, and

she invites her students to pray and discuss "what we can do to bring the gospel to Indigenous" people (A41).

The analysis of graduates' vision of other cultures and religions should take into consideration where a particular graduate grew up. In the case of the Canadian Reformed community, whether it was a rural or urban area plays an important role in shaping and defining students' views on diversity, and the curriculum is adjusted depending on the school's geographical location. Hence, there is a significant difference between the two high schools. One of them, Guido de Brès Christian High school, is located in Hamilton, a city with a population of 536,917 people (Statistics Canada, 2016*b*), 25% of which are immigrants, 30% of which moved to Canada after 2001. Another school, Emmanuel Christian High School, is in Fergus. The population there is 20,767, and 2,010 individuals are immigrants; more than 60% of them immigrated before 1981. Additionally, in Fergus, only 570 individuals are identified as visible minority (around 3% of the total population), while in Hamilton, visible minorities comprise 100,060 individuals (one-fifth of the total population). Thus, one of the graduates of the 1990s, who grew up in the Hamilton-Burlington area, remembers that he regularly engaged with people outside the community while living "in the neighbourhood where there were Buddhists" (A30) and also with other Christian people through a Burlington soccer team. The rural/urban dichotomy was emphasized predominantly by urban interviewees, including when discussing ways of teaching social sciences and liberal arts in schools. Although "[i]n a network society the importance of place is secondary to the importance of 'flows'" (Niemandt, 2013, para. 2011), "for many people their belonging with, or alienation from, specific geographical communities play a vital role in their lives" (Walker, 2012, p. 105). There are numerous studies in a variety of Christian journals in Canada and the USA about the cultural divide between the urban and the rural and the

difference between the churches in rural and urban areas. Although the USA is being referred to in the following magazine piece, it reflects the Canadian landscape as well:

> Cornfields replace parking lots and the horizon expands. But signs along the highway also show changing cultural views. Billboards for local restaurants are interspersed with anti-abortion ads and calls to repent from un-Christian behavior. These signs do show up occasionally in the city, but not with the same prevalence as in the rural Midwest. (Hallock, 2017, para. 5)

The correlation between religious and political views is especially close among rural Christians:

> Rural Christians more commonly hold certain religious views that align with the political right. These include opposition to abortion, a belief that Christianity is under siege, a belief that Christians should "separate from the world" in a physical sense in addition to a metaphorical sense, and a focus on preserving church culture. … In contrast, urban churches tend to be a lot more mixed in their views. Being politically liberal, including being pro-choice and pro-diversity in religion are looked on much more favorably. (Hallock, 2017, para. 6)

Additionally, because rural Christians are usually older than their urban counterparts, they are "more likely to feel the tides of cultural change and see certain longstanding church beliefs eroding" (Hallock, 2017, para. 10).

It seems that the contrast between rural and urban Canadian Reformed community members has been growing for decades and generations due to the progress of urbanization and the increase of enrollment in post-secondary education by urban church members, and, hence there is a drastic growth of Canadian Reformed Christians who have joined the labour force outside the church community:

> I find that people in the country, they have a more conservative outlook. And they are able to make a living doing farming and doing landscaping and that kind of work. They are able to stick to their own community and work with each other, whereas people in urban areas have to interact with the secular society a lot more. So, I think that's why the more urban the church is, the students from this urban church are more open-minded to interact with Canadian society. (A7)

Interviewees explain that the difference "in the attitude between people that are from urban areas and people who are from country areas" (A7) are particularly visible in schools when

children from more progressive urban churches and more conservative rural churches meet in one classroom. In this situation, it is often very hard, the participants say, to find a happy medium or a middle ground:

> I saw this conflict between these different opinions when urban people wanted to be more open-minded, and the other half were more conservative. So, there were a lot of tensions about that: how do you teach sex-ed, for example, how do you teach art, how do you teach music, when half of your class is more in touch with secular society whereas the other half is not? (A7)

6.2. Christian-Muslim dialogue

The Muslim population in Canada is growing at a rate exceeding other religions. In contrast to a period before 1971, when Muslims composed 0.7% of immigrants; out of those who immigrated to Canada between 2006 and 2011, 17% were Muslims (Statistics Canada, 2011). According to the 2011 National Household Survey, Muslims represented "3.2% of the nation's total population, up from 2.0% recorded in the 2001 Census" (Statistics Canada, 2011). Additionally, in the post-9/11 era, there have been strong associations of Muslims with violence and terrorism by both mainstream and religious media. In Canada, "police-reported hate crimes targeting the Muslim population increased" by 61% in 2015 compared to 2014 (Statistics Canada, 2017*b*). The attitude toward Islam and the representation of Muslims can be a precise indicator of how Canadian Reformed Church members perceive openness to interfaith dialogue and cooperation with individuals who believe differently. Reformed magazines, such as *Clarion* and *Christian Renewal*, as well as online sources, such as the ARPA website, partially reflect the CanRC's position on Islam. A content analysis of Reformed media shows that while there are different attitudes towards Muslims among CanRC members, the vast majority of them stay away from regular dialogue and cooperation with Canadian Muslims. This section presents a comparative analysis of the approaches to Islam of two Reformed churches with Dutch heritage: the Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) and the Christian Reformed Church in North America

(CRCNA, or CRC for short). The CRCNA's model of interfaith dialogue could work as an example for interreligious engagement today.

The readership of *Clarion – the Canadian Reformed Magazine* covers only a segment of CanRC members. Although there is no data on the age of the readership, many interviewees mentioned that it is mainly the older generation that is interested in this magazine. *Clarion* is published twice per month and covers "events in the Canadian and American Reformed Churches" (Clarion, n.d., para. 1). The first issue of the *Canadian Reformed Magazine* was published in 1952, two years after the CanRC was established, in order "to develop the common bond of faith and promote the unity among the federation of churches" (Hollander den, 1999, p. 353). In 1973, it was re-named *Clarion* (p. 353). *Clarion* is not an official denominational magazine of the CanRC, although many readers, both in Canada and abroad, consider it as such (Reformed Academic, 2015). It is not surprising because "the magazine itself admits that, 'with contributions coming mostly from our own ministers, it endeavours to provide Reformed articles, aimed primarily at our Canadian/American Reformed church membership'" (Reformed Academic, 2015, para. 1). The demographic data kindly provided by *Clarion*'s editors for this research shows that in total there are 2,930 subscribers across Canada, the USA, and other countries including but not limited to the Netherlands, South Korea, Australia, South Africa, New Zealand, Brazil, Egypt, Japan, and the UK (2018). The real number of readers is likely to be much higher given the number of immediate family members as well as extended family members and friends who might borrow a magazine volume on a regular basis or occasionally. The predominant majority of subscribers are located in Ontario (1567), constituting 53.5% of all subscribers. From those, 21 live in Ottawa, 49 in Toronto, 262 in Hamilton, 305 in Burlington, 177 in Fergus, 174 in Guelph. 19% of subscribers are in British

Columbia, 15% in Alberta, 7% in Manitoba, 3.4% in the USA. The rest are in Quebec, Prince Edward Island, and countries other than Canada and the United States.

Clarion often generalizes the Muslim community as if all Muslims think and behave in the similar manner and presents Christianity in opposition to Islam. Thus, Klaas Stam, a late Canadian Reformed minister emeritus admits that although "there is no reason to see a bomb behind every mosque", he also states "discrimination may be wrong, but discretion is not": "Islam is not innocent. Wherever Islam comes to dominance, Christians and others are persecuted" (2012, p. 412). Concurring with Stam, Professor Emeritus of Old Testament Cornelis Van Dam argues that there is a "gap between Muslim and Christian" as "a yawning chasm" (2007, p. 26) and puts communists and Muslims on the same stage as they both "hate Christianity" and kill and imprison them "with impunity" (2014, p. 665). Furthermore, there is a tendency to present Islam as a predominantly violent religion.

Additionally, *Clarion* often implies that Islam and democracy are incompatible because, according to some theologians publishing in *Clarion*, Islam does not tolerate diversity. This interpretation is opposed by many scholarly studies which argue that "Islam has had a long commitment to religious pluralism" (Aslan, 2011, p. 271), and today it is possible to observe "massive demonstrations by democracy activists throughout the Islamic world" which show that "ideals such as constitutionalism, … pluralism, and human rights are widely accepted by Muslims throughout the world, even if most of the region's rulers refuse to implement them" (p. 267). Additionally, some articles in *Clarion* point out that some Muslims were very persuasive at attempting to convert members of other faiths in Islam (Hastie, 2014, p. 502; Van der Velde, 2002, p. 605; Van Popta, 2002, p. 109).

Some interviewees, especially individuals of older generations or those in their mid-40s and living in rural areas (some of them are current teachers and professors), support *Clarion*'s presentation of fear of Islam, and in particular an expectation that the growth of the Muslim population in Canada, might lead to the adoption of Sharia law here:

> …[T]here is an underlying mistrust [between Canadian Reformed Christians and Muslims] which, I think, is legitimate: you cannot be sure whether what a Muslim says is the same what we understand is to be because Islam allows for deception if it helps promote the Islamic cause… (A28)

Others emphasize a dramatic difference between Islam and the Reformed tradition:

> The sweetness of the Reformed faith is grace… you live out of grace…. Everything is happening for a reason instead of earning points. Then your whole life/way of living is changing. I see Islam as a works religion, and it's not that far from Roman Catholicism when you need to do certain things [to earn salvation] (A36).

Therefore, several participants said that although it would be possible to find common ground with Muslims at a practical level, for instance, in the political realm, it would be very hard to "work from a principled position" (A28). The reason is that Canadian Reformed Christians and Muslims "look at things from different perspectives" (A28), and the former consider some pieces of the Quran as blasphemous. At the same time, a few CanRC participants see opportunities and even the necessity for cooperation with Muslims:

> What I am working on with the League [of Canadian Reformed School Societies] and the Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools is to develop a faith-based schools organization, not Christian but faith-based, so that we can work with the Muslim schools, and the Jewish schools, and the Sikh schools, as well as Christian schools, to stand on from those things because there is a lot of pressure from the government coming down to the Roman Catholic school system to be open to lifestyles that go against Christian faith. … That is where we see our real possibility to work together with the Muslim schools or Jewish schools because we need to be able to still hold to our values without having the current government worldview dictating to us, in order to allow us to operate. (A68)

The analysis of interviews shows that the opinions about Muslims expressed by several authors in *Clarion* are not supported by the majority members of the Canadian Reformed community. Many urban and young people are subscribers to the *Comment* magazine and other

Cardus publications whose rhetoric is drastically different from *Clarion*'s. The official website of Christian-focused think tank *Cardus* says that it is "a non-partisan, faith-based think tank and registered charity dedicated to promoting a flourishing society through independent research, robust public dialogue, and thought-provoking commentary". Although representatives of various Christian denominations work for *Cardus* and are published in *Cardus* media, its founders and many involved are members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA). The CRCNA is much more open to diversity than the Canadian Reformed and the United Reformed Churches in North America and has recently appointed a study committee to re-assess its official position on homosexuality and "to articulate a foundation-laying biblical theology of human sexuality that pays particular attention to biblical conceptions of gender and sexuality" (Acts of Synod, 2016, pp. 917-19). The final report will be presented at the 2021 Synod. Regarding Muslims, the CRCNA tends to look for common ground with Muslim communities and ways to dialogue. While *Clarion* presents mainly the negative aspects of the Muslim world, including the approval of violence by Islamic fundamentalism and persecution of Christian believers, *Comment* usually has a philosophical and theological approach to Islam and shows that the Muslim worldview may be closer to a Reformed one than a secular one. Thus, *Comment*'s journalist Peter Menzies opposes the ban on hijab and reminds his readership that a truly secular society treats both religious and secular groups equally. So, if a ban to hijab is approved, "the Sikh turban, the Jewish yarmulke or, for that matter, a tattered old Yankees ballcap" should also be banned (2009, para. 7). Furthermore, whereas some secular scholars within the discussion on ISIS assert that it is "respected Muslim authorities" who should "do more to insulate [the Muslim community] against revolutionary messages", Christian scholars speaking from the pages of *Comment* consider that it is Christian academics who should do "their philosophy in a scholastic vacuum disengaged from

the greater moral problems of the world" (Hampton, 2004, para. 32). Otherwise, radical Islamists will continue succeeding in "recruiting poor and disillusioned young … men to their cause" (para. 32). There is a call for Christians' participation in the struggle against Islamic fundamentalism, but not against all of Islam. Menzies insists that the issue the Western world faces today is not the "presence within [its] culture of new strongly-held worldviews" but a "large vacuum within the western worldview" established as a result of "cultural and philosophical relativism" in the West which Muslim culture tends to fill (2009, para. 10).

Overall, the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) has a significantly different approach to Islam than the CanRC. Many members of the CRC endeavour to build bridges and develop a dialogue with Muslims in Canada. The CRCNA's intention for interfaith engagement is also justified and articulated by particular Reformed theological doctrines, and, therefore, its approach differs from the approaches of Catholic and other Protestant churches, including the CanRC. The CRCNA has been significantly influenced by the development of Dutch neo-Calvinism, called Kuyperianism (after its founder, Abraham Kuyper). Neo-Calvinism, as a theological and political movement, experienced intense development at the turn of the 20th century in the Netherlands due to Kuyper, who later became prime minister of the Netherlands (1901–1905). Experts in Kuyperian thought (Bolt, 2001; Bratt, 2013; Mouw, 2012) emphasize that one of the most important features of Dutch neo-Calvinism is its openness to the world and encouragement of Christians to be involved in all spheres of life. Also, the rhetoric of pluralism is highly valued by Kuyperians (Boer, 2009; Chaplin, 2008). While some other Protestant Churches also have a pluralist approach and might be involved in interfaith relations, the uniqueness of the neo-Calvinist tradition is that Kuyper was one of the first Reformed theologists who "affirmed religious liberty for all people in society to a degree far beyond that of the earlier Reformed

tradition and broke quite decisively from a Christendom mindset", for example, by rejecting the idea of a national church (VanDrunen, 2010, p. 306). One of the interviewees noted this difference between Canadian and American members of the CRC. In the U.S., CRC members are not shaped by Kuyperian tradition: "They came during the 1800s. They were pietists and didn't think about engagement with a larger world" (A54). The following reasons, several interviewees argued, might explain why Canadian members of the CRCNA are more interested in Christian-Muslim dialogue than their American counterparts. First, neo-Calvinism has a "broader social vision" (A61) compared to Reformed evangelicalism, widespread in the U.S. The second reason is much more openness of Canadians to multiculturalism compared to the U.S. population.

In accordance with the "orthodox Reformed" tradition (Spohnholz, 2017, p. xi), Kuyper espoused "radical theocentricity" (Bratt, p. 173) and simultaneously insisted on religious pluralism for modern society. Kuyper promoted the idea of *principled pluralism*, which derives from his doctrine of *sphere sovereignty*. The latter idea insists that each sphere has its own task and authority within its own domain, but God's sovereign rule extends over all spheres (Mouw, 2011, p. 41). This means that Kuyper confronts both the church-control worldview, which is understood as "the legal granting of public primacy, even exclusivity, to Christian faith", and the secularist perspective, which, in its turn, signifies "the legal granting of public primacy, even exclusivity, to secularist worldviews" (Chaplin, 2013, para. 12). Therefore, Christians should not fight for political or legal privileges in the public square; rather, they should respect the equality of rights alongside other religious groups (Chaplin, para. 1). To achieve "common good", neo-Calvinism promotes an idea of cooperation between Reformed Christians and other religious groups (Himes, 2013, p. 16).

Principled pluralism, as well as interfaith dialogue, are possible due to the Kuyperian vision of *common grace* and *general revelation*. These theological concepts imply that non-Christian religions may contain elements of truth. According to Reformed theologian Herman Bavinck (1854–1921), general revelation[x] is a "firm foundation" (2003, p. 321) for Christians to meet non-Christians. It implies that natural laws, as well as people's ability for moral and healthy relationship, indicate common grace given by God to all people, which does not, however, mean their salvation. General revelation, says one of the interviewees, "includes His providential allowance of the existence of different religions and His ability to take religions and cultures to create paths toward Himself" (A59). Additionally, an interviewee from the CRC emphasizes that God may bring somebody from another religion into our life because "maybe God has something to teach you through this person" (A59).

None of the other Reformed churches with Dutch roots have a similar standpoint on building connections with Muslim neighbours. Even in the CRCNA, there are various approaches to dialogue:

> Within the CRC you will find people who work and live along with Muslims and don't have any difficulty and don't try to convert them, and you'll see people who try to convert them, and those who try to keep them away. (A52)

Nevertheless, a group of CRCNA members who have a new vision of the church's role in the contemporary world as one of being "committed to mediation and the building of bridges between communities" (Barnes, 2002, p. 4) is growing. The neo-Calvinist worldview, along with other theological stances of the CRCNA, give a thorough understanding of why an establishment of interfaith meeting groups is a direct result of the CRCNA's interest in interfaith dialogue. There are at least two types of groups for interfaith dialogue organized by CRCNA members. One of the types is a ministry of Resonate Global Mission established in 2011 and called Salaam 2.0. One of the challenges which Salaam 2.0 tries to cope with is how to have an honest interfaith dialogue

and "still remain in your faith tradition and witness honestly to your own faith tradition" (A61). On the other hand, among those CRCNA members, who are involved in interfaith dialogue, some individuals who insist that there should be some blurriness in the dialogue, because "the actual purpose [of dialogue] is less about outward peace and more about the internal peace of that person in front of you" (A59). Others insist that Salaam 2.0 is more than interfaith dialogue and is missionary in its core: since it represents "a mission society [*World Missions*], it is obvious what you are going to do" (A51). While this individual admits that Christians are called to do evangelism, this interviewee notes an important detail that should be taken into consideration during any missionary work: "For me, it is more how you choose the people. If I come to know you only because I want you to become a Christian, it means that I don't come to you person to person; you are just becoming a project for me" (A51).

The second type of interfaith groups is an informal and grassroots initiative that builds connections and relations between neighbours. One such group was founded in Guelph, Ontario, in 2014 and is called the *Bridging Group*. The experience of the *Bridging Group* demonstrates that grassroots initiatives can be a useful and successful tool to build friendship and trust with neighbours on a daily basis. In contrast to some other Christian-Muslim dialogue groups, including Salaam 2.0, this has a limited scope and does not put much emphasis on missionary work. At the same time, this standpoint was not of interest to all CRCNA members. Some of them left the group because it was more meaningful for them when it was exclusively between one church and one mosque in order to build relations with their neighbours.

Christian-Muslim cooperation may contribute to the transformation of destructive stereotypes and hostility against Muslims and lead to the virtues of free speech and equality. It can also reassure Muslim minorities that their viewpoint is important and could enhance their further

participation in public life. Interfaith meetings provided by CRCNA members might help Muslims in the process of integration into Canadian society. Having experienced immigration themselves (or remembering the challenges their parents or grandparents faced when they first came to Canada), Reformed Christians of Dutch ancestry may relate to some extent to the experiences of Muslim communities. Also, due to its interfaith initiatives, CRCNA congregations may contribute to the common good of Canada's ethnically and religiously diverse society, because learning how to live out the idea of pluralism, in which different communities "have equal rights and responsibilities in the public sphere", is "crucial to the common good" (Citizens for Public Justice, 2008). Interfaith dialogue may propose a "deeper and more meaningful engagement [than a secular one] because of the possibility for spiritual encounter" (Smock, 2002, p. 128). One of the interviewees pointed out that if "evangelicals and conservative Christians are able to reach out to Muslims, it will be more effective" than if it is being done by liberals or secularists (A59). Ethical issues offer opportunities for constructive Christian-Muslim dialogue (Hirvonen, 2012, p. 318).

A theological conflict between Abraham Kuyper and Klaas Schilder can partially explain the difference in approaches to Christian-Muslim relations by various Reformed churches in Canada. Followers of Schilder, who had some theological disagreements (including on the engagement with the world and culture) with Abraham Kuyper, established the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) in 1950. In 1996, the controversy over women's leadership and the creation/evolution debate entailed an establishment of the United Reformed Churches in North America (URCNA) that split from the CRCNA. In contrast to Kuyper, Dutch theologian Klaas Schilder disagreed with Kuyper around *common grace*: "For Schilder, grace is always a saving power, and the only sense in which it is 'common' is that it is shared by all who truly belong to Christ" (Mouw, 2003, p. 294). Schilder warned against cultural compromises

(Mouw, p. 291) and, for him, "the Christian community is called to produce its own uniquely God-honoring patterns of culture" (Mouw, p. 286); however, he did not mean non-participation in public life. The choice to establish and maintain a level of institutional completeness made by the Canadian Reformed community is reflected in Schilder's *Christ and Culture*. He distinguishes two types of cultural abstinence; the second one can be seen in the Canadian Reformed community:

> …cultural abstinence, in whatever form and regarding whatever detail, as far as it originates in resentment, laziness, diffidence, slackness, or narrow mindedness, is sin before God. Unfortunately, we must admit that in this regard the unbelieving world often rightly criticizes us.
>
> …Christians who consciously abstain are heroes when they resort to their negative "asceticism" to preserve the positive, their training for the forthcoming performance of their duties, putting first and foremost that whereto they are in particular called. A Christian people maintaining their colleges, supporting missionaries, and caring for the needy who were left them by Christ, …doing a thousand other works of divine obligation... (Schilder, 1977, para. 25).

Hence, the reasons for the lack of the CanRC's interest in the interfaith dialogue are theological and sociological:

> They [CanRC] tend to have stronger boundaries with the outside world in general, so that would also apply to their relationship with people from other religions. Using sociological categories, I'd say they are less assimilated, while the CRC is a bit more assimilated with North American culture, and our [CRC] ties to the Netherlands I don't think are as strong as theirs [of CanRC]. They are always watching the theology in Holland and talking about it. We don't talk about that much…. So, I think we are a little more assimilated, so that makes us more likely to participate in multicultural issues that are part of being a Canadian than they are. (A52)

Some CanRC and URCNA members do see a potential for cooperation with Muslims with regards to defending religious freedom, rights for maintaining religious schools, etc., and some of them are already involved in dialogue, including through the Christian-Muslim Forum of Canada and Christian-Muslim meetings organized by the URCNA. A URCNA representative recognizes that although many church members have a fear of Muslims and are not aware that Christin-Muslim meetings exist, it is important to continue working on dialogue:

> I think one of the weaknesses of our churches, historically speaking, is that we have had a tendency to withdraw, to pull back from the world because the world is bad, and we don't want the world to corrupt us. Our instinct has taken us in the direction of self-preservation. However, we need to remember that … we are called to bring God's truth into the world. If we just protect ourselves from the world by withdrawing, we are actually being disobedient. We need to have a healthy sense of tension. (A57)

One of the interviewees identified two strong opinions on the relationship to Muslims, which exist in the CanRC community. On the one hand, there is a vision of Islam as an "ugly", "horrible", "terrible" religion which intends to "conquer the world"; on the other hand, regular Muslims are described as "usually very nice people" with high moral standards (A57).

A content analysis of CanRC members' Facebook group unveils a debate existing in the community regarding their attitude towards CRCNA and the social stance of the latter. There are more than 1,500 members in this Facebook group. Because this group is private, I cannot reveal its name and consider that paraphrasing of the comments would be more ethical rather than a direct citation. Moreover, the pinned post on the discussion page reminds that "this group is a private and safe 'room' … [for individuals] of a similar worldview can hang out and share ideas as well as have some deeper and more personal discussions about life and issues in the world around them… This means keeping discussions in the 'room' and not sharing on other forums or with other groups…". In September 2018, one of the Facebook group members posted a question as to whether the group could be opened to CRC members as well. There was an interesting discussion with more than thirty original comments and even more sub-comments. While some of the group's members thought that it would be a good idea to share experiences with CRC believers, another part of the members emphasized the theological differences between them and CRC members; hence, it is important, they said, to keep the group limited only to the sister church members. The whole debate was deleted by the admin a day later. And instead of it, the description of the group and its orientation towards individuals from Canadian Reformed, American Reformed, Free

Reformed (Australian) and United Reformed churches was repeated by the admin. This anecdote might demonstrate that firstly, there is not a consolidated position or united attitude towards the CRC; second, the admin might have felt the debate was dividing the community and the group, which was created to help each other, and solved the problem just by limiting the group to the above-mentioned four sister church federations. To sum up, the debate showed an absence of common vision among CanRC members on dialogue, and it may vary from one congregation to another.

6.3. Blessings Christian Church: membership and musical diversity

Members of Blessings Christian Church, one of the Canadian Reformed churches located in Hamilton, Ontario, seem to be more open to religious diversity, dialogue, and pluralism. Its membership includes students and graduates from different schools located nearby. It is worthwhile for this study to describe this church in a nutshell. It emerged in January 2015 after it was launched out of Cornerstone Canadian Reformed Church, because Cornerstone had reached capacity with about 800 members (Galenkamp, 2017). The pastor of Blessings Christian Church, Bill DeJong, explains that

> [i]nstead of growing bigger or dividing the congregation in two, we decided to launch a distinctly missional church in the City of Hamilton. We wanted the new launch to have a missional character in every single dimension of its ministry, from worship to preaching to teaching to small groups. (cited in Galenkamp, 2017, para. 6)

The opening of a new church was covered in the local news, because it is quite rare to see an opening of a new church while many are being closed. While Blessings Christian Church started with 200 members, by 2017, it had "nearly doubled in size" (Galenkamp, 2017, para. 7).

The majority of interviewees agree that this church is dramatically different from the rest of the CanRC congregations located in Ontario. A member of the Blessings church mentioned that people who choose this church might value the heritage of the CanRC bur feel frustrated with the

strictness they encounter in all but this congregation. One of the defining features of Blessings Christian Church that distinguishes it from other churches is its missionary and evangelical orientation. Because the church has a missionary character, the founding pastor DeJong believes that it might be a sign of its prospective future:

> Redeemer professor Kevin Flatt, with others, has discovered that churches currently flourishing in Canada tend to be theologically conservative and yet contemporary in worship and accessible in communication," says DeJong, referencing the "Theology Matters" study published last December in the Review of Religious Research. "These are all things for which we strive at Blessings." (cited in Galenkamp, 2017, para. 4)

In order to analyze the difference between this church and other congregations of the CanRC, it is important to emphasize that this pastor of Blessings Church was shaped and profoundly influenced by Kuyperian theology:

> In many ways my education at Redeemer was more formative than my seminary education," he says. "The neo-Calvinism or neo-Kuyperianism that Redeemer winsomely communicated envisions the kingdom of Christ as more expansive than the church, the truth of Christ as wider than the Scriptures and the call of Christ as broader than evangelism. I remain convicted that the world is Christ's." (cited in Galenkamp, 2017, para. 8)

Since Blessings Christian Church began its existence, there have been tensions in the community regarding this church. In the Deputies Report (2018), the 2018 Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia said that "Blessings Christian Church has no defined church boundary or catchment area, and additionally specifies its members to give evidence of a commitment to mission/outreach. Deputies question how such developments function within the CanRC and whether they are consistent with the plain reading of the agreed Church Order" (The Deputies Report, p. 31).

A specific aspect, which should be discussed, is the type of missionary work conducted by the church and its understanding of the concept *missional*. Professor at the Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary Arjan de Visser explains that in the classic Reformed view, according to the

seventeenth-century Reformed theologian Gisbertus Voetius, mission work has three goals: "(1) the conversion of unbelievers, (2) the planting of the church, (3) the glorification of God's name" (2015*c*, p. 438). It means, says de Visser, that although "there is nothing against social action or political action or protection of the environment as such", "the primary task of mission and evangelism is the verbal proclamation of the gospel" (2015*c*, p. 440). The theologian criticizes the broader contemporary understanding of missiology and the active inclusion of the deed into it in both "liberal-ecumenical circles (e.g., the World Council of Churches)" and "also in evangelical circles (e.g., the Lausanne movement)" (p. 439). In de Visser's opinion, such activities as support of "hospitals, schools, programs to alleviate poverty" should be auxiliary ministries rather than primary and main dimensions of missiological thinking (p. 438). Meanwhile, Bill DeJong (pastor of Blessings church) emphasizes his interest in active participation in the life of the community and explains his understanding of his missional church:

> To be missional is to be convinced that God is a missional God and that just as he sent his Son into the world for the world's salvation, so we are sent into our culture for the world's betterment. (DeJong in Galenkamp, 2017, para. 10)

Blessings Christian Church is actively involved in the life of Hamilton city. DeJong shares:

> We serve Hamilton largely by coming alongside existing ministries and providing financial support and volunteer assistance. We're quite active with Christians Against Poverty, for instance, running both money coaching and jobs clubs, and we volunteer at the Dream Center, 541 Eatery, Wesley Urban Ministries and a host of other organizations. I'm especially excited to see people in the church mobilized for the welfare of the city. (Galenkamp, 2017, para. 8)

In March 2018, after Locke Street (where Blessings' church building is located) was vandalized by an anarchist mob as a response to gentrification, DeJong reflected on the vandalism in the *Hamilton Spectator*. He says that although "Jesus of Nazareth was also bent on revolution", he would "chastise [anarchists] for their moral hubris in castigating the Locke Street vendors as oppressors deserving of punishment and 'upbraid the anarchists for their violent tactics' (DeJong,

2018, para. 5). The pastor concludes his essay with a rhetorical question on whether "both anarchists and developers can join me in this space — this space of justice and mercy, grace and forgiveness, and love for one's enemies" (2018, para. 8). Just after the act of vandalism happened (on Sunday early morning of March 3rd, 2018), pastor DeJong finished the service by asking church members to collect money to help the neighbourhood to restore and fix the buildings.

Another significant difference between Blessings Christian Church and other Canadian Reformed churches is immediately visible during their service: there is a diversity of instruments involved. Many instruments, including electric keyboard, drums, electric guitar, etc. are used during the service at Blessings Church (Streetlight church is another notable exception) in contrast to other congregations, which usually prefer using only an organ or piano. *Clarion* magazine contains several articles about which musical instruments are suitable for accompaniment during the CanRC worship services. One of the experts on this topic is Arjan de Visser, professor at Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary, was one of the plenary speakers at The Reformed Worship Conference (October 24–25, 2014), organized by Fellowship Canadian Reformed Church in Burlington for organists, pianists, pastors, and anyone interested in the future of music at Canadian Reformed worship services. Arjan de Visser pointed out that because "Calvin wanted to go back to the early church", he believed that it was wrong to use musical instruments in worship" (2015*b*, p. 66). In the Reformed tradition, though, de Visser says, "we have moved closer to Martin Luther who had a more positive view of music than Calvin, seeing it as a gift of God that is to be used in worship" (p. 67). The principles, which explain the approach to musical instruments, are the following: "First, the use of musical instruments is *not essential* to worship. While congregational *singing* is commanded explicitly, the New Testament does not prescribe the use of musical instruments. Thus, if we wanted to sing *a capella* all the time, that would be okay";

"Second, the use of musical instruments in worship is *legitimate*. In the old covenant musical instruments were used for the temple service. The book of Revelation mentions the use of musical instruments as part of heavenly worship"; "Third, the use of musical instruments in worship can be very *beneficial* if it supports the singing of the congregation" (de Visser, p. 67). Regarding the use of particular musical instruments, Visser hopes that "the church organ will maintain (perhaps I should say, regain) its place of honour in our worship services" (p. 68). Visser admits that although the church organ is not "'more biblical' than other instruments", "from a liturgical perspective it cannot be denied that the organ is very suitable to carry congregational singing" (p. 68). At the same time, he admits that "[a] small ensemble of musicians (for example, a piano, an acoustic guitar amplified through the sound system, and a flute or a violin) can do a wonderful job in accompanying the singing of the congregation. … When the ensemble is small, they do not need to occupy a lot of space on stage, which helps to avoid the impression that the musicians are giving a performance" (p. 68). The reason for a small ensemble is because a Christian worship service is "a two-way movement": "[A]s much as the congregation brings reverence and adoration to God, God also ministers to his people as they are gathered together" (de Visser, 2015*a*, p. 37). That is why the CanRC criticizes the ways services are held by the evangelical Christians and Roman Catholics. For example, de Visser (2015*a*) argues that the Roman Catholic Church

> had introduced too many rituals to the worship service. The members of the congregation became spectators who were watching the clergy perform their duties. In response to this, the Reformers removed liturgical distractions and pursued a sober style of worship. This is a lesson to keep in mind when we look at what is happening in some forms of Pentecostal and charismatic worship. … In more recent years it seems like music has taken over this role of facilitating the work of the Spirit. The worship band plays an important role in the whole worship experience. … In this connection, the Australian theologian Barry Grant has warned against the *musification of worship*. Grant comments that music "has almost become a new means of grace." … The other problem with the "musification of worship" is that it tends to reduce the congregation to being an audience who are watching and listening to what the worship band is doing on stage. (p. 40)

Opponents to this rigorous vision refer to a position clearly declared by American evangelist Billy Graham. Responding to a letter from a Christian who was complaining about their pastor who did not want to "stick with" the old hymns instead of introducing new songs into the service, Rev. Graham encouraged this individual to "ask God to help you be grateful for all music that points us to God, new or old. … Remember: The old hymns you like were once new, and someone probably didn't like them, either!" (Graham, 2015, para. 2). Furthermore, being an adherent to the evangelical movement, Bill Graham argues that contemporary music might help attract the younger generation to the church and make them feel welcome there. While respecting a Christian music heritage, "a wise pastor will find ways to blend the old with the new," Graham said (2008, para. 6).

A strict attitude towards music in the majority of Canadian Reformed churches, but not the Blessings congregation, might explain the strict practice of teaching music in Canadian Reformed schools. In 2014, The *Guido Gazette* published a statement explaining the reason for the dismissal of music teacher Tim Nijenhuis, who had been working in this school for more than nine years:

> Sometimes the Board has to make difficult and far-reaching decisions and recently the severance of ties with a staff member was one of them. While the reasons and details are not matters for public discussion, the Board does not make any judgment on the sincerity of those involved as fellow Christians. … We are and remain fellow believers and together we rely on the grace of our heavenly Father. May His Name be honoured, also by the use of the musical talents of our brother Tim Nijenhuis within our community. In reference to this difficult experience, the Board would like to indicate that the existing policies and procedures will all be reviewed. This review will use the input from school administration, staff and the ad hoc committee that was established to make recommendations in these matters. (Guido Gazette, 2014)

As Facebook discussions show, some students, parents and graduates of Guido de Brès did not agree with the school's statement that "the reasons and details are not matters for public discussion". Moreover, some of Nijenhuis's former students published public support of him on Facebook. For instance, one of them mentioned that her music classes with Nijenhuis, whom she

describes as “an incredible teacher”, “came to be the most influential on my personal well-being & success” and encouraged her not only “to combine my love of Christ with my passion for singing but gave me the most important gift a teacher can give: self-confidence” (March 2014). She thanked Tim Nijenhuis for inspiring “teens like myself to celebrate their musical gifts” and concluded that “[i]t is truly an error in judgement on the part of the board & directors at Guido to allow a teacher like yourself to leave” (2014).

Participants, who were aware of the situation, commented that the teacher presented in class a variety of music styles, including pop, rock music, jazz, classical and cinematic art music, but at the same time he intended to teach students how to analyze whether this particular piece or type of music was good for students to be influenced by or not (A7). An interviewee said that the teacher taught how to “interact with secular culture” and understand the surrounding world better (A7). He also taught about the lifestyle and spiritual opinions of the composers who wrote classical music, which Christians usually enjoy. They were not that different from contemporary artists; “many had strange opinions and non-Christian values” (A7). One of the current teachers emphasized that it is much better if students are introduced to non-Christian music by a Christian teacher who would guide students and explain “what’s wrong with” this music (A29). However, some parents did not share this approach, and it seems that a few of them expressed their dissatisfaction with the teacher’s strategy to make students learn how to “interact with the world, how to get benefit from secular music, but then use that in a Christian manner” (A7). One of the reasons for this, as I was explained, might lie at the theological level. It would suggest that a lot of people in the Canadian Reformed community do not agree with the approach mentioned above as it “would be a more Christian Reformed approach to culture” (A7) and in accordance with Abraham Kuyper. Many parents in the community, “especially among more conservative

Canadian Reformed people, would really like to see black and white: … 'If you just tell me a rule, and I just obey, then I will feel that I am serving God'" (A7). Hence, these parents expect a teacher to tell "what is good and what is bad" while other teachers and community members argue that students need to learn how to live and work with worldly things:

> I think we see the trend where, in order to make a living, in order to survive in this country, you have to go out of that [Canadian Reformed] environment, you must interact with others. If you want to go to industry, or economics, or politics, or whatever profession, there are far more opportunities in the world outside the Dutch Reformed community. (A7)

As one current teacher interviewed said, "much more was going on around him [Tim Nijenhuis]; he's a very free thinker. He was warned before… Some people took an opportunity to get rid of him" (A29).

The way of teaching music in Canadian Reformed schools is in alignment with teaching literature. Although there is an understanding among Reformed Christians that too much 'Christian literature' might shape "a rosy picture of life" (Van Til, 1959, p. 63) and that not "all non-Christian literature must display a gloomy pessimism" (p. 62), some teachers of literature still prefer to focus on classical literature, even if it is predominantly not Christian. The main Teachers College's textbook on Literature, which is called *Literature through the Eyes of Faith* by Susan V. Gallagher and Roger Lundin and issued in the late 1980s, recommends students a list of foreign literature (*Appendix C*). In reality, in neither the Teachers College nor a Reformed school there is much time to go far beyond British literature. Despite this, a *World Literature* course has been introduced recently in Guido de Brès, and contemporary works, including poetry, short stories by Alice Munro, and a series for teens called *The Hunger Games* are included. This can be considered as significant progress towards knowing other cultures. Grade 12 students are asked to choose a novel from the list in order to do an independent study, and, as a teacher said, many of them choose fairly contemporary novels. When one of the students expressed an interest in analyzing *The Catcher in*

the Rye, the teacher contacted her parents, and after he had received their permission, he allowed the student to follow her interest.

6.4. Islam in the classroom

As mentioned in the first section of this chapter, Canadian Reformed school students study Islam in grade 6 and later, in high school, in the *World Religions* course. Some respondents say that schools intend to prepare students for the post-graduation stage when they go to college or university or join a workforce:

> …the general mindset in our schools is: let's try to prepare our students so that they know as much as we can tell them, and they will not be afraid to engage with people of different backgrounds. (A 40)

Because there is not a unified guide on how to teach religions, it is the teacher who chooses the teaching materials. One of the current teachers says that he/she, in contrast to his/her colleagues, goes far beyond presenting just factual information about Islam. He/she shares his/her experience of teaching about Islam:

> You talk about Ramadan, you talk about infidels, you talk about the jihad, you talk about that they want to spread their gospel and you talk about their love toward Allah, that we can look at that and say: wow, we wish to love the Lord as much as those Muslims love Allah. So, for me, it's a mix: I let them [students] look at the Muslim faith with the desire to tell them that there is a Lord Jesus Christ and how sad that they don't see that and they don't want to acknowledge him… (A68)

Two topics, which might be discussed in schools within the discourse of Christian-Muslim relations, are the persecution of Christians in the Middle East, and the future demographics of the European and North American continents. The Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA Canada) provides educational resources for Reformed high schools. A booklet entitled *Lesson Plans for Christian schools and home schools in Canada (Grades 10 – 12)* was developed by ARPA Canada for "teachers and parents to introduce students to some key public and political issues from a Biblical perspective" (2014*a*, p. 2) and contains a section about religious persecution.

The reason for this is that "our children are growing up in a world that is increasingly opposed to applying our Christian worldview to public life", and it is important to make students aware of current social and political issues and make them "comfortable with responding to them in a way that is consistent with their faith" (p. 2). It states that the countless stories of religious persecution "happen every day in our world, but these stories rarely make it into the daily news" (p. 10). Hence, this section refers to a scholarly book *Persecuted: The Global Assault on Christians* (Marshall et al., 2013). Although the section focuses on Christians and argues that "Christians are the most persecuted group of believers in the world, suffering about 75% of all religious intolerance" (p. 10), it is important to note that it admits that "many other religious minorities, like Ahmadi Muslims in Pakistan, also suffer religious persecution" (p. 10). Therefore, this section helps broaden students' knowledge about religious persecution and break biases which associate persecution only with radical Islam: for example, it mentions that "radical Buddhists in Sri-Lanka are pushing for anti-conversion laws" (p. 10). Meanwhile, significant space is devoted to persecution in the Muslim world because "[t]he most widespread persecution today takes place" there (p. 11). However, in contrast to what graduates mentioned regarding their learning about Islam, which was pretty limited, this booklet shows some nuances and identifies different branches of Islam. Thus, it says that in Saudi Arabia, which is "influenced by the hard-line Wahhabi version of Islam", "state schools teach children to 'hate Christians', and the state is governed by the principles of Sharia law" (p. 11). A few questions are offered for discussion in class. One of them is interesting for our better understanding of how CanRC students and graduates see people of other religious beliefs: "Should we allow other religions the freedom to practice? Should we tolerate idolatry and false religions?" (p. 12). As was already discussed in two previous sections of this chapter, many members of the CanRC see missionary work as an important call for all

members of the community, but at the same time they respect the right of each person to practice any religious tradition which is in line with Canadian legislation. In comparison to some Reformed media, ARPA's portrayal of the persecution of Christians seems to be more coherent and complex.

One of ARPA's booklets for teaching social sciences in high schools is devoted to *Demographics* (n.d.*a*). Discussing the increase of immigration and decrease of local population in Canada, this booklet admits that "it is not a Biblical command to have big families" but argues that "our individual choices ultimately shape our society" (ARPA Canada, n.d.*a*, p. 14). The booklet emphasizes that while contemporary media speaks of a necessity to increase the number of immigrants being accepted into Canada in order to fill the Canadian job market, it is important to specify which groups of immigrants are going to grow:

> As Mark Steyn made clear in his book *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*, there are obvious demographic consequences to this imbalance. Muslim nations have high birth rates and are growing much faster than Western secular nations. So, when secular countries such as Holland and France need immigrants to grow, they inevitably bring in more Muslims which results in serious clashes. The 'tolerant' West suddenly is exposed as not being so tolerant after all." (ARPA Canada, n.d.*a*, p. 2)

The quotation of Steyn in the school booklet is limited to this piece, and the book's conclusion was omitted. Steyn sums up the book by saying that a future where the European continent is dominated by Islam is an imminent reality that cannot be reversed: "native populations on the continent are aging and fading and being supplanted remorselessly by a young Muslim demographic" (2006, p. 33). Mark Steyn is a Canadian journalist whose book on Muslims in the West was challenged in Canadian court for hate speech and insulting Islam. There was a complaint (2007) about Steyn's article *The Future Belongs to Islam* (which is an excerpt from his book) from Mohamed Elmasry, head of the Canadian Islamic Congress. The complaint states that this article "discriminates against Muslims on the basis of their religion. It exposes Muslims to hatred and contempt due to their religion" (Macdonald, 2008, para. 8). To summarize, although some pieces

by Steyn are highly controversial, the federal Canadian Human Rights Commission (CHRC) dismissed the complaint against *Maclean's* publication of Steyn's article in 2008. The Commission ruling stated that the article's "writing is polemical, colourful and emphatic, and was obviously calculated to excite discussion and even offend certain readers, Muslim and non-Muslim alike". However, "the views expressed in the Steyn article, when considered as a whole and in context, are not of an extreme nature, as defined by the Supreme Court" (*Rights commission dismisses complaint against Maclean's*, 2008, para. 5). My empirical results showed that not many teachers use handouts prepared by ARPA in their classes, although many of them are regular subscribers to ARPA materials. Hence, they are likely to be influenced by the studies presented by ARPA and might use them while preparing their lessons.

To conclude, overall, the Canadian Reformed community, and the current teachers in particular, recognize that multiculturalism is an important and defining characteristic of Canadian society, which students should be aware of. Furthermore, they often see pluralism and equal rights of religious groups to express their opinion in the public sphere and run their own institutions (such as schools) as a positive phenomenon. Pluralism allows the Canadian Reformed community to preserve its identity and maintain a parallel school system. A graduate and a former member of the community highlights that, in his opinion, there should be room for every religious tradition and school in Canada: "Freedom of speech is fundamental, and we can't have freedom of speech without allowing people with different perspectives to have their opinion and to express it. This [Canadian Reformed] community is entitled to exist, entitled to express itself. There is room in society for this community, even though the community does not like the rest of society as a whole. It's important for any society to have an ability to express itself and, ultimately, it's because our society has freedom of speech that will bring people out of this community" (A9).

While a few decades ago, it was the Catholic Church, which was seen with fear and as a threat, today it is Islam that is often perceived negatively or with suspicion by some Canadian Reformed community's members. A comparative analysis of the CRCNA's and the CanRC's approaches to Islam shows that the mistrust towards Muslims and Islam that can be found on the pages of *Clarion* does not actually reflect a Reformed stance on Islam which can, in fact, be open to dialogue as in the case of Christian Reformed community. As more and more members of the CanRC gain post-secondary degree and work outside their religious community, and as more individuals are interested in non-Canadian Reformed publications (such as those by Cardus), there is a strong likelihood that there will be an increase of Canadian Reformed individuals interested in dialogue with Muslim neighbours and building relationships of trust. One of the obvious steps towards this that is present today is vising mosques by Canadian Reformed school students.

There is also progressive openness towards secular literature, which was not the case even a few years ago. While a World Literature course has been recently introduced in one of the Canadian Reformed high schools, there is still a restrictive curriculum for teaching music in schools. One possible explanation is its close connection to the liturgy to which CanRC churches adhere.

