Upcoming in January
Public Forum
Literacy and Inclusion
January 24 & 25, 1991
Place to be announced
John McKnight and Judith Snow, two leaders in the field of community building and citizen advocacy, bring their years of experience to the field of literacy.
Moderator: Jack Pearlpoint.
For further info call Carol at (116) 923-3591

What the Centre Has Done in 1989-90

We’ve done a lot more than even we thought!

Courses We’ve Built and Run

A. Family Support & Educational Advising

The Centre has developed several strategies to help families, schools and communities “include” all citizens.

- MAPS (Making Action Plans): a process planning tool that uses 8 key questions to create a plan of action for a person or an organization moving in the direction of full inclusion. It is a process strategy—not a technique.
- Circles of Friends: a process of building supports around people who are “at risk” or vulnerable to exclusion of any kind.
- Problem Solving Workshops: a process of brainstorming ideas to solve problems in unique and diverse ways. There are hundreds of ways to solve any problem. Through collaboration and team work help people to find new answers.

B. Summer Institutes

- New — Syracuse University, Syracuse, New York — one week Summer Institute with Marsha Forest, Judith Snow and Jack Pearlpoint in June.
- The McGill Summer Institute continues. It is now distinctly international. Over 50% of the students are from the U.S. and the U.K.
- Summer Institutes in the West... Patrick continues his sweep.
- University of Lethbridge, Alberta
- University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C.
- University of Manitoba, Winnipeg, Manitoba

C. Medical School Course Continues

Four years ago, Dr. Yves Talbot of the University of Toronto Medical School invited Marsha Forest and Jack Pearlpoint to help plan a unique course for first year “family medicine” students. We called the course: “VIVE LA DIFFERENCE”. The purpose was to widen the perspective and scope of students going into family medicine by introducing them to real people in real settings that they would not normally see—i.e. street people, people with disabilities, people who had been in prison, gay couples, etc.

This year while Marsha and Jack were on sabbatical, Judith Snow coordinated the course with Dr. Talbot. The course has been nominated for a major award in undergraduate medical education.

Dartmouth Medical School in New Hampshire heard about the course and is exploring replicating it in a rural setting. This is an exciting new area for the Centre to explore.

D. Other Centre Courses and Seminars

The Facilitator (2.5 days per course — 20 participants)
- Run twice in Toronto and once in New Hampshire
- Aim: to train MAPS facilitators and to focus on the skills of being a successful facilitator. (Marsha and Dave)

A Day of Reflection with Judith Snow (12 participants)
- Run twice in Toronto
- Aim: a day for people interested in support circles to talk to a person who lives, eats and breathes the concept on a daily basis.

Turning Visions into Reality (3 days — maximum 25 participants)
- Run six groups of 20-25 participants
- Aim: to tour and educate teachers and administrators in the reality of inclusive schools.
- Process: three day Visits and Seminars at the Hamilton Separate School Board and the Waterloo Region Separate School Board — model inclusive school systems. The prize goes to Michigan for sending the most people from school systems (Marsha and Dave).

Parents United (weekend course)
- Run twice in Toronto
- Aim: to develop strategies for parents to cope with school system stress.
- Process: popular with parents frustrated by their local school systems. Just being together to work out strategies seems to be a great help to everyone involved (Amnistie and Judith).

Building Circles (fifteen persons)
- Run twice in Toronto

See CENTRE, page 2

Upcoming Courses this Fall 1990

Courses in Lethbridge

For more information call Patrick Mackan in Lethbridge re these two courses:

September 15, 1990
- University of Lethbridge
- Parent Leadership Workshop

Mackan, Cormier

September 20, 21, 22
- University of Lethbridge
- The Vision, The Theory, The Practice

Mackan, Cormier

These popular workshop-seminars combined with visits to two outstanding Ontario Separate School Boards (Waterloo Region and Hamilton-Wentworth) fill up rapidly and we encourage you to phone if you are interested.

November 15, 16, 17
- How to Deal With Difficult Behaviour: Yours and Theirs
- For further information contact Dr. Patrick Mackan in Lethbridge.

Quality Education Workshop — Seminar and Visits:
- Centre and school board personnel give you a two and a half day glimpse into the theory and practice of integration in action.
- Two Locations:
  - October 10, 11, 12 (Kitchener-Waterloo location):
  - November 14, 15, 16 (Hamilton-Wentworth location):

See CENTRE, page 2

Return Address: 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ont. M6H 3S5

The Centre Team and How to Find Us

Directors
- Marsha Forest, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ont. M6H 3S5 • (416) 868-5536
day or eve • fax (416) 868-5536
- Patrick Mackan, University of Lethbridge, Faculty of Education, 440 University Drive, Lethbridge, Alberta T1K 3M4 • (403) 229-2250 work
- (403) 229-2252 home • fax (403) 229-2352
- Jack Pearlpoint, 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ont. M6H 3S5 • (416) 868-5536

Senior Associate
- Judith Snow, 1003, 141, 1 Enslin Ave, Toronto, Ont. M6P 1V9 • (416) 862-3501 work
- (416) 862-3501 home

Consultants
- Lynn Cormier, Centre for Integrated Education and Community, 1001-650 Charles Street East, Toronto, Ont. M5A 8J3 • (416) 862-3501
- (416) 862-3501 home

Sponsors
- Sonus, R.E. 950, 141, 1 Enslin Ave, Toronto, Ont. M6P 1V9 • (416) 862-3501
- (416) 862-3501 home

Jobs
- Substitute Teachers
- Office Assistants
- Bookkeepers
- Volunteers

Business Staff (part-time)
- Heidi Phipps • Bookkeeper • (416) 862-8471
- Carol R.A. • Centre Assistant • (416) 862-3501
- Vic and Max • (416) 862-8471

Courses to be held in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario

To register or to receive further information phone the Centre’s office in Kitchener. Ask for Lynn Cormier (519-741-0190).

Monday, Oct. 15, 1990
A Community Building Workshop
Patrick Mackan and Lynn Cormier

This popular two-day course is an in-depth look at why and how to build circles of support around any person at risk of being excluded from any sector of the community. $200 Registration Fee.

November 15, 16
Building Relationships and Circles of Support
- 9.5 daily — location: Guelph College
- 10.5 daily — location: Waterloo College

Reflection on Developing Christian Community in Catholic Schools
Father Patrick Mackan will explore the true meaning of Christian Community in Catholic Schools.

November 28, 29, 30 (at a location in Kitchener/Waterloo area)
- The Facilitator: How to Make the MAPS Process Happen

See Courses, page 2

Dayton, Ohio
Boston, Massachusetts
Ann Arbor, Michigan
Memphis, Tennessee

Courses to be held in Kitchener/Waterloo, Ontario

To register or to receive further information phone the Centre’s office in Kitchener. Ask for Lynn Cormier (519-741-0190).

Monday, Oct. 15, 1990
A Community Building Workshop
Patrick Mackan and Lynn Cormier

Pat and Lynn will focus on the basic steps needed