Chapter 7. Sex education. Approaches to gender identity and sexual orientation

7.1. Sex-ed controversy

To continue the topic of multiculturalism that is supposed to embrace "the notions of tolerance and acceptance of all cultures" (Jones, 2014, p. 42) and provide space where "different social and culture groups can interact without fear" (p. 39), it is fair to say that many public non-religious schools in Canada strive to achieve a multicultural school environment but rarely reach their objectives. Yet the inherent value of some level of cultural diversity is rarely questioned. The issue of sexual diversity has resulted in a much more complex and divisive environment in many, if not most educational institutions. Non-heterosexual individuals are still marginalized and experiencing harassment in Canadian schools (Jones, 2014, p. 15). A similar situation can be found in private religious schools, especially if theologically only heterosexual orientation is considered to be the norm.

The heated debates on gender identity in society and reforms of the sex education curriculum certainly serve as a significant reason why Christian parents choose a private religious school over a public school. Andrew Walker, Director of Policy Studies with the Ethics and Religious Liberty Commission and a blogger for the *Gospel Coalition,* whose posts are read by some Canadian Reformed teachers, encourages his Christian readers not to enroll their children in "government schools". One of his main arguments is that the "increasing support for transgenderism" in public schools (2017, p. 147) will require the "active suppression of the view that men and women are intrinsically different and complementary" (p. 148). As a result, Walker warns, the decision to choose a public school should be questioned because Christian children will be exposed to the environment "where their views are treated with hostility and made to feel second class" (p. 149), while children themselves will still lack "the emotional and psychological maturity

to grapple with all that is being taught" (p. 148). A decision to choose a religious school or homeschooling is preferred to "a new round of wars about beliefs" against the "new sexual fundamentalists" (Benson, 2004), says an article issued by Christian think tank *Cardus.* According to it, "new sexual fundamentalists" are those individuals who consider a sexual matter to be "public and political" and who "have made 'sexual orientation' an identity banner under which to march, [and] wish to impose their conceptions of what is and is not appropriate sexual conduct publicly" (Benson, 2004, para. 8). Therefore, Iain Benson (2004) states:

> The current phrase is correct; we "don't need to go there." Better to help the principals learn or relearn the principles and treat the "new sexuality" as what it really is — a new sort of religion. It should be treated as such. (para. 14)

Although Canadian Reformed schools refer to Ontario curriculum while teaching physical education, there is some freedom of interpretation for the individuals teaching this course. The current chapter overviews the debates around sex education existing in the Canadian Reformed community, addresses its approaches to birth control, homosexual relations and transgender identity in Canadian Reformed schools, and analyzes which gaps Canadian Reformed teachers see in the Ontario sex-ed. Additionally, the last sub-section examines how the community has been addressing youth exposure to pornography.

The Ontario Curriculum for Health and Physical Education of 2015 has caused a lot of controversies "for the topics being introduced in the elementary school years, particularly teaching students the proper names of body parts in Grade 1, teaching students about different family structures (including same-sex-parented families) in Grade 3 and teaching students about reproduction and consent in Grades 4–6" (Ensslen & Ursel, 2015, pp. 11-12). Also, students were "expected to understand self-concept, gender identity and sexual orientation, and to consider decision-making around sexual activity, contraception and intimacy in relationships in Grade 8"; "for Grade 9, the curriculum focus is on understanding how to prevent pregnancy and STIs as well

as understanding factors affecting gender identity and sexual orientation" (Ensslen & Ursel, 2015, pp. 11-12). The fieldwork for this thesis was completed after the 2015 sex-ed curriculum had been introduced. So, interviews reflect the community's thoughts on the previous Ontario sex-ed curriculum, rather than the most recent revision (August 2019). The Liberal government in Ontario developed and introduced the 2015 sex-ed curriculum, and the Progressive Conservative government replaced that in June 2018. The latter government has promised to repeal the 2015 rewrite of the sex-ed curriculum and reinstate the 1998 version. In fact, the new Grade 1–8 curriculum combines the elements of both the 1998 and 2015 sex-ed curricula. In August 2019, a revised elementary sex-ed curriculum was released. Certain topics will be studied later than stated in the 2015 sex-ed curriculum, while others will be taught earlier. For example, "sexual orientation will be a mandatory topic taught in Grade 5, earlier than in the Liberals' 2015 curriculum, which had it in Grade 6. Gender identity will be a mandatory topic in Grade 8 — it was previously mandatory in Grade 6" (Jones, 2019, para. 3); "Masturbation remains an optional teacher prompt in Grade 6, and anal sex continues to be first mentioned in Grade 7, in terms of delaying sexual activity until people are older" (para. 25). At the same time, new topics were added: "Education Minister Stephen Lecce said the new curriculum would also include a new focus on mental health, teachings on concussions and the risks of vaping, and expanded lessons on consent, cannabis risks and online safety" (Jones, 2019, para. 4). Furthermore, the 2019 elementary sex-ed curriculum allows parents to exempt their children from certain teaching blocks, and it "standardizes a process that was already in place across most of the province" (para. 26).

It is not surprising that after the 2018 provincial elections, there has been severe backlash in Ontario by a more liberal part of the provincial population because of the new government's stance on gender identity and sexual education. For example, in September 2018, there was a

protest across Ontario which was organized by high school students to oppose "changes to sex education and Indigenous curriculum" and to demand "the reinstatement of the 2015 sex ed curriculum and re-establishment of the indigenous curriculum rewrite" (Ontario high school students walk out over curriculum, 2018, para. 9). One of the student organizers Indygo Arscott said that sex ed curriculum is supposed to help students avoid serious mistakes or "putting themselves in danger": "I know way too many people whose entire education about their sexual health comes from the internet and I don't think that's OK" (in Ontario high school students walk out over curriculum, 2018, para. 6). In November 2018, the Ontario PC Party passed a resolution stating that gender identity theory is a "highly controversial, unscientific 'liberal ideology'; and, as such, that an Ontario PC Government will remove the teaching and promotion of 'gender identity theory' from Ontario schools and its curriculum" (Rocca, 2018, para. 3). Although this resolution did not intend the adoption of new government policy, it provoked an intense discussion and brought a "true and general disappointment" to some people in the province, including Lyra Evans, "the first openly transgender school trustee in Canada representing zone nine of the Ottawa-Carlton District School Board" (Rocca, 2018, para. 14).

During the elections, traditional religious groups supported the Progressive Conservative Party partially because it promised to return the previous sex-ed curriculum. One of the main concerns of the Reformed Christians regarding the 2015 curriculum was how it presented "sexual freedom" and "experimenting" (Grossman in Wagner, 2016, p. 13), while the science, as *Reformed Perspective* argues, "clearly demonstrates that monogamous heterosexuality is the healthiest sexuality for human beings" (Wagner, 2016, p. 16).

In 2018, the new government of Ontario opened an online survey "2018 Consultation: Education in Ontario" and asked for suggestions from people across the province to "solicit

feedback on all components of the education system" (Government of Ontario, 2018, para. 3) in order to shape the final decisions on a few particular topics, including sex ed. ARPA Canada also encouraged Reformed Christians to get involved in the discussion on sex education in Ontario: "Even if your kids attend private school or are homeschooled, this curriculum will affect your children's friends and neighbours and will influence the next generation of Ontarians that we will be interacting with" (ARPA Canada, 2018*d*, para. 1). ARPA called its subscribers to encourage the Progressive Conservative government, through letters to their MPs, to hold to five principles in the revision of the sex-ed curriculum. These principles reflect the stance of Canadian Reformed Christians on sex ed. First, ARPA insists that sex ed should be age-appropriate. It argues that the revised curriculum should educate children about the biological changes that they experience rather than on "how to use their bodies sexually during this time" (para. 11). Second, ARPA calls to revise the meaning of the concept "consent". The reason for this is that, according to ARPA's members, it is not enough "to consent" to avoid or solve problems: "Just because someone consents, doesn't mean that you can do whatever you want to them. Besides that, there are other factors; people will make different decisions they later regret under pressure or in tough social settings, and more" (para. 8). ARPA insists that because "teenagers are generally incapable of properly evaluating risk," it is abstinence, which should be recommended to students until their "brains are fully developed," even if they want to engage in "some 'consensual' sexual activity" (para. 9). Third, the problem of sexting (sharing sexual images or videos) was raised. Fourth, ARPA says that the impact of pornography on health should be discussed. Lastly, according to ARPA, sex ed should prioritize health over safe sex: "This means encouraging abstinence until adulthood, which is the surest safeguard against STI's, unwanted pregnancy, and physical or emotional injuries" (para. 4). Also, ARPA says, it should be mentioned that "depression and

suicide attempts triple in teens who are sexually active" (para. 4). It seems that ARPA promotes a more detailed sex-ed curriculum than some CanRC members would prefer. The latter consider that presenting details about sex to the youth leads to the assumption that young Christians might have sexual relations. ARPA recommends that sex-ed curriculum includes information about sexually transmitted diseases and mentions that there is, for example, "a significant risk of contracting herpes even when using a condom" and that there is a "need for regular testing if one is sexually active" (ARPA, 2018*d,* para. 4).

ARPA's coverage of the 2019 sex-ed curriculum is generally positive. It says that the 2019 curriculum "focuses on important topics like diet, exercise, mental health, physical safety, biological development, and online safety. These basic elements of the curriculum are uncontroversial, and we have no objections to their content" (Schutten & Hoogerdyk, 2019, para. 2). André Schutten and Ed Hoogerdyk believe that the new sex-ed curriculum has been "improved" partially due to Christian communities' engagement. According to them, among the main achievements are "a recognition of parental authority, a requirement for parental notification and better student opt-out options" (2019, para. 4). Furthermore, they consider a few more changes that could significantly improve the curriculum. Among them is the inclusion of the discussion about "the harms of pornography". A detailed analysis of Reformed Christians' attitudes to pornography will be presented in this chapter's last section. What concerns Schutten and Hoogerdyk is that gender identity continues to be part of the sex-ed curriculum.

Reformed Christians also criticized some aspects of the 1998 sex-ed curriculum. For example, *Cardus Family* Director Andrea Mrozek (2018) explains several benefits of legal marriage while noting that the Ontario's 2015 sex-ed curriculum as well as the 1998 curriculum "fail to educate about the value and benefits of marriage" (para. 3). Therefore, Mrozek (2018)

remarks, "if a sex ed curriculum can't mention the very best solution for safe and consensual life-long love, it's wise to ask the question: What is it actually teaching?" (para. 12). In the 2019 sex-ed curriculum, "abstinence and marriage are now taught in connection with sex" (Schutten & Hoogerdyk, 2019, para. 9).

Reformed media serves as an efficient source to analyze the concerns of Reformed communities regarding sex ed. The significant number of articles on this topic indicates that it is important for the Reformed community if sex ed is taught from a Reformed Christian perspective. In 2015, both CanRC and URCNA members were alarmed because of a new sex-ed program in Ontario schools. To these church members, "the material is completely age-inappropriate, is psychologically manipulative, does not warn against some of the sex practices discussed, and is implicitly immoral," leading to the conclusion that "the course is clearly hostile to biblical norms" (Van Dam, 2015*c*, p. 444). Besides, according to Reformed media, this new program corresponds to the general trend of not "assimilating gays into straight culture," but "assimilating straights into gay culture" (Dykxhoorn, 2015, p. 33). At the same time, CanRC and URCNA's members admit that "confessionally Reformed people are woefully unprepared to defend the commonplace assumptions of untold generations of Christians regarding sex, gender, and marriage" (Kingsbury, 2015, p. 240). Therefore, it is concluded, these topics should not be ignored anymore. Rather, they need "to be supplemented by a clear and robust statement of scriptural teaching on sex and gender" (p. 239). The interviews show that this approach is far from being regularly applied in Canadian Reformed schools. One of the reasons for this might be that, in accord with the Reformed approach, it is a task for parents, not the state or school, "to guide the children in [a] sensitive area" (Van Dam, 2015*c*, p. 444). The Canadian Reformed community considers parents to have the primary responsibility to discuss topics related to sex with their children. And it is assumed to be the

parents' decision as to how detailed this conversation should be. Thus, Christian parents "have the first responsibility to educate their children in a biblical world view in the fear of the Lord God, also when it comes to sexual matters" (Van Dam, 2015*c*, p. 445). Otherwise, Van Dam concludes in *Clarion*, the state is replacing parents in child upbringing, claiming "the children as its own" (p. 445) and dictating to children what to do. ARPA's Notice of Motion in the Loyola School appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada on behalf of ACES Canada confirms this statement in its legal document. Alluding to Kuyper's ideas about the paramount role of parents in the education of their children (ARPA Canada, 2014*b*) and the concept of *sphere sovereignty*, this document, created by the lawyers Ian C. Moes and André Schutten, says: "In all areas of education, including religion, ethics and sexuality, parents are the primary decision-makers in, and directors of, their child's education. These rulings recognize the distinct roles and functions of the institutions of the family and the State" (Loyola High School v. Quebec (Attorney General), 2015, Article 24).

At the same time, current teachers and parents admit that today, because of students' interaction with a variety of digital devices, schools need to deal with sexual questions and not leave this task only to parents. A graduate of the 2000s says that in contrast to his time, contemporary students are "exposed to pop culture, which is … addressing issues like sexuality, transgender people as well as women's rights" (A9). As a result, he says, it will be more and more difficult "for leaders of this community to tell women, [and] girls turning into women that they have to submit to the husbands" (A9). That is why religious schools today have a duty to take this burden of sexual education on themselves.

One of the most important findings of interviews conducted with CanRC members is that, as several respondents mentioned, sometimes the community lacks the intention to fight the problem itself and to help those who have faced it. As several participants mentioned, the

community rather tries to avoid the problem. One of the former teachers says that barely one sermon per year is about sex, and if it is, the topic of sex is usually connected to morality. Many "don'ts" emerge in the conversations about sexuality, including adultery and pornography. However, the interviewee says, this approach is not practical, because it does not give tools to "fight… the dangers" (A34) and help those who already have a problem. He points out that the message "just put fences around, and your kids will be okay" does not work anymore, and it is important to provide children with an understanding of when they see pornography, what they ought to do (A34):

> You can say: How do you recognize that what you have seen is not good? You need to talk to someone about what you have seen... I think promoting dialogue between children and parents or even just getting into conversations with children and saying: How do you talk about this subject? Because right now there is a big code: Don't talk about it. … Or even just giving a role play: When somebody has an abortion, what is that about? Because an assumption is that nobody will have an abortion because it is so horrific. But some people do make horrific choices, and after that they are left. How do we minister to people who made a mistake? … There is a lot of about how to prevent sin, but what do we do if somebody has done this sin? And it is a more uncomfortable conversation because, I think, it is much easier … to try to create a pure community; let's just pretend that we are pure, and purity is something we can pursue. But when we say it's unachievable, then we have a problem. (A34)

Interviewees of various decades of graduation complained about limited sex education. Many of them, including those who graduated in the 2010s, said that sex ed even in high school was limited to basic biology and STIs coverage. The interviews' analysis showed that participants of the same years of graduation could provide drastically different answers depending on who out of a few teachers taught physical education.

A high school graduate of the 2010s, who is now a former member of the community, noticed the reluctancy of teachers to raise complex topics related to sexual education. He emphasizes that "the Canadian Reformed community is living in a very much isolated bubble" and "trying to discourage anyone from exploring sexuality" (A2). The reason is that "you should not

be looking for sexual knowledge until you are married, and [only] then it's considered valid" (A2). It leads to the situation that in the community, and schools in particular, there is "a big lack of education and a big lack of encouragement of [sexual] education" (A2).

Interviews with high school teachers in physical education and principals of primary schools showed that many intend to develop and diversify sexual education in schools. Some sex ed has already been introduced in several primary schools to respond to the demands of modern society. Thus, a primary school teacher says that their school reviewed the part of the physical education program related to sexual education, partially because of introducing the new sex-ed curriculum in the province in 2015. Today, this school introduces "the basics of human anatomy" in grade 5 and afterwards, in grades 6, 7, and 8 students "learn more about sexuality and relations, but always in a Christian context" (A38). In comparison to even the previous decade, when some vocabulary did not exist, the current grade 7 and 8, students at this school discuss "the issues of the day," including gender identity and sexual orientation (A38). As the interviewee noted, the school informed parents about physical education changes and has not received any complaints.

For high school students, physical education is taught separately for boys and girls to let students feel more comfortable while asking sensitive questions, as one of the teachers stated. The idea of single-sex classrooms for various subjects in order to improve the discipline or fill the academic gaps (Fize, 2003) has been at the centre of many stakeholders' discussions in the field of education since the mid-90s. While contemporary studies admit that single-sex schools might be advantageous for girls who would no longer be exposed to sexual harassment or any other disturbing acts committed by some boys (Bouchard & St-Amant, 2003), they confront the assumption that single-sex schools can address the high dropout or low academic success rates among boys (Bouchard & St-Amant, 2003; U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning,

Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service, Single-Sex Versus Secondary Schooling: A Systematic Review, Washington, D.C., 2005). There are also intense debates about single-gendered health classrooms. Nicole Cushman, the executive director of *Answer*, a sex education program at Rutgers University, claims that "[w]hen we divide young people by gender, the implication there is that we're somehow giving them different messages. We kind of reinforce this cultural taboo about the subject, and we reinforce the idea that sex is not something to be discussed in 'mixed company'. There's definitely consensus in the field that it is a best practice, or that it is preferable, to speak to all genders at the same time" (quoted in Rough, 2018, para. 5). Furthermore, Bonnie J. Rough, the author of *Beyond Birds and Bees: Bringing Home a New Message to Our Kids about Sex, Love, and Equality*, claims that "[b]y teaching students of all genders alongside one another about healthy sexuality and relationships, including consent, we hand them a set of social expectations to hold in common" (Rough, 2018, para. 13). What might also be often disregarded is that lessons designated exclusively for "boys" or "girls" "exclude transgender and non-binary kids" (Rough, 2018, para. 10).

A recent survey of high school students conducted by University of Auckland professor of sociology and education Louisa Allen showed that **"**65 percent of students prefer mixed-gender instruction" and state that "their ability to learn in sex education had more to do with their instructor's apparent comfort level than the mix of genders in the room" (in Rough, 2018, para. 8). A similar standpoint was expressed by several respondents who said that, as students, they had felt comfortable asking an instructor or a parent any serious questions related to sexual development if the adult was not confused and responded clearly and openly to the questions that had been raised. The opposite was experienced in the situations where the physical education teacher in a Canadian Reformed school was not trained or skilled in teaching about sex. As a result, students

do not ask those questions that concern them and which are likely to confuse the teacher even more. Although the sex ed taught in Canadian Reformed schools today is more detailed than it was before and the sex-ed teacher interviewed demonstrated his intentions to discuss various topics with his students, a recent graduate confirmed that this particular teacher offered his students a choice: to either stay in class and read about various means of birth control in the textbook or go outside and play soccer. The majority undoubtedly chose the second option. Studies on public schools also confirm that many teachers are not ready to talk about sex and gender identity and some other sex ed topics. One of the reasons for this is that some teachers have not received any formal training in sexual health because it is not required (Meaney et al., 2009) or because of their personal beliefs or various other reasons. Existing studies do not reach a consensus as to what extent teachers are prepared to address various topics within sexual health classes. A recent Master's thesis by Glenn J. Meaney (2009) based on multiple questionnaires with 161 "undergraduate students attending a mid- to large-size… Canadian university" (p. 8) concludes that school "teachers were perceived as being knowledgeable and comfortable with sexual matters, and as exhibiting confidence and approachability in the classroom" (2009, p. 33). Male and female participants evaluated their sexual health education in school in a similar manner (p. 34). At the same time, the research by Sandra Byers and her colleagues (2003), which had a focus on New Brunswick and based on a survey of 745 middle school students enrolled in grades 6–8, showed that "less than one half of the students who had received SHE [sexual health education] agreed that the topics in which they were most interested had been covered. They also highlighted a need for more factual information and for practical skills associated with a variety of sexual health topics" (p. 19).

To conclude this overview of sex ed in Canadian Reformed schools, I would like to cite respondents whose answers demonstrate the importance of this discussion for the Canadian Reformed community. A former Canadian Reformed member noted that the absence of studies on the sexual behaviour of Canadian Reformed school students allows the community to maintain a false mythological assumption that its young members follow the principle of abstinence. As a result, the community can stand in opposition to secular members of society and claim that teenagers in public schools behave in a particular manner "because they are not Christians" (A34). That is why, the respondent says, it is important to conduct honest surveys. Otherwise, he argues, "we get only the tip of the iceberg, because of the secrecy" in the community: students "know what they are supposed to tell and not to tell" (A34). Several interviews with both graduates and teachers confirm that alcohol and drug use and adolescent pregnancy are not that rare in Canadian Reformed high schools. Another respondent argues that the right way to figure out how to adapt physical education, and sex ed in particular, for the new generations in Canadian Reformed schools is to regularly interview recent graduates, especially those who recently married, on what was missing in sex ed at their time, and what materials were presented too much or too little (A17). Another problem is that because of the absence of discussion about different types of sex, some students have no awareness that what they are doing is actually sex, a recent graduate mentioned (A37). This issue was also covered on the website of Spring Creek Canadian Reformed Church, Ontario. A post by pastor Peter H. Holtvluwer addresses how "friendship with benefits" has become a more or less regular practice among young Christians. The pastor insists that any "peripheral" sexual activities should be only within marriage, while young people use this grey area of Scripture to justify their behaviour:

> All young people in the church know that the Bible clearly condemns sexual intercourse outside of marriage (fornication) or having sex with someone other than your spouse

> (adultery). But Scripture does not out-rightly condemn things like sexual stimulation, petting, mutual masturbation, or oral sex. If the FWB [friendship with benefits] relationship is limited to these and similar sexual activities, no biblical injunction is broken, it is thought. … Our young people should be taught to refrain from sexual impurity of all kinds but also to save their sexuality and anticipate its joys as God's wedding gift to them and their future spouse! (2010, para. 4)

Reformed Christians explain that Scripture actually gives a clear answer:

> The entire Song of Solomon is an ode to the pleasures of sexuality celebrated and enjoyed inside the marriage relationship. God gave sex for different reasons but one of them is certainly the enjoyment of husband and wife and this should be held out to our youth as a gift to cherish and look forward to! (Holtvluwer, 2010, para. 10)

CanRC pastors provide 8- to 10-week pre-marriage classes, within which there is a detailed discussion about birth control, planning family size and spacing, how to raise children, and about postpartum depression: "So, it is not like getting married without any support from the community. We have this in place, and I think this is awesome" (A17). One of the books recommended in pre-marriage classes is *Reforming Marriage* by Douglas Wilson. Chapter 7, entitled *The Marriage Bed is Honorable,* admits that "[o]ften Christians do a poor job teaching on this subject [sex] (whether in sermons, books, seminars, etc.) because they are following the world, with some sort of respectable time-lag of about five to ten years. … When the church *does* get around to teaching on sex, we find that the teaching is an echo of the world's thinking rather than an answer to it" (Wilson, 1995, p. 99). This leads to the situation in which Christians might choose non-Christian ways of building sexual relations as a couple.

Canadian Reformed Christians gain much more information related to sex ed after entering a marriage. For example, in September 2018, there was a presentation by Christian author and blogger Sheila Wray Gregoire at Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church (Eramosa, ON) within her tour all around North America, "bringing her signature *Girl Talk*" in churches (*Sheila Would Love to Speak at Your Church!*, n.d.). During the lecture, Sheila Gregoire talked about "what God designed sex to be, and why we often experience such tension around libido differences and

problems with making sex feel good for her" (Gregoire, 2018, para. 1). According to a private Facebook group, about 240 women showed up in Emmanuel Canadian Reformed Church for the *Girl Talk* event, which gathered much positive feedback. Therefore, existing limitations on school sex ed are filled later when or after the community members start a family.

7.2. Who is using birth control?

One of the most discussed topics related to sex ed is whether and how to present contraception to students. The mentality on birth control has evolved rapidly among Canadian Reformed Christians, as one respondent noted: "the term 'family planning' is now used more in our community while 25–30 years ago it was definitely not the term that was used. … Now, we are not seeing families with many kids" (A17). At the same time, it is evident that it is often "made very clear by parents, by some teachers and ministers that birth control is sinful" (A2). Until recently, female students taking birth control pills for medical reasons hid this information at school because of the stigma associated with birth control medication. A current teacher argues that today birth control has less of the stigma than, for instance, when he was studying in a Canadian Reformed high school in the 1990s. Nowadays, there is a better understanding in the community that "birth control has other purposes than [just as] birth control in women's health" (A32). Also, today birth control "is being discussed at home" (A32), although interviews showed that far from all parents discuss this topic with their children. A female respondent, who was twenty-three years old at the time of the interview and has been grown up in a rural area, could not formulate an answer to a question about birth control. She did not receive any adequate school education on this topic, and her parents did not have a conversation on this topic with her. She stated that she would learn about birth control when she is about to get married.

According to the 2015 and 2019 Ontario sex-ed programs, sexually transmitted infections (STIs) and pregnancy prevention are being discussed in grade 7 (*Sex education in Ontario*). Abortion though "is not explicitly mentioned", laments the Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, Canada's national political pro-choice advocacy group (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2017). Parents are allowed to withdraw their children from all or part of the sex-ed curriculum if they want. In a Canadian Reformed high school, students at physical education class study about various forms of birth control (pills and condoms were mentioned by a teacher) in general terms: "Everything we talk about is under the umbrella of healthy marriage relationships" (A17). In the sex ed that was introduced in 1999, abstinence was "put forward as a positive choice as a method to prevent pregnancy", according to then Education Minister Dave Johnson. The freedom to determine how to present the prevention of pregnancy was given to boards and parents: "If some boards choose to go beyond that [abstinence] into more detail, that's their choice. In other boards, parents may say the basic discussion will suffice" (Lewington, 1998, p. 4). Today, a Canadian Reformed high school teacher admits that "we would be so naïve that people will not have relations before marriage" (A17). As a result, some time is devoted to the discussion about STDs/STIs[xi], although it is framed in the context that "God wants us to stay" abstinent before marriage; yet it is mentioned that students might face "STDs in case your partner had a partner before you" (A17).

Although some high school students are sexually active (A2), only one respondent shared that some of his classmates would prefer to take a risk than using a contraceptive. The reasons lie in fear of being caught having contraceptives and provoking the "anger of parents and isolation from the community" (A2), as well as because of the existing stigma and a "pervasive myth that birth control can cause abortion," in the words of an interviewee (A2).

To analyze the Canadian Reformed community's perspective on birth control, we need to define "birth control" from a Christian point of view. Various religious traditions see this concept differently (Stacey, 2018). The literature review shows that the majority of Protestant denominations "allow contraception and may even promote family planning as an important moral good" (Stacey, 2018, para. 3), while some conservative evangelical groups might oppose birth control. Diversity of opinions on birth control differs drastically across Christian denominations: "Some oppose all forms of contraception short of abstinence while others allow natural family planning but oppose other methods" (Stacey, 2018, para. 7). Thus, a Baptist church pastor John Piper and many other pastors "believe that non-abortive forms of birth control are permissible. The Bible nowhere forbids birth control, either explicitly or implicitly, and we should not add universal rules that are not in Scripture (cf. Psalm 119:1, 9 on the sufficiency of Scripture)" (Perman, 2006, para. 1). So, birth control can be seen as a "gift from God that may be used for the wise regulation of the size of one's family, as well as a means of seeking to have children at the time which seems to be wisest" (Perman, 2006, para. 7). Christians do not believe that it is wrong to prevent fertilization, but they "oppose any method of so-called 'birth control' that functions as an abortifacient — that is to say, any method that acts after fertilization to end a human life by preventing implantation in the womb" (Use of Contraceptives in Marriage, n.d., para. 3). Because of the possibility of their abortifacient nature, such birth control forms as intrauterine devices (IUDs) or pills provoke some concern among Christians (Use of Contraceptives in Marriage, n.d.). As a result, many Christian couples choose "a barrier method, like condoms or diaphragms, or a timing method of birth control (sometimes referred to as Natural Family Planning)" (Use of Contraceptives in Marriage, n.d., para. 6).

It is interesting to note that Christian Reformed magazines usually refer to pills while talking about birth control. One of the reasons for this is that since the 1930s, many Protestant groups started considering "birth control in certain forms and for certain purposes" to be "morally acceptable" (Driscoll, 2009, para. 51). There have been drastic changes in Protestant churches' approach to birth control and abortion throughout the twentieth century. While in the 1930s, "the liberal Protestants, and then many evangelical Protestants embraced birth control" and subsequently by the late 1960s have become *pro-choice*, since the 1970s evangelical leaders have started speaking out against abortion (Grant, 1991, p. 145). As a result, the effect was substantial: in the USA, by 1985, "twenty-eight Protestant denominations, associations, and missions had recanted their earlier pro-abortion positions" (Grant, p. 146). Basically, most of evangelical churches "swung back to the historic Christian position of opposition to abortion by the late 1980s" (ARPA, 2011*d*, para. 19). ARPA Canada has been actively involved in promoting the understanding that the pill has an abortifacient effect. As it says on its website, "although the answer is still debated by many in the Reformed community, many more aren't even aware that there is an issue" (2010, para. 1). American evangelical pastor Mark Driscoll (2009) shares a personal story that gives a historical context to the several decades when many Christians were not aware of the abortifacient character of some types of birth control, including the most popular of them — the pill:

> Personally, when Grace and I were first married, she had one semester of college left and I had one year remaining until our degrees were completed. At that time, Grace used the pill to prevent pregnancy until after graduation. She was actively involved in a local pro-life group, and we were completely unaware of the potential abortive nature of the pill. Once we uncovered more information on the matter, we prayerfully came to the conclusion together that, in order to err on the side of caution based upon our deep convictions about the sanctity of human life, she would not take the pill. As a pastor who is, admittedly, not medically trained, I do not encourage members of our church to use the pill but also would not discipline a member for sin if they did. (para. 124)

Several recent articles in Reformed journals, as well as readers' comments under these articles, serve as substantial evidence that the Reformed communities in North America often lack education in birth control that could be provided by Christian schools and churches. These are a few comments posted under Nicole Van Dyke's article on the pill (2017) published in the *Reformed Perspective*:

> I would add that in addition to telling our teenage girls and boys about the abortifacient nature of the pill, the discussion should also happen with our church leadership, namely, those who will give pre-marriage classes. It happens all too often that they are unaware and are advising young couples that it is a good and safe contraceptive when it is neither. (Linda)
>
> …I used the patch (same effects as the pill) when I got married but I had no idea about all this, and thankfully it was only after a few months that I stumbled across articles of this nature and stopped using it. I really wish I had known about this before… I also wish I had known how much it would mess with my body and mood. Never again, and I will tell my kids too. (Susan)

Van Dyke (2017) explains in her article how the pill works. It has three functions: "prevention of ovulation"; causing the "cervical mucus to thicken" in order to make it "more difficult for sperm to reach the egg if the woman still ovulates"; and causing "the lining of [the] endometrium (on the wall of the womb, where the egg needs to attach) to be very thin so the baby cannot implant" (para. 5–7). Van Dyke clarifies that if the first two mechanisms are contraceptive because they prevent the joining of the egg and sperm, the third "acts after conception" so that it is unlikely that the fertilized egg can be implanted (para. 8). Hence, the author concludes, "it is chemically aborted" (para. 7). This confusion, which many Christians might face, is caused by the fact that the dictionary defines "contraception" as "deliberate prevention of conception or impregnation" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, n.d.). For pro-lifers, the fertilized egg is already a human being made in God's image. In an ARPA's post, Jon Dykstra (2008) explains that the meaning of the word "conception" has been changed drastically throughout time. According to an older definition, "conception and fertilization used to be synonymous" while today's medical dictionaries include

in conception "not just the fertilization of the egg, but also an event that occurs seven or more days later, the fertilized egg's implantation into the womb" (quoted in ARPA Canada, 2008, para. 25). Therefore, Van Dyke (2017) warns her audience that when they read that something is a contraceptive, that might include "the abortive function".

Some controversy exists regarding the third function of the pill. Van Dyke (2017) analyzed both Christian and non-Christian studies to conclude that most pills potentially serve the same three functions, and there are some cases when the third mechanism comes into effect. She summarizes both types of sources as follows:

> *CHRISTIAN SOURCES: We do not and cannot know how often the third mechanism has to kick in because the first two fail, but we know it can and does happen, therefore we should not be willing to risk killing our baby.*
> *NON-CHRISTIAN SOURCES: There is no precise medical testing that exists which can prove how often a fertilized egg is not implanting and so Christians should not worry or care about a non-statistic.* (para. 15-16)

Jaclyn VanderHorst (2017) notices in the *Reformed Perspective* that there is a need for more quantitative research on the abortifacient effects of the birth control pill, because existing data still cannot name a "number of abortions" caused by the pill. She, nevertheless, argues that it is not likely that "these studies will necessarily occur, because the pharmaceutical companies would be unlikely to fund them. Also, they could quickly become unethical as would any study that involves the life of a child and involves trying to control and imitate the causes of death in the life of that child" (para. 15). Randy Alcorn (2010), the author of the book *Does the Birth Control Pill Cause Abortions?*, mentions that some Christian physicians believe that the pills do not cause abortion, but he insists that these scholars' "case is not based solidly on the medical evidence" (para. 38). Moreover, Alcorn (2010) insists, it is Christian physicians who predominantly resist admitting an abortifacient effect of the pill:

> Dr. Walt Larimore has told me that whenever he has presented this evidence to audiences of secular physicians, there has been little or no resistance to it. But when he has presented

> it to Christian physicians there has been substantial resistance. Since secular physicians do not care whether the Pill prevents implantation, they tend to be objective in interpreting the evidence. After all, they have little or nothing at stake either way. Christian physicians, however, very much do not want to believe the Pill causes early abortions. Therefore, I believe, they tend to resist the evidence. (para. 58)

ARPA Canada provided links to studies that show a correlation between birth control pills and the rise of male infertility. The hormone estrogen from birth control pills that enter the water supply through urination is being "blamed for declining sperm counts in human and animal populations, the growth of female sex organs in male fish, breast growth in young men, and early onset of puberty in young girls" (ARPA Canada, 2009, para. 4).

Reformed authors encourage their audience to start talking about the pill's effects to their children and family members. Van Dyke (2017) concludes her text by directly addressing various groups. First, she encourages parents to talk about the birth control pill to teenage girls, "and, even teenage boys should be informed too!"; second, she suggests women asking their "doctor for a non-abortive pill" if the reader is engaged to be married; third, something that is very important and quite rare for Christian articles on birth control, she addresses those who already have been on the pill: "please don't let guilt get in the way of change. What you've done in ignorance, you can turn from now that you know better. And because our God is merciful we can depend on His forgiveness, and live lives of thankfulness" (para. 25–27). While mentioning all these reasons, what the text does not address are the possible evidence-based long-term effects of oral hormonal reproductive contraception on physical and mental health (Burkman, 2011; Klaus, 2015).

Lastly, one of the significant limitations of sex ed regarding birth control in Canadian Reformed schools is that it puts so much focus on the abortion issue: they "go from nothing to abortion. It's pretty extreme" (A37). One of the respondents emphasized that it's important to talk about sexually transmitted diseases rather than orient the whole sex-ed section just on the message: "don't get pregnant" (A34). He summed up: "If our main fear of sexuality is fear of pregnancy,

then we are not teaching the topic" (A34). Therefore, community members point out to the need for a more detailed discussion about birth control, also with an emphasis on which types of birth control protect against STIs. However, several respondents, current teachers are among them, emphasized that birth control is not being presented in the classroom in the context of "in case you are sexually active and to avoid pregnancy…" (A19).

It is also interesting to notice that some interviewees tend to consider sexual education with nuances and advocate for some parts of it while discrediting others. For example, one respondent (A44) points out that in an ideal world, it would be the parents who introduce their child to the topics related to sexuality. In real life, he says, there are many dysfunctional families, in church as well. That is why it is important, in the respondent's opinion, that a school protects students and make them familiar with what, for example, an abuse is and how to avoid it (A44). At the same time, this respondent concurs with those co-believers who think that familiarization of students with a diversity of birth control options is "unproductive and unnecessary" (A44). It is seen as an acceptance of possible premarital sexual relations that students might engage in, and a tacit approval of it.

7.3. Gender Identity

Christian authors talk more and more about the necessary balance that parents should maintain while protecting their children from the world and preparing them for the world. This study shows that Canadian Reformed parents are more and more inclined to concur with the view expressed by Associate Professor of Christian Ethics and Apologetics at The Southern Baptist Theological Seminar Andrew T. Walker (2017) urges parents to talk to children about gender identities[xii] and sexual orientations[xiii] in a concise manner: "It's not a question of if you'll have to

talk to your son or daughter about the growing acceptance of transgenderism; it's a matter of when. When it happens, what will you say?" (p. 134).

ARPA Canada issued a detailed report entitled *Gender Identity* (2016*a*), which is being used by some Canadian Reformed school teachers. This report reflects how the Canadian Reformed community generally understands gender identity. First, the report emphasizes that it uses the terms "sex" and "gender" "as seemed best in each context to minimize confusion and maximize clarity", but it does not endorse the view that a person's gender identity is a social construct and distinct from biological sex (ARPA, 2016*a*, p. 7). The report presents a detailed description of different groups under transgender identification (*Appendix D*): "The term 'transgendered', then, is an umbrella term for the many ways in which people might experience or express their gender identity differently from people whose gender identity is congruent with their biological sex" (ARPA, 2016*a*, p. 1). ARPA distinguishes between gender dysphoria, which is "a psychological condition", and "biological intersex conditions" (p. 2). The report pays particular attention to transgender people's challenges, including "higher rates of suicide and attempted suicide, overall mortality, and need for psychiatric inpatient care" (p. 2). It is emphasized that "the theory behind popular approaches to transgenderism today is not scientific – it is political" (p. 2). As a result, ARPA argues, gender dysphoria is being normalized in the society, and "thereby impedes its diagnosis and treatment" (p. 2).

As in any other of its reports, ARPA Canada refers to some scholarly studies and statistics to confirm its statements. Thus, in the report on gender identity, it refers to the conclusion made by "a psychiatrist with clinical experience working with transsexuals at Michigan's Wayne State University", Dr. Sander Breiner: "the disturbed body image was not an organic [problem] at all but was strictly a psychological problem. It could not be solved by organic manipulation (surgery,

hormones)" (quoted in ARPA, 2016*a*, p. 2). ARPA Canada infers, based on a Swedish report, that "persons with transsexualism, after sex reassignment, have considerably higher risks for mortality, suicidal behavior, and psychiatric morbidity than the general population" (Dhejne et al., 2011, quoted in ARPA, 2016*a*, p. 4). It correlates, ARPA says, with the results of an American national survey of 6,450 transgender people:

> In response to the question, "Have you ever attempted suicide?", 41% of respondents answered yes. The same survey notes that 4.6% of the general population has. The American transgender advocacy survey explained the high suicide rate as resulting from a lack of acceptance or an insufficiently positive affirmation of transgender identity. However, evidence from jurisdictions like Sweden which are known for their affirmation of transgender identity show similar numbers. San Francisco, the rainbow capital of the world, also reports similar numbers of suicide attempts among the transgender community. (ARPA, 2016*a*, p. 4)

ARPA Canada also refers to other studies, such as of Mayer and McHugh (2016) that after analyzing a high level of suicide by the members of the transgender population (41% compared to under 5% in the overall U.S. population), recognized that "social stressors such as discrimination and stigma contribute to the elevated risk of poor mental health outcomes for non-heterosexual and transgender populations" (p. 8). ARPA Canada admits and underlines that many transgender people face "bullying, rejection by family, isolation" (2016*a*, p. 4), but along with other youth, "not just transgender youth" (p. 4). In any case, ARPA Canada encourages readers to "walk alongside a transgender individual with love and compassion, with the goal of resolving gender incongruence in keeping with their birth sex" (2016, p. 4). They believe that this approach might help "reduce suicide rates for transgender people, particularly because other comorbid (coexisting) issues can then be properly identified and treated" (p. 4).

The psychiatric concept of "gender dysphoria" that "describes the psychological distress caused by identifying with the sex opposite to the one assigned at birth" (Mueller et al., 2017, para. 1) has been questioned fairly recently in medical studies. Thus, in 2018, the United Nations

health agency announced that "gender incongruence" has been moved from the mental disorders chapter to the sexual health chapter (Pickman & Griggs, 2018). The move was prompted by the fact that the World Health Organization does not consider "gender incongruence" to be a mental health illness anymore and also in order to "reduce the stigma while also ensuring access to necessary health interventions" (Pickman & Griggs, 2018, para. 5). The question of hormonal or surgical intervention triggers intense debates among researchers, healthcare professionals and intersex and transgender people, including about the long-term benefits of it. Some of them argue that transgender people need mainly psychiatric help rather than gender-reassignment surgery, because, as Dr. Paul McHugh says, "being transgender is largely a psychological problem, not a biological phenomenon" (in Nutt, 2017, para. 2). Some existing data says that "compared to controls, sex-reassigned individuals were about 5 times more likely to attempt suicide and about 19 times more likely to die by suicide" (Mayer & McHugh, 2016, p. 8). Another argument against transitioning as kids is that a minor number of children "who experience cross-gender identification continue to do so into adolescence or adulthood" (Mayer & McHugh, 2016, p. 9). There is also a lack of scientific evidence "for the therapeutic value of interventions that delay puberty or modify the secondary sex characteristics of adolescents, although some children may have improved psychological well-being if they are encouraged and supported in their cross-gender identification" (p. 9). In relation to that, many Christians have serious concerns regarding hormone therapy or gender reassignment surgery for children. Referring to the study by McHugh and his colleagues, Andrew Walker states that "even if a pre-pubescent child really does feel they are the opposite gender, statistically the vast majority of individuals outgrow these feelings" (p. 139). ARPA (2016*a*) also comments on the treatment of children who face gender issues:

> Provinces must ban all gender reassignment surgery on children before the age of 18. Further, since those who have had sex reassignment surgery have higher rates of attempted suicide, surgical transition should be abandoned as a treatment option even for adults. (p. 5)

It would be fair to note that the approach to gender identity theory expressed by CanRC is consistent with the understanding of "gender" held by other traditional Christian churches, including other Protestant churches, the Roman Catholic Church and Orthodox churches. Christian doctrinal teachings of traditional churches usually equate birth anatomy with gender. For example, Eastern Orthodox churches are united in their view on homosexuality and have a consensus on LGBTTQ2+ policy, but its members disagree on many other social and political issues, including abortion. The Eastern Orthodox Church considers same-sex relations as sinful and destructive, and same-sex marriages are not performed or recognized. Also, as it is summarized by the Orthodox Church of America, homosexual orientation is seen as "a disorder and disease" (Hopko, 2012). The Catholic Church argues that an "inclination of the homosexual person is not a sin", but homosexual persons are called to chastity (Letter to the Bishops on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons, 1986). "The fact that Catholicism does not consider the 'inclination' sinful is very different from more fundamentalist Christian churches" (Stances of Faiths on LGBTQ Issues: Roman Catholic Church, 2018, para. 5). During the last several years of the Francis papacy, the Catholic Church has shown some evident signs of change towards LGBTTQ2+ individuals to start its move away from their marginalization. Regarding the Protestant churches, it is barely possible to provide an overall review given the wide diversity of approaches across denominations. For this thesis, focusing on the Dutch Reformed community in Canada, it would be more relevant to focus on the analysis of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA) that was already mentioned in the previous chapter.

At the Synod 1973, the CRCNA approved an official position on homosexuality that states that "having a same-sex orientation is not sinful, but same-sex sexual behaviour (termed 'homosexualism' by the 1973 report) is" (Parks, 2016, para. 4). According to the CRCNA, being

same-sex oriented is "not a choice, but is a condition of 'disordered sexuality,' a result of the fallenness of humanity" (para. 4). As a result of the legalization of same-sex marriage in Canada and the USA, along with the records that gay churchgoers experience shaming for their orientation, the 2016 Synod aimed at making churches safer for same-sex oriented people. It "reiterated a significant caution regarding therapies such as conversion/reparative therapy", because "such therapies have been found to be ineffective and, in some forms, to cause psychological and spiritual harm" since the 1973 report was published (CRCNA, n.d., para. 11). Despite the debates and controversies, the CRCNA has not changed its official policy regarding homosexuality. A recent article in *Christian Courier* demonstrates that the community is divided over this question. The untitled author, who "was born into a Christian Reformed family and attended CRC churches and Christian schools all [his] life", and who shares that being a Calvinist has been "an important part of his theological identity", says:

> …what I was taught about homosexuality was not based on Scripture but was based on an assumption about what Scripture said. … Over the course of a few years, three things happened to bring me on a journey. First, I lived in the Netherlands and in Washington D.C. for a period and met gay Christians. This was a cognitive dissonance for me. Second, I learned more about biology and came to understand that God has created a wide diversity of human beings with chromosomes that are XX, XY, XXY and other formations. … Third, I heard a sermon that demonstrated to me that the sin of Sodom and Gomorrah was not homosexuality but violence and lack of hospitality. (Growing up CRC and thinking about homosexuality. A two-part series on faith and sexual identity, 2015, para. 6-10).

Since the CanRC has inclined to be less progressive than the CRCNA, there is even a more need to start a discussion about how to make Canadian Reformed communities more welcoming to individuals with same-sex attraction who might stay abstinent but still feel uncomfortable to admit their identity among their family or community members.

While talking about gender identity, many Christians use the word "transgenderism" which they define as "the latest political cause du jour, dominating media headlines, saturating academic deliberation, the subject of new laws and radical educational policies across the country"

(Schutten, 2017, para. 1). An article published in *Reformed Perspective* distinguishes those individuals "who [are] genuinely struggling with gender identity disorder" and who "start identifying as the other gender, or it might mean undergoing surgery to try to resemble the other gender" (Schutten, 2017, para. 2):

> One of the debates within the social sciences today revolves around the question of whether we should bring the body into conformity with the mind (via hormone injections, male genitalia removal, breast augmentation, or other surgery) or bring the mind into conformity with the body (via counseling). … We might hear them say something like, "I'm a woman trapped in a man's body" or vice versa. … An intersexed condition is a biological disorder and should be distinguished from a transgendered person's gender dysphoria, which is a psychological disorder. … To mar or to diminish the masculine and feminine diminishes our God-given identity as males or females. Both reflect the glory of God. (Schutten, 2017, para. 6, 7, 10, 13)

For traditional Christians, "how you feel is not necessarily who you are" (Walker, 2017, p. 139). Therefore, transgender identity is seen as one of the challenges imposed on an individual by God: "the Christian life of discipleship is about carrying a cross" (p. 139). It means that "individuals who experience gender dysphoria are not sinning when such experience occurs", because the "Bible nowhere categorizes unwanted psychological distress as sinful in itself" (Walker, p. 68). Some Christians understand this experience as "all of our selves are as broken by sin as the creation around us is" (p. 68). What is sinful is to allow the feeling of gender dysphoria to have authority over the person and "define what is right and what is wrong" (p. 68). Walker explains Christian position stating that God made people "to be a man or a woman, with a male body or a female body; and so how they feel about themselves is not what God wants for them… every Christian sometimes has to say 'no' to what they want or how they feel, because Jesus is their King" (p. 136).

In contrast to Reformed journals that have been touching on transgender identity for the last few years and discussing gay people for even longer, Canadian Reformed schools have only recently started mentioning these topics. If not the Canadian Reformed community in total, high

schools at least recognize that questioning gender identity exists in society and among Canadian Reformed students as well. During the last several years, Canadian Reformed high schools have worked with an external Christian counsellor who is not a member of the community and with whom students could discuss various topics and issues, including their gender identity. Any community would benefit from having a counsellor who is "a trained expert in mental health, but who also refuses to embrace all the community's ideological underpinnings. As one respondent stated, some students in Canadian Reformed high schools are struggling with their sexual identity: "In Canadian Reformed circles … maybe ten years ago … [if] somebody [was] struggling with homosexuality, you would probably talk about it or you find out about it … at the University or after. Now, because of the culture and openness to talk about things… some in high school talk about it. It is a new issue. How are we dealing with this now when they say, 'I am gay'?" (A34).

A recent graduate said that there was no specific conversation about same-sex relations in a Canadian Reformed high school, but it was mentioned among other sinful lifestyle choices (A6). Several other recent graduates emphasized that there has been a misconception presented in school that still exists in the community that "people decide to be gay" (A37), so it is a sinful choice people make (A6). While general discussions about gender identity occur in Canadian Reformed schools, it rarely comes down to a personal level. Students hear about gay or transgender people but barely meet them in person. The graduates admit that some gay individuals in the community do not often come out and stay single or engage in heterosexual relations and get married. As interviews show, some community members either hide their sexuality in school and come out after they leave the community, or, especially until the recent decade, pretend to be heterosexual and build a traditional family or stay alone while suppressing their sexual attraction to same-sex

individuals. One graduate shared that she had not realized how strict her upbringing was until she joined a public school:

> For me… my first day in grade 10 in a public high school was an entire culture shock. I had no idea that people of my age were actually openly engaging in things that I saw… The most shocking thing was when I walked in a cafeteria and I saw two girls kissing on a table. And I was like, oh my God, because I had actually never seen, I'd never actually met a gay person that I was aware of before that day. I mean if people in our church were gay, they would certainly not talk about it. They denied it; they just stayed single. So, one of the biggest things was to see people being openly gay. (A6)

Even though Canadian Reformed schools implement the Ontario sex-ed curriculum that contains information about gender identity, a Canadian Reformed teacher's expectations might differ drastically from the expectations expressed in the instructor's guidebook. For example, *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education* (2015) recommends that teachers ask the following questions:

> Gender identity refers to a person's sense of self, with respect to being male or female, both, or neither, and may be different from biological or birth-assigned sex. Sexual orientation refers to how people think of themselves in terms of their sexual and romantic attraction to others. What determines a person's sense of self? How do social expectations and stereotypes about gender and sexuality influence how a person may feel about their gender identity or sexual orientation? (C 5.1)

The students are expected to give an answer similar to that presented in the curriculum document:

> Expectations or assumptions about masculinity and femininity and about heterosexuality as the norm can affect the self-image of those who do not fit those expectations or assumptions. This can make it difficult for a person to feel accepted by others. (C 5.1)

A Canadian Reformed teacher would argue that the curriculum has a very strong agenda, but because the Canadian Reformed community, including its schools, consider heterosexual relations to be the norm, Canadian Reformed students are supposed to give a different answer from the one mentioned above. A Canadian Reformed teacher says:

> We look at this from the perspective that God has created an order of things. This is an expectation. But how do we view someone who has homosexual tendencies? So, we talk about these terms but take it from the perspective of that not being the norm, and it's not being something of God's created order. So, we have this sort of conversation about it…

> or sources of support for students questioning their sexual identity and sexual orientation. … If this idea that we are who … our orientation dictates to us, maleness or femaleness is essentially pivotal to who we are in our identity. I say, that's not the key. As Christians, our identity is in Christ. That's pivotal. (A17)

Interviews with some teachers and recent graduates demonstrate a serious lack of discussion on gender identity in Canadian Reformed schools. A significant shift towards a more open conversation on this topic has been happening since 2017, when some extracurricular activities were launched to introduce students to the topics barely covered in class. More educators have eventually realized the importance of conversation about sex, pornography and pregnancy, because Christian youth live "in an increasingly sexualized culture" (Kampen, 2017, p. 3). There was the first-ever conference about sex and gender identity in Guido de Brès in March 2017, called *Truth Exposed: Sexuality, Identity, and Relationships.* The reason is that, as a key speaker Brett Ullman said, "[o]ur media saturated culture consistently floods our minds with inaccurate, often twisted truths about the true nature of sex. As fellow journeyers, let's ask the tough questions together as we look to connect our ancient faith with our modern world" (cited in Guido de Brès Highlights, 2017, para. 3). The conference consisted of two parts. On the first day, parents of Guido de Brès students and supporting community members were invited to know "how to engage in conversations with teens about all of the sexual content that they are inundated with from the culture around them" (Kampen, 2017, p. 3) as presented in the speech of Brett Ullman. The speech was followed by a Questions & Answers session with various panelists who were available "to answer questions and discuss further on the topics of sexuality, identity, and relationships" (p. 3). If parents agreed with the content of presentations, they could approve that their children attend the conference the following day to listen to the same speakers as well as to participate "in various workshops, discussing such struggles as pornography, teen pregnancy, and sexual identity" (p. 3) and ask their questions. The workshops offered situational cases. The first one organized by Linda

Baartse, an Executive Director of the Toronto Pregnancy Care Centre, encouraged students to reflect on how to "offer compassionate support to a fellow student making a life changing pregnancy decision" (*Truth Exposed: Sexuality, Identity, and Relationships – Guido de Bres,* 2017). The second workshop was led by Josh and Deborah Gilman from the group *Strength to Fight*, which is "fighting for a porn-free Canada". Students discussed what can be done to help those people who have an addiction to watching pornography (*Truth Exposed: Sexuality, Identity, and Relationships – Guido de Bres,* 2017).

One of the interviewees said that the above-mentioned conference and counselling was a big step for this Canadian Reformed high school. He feels that in Guido, a "culture of care is being promoted" as well as concern for each other (A34). One of the speakers invited to present at this conference was not a member of the community, but this person was invited because he was an expert. The interviewee emphasized that this is an unusual and significant step made by the community: "It is sometimes good to go outside of our circles to see blind spots" (A34). Another example is the talk about the effects of pornography on the brain and behaviour of those addicted, which was presented by Jonathon Van Maren. He is a Netherlands Reformed Church member, a pro-life activist and "the communications director for the Canadian Centre for Bio-Ethical Reform, a national Canadian pro-life group working to end the killing of pre-born children in Canada" (The Reformed Pro-Lifer, n.d., para. 1). Van Maren also gave talks on pornography in various Reformed schools, including Emmanuel Christian High School (a Canadian Reformed school in Fergus) in 2016 and to Reformed students at the *God and Government Youth Conference* organized by ARPA in Ottawa in May 2017.

7.4. Bullying

The concepts of "sexual orientation," "gender identity," and "homophobia" appeared for the first time in the Ontario curriculum in 2010. "This marks a significant change in the perception of sexuality in Canadian society" (Gismondi et al., n.d., p.30). Posts on ARPA's website and interviews with Canadian Reformed Christians show that for them, it is important to treat every student with respect and love: "as followers of Jesus, we believe that every child should be free from bullying, whether it is because of his or her physical appearance or their sexual orientation, or for any other reason, and that all persons and families should be treated with respect and dignity" (ARPA, 2011*b*, para. 6). One of Guido de Brès' teachers says that "there is room for all covenant children in our schools", including all kinds of "broken children": "That means whether they are broken in the fact that they are very proud or broken in the fact that they have homosexual tendencies, it does not matter; they are God's children, and they are welcome in our schools" (A32). It is nevertheless explained in the Canadian Reformed school that a gay lifestyle is sinful. Although there is an understanding in today's schools that the goal is "to open your arms to these brothers and sisters because they are struggling with a sin, just as anybody else; it is just a different sin" (A32), several respondents admitted that this is not always what actually happens. Latent or open bullying of queer students or those perceived as queer individuals or as questioning their gender identity takes place in Canadian Reformed schools. A few individuals who had recently graduated told me in a private conversation that when students are asked to give an example of how the contemporary world is sinful, a few students would mention that same-sex relationship is accepted in society. In this situation, a teacher is often not likely to go into detail and emphasize the difference between being a gay and having same-sex relations. This entails a situation when students questioning their gender identity do not feel safe coming out at school. Gay and transgender individuals are treated drastically different depending on the family. Some

respondents keep contact with former members of the church who are part of LGBTTQ2+ groups, whether they are family members or former classmates. At the same time, I barely encountered a few cases in the community when parents decided to cut off the connection or reduce communication to by phone or online with their children who came out as gay or transgender individuals. One respondent shared that her mother changed the locks on the house after discovering the sexual orientation of her child:

> The way we were raised was that God comes before anything else. And there is even the Bible text that says: "if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off." So, if you see a family as a body, and one of the body parts causes sin, you just cut it off. For them [parents], their beliefs and their relationships with God are more important than their relationship with me. So, I mean, I do still talk to my mom sometimes, but it's very strange. (A6)

This type of reaction can regularly happen outside religious communities as well. However, the majority of other participants would disagree with the statement above and concur with a position clearly defined by Andrew T. Walker, the Senior Fellow in Christian Ethics at the Ethics & Religious Liberty Commission of the Southern Baptist Convention. He says that "there is no justification for abandoning your child — ever. … Whatever self-righteous attempt at saving face has infected Christianity with the idea that a child's disobedience nullifies a parent's love for a child and a relationship with a child — that must end right now" (Walker, 2017, pp. 140-141). Walker insists that a child's sin of practicing same-sex relations does not justify a parent's sin to abandon the call to show unconditional love for the child (p. 141). However, even if a Canadian Reformed Christian maintains relationships with their gay relatives, the relations are not always smooth inside the family given a deep difference in viewing same-sex relations.

To be fair, the data on public schools in Canada (2016) demonstrates that the situation of bullying because of gender identity is common there as well. *The Final Report on the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools* (2011) concludes that "homophobic comments are extremely prevalent in school environments" (Taylor et al.,

p. 48). The study shows that "over two-thirds (70.4%) of all participating students reported hearing expressions such as "that's so gay" frequently (i.e., daily) in school" (p. 48). There are, however, regional differences in the levels of expression of homophobia. While 80.9% of Ontario participants reported hearing "that's so gay" daily, "BC had the lowest reported rate at 53.7%" (p. 53). The latter result might be attributed to "the high proportion of BC students who were from the Vancouver School Board, which has an extensive anti-homophobia programme" (p. 53). The process of coming out might be even more anxiety-ridden for transgender students than for gay students because the former feel less comfortable to talk "about LGBTQ matters with various people in their lives: teachers, the principal, counsellors, … classmates, parents…" (Taylor et al., p. 101). Even studies on predominantly secular schools show that although those teachers who consider LGBTTQ2+ relations to be "immoral or sinful, would agree that they do not want any child to be insulted and made to feel afraid to go to school" (p. 109); "a great many teachers are disinclined to intervene when they hear homophobic comments" (p. 109). The recent Canadian survey concludes that "[m]ost LGBTQ students see teachers as ineffective in addressing homophobic harassment (67.2% of trans youth, 67.0% of sexual minority females, and 64.6% of sexual minority males)" (p. 110).

Although Canadian Reformed schools might address bullying, they usually do not explicitly discuss homophobia or transphobia. However, many Canadian Reformed schools have developed anti-bullying policies during the last several years and organized an Anti-bullying week to discuss this current issue with students every year. An article cited by ARPA Canada highlights an important point: "The law may have a role by providing clear definitions of bullying behaviour, mandating the need for policies, assigning responsibility and empowering educators with disciplinary tools, but it is community-level involvement that will best stop bullying" (Mitchell,

2012, para. 9). Regarding the definition, Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian School (ON), for example, defines bullying as follows: "a student is bullied when he or she is regularly and often treated in an unchristian manner either physically, verbally or emotionally. Barbara Coloroso, in her book *The Bully, The Bullied and the Bystander*, defines bullying as 'a conscious, willful, unprovoked and deliberately hostile activity intended to harm, induce fear through the threat of further aggression, and create terror'. Bullying is often organized and systematic, and the hurt experienced by the victim can be physical and/or psychological" (Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian School, 2015, p. 32). The problem in Canadian Reformed schools is that they have only recently started (mainly at the high school level) to address gender identity and sexual orientation topics but are still far from connecting these topics with discussions on anti-bullying behaviour.

As a result, existing policies and discussions appear to be ineffective in overcoming stigmatization of those students who question their gender identity or experience same-sex attraction. One of the most significant findings of the 2007 U.S. Climate Survey (Korsciw, Diaz & Greytak, 2008) is that "generic safe school policies that do not include specific measures on homophobia are ineffective in improving the school climate for LGBTQ students" (Taylor et al., 2011, p. 114). Moreover, the presence of one course discussing LGBTTQ2+ matters in the curriculum does not change "the behaviour of harassers" (Taylor et al., p. 125). However, studies show that schools containing Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs) demonstrate a higher level of tolerance and acceptance of sexual minorities (Taylor et al., p. 128). GSAs usually include LGBTTQ2+ and straight student memberships (p. 127).

Some religious schools in Canada have already introduced GSAs in their schools, especially after the legislation on these alliances was adopted in a number of provinces. In Ontario, Bill 13 (2012), an Act to amend the Education Act with respect to bullying and other matters, is

consistent with the court's decision on *Hall v Powers*. The 2002 *Hall v Powers* case (ON) involved the Durham Catholic high school's refusal to allow one of its gay students to bring his boyfriend to the school prom. The school claimed that to allow Mr. Hall to attend the event with his friend "would implicitly suggest that the Catholic school board approved homosexual relations" (Donlevy, 2013, p. 122). The court did not support this application based on the "fundamental right to freedom and right to equal protection from discrimination based on sexual orientation" (Student safety *vs*. Catholic sanctity, 2012, para. 8). Justice McKinnon affirmed Catholic schools' rights in the area of curriculum, but school dances were not part of religious education; therefore, a "restriction on Mr. Hall's activities is not proportionate" (para. 9). Bill 13 endorses that "neither the board nor the principal shall refuse to allow a pupil to use the name gay-straight alliance or a similar name" (303.1 (2)) for an organization to "promote the awareness and understanding of, and respect for, people of all sexual orientations and gender identities" (300.0.2 (2)). Advocates of Bill 13 underscore that Catholic school boards do not have a right to prohibit their students from opening clubs named *gay-straight alliances* (GSAs)[xiv] as it is an extracurricular activity and "does not restrict the right of faith communities to profess their views for or against homosexuality" (300.0.2 (2)).

As studies show, gay-straight alliances and Catholicism are not mutually exclusive for some students: "students from the gay-straight alliance club of Francis Liberman Catholic High School … start each club meeting with a prayer and believe the Catholic faith extends to accepting those of different sexual identities" (Brown, 2013, para. 4). However, some Ontario Catholic schools prefer to organize *By Your SIDE Spaces* (an acronym for Safety, Inclusivity, Diversity, and Equity) instead of GSAs on the following conditions: they do not use the word "gay" in their title; they are not student-led; and, if they "address issues facing sexual minorities, they would focus mainly on

Church teaching regarding homosexuality and the problem of homophobic bullying among students, rather than the anti-homophobia activism and LGBTQ pride that typify Gay/Straight Alliances" (Callaghan, 2014, p. 30). Callaghan's 5-year qualitative study (2016) on Canadian Catholic schools concludes that there are two conditions for challenging homophobic bullying in schools. They are 1) "a vocal student who refused to take 'no' for an answer", and 2) "a strong ally who held a completely different worldview than that of the Catholic school administrators" (p. 281). Otherwise, the environment of Catholic schools, where LGBTTQ2+ students might not see any representations of people like them, as well as the "null curriculum" (which usually does not address sexual minorities), make LGBTTQ2+ students feel lonely, neglected and ignored. An inclusion of "the occasional sexual minority person in the curriculum is not sufficient to address the problem of heterosexism, although it can be a place to begin" (Bickmore, 2002, p. 206).

It is not likely that the Canadian Reformed community will voluntarily introduce GSAs in their schools in the near future, and being private, these schools are not obliged to accept government enforcement to allow these alliances. ARPA Canada launched a campaign against Bill 13 that obligated public Ontario schools to establish Gay Straight Alliances (GSAs). One of ARPA's leaders, Mike Schouten (2011), argued:

> But to be against bullying should not be equated with a blind acceptance of all lifestyles, in this case, homosexuality. The youth, indeed all of society, would be much better served by the schools educating students about many of the physical and mental perils that come with living a homosexual lifestyle. It's time Canadians stood up to the bullying of the homosexual community. Their militant efforts to force all of us to not only tolerate but to accept and even celebrate their choice to practise a completely unnatural lifestyle needs to be stopped! (para. 2–3)

The National Post's article written by legal counsel with The Evangelical Fellowship of Canada Faye Sonier (2012), that was quoted by ARPA, says:

> It's unfortunate that a bill declared to promote tolerance in schools has been turned into a club of intolerance with which to beat back the lawful and respectful expression of Catholic

> beliefs. Based on amendments made after the committee hearings, it seems the Ontario government's understanding of a tolerant society isn't very tolerant at all. (para. 9)

ARPA Canada explained that "the policy becomes problematic when the content requires Christian programs and schools not just to affirm their students but to 'affirm' various orientations and lifestyles that are contrary to Biblical beliefs" (ARPA, 2011*b*, para. 4). Besides the fact that ARPA considers Bill 13 to be a bill that ignores "the rights to freedom of religion, conscience and parental authority, in order to protect another, the right to be free from discrimination based on sexual orientation" (2011*b*, para. 2); it also emphasizes that, according to some studies, the majority of bullying cases in schools happen because of other reasons than those stated in the Bill. Thus, "[o]ne study found that two-thirds of all cases of bullying are based on body image issues, academic grades or cultural background. Similar trends were found in cases of cyber-bullying" (Sonier, 2012, para. 3). There is no reference to this study though. At the same time, the existing research shows a drastic difference in bullying between sexual minority students and non-LGBTTQ2+ students. According to the 2009 Canadian Climate Survey on Homophobia:

- 59 per cent of LGBTQ high school students reported they were verbally harassed, compared to seven per cent of non-LGBTQ students.
- 25 per cent of LGBTQ students indicated being physically harassed due to their sexual orientation, compared to eight per cent of non-LGBTQ students.
- 31 per cent of LGBTQ students reported personal harassment on the internet or via text messaging, compared to eight per cent of non-LGBTQ students.
- 73 per cent of LGBTQ students reported they felt unsafe at school, compared to 20 per cent who did not. (Bullying and sexual orientation by the numbers, 2011, para. 7)

One of the recent concerns of ARPA and Reformed communities, which led to the call for disobedience to the state, was the adoption of Bill 24, An Act to Support Gay Straight Alliances, in Alberta in November 2017. In order to provide a safe and inclusive environment in schools, Bill 24 "requires a school principal to … allow a Gay-Straight Alliance club (GSA) upon a student's request" (ARPA, 2018*c*, para. 3). What concerns the Reformed community the most is that it has

become illegal for the school to inform parents if their children have joined a Gay-Straight Alliance support group. This approach has been chosen to protect students from lack of acceptance or even abuse that they might face in their own family. "The Justice Centre argues the bill violates parents' charter rights, including freedom of religion and expression, by keeping them out of the loop. 'It's not lawful, it's not constitutional, to require schools to restrict information from parents about small children. Full stop,' said Jay Cameron, a lawyer with the Justice Centre" (Rieger, 2018, para. 4–5). ARPA Canada claims that Bill 24 is "a bill with an ideological bent, requiring all schools, including independent Christian schools, to adopt a view of sexuality and gender that is harmful and contrary to scripture" (ARPA, 2018*c*, para. 2). ARPA concurs that the Bill "infringes on the rights of parents to educate their children according to their faith commitments" and also "fails to recognize the unconditional love that parents have for their children, whether they identify as LGBTQ+ or not (there are exceptions, but these are very few)" (ARPA, 2018*c*, para. 20). The leader of ARPA Canada Mark Penninga (2018) commented that it seems to be "the first time Reformed schools have ever taken the government to court in this country. And these schools have joined this legal challenge because they understand that their fundamental freedoms are at stake, including the freedom to live in accordance with their Christian faith" (para. 4). Alberta Court of Queen's Bench Justice Johnna Kubik said in her decision that the coalition of parents and independent schools in Alberta, including all of the Reformed schools in the province, "had failed to prove the law would have caused irreparable harm" (Rieger, 2018, para. 7). Justice Johnna Kubik also referred to the recent Supreme Court of Canada ruling on the Trinity Western Law School case, writing that "minor limits on religious freedom are often an unavoidable reality of a decision-maker's pursuit of its statutory mandate in a multicultural and democratic society" (quoted in ARPA*p*, 2018, para. 5). Bill 24 was removed after the United Conservative Party (UCP)

introduced Bill 8, *The Education Amendment Act*, which passed third reading in the Legislative Assembly in July 2019. A year later, "Bill 15: *The Choice in Education Act* was passed on June 26, 2020, affirming parental choice in education and the primary responsibility parents have for their children's education" (ARPA Canada, 2020, para. 7). Bill 8 was passed after a 40-hour straight debate - the longest debate in the Alberta legislature's history. It enacted "no time limit for school principals to grant a student's request to form a GSA club and no longer guaranteed permission to use words such as "gay" or "queer" in school club names, among other things" (Smith, 2019, para. 2). The detrimental amendment related to the GSA legislation is that it lifted the prohibited parental notification if a child joins a GSA:

> 58.1(1) A board shall provide notice to a parent of a student where courses, programs of study or instructional materials, or instruction or exercises, include subject-matter that deals primarily and explicitly with religion or human sexuality.

Given the ongoing intense discussions in the Canadian Reformed community related to the social norms and legal regulations around the gender identity, several participants mentioned that the Canadian Reformed community needs to have a more loving approach to individuals of non-heterosexual orientation. One specified that "we should move to Jesus in truth and grace", but some CanRC members move to Jesus in truth, but not in grace because they do not approach homosexual people lovingly and patiently (A43). He hopes that schools would work more to ensure that there is "zero tolerance to bullying" and that those who struggle, including with gender identity, are being approached with grace (A43).

To conclude, existing research and my case study show that many teachers in both religious and non-religious schools do not raise the topic of sexual identity "less by fear of political controversy or censorship than by the challenge of teaching any conflict-laden topic" (Bickmore, 2002, p. 207). To maintain a comfortable environment in class and encourage students to get high

achievement scores, "many teachers avoid complex, substantive issues" (p. 207). Also, "heterosexuality in schools is validated through pervasive discourse on … straight sexual mechanics and pregnancy in sex education classes; straight territorialization (such as high school dances and prom nights) … and fictional stories exclusively about … heterosexual relationships" (Walton, 2004, p. 26). However, many theorists on education state that it is studying controversial issues that help students become responsible citizens capable of critical thinking. Therefore, instead of protecting the youth from the discomforts of learning about various complex issues, teachers could gently invite students "into the ongoing predicament" (Ellsworth, 1997, p. 24) of a world that includes troubles such as homophobia (Bickmore, 2002, p. 207).

7.5. Pornography

The topic of pornography is seen as part of sex education both by some scholars and some members of Canadian Reformed community who approach the topic in widely different ways Some contemporary scholarly publications underline the importance of pornography for educational purposes. Thus, access to Internet-based pornography might help some individuals in understanding the mechanics of same-sex sexuality (Kubicek et al., 2010; Kubicek et al., 2011), as well as in facilitating sexual orientation identity development (Harper et al., 2016). The Canadian Reformed publications refer to the studies criticizing pornography and emphasizing its negative impact on viewers (Doidge, 2007; Hilton, 2013).

The topic of pornography was barely touched on by any participants, except for ARPA's representatives. As described below, an interest in this topic is growing in the community through the exposure to the discussion of it at various Canadian Reformed events, including for the youth. Since pornography has become easily available online in recent decades, and it has become hard to escape pornographic images, Canadian Reformed pastors have started confronting it. Canadian

Reformed minister Rev. W.B. Slomp states that "morals within society have changed considerably over the last few decades, allowing an avalanche of pornographic material to flood the market place" (2004, p. 30). One of five main principles of the sex-ed curriculum proposed by ARPA (2018) includes a discussion of the impact of pornography on both children and adults, including "addiction and intimacy disorders", that "the Wynne curriculum ignored". At the *God and Government Youth Conference* (May 2017) organized by ARPA, Jonathon Van Maren noted that "Christian communities are terrible at talking about sex". This is one of the reasons why children learn about sex from friends and the Internet, explained Van Maren. Hence, the lack of sexual education at home and at school might lead Christian children to become familiar with pornography. Various Christian institutions in North America have not succeeded in avoiding pornography: According to Focus on the Family Canada, "sixteen percent of married men within the church, including ministers, have a serious problem with pornography," mentioned Rev. W.B. Slomp, minister of the Immanuel Canadian Reformed Church, Alberta, in his *Clarion*'s article "Addiction to Pornography" released in 2004 (p. 30). Moreover, *The Porn Phenomenon* study, conducted by Barna Group (2016), surveyed "nearly 3,000 … U.S. teens, adults and Protestant church leaders" (Porn Phenomenon, n.d., para. 2) and found out that "most pastors (57%) and youth pastors (64%) admit they have struggled with porn, either currently or in the past" (Kinnaman, n.d., n.12).

Articles in Reformed Christian media, including *Clarion* and *Christian Renewal*, usually have a narrow theological approach to pornography and frame the discussion in biblical terms. For example, a piece by Slomp (2004) states that "the presence of sexual sins and pornography can be evidenced throughout the pages of the Bible" (p. 30) and argues that there is "no doubt that the root cause of people turning to pornography is the sinful heart" (p. 30). As a result, people

"addicted to pornography" might hurt their loved ones: "men who are enslaved by it will often treat women as objects of their pleasure, and shun intimacy" (p. 31). It leads to deteriorated and broken relations (p. 31). This article ends with a recommendation to monitor all access to Internet, TV and movies in the home by, for example, keeping devices at "a place open to all, such as the kitchen or the living room" (p. 32) so that neither children nor adults could have access to pornography. Many other Christian authors writing about pornography or more generally about the impact of technology on youth recommend using special filters on all devices at home, especially those which are available to children. Some of these texts, including the article by Slomp, lack statistical data and references to scholarly studies that examine the why and how teenagers start watching pornography or what the most efficient strategies are to address this interest. ARPA Canada and Jonathon Van Maren have produced more balanced pieces that emphasize the importance of approaching teenagers and providing them with relevant sex education.

During the presentation to Christian high school students at the ARPA youth conference, Van Maren referred to existing statistics. "Today, it is believed the online porn sector is worth around $15 billion, and it reaches more people, and younger people, every year. In 2016 the analytics report of just one website, Pornhub, revealed that its videos were watched 92 billion times last year by 64 million daily visitors. It works out at 12.5 videos for every person on the planet, and if you tried to watch all of them consecutively — don't — you'd be busy for 524,641 years" (Kelly, 2017, para.4). Van Maren also raised the issue of access to pornographic materials by individuals under the age of 18. Thus, in the USA, in 2006, out of 563 university students who responded to a survey, "72.8% of participants (93.2% of boys, 62.1% of girls …) had seen online pornography before age 18" (Sabina et al., 2008, p. 691). Van Maren (2017) says these statistical

data show that pornography has a collective social impact because almost the entire society is engaging with something, and thus the whole culture is affected. Hence, according to Van Maren, the effect of pornography on society is becoming a political issue. It is the government's role, he says, to take some measures to prevent people under 18 from having access to pornographic materials. ARPA's policy report on Pornography (2017*b*) concurs with this statement. It refers to an article by Morgan Bennett, a writer for *Public Discourse* (a publication of the Witherspoon Institute), and a law student at Pepperdine University who is affiliated with the Churches of Christ. Bennett (2013*a*) said that although sexuality is considered to be "private", "the social effects of collective sexual behaviours and norms, including the effects of internet pornography, cannot be kept 'private'" (para. 5). As a result, "[b]ecause pornography is sexual, it is inherently relational and thus inherently social" (para. 5).

ARPA's report deplores that "the lack of prosecution and the vagueness of the law permit the proliferation of even the vilest forms of pornography" (ARPA Canada, 2018, p. 5). The report provides examples of the types of legislation on access to pornographic materials in various Western European countries. For instance, in 2013, "Britain's Prime Minister David Cameron made international news by announcing that all homes in the UK would have pornography blocked by their internet service provider (ISP) unless they explicitly chose to receive it. He also announced that possessing pornography depicting rape would be a criminal offense, among other measures" (ARPA, 2018, p. 3). There is a ban on possession of "extreme" pornography in Scotland, it is "illegal to produce and distribute pornography that involves violence or bestiality" in Germany, and it is "illegal to depict sexual activities involving animals, rape, violence, or force" in Norway (p. 4). ARPA's report on *Pornography* (issued in 2017 and updated in 2018) provides a few recommendations for Canadian policy makers. They include a call for an "extensive study of the

impact of pornography on the health of Canadians, in particular, the factors that heighten risk for dependency and addiction and the effects of exposure to pornography on children and adolescents" (p. 5). This recommendation was put into motion and promoted by MP Arnold Viersen. The details of it are discussed below. Another recommendation reflects ARPA's strong stance on the parents' primary role in their children's sexual education:

> That all levels of civil government respect the role and authority of the family so that parents can take appropriate measures to raise their children. For example, some provincial governments have driven a wedge between schools and parents by not allowing parents to opt-out of exposure to sexually explicit material which parents believe is inappropriate for their children" (p. 5).

Being motivated to achieve political changes and promoting political awareness and involvement among its followers and subscribers, ARPA Canada encourages its readers to send an e-mail to their provincial representatives asking "them to introduce or support similar [to Nova Scotia] legislation in your province to protect children" from pornography on the Internet (ARPA Canada, 2018*e*, para. 5). It refers to Private Member's Bill No. 61, introduced in Nova Scotia in 2018, which "calls on internet service providers to automatically block websites that feature pornography and encourage its business partners to adopt filtering services at locations where children may have access to a free wireless Internet service" (para. 2).

The ARPA *Pornography* report (2018*b*) recommends using technological resources, including the "opt in" approach "by which individuals who want to have access to pornography on their digital devices must call their Internet service providers (ISPs) and provide proof of age and a credit card number, otherwise, pornography websites and content would automatically be filtered out by the ISPs" (p. 10). It also encourages technology companies "to create better online content filters and tools that empower parents to protect children while they are online" (pp. 11-12).

Arnold Viersen, a member of the CanRC who was elected as a Conservative MP (2015) to represent the riding of Peace River—Westlock in the House of Commons of Canada, introduced Motion 47 (2016). It "instructed the Health Committee to examine the public health effects of the ease of access and viewing of online violent and degrading sexually explicit material on children, women, and men" (About Arnold, n.d., para. 7). This call to examine the effects of violent pornography gained "the support of the Conservative, Liberal, NDP, Bloc and Green parties" and "was unanimously adopted by the House of Commons" (About Arnold, n.d., para. 7) . The report issued by the Federal Health Committee in response to Motion 47 (2017) was disappointing for many Christian groups, including the Canadian Reformed Christians. ARPA Canada says that the response from the Health Committee "betrayed a serious lack of concern on the part of the government about the issue of pornography and its impacts on Canadians – particularly children" (ARPA Canada, 2017*b*, para. 1). To sum up, Viersen was unsatisfied with the report for the following reasons. First, the report does not refer to those studies that consider that "violent and degrading pornography contributes to rape culture, objectifies women and subjects them to violent acts, desensitizes viewers to violence against women, is used to groom children for sexual abuse, etc." (The Health Committee Tables Report on Porn Motion (M-47), 2017, para. 4). Second, the report says about the "significant debate around the academic research" on the negative public health impact of pornography (para. 5). The *Report on the public health effects of the ease of access and viewing of online violent and degrading sexually explicit material on children, women and men* (2017) refers to Dr. Jacqueline Gahagan, professor and Interim Assistant Dean, Faculty of Health Professions, Dalhousie University, who "explained that research regarding the exact causal role of pornography in sexual violence and poor health outcomes remains 'hotly debated', which poses challenges to understanding and responding to it as a public health issue in the same manner

as one would for other types of public health concerns, such as communicable diseases" (p. 7). The report concludes that "despite evidence of a correlation between negative sexual attitudes and behaviours and the viewing of pornography, research has not established any causal relationship among the general population to date" (p. 11). The Report notices, "the impacts of sexually explicit material on sexual health and behaviour cannot be separated out from how sexuality is addressed in society more broadly through education, political and social structures, and the wider media environment" (p. 11). However, the report emphasizes the importance of providing children, youth and parents with "more comprehensive sources of information regarding sexual health and behavior" (p. 11):

> Witnesses were in agreement that this goal could be achieved through broad-based sexual health promotion efforts, including sex education in schools, community and online interactive programs and information, as well as advertising campaigns. Furthermore, they felt that these sexual health promotion efforts should also aim to address systemic problems related to gender equity and gender-based violence. (p. 11)

An anti-pornography movement has emerged. It unites both religious and non-religious activists who consider pornography to be a public health issue rather than "a free speech issue" (Ley, 2013). In May 2018, in Ottawa, Canada's first anti-pornography summit occurred. It was hosted by Strength to Fight, an Ottawa-based anti-porn organization and gathered together, as it is said on the website, "international experts to address North America's pornography epidemic" and "to equip participants to take action against the harms of pornography, both inside the Church and in the broader culture" (Macartney, 2018, para.1). The group Strength to Fight describes itself as "a group of Canadians passionate about fighting for a porn-free Canada" and "working to equip Canadians to live porn-free lives and build porn-free communities" (Strength to Fight, n.d., para. 1). Van Maren (2018) says that "the anti-porn movement is one of the very few places where common ground exists in the culture wars" (para. 3). Josh Gilman, the Executive Director at Strength to Fight, explains the anti-porn movement's particularity: "I've never seen any movement

where different activists and organizations are so invested in each other's success. And it's made up of incredibly diverse viewpoints, faiths, political factions. When you go to the Coalition to End Sexual Exploitation Summit, you'll find Catholics, Mormons, and Evangelicals of every stripe. You'll have atheist professors and feminist authors" (in Van Maren, 2018, para. 5).

While there are serious debates about whether medicine gives an exact and clear answer to whether pornography affects the brain, both secular and religious representatives of the discussion sometimes argue that religious people fighting against sex addiction are "advocating for a moral system, not a medical one" (Ley quoted in Clark-Flory, 2011, para. 8). A journalist of the *Convinuum*, a *Cardus* newspaper, Naomi Biesheuvel points out that "a lot of people in faith communities react to pornography mostly out of guilt or shame, and go, 'Oh yeah, that's bad.' But then, as a result, they tend to avoid talking about it at all" (in Anderson & Biesheuvel, 2015, para. 5). Activist Cordelia Anderson, who conducted over 2,500 presentations in the USA and internationally "on topics including prevention of child sexual abuse/exploitation, impact of pornography, normalization of sexual harm, promotion of sexual health, bullying/cyber-bullying, restorative justice, and compassion fatigue" (Cordelia Anderson, 2018, para. 1), framed the questions the most precisely: "What we do not need is to go about this from a shame-and-guilt point of view because that brings it back to 'What's wrong with you as an individual that you are using this?' Whereas the larger question is 'What makes it very difficult for an individual to not use this?'" (Anderson & Biesheuvel, 2015, para. 6). She points out that various surveys have shown high rates of pornography use among believers of different religions. Therefore, "[t]here's sort of a double silencing. It's the silencing that's there for people in general, but then, as a person of faith, there's the 'I have to deal with doing something that I recognize as against my values, yet I'm aroused by it.' That's a toxic mix." (Anderson & Biesheuvel, 2015, para. 8).

ARPA's policy recommendations on pornography, as well as Jonathan Van Maren's speech on pornography presented to Christian high school students or members of Christian churches, refer to those studies that testify to a serious impact of pornography on the brain. They allude to the studies conducted by Dr. Norman Doidge, Dr. Donald L. Hilton and Daniel Gilman. To briefly summarize, I will present the main arguments of the above mentioned scholars that indicate that sex addiction is a real thing. Dr. Doidge (2007) explains that addictions "make the pleasure-giving neurotransmitter dopamine more active in the brain" (p. 106). He says that "an important link with porn is that dopamine is also released in sexual excitement, increasing the sex drive in both sexes, facilitating orgasm, and activating the brain's pleasure centers. Hence the addictive power of pornography" (p. 107). As a result, Morgan Bennett interprets, pornography "literally changes the physical matter within the brain so that new neurological pathways require pornographic material in order to trigger the desired reward sensation" (Bennett, 2013*b*, para. 16). The overuse of the dopamine reward system causes addiction (Hilton, 2013). As a result, Catholic researcher Matt Fradd (2017) concludes, "just like a drug addiction, porn addiction causes a person over time to use the substance more and more" (p. 121). This leads to the situation, which was described by Van Maren too, that "the porn addict needs to watch more porn or more hard-core porn to get the same high he could get with smaller doses" (p. 121). Psychologist Dr. Ley summarizes that "[s]ex addiction proponents, from Rob Weiss to Carnes have long argued that sex and porn are 'like cocaine' in the brain" (Ley, 2013, para. 5). One of them is Gary Wilson, the founder of the website yourbrainonporn.com, which describes the effects of internet porn on the brain.

The statements claiming that "viewing porn triggers dangerous neurochemical changes in the brain" (Ley, 2013) were confronted. David J. Ley (2013) clarifies:

> Brain science is hot these days, and it's attention-getting to use brain and neuroscience lingo in arguments, because it sounds so gosh-darned convincing and scientific. The problem is, there has been extremely little research that actually looks at the brains and behaviors of people using porn, and no good, experimental research that has looked at the brains of those who are allegedly addicted to porn. (para. 3)

Additionally, a research by Steele, Staley, Fong and Prause (2013), which used electroencephalography (EEG) testing, showed that "the participants' overall demonstrated increased electrical brain responses to the erotic imagery they were shown, just like the brains of 'normal people' as has been shown in hundreds of studies", explains Dr. Ley (2013, para. 6). In contrast, if "viewing pornography actually was habituating (or desensitizing), like drugs are, then viewing pornography would have a diminished electrical response in the brain" (Ley, 2013, para. 6). Reid and his colleagues (2011) similarly conclude:

> when actual performance was assessed on neuropsychological tests sensitive to frontal deficits common in executive dysfunction, no differences were found between hypersexual patients and healthy controls. We interpreted these findings to support our theory that hypersexuality, including excessive pornography use, is a context specific phenomenon which is expressed when triggered by a sexual cue or another stimuli, that when activated, is paired with sexual behavior. … Regardless, the current literature on excessive pornography use and hypersexuality diverge in many regards from those found in studies among patients seeking help for addictive disorders such as chemical dependency or among patients with impulse control problems such as pathological gamblers. (para. 5)

Anti-porn activists argue that contemporary culture is characterized by "rape culture and hook-up culture" (Jaclyn White in Macartney, 2018). According to poll results, around 60% of Canadian women "overall say Canadian society is 'too sexually open' today. Conversely, men are more likely to say that society was 'too sexually repressed' in the past" (Cardus, 2017). This poll (*Appendix E*) indicates that "parents of teenagers and aging boomers are nervous about society's direction in an age of Tinder, easily accessed online pornography, and personal lives put on full display through social media for all the world to see," concludes Andrea Mrozek, a *Cardus* program director (in Cardus, 2017, para. 3). A Ph.D. thesis by Jennifer Tognela (2011) on the construction of female sexuality in men's pornographic and non-pornographic magazines

"provides empirical support for McNair's (2002) argument that we have undergone 'a pornographication' of mainstream popular culture, and that through the sexualization of culture, pornographic themes, such as the construction of women as sexual object, are now found throughout non-pornographic material" (p. 130). Hence, today, there is a need for everyone (including kids) to have "accurate, comprehensive sexual relational health information" which should "include a media literacy element that helps us to understand the environment around us and what messages are being given" (Anderson & Biesheuvel, 2015, para. 17).

Despite the controversy on the physical changes pornography produces in viewers, some scholarly studies mention a psychological influence that pornographic images have on individuals who consume them. Reid, Carpenter, and Fong (2011) agree that Hilton and Watts' research (2011) "made an attempt to bring increased awareness to patients exhibiting problems with excessive pornography consumption. …such patterns of behavior have been associated with numerous negative consequences including attachment ruptures in romantic relationships, loss of employment, and psychological distress" (para. 9). During his meeting with Christian school students, Van Maren (2017) told them that if they watch pornography, they "travel ahead and cut [their] marriage".

There is also a controversy around the relationships between pornography and women's rights. On the one hand, many third-wave feminists argue that "putting limits on pornography restrict personal freedoms and the ability of women to express their sexuality" (Tognela, 2011, p. 25). On the other hand, second-wave feminists and also conservative politicians argue "for government control over pornography, claiming that it advocates violence against women, children and minorities" (Strossen, 1995, p. 12). MacKinnon (1993) and Dworkin (1995) assert that the consumption of pornography is harmful to women. For example, *Playboy* "objectifies and

dehumanizes women, constructing them as mere things available at a whim for the pleasure of men" (MacKinnon, 1993, pp. 22-23). A doctoral research on the construction of female sexuality in men's pornographic and non-pornographic magazines concludes that "in spite of increasing legal equality, women's sexuality is still constructed as an object to be defined by men's desires/fantasies, and for male consumption. This pornographication is also evident in the types of women who are portrayed in sexualized ways in pornographic and non-pornographic magazines. It is not only the women who work in the adult entertainment industry who are constructed as sexual objects; rather, all types of women are objectified within the sampled magazines" (Tognela, 2011, p. 131). Christian speakers also protest the degrading of women in pornography. Van Maren (2017) states that 88% of popular pornography on DVD "feature[s] physical violence against women", and 49% of the content "contain[s] explicit name calling against women" and hate speech against women. Moreover, Van Maren (2017) says, "Fifty shades of grey try to convince women that violence can be part of romantic relations". There is also much assault and rape in pornography:

> When I go to even Reformed schools, I have [met] kids who are as young as eleven and who have seen this stuff. The average age of the first exposure to porn is age nine in Canada and the United States. It used to be age eleven, but it keeps on going down. I talked to a pastor in [a big city in Ontario], who is Reformed, and his first exposure to sexuality was a violent threesome at the age of ten. Because this is the stuff you have access to on the Internet. (Van Maren, 2017)

Van Maren warns that "if parents don't teach their kids about sex and the Internet well" (meaning that if they do not have "an open conversation with a kid" when a child can ask any questions and not feel embarrassed), then kids Google their questions and might find answers in pornography. However, this warning is not shared by the scholars and practitioners who emphasize the importance of pornography for LGBTTQ2+ individuals for educational purposes. Scholarly studies from the 1990s already mentioned pornography as a sexual education tool. For example,

surveys conducted at university campuses showed that "oral-anal sex was the topic on which the most subjects reported gaining knowledge from pornography" (Duncan & Nicholson, 1991, p. 802).

To summarize, this chapter shows that sexual education is one of the most controversial and complex topics for the Canadian Reformed community to discuss and address. While part of the community sees the importance of providing students with detailed and comprehensive sex education in order to protect them from potential problems, including STIs, another part of the community prefers to leave sexual education to a later stage in life, in preparation for marriage. The latter group perceives introducing various sex-ed topics, such as contraceptives, as opening Pandora's box and assuming that students are engaged in premarital sexual relations. As the analysis of interviews shows, there is a growing understanding in both Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools of the importance of providing sex education which is relevant for the 21st century. The invitation extended toward external experts to have open conversations with Canadian Reformed students about gender identity (and, more recently, transgender identity) and pornography is a transforming step in the community, which just two decades ago aimed to shelter their children and censored TV. The Canadian Reformed community still has strict, traditional Christian views on gender identity and sexual relations, and this perspective is taught in Canadian Reformed schools. However, the fact that the existence of people identifying themselves as other than cisgender has been acknowledged, is a significant step.

Furthermore, the vast majority of Canadian Reformed community members state that it is a predominantly parental role to provide their children with sexual education as detailed as they consider to be right for their family. At the same time, as the analysis of interviews shows, there is a growing expectation that schools assist parents in having conversation on sexual matters with

their children. While teaching sex-ed in accordance with the Ontario curriculum, Canadian Reformed schools endeavour to be "sensitive to the needs of the community" and teach it "from a biblical perspective", so abstinence is being promoted (A19).

The importance of various aspects of sexual education, including the right to exempt children from certain sex-ed classes or limit access to pornography for minors, for the Canadian Reformed community has encouraged its political engagement. The following chapter will cover the involvement of Canadian Reformed members in Canada's socio-political life, the engagement of ARPA Canada in politics, the evolution of political topics covered in Canadian Reformed schools in recent decades, and an increasing interest of students in contributing to the political realm.

Chapter 8. Graduates' involvement in socio-political discourse

8.1. Evangelical Christians in Canada – trends in political views

While a quarter of Canadians do not affiliate themselves with any religious institutions (Statistics Canada, 2011), the rest significantly vary in their service attendance. In comparison to the middle of the 20th century when more than 50% of Canadians claimed to attend church weekly (Bibby, 2011, p. 29), by 2008 the proportion was 18.3% (Eagle, 2011). At the same time, the studies show that evangelical Protestant tradition has remained stable and "comparatively strong institutionally" (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 17) for decades. Bibby's data indicates that from 1871 to 2001 the proportion of evangelicals has consistently been 8% of the Canadian population: "While that may not sound like growth, simply being able to stay up with the population and retain their 'market share' has been quite an accomplishment" (Bibby, 2006, p. 199). It seems that they have been using efficient strategies to retain "their children, as well as their people as they move from place to place" (Bibby, pp. 199–200). Evangelical Protestantism is therefore "a uniquely congregational style of Canadian religion, and its institutional form remains relatively strong" (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 17). It is predicted to become an even more significant and dominant force within Canadian Protestantism (Bowen, 2004).

Since the decline in church attendance, "the political influence of Christianity was rapidly shrinking" (Wagner, 2010, p. 21). Moreover, many churches, including Roman Catholic, mainline Protestant and Evangelical Churches, "distance themselves from anything 'political'" and "only address politically correct issues like homelessness" (Wagner, p. 25). What is also interesting is that American and Canadian evangelicals "resemble each other more than they resemble non-evangelical Americans and Canadians – at least religiously" (Reimer & Wilkinson, 2015, p. 24), and, as it was also mentioned by an interviewee above, "Canadian evangelicals mostly consume

American evangelical books, music, and videos" (Malloy, 2009, p. 354) than relate to Dutch Reformed Christians. In the political engagement context, "there is a stronger connection between partisan politics and religion among American evangelicals" than their Canadian counterparts (Reimer & Wilkinson, p. 92). Also, historically Canadian evangelicals have had more diverse political views than those in the United States (p. 92), and, therefore, "in Canada, evangelicals have not aligned with a single political party" (p. 91). Even though "polls show growing support among evangelicals for the Conservative Party", some researchers doubt that "a solid voting block will develop and be sustained" in Canada (Reimer & Wilkinson, p. 91). Moreover, despite the common assumption about American evangelical congregations' strong engagement in politics, as Chaves' study (2004) shows, they spend comparatively little time on political mobilization. Additionally, in contrast to the popular perception of evangelicals as people on the 'right' side of the political spectrum, "sexual issues or political mobilization are not [in their] focus" (Reimer & Wilkinson, p. 90); they actually focus on "worship, religious education, and serving their communities" (p. 90).

Canadian evangelicals are even less likely than their American counterparts to mobilize politically (Adkins et al., 2013; Beard et al., 2013; Layman, 2001; Putnam and Campbell, 2010; Raymond, 2011; Smidt et al., 2010) because the former "construct their *subcultural identity* differently than" the latter (Bean et al., 2008, p. 899). To give a clear explanation, "[w]hile Canadian evangelicals are similar to American counterparts in their opposition to abortion and homosexuality, they have different understandings about the relationship between their religious morality and national identity" (p. 929). Canadian evangelicals do not pursue the idea of civil religion (Bellah, 1967), mainly considering Canada to be a 'post-Christian nation', and therefore "engage the society as a cultural minority within a multicultural society" (Bean et al., p. 927).

It seems important to place the analysis of the Canadian Reformed community's political engagement in more detailed and explicit conversation with works on other traditional Christian groups, including the evangelical communities in North America and Canada in particular. Given the focus of this study on the school system and a wide diversity of political views and approaches by different Reformed Christians, a brief comparative summary would be reductive and simplifying. Moreover, while evangelical groups are very diverse, Canadian Reformed members do not clearly fit into the definition of Christian Fundamentalists. By referring to the "Evangelical Christians in Canadian National Television News" by David M. Haskell, Leah McKeen (2015) provides a clear depiction of the key Christian Fundamentalists' features: "1) its emphasis on Biblical literalism, 2) its militant or aggressive response to nonbelievers, and 3) its separatism, or self-enforced segregation from mainstream culture" (p. 157). Any of these features would characterize the Canadian Reformed community.

As a note, many individuals of the older generation of Canadian Reformed Christians would not identify themselves as evangelicals because they associate evangelism with a specific Christian movement that has a negative connotation for many community members. However, a Canadian Reformed pastor and theologian, Gerhard H. Visscher (1999) explains: "We must and we may be reformed *and* evangelical" (p. 3). By saying this, he means that evangelism and missionary work are important and should be reinforced; at the same time, there is a clear endeavour to distance from evangelical Fundamentalism as an attitude to society and political engagement and not to compromise on the Reformed identity.

Also, the Canadian Reformed community emphasizes the value of the Reformation heritage for the further in-depth development of the evangelical movement in North America by referring to the words of evangelical historian Mark Noll (1994): "The Dutch Reformed offered

their American counterparts a heritage of serious academic work and experienced philosophical reasoning" (pp. 27-28). Mark Noll mentioned Abraham Kuyper, a neo-Calvinist leader, as an example of an engaged evangelical Christian. Another historian James Turner (1999) also saw "the decisive influence" of neo-Calvinism on the revival and resurgence of the evangelical tradition in North America (p. 6). Although the latter discussion is more related to the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), with its strong emphasis on neo-Calvinism, the Canadian Reformed community has actually become more engaged with Kuyperian thought.

The latter statement about the shift in the community towards more interest in Kuyperianism could be explained by several trends that this empirical research has allowed to notice: 1) a number of Canadian Reformed people are going through the Redeemer University, private Christian liberal arts and science university located in Hamilton and built on Kuyperian ideas; 2) ARPA Canada has been consolidated based on and openly promotes Kuyper's worldview and his approach to socio-political engagement; 3) a growing number of the younger generation follow *Cardus*, a Christian think tank that represents Christians from various denominations but has strong Kuyperian roots.

Besides basing on a strong philosophical tradition and being committed to the Protestant orthodoxy of historic Christianity, the Canadian Reformed community seems still to have a much stronger focus on on orthodoxy rather than orthopraxis. However, this chapter will provide insights into how Canadian Reformed people engage with politics. Particular attention will be given to the Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) that was founded by members of the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches and is currently supported by Reformed Christians of other Reformed Churches as well. The focus will be on the pro-life campaigns launched by ARPA

Canada, its contribution to the establishment of high school political clubs, and its involvement in a variety of court cases related to education.

8.2. Reformed theology and political involvement

The Canadian Reformed community, as many other evangelical groups, obviously considers the inward spiritual life more important than outward engagements. However, while some members of the Canadian Reformed community argue that the afterlife should be the first priority, and therefore, political compromises are not allowed and political discussions should not be a priority; others insist that "laws passed by governments … have an important influence" because they affect "morality in the country" (Wagner, 2010, p. 99), and hence the Christian community should engage in the political life:

> Government policies play an extraordinary role in determining the moral tone of a nation. … The law is an influential teacher of right and wrong, and it is the responsibility of citizens to make sure that laws are compatible with moral truth and are enforced. (Minnery, 2001, p. 158)

Adhering to this argumentation, ARPA Canada Executive Director Mark Penninga (2008) opposes the dichotomy between evangelism and activism:

> A spiritual conversion is not going to automatically solve the problems that our nation faces. … Just look at our own denominations and notice the lack of civic and public engagement. … we don't always understand how our faith is supposed to shape every part of our lives. That explains why Christians can be so ideologically diverse on political issues even though we all claim to believe the authority of God's Word. … We also have to get our "hands dirty" and apply our faith to politics and many other spheres which we may want to avoid. Spiritual revival, either individually or on a bigger scale, is much needed in this country. (quoted in Wagner, p. 100)

As the current study of Canadian Reformed community showed, some members support ARPA Canada while others do not agree to compromise to achieve the goals, and more members have started volunteering for the broader community to various causes. The latter include but not limited to providing food to the poor and homeless downtown Hamilton; volunteering in palliative

care centres and hospices; engaging in community development work and food funds (although in combination with some missionary work) in several African and Middle Eastern countries; sponsoring refugees of any religious background.

ARPA Canada has been built and developed around the idea of presenting a Reformed voice and offering a Christian perspective in political and public spheres. While being officially a non-partisan organization, ARPA Canada encourages its followers to be active in a political party because it would allow them "to vote in party leadership races, local candidate nomination races, and policy conventions" (Minderhoud, 2020, para. 2). Since a limited amount of people can participate in partisan activities, the vote might be even more important here than in a general election (para. 2). Neither through the website nor policy publications or booklets for Christian schools, ARPA Canada encourages its audience to prefer one particular political party. ARPA Canada regularly provides an overview of political parties' positions on certain social issues and legal cases before federal or provincial elections. While ARPA Canada focuses on the major parties, it also includes one of the fifteen minor parties - the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) - in the comparative table. The key issues on which ARPA Canada compares the parties' platforms have changed over the years along with the social context and Reformed Christians' main concerns. For example, if in 2015, ARPA highlighted the differences between parties on twelve social issues, including abortion, childcare, marijuana, euthanasia, environment, taxation, etc.; in 2019, an interest shifted and concentrated on six topics, they are: religious freedom, abortion, euthanasia and palliative care, free speech/hate speech, prostitution, and sexuality and identity. The comparative criteria reflect the Reformed communities' topics of interest and discussion and maybe, to some extent, shape their key political concerns.

Levi Minderhoud, ARPA's British Columbia Manager, emphasizes that when considering partisan political action, the readers should remember that, first, "individual candidates of the same party may have very different positions on important issues" (para. 11), and some in any party across the political spectrum might exemplify Christian values. Second, Levi Minderhoud articulates the dichotomy which several interviewees mentioned while describing that they often need to choose between two political parties that are the Conservatives and the CHP:

> The political party that best represents your views may also have a relatively small chance of winning a general provincial election or even your riding. Both of these factors – political philosophy and electability – require consideration when deciding which party to support. (para. 13)

ARPA's booklet (n.d.*b*) about Canadian political parties have a similar conclusion stating that Christians may and do work in different political parties; what every Canadian citizen should do, ARPA Canada says, is to take the responsibility to choose which party to support.

As to the Christian Heritage Party (CHP), the most common interview comment is that "realistically looking, Conservatives can make a difference", and voting for the CHP would take away a vote from the former (A37). *Christian Citizenship Guide* (2010) by Michael Wagner (2010) published by ARPA explains that the Christian Heritage Party (CHP) is "the only option because the brokerage parties [the Liberal and the Conservative] follow the sentiments of the people rather than the Bible" while for others, "brokerage parties offer reasonable avenues through which to have influence" (p. 113). Overall, "French Catholics and devout Evangelicals are less likely to support the Conservatives" (Guth & Fraser, 2001, p. 53). One of the main priorities of evangelicals is the opposition to "new moralities", emphasis on "'family values'" over other functions of government", "favoring less social spending and more 'individual responsibility'" and downplaying environmental concerns (Guth & Fraser, p. 59). The CHP reflects these priorities as it self-identifies as "Canada's only pro-Life federal political party, and the only federal party that

endorses the Judeo-Christian principles enshrined in the Canadian Constitution…" (CHP, n.d., para. 7).

The CHP for its members is, according to a Ph.D. thesis by McKeen (2015), "a site where they are doing religion in their everyday lives and in politics more particularly. The act of running as a candidate becomes a form of witnessing, the party policy and the five unalterable principles become sacred texts, and maintaining loyalty to the party becomes a way of devoting one's life to God" (p. 308). While struggling with the principled vs. pragmatic dilemma, the CHP embraces persistent characteristics that include "the prevalence of Dutch Reformed members, the significance of being pro-life and supporting capital punishment" (McKeen, p. 309). The study also concludes that "the Dutch Reformed factor to be just as significant as any American influences" in the CHP (p. 310). One of the reasons for this is that individuals of various Reformed Churches, including of Dutch background, were involved in creating the Christian Heritage Party in the late-1980s. McKeen says that "the CHP contributes to the institutional completeness of the more conservative faction of the Canadian Dutch Reformed community, and the strong social cohesion of this group helps reinforce the party" (p. 310). The idea of pillarization that was already discussed in chapter 2 has shaped the community's mentality. However, the current level of ethnic diversity seems to encourage politicians to diversify their appeal and focus on a broader Christian community. After visiting the Lower Mainland (BC) in 2019, the CHP leader Rod Taylor said:

> We have some interest there in the Chinese Christian community, basically a new development for us," he explained. "In the past we've had pretty strong Dutch influence in the party, or the Dutch population has been a large part of our membership, and now we are starting to get a lot of interest in other branches of the Christian community, so I think that is a strength for us. (in Barker, 2019, para. 7-8).

Although in 2015 the CHP's 30 candidates "only garnered 15,232 votes, an average of less than one per cent in those ridings" (in Barker, 2019, para. 1), the party's pro-life and a traditional family-focused program strongly correlates with the Canadian Reformed believers and gains votes

from some of them. ARPA's Parent/Teacher Lesson Plan booklet about the political parties emphasizes the aspect of the CHP's platform that is of interest to the Reformed Christians and reflect a well-accepted and seen in the community lifestyle when a female spouse is a stay-at-home mom, at least until children are grown: "The CHP's position has a principled element to it where they are rewarding a family for having a parent at home. The Conservative income-splitting plank also acknowledges the influential role of a stay-at-home parent" (ARPA, n.d.*c*, p. 2).

The following sub-sections will focus on ARPA's work and its contributions to the promotion of a Reformed, and more broadly Christian, perspective on various topical issues in the public sphere.

8.2.1. Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) Canada

Local associations for Reformed Political Action (also referred to as ARPA) are "made up of a diversity of people from local Reformed churches who work together to respond to social and political issues from a Christian perspective" (Wagner, 2010, p. 107). Although these ARPA groups are autonomous, "they benefit from the coordination and resources provided by ARPA Canada" and can "share information, ideas, and resources" (p. 107). ARPA Canada was founded in its current structure in 2007 to be "a faithful Christian witness" in the Canadian public square. As already mentioned in Chapter 3, ARPA's main goal is "to educate, equip, and encourage Reformed Christians to political action and to bring a biblical perspective to our civil authorities" (ARPA Canada, n.d.*b*, para. 1). While local volunteer-type groups occurred and disappeared through the 1970s, 80s and 90s, in the 2000s, a part-time employee was hired to let an action group be sustained (A45). ARPA gained permanent status is 2007. While I assumed that the year of ARPA's formal establishment was related to the fact that the Conservative Party was in power at that time (2006–2015), one of ARPA's representatives expressed his doubt that "it corresponds

with something happening in federal politics"; there were just enough people interested in politics and they considered that it was to be something worth investing in (A45). Another reason, as the respondent points out, is that by 2007 some significant changes had happened within the church circles where there had already been the third generation of immigrants from the Netherlands. While the first two generations concentrated on establishing churches, building schools, and setting up businesses, the following generations have "started focusing outwards" and raising the question: "how can we positively impact Canada?" (A45).

ARPA has nine full-time and five part-time employees across Canada (in 2018) who come from different Christian churches, mainly the Canadian Reformed. ARPA is supported by Christians from various denominations, but Canadian Reformed, United Reformed, and Free Reformed churches were named as the three "biggest contributors to [ARPA's] work, and there are also a few smaller denominations" (A45). Because of its political activities, ARPA is not a charity organization and does not receive tax relief from the government. ARPA therefore does not receive any money from churches or foundations; all donations come from individuals — over one million dollars in 2017 (A45). What is interesting for this study is that the biggest donations are given by the CanRC people (A45), and only a few of my interviewees were not aware of ARPA's existence and its campaigns.

The principles on which ARPA has been built concur with Abraham Kuyper's statements about the importance of Christians' engagement with the world, including the political domain, public policy and advocacy from a Reformed perspective (A45). A representative of ARPA interviewed for this research (A45) admits that the vast majority of Canadian Reformed Christians do not understand Kuyper's views, partially because of a continuous tension between the followers of Abraham Kuyper and Klaas Schilder (which was described in more detail in chapter 6). They

were therefore taught at church history class at school to view Kuyper "with some suspicion". The respondent points out that Canadian Reformed Christians often do not understand the theological nuances relating to why several congregations separated from the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands, led by Klaas Schilder among others, and established their own denomination, The Reformed Churches in the Netherlands (Liberated) (Gereformeerde Kerken in Nederland (vrijgemaakt), GKNv); CanRC was founded by mainly GKNv immigrants. If Schilder split from the Church influenced by Kuyper, "there should be some good reasons for that" they think, said a respondent (A45). Whatever theological disagreements or differences the Canadian Reformed Christians may have with Kuyper, the respondent says, they "do not really spill over into [Kuyper's] political and social thoughts" (A45). That is why it is not surprising that many interviewees expressed interest in and emphasized the importance of engagement in cultural and political life without pronouncing Kuyper's name and often without recognizing a Kuyperian influence on their worldview. An ARPA member admits that if you explain Kuyper's views on Christian involvement in politics or his principle of pluralism, or his view on society and cultural Christian engagement, and "if you don't use his name, the vast majority [of Canadian Reformed Christians] would tell you: it's good, this is what we should be doing. If you throw in Kuyper's name, then some [would tell that] maybe there's something wrong with that" (A45).

Despite the alignment of ARPA's principles with Kuyperian ideas, the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), which has been significantly influenced by Kuyperianism, is out of ARPA's reach for several reasons. First, in the CRCNA (which is much larger than the CanRC), "there is way more variety and diversity of political thought than in the CanRC" while, in the latter, around "90% fall onto one side of the political spectrum" (A45). Therefore, "it's harder to appeal to them [CRCNA] as a denomination" because in "one congregation you can get

a very-very progressive, open to almost … socialist ideas", and "in another congregation you can find somebody who will actually like the work that we [ARPA] are doing" (A45). Second, the CRCNA already has its own associations, for example, The Centre for Public Dialogue (CPD), and ARPA does not want "to step on their toes" (A45).

ARPA has been involved in a variety of court processes; a strategy it describes as follows: "civil disobedience has to be civil. We may only disobey on the very specific point at which the State tells us we must do something that God forbids. And we must also exhaust the legal options that are open to us" (Penninga, 2018, para. 7). ARPA organizes *God & Government* conferences (both regular and for students), speaking tours across the provinces, lesson plans for high school students, and is actively involved in the annual National March for Life in Ottawa and local marches across the country. ARPA's website highlights the main topics to which ARPA Canada pays close attention; they are Canadian politics, economics, education, environment, euthanasia, family, justice and freedom, multiculturalism, pre-born human rights, and sexuality.

ARPA's work on some topics is widely supported, while some other activities are being criticized even by the Canadian Reformed people. A member of a Canadian Reformed church member stated, for instance, that ARPA is doing good work on religious freedom, but he deeply disagrees on ARPA's stance on the issues related to science, such as climate change (A14). Although ARPA's *Climate Change policy report for Parliamentarians* (2015) does not include a reference to the Cornwall Alliance, the respondent points out that there are a few posts on ARPA's website that call to sign the declaration *Protect the Poor: Ten Reasons to Oppose Harmful Climate Change Policies* issued by the Cornwall Alliance (ARPA Canada, 2014*c*). The main call of this declaration is "to abandon fruitless and harmful policies to control global temperature and instead adopt policies that simultaneously reflect responsible environmental stewardship, make energy

and all its benefits more affordable, and so free the poor to rise out of poverty" (cited in ARPA, 2014*c*, para. 15). While ARPA does not deny climate change, it insists that the priority should be given to another issue, namely, that of global poverty and the development of "solutions to priorities such as health care, housing, energy, clean water, and education" (ARPA Canada, 2015, p. 5). ARPA's policy report (2015) underlines that "[r]eductions in energy production or increases in the cost of energy production will hinder medical, economic and social progress for the world's poorer nations. Abundant, reliable, affordable energy – at scale, instantly on demand, and unintermittent – is essential to lifting the poor out of poverty" (p. 5). ARPA concludes that environmental policy should be focused "on stewardship of Canada's land, air and waters, not changing the climate" (p. 5). While there are scripture-citing environmentalist evangelicals, ARPA's position partially coincides with those who are suspicious or deny global warming and climate change. While, according to a Pew Research Center survey (2016), about three-quarters of U.S. adults (74%) believe that "the country should do whatever it takes to protect the environment" (Anderson, 2017), only 28% among white evangelical Protestants in the USA say that "the Earth is warming primarily due to human activity, 33% say the Earth's warming is mostly due to natural patterns, and 37% say there is no solid evidence that climate change is occurring" (Pew Research Center, 2015, para. 7). A review of scholarly literature shows that, with such exceptions as Francis Schaeffer's book *Pollution and the Death of Man* (1970), evangelicals have usually been late to address environmental issues or "were absent from most of the recent debates about environmental law" (Nagle, 2008, p. 61). In 2006, Evangelical Climate Initiative (ECI) was created and stated that "Christian moral convictions demand our response to the climate change problem" (ECI, n.d., supra note 3). To conclude, since this thesis was not designed to analyze how the Canadian Reformed Churches or the community approach climate change and no specific questions related

to this topic were asked during the interview, we cannot provide a summary of the Canadian Reformed community's and their schools' overall vision of or opinion about environmental issues.

8.2.2. Canadian Reformed Pro-life Activism

ARPA has developed a number of grassroots activities, which they recommend the local associations to carry out. ARPA defines three main target groups: politicians, Reformed people and the public. In order to approach the first group, ARPA encourages people to reach out to their MPs and senators by calling them or sending letters, or hosting them for "a coffee social … in your home" while inviting also "all members of your congregation". Sending them flowers or baking during campaigns are other ways for starting a conversation with politicians (ARPA, 2018*a*, p. 3). For example, the booklet *Speak Up* suggests to "deliver flowers 10 times, then at the end include your information and that the 10 gifts each represent 10,000 babies aborted in Canada each year" (p. 3). Furthermore, as already mentioned in chapter 5, ARPA calls on school teachers to encourage their students to write short essays on a political issue and submit them to government representatives (p. 3).

To engage Reformed people in political life, ARPA urges its members to "create and distribute a non-partisan election issues awareness sheet, letting others know where candidates stand on important issues", "invite a politician to speak to your church, school or study group", "encourage ARPA student clubs to present to the broader student body or to host speakers", "volunteer with palliative care facilities, hospices and pregnancy care centres", and "hold an open house event at a hospice or palliative care facility so that people better understand the positive benefits of palliative care" (p. 4).

Lastly, a variety of strategies have been developed in order to reach out to the general public. The Reformed communities, including politically motivated school students, have created

colourful large-scale installations along highways to remind travelers of the number of abortions carried out in Canada. The booklet recommends installing "a statistically representative hay bale and cross display, with each cross representing 100 or 1000 abortions a year" (p. 5). It has been put into practice several times. To provide a few examples, in 2016, the Rehoboth ARPA School Club's members planted "10,000 pink and blue coloured flags into the ground" along Highway 5, and each flag represented "10 babies aborted each year in Canada" (ARPA, 2016*d*, para. 1). During ARPA's God & Government conference 2016, participants laid 6890 hand-crafted baby booties on the Parliament Hill lawn (ARPA, 2016*b*, para. 2). Each pair "represented approximately 15 children killed annually through abortion in Canada" (ARPA, 2016*c*, para. 6) and was made by "grassroots supporters from coast to coast" (para. 1). Also, "[e]ach Member of Parliament received a custom package with 21 pairs of baby booties (all of which had to be individually packed), along with a note, which explained the initiative, and a request to donate them to their local pregnancy care centre or hospital" (para. 7).

Many Canadian Reformed churches participate in their local March for Life every year, which raises various topics relating to abortion. For example, the 2013 National March for Life in Ottawa urged the government "to end female gendercide, the practice of aborting pre-born girls simply because they are female" (Baklinski, 2013, para. 1). While the natural "sex ratio at birth" is 105-110 males for every 100 females (World Health Organization, 2019, p. 4), some areas in Canada exceed the 105-threshold, meaning that the population there tends to reduce the number of girls born because of sex-selective abortion (Wanigaratne et al., 2018, p. 1044). Meanwhile, the majority of the Canadian population "have long regarded sex-selective abortion as odious" (Vogel, 2012, E164), and a 1993 survey conducted by a Royal Commission on New Reproductive Technologies indicated that 92% were against this practice (cited in Vogel, 2012, E164). While

some favour government intervention and legislation, others, like *Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada*, assert that there should be a focus on "education and raising the status of girls and women over the long-term" in certain cultures, and "[s]olutions must be community-led, not dictated by law" (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2020, p. 2). ARPA's pro-life initiative, the *We Need a Law* campaign, calls for an amendment to the Criminal Code, which would prohibit sex-selective abortion. For them, the change of attitude towards reaching gender equity should not be expected from the inside of certain communities; it should emerge in the culture of the whole society. The *We Need a Law* initiative states that Canada has not modeled to, for example, Canadian-born Asian women "a valuing of women. Pornography is rampant, women continue to be portrayed as sex objects for men in movies, shows and advertising, and women continue to work for less pay than men" (We need a law, 2018, para. 7). Furthermore, the Assisted Human Reproduction Act (2004) "banned the sex selection of implanted embryos among women undergoing in vitro fertilization" (Vogel, 2012, E164), there is no law that "protect[s] the resultant fetus from subsequent termination on the basis of gender" (Vogel, 2012, E164).

The *We Need a Law* initiative was launched in 2012 and aims to "mobilize Canadians and persuade our political leaders to pass laws that protect children before birth" (We Need a Law, n.d.*a*, para. 1). There are three central campaigns today. One mentioned in the previous paragraph is "Defend Girls". The other two are: "A Woman's Right to Have Her Child" and "End Late-Term Abortion". The latter campaign originally created some controversy in the Reformed community, and, yet, is not supported by some Canadian Reformed Christians. Its main goal is to put Canada in "line with international counterparts", other secular pluralist nations, such as France, Germany, Spain, "when it comes to protecting pre-born human rights" and prohibit abortion after 13 weeks' gestation[xv] (We Need a Law, n.d.*b*, para. 6), "with an exception for cases of extreme trauma or

where life is endangered" (Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2019, p. 4). While some Canadian Reformed Christians cannot agree with this pragmatic approach, others support ARPA's statement that "saving some is better than saving none" (A46). *We Need a Law* refers to the statistical data confirming that "14.8% of hospital abortions are done after 12 weeks" (CIHI 2017, cited in Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada, 2019, p. 4) but avoids mentioning that some of those abortions were done for medical reasons.

Active euthanasia[xvi] is another topic of concern for ARPA's members. It has received wide coverage and multiple discussions by ARPA in recent years. Based on its view of the importance of every human life, ARPA argues for more government investment into palliative care. The booklet *Speak Up* recommends to "find a nurse or doctor in your church, or a person with a disability, who can speak to their personal experience on the palliative care issue" (ARPA Canada, 2018*a*, p. 3). A variety of topics related to euthanasia has been raised by ARPA, including "the rights of medical professionals to refuse" to perform euthanasia (ARPA Canada, 2017*a*, para. 8); and that euthanasia might be a "deadlier pandemic in more way" than Covid-19 (Sikkema, 2020). As the analysis of interviews shows, abortion still seems to be more discussed in Canadian Reformed schools than euthanasia.

8.2.3. ARPA defends parental rights

ARPA Canada intends to represent a Christian voice in the public domain and has been involved in various court processes. In some of them, ARPA has supported other Christian groups, for example, in the case of Loyola Catholic High School and that of Trinity Western University. ARPA Canada prefers working with Christians rather than interfaith groups because, for them, "it becomes almost impossible to intervene … only if you share a very general principle" (A45). Additionally, ARPA would not be able to refer to Scripture if working with other, non-Christian

groups. While engaging in court cases, ARPA aims to raise its profile, but also endeavours to control the legal argument and use Scripture to build a legal argument (A45).

ARPA intervened in several court processes, appealed to politicians, the media and the public in order to defend Reformed communities. For example, as discussed in chapter 7, ARPA was confronting Bill 24, An Act to Support Gay Straight Alliances, in Alberta (2017). ARPA made several presentations in the House of Commons, including on "the issue of online hatred" (Schutten, 2019, in ARPA Canada, 2019*a*) and on "multicultural challenges" in the Canadian Parliament (Van Dam, 2012). The best-known court case that ARPA joined, in order to make the coalition larger as well as to present their theological views on education and roles of parents (A45), was *Loyola High School v. Quebec* (2015). In 2008, Loyola, a private Catholic high school in Montreal, tried to receive an exemption from the new secular course *Ethics and Religious Culture* (ERC)[xvii] introduced as mandatory for both public and private schools in Quebec. In March 2015, in a decision of the Supreme Court of Canada, the ERC Program was determined to be "incompatible with Catholic education", and it was proclaimed that "Loyola would violate the fundamental and mandatory laws of the Catholic Church that govern it by teaching the ERC subject with the program established by the Minister" (Loyola high school v. Quebec, 2015, para. 144). The Loyola school was allowed "to teach the ERC Program without sacrificing [its] own religious perspectives" (para. 148). Otherwise, there would be an interference with "the freedom of religion guaranteed to Loyola" (para. 289). ARPA participated in this Supreme Court process. On behalf of the Association of Christian Educators and Schools Canada (ACES Canada[xviii]), ARPA Canada represented "the interests of independent Christian education and to bring that perspective forcefully to the Court" (ARPA Canada, 2014*a*, para. 2). ARPA filed a Notice of Motion in the Loyola School appeal to the Supreme Court of Canada on behalf of ACES Canada. This document,

created by lawyers Ian C. Moes and André Schutten, referred to Kuyper's ideas about the paramount role of parents in the education of their children and the *Sphere Sovereignty* concept: "In all areas of education, including religion, ethics and sexuality, parents are the primary decision-makers in, and directors of, their child's education. These rulings recognize the distinct roles and functions of the institutions of the family and the State" (ARPA Canada, 2014*a*, para. 24). Because of the Kuyperian principle of the division of roles between various domains, the entire cost of this Supreme Court intervention was covered by ARPA Canada. From its point of view, "schools should be using their resources for teaching the next generation", and the role of ARPA is "to assist by doing the legal and political work" (ARPA Canada, 2013, para. 4). The last statement also reflects the realization of the *sphere sovereignty* principle, which argues that each social institution has its own unique task.

My analysis of mass media representation of Reformed communities in Canada (Alekseevskaia, 2017) showed that there are several articles published in the *Ottawa Citizen* and the *National Post* which are written by ARPA Ottawa Director André Schutten in defense of faith-based schools. He concurs with those theorists who consider that the state (Quebec, in the Loyola case) has its own religion, which is secular humanism and is being promoted in opposition to Christianity or other religious traditions. In fact, based on examples of various court cases and referring to Canadian legislation, André Schutten has already published a number of articles written in an understandable language for a mass readership in mainstream newspapers. His pieces cover a diversity of topics, including: disdain for religious freedom and "Canada's current trend toward intolerance of the Christian faith" (Schutten, 2015*b*, p. 5); the censorship faced by "a religiously motivated social conservative" who expresses his position in the public space (Schutten, 2013, p. 12); the limited attention drawn to pre-born children in current legal cases

(Schutten & Schouten, 2014, p. 10). However, in contrast to the articles on legislative issues, which are characterized by coherence and validity, Schutten's publications on religious schools in mainstream media sometimes need more compelling arguments. He raises the topic of parental role in the education of their children (2014), but he does not present any proof to support his statements. In addition, it seems, there is a shortage of a vivid representation of the Reformed communities' standpoint in his articles (for instance, in the form of interviews). In contrast, in the pieces written for the *Clarion*, Schutten refers to the Bible and theological works to confirm parents' rights and obligations in educating their children. Referring to the work of Herman Bavinck, Schutten makes a historical allusion to the Netherlands in the 19th century. He compares the introduction of the Ethics and Religious Culture program (ERC) in Quebec with "the 1876 Law Concerning Higher Education, which effectively turned university theology faculties into departments of religious studies" (Schutten, 2015*a*, p. 245). For Schutten, the ERC, not unlike the 1876 law, has changed "the study of religion into a 'neutral', phenomenological study rather than a confessional one" (p. 245). Many authors of other Reformed traditions usually use more than just theological arguments while discussing religious schools. They also draw on secular points, which, it could be argued, make publications more reliable and accessible to a secular readership. Thus, in *Christian Renewal*, Michael Wagner states that "the Bible gives parents the ultimate responsibility for the education of their children", but also shows that there is a secular parental rights theory (2015, p. 24). He refers to "On Educating Children: A Parentalist Manifesto" written by University of Chicago Professor Stephen Gilles (1996). Gilles has introduced a concept "parentalism", which "is clearly compatible with Christian assumptions" (p. 26), to indicate that "parents should always have the right to make educational decisions for their children, unless there is some glaring reason why they shouldn't (such as physical abuse)" (p. 24). Therefore, although

ARPA's representatives publish compelling articles in mainstream media, sometimes these texts lack a narrative storytelling and diversity of voices. In addition, these publications usually present a Christian perspective on an issue, neglecting strong secular points that would benefit the argument, for example, in favour of parental rights.

8.3. Political ideas in Canadian Reformed schools

The interviews show that high schools "encourage political engagement" while elementary schools' students are mildly encouraged to be aware of current events (A48). A teacher interviewed said that her students of Civics, grade 6, would bring newspaper articles, "put them on the wall and give a little talk about it" (A48). She mentioned that students were interested in the publications talking about children who were poisoned in Syria, maybe because "many parents talked about it at home. They came to school, and we prayed... Although they are nine years old, they are aware of the blessings we have" (A48). Children might also be aware of the situation in Syria because today "in many congregations, families are coming from Syria. They talk about it — why they needed to flee: …there is no freedom, a lot of persecution. Some other congregations … [sponsor] refugees. Various congregations adopted refugee families" (A48). Another topic that is being touched on by elementary school children is abortion: "even children … [who are] eleven years old, [know] about abortion... from newspapers, students come with these stories. A lot of families adopted children. The issue is out there" (A48). While "abortion" is explained to kids in very broad terms, the main message that is being delivered by any Canadian Reformed educational institution, including kindergarten, is that some babies are not safe and "are being killed in Mommy's body" (A1).

Students are encouraged to learn about world events. As mentioned in chapter 5, in *Religious Studies* class, students are asked to bring newspapers and give critical comments about

events covered in mass media in order to be "aware of what's going on in society" (A17) and to be skilled in providing a Christian perspective on the events (A16).

However, it is expected that, as in case of sex education, it is usually parents who would discuss with a child specific details: which political party they vote for and why; Canadian Reformed schools or school political clubs or ARPA Canada itself have a non-partisan approach. Outside home, there are discussions on the political issues of interest and the strategies to achieve them by approaching various political parties by emphasizing that allies can be in any party; and it is up to an individual decide which party to vote for.

Political or historical changes may motivate a faith-based school to adjust its policy or stance. For example, if during the first two decades of Islamic schools' presence in Canada they were "relatively insular and inward focused", after 9/11 and "the Ontario Provincial Elections of 2007, where opposing sentiments toward religious schooling were revived, some Islamic schools have responded with a more forthright emphasis on civic participation" (Memon, 2010, p. 110). As a result, such topics as "pluralism, multiculturalism, integration, civic and global responsibility, religious extremism, indoctrination, race, class, and gender-based inequities, … inter- and intra-religious differences" are being raised in some Islamic schools today (pp. 110-111). In the case of Dutch Reformed Canadians, we observe a behaviour typical of other immigrant groups whose second and following generations usually demonstrate more interest in political engagement. One of the reasons for this is the preoccupation of the first generations with finding employment, achieving the economic survival of the family in a new country, and negotiating the complex process of acculturation, including overcoming language barriers.

A graduate of the late 1970s and a current teacher says that today students are much more politically engaged, and there is definitely a push by schools to be more politically involved (A18).

For example, students are accustomed to write a greeting card or a letter to their MP during English class or Religious Studies or Bible Studies. It seems that this habit to know MPs and regularly communicate with them is now fostered and promoted by schools. This approach is highly visible at ARPA's conferences, including the *God and Government* and *Youth* conferences, where a mandatory part of the program is a meeting with MPs. Hence, although a teacher admits that it is often difficult "to switch from what you know to what you should do" (A29), some students have started joining March for Life.

Some interviewees mentioned that it could be hard for Canadian Reformed schools to remain unpoliticized when talking about political parties and such sensitive topics as euthanasia or abortion on which the community has a solid and uncompromising stance. One recent graduate points out that when she was learning about politics in a Canadian Reformed school, "it was always under the umbrella that this is what each political party means, but you gonna be Conservative" (A16). While other participants insist that schools never call students to become partisans of one political party, "certain parties were more endorsed" (A37), and a statement about which political views Canadian Reformed people would most align themselves with was openly expressed (A16). This approach might limit students' understanding of other political parties and prevent some of them from making own decisions for whom to vote later while eligible. A recent graduate also comments that they would discuss in class, when the elections were coming, whether each candidate would be a good prime-minister and how the candidate's views "coincide with our belief system" (A37).

As mentioned in chapter 6, ARPA publish materials oriented for high school students that are available online: "The collection of over 70 documents on a dozen different issues is freely available to Christian high school teachers and home schoolers" (ARPA Canada, 2018*a*, p. 6). One

respondent confirms that ARPA's articles are being used in senior grades in Canadian Reformed schools (A1). Teachers receive a newsletter from ARPA once or twice per week; some of those materials are for their personal knowledge and others are for the purpose of being incorporated in class (A1).

Some Reformed high schools in Ontario, Alberta, British Columbia and Manitoba have political clubs, and not all of them title themselves ARPA clubs. As an ARPA representative explained during an interview, there are between 10 and 13 political clubs in Reformed schools across the country, 4 or 5 being in Ontario (A46). As to Canadian Reformed high schools in Ontario, Guido de Brès (Hamilton) has one political club while Emmanuel Christian High School (Fergus) does not. The statistics is not precise because high schools' political clubs are grassroots, not driven by ARPA; students create and run these clubs (A46). It is "usually a group of students who are interested in being involved in social or political action … [and] put a club together", and in case they need some assistance, a local ARPA helps them with that (A46). An ARPA representative admits that when being organized, political clubs are much larger (around twenty students), they later become smaller (five to six students). The respondent does not know exactly the reasons for the decline in participation in these clubs over time, but he mentions a few possible reasons. First, it is an extracurricular activity, so students must meet after school hours or during lunch. Second, some children come from farmers' families, and they need to do seasonal work in the field. ARPA's representative admits that one of the challenges of school political clubs is to get other people involved; it might be difficult for a variety of reasons: some schools do not have a teacher who would be interested in guiding a political club; some churches oppose the pragmatic ways ARPA approaches certain life issues (A46). ARPA's representative asserts that it is those children who have had exposure to the outside world are more interested in being involved in

school political clubs because they "have seen the struggles", for example, among city sports league peers "who had various issues" (A46).

High school clubs vary in their goals. Some are mainly pro-life groups, others are "specifically community action groups" (A46). There is therefore a broad spectrum of activities undertaken by school political clubs. They include, but not limited to, "doing flag displays, putting up billboards, doing community events, … garbage cleaning … [involvement in] palliative care", etc. (A46). Pro-life activism is often the core of high school political clubs. That is why, a respondent says, it is not surprising that due to their focus on issues closely related to women, political clubs are comprised mostly of female students (70%), and girls are usually the leaders in these clubs (A46). Many members of political clubs come to Ottawa to participate in March for Life, as well as the *God and Government Youth* conferences organized by ARPA. Schools are also involved in creating and folding billboards and flags to remind the public about the level of abortions, including sex-selection abortions performed in Canada.

ARPA's member states that students in Reformed political clubs have already "established the basis for where they are coming from" and therefore during the club discussions they are not trying "to come to a common agreement or have a philosophical discussion" (A46). They mainly try to reach out to and engage with the community. So, they have more of "a political discussion with the community than among themselves" (A46). At the same time, it does not mean that all members of Reformed schools' political clubs have the same opinions on all issues, or that political opinions of Canadian Reformed school students coincide. ARPA insists that current education differs drastically from the one that existed twenty years ago. As already discussed in chapter 5, development of critical thinking skills is considered to be significant in current Canadian Reformed schools. Thus, an ARPA member says that they try to encourage certain perspectives through

persuasion rather than coercion. The latter technique, which was common a few decades ago, would try to change students' opinions "by denigrating the idea or by suggesting that it's just doctrinally faulty" (A45). Today, there is more engagement with students and encouragement to challenge ideas (A45). ARPA's intern Daniel Zekveld concludes:

> While a career in politics is only one of the many ways in which Christians serve God, every Christian should be involved in politics where they can. Christians who know about the issues of the day and how to discuss them with neighbours and co-workers can have more impact than they think and can be a great encouragement to fellow Christians who do choose this as a career. (2018, para. 10)

To summarize, the analysis of interviews and ARPA's activity shows that Canadian Reformed students' awareness of various socio-political issues in Canada and in the broader world is becoming more nuanced. The reason for this is more exposure of current students to the world and a more pragmatic approach within the community overall. Nevertheless, the topics of abortion and euthanasia are still central for Canadian Reformed members engaged in the political realm, and political clubs in Canadian Reformed schools mainly focus on pro-life activism. Moreover, there is a lack of discussion with people who have worldviews drastically different from Canadian Reformed people in both school political clubs and in-class studies. This might result in students being less prepared to understand what they stand for and why and being definite that the political opinion they have is their own choice. An engagement of Reformed students, including female students, in school political clubs and ARPA's youth conferences shows that the Canadian Reformed community is shifting from inward-looking towards being more outward-looking, and the current generation of students has a growing interest in engaging in and changing the world's culture and society.

9. Conclusion

The goal of this research was to contribute to the sociological knowledge of the impact of Canadian religious schools created by immigrant-origin communities on their students and graduates. Given philosophical, sociological as well as political debates about the advantages and shortcomings of religious education institutions run by immigrant ethno-religious communities, this research on the third and fourth generations of Dutch Reformed immigrants is as relevant and topical as ever.

Furthermore, there is no current scholarly literature on how Christian schools organized by Dutch Calvinists prepare their graduates for living in a diverse and pluralistic Canadian society or on these graduates' social and political engagement. Most studies of Dutch Reformed schools are devoted to those established by members of the Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA), and there is little scholarship on the schools organized by post-war Dutch Reformed immigrants from other Churches, including Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC).

Religious schooling has been growing in Canada, and along with it, growing concern about the impact of these schools on their graduates' integration into Canadian society, especially if they are first-generation immigrants. My research was therefore informed by the main issues raised in studies related to the educational practices of immigrant communities. I formulated the goal of my case study to examine how Canadian Reformed schools prepare their graduates for living in a diverse society. Despite the fact that a pluralist framework "for society building remains highly controversial" (Winter, 2011, p. 35), it "encourages the expression of group cultures and identities within society" (p. 35) and public space (p. 197). In the Canadian post-secular landscape, "the multiculturalization of national identity" (Winter, 2011, p. 196) has led to the adoption of the policies as well as public recognition of minorities' rights to express their cultural (meaning

linguistic or religious, etc.) identities in the public space. One of the reasons for controversies around the concept of religious pluralism, as mentioned in chapter 2, is a wide diversity of definitions and understandings of pluralism, and "the public acceptability of religions takes on different meanings in different societies" (Beckford, 2003, p. 101). Moreover, pluralism is being opposed because some religions "allegedly discriminate against, and oppress, women" (p. 101), as well as because pluralist approaches are seen as essentializing ethnic and religious categories that should be better conceptualized as dynamic and flexible.

In the Canadian context, *reasonable* pluralism promoted by John Rawls in his work on political liberalism (1993) seems to oppose "polyethnic rights" (Kymlicka, 1995) that grant exemptions and accommodations to certain communities. Rawls promotes an idea of "a fair system of cooperation over time" (Rawls, 2001, p. 6), despite a variety of exclusive religious beliefs present in the society. He also develops a concept of overlapping consensus so that over time citizens accept a political conception of justice "as fully compatible with their own religious, philosophical, and moral commitments, especially as they come to appreciate what such a conception achieves" (Friedline, 2019, p. 4). The empirical results of this thesis show that, as Nicholas Wolterstorff argued, certain religious communities cannot separate their religious convictions from their political views neither in private nor in public life because "it is a matter of religious conviction that they ought to strive for a religiously integrated existence" (Wolterstorff, 1997*a*, p. 116).

This thesis enhances theoretical thinking about pluralist society building. This research extends the understanding of Will Kymlicka and Jürgen Habermas who promoted cultural pluralism and openly defended the legitimacy and credibility of religious groups to take actions in social and political spheres that align with their religious convictions. Habermas mentions the

existential force of religious beliefs and argues that the "state cannot emcumber its citizens, whom it guarantees freedom of religious expression, with duties that are incompatible with pursuing a devout life – it cannot expect something impossible of them" (2006, p. 7), unless it violates human dignity. Some researchers emphasize that on the legal level, Canada promotes an equal religious citizenship and a positive religious pluralism (Ryder, 2008) and therefore encourages the "rights to positive accommodation of religious practices that sound so fine in the law books are, of course, not always easily achieved on the ground" (Ryder, p. 89). The existence of religious schooling is a remarkable example of this.

Some sociologists and educators express serious concerns regarding negative consequences of these schools promoting one particular theological position which might lead to creating an insular, ethno-religious "bubble" effect and undermine the teaching of the common set of democratic values (Gutmann, 1999). Others think that religious schooling might help immigrants address the challenges they face in the new country as well as show "the value of religious tolerance in this context where some religious communities cannot be accommodated in the secular system dissenting opinion" (Justice L'Heureux-Dubé, cited in Adler v. Ontario, [1996] 3 S.C.R. 609 at para.106). This research strongly aligns with Charles Taylor's and Will Kymlicka's vision of multiculturalism and pluralism in Canada and their emphasis on the recognition-based pluralism. It means that difference-blindness of the state or the society is not possible or not correct: the so-called neutrality would marginalize the disempowered and amplify or reproduce inequality. That is why there is a need for the government to intervene in order to provide ethnic, religious, cultural minorities with accommodation to ensure their equity in the society. As discussed in chapter two, the literature review, the principle of religious accommodation can be questioned, for example, in the work of Lori Beaman, because accommodation often leads to the

dominant-dominated culture and power relations. The question about how various ethno-religious groups can be equitably respected in the public square is complex. As Elke Winter recently noted, even the proponents of structural pluralism (Richard Schermerhorn, 1970, as an example), do not define how much institutional variety ethnic minorities should have. Hence, it is not surprising that the debates about independent immigrant-origin ethno-religious schools are still wide-ranging.

The findings of this study coincide with the position of those pluralist theorists who believe that religious identity retention can go along with high economic and social standing. To be fair, the separateness Dutch Reformed have experienced in Canadian society is a separateness by choice. Also, while already in the first generation, the Dutch Reformed immigrants had the firm intention to assimilate into Canadian society (this is the reason for an early adoption of all services in English language), they were also favoured and well accepted by both the Canadian government and the society in general. Being white Western Europeans meant that this community has had some privileges and advantages and did not face systemic discrimination; hence, these were some of the reasons their socio-economic integration and the development of their feeling of belonging to Canada occurred rapidly and smoothly.

At the same time, Canadian Reformed Christians' core religious beliefs may and do sometimes clash with certain rights, including within the legal rights discourse on abortion, euthanasia, and same-sex marriage. The empirical findings of this case study demonstrate that the potential conflict between minorities' cultural or religious values and the liberal vision of equal dignity raised by Charles Taylor is likely to continue being present given the long-lasting religious convictions that are voiced in the public square. Moreover, a variety of court cases (some are mentioned in previous chapters) explicitly show a lack of consistency and coherency in the legal responses when religious freedom clashes with other human rights. Strong civic engagement of

the studied religious group since its second/third immigrant generation (which correlates with the start of political engagement of other religious groups) can allow us to envision that other, more recent immigrant groups, might join the public square in the close future to defend their religious freedom rights too. Having aimed to investigate a particular institution of a particular community, I considered that the best method to complete this study would be a qualitative case study that allows the researcher to collect and analyze multiple perspectives, which current or former members of the community have about their schools, and various experiences of studying or teaching there. That is why the main method of this study was semi-structured interviewing, and where it was possible, the results were triangulated with data collected through content analysis.

What made me choose this particular Christian school system is that Canadian Reformed schools established and run by Canadian Reformed Church members since the 1950-60s (depending on the province) have not become interdenominational unlike many other Christian schools established by ethnic immigrant communities, including by Christian Reformed Church in North America (CRCNA)'s members. Although in absolute numbers, the studied schools represent a tiny percentage of all existing private religious schools in Canada, almost 95% of Canadian Reformed community's children have gone through this school system, and it makes my findings significant for a better understanding of this ethno-religious long-standing immigrant community. Believing in the triangle (church – parents – school), Canadian Reformed individuals underline the importance of having their own separate school system for retaining and maintaining Calvinist identity. While from an academic perspective, the school program is designed to meet the Ontario Ministry of Education Curriculum Guidelines, the goal of maintaining the Canadian Reformed independent schools is in assisting parents in equipping their children so that the latter can "employ their talents in the service of God and His kingdom"; hence, the entire curriculum is

to "be taught in obedience to the Holy Scriptures as confessed in the Three Forms of Unity" (the First International Conference of Reformed Education, ICRE, 2004; cited in Sikkema, 2012, p. 63).The results are based on the analysis of sixty-four interviews with current or former members of the community who have been working in or studying at Canadian Reformed schools or who has some expertise on the community (CanRC as well as CRCNA pastors, etc.). The interview guide that I developed intended to steer respondents in the direction of freely discussing their experiences and to encourage them to assess those experiences critically, but it did not prescribe to discuss a pre-determined and limited number of topics. Analyzing interview data allowed me to distinguish emergent themes and focus on a few major topics raised by respondents as well as on the issues which I considered to be important.

Topics covered in interviews include ethnic identity, multiculturalism, sex education, attitudes towards Muslim communities, and political engagement. As identified in the methodology chapter, I was able to make relevant adjustments to the interview guide during the field work. For example, I significantly reduced the number of theological questions. One of the reasons was that my expectation regarding theological knowledge of Canadian Reformed members based on my more general awareness of Dutch Calvinist theology and theological conflicts emerged in the Netherland during World War II. As my research proceeded, it became clear that, first, subsequent generations have little knowledge about those theological conflicts and have not studied them, except in the theological seminary; second, in comparison to previous decades current members of CanRC, including pastors, have been significantly influenced by North American Reformed theologians rather than stick solely to Dutch Reformed tradition.

Furthermore, because I found an opportunity to interview former members of CanRC who were engaged in Canadian Reformed schools, I gained a better understanding of which questions

or topics should be prioritized in the interview guide. For instance, many of the participants who had left the church, did so because of their gender identity and, therefore, feelings of exclusion they often experienced in the community. These testimonials were a reason to adjust the interview guide and extend probe questions on sex-ed. Eventually, I collected sufficient and important data to document the topics and issues related to comprehensive sexual education raised and touched on by current or former members of CanRC.

Several recurring themes emerged in these interviews, among them are the following: *"pluralism", "Islam", "Dutchness", "parental role", "schools' funding", "politics", "sex-ed", "pro-life", "critical thinking", "evolution".* Hence, the structure of the thesis reflects the major themes that occurred throughout the interview process. Chapter one contextualizes the research and shows its relevance, timeliness, and uniqueness. Chapter two provides an interdisciplinary literature review on religious schools in Canada and shapes the theoretical framework. Chapter three gives a detailed description of the methods and techniques used to gather and interpret data for this research, as well as discusses the place of the researcher and potential biases and limitations of the study. Chapter four explains how Dutch Calvinism is ingrained in post-war Dutch Reformed immigrant community and thus has become the defining characteristic of the community while at the same time playing as a factor affecting the preservation of ethnic identity of the community members. Chapter five documents how the ethno-religious background of the studied community has affected an interest in and decision of the first/second generation Dutch immigrants to establish their Christian schools in Canada. This chapter also provides a thorough analysis of approaches to education chosen by Canadian Reformed schools as well as examines Canadian Reformed teachers' and graduates' perspectives on these schools, their strong sides and the challenges their graduates face. Chapters six, seven and eight are mainly based on empirical data. Chapter six

analyzes how graduates of Canadian Reformed schools have been prepared for integrating into a pluralist society and compares perspectives on interfaith relations between two post-war Dutch Calvinist communities. Chapter seven focuses on the examination of the evolution of sexual education in Canadian Reformed schools and which topics are being currently covered there. Chapter eight is closely connected to the previous two chapters as it covers pro-life sentiments within the community and examines how Canadian Reformed students are informed about political issues, and the role of political clubs in the schools' life.

One of the limitations that might have partially affected the results of the research is the limited socio-demographic diversity of respondents. The majority have at least a bachelor's degree, and several of them have a graduate degree. This can be explained by the study's focus on schools that led to a high number of respondents being principals, teachers or instructors from the schools or the Teachers College. In terms of financial status, the Dutch Canadians are generally better integrated economically than all Canadian in total (Statistics Canada, 2016*a*). Another limitation is that I was not able to collect and analyze original quantitative data. Time and financial limitations did not allow me to collect this sort of data, but I do present a number of existing numerical findings from other studies. One of the respondents mentioned that it would benefit the school if regular surveys of recent graduates were conducted by the schools to address the challenges that students face but do not feel comfortable mentioning them. At the same time, while reliable quantitative data is essential, there is a need to regularly collect and analyze qualitative data on how graduates adjust to the broader social environment after graduation. This study, based on empirically grounded data, provides a detailed analysis of the challenges that graduates have experienced as well as which benefits of Canadian Reformed schools they identified as the most significant for their life after graduation.

Despite critical comments by some respondents about certain shortcomings of the Canadian Reformed school system, overall, it has educated students in a relatively productive fashion. My findings indicate that the Canadian Reformed school system has not become a barrier for immigrants' (and their offspring) successful social, economic and political integration. While the schools aimed at teaching predominantly Canadian Reformed students by only Canadian Reformed teachers (with a few exceptions), these institutions allowed Dutch Reformed post-World War II communities to preserve their religious and, as a result, ethnic identity. In comparison to some other immigrant communities, linguistic identity was not of significance for Dutch Calvinists in Canada who adopted services in English during the first generation of post-war immigrants because this was important in their understanding of successful social integration.

As I interviewed graduates and teachers studying or working in schools during a 40-year period (from the 1980s to the 2010s), it became clear that Canadian Reformed schools had changed and evolved significantly. Created to shelter their children in the 1950s in British Columbia and in the 1960s in Ontario, some Canadian Reformed schools still act as a "bubble", but many do expose their students to different points of view and controversial issues and topics. The level and extent of openness and interest in political engagement depends on whether the school is located in or students are from a rural or urban area, as many participants said. A key finding is that the Canadian Reformed community has slowly started looking outwards rather than inwards. As an example, more people are volunteering for the broader city community rather than only for the church community as it was usual in the previous decades. Interviews show that the younger generation is more open to dialogue with other religious communities, including Muslim Canadians, while some of the older generation experience strong anti-Muslim sentiments, and they are often reflected in the *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*. Overall, the majority of participants

emphasized the importance of fostering tolerance and compassion to others despite their religious views. Several participants also mentioned that the recognition of rights of religious groups in Canada allows CanRC members to pursue the work of their school system and preserve their identity. Furthermore, it seems that as more and more members of CanRC work outside their community (which was much less common before than today because of the professions younger generation chooses), they are more inclined to follow other than just Canadian Reformed sources of information and, therefore, be exposed to perspectives of at least other Christian groups. They also often express more interest and openness to learn about other religious traditions. As early as the 1990s Canadian Reformed high school students interviewed individuals of other religious traditions in order to compare that tradition with theirs. Today, it seems that there is even more openness to dialogue and knowing different traditions better, with respect and agreement that Canadian Reformed Christianity might have something in common with them. For example, many Canadian Reformed school students have planned visits to mosques. Also, it seems to be a significant change in how the Canadian Reformed community treats other Christians and how it becomes more prepared to have dialogue and learn from others. Moreover, current Canadian Reformed schools are planning to have meetings and discussions with Muslim and Jewish schools to defend the right for the existence of faith-based schools and advocate the interests of religious schooling together. Ensuring that students are 'critically' educated and aware of the nuances of other cultures is a vital aspect of a successful multicultural society.

One of the unexpected findings is that there was no former member of CanRC interviewed who would paint the school system or the community only negatively. Having left the Church because of various reasons, mainly its insularity and nonrecognition of same-sex relations, ex-members of CanRC favoured their time in Canadian Reformed school for strong community

sentiments, support of each other as well as strong academic training. Another important finding is that no respondent offered an uncritical assessment of the educational system or theological and cultural values of the community. It shows strongly developed critical thinking skills by members of the community. One of the main concerns regarding the schools expressed by both former and current members of CanRC is limited science studies and limitations of women's role in the church and the community which one of respondent names as "a waste of talents".

One of the most problematic aspects of Canadian Reformed schools seems to be a lack of a more inclusive and up-to-date sex education. A comprehensive school-based sex education, in particular a more detailed description of STIs and contraception, was recommended by a few respondents. While some members of the community are reluctant to provide children with a detailed explanation of certain topics related to sexual relations, in general the interview results demonstrate a growing understanding of the importance of relevant and current sex-ed by teachers and principals of Canadian Reformed elementary and high schools. The inclusion of conversations about gender identity and pornography during after-class time seems to be a transformative step for the community, which two decades ago aimed to shelter their children and censored television.

A few participants, all former members of the community, who self-identified as gay or transgender individuals, described the limited approach to gender identity topic in the church and schools. At the same time, the interviews conducted for this research show that some Canadian Reformed schools are evolving in sex education aspect as well. While officially the gender identity topic is not a top priority of CanRC, a Canadian Reformed high school in Hamilton started discussing transgender identity a few years ago with parents and students. Not having experts in this topic in the community, the school invited guest speakers from other Christian communities. Furthermore, which would be hard to imagine a few decades ago, some of current Canadian

Reformed churches in Ontario have openly homosexual members, who have presumably chosen sexual abstinence. However, there is still a gap and disparity between the planned curriculum and the lived curriculum. Moreover, the inner clashes in worldviews, approaches, openness within the Canadian Reformed community are along the urban/rural and generation lines are especially visible when talking about the sex ed implementation. Also, a more nuanced and compassionate discussion about students and members of the community who do not fit into the heterosexual cisgender box is needed. Even though the opportunity to draw generalizations and forecast the future of Canadian Reformed schools from this case study is limited, I could envision the further growth of disagreements within the community; and a higher diversity among Canadian Reformed schools might be selected as a temporary solution. The long-term survival and evolution of these schools will be shaped and affected by the broader developments in the Canadian Reformed communities, including but not limited to within the Federation of Canadian and American Reformed Churches (CanRC) in general and individual Canadian Reformed congregations. A further thorough research is needed to examine the possibility of the growing "pluriformity" of Canadian Reformed institutions on Canadian landscape.

As mentioned above, the majority of post-war Dutch immigrants were not interested in preserving their language and became anglophone very quickly, during the first generation of post-war immigrants. The Canadian Reformed community has developed a very strong feeling of belonging to Canada. While practicing evangelical Christianity, which departs significantly from mainline Christianity and secularism in Canada, members of the community named a few features of Canada they are proud of, including tolerance and politeness. The Canadian Reformed community is fully politically integrated and stands for legitimate ways of political participation. Disagreement with certain policies and approaches of leading political parties has encouraged

Canadian Reformed members to be actively involved in Canadian politics and socio-political movements. The Association for Reformed Political Action (ARPA) is the best example. A strong identification with Canada as a homeland was also one of the reasons why the Federation of Canadian Reformed Churches (CanRC) does not have reference to Dutch descent in its title. Moreover, since its start in 1950, CanRC has promoted the idea of an inclusive and ethnically diverse church. In practice, it has stayed ethnically homogenous. Schryer's study of Dutch Calvinist communities in Ontario (1998) shows that their religious tradition has been reinforcing ethnic identity, which my research confirms. Not only do outsiders still identify Canadian Reformed community and their schools as Dutch, but most members of the community also have Dutch family names, and some feel the insularity and "Dutchness" of the church.

However, Dutchness is better understood as symbolic ethnic identity, reflected in the food the community members prepare for holidays, the way houses of the first and second generations are decorated, the games that are played; Dutchness is still in the Dutch theology that is being taught but is being watered down by strong American evangelical influence. Some CanRC current members consider its strong Dutch affiliation as a serious drawback. This is one of the reasons for the numerical decrease of the community.

Another related problem that the youth have with the community is following the habits without critically assessing them. Thus, one of the main concerns of some current members is to formulate the goals of their schools. If they were created by the first-second generation in order to protect children from secular influences, the new generation sees this approach as a barrier to success in the society where secular education and working with people of different cultural and religious backgrounds is crucial. Interview data shows that since their establishment, Canadian Reformed schools tried to encourage their students to discuss various topical issues and develop

their own solutions to them. While the tendency to shelter children is still present, especially in rural areas, principals and teachers generally recognize the challenges students face in the 21st century and aim to introduce efficient teaching strategies and develop standardized curriculum plans across schools. Overall, Canadian Reformed schools' curriculum has changed significantly over the last two decades; the number and quality of extracurricular activities have been significantly improved. In particular, discussions of complex and important issues and topics have taken place, including bullying, transgender identity, and pornography, while these were largely ignored previously. At the same time, although many teachers are eager to answer students' questions on controversial topics, some respondents still faced hostility and bullying from their peers when they asked uncomfortable or unconventional questions in the classroom. Hence, despite strong academic training provided by Canadian Reformed schooling, the majority of respondents gave several recommendations for necessary improvement. The issues most often raised during interviews were the following: intercultural communication skills and better relations outside their religious community in order to integrate smoothly and successfully in a secular university and diverse job environment; a better understanding of their own religious tradition, in comparison to other religions, to escape cultural shock and a possibility of "split of identity" when they are exposed to the outside Canadian Reformed community world; and the high cost of the schools. Also, a few former members of CanRC noticed a lack of opportunities for women to apply their full potential in a career path as another major concern.

The Canadian Reformed community resembles many other immigrant communities where the first generation usually does not engage in politics because they are busy with settlement and securing employment. The Christian Heritage Party (CHP) was created by Dutch immigrants and their descendants in the late 1980s, the third and following generations are actively engaged in

politics. ARPA has united and gained significant lobbying power only since the mid-2000s. It has resulted in more active political clubs in Canadian Reformed schools. Canadian evangelicals do not pursue the ideal of civil religion (Bellah, 1967). They mainly consider Canada to be a 'post-Christian nation', and therefore, "engage the society as a cultural minority within a multicultural society" (Bean et al., 2008, p. 927). While multiculturalism "remains a strong part of national discourse" in Canada (Beaman, 2017, p. 4), this concept is of significant value for the community, which mentioned it as a positive achievement of the Canadian society and a policy that allows this community to preserve its religious institutes.

The Canadian Reformed community, as other evangelical groups, obviously considers inward spiritual life over outward engagements. Certain topics, including pro-life arguments (anti-abortion and anti-euthanasia), pro-traditional genders, are central; hence, political clubs in Canadian Reformed schools mainly focus on pro-life activism. Furthermore, the interviews conducted and content analysis of ARPA's posts show that the awareness of various socio-political issues in Canada and in the world has become more nuanced. One of the reasons for this and for the increasing number of political school clubs is a broader exposure of current students to the world and a more pragmatic approach of the community overall. Many community members have shifted from voting for the CHP towards the Conservative Party despite disagreements with many aspects of the latter just because the CHP is unlikely to win elections and therefore implement changes. Political compromise has become more acceptable in the community than it was before. At the same time, the interviews conducted for this research show that school political clubs and in-class studies lack debates with those whose worldviews are drastically different from the dominant Canadian Reformed perspective. The result is that Canadian Reformed schools' graduates are not that well prepared for explaining what they stand for politically and otherwise

and why. Sometimes, it seems to create doubts about whether the political opinions they have are of their own choosing.

One more limitation of my study is that it mainly covers Ontario, and all graduates or teachers interviewed have had experience of being part of Canadian Reformed schools in Ontario only. Time and resource constraints of this study as well as different educational legislation and regulations across provinces were the reasons for this limitation. A comparative analysis would give a more precise understanding of the Canadian Reformed community in Canada. Such factors as government funding, geographical location of these schools (rural vs. urban) and exposure to other immigrant groups and diversity would be important to consider comparatively. Hence, further research on this topic would enrich the scholarship.

This study fits in the context of the broader debate around the place of religious schools in Canada and beyond. As presented in chapter 2, historically, many ethno-/religious immigrant communities in Canada established faith-based schools in order to preserve their own religious and cultural value system, particularly just after their initial settlement. While some of them, such as Jewish schools, have existed for more than a century and have succeeded in preparing their graduates for active participation in the larger Canadian society, others, like German Catholic schools, that served to preserve a distinct ethnic identity, had a short-term effect. At the same time, Catholic schooling was one of the most significant and powerful tools for the cultural and linguistic identity retention of the francophone minority in Canada. As discussed earlier, while many intend to preserve religious beliefs, faith-based schools, including relatively new Muslim schools, display an openness to the idea of dialogue and pluralism. Despite a variety of approaches to controversial topics by the schools representing different parts of the religious spectrum, our overall conclusion is that the majority of them endeavour to form thoughtful and responsible citizens, at least in the

medium to long term. This question requires ongoing attention, particularly since new educational approaches blending various theological, social, and political perspectives emerge continually. Whether or not they all are able to tackle the complex task of preparing future members of pluralistic societies is still an open question. Thus, this study contributes to a better understanding of religious schooling in Canada and shows that religious schools usually evolve across generations and become more open towards the ideas of pluralism and diversity. This thesis can inform further studies on the implications of emerging new faith-based schools in Canada as fears and negative expectations of these schools are common. Furthermore, this research can enhance the assessments used for policy decisions because the empirical findings can better inform them about the challenges that graduates of religious schools face as well as the important role these schools play in bridging religious community and the broader society.

While some sociologists and scholars in education state that all education should be secular for the benefits of the child, this approach might lead certain ethno-religious communities to withdraw their kids from the schools and favour home-school education. Although the Canadian Reformed community is still somewhat ambiguous toward homeschooling, which only attracts a tiny minority across the country, it is often practiced by traditional religious families. Moreover, some Canadian Reformed respondents commented that if the government does not respect their right to run their own schools and to preserve their belief system, they are might have to leave the country. Hence, his case study shows that maintaining the religious minorities' right to have its own institutions, such as schools, allows these groups to: develop and maintain a feeling of belonging to Canada and a sense of recognition; motivates them to use legal ways of civic participation; and also helps avoid marginalization and segregation of these groups that could negatively affect children in the communities whose exposure to the world would become more

limited and less structured as it is currently done via legal educational institutions that follow the provincial curriculum through religious lens.

To summarize, this thesis is based on theories that analyze the retention of immigrants' ethno-religious identity (Bangura, 1994; Hall, 2006; Zine, 2008) as well as the role of religious schools in promoting immigrant-origin students' ethical autonomy (Gutmann, 1999; MacMullen, 2007). I also considered Raymond Breton's institutional completeness theory, which has certain limitations, and complemented it by Arend Lijphart's theory on the concept of pillarization. The latter is supported by neo-Calvinist theological thought and explains the need for post-war Dutch Reformed communities to set up a separate system of institutions, including schools. My theoretical framework also recognized the ongoing debate surrounding the effectiveness of faith-based schooling and their ability to educate their students as responsible and engaged citizens. I examined sociological literature (Hiemstra & Brink, 2006; Kymlicka, 2002; Sweet, 1996; Thiessen 2001; Zine, 2008), theological and philosophical literature (Bratt, 2013; Chaplin, 2008; Mouw, 2012) and studies on Reformed schooling (Oppewal, 1997; Prinsen, 2000; Sikkema, 2010; Teeuwsen, 2016). This thesis addresses a gap in our understanding of how Christian schools in Canada prepare their graduates for socio-political engagement and in scholarly knowledge about Canadian Reformed community specifically. One of the main theoretical conclusions of this research is that ethno-religious schooling is almost never static. It evolves and integrates aspect of mainstream culture and adjusts its curriculum and the topics addressed in class to the current situation in society. The case study of Canadian Reformed schools shows that while they have preserved some inwardness and strict policy on religious identity of both students and teachers, they have significantly evolved in terms of exposing students to cultural and religious diversity, and discussing complex issues, including gender identity and political conflicts. Recently, the

Canadian Reformed community has demonstrated social and political pluralism while standing differently on certain issues such as diversity of student population in religious school, the role of women in the community and voting for different parties from across the political spectrum. While Driedger's chart (2003) considered Dutch Reformed Canadians as those who integrate economically but socially and culturally stay inwards, today, the vast majority of Dutch Reformed respondents demonstrate economic prosperity and also have friendship or volunteer ties with people outside the Canadian Reformed community. The concept of pillarization that was ingrained in Dutch Reformed life in Canada just after their post-war immigration no longer seems to play an important role in guiding community members. This is one of the reasons why the Canadian Reformed community is in the process of reconsidering the role of their schools and reshaping them.

This study contributes to broader research on religious schooling and also provides the Canadian Reformed community with a more precise vision of its schools' impact. With this thesis, the Canadian Reformed community gains access to the opinions of its schools' graduates of recent decades, including those who had been reluctant to share their concerns before but contributed to the study knowing about the confidentiality of data. The majority of respondents expressed an interest in the final version of the research that could contribute to the schools' discussions on the changes that should be made to the curriculum to address issues that recent graduates faced. This thesis might also encourage Canadian Reformed schools to conduct their own regular studies, including focus groups and surveys.

Endnotes

[i] Public reasons are public, according to Rawls, if "all reasonable citizens can be expected to accept them as genuine reasons in overlapping consensus" (Whitfield 2017, 452).

[ii] "*Home schooling, home educating* or *home-based education* — a child participates in his or her education 'at home' rather than attending a public, private or other types of school. Parents or guardians assume the responsibility of educating their child and may develop their own curriculum guidelines". In Jacqueline Luffman, "A profile of home schooling in Canada", *Education Quarterly Review* 4, no.4 (1997): 31.

[iii] Herman Bavinck (1854–1921) is a Dutch Reformed theologian and author of the four-volume *Reformed Dogmatics*.

[iv] Albert Wolters is Professor Emeritus of Religion and Theology/Classical Languages at Redeemer University College.

[v] As Harinck (2001) explains, Dr. Klaas Schilder (1890–1952), a professor in dogma at the Theological School of the Reformed Churches in Kampen, was "deposed by the synod of Utrecht on August 3, 1944. The Liberation started later that month and the exodus of members and churches went on until about 1946. At that time, about 10 percent had left the Reformed Churches" (p. 27). Despite the fact that is was occupation time, "the synod feared the growing influence of Schilder and judged it dangerous not to stop him immediately" and organized the synod in 1944 (p. 27). According to Harinck, the synod deposed Schilder "not because of his teachings, but for being publicly unwilling to agree with the synod. The Liberation, seen from the synodical point of view, was a question of authority. From the standpoint of the Liberated people it was a matter of freedom of speech and freedom of opinion, hence the name Liberation" (p. 27). Regarding Schilder's disagreement with church teaching, "[t]he 1924 statement of the CRC synod at Kalamazoo on common grace—the so called three points—was the shibboleth of the CRC. Anyone who did not endorse these points was considered to be deviating from the reformed doctrine. By 1944 the three points had reached a more or less confessional status. For Kuyper and several professors of the Theological School at Grand Rapids, this statement had become so vital to the identity of the CRC that they turned a cold shoulder to Schilder on his 1939 visit, because he did not accept this statement unconditionally" (p. 28). "In August 1944 Schilder issued a declaration of liberation or return, containing accusations of tyranny and binding the consciences, and summoned the churches to secede" (p. 30). In North America, some CRC leaders feared the influence of Schilder (p. 27), and despite sympathy from some CRC members, "the general opinion in the CRC press [was that] there had been no need for a secession" (p. 32). Moreover in 1947 when Schilder was going to visit the USA, the CRC synodical committee announced that "the CRC did not sustain church correspondence with the Liberated Churches and therefore could not invite their ministers to occupy its pulpits. The CRC officially closed its doors to Schilder and the Liberated churches" (p. 32). Harinck concludes that "the Liberation has turned out to be a turning point in Dutch church history, because it initiated the demise of the world Abraham Kuyper had created and seriously weakened the reformed presence in Dutch society. Secondly, Prof. G. C. Berkouwer, who presided the synod of 1944 that deposed Schilder, in 1987 apologized in public, on the Dutch television, for this decision. It was utterly wrong to depose Schilder, he said. And in reaction to this most personal action of Berkouwer, the synod of the Reformed Churches in 1988 apologized for deposing Schilder and many others" (p. 32).

[vi] *Antithetical* refers to "the theme of the great enmity": "We also hear antithetical language in theories of Christian education: The kingdom of God stands antithetically opposed to the kingdom of darkness. Some take a cautious antithetical stance: We believe that the Christian life is a struggle against the spiritual forces of evil. Others adopt a bold, optimistic, antithetical stance: The task of the school is to usher in the new creation which belongs to Christ. We believe Christians must transform culture and reform all of society." (Numan, 2017). Source: https://defenceofthetruth.com/en/2017/06/goals-reformed-education-curriculum/#_edn1

[vii] The Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College applied for the accreditation for its Diploma of Education. "If accredited, this would enable graduates to receive a Bachelor of Education, as well as an Ontario Teaching Certificate. This degree would also be transferrable across Canada utilizing interprovincial agreements that are currently in place." Hence, "students who graduate will receive a Bachelor of Education (B.Ed.), a university-level degree as opposed to a diploma. Such students will then also be eligible for certification by the Ontario College of Teachers (OCT) and thus obtain an Ontario Teaching Certificate". Source: https://www.covenantteacherscollege.com/Accreditation.html

[viii] http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/privsch/

[ix] The word *apologetics* "comes from a Greek word (*apologeomai*) which means 'to make defense.'" (Dollar & Pinkerton, 2009, p. 13). "On the technical level apologetics is the defense and presentation of the truth of Christian faith on intellectual and moral grounds. As such, it is the work of theologians and philosophers. But on an everyday level apologetics is simply the matter of facing up to the questions of what we believe and why" (Brown, 1984, p. 3).

[x] C*ommon grace* and *general revelation* are related "because in common grace God uses the truths of general revelation to restrain sin" (Masselink, 1953, p. 69). In other words, "common grace is essential to our gaining knowledge through general revelation, for it is common grace that inhibits our sinful hostility toward God and our inclination to suppress his truth" (Sande, 2013). Since the Second World War, there have been rare references to common grace "in order to acknowledge elements of truth in non-Christian religions" (van Keulen, p. 240), and there has been a shift from "talking about" Islam to "speaking with" Muslims (p. 240).

[xi] While participants interchangeably used STDs (sexually transmitted diseases) and STIs (sexually transmitted infections) and there is still no consensus in the medical and public health community which term is preferred, I will mainly use STIs because it seems to have less negative stigma than STDs.

[xii] Gender identity refers to one's sense of oneself as male, female or something else (APA, 2011). When one's gender identity and biological sex are not congruent, the individual may identify along the transgender spectrum (APA, 2012; Gainor, 2000).

Transgender is an umbrella term that incorporates differences in gender identity wherein one's assigned biological sex doesn't match their felt identity. This umbrella term includes persons who do not feel they fit into a dichotomous sex structure through which they are identified as male or female. Individuals in this category may feel as if they are in the wrong gender, but this perception may or may not correlate with a desire for surgical or hormonal reassignment (Meier & Labuski, 2013). Source: American Psychological Association, n.d.

[xiii] Sexual orientation is a term used to describe your pattern of emotional, romantic or sexual attraction. Sexual orientation may include attraction to the same gender (homosexuality), a gender different than your own (heterosexuality), both men and women (bisexuality), all genders (pansexual), or neither (asexuality). Source: HealthLinkBC (n.d.).

[xiv] Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs) originated in the USA. It is "an in-school student club whose focus is on making the school a safe space for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ) students and their straight allies by raising awareness about, and hopefully reducing, school-based homophobia" (Callaghan, 2014, p. 28).

[xv] Since 1988, when "the Supreme Court of Canada struck down Canada's abortion law as unconstitutional", Canada is "one of a small number of countries without a law restricting abortion. Abortion was now treated like any other medical procedure and was governed by provincial and medical regulations" (National Abortion Federation, n.d., para. 4).

[xvi] "In June 2016, the Parliament of Canada passed federal legislation that allows eligible Canadian adults to request medical assistance in dying" (Government of Canada, n.d., *Medical assistance in dying*).

[xvii] In Quebec, where confessional school boards were replaced by linguistic ones (French and English) in 1998, parents of elementary and secondary school students had to choose between Moral Education, Catholic Religious and Moral Instruction, and Protestant Moral and Religious Education courses (Secular Schools in Québec. A Necessary Change in Institutional Culture, 2006, p. 1). Ten years later, this three-option system was replaced by the Ethics and Religion Culture (ERC) program. It teaches students about religious diversity in contemporary society and how "to position themselves … with respect to religions and new religious movements" (Consultation on the Draft Ethics and Religious Culture Program, 2007, p. 44).

[xviii] ACES Canada represented "a broad coalition of independent Christian schools from across the country" and "was made up of six different regional umbrella Christian school groups" (Schutten, cited in Konyndyk, 2015, para. 12). It "represented well over 300 schools, which means 70,000 students, 6,500 teachers, and a broader Christian community of a quarter of a million" (Konyndyk, 2015, para. 13).

References

Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. (2017). *Position Paper #39. Sex Education in Canada*. Retrieved from: http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/postionpapers/39-Sex-Education-in-Canada.pdf

Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. (2019). *Statistics - Abortion in Canada*. Retrieved from: http://www.arcc-cdac.ca/backrounders/statistics-abortion-in-canada.pdf

Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada. (2020). *Position Paper #24. Sex Selection Abortions*. Retrieved from: https://www.arcc-cdac.ca/postionpapers/24-Sex-Selection-Abortions.pdf

About Arnold (n.d.). *Arnold Viersen*. Retrieved from: https://www.arnoldviersen.ca/about

Abramson, H. (1980). Religion. In *Harvard Encyclopedia of American Ethnic Groups* (pp. 869-875). Cambridge, Mass.: Belknap Press.

Ackerman, B. (1980). *Social Justice in the Liberal State*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Acts of Synod 2016. (2016). Retrieved from: https://www.crcna.org/sites/default/files/2016_acts.pdf

Adams, M. (2007). *Unlikely Utopia: The Surprising Triumph of Canadian Pluralism*. Toronto: Viking.

Adkins, T., Layman, G.C., Campbell, D. E. and Green, J.C. (2013). Religious group cues and citizen policy attitudes in the United States. *Politics and Religion, 6*(2), 235-264.

Adler v. Ontario, [1996] 3 S.C.R. 609.

Agboola, S. (2012). The Dilemma of "Reasonable Accommodation" in Canada's Multiculturalism: State's Decision to Ban the Niquab at Citizenship Oath Ceremony. *e-cadernos CES*. Retrieved from: https://journals.openedition.org/eces/1031?lang=es#quotation

Ahmad, Q. (2013). A Canadian Islamic school in perspective: a critique of the 'moderate" and "strong" categories in faith-based schooling". In Graham P. McDonough, Nadeem A. Menon, and Avi I. Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 213-236). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Alcorn, R. (2010). Does the Birth Control Pill Cause Abortions?: A Short Condensation. *Eternal Perspective Ministries*. Retrieved from: https://www.epm.org/resources/2010/Feb/17/short-condensation-does-birth-control-pill-cause-a/

Aldiabat, K. M., and Le Navenec, C. (2011). Philosophical Roots of Classical Grounded Theory: Its Foundations in Symbolic Interactionism. *The Qualitative Report, 16(4)*, 1063-1080.

Alekseevskaia, M. (2017, Winter). Comparative analysis of Dutch Reformed communities' coverage in Canadian mainstream and Reformed mass media. *Regulating Religion*. Retrieved from: http://religionanddiversity.ca/en/projects-and-tools/projects/e-journal/winter-2017/

Allen, C. (1997). Spies like us: When sociologists deceive their subjects. *Lingua Franca, 7*(9), 30-39.

Allison D. J., Hasan S., and Van Pelt, D. (2016). *A Diverse Landscape: Independent Schools in Canada*. Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/a-diverse-landscape-independent-schools-in-canada.pdf

Allison, D. J., and Van Pelt, D. A. (2012). Canada. In C. Glenn and J. De Groof (Eds.), *Balancing freedom, autonomy and accountability in education* (pp. 79-146). Oisterwijk, HL: Wolf Legal Publishers.

Al-Solaylee, K. (2016). *Brown: What Being Brown in the World Today Means (to Everyone)*. HarperCollins Publishers.

American Psychological Association. (n.d.). Definitions Related to Sexual Orientation and Gender Diversity in APA Documents. Retrieved from: https://www.apa.org/pi/lgbt/resources/sexuality-definitions.pdf

Ammerman, N. T. (1987). *Bible Believers: Fundamentalists in the Modern World*. Rutgers University Press.

Anderson, A. B. and Frideres, J.S. (1981). *Ethnicity in Canada: theoretical perspectives*. Toronto: Butterworths.

Anderson, B. (1991). *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism*. London; New York: Verso.

Anderson, C. and Biesheuvel, N. (2015, October 1). Porn and Public Health. *Convivium*. Retrieved from: https://www.convivium.ca/articles/porn-and-public-health

Anderson, M. (2017). For Earth Day, here's how Americans view environmental issues. *Pew Research Centre*. Retrieved from: https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2017/04/20/for-earth-day-heres-how-americans-view-environmental-issues/

Ansari, S., Panhwar A.H., and Mahesar, G. A. (2016). Mixed Methods Research: Ontological, Epistemological and Methodological underpinnings *ARIEL An International Research Journal of Language and Literature, 27*, 133-141.

Arai, B. (2000). Reasons for Home Schooling in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Education 25*(3), 204-217.

Arfi, B. (2015). Habermas and the aporia of translating religion in democracy. *European Journal of Social Theory, 18*(4), 489-506.

ARPA Canada. (2008, January 10*). The Birth Control Pill and Abortion*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2008/01/10/the-birth-control-pill-and-abortion

ARPA Canada. (2009, January 7). *Medical Expert Says That Contraceptive Pill Is Causing Global Rise in Male Infertility*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2009/01/07/medical-expert-says-that-contraceptive-pill-is-causing-global-rise-in-male-infertility

ARPA Canada. (2010, June 1). *28 Days On The Pill: Entire Documentary Now Available Here*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2010/06/01/28-days-on-the-pill-entire-documentary-available-free-online

ARPA Canada. (2011*a*, April 28). *Universal daycare leaves Sweden's children less educated*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2011/04/28/universal-daycare-leaves-swedens-children-less-educated

ARPA Canada. (2011*b*, June 21). *Are Anti-Discrimination Policies Bullying Christian Schools and Families?* Retrieve from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2011/06/21/are-anti-discrimination-policies-bullying-christian-schools-and-families

ARPA Canada. (2011*c*, August 19). *Women can be happy without full-time employment*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2011/08/19/women-can-be-happy-without-full-time-employment

ARPA Canada. (2011*d*, September 9). *The More Things Change, The More They Stay The Same: 2,000 Years Of Christian Pro-Life Activities*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2011/09/09/the-more-things-change-the-more-they-stay-the-same-2000-years-of-christian-pro-life-activities

ARPA Canada. (2013, December 4). *Loyola update - Motion filed with the Supreme Court*. Retrieved from: http://arpacanada.ca/issuesresearch/education10/1900-loyola-update-motion-filed-with-the-supreme-court

ARPA Canada. (2014*a*). *Parents/Teacher Lesson Plans (for High school students) series*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Lesson-Plan-Package-2014.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2014*b*). Loyola v. Quebec: ARPA Canada defends parental rights at the Supreme Court of Canada. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/legal/2035-loyola-v-quebec

ARPA Canada. (2014*c*, September 19). *Protect The Poor: Ten Reasons To Oppose Harmful Climate Change Policies*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2014/09/19/protect-the-poor-ten-reasons-to-oppose-harmful-climate-change-policies/

ARPA Canada. (2015). *Climate Change*. Policy Report. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Respectfully-Climate-Change-online.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2016*a*). *Gender Identity*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Respectfully-Submitted-Gender-ID-updated-1216.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2016*b*, May 19). *GG16 Spotlight: A Call to Action*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2016/05/19/gg16-spotlight-a-call-to-action/

ARPA Canada. (2016*c*, June 21). *Baby Booties – A Grassroots Effort*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2016/06/21/baby-booties-a-grassroots-effort/

ARPA Canada. (2016*d*, November 14). *Ontario School Club Hosts Flag Display*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2016/11/14/rehoboth-arpa-school-club-hosts-flag-display/

ARPA Canada. (2017*a*, April*)*. Submission to: The Legislative Assembly of Ontario Standing Committee on Justice Policy Regarding: Bill 89 "Supporting Children, Youth and Families Act, 2017". Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/04/Bill-89-Committee-Submission-a.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2017*b*, September 15). Infographic: our government is ignoring these facts about the impacts of pornography. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2017/09/15/motion-47-infographic

ARPA Canada. (2018*a*). *How to Speak Up! Political Action Book.* A Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/ARPA-GrassrootsActivismREVISED-2018-2.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2018*b*). *Pornography*. A policy report. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/ARPA-PolicyReport-Pornography-online2.pdf

ARPA Canada. (2018*c*, August 29). *FAQS on Alberta's Bill 24 saga*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2018/08/29/faq-bill-24/#questionsix

ARPA Canada. (2018*d*, September 19). *What should be in a sex-ed curriculum?* Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2018/09/19/what-should-be-in-a-sex-ed-curriculum/?fbclid=IwAR2K7uZVzLMyrF_PSvR8Oe3qNQLMGmx4tEm_qLLVVFUzPuojcAr0IiD_HW8

ARPA Canada. (2018*e*, October 2). *Nova Scotia MLA introduces a bill to protect children on the internet from pornography*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2018/10/02/nova-scotia-mla-introduces-a-bill-to-protect-children-on-the-internet-from-pornography/

ARPA Canada. (2019*a*, April 11). *ARPA Canada Presents to Justice Committee As They Study Online Hatred*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2019/04/11/arpa-canada-justice-committee/

ARPA Canada. (2019*b*, March 15). *Ontario curriculum update increases parental involvement and that's a good thing*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2019/03/15/2019-ontario-curriculum-update/

ARPA Canada. (2020, July 9). *Parental Rights and Education in Alberta: A Timeline of Success*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2020/07/09/parental-rights-and-education-in-alberta-a-timeline-of-success/

ARPA Canada. (n.d.*a*). *Demographics*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/Demographics-Lesson-Plan-Handouts.pdf

ARPA Canada. (n.d.*b*) *Our Mission*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/about-arpa/

ARPA Canada. (n.d.*c*). *Political Parties*. Parents/Teacher Lesson Plans (for High school students) series. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/publications/#arpa-publication-files-9043

Asad, T. (2003). *Formations of the Secular: Christianity, Islam, Modernity*. Stanford University Press.

Aslan, R. (2011). *No god but God: The Origins, Evolution, and Future of Islam*. Random House.

Atkins, P. (2001, March 1). The Church School-good or evil: Against. *The Independent* (Education Supplement), p. 7.

Au, K. and Kawakami, A. (1994). Cultural Congruence in Instruction". In E. Hollins, J. King, W. Hayman (Eds.), *Teaching diverse populations: formulating a knowledge base* (pp. 5-24). Albany: State University of New York Press.

Audi, R. (1990). Religion and the Ethics of Political Participation. *Ethics 100* (2), 386-397.

Audi, R. and Wolterstorff, N. (1997). *Religion in the Public Square: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debate*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Aurini, J. and Davies, S. (2005). Choice without markets: homeschooling in the context of private education. *British Journal of Sociology of Education, 26*(4), 461-474.

Baklinski, T. (2013, April 4). Canadian March for Life theme: 'It's a girl' should not be a death sentence. *LifeSite*. Retrieved from: https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/canadian-march-for-life-theme-its-a-girl-should-not-be-a-death-sentence

Balthazar, L., Haenens L. and International Council for Canadian studies. (1998). *Images of Canadianness: Visions on Canada's Politics, Culture, Economics*. University of Ottawa Press.

Bangura, Y. (1994). *The search for identity: ethnicity, religion and political violence*. Geneva: UNRISD.

Bannerji, H. (2000). *The Dark Side of the Nation: Essays on Multiculturalism, Nationalism and Gender*. Canadian Scholars' Press.

Barakett, J. and Cleghorn, A. (2008). *Sociology of Education. An Introductory View from Canada*. Toronto: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Barker, E. (1984). *The Making of a Moonie: Choice or Brainwashing?* Oxford: Blackwell.

Barker, T. (2019, February 20). Christian Heritage Party leader reflects on 2019 federal election. *The Interior News*. Retrieved from: https://www.interior-news.com/news/christian-heritage-party-leader-reflects-on-2019-federal-election/

Barman, J. (1995). Deprivatizing Private Education: The British Columbia Experience. *Canadian Journal of Education 16*(1), 12-31.

Barnes, M. (2002) *Theology and the dialogue of religions*. Cambridge U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Barth, F. (1969). *Ethnic groups and boundaries: the social organization of culture difference.* Little Brown, Boston. Bergen: Universitetsforlaget; London: Allen & Unwin.

Barth, K. (1956). *Church Dogmatics*, I/2, ed. by G.W. Bromiley and T.F. Torrance (German orig., 1939). Edinburgh: T. and T. Clark.

Basch, L., Schiller, N. G., and Blanc, C. S. (1994). *Nations Unbound: Transnational Projects, Postcolonial Predicaments and Deterritorialized Nation States.* Langhorne: Gordon & Breach.

Bashir, M., Afzal M. T., Azeem M. (2008). Reliability and Validity of Qualitative and Operational Research Paradigm. *Pakistan Journal of Statistics and Operation Research, 4*(1), 35-45.

Baškarada, S. (2013). *Qualitative Case Study Guidelines*. Guidelines: Australian Government Department of Defence.

Bastide, R. (2007 [1960]). Les Religions africaines au Brésil. Paris: PUF.

Bauman, Z. (1993). *Postmodern Ethics*. Oxford: Blackwell.

Baumann, G. (1999). *The multicultural riddle: rethinking national, ethnic, and religious identities*. New York: Routledge.

Bavinck, H. (2003). *Reformed Dogmatics*: *Prolegomena*. Baker Publishing Group.

Baxter, P. and Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, *13*(4), 544–559.

Beaman, L. (2005). Preserving Heteronormativity: Trinity Western University v. British Columbia College of Teachers. In G. MacDonald, R.L. Osborne, and C.C. Smith (Eds.), *Feminism, Law, Inclusion: Intersectionality in Action* (pp. 89-114). Toronto: Sumach Press.

Beaman, L. (2012*a*, Winter). *Deep equality: moving beyond tolerance and accommodation*. Impetus. Retrieved from www.luthercollege.edu/university/academics/impetus/winter-2012-impetus/deep-equality-moving-beyond-tolerance-and-accommodation

Beaman, L. (2012*b*). The Status of Women: The Report from a Civilized Society. *Canadian Criminal Law Review*, *16*(2), 223-246.

Beaman, L. (2013). Tolerance and Accommodation as Vestiges of the Empire. In B. J. Berman, R. Bhargava, & André Laliberté (Eds.), *Secular states and religious diversity* (pp. 120-135). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Beaman, L. (2014). Deep equality as an alternative to accommodation and tolerance. *Nordic Journal of Religion and Society, 2*(27), 89-111.

Beaman, L. (2017). Religious Diversity in the Public Sphere: The Canadian Case. *Religions 8*(259), 1-18.

Bean, L., Gonsalez, M. and Kaufmann, J. (2008). Why Doesn't Canada Have an American-style Christian Right? A Comparative Framework for Analyzing the Political Effects of Evangelical Subcultural Identity. *Canadian Journal of Sociology*, *33*(4), 899-943.

Beard, T. R., Ekelund R. B., Ford G. S., Gaskins B., and Tollison R. D. (2013). Secularism, Religion, and Political Choice in the United States. *Politics and Religion, 6*, 753–77.

Beaumont, J. (2010). Transcending the particular in postsecular cities. In A. Molendijk, J. Beaumont, and C. Jedan (Eds.), *Exploring the postsecular: The religious, the political, and the urban* (pp.3-17). Leiden, The Netherlands: Brill.

Beckford, J. (2003). *Social Theory and Religion*. Cambridge University Press.

Beckford, J. (2012). SSSR Presidential Address Public Religions and the Postsecular: Critical Reflections. *Journal for the scientific study of religion*, *51*(1), 1-19.

Beckford, J. (2014). Re-Thinking Religious Pluralism. In G. Giordan and E. Pace (Eds.), *Religious Pluralism* (pp. 15-29). Springer International Publishing.

Bélanger, P. and Eagles M. (2006). The Geography of Class and Religion in Canadian Elections Revisited. *Canadian Journal of Political Science 39*, 591-609.

Bellah, R. (1967). Civil Religion in America. *Daedalus*, *96*(1), 1-21.

Bellamy, A. J. (2003). *The Formation of Croatian National Identity: A Centuries-Old Dream? Europe in Change*. Manchester, UK; New York: Manchester University Press.

Bendroth, M. L. (1993). *Fundamentalism and Gender, 1875 to the Present*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Bennett, M. (2013*a*, October 10). Internet Pornography & the First Amendment. *Public Discourse – Journal of Witherspoon Institute*. Retrieved from: https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2013/10/10998/

Bennett, M. (2013*b*, October 9). The New Narcotic. *Public Discourse – Journal of Witherspoon Institute*. Retrieved from: https://www.thepublicdiscourse.com/2013/10/10846/

Bennett, P. W. (2020). School System in Crisis: How did the COVID-19 Pandemic Impact the System? *Educhatter*. Retrieved from: https://educhatter.wordpress.com/2020/09/11/school-system-in-crisis-how-did-the-covid-19-pandemic-impact-the-system/?fbclid=IwAR3NkzGLO8cec2Dwc6iPJpCOwWKLuG1TQ4dzotY_-362B3W3hIHzmiehLto

Benson, I. (2004, March 2) Centre Article 019: Indoctrination, Education and New Sexual Beliefs: Can We Learn to Accommodate Diversity? *Comment*. Retrieved from: https://www.cardus.ca/news/media-coverage/centre-article-indoctrination-education-and-new-sexual-beliefs-can-we-learn-to-accommodate-diversity/

Ben-Zion, S. (2014). *Constructing Transnational and Transracial Identity: Adoption and Belonging in Sweden, Norway, and Denmark*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Berger, B. (2007). Law's Religion: Rendering Culture. *Osgoode Hall Law Journal*, *45*(2), 277-314.

Berger, P. (1999). The Desecularization of the World: A Global Overview. In P. Berger (Ed.), *The Desecularization of the World: Resurgent Religion and World Politics* (pp.1-18). Grand Rapids: William B. Eerdmans Publishing Company.

Berger, P. L. and Luckmann, T. (1966). *The Social Construction of Reality A Treatise in the Sociology of Knowledge*. Doubleday & Company, New York.

Bergman, B. (1994). Pride and prejudice. *Maclean's 107*(45), pp. 32, 34.

Berkhof, L. (1953). *The History of Christian Doctrines*. Wm. B. Eerdmans.

Berry, B. (1958). *Race and ethnic relations: The interaction of ethnic and racial groups*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin.

Berry, J. (1997). Immigration, Acculturation, and Adaptation. *Applied Psychology: an International Review*, *46*(1), 5-68.

Berry, J. (2011). Integration and Multiculturalism: Ways towards Social Solidarity. *Papers on Social Representations*, *20*, 1-21.

Beyer, P. and Ramji, R. (2013). *Growing up Canadian*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

Bibby, R. W. (2006). *The Boomer Factor: What Canada's Most Famous Generation Is Leaving Behind*. Toronto: Bastian.

Bibby, R. W. (2011). *Beyond Gods and Back*. Lethbridge: Project Canada.

Bickmore, K. (2002). How Might Social Education Resist Heterosexism? Facing the Impact of Gender and Sexual Ideology on Citizenship. *Theory and Research in Social Education*, *30*(2), 198-216.

Bilkes, G. (1973, November). "The Family III." *The Messenger 20*(11), p. 2.

Bill 13, Accepting Schools Act, 2012. (2012). Legislative Assembly of Ontario. Retrieved from: https://www.ola.org/en/legislative-business/bills/parliament-40/session-1/bill-13

Bissoondath, N. (1994). *Selling Illusions: The Cult of Multiculturalism in Canada*. Penguin Books, Acculturation.

Blais, A. (2005). Accounting for the Electoral Success of the Liberal Party in Canada. Presidential Address to the Canadian Political Science Association London, Ontario, June 3. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *38*, 821-840.

Blanes R. L. (2006). The atheist anthropologist: Believers and non-believers in anthropological fieldwork. *Social Anthropology 14*(2), 223-234.

Bloemraad, I. (2011). 'Two Peas in a Pod', 'Apples and Oranges', and Other Food Metaphors: Comparing Canada and the United States. *American Behavioral Scientist, 55*(9), 1131-59.

Blomberg, D. (2012). Christian Schooling: Why it is Worth it. *Christian Teachers Journal, 20*(1), pp. 26-30.

Bloom, A. (1987). *The Closing of the American Mind.* New York: Simon and Schuster.

Boas, F. (1931). Race and Progress. *Science*, *74*(1905), 1-8.

Boas, F. (1940). *Race, language and culture*. New York: Macmillan.

Boer, J. (2009). *Christians and Muslims: Parameters for Living Together*. Essence Publishing.

Boeve, L. (2007). *God Interrupts History*. London and New York: Continuum.

Bolderston, A. (2012). Conducting a Research Interview. *Journal of Medical Imaging and Radiation Sciences*, *41*(1), 66-76.

Bolt, J. (2001). *A Free Church, a Holy Nation: Abraham Kuyper's American Public Theology*. Wm. B. Eerdman's Publishing.

Boog, I. (2019). Multiculturalism and Citizenship in the Netherlands. In Steven Ratuva (Ed.), *The Palgrave Handbook of Ethnicity* (pp. 1993-2013). Singapore: Palgrave Macmillan.

Bosetti, L. and Van Pelt, D. (2017). Provisions for Homeschooling in Canada: Parental Rights and the Role of the State *Pro-Posições*, *28*(2), 39-56.

Bouchard, G. and Taylor, C. (2008). Building the Future: A Time for Reconciliation. *Final Report of the Commission de consultation sur les pratiques d'accommodement reliées aux différences culturelles*. Quebec: Gouvernement du Quebec.

Bouchard, P. et St-Amant, J.-C. (2003). La nonmixité à l'école : quels enjeux ? *Options*, 22.

Bourassa, C., McKay-McNabb, K., and Hampton, M. (2004). Racism, sexism and colonialism: The impact on the health of Aboriginal women in Canada. *Canadian Woman Studies*, *24*(1), 23-30.

Boyatzis, R. (1998). *Qualitative Information: Thematic Analysis and Code Development*. Sage Publications.

Brahmachari, S. (2004). Monokulturer eller kullturelt Mangfold? In RISIKOSONER Om kunst, makt og endring. Ed. Siri Meyer og Svein Bjørkås. Norsk kulturråd. Rapport 33.

Bramadat, P. (2000). *The church on the world's turf: an evangelical Christian group at a secular university*. Oxford University Press.

Bramadat, P. (2005). Beyond Christian Canada: Religion and Ethnicity in a Multicultural Society. In P. Bramadat and D. Seljak (Eds.), *Religion and ethnicity in Canada* (1-29). Toronto: Pearson Longman.

Bramadat, P. (2016). Managing and Imagining Religion in Canada from the Top and the Bottom: 15 Years After. In B. L. Berger and R. Moon (Eds.), *Religion and the Exercise of Public Authority* (pp. 61-78). London: Hart Publishing.

Bramadat, P. and Seljak, D. (2008). *Christianity and Ethnicity in Canada.* University of Toronto Press, Scholarly Publishing Division.

Bratt, J. (1998). Common Grace. In J. Bratt (Ed.), *Abraham Kuyper: A Centennial Reader* (pp. 165-204). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Bratt, J. (2013). *Abraham Kuyper: Modern Calvinist, Christian Democrat.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Bredenhof, W. (2010, June 3). Reflections on the CanRC Synodical Decision to Allow Women to Vote in Congregational Elections. Yinkahdinay. Retrieved from: https://yinkahdinay.wordpress.com/2010/06/03/reflections-on-the-canrc-synodical-decision-to-allow-women-to-vote-in-congregational-elections

Bredenhof, W. (2014, November 13). Raising Covenant Children. Yinkahdinay. Retrieved from: https://yinkahdinay.wordpress.com/2014/11/13/raising-covenant-children/

Bredenhof, W. (2016, May 24). Tag Archives: Women's voting 2016 Synod Dunnville 2016 (6). Yinkahdinay. Retrieved from: https://yinkahdinay.wordpress.com/tag/womens-voting

Bredenhof, W. and Joosse, L. (2012*a*). Early Canadian Church History (Part 1). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 61*(9), 232-233.

Bredenhof, W. and Joosse, L. (2012*b*). Early Canadian Church History (Part 4). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 61*(12), 309-310.

Breton, R. (1964). Institutional Completeness of Ethnic Communities and the Personal Relations of Immigrants. *American Journal of Sociology, 70*(2), 193-205.

Breton, R., Burnet, J. et al. (1977). The Impact of Ethnic Groups on Canadian Society: Research Issues. In W. Isajiw (Ed.), *Identities: The Impact of Ethnicity on Canadian Society* (pp. 191-213). Toronto, ON: Peter Martin Associates Ltd.

Brighouse, H. (2009). Faith schools, personal autonomy and democratic competence. In G. Haydon (Ed.), *Faith in education: a tribute to Terence McLaughlin* (pp. 78-93). London: Institute of Education, University of London.

Brown, C. (1984). *Miracles and the Critical Mind*. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans.

Brown, L. (2013, May 23). Toronto Catholic School Board Rejects Call for Ban on Gay-Straight Alliance. *Toronto Star*. Retrieved from: https://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2013/05/23/toronto_catholic_school_board_rejects_call_for_ban_on_gaystraight_alliances.html

Brubaker, R. (2009). Ethnicity, Race, and Nationalism. *Annual Review of Sociology, 35*, 21-42.

Bruce, S. (1998). *Conservative Protestant Politics*. London and New York: Oxford University Press.

Bruce, S. (2003). *Politics and Religion*. Cambridge UK: Polity.

Bruce, S. (2008). *God Is Dead: Secularization in the West*. Oxford: Blackwell Oxford.

Bruland, E. B. (1989). Evangelical and Feminist Ethics: Complex Solidarities. *Journal of Religious Ethics, 17*(2), 139-160.

Brusq, J. (2011). L'Interdisciplinarité : Un Enjeu pour l'Analyse de Contenu? In M. Patrascu, D. Bruscq, S. Canivenc (Eds.), *Corpus et Méthodes - Épistémologies critiques et appropriations multidisciplinaires* (pp. 175-192). L'Harmattan.

Bryk, A. S., Lee, V.E. and Holland, P.B. (1993). *Catholic schools and the common good*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.

Bryman, A. (2012). *Social Research Methods*. Oxford University Press.

Buckingham, J. E. (2012). The relationship Between religions and a secular society. *Canadian Diversite, 9*(3), 12-15.

Bugg L. B. (2010, April 7-11). 'Religious Freedom and the Right to the City: Local Government Planning and the Rejection of Islamic Schools in Sydney, Australia,' Workshop Paper, Twelfth Berlin Roundtables: Religious Pluralism, Irmgard Coninx Stiftung.

Bullying and sexual orientation by the numbers (2011, October 24). *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/bullying-and-sexual-orientation-by-the-numbers-1.909444

Burkman, B. (2011). The Evolution of Combined Oral Contraception: Improving the Risk-to-Benefit Ratio. *Contraception (Stoneham), 84*(1), 19-34.

Burnet, J. R. and Palmer, H. (1988). *Coming Canadians: An Introduction to a History of Canada's Peoples*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart.

Byers, S.E., Sears, H.A., Voyer, S.D., Thurlow, J.L., Cohen, J.N., and Weaver, A.D. (2003). An adolescent perspective on sexual health education at school and at home: I. High school students. *Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality, 72*(1), 1-17.

Byl, J. (2011, February 9). Women, Voting, and Authority. *bylogos*. Retrieved from: http://bylogos.blogspot.com/2011/10/women-voting-and-authority.html

Calhoun, C. (1993). Nationalism and Ethnicity. *Annual Review of Sociology, 19*, 211-239.

Calhoun, C., VanAntwerpen, J., and M. Juergensmeyer. (2011). *Rethinking Secularism*. United Kingdom: OUP USA.

Callaghan, T. D. (2012). *Holy homophobia: Doctrinal disciplining of non-heterosexuals in Canadian Catholic schools*. (Doctoral thesis, University of Toronto, Canada). Retrieved from: https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/32675/5/Callaghan_Tonya_D_201206_PhD_thesis.pdf

Callaghan, T. D. (2014). Law and Disorder: Ontario Catholic Bishops' Opposition to Gay-Straight Alliances. *Paideusis, 22*(1), 28-37.

Callaghan, T. D. (2016). Young, queer, and Catholic: Youth resistance to homophobia in Catholic schools. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 13*(3), 270-287.

Callan, E. (2009). Why bring the kids into this? McLaughlin and Anscombe on religious understanding and upbringing. In G. Haydon (Ed.), *Faith in education: a tribute to Terence McLaughlin* (pp. 9-26). London: Institute of Education, University of London.

Canada - Ratio of girls to boys in primary and secondary education. (n.d.) *Trading Economics*. Retrieved from: https://tradingeconomics.com/canada/ratio-of-girls-to-boys-in-primary-and-secondary-education-percent-wb-data.html

Cardus. (2017, May 17). *Majority of Canadian Women Sour on Sexual Revolution*. Cardus. Retrieved from: https://www.cardus.ca/news/media-coverage/majority-of-canadian-women-sour-on-sexual-revolution/

CARE. (2004). *Guidance Document - To Work is to Serve*. CARE Committee.

Casanova, J. (2001). Civil society and religion: retrospective reflections on Catholicism and prospective reflections on Islam. *Social Research, 68*(4), 1041-1080.

Castles, S. (2002). Migration and Community Formation Under Conditions of Globalization. *International Migration Review, 36*(4), 1143-1168.

CCMC. (2002). *Report to the League of Canadian Reformed School Societies*. The CCMC Committee.

Chandra, K. (2001). Cummulative Findings in the Study of Ethnic Politics. *APSA-CP, 12*(1), 7-11.

Chandra, K. (2004). *Why Ethnic Parties Succeed*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Chaplin, J. (2008, July) *The Bible, the State and Religious Diversity: Theological Foundations for 'Principled Pluralism'*. A paper delivered at a meeting of the Religion, Culture & Communication group of the Tyndale Fellowship, in Cambridge.

Chaplin, J. (2009). The Place of Religious Arguments for Law Reform in a Secular State. Law and Justice: *The Christian Law Review*, *162*, 18-35.

Chaplin, J. (2012). Why We Can Talk to Each Other: A Response to Robin Lovin. In K. Grasso & C. Castillo (Eds.), *Theology and Public Philosophy: Four Conversations* (pp. 119-126). Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

Chaplin, J. (2013, November 1). The Point of Kuyperian Pluralism. *Comment*. Retrieved from: www.cardus.ca/comment/article/4069/the-point-of-kuyperian-pluralism

Charmaz, K. (2006). *Constructing grounded theory: A practical guide through qualitative analysis*. London: Sage.

Charmaz, K. (2008). Constructionism and the Grounded Theory Method. In J.-A. Holstein, & J.-F. Gubrium (Eds.), *Handbook of Constructionist Research* (pp. 397-412). New York: Guilford.

Charmaz, K. (2013). Grounded Theory Methods in Social Justice Research. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna Lincoln (Eds.), *Strategies of qualitative inquiry* (pp. 291-336). Los Angeles: SAGE.

Charmaz, K. and Mitchell, R. G. (1996). The myth of silent authorship: Self, substance, and style in ethnographic writing. *Symbolic Interaction*, *19*(4), 285-302.

Choquette, R. (2004). *Canada's religions: A historical introduction*. Ottawa, ON: University of Ottawa Press.

CHP. (n.d.). About. Retrieved from: https://www.chp.ca/about/

cial Studies, 1(4), 402-411.

CIC. (2012). *Canadian Multiculturalism: An Inclusive Citizenship*. Ottawa: Government of Canada. Retrieved from www.cic.gc.ca/english/multiculturalism/citizenship.asp

Citizens for Public Justice. (2008). *Pluralism*. Retrieved from: www.archive.li/w9M3U

Clarion – The Canadian Reformed Magazine. (n.d.) Why Subscribe to this Bi-weekly Publication? Retrieved from: http://www.clarionmagazine.ca/subscriptions.html

Clark, R., Anderson, N.B., Clark, V.R., & Williams, D.R. (1999). Racism as a stressor for African Americans: A biopsychosocial model. *American Psychologist*, *54*, 805-816.

Clarke, A. E. (2005). *Situational analysis: Grounded theory after the postmodern turn*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Clarke, A. E. (2006). Qualitative interviewing: encountering ethical issues and challenges. *Nurse Researcher*, *13*(4), 19-29.

Clarke, B. and Macdonald, S. (2017). *Leaving Christianity*. McGill-Queen's University Press.

Clark-Flory, T. (2011). Don't believe the sex addiction hype. November 30, *Salon*. Retrieved from: https://www.salon.com/2011/11/29/dont_believe_the_sex_addiction_hype/

Cohen, A. (1974). Introduction: The Lesson of Ethnicity. In A. Cohen (Ed.), *Urban Ethnicity* (pp. ix–xxiv). Tavistock Publications, London.

Cohn, M.R. (2016, October 29). How a teenager trumped Ontario's Tories: Cohn. *The Star, Queen's Park*. Retrieved from: https://www.thestar.com/news/queenspark/2016/10/29/how-a-teenager-trumped-ontarios-tories-cohn.html

Connor, P. (2012). Balm for the soul: immigrant religion and emotional well-being. *International Migration*, *50*(2), 130-57.

Consultation on the Draft Ethics and Religious Culture Program. (2007, May). Report submitted to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports.

Coons J. and Sugarman S. (1999). *Making school choice work for all families: A template for legislative and policy reform*. San Francisco: Pacific Research Institute.

Cordelia Anderson. (2018). In *Convivium*. Retrieved from: https://www.convivium.ca/writers/bio/cordeliaanderson

Cottee, S. (2015). *The Apostates: When Muslims Leave Islam*. Oxford University Press.

Couton, P. (1999). The Role of Minority Educators: Haitian Teachers in Quebec Schools. In Harold M. Troper and Morton Weinfeld (Eds.), *Ethnicity, Politics, and Public Policy: Case Studies in Canadian Diversity* (pp. 142-163). University of Toronto Press: Political Science.

Crabtree, B. F. and Miller, W.L. (1999). *Doing Qualitative Research* (2nd edition). London: Sage.

CRCNA. (2019). *Walking Alongside: Youth and Mental Health*. Retrieved from: https://www.crcna.org/events/walking-alongside-youth-and-mental-health

CRCNA. (n.d.). *Homosexuality*. Christian Reformed Church in North America. Retrieved from: https://www.crcna.org/welcome/beliefs/position-statements/homosexuality

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research Planning, conducting, and evaluating quantitative and qualitative research* (4th ed.). Boston, MA Pearson.

Crittenden, B. (1988). *Parents, the State and the Right to Educate*. Carlton, Australia: Melbourne University Press.

Davie G. (2018). Thinking Theoretically about Religiosity, Secularity and Pluralism in the Global East. *Religions*, *9*, 337.

Dawkins, R. (2001, February 23). No Faith in the Absurd. *Times Educational Supplement* (London), p.17.

Day, A. (2011). *Believing in Belonging: Belief and Social Identity in the Modern World*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Day, R. (2000). *Multiculturalism and the History of Canadian Diversity*. University of Toronto Press.

Day, S. and Brodsky, G. (1996). The Duty to Accommodate: Who Will Benefit? *Canadian Bar Review*, *75*, 433-473.

De Boer, P. and Oppewal, D. (1984). American Calvinist Day Schools. *Christian Scholar's Review*, *2*, 120-140.

De Jong, P. (2005, March 15). John Sterenberg. *The Globe and Mail: Toronto*, p. 18.

DeJong, B. (2018, March 16). What would Jesus do on Locke Street? *Hamilton Spectator*. Retrieved from: https://www.thespec.com/opinion/columnists/2018/03/16/what-would-jesus-do-on-locke-street.html

Dekkema, G. (2015, April 7). Klaas Anne Dekkema. *The Globe and Mail: Toronto*, p. 6.

Denzin, N. (1994). The art and politics of interpretation. In N.K. Denzin and Y.S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Handbook of qualitative research* (pp. 500-515). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Denzin, N. and Lincoln, Y. S. (2013). *Strategies of qualitative inquiry*. Los Angeles: SAGE.

Dewey, J. (1987). Education and social change. In J.A. Boydston (Ed.), *John Dewey: The later works, 1925-1953*, Vol. 11. 1935-1937 (pp. 408-418). Carbondale: Southern Illinois University Press.

Dhejne, C., Lichtenstein, P., Boman M. et al. (2011). Long-Term Follow-Up of Transsexual Persons Undergoing Sex Reassignment Surgery: Cohort Study in Sweden. *PLoS ONE*, 2. Retrieved from: https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0016885

Disability Concerns. (2014). *A Mental Illness Infographic*. CRC Network. Retrieved from: https://network.crcna.org/disability-concerns/mental-illness-infographic

Disability Concerns. (2015). *Mental Health: A Guide for Faith Leaders*. Retrieved from: https://network.crcna.org/disability-concerns/mental-health-guide-faith-leaders

Doerr, E. and Menendez, A. (1991). *Church Schools and Public Money: The Politics of Parochiaid*. New York: Prometheus Books.

Doidge, N. (2007). *The Brain that Changes Itself: Stories of Personal Triumph from the Frontiers of Brain Science*. New York: Viking.

Dollar, J., Pinkerton B., and Cowan S. (2009). *Contend: A Survey of Christian Apologetics on a High School Level*. Aventine Pr.

Donlevy, J. K. (2013). Canadian Catholic Schools: Sacred and Secular Tensions in a Free and Democratic Society. In Graham P. McDonough, Nadeem A. Menon, and Avi I. Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 121-144). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Donovan, R., Williams, A., Stajduhar, K., Brazil, K., Marshall, D. (2011). The influence of culture on home-based family caregiving at end-of-life: A case study of Dutch reformed family care givers in Ontario, Canada. *Social Science & Medicine*, *72*(3), 338-346.

Driedger, L. (2003). *Race and ethnicity: finding identities and equalities*. Don Mills, Ont.; New York: Oxford University Press.

Driedger, L. and Halli, S. (2000). *Race and Racism: Canada's Challenge*. McGill-Queen's Press – MQUP.

Driscoll, M. (2009). *Can Christians Use Birth Control?* Crosswalk.com. Retrieved from: https://www.crosswalk.com/culture/books/can-christians-use-birth-control-11605806.html

Dronkers, J. (2001). *More Parental Choice in Europe? Overview of Effectiveness Differences between Religious Schools and Public Schools in Several European Societies*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association (Seattle, WA, April 10-14, 2001).

Dukelow, M. (2018). *School shouldn't end when the bell rings: an exploratory homeschooling study*. MA Research Paper. Retrieved from: https://ir.lib.uwo.ca/sociology_masrp/21

Dumont, M. and Fahmy-Eid, N. (1986). *Les Couventines*: *l'éducation des filles au Québec dans les congrégations religieuses enseignantes 1840-1960*. Montréal, Boréal.

Duncan, D. and Nicholson, T. (1991). Pornography as a Source of Sex Information for Students at a Southeastern State University. *Psychological Reports, 68*(3), 802.

Durkheim, E. (1995). *The Elementary Forms of Religious Life*. New York: The Free Press (Simon & Schuster).

Duyvendak, J.W. (2011). Feeling at home in the nation. Understanding Dutch nostalgia. In Hans Harbers (Ed.), *Strangeness and familiarity. Global unity and diversity in human rights and democracy* (pp. 74-93). University of Groningen.

Dworkin, A. (1995). Power. In Susan Dwyer (Ed.) *The problem of pornography* (pp. 48-52). Wadsworth Publishing Company, USA.

Dykxhoorn, H. (2015, May 20). Counterspin. *Christian Renewal*, pp. 32-33.

Eagle, D. (2011). Changing Patterns of Attendance at Religious Services in Canada, 1986-2008. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion 5*(1), 187-200.

ECI. (n.d.). *Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action*. Retrieved from: http://www.christiansandclimate.org/statement/

Eck, D. L. (2014). *Encountering God: A Spiritual Journey from Bozeman to Banaras*. Beacon Press.

Eekelaar, J. (2001). Rethinking Parental Responsibility. *Family law, 31*, 426-431.

Eelhart, C. (2013). Why I left the Canadian Reformed Church. *ExChristian.Net.* Retrieved from: http://new.exchristian.net/2013/01/why-i-left-canadian-reformed-church.html

Elliott, C. and Reynolds III, W. (2014, April 2). Making it Millennial: Public policy and the next generation. *Deloitte Insights*. Retrieved from: https://www2.deloitte.com/uk/en/insights/industry/public-sector/making-it-millennial.html

Ellis, C. (1986). *Fisher folk: Two communities on Chesapeake Bay*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky.

Ellsworth, E. (1997). *Teaching positions: Difference, pedagogy, and the power of address*. NY: Teachers College Press.

Elver, H. (2012). Racializing Islam before and after 9/11: From melting pot to Islamophobia. *Transnational Law and Contemporary Problems, 21*(1), 119-174.

Emmanuel Christian High School. (2017). *Student Handbook 2017-2018*. Emmanuel Canadian Reformed High School Society.

Ensslen, K. and Ursel, S. (2015). Ontario's new sex education curriculum in context. *Education Forum, 41*(2), 11-12.

Epstein, S. (2013). The Jewish Day Schools of Canada. In Graham P. McDonough, Nadeem A. Menon, and Avi I. Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 25-44). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Erickson, F. (1986). Qualitative Methods in Research on Teaching. In M. Wittrockk (Ed.), *Handbook of Research on Teaching* (3rd ed., pp. 119-161). New York: MacMillan.

Essen, J. L. van. (1990). *Groen van Prinsterer's tactics in his campaign for freedom of education.* In J. L. van Essen and H. D. Morton (Eds.), *Guillame Groen van Prinsterer. Selected studies* (pp. 79-88). Wedge Publishing Foundation, Canada.

Ester, P. (2006). Still bowling together: social capital of Dutch Protestant immigrant groups in North America. In G. Harinck and H. Krabbendam (Eds.), *Morsels in the Melting Pot. The Persistence of Dutch Immigrant Communities in North America* (pp. 21-32). Amsterdam: vu Uitgeverij.

Fahie, D. (2014). Doing Sensitive Research Sensitively: Ethical and Methodological Issues in Researching Workplace Bullying. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods, 13*(1), 19-36.

Fallon, M. D. (2000). *People of the Covenant: Dutch Reformed Immigration into Canada After World War II*. (Doctoral thesis, University of Guelph, Canada). Retrieved from: https://dr.library.brocku.ca/bitstream/handle/10464/8932/Brock_Teeuwsen_Philip_2016.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Feldblum, C. R. (2006). Moral Conflict and Liberty: Gay Rights and Religion. *72 Brook. L. Rev.*, 61-123.

Finch, J. (1984). "It's great to have someone to talk to": the ethics and politics of interviewing women. In C. Bell and H. Roberts (Eds.), *Social Researching: Politics, Problems, Practice* (pp. 70-87). London: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Finnemore, M. and Sikkink, K. (2001). Taking Stock: The Constructivist Research Program in International Relations and Comparative Politics. *Annual Review of Political Science, 4*, 391-416.

Fionda, J. (2001). *Legal Concepts of Childhood*. Hart Publishing.

Fishman, J., Gertner, M. H., Lowy, E. G., and Milán W. G. (1985). *The Rise and Fall of the Ethnic Revival: Perspectives on Language and Ethnicity*. Berlin: Mouton.

Fize, M. (2003). *Les pièges de la mixité scolaire.* Paris, Presses de la renaissance.

Fleras, A. (2009). *The Politics of Multiculturalism: Multicultural Governance in Comparative Perspective*. Palgrave Macmillan, New York.

Fleras, A. (2014). *Immigration Canada evolving realities and emerging challenges in a postnational world*. Vancouver [British Columbia]: UBC Press.

Foltz, R. (2007). The Religion of the Market: Reflections on a Decade of Discussion. *Worldviews, 11*, 135-154.

Foner N. and Alba, R. (2008). Immigrant Religion in the US and Western Europe: Bridge or Barrier to Inclusion? *International Migration Review, 42*(2), 360-392.

Foster, C. (2014). *Genuine multiculturalism: the tragedy and comedy of diversity*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Fox, C. (2015, August 13). 3 Reasons Not to Homeschool. *The Gospel Coalition*. Retrieved from: https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/article/3-reasons-not-to-homeschool/

Fradd, M. (2017). *The porn myth: exposing the reality behind the fantasy of pornography*. San Francisco, Calif.: Ignatius Press.

Freeman, G. P. (1995). Modes of immigration politics in liberal democratic states. *International Migration Review, 29*(4), 881-913.

Friedline, M. A. (2019). Pluralism and the Roots of Social Conflict: Rethinking Rawls. *Religions*, *10*(1), 20.

Fry, H. (1997). Multiculturalism: A Framework for Canadian Unity. *Newsletter of the Royal Society of Canada, 5*(1), 1-2.

Gadourek, I. (1956). *A Dutch Community; Social and Cultural Structure and Process in a Bulb-growing Region in the Netherlands.* Stenfert Kroese.

Gainor, K. A. (2000). Including transgender issues in lesbian, gay, and bisexual psychology: Implications for clinical practice and training. In B. Greene & G. L. Croom (Eds.), *Education, research, and practice in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered psychology: A resource manual, 5*, (pp. 131–160). Sage Publications, Inc.

Gaither, M. (2008). *Homeschool: An American History*. Palgrave Macmillan.

Galenkamp, D. (2017, May 2). Blessings Upon Blessings. *Redeemer University*. Retrieved from: https://www.redeemer.ca/resound/blessings-upon-blessings/

Gallagher, S. V. and Lundin, R. (1989). *Literature Through the Eyes of Faith: Christian College Coalition Series*. HarperCollins – Religion. Reprinted in 2013.

Galston, W. A. (1995). Two Concepts of Liberalism. *Ethics*, *105*, 516–534.

Gans, H. (1979). Symbolic ethnicity: The future of ethnic groups and cultures in America. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 2*(1), 1-20.

Gans, H. (1994). Symbolic Ethnicity and Symbolic Religiosity: Toward a Comparison of Ethnic and Religious Acculturation. *Ethnic and Racial Studies 17*(4), 577-592.

Gans, H. (2014). The Coming Darkness of Late-generation European American Ethnicity. *Ethnic and Racial Studies 37*(5), 1-12.

Ganzevoort, H. (1988). *A Bittersweet Land: the Dutch experience in Canada, 1890-1980.* Toronto: McClelland and Stewart.

Ganzevoort, H. (1998). The Dutch in Canada. In L. D'Haenens (Ed.), *Images of Canadianness: Visions on Canada's Politics, Culture, and Economics*. University of Ottawa Press. Retrieved from http://books.openedition.org/uop/1426

Gauthier, F., Martikainen T., and Woodhead, L. (2011). Religion on Consumer Society. *Social Compass*, *58*(3), 291-301.

Gay, G. (2002). Preparing for Culturally Responsive Teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *53*(2), 106-116.

Geddes, J. (2011, July 11). Is subsidized daycare bad for kids? *Maclean's*. Retrieved from: https://www.macleans.ca/news/canada/bad-for-kids-2/

Gee, G. C. and Ford, C. L. (2011). Structural racism and health inequities. *Du Bois Review: Social Science Research on Race*, *8*(1), 115-132.

Geertz, C. (1963). The Integrative Revolution: Primordial Sentiments and Civil Politics in the New States. In C. Geertz (Ed.), *Old Societies and New States* (pp. 105-157). New York: Free Press.

Gellner, E. (1983). *Nations and Nationalism*. Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press.

Gensburger, S. (2016). Halbwachs' studies in collective memory: A founding text for contemporary 'memory studies'? *Journal of Classical Sociology, 16*(4), 396-413.

Gessell, P. (2008, April 19) Book review: This is how Canada came to be. *Star – Phoenix*. p. 4.

GhaneaBassiri, K. (2010). *A history of Islam in America: from the new world to the new world order*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ghitter, R. et al. (1984). *Private Education in Alberta. Discussion Paper*. Edmonton: Ministry of Education, Committee on Tolerance and Understanding.

Giddens, A. (1990). *The Consequences of Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Giddings, L. S. (2006). Mixed-methods research, positivism dressed in drag? *Journal of Research in Nursing, 11*(3), 195-203.

Gilles, S. G. (1996). On Educating Children: A Parentalist Manifesto. *University of Chicago Law Review*, *63*(3), 937-1034.

Gilles, S. G. (1997). Liberal parentalism and children's educational rights. *Capital University Law Review*, *26*, 9-44.

Gilroy, P. (2012). "My Britain is fuck all": Zombie multiculturalism and the race politics of citizenship. *Identities: Global Studies in Culture and Power*, *19*(4), 380-397.

Gismondi, A., Dimaras, E., Yu, J. and Hurley, M. (n.d.). *The Evolution of Sexual Health Education in Ontario, 1960s until Present-day*. Retrieved from: https://www.curriculumhistory.org/Select_Subjects_in_the_History_of_Ontario_Education_files/Evolution%20of%20Sex%20Education_aliciagismondi_elenidimaras_jocelynyu_matthurley.pdf

Given, L. M. (2015). *100 Questions (and Answers) About Qualitative Research*. SAGE Publications.

Glaser, B., and Strauss, A. (1967). *The Discovery of Grounded Theory Strategies for Qualitative Research*. Mill Valley, CA Sociology Press.

Glendon, M. A. (2013). The Naked Public Square Today: A Secular Public Square? In C. Wolfe (Ed.), *The Naked Public Square Reconsidered*: *Religion and Politics in the Twenty-First Century* (pp. 33-43). Wilmington: Intercollegiate Studies Institute.

Glenn, C. L. (2011). *Contrasting models of state and school: a comparative historical study of parental choice and state control*. New York: Continuum.

Godwin, R. K., Godwin, J. W. and Martinez-Ebers, V. (2004). Civic socialization in public and fundamentalist schools. *Social Science Quarterly*, *85*, 1097-1111.

González, J. L. (2005). *Essential Theological Terms*. Westminster John Knox Press.

Goodrum, S., and Keys, J. L. (2007). Reflections on two studies of emotionally sensitive topics: Bereavement from murder and abortion. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *10*(4), 249-258.

Goudzwaard, B. (1986). Christian Social Thought in the Dutch Neo-Calvinist Tradition. In: W. Block, & I. Hexham (Eds.), *Religion, Economics and Social Thought* (pp. 251-264). Vancouver, Fraser Institute.

Government of Canada. (n.d.). *Medical assistance in dying*. Retrieved from: https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/medical-assistance-dying.html#a1

Government of Ontario. (2018). *Consultation: Education in Ontario*. Retrieved from: https://www.ontario.ca/page/for-the-parents

Gozdecka, D.A., Ercan, S.A. and Kmak, M. (2014). From multiculturalism to post-multiculturalism: Trends and paradoxes. (Special issue: Migration and multiculturalism: Australia and Europe). *Journal of Sociology*, *50*(1), 51-64.

Graham, B. (2008, September 2). *Answers*. Retrieved from: https://billygraham.org/answer/what-do-you-think-of-contemporary-christian-music-our-church-is-beginning-to-use-it-more-and-more-but-to-be-honest-im-having-a-hard-time-getting-used-to-it-my-teenaged-children-like-it-however/

Graham, B. (2015, August 18). Introducing new church music can reach new people. *Tribune Media Services*. Retrieved from: https://www.kansascity.com/living/liv-columns-blogs/billy-graham/article31303013.html

Grams, G. (2013). Der Volksverein Deutsch-Canadischer Katholiken: the rise and fall of a German-Catholic cultural and immigration society, 1909–52. *The Catholic Historical Review*, *99*(3), 480-498.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. Translated and edited by Quintin Hoare and Geoffrey Nowell Smith. New York: International Publishers.

Grant, G. (1991). *Third Time Around: A History of the Pro-Life Movement From the First Century to the Present*. Wolgemuth & Hyatt Publishers.

Gray, J. R., Grove, S. K. and Sutherland, S. (2016). *Burns and Grove's The Practice of Nursing Research*. Elsevier Health Sciences.

Greeley, A. (1972). *The transmission of cultural heritage: the case of the Irish and the Italians*. Paper presented to the American Academy of Arts and Sciences: Conference on Ethnic Problems in the Contemporary World. Boston, Mass.

Green, B., Sikkink, D., Pennings, R., Skiles, S. and Sikkema, D. (2016). *Cardus Education Survey: Educating to Love Your Neighbour. The Full Picture of Canadian Graduates.* Cardus.

Green, D. & and Seher, R. (2003). What Role Does Prejudice Play in Ethnic Conflict? *Annual Review of Political Science, 6,* 509-531.

Greenawalt, K. (1994). The Participation of Religious Groups in Political Advocacy. *Journal of Church & State*, *36*(1), 143-160.

Greenawalt, K. (2001). Religion and American Political Judgements. *Wake Forest Law Review*, *36*(2), 401-421.

Gregoire, S. (2018, September 14). "*We Haven't Had Sex in Two Years" Plus Answers to 12 More Sex Questions.* Retrieved from: https://tolovehonorandvacuum.com/2018/09/we-havent-had-sex-in-two-years-plus-answers-to-12-more-sex-questions/?utm_campaign=coschedule&utm_source=facebook_page&utm_medium=To%20Love,%20Honor%20and%20Vacuum&utm_content=%22We%20Haven%27t%20Had%20Sex%20in%20Two%20Years%22%20Plus%20Answers%20to%2012%20More%20Sex%20Questions

Groenewold, H. J. (1991). The Christian Reformed Tradition in Canada. In R. E. Vandervennen (Ed.), *Church and Canadian culture* (pp. 179-191). Lanham, MD: University Press of America.

Growing up CRC and thinking about homosexuality. A two-part series on faith and sexual identity. (2015, March 9). *Christian Courier*. Retrieved from: http://www.christiancourier.ca/columns-op-ed/entry/growing-up-crc-and-thinking-about-homosexuality

Grubel, H. and Patrick G. (2011). *Immigration and the Welfare State 2011*. Fraser Institute Studies in Immigration and Refugee Policy.

Grzymała-Busse, A. (2015). *Nations under God: How Churches Use Moral Authority to Influence Policy.* Princeton University Press.

Guba, E. G. & Lincoln, Y.S. (1994). Competing paradigms in qualitative research. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research* (pp. 105-117). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Guba, E. G. (1990). The alternative paradigm dialog. In E. G. Guba (Ed.), *The paradigm dialog* (pp. 17–27). Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Guido de Brès Canadian Reformed High School. (2019). *Parent Handbook*. Guido de Brès Canadian Reformed High School Society.

Guido de Brès Highlights. (2017, February 2017). *Truth Exposed: Identity, Sexuality, and Relationships*. Retrieved from: http://www.guidodebres.org/forms/Highlights/Highlights%20Feb%202017.pdf

Guido Gazette. (2014, March). *[Statement]*. Retrieved from: http://www.guidodebres.org/forms/guido-gazette.html

Guinness, O. (1993). *An American Hour: A Time of Reckoning and the Once and Future Role of Faith*. New York: Free Press.

Guterson, D. (1993). *Family Matters: Why Homeschooling Makes Sense*. San Diego, CA: Harcourt, Brace, Jovanovich.

Guth, J. L. and Fraser, C. R. (2001) Religion and Partisanship in Canada. *Journal for the scientific study of religion*, *40*(1), 51–64.

Gutmann, A. (1999). *Democratic education*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Gwyn, R. J. (1996). *Nationalism without walls*: The unbearable lightness of being Canadian. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.

Haas, H. de, Miller M., and Castles, S. (2020). *The Age of Migration: International Population Movements in the Modern World*. Red Globe Press.

Habermas, J. (2005). On the Relation between the Secular Liberal State and Religion. In Eduardo Mendieta (Ed.), *The Frankfurt School on Religion: Key Writings by the Major Thinkers* (pp. 339-348). Routledge: New York and London.

Habermas, J. (2006). Religion in the Public Sphere. *European Journal of Philosophy, 14*(1), 1-25.

Habermas, J. (2008). Notes on Post-Secular Society. *New Perspectives Quarterly*, Fall, 17-29.

Haggerty, K. D. (2004). Ethics Creep Governing Social Science Research in the Name of Ethics. *Qualitative Sociology, 27*, 391-414.

Halbwachs, M. (1992 [1941]). *On Collective Memory*. Chicago: U of Chicago. Print. The Heritage of Sociology.

Hall, S. (1992). Our Mongrel Selves', Borderlands Supplement. *New Statesman and Society*, *5*(207), 6-8.

Hall, S. (2006). The Future of Identity. In S. P. Hier & B. S. Bolaria (Eds.), *Identity and belonging: rethinking race and ethnicity in Canadian society* (pp. 249-274). Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Hallett, R. E., and Barber, K. (2014). *Ethnographic research in a cyber era. Journal of Contemporary Ethnography*, *43*(3), 306-330.

Hallock, B. (2017, November 7). The Divide Between Rural and Urban Christianity and The Need To Listen To The Other Side. *Outlook: News and Inspiration from Mid-America*. Retrieved from: https://outlookmag.org/the-divide-between-rural-and-urban-christianity/

Halstead, M. (1997). Muslim and Sex Education. *Journal of Moral Education*, *26*(3), 317-330.

Hamdani, H. A., Bhatti K., & Munawar N.F. (2008, December 1). Muslim political participation in Canada: from marginalization to empowerment? *Muslim Presence*. Retrieved from http://muslimpresence.com/?p=702

Hammett, D., Twyman, C., Graham, M. (2015). *Research and Fieldwork in Development*. London: Routledge.

Hampton, B. (2004, October 1). Dialoguing with Terrorists and Liberals. *Comment*. Retrieved from: https://www.cardus.ca/comment/article/dialoguing-with-terrorists-and-liberals/

Hansen, M. L. (1938). *The problem of the third generation immigrant*. Rock Island: Augustana Historical Society Publications.

Harinck, G. (2001). The Reception of the Liberation of 1944 in Christian Reformed Circles, 1944-1946. AADAS 13th Biennial Conference Papers, pp. 27-32.

Harper, G. W., Serrano, P. A., Bruce, D., and Bauermeister, J. A. (2016). The Internet's Multiple Roles in Facilitating the Sexual Orientation Identity Development of Gay and Bisexual Male Adolescents. *American journal of men's health*, *10*(5), 359-376.

Harris, K. (2018, June 15). Trinity Western loses fight for Christian law school as court rules limits on religious freedom 'reasonable'. *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trinity-western-supreme-court-decision-1.4707240

Harvest Canadian Reformed Christian school. (2015). *Parent Handbook 2015-2016*. Retrieved from: https://harvestschool.ca/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/Parent-Handbook-Revised-Nov-2015.pdf

Hastie, P. (2014, September 26). Clash of Cultures: Christians must be clear-sighted about Islam, for better or worse. Patrick Sookhdeo talks to Peter Hastie. *Clarion – the Canadian Reformed magazine*, *63*(19), 495-503.

Hastings, A. (1997). *The Construction of Nationhood: Ethnicity, Religion, and Nationalism.* Cambridge; New York: Cambridge University Press.

Health Committee Tables Report on Porn Motion (M-47). (2017, June 15). *My Canada: National Updates*. Retrieved from: https://madmimi.com/s/6c5a4a

HealthLinkBC. (n.d.). *Sexual Orientation*. Retrieved from: www.healthlinkbc.ca/health-topics/abj9152

Heemskerk, J. (2017*a*). *Thoughts about admissions*. LCRSS.

Heemskerk, J. (2017*b*). Toward a Uniform Curriculum. *LCRSS Newsletter*, *2*(3), 1-2.

Heldke, L. and O'Connor, P. (2004). *Oppression, privilege and resistance: Theoretical perspective on racism, sexism and heterosexism*. New York, NY: McGraw-Hill.

Hevesi, D. (2007, November 4). Saviour of Jews in Netherlands. *Montreal Gazette*, p. 24.

Hiemstra, J. L. (1994). Religious Schooling and Prejudice in Canada: Implications for Public Funding of Christian Schools. *Journal of Research on Christian Education*, *3*(2), 199-215.

Hiemstra, J. L. (2005). Calvinist Pluriformity Challenges Liberal Assimilation: A Novel Case for Publicly Funding. Alberta's Private Schools, 1953-1967. *Journal of Canadian Studies, 39*(3), 146-173.

Hiemstra, J. L. and Brink, R.A. (2006). The advent of a public pluriformity model: faith-based school choice in Alberta. *Canadian Journal of Education*, *29*(4), 1157-1190.

Hier, S. P. and Bolaria, B. S. (2006). *Identity and Belonging: Rethinking Race and Ethnicity in Canadian Society*. Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Hilton D. L. (2013). Pornography addiction — A supranormal stimulus considered in the context of neuroplasticity. *Socioaffective Neuroscience & Psychology*, *3*, 1.

Hilton D. L. and Watts C. (2011). Pornography addiction: A neuroscience perspective. *Surgical Neurology International*, *2*, 19.

Himes, B. (2013). *The Common Good and Just Peacemaking: Abraham Kuyper's and Dietrich Bonhoeffer's Discipleship for a Better Worldliness*. (Doctoral thesis, Westmont College, Santa Barbara, California). Retrieved from: ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global database. (UMI No. 3704720)

Hirschman, C. (2004). The Role of Religion in the Origins and Adaptation of Immigrant Groups in the United States. *International Migration Review*, *38*(3), 1206-1233.

Hirvonen, H. (2012) *Christian-Muslim Dialogue: Perspectives of Four Lebanese Thinkers*. BRILL.

Hollander den, W. (1999). Unity Committee Reports – The Canadian Reformed Churches – A Brief History. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *48*(15), 350-354.

Holtvluwer, P. (2010). *Friends With Benefits.* Spring Creek CanRC. Retrieved from: https://springcreekcanrc.org/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=30:worship-service-tour-enter-in-&catid=17:2011-04-12-03-11-40&Itemid=25

Holtvluwer, P. (2011). *Jubilee Woman*. Spring Creek CanRC. Retrieved from: http://www.springcreekcanrc.org/index.php/component/content/article/2-latest/49-jubilee-woman

Hoover, D., Martinez, M., Reimer, S. and Wald, K. (2002). Evangelicalism Meets the Continental Divide: Moral and Economic Conservatism in the United States and Canada. *Political Research Quarterly*, *55*, 351–374.

Hopko, T. P. (2012). The Homosexual Christian. *The Orthodox Church of Americ*a. Retrieved from: https://oca.org/reflections/misc-authors/the-homosexual-christian

Horowitz, D. L. (1985). *Ethnic Groups in Conflict*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Htun, M. (2004). Is Gender like Ethnicity? The Political Representation of Identity Groups. *Perspectives on Politics, 2*(3), 439-458.

Huisken, J. (2006). The Protestant Reformed churches: organization, roots, and future. In G. Harinck and H. Krabbendam (Eds.), *Morsels in the Melting Pot. The Persistence of Dutch Immigrant Communities in North America* (pp. 79-92). Amsterdam: vu Uitgeverij.

Hunter, J. D. and Franz, D. (2006). Religious pluralism and civil society. In Stephen Prothero (Ed.), *A nation of religions: the politics of pluralism in multireligious America* (pp. 256-273). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.

Hunter, J. D. (1991). *Culture Wars: The Struggle to Define America*. New York: Basic Books.

Hussain, Y. and Bagguley, P. (2012). Securitized citizens: Islamophobia, racism and the 7/7 London bombings. *The Sociological Review*, *60*(4), 715-734.

Hussein A. H, Bhatti, K. and Munawar, N. F. (2008). Muslim political participation in Canada: from marginalization to empowerment? *Muslim Presence*. Retrieved from: https://pointdebasculecanada.ca/muslim-political-participation-in-canada/

Hutchison, W. R. (2003). *Religious Pluralism in America: The Contentious History of a Founding Ideal*. Yale University Press.

Irvine, W. P. (1974). Explaining the Religious Basis of the Canadian Partisan Identity: Success on the Third Try. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *7*, 560–63.

Irvine, W. P. and Gold, H. (1980). Do Frozen Cleavages Ever Go Stale? The Bases of the Canadian and Australian Party Systems. *British Journal of Political Science*, *10*, 187-218.

Isaacs, H. (1975). Basic Group Identity: The Idols of the Tribe. In N. Glazer and D. P. Moynihan (Eds.), *Ethnicity: Theory and Experience* (pp. 29-52). Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Isajiw, W. (1981). *Ethnic identity retention*. University of Toronto. Centre for Urban and Community Studies.

Isajiw, W. (1990). Ethnic Identity Retention. In R. Breton, W.W. Isajiw, W.E. Kalbach, J.G. Reitz (Eds.), *Ethnic Identity and Equality* (pp. 34-91). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Isajiw, W. (1993*a*). Definition and Dimensions of Ethnicity: A Theoretical Framework. In *Challenges of Measuring an Ethnic World: Science, politics and reality: Proceedings of the Joint Canada-United States Conference on the Measurement of Ethnicity April 1-3, 1992, Statistics Canada and U.S. Bureau of the Census* (pp. 407-427). Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Isajiw, W. (1993*b*). *The Assimilation-Retention Hypothesis and the Second and Third Generations*. University of Toronto Research Repository.

Jakobsen, J. R. and Pellegrini, A. (2004). *Love the Sin: Sexual Regulation and the Limits of Religious Tolerance*. New York: Beacon Press.

Jellema, W.H. (1953). The Christian School a Prerequisite for and an Outgrowth of the Calvinistic World and Life View. In C. Jaarsma (Ed.), *Fundamentals in Christian Education* (pp. 27-32). W.B. Eerdmans Pub. Co.

Juergensmeyer, M. (2012). Global Religion. In Wade Clark Roof and Mark Juergensmeyer (pp. 457-462). *Encyclopedia of Global Religion*. India: SAGE Publications.

Jézéquel, M. (2006). L'obligation d'accommodement: un outil juridique et une mesure d'intégration. *Éthique publique*, *8*(1), 52-59.

Johnston, R. (1985). The Reproduction of the Religious Cleavage in Canadian Elections. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *18*, 99-113.

Jones, A. (2019, August 21). Ontario government releases new sex-ed curriculum. *CTV News Toronto*. Retrieved from: https://toronto.ctvnews.ca/ontario-government-releases-new-sex-ed-curriculum-1.4558601

Jones, J. (2014). *(Un)normalizing education: addressing homophobia in higher education and K-12 schools*. Charlotte, North Carolina: Information Age Publishing Inc.

Jones, S. (1997). *The Archaeology of Ethnicity: Constructing Identities in the Past and Present*. Routledge Press, London and New York.

Jordan, G., and Weedon, C. (1995). *Cultural politics: Class, gender, race and the postmodern world*. Oxford, UK: Blackwell.

Kampen, D. (2017, March 2017). Chairman's Notes. *Guido de Bres Gazette*, *3*, p. 6.

Kehrer, G. and Hardin B. (1995). Sociological Approaches. In F. Whaling (Ed.), *Theory and Method in Religious Studies: Contemporary Approaches to the Study of Religion* (pp. 321-350). Walter de Gruyter.

Kelly, G. (2017). The scary effects of pornography: how the 21st century's acute addiction is rewiring our brains. *The Telegraph*. Retrieved from: https://www.telegraph.co.uk/men/thinking-man/scary-effects-pornography-21st-centurys-accute-addiction-rewiring/

Kelly, P. (1997). *Integrating Islam: A Muslim school in Montreal*. (Master's Thesis, Department of Islamic Studies, McGill University, Montreal, Canada). Retrieved from: ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (UMI No. MQ37210).

Kim, R. Y. (2011). Religion and Ethnicity: Theoretical Connections. *Religions*, *2*, 312-329.

Kingma, J. (2006). Bricks and Mortar and Beyond. 50 Years of Reformed Education in North America. In A. Gunnink, J. Kingma, F. Oosterhoff, C. van Halen-Faber (Eds.), *Celebrating 25 Years Milestones as Steppingstones* (pp. 17-27). Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers Colleges: Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Kingsbury, M. W. (2015) A Time to Fight: Sex, Gender, and the Confessions of the Reformed Churches in North America. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *64*(9), 239-241.

Kinnaman, D. (n.d.). Porn Phenomenon. *Barna*. Retrieved from: https://www.barna.com/the-porn-phenomenon

Kits, H. (1988). *World Views and Social Involvement. A Proposal for Classification of Canadian Neo-Calvinist Social Involvement 1945 – 1988*. (Master's thesis, Institute for Christian Studies, Canada). Retrieved from: https://ir.icscanada.edu/bitstream/handle/10756/288520/Kits_Harry_J_1988_MPhilF_Thesis.pdf?sequence=2&isAllowed=y

Kitzinger, J. and Samuel G. (2014). A response to Naccache's comment on 'Reporting consciousness in coma'. *JOMEC Journal: Journalism, Media and Cultural Studies*.

Retrieved from: http://www.cardiff.ac.uk/jomec/jomecjournal/3-june2013/Kitzinger_Samuel_Naccache.pdf

Kivisto, P. (2014). *Religion and Immigration: Migrant Faiths in North America and Western Europe*. Polity.

Klaus, C. (2015). Psychological, Social, and Spiritual Effects of Contraceptive Steroid Hormones. *The Linacre quarterly*, *82*(3), 283-300.

Kleiss, K. (2006, November 3) Nick Knoppers risked his life for the Dutch resistance, and helped found Kings College. *Edmonton Journal*, p. 6.

Kloosterman, N. D. (2015). Clarity and Rapprochement? Review on 'Correctly Handling the Word of Truth: Reformed Hermeneutics Today', edited by Mees te Velde and Gerhard H. Visscher. *Christian Renewal*, June 10, 20-21.

Koh, P. W., Xi C., Cummins, J., and Li, J. (2017). Literacy Outcomes of a Chinese/English Bilingual Program in Ontario. *The Canadian modern language review 73*(3), 343-367.

Konyndyk, L. (2015, April 21). Christian Schools Rally around Loyola. *Ontario Alliance of Christian Schools.* Retrieved from: http://www.oacs.org/2015/christian-schools-rally-around-loyola

Koops, E. (2010). Churches reach across borders: "Emigration culture" as a concept to analyse religious aspects of emigration." In J. E. Nyenhuis, S. M. Sinke, & R. P. Swierenga (Eds.), *Across borders: Dutch migration to North America and Australia*. (pp. 19-26). Holland, MI: Van Raalte Press.

Koppelman, A. M. (2006). You can't hurry love: why antidiscrimination protections for gay people should have religious exemptions. *Brooklyn Law Review*, *72*, 125-146.

Kossmann, E. H. (1978). *The low countries: 1780-1940*. London, UK: Oxford University Press.

Koussens, D. (2009). Neutrality of the State and Regulation of Religious Symbols in Schools in Quebec and France. *Social Compass*, *56*, 202-213.

Krabbendam, H. (2003). *Dutch-American Identity Politics: The Use of History by Dutch Immigrants*. Inaugural lecture, Visiting Research Fellows Program, Van Raalte Institute, Hope College, (September 18, 2003).

Krabbendam, H. and Harinck, G. (2006). Of weeds and wall flowers: small Dutch ethnic communities in North America. In G. Harinck, and H. Krabbendam (Eds.), *Morsels in the Melting Pot. The Persistence of Dutch Immigrant Communities in North America* (pp. 9-20). Amsterdam: vu Uitgeverij.

Kramer, J. and Leventman, S. (1961). *Children of the Gilded Ghetto: Conflict Resolutions of Three Generations of American Jews*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Kubicek, K., Beyer W., Weiss G., Iverson E., Kipke M. D. (2010). In the dark: Young men's stories of sexual initiation in the absence of relevant sexual health information. *Health Education and Behavior*, *37*(2), 243-263.

Kubicek, K., Carpineto, J., McDavitt, B., Weiss, G., and Kipke, M. (2011). Use and perceptions of the Internet for sexual information and partners: A study of YMSM. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *40*(4), 803-816.

Kukathas, C. (1992). Are There Any Cultural Rights? *Political Theory*, *20*(1), 105-139.

Kuyper, A. (2009). *Lectures on Calvinism: The Stone Lectures* of Princeton. Cosimo, Inc.

Kuyvenhoven, A. (1980, November 3). It's Time to Burn the Wooden Shoes. *Banner*, pp. 7-8.

Kymlicka, W. (1989). *Liberalism, Community, and Culture*. Oxford: Clarendon Press.

Kymlicka, W. (1995). *Multicultural citizenship a liberal theory of minority rights*. Oxford: Clarendon.

Kymlicka, W. (1998). *Finding Our Way: Rethinking Ethnocultural Relations in Canada.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (1999). Liberal Complacencies. In J. Cohen, M. Howard, M. Nussbaum (Eds.), *Is Multiculturalism Bad for Women? Susan Moller Okin with respondents* (pp. 31-34). Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2001). *Politics in the vernacular nationalism, multiculturalism and citizenship*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2002). *Contemporary Political Philosophy: An Introduction*. Oxford University Press.

Kymlicka, W. (2008). *The Three Lives of Multiculturalism*. Prepared for presentation to UBC-Laurier Institution Multiculturalism Lecture Series University of British Columbia, April 15, 2008. Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/2397536/The_Three_Lives_of_Multiculturalism_2008

Kymlicka, W. (2010). The Rise and Fall of Multiculturalism? New Debates on Inclusion and Accommodation in Diverse Societies. *International Social Science Journal*, *61*(199), 97-122.

Kymlicka, W. and Norman, W. (2000). *Citizenship in Culturally Diverse Societies*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Laplante, R. (1991). Calm Vs. Conflict: Religious Education and Catholic School Identity in Canada. *Religious Education*, *88*(1), 84-98.

Laurence, J. (2012). *The Emancipation of Europe's Muslims: The State's Role in Minority Integration*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Laurence, L. (2016, November 18). 19-year-old homeschooled pro-lifer wins Ontario election by landslide. *Life Site*. Retrieved from: https://www.lifesitenews.com/news/pro-life-pc-teens-win-pro-sex-ed-torys-loss-prove-social-conservatives-get

Layman, G. (2001). *The Great Divide: Religious and Cultural Conflict in American Party Politics*. New York: Columbia University Press.

LCRSS. (2019). *2019-2020 Reformed School Directory*. Hamilton, Canada.

LCRSS. (n.d.). *The League of Canadian Reformed School Societies*. Retrieved from: https://lcrss.ca/

Lee, E. (2013). *A Critique of Canadian Multiculturalism as a State Policy and Its Effects on Canadian Subjects*. (Master's Thesis. University of Toronto, Canada). Retrieved from: https://tspace.library.utoronto.ca/bitstream/1807/42631/1/Lee_Emerald_201311_MA_thesis.pdf

Lee, R. M., and Renzetti, C. M. (1990). The problems of researching sensitive topics: An overview and introduction. *The American Behavioral Scientist*, *33*(5), 510-528.

Letter to the Bishops on the Pastoral Care of Homosexual Persons. (1986). Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Retrieved from: http://www.vatican.va/roman_curia/congregations/cfaith/documents/rc_con_cfaith_doc_19861001_homosexual-persons_en.html

Lewington, J. (1998, June 30). Teach abstinence in sex-ed class, Ontario says What pupils learn about other methods of birth control, homosexuality left up to local boards and parents. *The Globe and Mail*, A.4

Ley, D. J. (2013, July 25). Your Brain on Porn - It's NOT Addictive. What neurological research ACTUALLY shows about the people who use porn. *Psychology Today*. Retrieved from: https://www.psychologytoday.com/ca/blog/women-who-stray/201307/your-brain-porn-its-not-addictive

Lieburg, F. van (2009). The Dutch and Their Religion. In Hans Krabbendam, Cornelis A. van Minnen, and Giles Scott-Smith (Eds.), *Four Centuries of Dutch-American Relations: 1609-2009* (pp. 154-165). SUNY Press.

Lijphart, A. (1968). *The Politics of Accommodation*. University of California Press.

Lobbezoo, C. C. (2014). *"They Built a Kingdom": Developing a Free Reformed Church Community in Southern Ontario, 1950-1976*. (Master's Thesis. University of Waterloo, Canada). Retrieved from: https://uwspace.uwaterloo.ca/bitstream/handle/10012/8240/Lobbezoo_Corrina.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Lofland, J. and Stark, R. (1965). Becoming a World-Saver: A Theory of Conversion to a Deviant Perspective. *American Sociological Review*, *30*, 862-875.

Lövheim, M, and Stenmark, M. (2020). Introduction: Constructive Criticism in Secular and Religiously Diverse Society. In Mia Lövheim and Mikael Stenmark, *A Constructive Critique of Religion: Encounters Between Christianity, Islam and Non-Religion in Secular Societies* (pp. 1-16). Bloomsbury Academic.

Lovin, R. (2012). Consensus and Commitment: Real People, Religious Reasons, and Public Discourse. In K. Grasso and C. Castillo (Eds.), *Theology and Public Philosophy: Four Conversations* (pp. 119-126). Lanham, Maryland: Lexington Books.

Loy, D. (2007). The Religion of the Market. *Journal of the American Academy of Religion, 65*(2), 275-290.

Loyola High School V. Quebec (Attorney General). (2015). Retrieved from: https://scc-csc.lexum.com/scc-csc/scc-csc/en/item/14703/index.do

Loyola High School v. Quebec (Attorney General). (2015). SCC 12, [2015] 1 S.C.R. 613. FR120 Intervener Home-School Legal Defense Association of Canada. Retrieved from: https://www.scc-csc.ca/WebDocuments-DocumentsWeb/35201/FM120_Intervener_Home-School-Legal-Defence-Association-of-Canada.pdf

Luckman, T. (1967). *The Invisible Religion: The Transformation of Symbols in Industrial Society*. New York.

Luffman, J. (1997). A profile of home schooling in Canada. *Education Quarterly Review, 4*(4), 30-47.

Lupul, M. R. (1974). *The Roman Catholic Church and the North-West School Question: A study in Church-State relations in Western Canada, 1875-1905*. Toronto, The University of Toronto Press.

Macartney, C. (2018). *Canada's first anti-porn summit to be hosted in Ottawa*. SpurOttawa. Retrieved from: http://www.spurottawa.com/canadas-first-anti-porn-summit-to-be-hosted-in-ottawa/

Macdonald, N. (2008, June 13). Free speech, eh? Why is Canada prosecuting Mark Steyn? *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/world/free-speech-eh-why-is-canada-prosecuting-mark-steyn-1.720445

Macedo, S. (2000). *Diversity and Distrust: Civic Education in a Multicultural Democracy*. Harvard University Press.

Mack, N., Woodsong, C, Macqueen, K., Guest, G., Namey, E. (2005). *Qualitative Research Methods: A Data Collector's Field Guide*. FHI and USAID, North Carolina.

MacKinnon, C. A. (1993). *Only Words.* Harvard University Press. Cambridge, Massachusetts.

MacLeod, A. (2018). *Homeschooling has grown substantially in Canada over past five years*. Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: www.fraserinstitute.org/blogs/homeschooling-has-grown-substantially-in-canada-over-past-five-years

MacMullen, I. (2007). *Faith in schools: autonomy, citizenship, and religious education in the liberal state*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Maddox, M. (2011). Are religious schools socially inclusive or exclusive? An Australian conundrum. *International Journal of Cultural Policy, 17*(2), 170-186.

Magnuson, R. (1992). *Education in New France*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Mahtani, M. (2002). Interrogating the Hyphen-Nation: Canadian Multicultural Policy and 'Mixed Race' Identities. *Social Identities, 8*(1), 67-90.

Malik, K. (2005). Making a difference: culture, race and social policy. *Patterns of Prejudice 39*(4), 361-378.

Malik, K. (2015). The Failure of Multiculturalism. *Foreign Affairs, 94*(2), 21-32.

Malloy, J. (2009). Bush/Harper? Canadian and American Evangelical Politics Compared. *American Review of Canadian Studies, 39*(4), 352-363.

Malloy, J. (2011). Between America and Europe: Religion, Politics and Evangelicals in Canada. *Politics, Religion & Ideology, 12*(3), 317-333.

Marcotte, G. (2005). *Le scandale de l'école confessionnelle: le cas du Québec.* Sainte-Foy, Québec: Éditions Humanisation.

Marle, J. van. (2006). *When perfection comes: Dutch Pentecostal immigrants in America*. In Harinck, G. and Krabbendam H. (Eds.), *Morsels in the Melting Pot. The Persistence of Dutch Immigrant Communities in North America* (pp. 125-130). Amsterdam: vu Uitgeverij.

Marshall, C. and Rossman, G. (1999) Designing Qualitative Research, 3rd ed. London: Sage.

Marshall, D. and Mosher, L. (2014) *Death, Resurrection and Human Destiny: Christian and Muslim Perspectives*. Washington: Georgetown University Press.

Martin, D. (2005). *On Secularization: Towards a Revised General Theory*. Ashgate-Religion.

Martínez-Ariño, J., Lefebvre, S. (2016). Resisting or Adapting? How Private Catholic High Schools in Quebec Respond to State Secularism and Religious Diversification. *Eurostudia – Revue Transatlantique De Recherche Sur L'Europe, 11*(1), 19-44.

Masselink, W. (1953). *General Revelation and Common Grace*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans.

Massey, D. S. and International Union for the Scientific Study of Population. Committee on South-North Migration. (1998). *Worlds in motion: understanding international migration at the end of the millenium*. Clarendon Press; New York: Oxford University Press, Oxford; New York.

Massey, D., Arango J., Hugo G., Kouaouci A., Pellegrino A., Taylor J. E. (2005). *Worlds in Motion. Understanding international migration at the end of the Millenium*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Maussen, M. (2013). *Religious Governance in the Netherlands: Associative Freedoms and Non-Discrimination After 'Pillarization'. The Example of Faith-Based School*. RECODE – Responding to Complex Diversity in Europe and Canada. Helsinki, Finland. Online Working Paper No. 14.

Maxwell, J. A. (2009). Designing a qualitative study. In L. Bickman and D. J. Rog (Eds.), *Handbook of applied social research methods*, 2nd ed. (pp. 69-100). SAGE.

Mayberry M. and Knowles, G. (1989). Family unity objectives of parents who teach their children: Ideological and pedagogical orientations to home schooling. *Urban Review, 21*, 209-210.

Mayer, L. and McHugh, P. (2016). Special Report - Sexuality and Gender. Findings from the Biological, Psychological, and Social Sciences. *The New Atlantis*, Fall. Retrieved from: https://www.thenewatlantis.com/docLib/20160819_TNA50SexualityandGender.pdf

McCarthy, M. (1998). Interviewing People with Learning Disabilities about Sensitive Topics: A Discussion of Ethical Issues. *British Journal of Learning Disabilities, 26*(4), 140-145.

McCready, W. C. (1974). The persistence of ethnic variation in American families. In A.M. Greeley (Ed.), *Ethnicity in the United States: A Preliminary Reconnaissance* (pp. 156-76). New York: John Wiley.

McDonough, G. P. (2012). *Beyond obedience and abandonment: Toward a theory of dissent in Catholic education*. Montreal, QC & Kingston, ON: McGill-Queen's University Press.

McDonough, G. P., Menon, N. A. and Mintz, A. I. (2013). Introduction. In G. P. McDonough, N. A. Menon, and A. I. Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 1-24). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

McGrath, A. E. (1992). The Christian Church's Response to Pluralism. *JETS 35*(4), 487-501.

Mckeen, L. A. (2015). *Canadian Christian Nationalism? The Religiosity and Politics of The Christian Heritage Party of Canada*. (Doctoral thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University, Canada). Retrieved from: https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2842&context=etd

McLaughlin, T. N. (1984). Parental rights and the religious upbringing of children. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *18*(1), 75-83.

McLaughlin, T. N. (1990). *Parental Rights in Religious Upbringing and Religious Education within a Liberal Perspective*. (Doctoral thesis, University of London Institute of Education, UK). Retrieved from: ProQuest Dissertations & Theses Global. (UMI No. U044613).

McLeod, A. and Sazid H. (2017). *Where our students are educated. Measuring student enrolment in Canada-2017*. Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.fraserinstitute.org/studies/where-our-students-are-educated-measuring-student-enrolment-in-canada-2017

Meaney, G. (2009). *Satisfaction with Sexual Health Education among Recent Graduates of Ontario High Schools*. (Master's Thesis. Wilfrid Laurier University). Retrieved from: https://scholars.wlu.ca/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1961&context=etd

Meaney, G., Rye, B. J, Wood, E., Solovieva, E. (2009). Satisfaction with school-based sexual health education in a sample of university students recently graduated from Ontario high schools. *The Canadian Journal of Human Sexuality*, *18*(3), 107-125.

Meehan, C. (2010, September 30). *Breaking the Mental Illness Stigma*. Christian Reformed Church. Retrieved from: https://www.crcna.org/news-and-views/breaking-mental-illness-stigma

Meer, N. and Modood, T. (2012). How does Interculturalism Contrast with Multiculturalism? *Journal of Intercultural Studies, 33*(2), 175-196.

Memon, N. (2010). Social Consciousness in Canadian Islamic Schools? *International Migration & Integration, 11,* 109–117.

Memon, N. (2013). Between Immigrating and Integrating: The Challenge of Defining an Islamic Pedagogy in Canadian Islamic Schools. In G. P. McDonough, N. A. Menon, and A. I.

Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 73-100). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Menzies, P. (2009, November 13). Burqas and Our Worldview Vacuum. *Comment*. Retrieved from: https://www.cardus.ca/comment/article/burqas-and-our-worldview-vacuum/

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Merriam-Webster Dictionary. (n.d.). *Contraception*. Retrieved from: https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/contraception

Miller, J. and Glassner, B. (2011). The 'inside' and the 'outside': Finding realities in interviews. In D. Silverman (Ed.), *Qualitative Research* (pp. 131-148). London, England: Sage Publications.

Minderhood, L. (2020, January 22). Opportunities for Partisan Political Action in British Columbia in 2020. *ARPA Canada*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2020/01/22/opportunities-for-partisan-political-action-in-british-columbia-in-2020

Minnery, T. (2001). *Why You Can't Stay Silent: A Biblical Mandate to Shape Our Culture*. Wheaton, IL: Tyndale House Publishers.

Mintz, A. I. (2013). Diversity and Deliberation in Faith-Based Schools: Implications for Educating Canadian Citizens. In G. P. McDonough, N. A. Menon, & A. I. Mintz (Eds.), *Discipline, devotion, and dissent: Jewish, Catholic, and Islamic schooling in Canada* (pp. 237-250). Waterloo, Ont.: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Mitchel, P. (2012, June 13). Do anti-bullying laws work? *ARPA Canada*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2012/06/13/do-anti-bullying-laws-work

Moesker, J. (2017). Are We Following the Reformed Churches in the Netherlands? [audio]. *Smithville Canadian Reformed Church*. Retrieved from: https://smithvillecanrc.ca/sermon/are-we-following-the-reformed-churches-in-the-netherlands

Mol, H. (1985). New Perspectives from Cross-Cultural Studies. In P. E. Hammond (Ed.), *The Sacred in a Secular Age* (pp. 90-103). Berkeley: University of California Press.

Montagu, A. (1964). *The Concept of Race*. Free Press of Glencoe.

Mouw, R. J. (2003), Klaas Schilder as Public Theologian. *Calvin Theological Journal*, *38*, 281-298.

Mouw, R. J. (2011). *Abraham Kuyper: A short and personal introduction*. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.

Mouw, R. J. (2012). *The Challenges of Cultural Discipleship*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Mrozek, A. (2018, September 5). Why is Sex Ed Silent About Marriage? *Convivium*. Retrieved from: https://www.convivium.ca/articles/why-is-sex-ed-silent-about-marriage?fbclid=IwAR37XqDG6yOH4zaQpRl24DQcD1ovm3KmHRlSvQ9XPGF89CbXJswSVXYF8C0

Mueller, S., De Cuypere, G., T'Sjoen, G. (2017). Transgender Research in the 21st Century: A Selective Critical Review from a Neurocognitive Perspective. *Am J Psychiatry*, *174*(12), 1155-1162. Retrieved from: https://ajp.psychiatryonline.org/doi/10.1176/appi.ajp.2017.17060626

Murphy, J. (2012). *Homeschooling in America: Capturing and Assessing the Movement*. Corwin.

Murphy, J. (2014). The Social and Educational Outcomes of Homeschooling. *Sociological Spectrum*, *34*, 244-272.

Nagle, J. C. (2008). The evangelical debate over climate change. *University of St. Thomas Law Journal*, *5*, 53-86.

Nahirney, V. and Fishman, J. A. (1965). American Immigrant Groups: Ethnic Identification and the Problem of Generations. *Sociological Review*, *13*, 311-326.

National Abortion Federation. (n.d.). *History of Abortion in Canada*. Retrieved from: https://nafcanada.org/history-abortion-canada/

Nault, J.-F., Meunier, E.-M. (2017). Is Quebec Still a Catholically Distinct Society within Canada? An Examination of Catholic Affiliation and Mass Attendance. *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses*, *46*(2), 230-248.

Nicolson, M. (1984). Irish Catholic Education in Victorian Toronto: An Ethnic Response to Urban Conformity. *Histoire sociale - Social History*, *XVII*(34), 287-306.

Niemandt, C. J. (2013). A network society, social media, migration and mission. *Missionalia 41*(1). Retrieved from: http://www.scielo.org.za/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S0256-95072013000100003#back1

Noel, S. J. R. (1971). Consociational Democracy and Canadian Federalism. *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, *4*(1), 15-18.

Noll, M. (1994). *The Scandal of the Evangelical Mind*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Noll, M. (1997). Canadian Evangelicalism: A View from the United States. In G. A. Rawlyk (Ed.), *Aspects of the Canadian Evangelical Experience* (pp. 3-20). Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Nordeman, G. J. (2014). Canadian Reformed Address to Synod Ede (March 2014). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 63*(17), 439-441.

Norman, R. (1999). Homeschooling. *Journal of the Association for Research on Mothering*, *1*(1), 121-124.

Northcott, M. S. (1998). Sociological approaches. Sociological Approaches to the Study of Religion. In P. Connolly (Ed.), *Approaches to the Study of Religion* (pp. 193-225). London: Cassell.

Nutt, A. (2017, April 5). Long shadow cast by psychiatrist on transgender issues finally recedes at Johns Hopkins. *Washington Post*. Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/national/health-science/long-shadow-cast-by-psychiatrist-on-transgender-issues-finally-recedes-at-johns-

hopkins/2017/04/05/e851e56e-0d85-11e7-ab07-07d9f521f6b5_story.html?utm_term=.e9378af175ff

O'Neill, B. (2001). A Simple Difference of Opinion? Religious Beliefs and Gender Gaps in Public Opinion in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science, 34*, 275-298.

O'Reilley, Rev. J. V. (1972). *Independent Education in B.C.* Vancouver: The Knights of Columbus.

Ontario high school students walk out over curriculum. (2018, September 21). *CBC*. Retrieved from: https://www.ctvnews.ca/canada/ontario-high-school-students-walk-out-over-curriculum-1.4103670?fbclid=IwAR2lmJI_Puol7_c7QOpgs3iYplp2YYwustoFvM7p3KIbzeooaF_K8mAve-o

Ontario Ministry of Education. (n.d.). *Private Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Retrieved from: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/general/elemsec/privsch/

Oosterhoff, F. (2006*a*). How are We Doing? The Canadian Reformed Churches Today. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 55*(2), 42-43.

Oosterhoff, F. (2006*b*). The Canadian Reformed Churches: Continuity and (Some) Change, 1950-2005. In G. Harinck and H. Krabbendam (Eds.), *Morsels in the Melting Pot. The Persistence of Dutch Immigrant Communities in North America* (pp. 109-124). Amsterdam: vu Uitgeverij.

Ossewaarde, M. (2014). The national identities of the 'death of multiculturalism' discourse in Western Europe. *Journal of Multicultural Discourses, 9*(3), 173-189.

Ouweneel, W. J. (2014). *Power in Service. An Introduction to Christian Political Thought*. Paideia Press.

Palinkas, L., Horwitz, S., Green, C. et al. (2013). Purposeful Sampling for Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis in Mixed Method Implementation Research. *Administration and Policy in Mental Health and Mental Health Services Research, 42*(5), 533–544.

Palmer, H. (1975). *Immigration and the Rise of Multiculturalism*. Copp Clark Publishing, Toronto.

Pammett, J. H. (1991). The Effects of Individual and Contextual Variables on Partisanship in Canada. *European Journal of Political Research, 19*, 399-412.

Paproski, P. (2011). *The German Catholics of St. Peter's Colony: 1903-1930*. (Master's thesis, University of Saskatchewan, Canada). Retrieved from: https://harvest.usask.ca/bitstream/handle/10388/ETD-2011-08-25/PAPROSKI-THESIS.pdf?sequence=3

Parks, J. (2016, December 8). CRC leaders wrestle with same-sex marriage: a look at Synod 2016. *Chimes – Calvin College*. Retrieved from: https://calvinchimes.org/2016/12/08/crc-leaders-wrestle-with-same-sex-marriage-a-look-at-synod-2016

Parsons, T. (1973). Durkheim on religion revisited: another look at the elementary forms of the religious life. In C. Glock and P. Hammond (Eds.), *Beyond the Classics? Essays in the Scientific Study of Religion* (pp. 156-80). New York: Harper & Row.

Pasztor, A. (2010). Talking the Same Language: How Does Education in the Mother Tongue Affect the Pupils' Scholastic Achievement in the Parallel School Systems? In J. Dronkers (Ed.), *Quality and Inequality of Education: Cross-National Perspectives* (pp. 205-225). Springer, Dordrecht.

Patrinos, H. A. (2009). *Private education provision and public finance: the Netherlands*. Prepared for School Choice and School Improvement: Research in State, District and Community Contexts. Vanderbilt University, October 25-27, 2009. Retrieved from: http://citeseerx.ist.psu.edu/viewdoc/download?doi=10.1.1.370.2208&rep=rep1&type=pdf

Patton, M. Q. (2001). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods*. (2nd ed.). Saint Paul, MN: Sage Publications.

Patton, M. Q. (2015). *Qualitative research & evaluation methods: Integrating theory and practice* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Pawson, R. (1995). Methods of Content/Document/Media Analysis. In M. Haralambos (Ed.), *Developments in Sociology*, *11* (pp. 107-128). Ormskirk: Causeway Press.

Pazmiño, R. W. (2008). *Foundational Issues in Christian Education: An Introduction in Evangelical Perspective*. Grand Rapids, Mich: Baker Academic.

Peetoom, A. (1983). *From mythology to mythology: Dutch-Canadian orthodox Calvinist immigrants and their schools*. (Unpublished Master's thesis, University of Toronto, Canada).

Penninga, M. (2018, June 28). Civil Disobedience and Courageous Leadership By Alberta Schools. *ARPA* Canada. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2018/06/28/civil-disobedience-and-courageous-leadership-by-alberta-schools

Pennings, M. (2016, October 31). Perpetuating Homeschool Myths. *Convivium*. Retrieved from: https://www.convivium.ca/articles/perpetuating-homeschool-myths#fn1

Pennings, R. et al. (2012). *A Rising Tide Lifts all Boats: Measuring Non-Government School Effects in Service of the Canadian Public Good*. Retrieved from: https://pacificchristian.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Cardus_Education_Survey_Phase_II_Report_2012.pdf

Perman, M. (2006, January 23). Does the Bible Permit Birth Control? *Desiring God*. Retrieved from: https://www.desiringgod.org/articles/does-the-bible-permit-birth-control

Perry, M. J. (1988). *Morality, Politics, and Law: A Bicentennial Essay*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Pew Research Center. (2015, October 22). *Religion and Views on Climate and Energy Issues*. Religion and Science. Retrieved from: https://www.pewresearch.org/science/2015/10/22/religion-and-views-on-climate-and-energy-issues/

Phinney, J. S. (1990). Ethnic Identity in Adolescents and Adults: Review of Research. *Psychological Bulletin, 108*, 499-514.

Pickman, B., and Griggs, B. (2018, June 20). The World Health Organization will stop classifying transgender people as mentally ill. *CNN*. Retrieved from:

https://www.cnn.com/2018/06/20/health/transgender-people-no-longer-considered-mentally-ill-trnd/index.html

Piquemal, N. and Nickels, B. (2005). Cultural Congruence in the Education of and Research with Young Aboriginal Students: Ethical Implications for Classroom Researchers". *The Alberta journal of Educational Research, 51*(2), 118-134.

Polak, M. (2008, March 22) The Dutch experience in WWII; Writing about own family, authors tell nation's story. *Montreal Gazette*, p. 4.

Porn Phenomenon (n.d.). *Barna*. Retrieved from: https://shop.barna.com/products/porn-phenomenon

Possick, C. (2009). Reflexive Positioning in a Politically Sensitive Situation Dealing With the Threats of Researching the West Bank Settler Experience. *Qualitative Inquiry*, *15*(5), 859-875.

Pring, R. (2007). The Common School. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *41*, 503-522.

Prinsen, P. C. (2000). "*That Old Dutch Disease". The Roots of Dutch Calvinist Education in Alberta*. (Doctoral thesis, University of Alberta, Canada). Retrieved from: https://central.bac-lac.gc.ca/.item?id=NQ59654&op=pdf&app=Library

Providence Canadian Reformed Church. (n.d.). *Our Congregation*. Retrieved from: https://providencechurch.ca/our-congregation/

Putnam, R. D. and Campbell, D. E. (2010). *American Grace: How Religion Divides and Unites Us*. New York: Simon and Schuster.

Rahnema, S. (2006). Islam in diaspora and challenges to multiculturalism. In H. Moghissi (Ed.), *Muslim Diaspora: Gender, Culture and Identity* (pp. 23-38). London: Routledge.

Ramcharan, S. (1982). *Racism: NonWhites in Canada*. Toronto: Butterworths.

Rang, L. (2015, April 27) The legacy of Liberation. *Christian Courier*, pp. 1-2.

Rawls, J. (1993). *Political Liberalism*. Columbia University Press.

Rawls, J. (1997). Idea of Public Revisited. *University of Chicago Law Review*, *64*(3), 765-807.

Rawls, J. (2001). *Justice as Fairness: A Restatement*. 2nd ed. Edited by Erin Kelly. Cambridge: Belknap Press.

Rawlyk, G. (1996). *Is Jesus Your Personal Saviour? In Search of Canadian Evangelicalism in the 1990s*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Ray, B. (2010). Academic Achievement and Demographic Traits of Homeschool Students: A Nationwide Study. *Academic Leadership Live, 8*(1), 1-32.

Raymond, C. (2011). The Continued Salience of Religious Voting in the United States, Germany, and Great Britain. *Electoral Studies*, *30*, 125-135.

Reformed Academic. (2009). *Teaching Evolution At Our Schools - Why And How*. Retrieved from: https://reformedacademic.blogspot.com/2009/10/teaching-evolution-at-our-schools-why.html

Reformed Academic. (2010). *Clarion and Young-Earth Creationism*. Retrieved from: https://reformedacademic.blogspot.com/2010/04/clarion-and-young-earth-creationism.html

Reformed Academic. (2015). *Clarion and Creation Science*. Retrieved from: http://reformedacademic.blogspot.com/2015/10/clarion-and-creation-science.html

Regnerus, M. D. Smith, C., Smith, B. (2004). Social Context in the Development of Adolescent Religiosity. *Applied Developmental Science*, *8*(1), 27-38.

Reid, R., Carpenter, B., and Fong, T. (2011). Neuroscience research fails to support claims that excessive pornography consumption causes brain damage. *Surgical Neurology International*, *2*, 64. Retrieved from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3115160/

Reid, T. (2017). Netherlands Reformed Congregations. In G. T. Kurian and S. C. Day (Eds.), *The Essential Handbook of Denominations and Ministries* (p. 215). Baker Books.

Reimer, S. (2003). *Evangelicals and the Continental Divide: The Conservative Protestant Subculture in Canada and the United States*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Reimer, S. H. and Wilkinson, M. (2015). *A culture of faith: evangelical congregations in Canada*. Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Reitz, J. (2009). Assessing Multiculturalism as a Behavioural Theory. In J. G. Reitz, R. Breton, K. K. Dion, and K. L. Dion (Eds.), *Multiculturalism and Social Cohesion: Potentials and Challenges of Diversity* (pp. 1-48). London: Springer.

Reitz, J. (2014). Canada: New Initiatives and Approaches to Immigration and Nation Building. In J. F. Hollifield, P. L. Martin, and P. M. Orrenius (Eds.), *Controlling Immigration: A Global Perspective* (pp. 88-116). Stanford CA: Stanford University Press.

Report on the public health effects of the ease of access and viewing of online violent and degrading sexually explicit material on children, women and men. (2017). Bill Casey, chair. Parliament. House of Commons. Standing Committee on Health. Report of the Standing Committee on Health; 11th report, 42nd Parliament, 1st session. Ottawa: House of Commons, Canada.

Rice, R. R. and Van Harn, G. L. (1998). Reformed Communities as Functional Communities: Social Capital, Christian Schools, and Reformed Community Vitality. In D. A. Luidens, C. E. Smidt, and H. Stoffels (Eds.), *Reformed Vitality - Continuity and Change in the Face of Modernity* (pp. 51-66). University Press of America.

Richard, M. A. (1992). *Ethnic Groups and Marital Choices: Ethnic History and Marital Assimilation in Canada, 1871 and 1971*. UBC Press.

Rieger, S. (2018, December 3). Parents, faith-based schools argue in court that GSAs spread harmful 'gender ideology'. *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/calgary/gay-straight-alliance-appeal-bill-24-1.4930999

Rights commission dismisses complaint against Maclean's. (2008, June 28). *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/rights-commission-dismisses-complaint-against-maclean-s-1.766963

Roberts, L. and Boldt E. (1979). Institutional completeness and ethnic assimilation. *Journal of Ethnic Studies, 7*(2), 103-108.

Robins, K. (1991). Tradition and Translation: National Culture in its Global Context. In J. Corner and S. Harvey (Eds.), *Enterprise and Heritage: Crosscurrents of National Culture* (pp. 21-44). London: Routledge.

Rocca, R. (2018, November 17). Ontario PC Party passes resolution to debate recognition of gender identity. *CBC*. Retrieved from: https://globalnews.ca/news/4673240/ontario-pc-recognize-gender-identity/amp/?fbclid=IwAR0-q5oPBBRqBD44NkD0e7pJfqbTCIC5z6pbaxqz4EPEKLp-jcu7_pNMG3I

Romanucci-Ross, L. and De Vos, G. A. (1995). *Ethnic identity: creation, conflict, and accommodation*. Walnut Creek, CA: AltaMira Press.

Romein, J. (1971). Abraham Kuyper: De Klokkenist van de Kleine Luyden. In Jan and Annie Romein (Eds.), *Erflaters van onze Beschaving*. Amsterdam: Queridos.

Roof, W. (1993). *A Generation of Seekers: The Spiritual Journeys of the Baby Boom Generation.* San Francisco: HarperCollins.

Rorty, R. (1979). *Philosophy and the mirror of nature*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University.

Rosati, M. and Ferrara, A. (2015). *The Making of a Postsecular Society: A Durkheimian Approach to Memory, Pluralism and Religion in Turkey*. Ashgate Publishing, Ltd.

Rough, B. J. (2018, October 19). Why we shouldn't be separating boys and girls for sex ed. *The Washington Post.* Retrieved from: https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2018/10/19/why-we-shouldnt-be-separating-boys-girls-sex-ed/?noredirect=on&utm_term=.929f1ab07cc4

Ruane, J. and Todd, J. (2011). Ethnicity and Religion: Redefining the Research Agenda. In J. Ruane & J. Todd (Eds.), *Ethnicity and religion: intersections and comparisons* (pp. 1-8). London etc.: Routledge.

Ryder, B. (2008). The Canadian Conception of Equal Religious Citizenship. In Richard Moon (Ed.), *Law and Religious Pluralism in Canada* (pp. 87-110). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Sabina, C., Wolak, J., Finkelhor, D. (2008). The nature and dynamics of internet pornography exposure for youth. *Cyberpsychology and Behavior, 11*(6), 691-693.

Saha, L. J. (2008). Sociology of education. In T. Good (Ed.), *21st Century Education: A Reference Handbook* (pp. 299-308). Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc.

Said, E. (1989). Representing the Colonized: Anthropology's Interlocutors. *Critical Inquiry, 15*(2), 205-225.

Sande, K. (2013) *Common Grace RW: Teaching and Learning from Non-Christians*. Retrieved from: https://rw360.org/2013/10/16/common-grace-rw

Sandel, M. (1993). Freedom of Conscience or Freedom of Choice? In T. Eastland (Ed.) *Religious Liberty in the Supreme Court: The Case that Define the Debate Over Church and State* (pp. 483-486). Published in conjunction with the Ethics and Public Policy Center, Washington, D.C. Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans.

Saunders, B., Kitzinger, J., Kitzinger, C. (2015). Anonymising interview data: challenges and compromise in practice. *Qualitative Research*, *15*(5), 616-632.

Schaeffer, F. A. (1970). *Pollution and the death of man; the Christian view of ecology*. Wheaton, Ill: Tyndale House Publishers.

Schermerhorn, R. A. (1970). *Comparative Ethnic Relations: A Framework for Theory and Research*. New York: Random House.

Schenkeveld, M.A. (1991). *Dutch Literature in the Age of Rembrandt: Themes and Ideas*. John Benjamins Publishing.

Schiffer, S., and C. Wagner. (2011). Anti-semitism and Islamophobia – New enemies, old patterns. *Race & Class*, *52*(3), 77-84.

Schilder, K. (1977). *Christ and Culture*. Trans. G. van Rongen and W. Helder. Winnipeg, Man. Premier Printing Ltd. Retrieved from: https://spindleworks.com/library/schilder/ChristnCulture.html

Schmied, E.R., Jackson, D., Wilkes, L. (2011). Interviewing people about potentially sensitive topics. *Nurse Researcher*, *19*(1), 12-16.

Schouten, M. (2011). Letter: intolerance not akin to bullying. *ARPA Canada*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2011/06/01/letter-intolerance-not-akin-to-bullying

Schouten, R. (1996). Shattered Consensus? *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *45*(19), 414-416.

Schrover, M. (2010). Pillarization, Multiculturalism and Cultural Freezing. Dutch Migration History and the Enforcement of Essentialist Ideas. *Bijdragen En Mededelingen Betreffende de Geschiedenis Der Nederlanden*, *125(2-3)*, 329-354.

Schryer, F J. (1998). *The Netherlandic Presence in Ontario: Pillars, Class and Dutch Ethnicity*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Schutten, A. (2013, February 27) At stake today: Canadian freedom of expression. *National Post*, p.12.

Schutten, A. (2014, March 24) Who owns our kids? *Ottawa Citizen*, p.10.

Schutten, A. (2015*a*) A (Small) Step in the Right Direction for Christian Education in Canada. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *64*(9), 245-247.

Schutten, A. (2015*b*, April 14) We need a shield against bigotry toward religion; Canadian Christians are under attack. *Ottawa Citizen*, p. 5.

Schutten, A. and Hoogerdyk, E. (2019, August 23). Ontario Government Releases Updated 2019 Sex-Ed Curriculum. *ARPA Canada*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2019/08/23/ontario-government-releases-updated-2019-sex-ed-curriculum/

Schutten, A. and Schouten, M. (2014, September 30) Justice for the unborn — delayed and denied. *National Post*, p.10.

Schwandt, T. A. (2001). *Dictionary of Qualitative Inquiry*. SAGE.

Sears, D. O., Sidanius, J., & Bobo, L. (2000). *Racialized politics: The debate about racism in America*. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press.

Secular Schools in Québec. A Necessary Change in Institutional Culture. (2006, October). Brief to the Minister of Education, Recreation and Sports. Québec: Gouvernement du Québec.

Sen, A. (2006). Multiculturalism: unfolding tragedy of two confusions. *Financial Times*. Retrieved from: https://www.ft.com/content/c90fd530-313b-11db-b953-0000779e2340

Seol, K. O. and Lee, R. M. (2012). The Effects of Religious Socialization and Religious Identity on Psychological Functioning in Korean American Adolescents from Immigrant Families. *Journal of Family Psychology*, *26*(3), 371-380.

Sex education in Ontario. (n.d.) Retrieved from: https://www.ontario.ca/page/sex-education-ontario#section-1

Shapiro B. J. (1985). *Report of the commission on private schools in Ontario*. Toronto: Government of Ontario. Retrieved from https://archive.org/stream/reportofprivschools00comm/reportofprivschools00comm_djvu.txt

Sharot, S. (1973). The three generations thesis and the American Jews. *The British Journal of Sociology*, *24*, 151-164.

Shaw, R. P. and Wong, Y. (1989). *Genetic Seeds of Warfare: Evolution, Nationalism, and Patriotism*. Boston: Unwin Hyman.

Sheila Would Love to Speak at Your Church! (n.d.) Retrieved from: https://tolovehonorandvacuum.com/sheila-speaks/

Short, G. (2002). Faith-based schools: a threat to social cohesion. *Journal of Philosophy of Education*, *36*(4), 559-572.

Shupe, A. D. and Bromley. D. G. (1994). *Anti-cult movements in cross-cultural perspective*. Garland.

Sikkema, D. (2010). *Between Isolation and Engagement: The History of the Dutch Calvinist School. Movement in the Netherlands, the United States, and Canada* (Master's thesis, Baylor University, Texas, the USA). Retrieved from: https://baylor-ir.tdl.org/bitstream/handle/2104/7949/Dave_Sikkema_pdf.pdf?sequence=1

Sikkema, J. (2020). A Tale of Two Pandemics. ARPA March 27, 2020. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2020/03/27/tale-of-two-pandemics-euthanasia-and-covid-in-canada/

Sikkema, K. (2004). *Home Schooling in View of John Calvin: A Study in Education and Communion of Saints*. (Master's thesis, Brock University, St. Catharines, Ontario, Canada). Retrieved from: https://spindleworks.com/library/sikkema/HS.pdf

Sikkema, K. (2012, February 3). Peregrine Survey, Fall/Winter 2011. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 61*(3), 63-65.

Sikkink D. and Hill, J. (2006). Education. In H. R. Ebaugh (Ed.), *Handbook of Religion and Social Institutions* (pp. 41–66). Boston, MA: Springer US.

Silcox, C. E. (1960). *Religious education in Canadian schools: why it is permitted, why it is necessary: a study document*. Ottawa: Canadian Council of Churches.

Simmons, A. (2010). *Immigration and Canada: Global and transnational perspectives (Critical issues in contemporary sociology).* Toronto: Canadian Scholars' Press.

Simons, H. (2009). *Case study research in practice*. London: SAGE.

Sissons, C. B. (1959). *Church and state in Canadian education*. Toronto: Ryerson.

Skillen, J. (1994). *Recharging the American Experiment: Principled Pluralism for Genuine Civic Community*. Grand Rapids, Mich.: Baker Books.

Slomp, W. B. (2004). Addiction to Pornography. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *53*(2), 30-32.

Small, J. D. (2005). *Conversations with the Confessions: Dialogue in the Reformed Tradition*. Westminster John Knox Press.

Smith G. W. (1998). The Ideology of 'Fag': The School Experience of Gay Students. *Sociological Quarterly, 39*, 309-355.

Smith, A. (1986). *The Ethnic Origins of Nations.* Blackwell.

Smith, A. (2019, July 22). LGBTQ youth demand meeting with Alberta Premier Jason Kenney. *Calgary Herald*. Retrieved from: https://calgaryherald.com/news/local-news/lgbtq-youth-demand-meeting-with-alberta-premier-jason-kenney

Smith, C. (2002). *Christian America?: What Evangelicals Really Want*. University of California Press.

Smith, L. E., Olson, L. R., and Fine, J. A. (2010). Substantive religious representation in the U.S. Senate: Voting alignment with the Family Research Council. *Political Research Quarterly, 63*(1), 68-82.

Smith, R. (2012, November 23). Women's Voting Rights in the CanRC. *One Christian Dad*. Retrieved from: http://onechristiandad.com/2012/11/23/womens-voting-rights-in-the-canrc

Smith, T. (1978). Religion and Ethnicity in America. *The American Historical Review*, *83*(5), 1155-1185.

Smithville Canadian Reformed Church (n.d.*a*). The Role of the Wife in Marriage. Retrieved from: https://smithvillecanrc.ca/the-role-of-the-wife-in-marriage

Smithville Canadian Reformed Church (n.d.*b*). Women in Office? Or, Needed: Men! Retrieved from: https://smithvillecanrc.ca/women-in-office-or-needed-men%EF%BB%BF

Smock, D. (2002). Conclusion. In D. Smock (Ed.) *Interfaith Dialogue and Peacebuilding* (pp. 127–132). Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press.

Snik, G and De Jong, J. (1995). Liberalism and denominational schools. *Journal of Moral Education*, *24*(4), 395-407.

Soleiman, Y. (2012). *The Dutch Reformed church in late eighteenth century Java: An eastern adventure*. Zoetermeer, The Netherlands: UitgeverijBoekencentrum.

Song, S. (2005). Majority Norms, Multiculturalism, and Gender Equality. *The American Political Science Review, 99*(4), 473-489.

Sonier, F. (2012, September 24). Ontario's bullying response to bullying. *National Post*. Retrieved from: https://nationalpost.com/opinion/faye-sonier-ontarios-bullying-response-to-bullying

Spilka, B., Hood, R. W., Hunsberger, B., & Gorsuch, R. (2003). *The psychology of religion: An empirical approach* (3rd ed.). New York, NY: Guilford Press.

Spohnholz, J. (2017). *The Convent of Wesel: The Event that Never was and the Invention of Tradition*. Cambridge University Press.

Spykman, G. (1980). *Society, State, and Schools*. Eerdmans: Grand Rapids.

Stacey, D. (2018, November 27). What Do Religions Say About Birth Control and Family Planning? *Very Well Health*. Retrieved from: https://www.verywellhealth.com/what-are-religious-views-on-birth-control-906618

Stack, J. F. (1986). *The Primordial Challenge*. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Stackhouse, J. (2000). Bearing Witness: Christian Groups Engage Canadian Politics since the 1960s. In D. Lyon and M. Van Die (Eds.), *Rethinking Church, State, and Modernity* (pp.113-128). Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Stake, R. E. (1995). *The art of case study research*. Thousand Oaks, Calif.: Sage Publications.

Stam, K. (2012). Klaastrophobia. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *61*(16), 412-414.

Stances of Faiths on LGBTQ Issues: Roman Catholic Church. (2018). *Human Right Campaign*. Retrieved from: https://www.hrc.org/resources/stances-of-faiths-on-lgbt-issues-roman-catholic-church

Statistics Canada. (2011). 2011 National Household Survey, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 99-010-X2011032. Retrieved from: http://www12.statcan.gc.ca/nhs-enm/2011/dp-pd/dt-td/Rp-eng.cfm?LANG=E&APATH=3&DETAIL=0&DIM=0&FL=A&FREE=0&GC=0&GID=0&GK=0&GRP=0&PID=105399&PRID=0&PTYPE=105277&S=0&SHOWALL=0&SUB=0&Temporal=2013&THEME=95&VID=0#tbt-tab2

Statistics Canada. (2016*a*). 2016 Census of Population, Statistics Canada Catalogue no. 98-400-X2016189.

Statistics Canada. (2016*b*). *Immigration and Ethnocultural Diversity in Canada*. Retrieved from: https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/rt-td/imm-eng.cfm

Statistics Canada. (2017*a*). Education in Canada: Key results from the 2016 Census, *The Daily*. Retrieved from: https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/171129/dq171129a-eng.htm

Statistics Canada. (2017*b*). *Police-reported hate crimes, 2015*. Retrieved from: www.statcan.gc.ca/daily-quotidien/170613/dq170613b-eng.pdf

Steele, V. R., Staley, C., Fong, T. and Prause, N. (2013). Sexual desire, not hypersexuality, is related to neurophysiological responses elicited by sexual images. *Socioaffective Neuroscience & Psychology*, 3. Retrieved from: https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3960022/

Stenmark, M. (2020). Criticizing Religion in a Secular Democratic Society. In Mia Lövheim and Mikael Stenmark, *A Constructive Critique of Religion: Encounters Between Christianity, Islam and Non-Religion in Secular Societies* (pp. 17-31). Bloomsbury Academic.

Stoffels, D. (2012). Education Matters – Why did CanRC Members Start Their Own Schools? *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *61*(14), 369-372.

Stolzenberg, N. M. (1992). 'He Drew a Circle that Shut Me Out': Assimilation, Indoctrination, and the Paradox of a Liberal Education. *Harvard Law Review*, *106*(3), 581-667.

Strength to Fight. (n.d.). Retrieved from: https://strengthtofight.ca

Strossen, N. (1995). *Defending pornography: free speech, sex, and the fight for women's rights*. Anchor Books, Doubleday: New York, New York.

Sullivan, W. and Beaman, L.G. (2013). *Varieties of religious establishment*. Ashgate AHRC/ESRC religion and society series.

Sweet, L. (1996). *The fourth R: religion in our classrooms*. Toronto: Atkinson Charitable Foundation.

Sweet, L. (1997). *God in the Classroom: The Controversial Issue of Religion in the Classroom*.Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.

Swierenga, R. (1991). The Religious Factor in Immigration. The Dutch Experience. In R. Swierenga and P. Vander Meer (Eds.), *Beliefs and. Behaviors* (pp. 164-188). New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press.

Swierenga, R. (2002). *Dutch Chicago: A History of the Hollanders in the Windy City*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

Tajfel, H. (1981). *Human Groups and Social Categories*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press.

Takasaki, E. (1991, May 3). When the Voices Say You're Different. *The Globe and Mail*, p.A15.

Taussig, K.-S. (2009). *Ordinary Genomes - Science, Citizenship,* and *Genetic Identities*. Duke University Press Books.

Taylor, C. (1994). The Politics of Recognition. In A. Gutmann (Ed.), *Multiculturalism: Examining the Politics of Recognition* (pp. 25-74). Princeton University Press.

Taylor, C. and Peter, T. (2011). *Every class in every school: Final report on the first national climate survey on homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia in Canadian schools*. Toronto, ON: EGALE Canada Human Rights Trust.

Taylor-Powell, E. and Camino, L. (2006). Ellen. *Program Development and Evaluation, University of Wisconsin-Extension*. Retrieved from: https://fyi.uwex.edu/programdevelopment/files/2016/04/Tipsheet34.pdf

Teeuwsen, P. (2016). *Understanding the Intersection of Faith and Culture in Dutch-Calvinist Christian Schools: Principals' Experiences and Perspectives*. (Doctoral Thesis, Brock University, Ontario, Canada). Retrieved from: https://dr.library.brocku.ca/handle/10464/8932

The Deputies Report. (2018). *2018 Synod of the Free Reformed Churches of Australia to be held at Southern River, Western Australia*. Retrieved from: https://synod.frca.org.au/2018/reports/FRCA%20Synod2018%20Deputies%20reports.pdf

The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9-12: Health and Physical Education, 2015 – revised. Retrieved from: http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/health9to12.pdf

The Reformed Pro-Lifer. (n.d.). Jonathon Van Maren. Retrieved from: https://www.reformedprolifer.com/about-us/jonathon-van-maren

Theological Education Committee of the Deputies for Ecclesiastical Unity of the Canadian Reformed Churches. (2003). *Why Do The Canadian Reformed Churches Have Their Own Seminary?* Retrieved from: https://www.canadianreformedseminary.ca/img/site/PDFs/CanRCSemReasonsRev.pdf

Thiessen, E. J. (1993). *Teaching for commitment: liberal education, indoctrination, and Christian nurture*. Montreal; Buffalo: McGill-Queen's University Press; Leominster [England]: Gracewing.

Thiessen, E. J. (2001). *In Defence of Religious Schools and Colleges*. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Thiessen, J. (2016). A Sociological Description and Defence Of Secularization In Canada. *Post-Christendom Studies, 1*, 97-124.

Thobani, S. (2007). *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Thobani, S. (2010). Multiculturalism displaces anti-racism, upholds white supremacy. *Restructure*. Retrieved from https://restructure.wordpress.com/2010/03/15/canadian-multiculturalism-displaces-antiracism-upholds-white-supremacy/

Tiflati, H. (2016). Western Islamic Schools as Institutions for Preventing Behavioral Radicalization: The Case of Quebec. *Journal for Desecularization, 6*, 180-205.

Ting-Toomey, S. (1981). Ethnic identity and close friendship in Chinese-American college students. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 5*, 383-406.

Tognela, J. (2011). Gender Representation in the Media: A Critical Analysis of the Construction of Female Sexuality in Men's Pornographic and Non-Pornographic Magazines. (Master's Thesis. University of Ottawa, Canada). Retrieved from: https://ruor.uottawa.ca/bitstream/10393/19859/5/Tognela_Jennifer_2011_thesis.pdf

Tremblay, L. (2009). The Bouchard-Taylor Report on Cultural and Religious Accommodation: Multiculturalism by Any Other Name? *EUI LAW, 18*. Retrieved from: http://cadmus.eui.eu/handle/1814/12971

Tremblay, S. (2014). *Les écoles juives, musulmanes et Steiner : pluralité des voies éducatives*. Québec (Québec): Presses de l'Université du Québec.

Truth Exposed: Sexuality, Identity, and Relationships - Guido de Bres. (2017). Retrieved from: www.guidodebres.org/truth%20exposed%20info%20sheet.pdf

Turner, J. C. (1999). Something to be Reckoned With. *Commonweal*. Reprinted. Retrieved from: https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/offices/mission/pdf1/ra7.pdf

Turner, V. (1969). *The Ritual Process*. Penguin.

U.S. Department of Education, Office of Planning, Evaluation and Policy Development, Policy and Program Studies Service. (2005). *Single-Sex Versus Secondary Schooling: A Systematic Review*. Washington, D.C.

Urquhart, C. (2012). *Grounded Theory for Qualitative Research: A Practical Guide*. SAGE.

Use of Contraceptives in Marriage. (n.d.). *Focus on the family*. Retrieved from: https://www.focusonthefamily.com/family-q-and-a/relationships-and-marriage/use-of-contraceptives-in-marriage

Van Arragon, L. (2011, August). *Based Schools and the Limits of Religious Freedom in Ontario*. In European Consortium for Political Research Faith Based Schools in Liberal Societies, Reykjavik. Retrieved from http://ecpr.eu/filestore/paperproposal/2442d8d3-972d-40ae-bde8-f5633b6d1cc6.pdf

Van Belle, H. A. (1991). From Religious Pluralism to Cultural Pluralism, Continuity and Change among the Reformed Dutch in Canada. In R. Kroes and H. Neuschafer (Eds.), *The Dutch in North America, Their Immigration and Cultural Continuity* (pp. 308-337). Amsterdam: V.U. University Press.

Van Brummelen, H. W. (1984). *Molding God's Children: The History of Curriculum in Christian Schools Rooted in Dutch Calvinism* (Doctoral thesis, the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada). Retrieved from: https://open.library.ubc.ca/cIRcle/collections/ubctheses/831/items/1.0054665

Van Brummelen, H. W. (1986). *Telling the Next Generation: Educational Development in North American Calvinist Christian Schools*. Lanham: University Press of America.

Van Dam, C. (2000). Educating our children within the communion of saints - whose task is it? In W. Huizinga & G. van Rongen (Eds.), *Fathers and mothers at home and at school* (pp. 26-38). Kelmscott, Western Australia: The Reformed Guardian.

Van Dam, C. (2007). Christians and Muslims: Across the Divide. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *56*(2), 26-28.

Van Dam, C. (2011). Slippery Slope? *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *60*(10), 234-236.

Van Dam, C. (2012). *The Multiculturalism Challenge. A Christian View*. ARPA Canada.

Van Dam, C. (2014, End of Year). New Year Challenge and Joy. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, 665-666.

Van Dam, C. (2015*a*). Developments in our Dutch Sister Churches and Lessons to be Leaned (Part 3 of 4). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed Magazine*, *64*(13), 359-361.

Van Dam, C. (2015*b*). Developments in our Dutch Sister Churches and Lessons to be Leaned (Part 4 of 4). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed Magazine*, *64*(14), 386-389.

Van Dam, C. (2015*c*) The Politics of Sex Education. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *64*(16), 444-445.

Van Den Berghe, P. (1978). Race and Ethnicity: A Sociobiological Perspective. *Ethnic and Ra-*

Van den Hoonaard, W. C. (1991). *Silent Ethnicity: The Dutch of New Brunswick*. New Ireland.

Van der Brug, W., Wouter, B., Hobolt, S., de Vreese, C. H. (2009). Religion and Party Choice in Europe. *West European Politics*, *32*(6), 1266–1283.

Van der Velde, M. (2002, Year End). Evangelize your Muslim Neighbour . . . Now! *Clarion – the Canadian Reformed magazine*, 605-606.

Van Dijk, J. (1996). *Ethnicity, Aging and Support among Dutch Canadians: A Study of Community in Two Generations of Catholics and Calvinists*. (Master's thesis, McMaster University, Ontario, Canada). Retrieved from: https://macsphere.mcmaster.ca/handle/11375/13609

Van Dijk, J. (2001). The Role of Religion in the Postwar Settlement Patterns of Dutch Canadians. *The Canadian Review of Sociology and Anthropology*, *38*(1), 57-74.

Van Dijk, J. (2004). The role of ethnicity and religion in the social support system of older Dutch Canadians. *Canadian Journal on Aging / La Revue canadienne du vieillissement*, *23*(1), 21-34.

Van Dyk, J. (2008). The Christian School: A Prophetic Voice. *Christian Educators Journal*, *47*(3), 12-13.

Van Dyke, N. (2017, April 17). Investigating the Birth Control Pill. *Reformed Perspective*. Retrieved from: https://reformedperspective.ca/investigating-the-birth-control-pill/

Van Keulen, D. (2011). From Talking About to Speaking With: The Reformed Churches in The Netherlands and Islam. In J. Bowlin (Ed.), *The Kuyper Center Review. Volume 2: Revelation and Common Grace* (pp. 221-243). Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co.

Van Maren, J. (2017). Presentation about Pornography at ARPA Youth Conference, Ottawa, ON, Canada, May 9-11, 2017. Personal notes with the permission of Mr. Van Maren.

Van Maren, J. (2018). How the Ford / Kavanaugh debacle complicated the fight against pornography. *Life Site News*, October 19. Retrieved from: https://www.lifesitenews.com/blogs/how-the-ford-kavanaugh-debacle-complicated-the-fight-against-pornography

Van Pelt, D. A. (2003). *Home Education in Canada: A Report on the Pan-Canadian Study on Home Education 2003*. Canadian Centre for Home Education.

Van Pelt, D. A. (2015). *Home Schooling in Canada: The Current Picture – 2015 Edition*. Barbara Mitchell Centre for Improvement in Education. Published by the Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/home-schooling-in-canada-2015-rev2.pdf

Van Pelt, D. A. and McLeod, A. (2017). *Increasing share of students attending independent schools in Ontario*. Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.fraserinstitute.org/article/increasing-share-of-students-attending-independent-schools-in-ontario

Van Pelt, D. A., Hasan, S., and Allison, D. J. (2017). *The Funding and Regulation of Independent Schools in Canada*. Fraser Institute. Retrieved from: https://www.fraserinstitute.org/sites/default/files/funding-and-regulation-of-independent-schools-in-canada.pdf

Van Popta, G. (2002, March 1). Islam Welcomed in the West. *Clarion – the Canadian Reformed magazine*, *51*(5), 109-110.

Van Schendelen, M. C. P. (1983). Critical comments on Lijphart's theory of consociational democracy. *Politikon: South African Journal of Political Studies*, *10*(1), 6-32.

Van Stekelenburg, H. (1983). Tracing the Dutch Roman Catholic Emigrants to North America in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries. In H. Ganzevoort and M. Boekelman (Eds.), *Dutch Immigration to North America* (pp. 57-84). The Multicultural History Society of Ontario, Toronto, Canada.

Van Til, H. (1959). *The Calvinistic Concept of Culture. Philadelphia*. The Presbyterian and Reformed Publishing Company.

Van Vliet, J. (2015, January 18). Interview by M. Alekseevskaia. Hamilton, Ontario, Canada.

Vandergugten, S. (2014). Cloverdale Celebrates Sixty Years of God's Goodness. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine*, *63*(10), 254-255.

VanderHorst, J. (2017). Does the birth control pill cause abortions? *Reformed Perspective*. Retrieved from: https://reformedperspective.ca/does-the-birth-control-pill-cause-abortions

VanDrunen, D. (2010) *Natural Law and the Two Kingdoms: A Study in the Development of Reformed Social Thought*. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing.

VanOene, W. W. J. (1975). *Inheritance preserved: the Canadian Reformed Churches in historical perspective*. Winnipeg: Premier Print.

VanOene, W. W. J. (1999). *Patrimony profile: Our Reformed Heritage Retraced, 1795-1946*. Publisher, Premier Printing Limited.

Varshney, A. (2001). Ethnic conflict and civil society: India and beyond. *World Politics*, *53*(2), 362-398.

Vermeer, P. (2009). Denominational schools and the (religious) socialization of youths: A changing relationship. *British Journal of Religious Studies*, *31*(3), 201-211.

Vertovec S. (1999). Conceiving and researching transnationalism. *Ethnic and Racial Studies, 22*(2), 447-62.

Vertovec, S. (2006). *The emergence of super-diversity in Britain*. Centre on Migration, Policy and Society.

Visscher, G. H. (1999). The Attraction of Evangelicalism. In J. Mulder (Ed.), *The Challenge of Being Reformed Today,* (pp. 1-21, 29-57). Winnipeg: Premier.

Visscher, G. H. (2011). Living Waters from Ancient Springs. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 60*(5), 110-113.

Visser de, A. (2015*a*). Musical Instruments in the Worship Service (Part 1). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 64*(2), 37-40.

Visser de, A. (2015*b*). Musical Instruments in the Worship Service (Part 2). *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 64*(3), 66-68.

Visser de, A. (2015*c*). Word and Deed. *Clarion – Canadian Reformed magazine, 64*(16), 438-440.

Vogel, L. (2012). Sex selection migrates to Canada. *CMAJ, 184*(3), E163-E164.

Vriend, J. (1992). *Understanding differences in Christian education*. Ancaster, ON: OCSTA.

Wagner, M. (2010). *Cristian Citizenship Guide. Christianity and Canadian Political Life*. ARPA Canada.

Wagner, M. (2015, July 1). It takes a family. Parentalism: Parents' rights in education. *Christian Renewal*, pp.24-26.

Wagner, M. (2016). Propaganda disguised as sex education. Ontario's curriculum is only the latest to go this direction. *Reformed Perspective, 35*(8), 13-16.

Walker, A. T. (2017). *God and the Transgender Debate: What does the Bible actually say about gender identity?* The Good Book Company.

Wallace, A. F. C. (1966). *Religion: An Anthropological View*. New York: Random House.

Wallerstein, I. (1960, October). Ethnicity and National Integration in West Africa. *Cahiers d'etwles africaines, 3*, 129-39.

Wallis, R. (1977). *The Elementary Forms of the New Religious Life*. London: Allen and Unwin.

Walls, P., Parahoo, K., Fleming, P., & McCaughan, E. (2010). Issues and considerations when researching sensitive issues with men: Examples from a study of men and sexual health. *Nurse Researcher, 18*(1), 26-34.

Walton, G. (2004). Bullying and Homophobia in Canadian Schools: The Politics of Policies, Programs, and Educational Leadership. *Journal of gay & lesbian issues in education, 1*(4), 23-36.

Walzer, M. (2015). *The Paradox of Liberation: Secular Revolutions and Religious Counterrevolutions*. New Haven: Yale University Press.

Wanigaratne, S., Uppal, P., Bhangoo, M. et al. (2018). Sex ratios at birth among second-generation mothers of South Asian ethnicity in Ontario, Canada: a retrospective population-based cohort study. *Journal of epidemiology and community health, 72*(11), 1044-1051.

Ward, C. (2011, August 19). How Dutch women got to be the happiest in the world. *Maclean's*. Retrieved from: http://www2.macleans.ca/2011/08/19/the-feminismhappiness-axis/

Warner, R. S. (2007). The Role of Religion in the Process of Segmented Assimilation. *Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, *612*, 102-12.

Warner, R. S. and Wittner, J. (1998). *Gathering in Diaspora: Religious Communities and the New Immigration*. Philadelphia: Temple University Press.

Waters, M. C. (1996). Optional Ethnicities: For Whites Only? In S. Pedraza and R. Rumbaut (Eds.), *Origins and Destinies: Immigration, Race and Ethnicity in America* (pp. 444-454). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Press.

Watson, J. E. (2013). Post-secular schooling: freedom through faith or diversity in community. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *43*(2), 147-162.

We need a law. (2018, October 10). *Sex-Selective Abortion & The International Day of The Girl*. Retrieved from: https://weneedalaw.ca/2018/10/sex-selective-abortion-the-international-day-of-the-girl/

We Need a Law. (n.d.*a*). *About*. Retrieved from: https://weneedalaw.ca/

We Need a Law. (n.d.*b*). *International Standards Abortion Law*. Retrieved from: https://weneedalaw.ca/initiatives/international-standards-abortion-law/

Weber, M. (2002). *The Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism*. Los Angeles, Calif.: Roxbury Pub. Co.

White, J. (1982). *The Aims of Education Restated*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Whitfield, G. (2017). Self-respect and public reason, Critical Review of International Social and *Political Philosophy*, *20*(4), 446-465.

Wilkins-Laflamme, S. (2016). The Changing Religious Cleavage in Canadians' Voting Behaviour. Canadian. *Journal of Political Science*, *49*(3), 1-20.

Williams, R. (2012). *Faith in the Public Square*. London: Bloomsbury.

Williamson, K. (2006). Research in constructivist frameworks using ethnographic techniques. *Library Trends*, *55*(1), 83-101.

Willis, J. W. (2007). *Foundations of qualitative research: Interpretive and critical approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Wilson, B. (1982). *Religion in Sociological Perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Wilson, D. (1995). *Reforming Marriage*. Canon Press. Book Service.

Wilson, J. D., Stamp, R. M. and Audet, L. P. (1970). *Canadian education: a history*. Prentice-Hall of Canada: Education.

Wimmer, A. (2013). *Ethnic Boundary Making: Institutions, Power, Networks*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Wimmer, A. and Soehl, T. (2014). Blocked Acculturation: Cultural Heterodoxy among Europe's Immigrants. *American Journal of Sociology*, *120*(1), 146-186.

Winter, E. (2011). *Us, them, and others: pluralism and national identities in diverse societies*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Winter, E. (2014). What Can Weberian Sociology Tell Us About Multiculturalism and Religion? In S. Sikka and L. Beaman (Eds.), *Multiculturalism and Religious Identity: Canada and India* (pp. 189-208). McGill-Queen's Press – MQUP.

Winter, E. (2015). Rethinking Multiculturalism After its "Retreat": Lessons From Canada'. *American Behavioral Scientist, 59*(6), 637-657.

Woehrling, J. (1998). L'obligation d'accommodement raisonnable et l'adaptation de la société à la diversité religieuse. *Mc Gill Law Journal*, *43*(2), 325-401.

Wolters, A. (1983). Dutch Neo-Calvinism: Worldview, Philosophy and Rationality. In H. Hart, J. van der Hoeven & N. Wolterstorff (Eds.), *Rationality in the Calvinian Tradition* (pp. 113-131). Toronto: UPA.

Wolterstorff, N. (1997*a*). The Role of Religion in Decision and Discussion of Political Issues. In R. Audi and N. Wolterstorff (Eds.), *Religion in the Public Square: The Place of Religious Convictions in Political Debate* (pp. 67-120). Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Wolterstorff, N. (1997*b*). Looking to the eighties: do Christian schools have a future? In D. Oppewal (Ed.), *Voices From the Past: Reformed Educators* (pp. 61-65). Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Wong, A. (2011). The Disquieting Revolution: A Genealogy of Reason and Racism in the Quebec Press. *Global Media Journal: Canadian Edition, 4*(1), 145-162.

World Health Organization. (2019). *World Health Statistics*. Retrieved from: https://www.who.int/gho/publications/world_health_statistics/2019/EN_WHS_2019_Main.pdf

Wright, M. and Bloemraad, I. (2012). Is there a trade-off between Multicuturalism and Socio-Political Integration? Policy Regimes and Immigrant Incorporation in Comparative perspective. *Perspectives in Politics*, *10*, 75-95.

Wu, J. Z. (2005). Bilingual Education in Western Canada and Chinese Language Minority Students' Self Perceptions of their Citizenship and Ethnicity. *Canadian and International Education*, *34*(1), 23-30.

Yazan, B. (2015). Three Approaches to Case Study Methods in Education: Yin, Merriam, and Stake. *The Qualitative Report*, *20*(2), 134-152.

Yearbook Anno Domini 2020 Canadian and American Reformed Churches. (2020). Edited by J. Visscher. Winnipeg: Premier Printing.

Young, I. (1990). *Justice and the Politics of Difference.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Young, P. (2015). 'Severely Normal': Sexuality and Religion in Alberta's Bill 44. In P. Young, H. Shipley & T. Trothen (Eds.), *Religion and Sexuality: Diversity and the Limits of Tolerance* (pp. 45-66). Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Zekveld, D. (2018, October 9). Canadian Governance: Is Optimism A Thing? *ARPA Canada*. Retrieved from: https://arpacanada.ca/news/2018/10/09/optimism/

Zimonjic, P. (2018, June 15). 3 legal reactions to the Supreme Court's Trinity Western University decision. *CBC News*. Retrieved from: https://www.cbc.ca/news/politics/trinity-western-university-legal-1.4709263

Zine, J. (2008). *Canadian Islamic schools unravelling the politics of faith, gender, knowledge, and identity*. Toronto Ont.: University of Toronto Press.

Zong, L. (1994). Structural and psychological dimensions of racism: Towards an alternative perspective. *Canadian Ethnic Studies*, *26*(3), 122-134.

Zwart, D. (2010). For the next generation: Dutch protestant church commemorations in North America, 1960-1980. *Tijdschrift Voor Sociale en Economische Geschiedenis*, *7*(2), 126-150.

Zylstra, H. (1997). Christian Education. In D. Oppewal (Ed.), *Voices From the Past: Reformed Educators* (pp. 39-44). Lanham, Md.: University Press of America.

Appendices

Appendix A

Leo Driedger's *Conformity-Pluralist Conceptual Model*

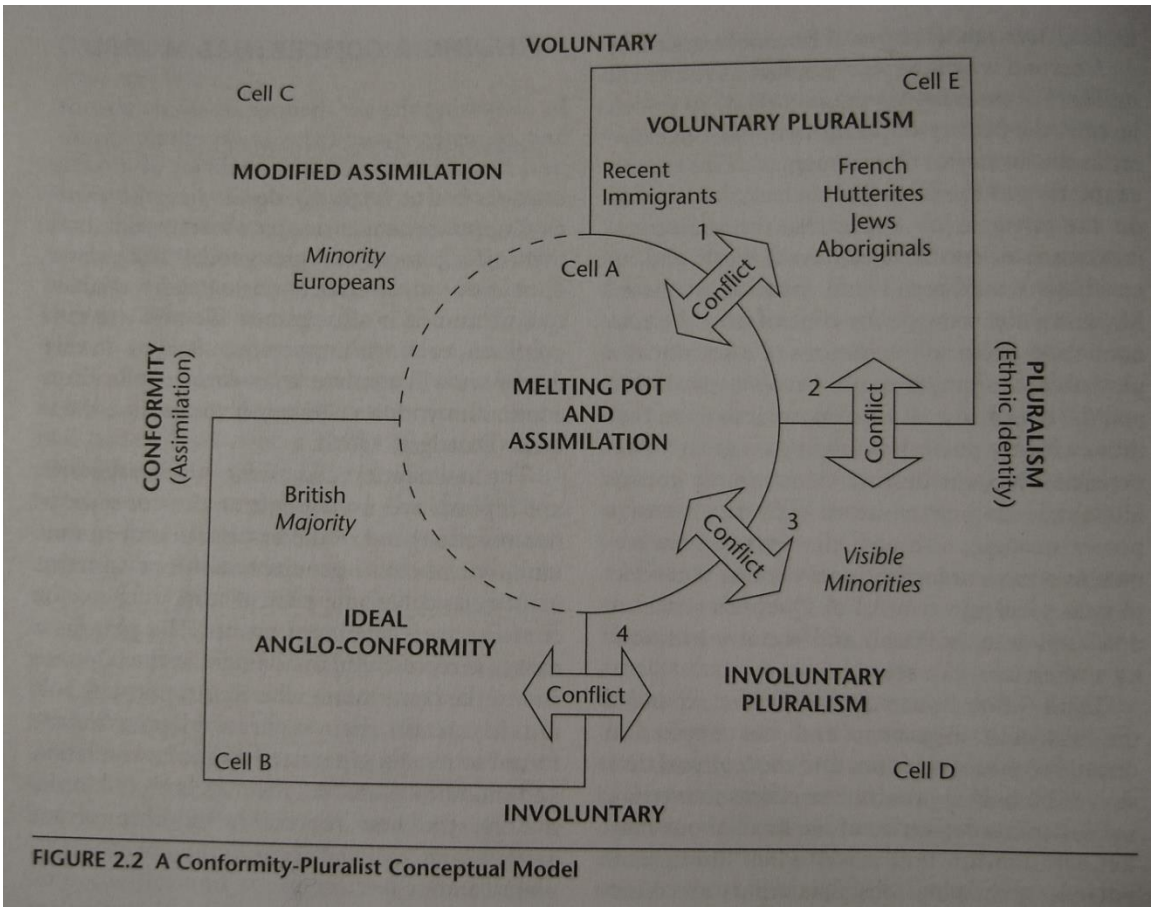


FIGURE 2.2 A Conformity-Pluralist Conceptual Model

Source: Driedger, L. (2003). *Race and ethnicity: finding identities and equalities*. Don Mills, Ont.; New York: Oxford University Press, p. 32.

Appendix B

Code	sex	LGBTTQ2+	religious affiliation	status	school affiliation if applicable	decade of graduation if applicable (if the information does not undermine confidentiality)
A1	female		CanRC	graduate / teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	2000s
A2	male		non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary-secondary and high school	2010s
A3	female		URCNA	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	2000s
A4	female	+	non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	2000s
A5	female		CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	2000s
A6	female	+	non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school; public high school	2000s
A7	male		CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	
A8	male		CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	
A9	male	+	non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	2000s
A10	male		non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	1990s
A11	male		non-affiliated	parent		
A12	female		CanRC	representative	The Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College	

A13	male	non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	1980s
A14	male	CanRC	member of community		
A15	male	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	2010s
A16	female	non-affiliated	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary/ secondary and high school	2010s
A17	male	CanRC	graduate / teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	1990s
A18	male	CanRC	graduate / teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary secondary and high school	1970s
A19	male	URCNA	teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	currently
A20	male	CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	currently
A21	female	CanRC	graduate / teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	1980s
A22	male	a Christian denomination	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	2000s
A23	male	a Christian denomination	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	1990s
A24	male	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	1990s
A25	male	a Christian denomination	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	1990s
A26	male	CanRC	parent		
A27	female	CanRC	parent		
A28	male	CanRC	representative	The Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College	
A29	male	CanRC	representative	The Covenant Canadian Reformed Teachers College	1970s
A30	male	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed high school	2000s
A31	female	CanRC	homeschooling graduate		2010s
A32	male	CanRC	graduate/ teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	1990s

A33	female	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary /secondary and high school	2010s
A34	male	a Christian denomination	graduate/ teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	1990s
A35	female	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary /secondary and high school	2000s
A36	male	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary/ secondary school	1970s
A37	female	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary /secondary and high school	2010s
A38	male	CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary / secondary school	
A39	male	CanRC	graduate	Canadian Reformed elementary /secondary and high school	2000s
A40	female	CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed high school	
A41	female	CanRC	homeschooling graduate		2010s
A42	male	CanRC	graduate / pastor	Canadian Reformed elementary /secondary and high school	1990s
A43	male	CanRC	pastor		
A44	male	CanRC	pastor		
A45	male	CanRC	ARPA member		
A46	male	CanRC	ARPA member		
A47	male	CanRC	professor	Canadian Reformed Theological Seminary	
A48	female	CanRC	teacher	Canadian Reformed elementary / secondary school	
A49	male	CanRC	pastor		
A50	female	CanRC	parent		
A51	female	CRCNA	church member		
A52	male	CRCNA	church member		
A53	male	CRCNA	church member		
A54	male	CRCNA	church member		
A55	male	CRCNA	church member		
A56	male	CRCNA	church member		
A57	male	URCNA	church member		
A58	female	URCNA	church member		

A59	male	CRCNA	church member		
A60	male	CRCNA	church member		
A61	male	CRCNA	church member		
A62	male	Christian affiliation	church member		
A63	female	CRCNA	church member		
A64	male	CanRC	principal	Canadian Reformed elementary school	
A65	*not to be released*	*CanRC*	*principal*	*Canadian Reformed elementary school*	
A66	*not to be released*	*CanRC*	*teacher*		
A67	*not to be released*	*CanRC*	*teacher*		
A68	*not to be released*	*CanRC*	*teacher*		

Appendix C

Annex: Some Suggestions for Reading Third-World and Minority Literature

Achebe, Chinua. Things Fall Apart. 1958 (Nigeria)

Allende, Isabel. The House of the Spirits. 1982. (Chile)

Brooks, Gwendolyn. The Bean Eaters. 1960. (United States)

Brutus, Dennis. Letters to Martha and Other Poems from A South African Prison. 1968. (South Africa)

Coetzee, J.M. Waiting for the Barbarians. 1980. (South Africa)

Douglass, Frederick. Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass, an American Slave. 1945. (United States)

Endo, Shusako. Silence. 1969. (Japan)

Garcia Marquez, Gabriel. One Hundred Years of Solitude. 1970. (Colombia)

Gordimer, Nadine. July's People. 1981. (South Africa)

Hurston, Zora Neale. Their Eyes Were Watching God. 1937. (United States)

La Guma, Alex. A Walk in the Night and Other Stories. 1969. (South Africa)

Lao, She. Crescent Moon and Other Stories. 1985. (China)

Lu, Yun. Wandering. 1981. (China)

Mahfouz, Naguib. "The Conjurer Made Off With the Dish." In Egyptian Short Stories. 1978. (Egypt)

Momaday, N. Scott. House Made of Dawn. 1969. (United States)

Morrison, Toni. Beloved. 1987. (United States)

Naipaul, V.S. A House for Mr. Biswas. 1983. (Trinidad)

Narayan, R.K. Malgudi Days. 1972. (India)

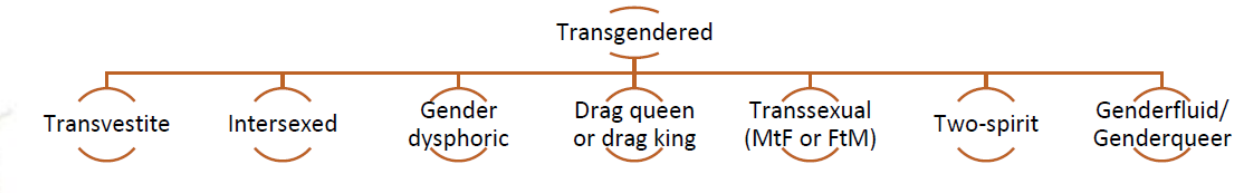
Selected Short Stories from Pakistan. Ed. Ahmed Ali. 1988. (Pakistan)

Soyinka, Wole. The Swamp Dwellers. 1958. (Nigeria)

Yu, Dafu. Nights of Spring Fever and Other Writings. 1984. (China)

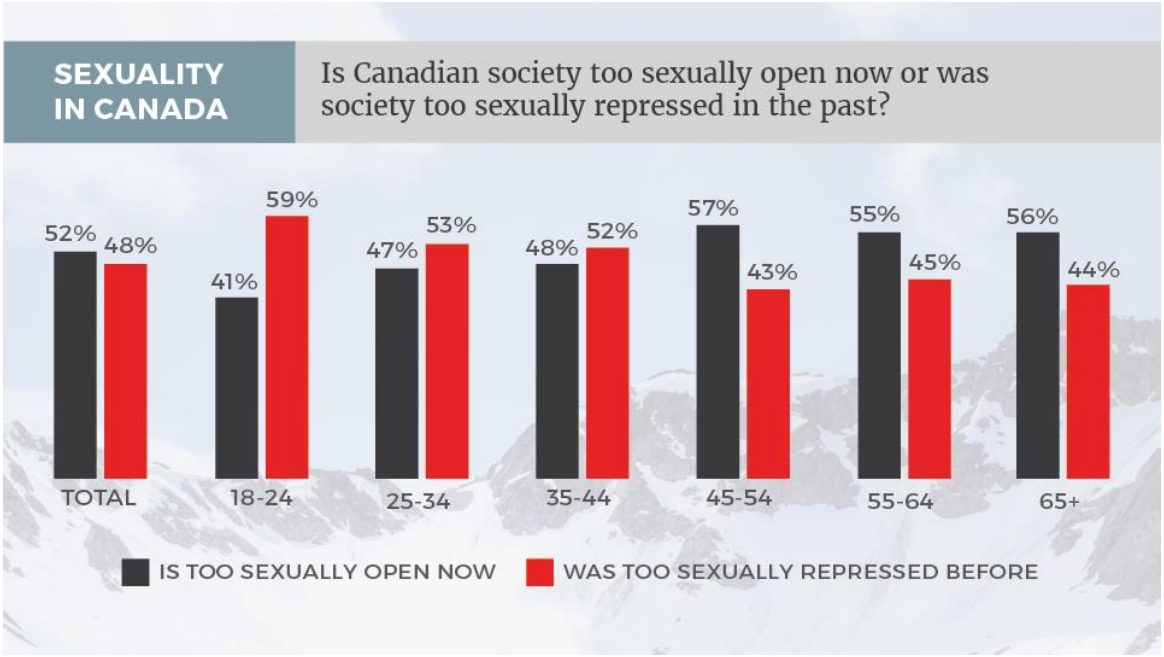
Source: Susan V. Gallagher and Roger Lundin. (1989). *Literature through the Eyes of Faith.* HarperCollins – Religion. Reprinted in 2013, p. 182.

Appendix D



Source: ARPA. (2016). Gender Identity.

Appendix E



Source: Cardus (2017). *Majority of Canadian Women Sour on Sexual Revolution*.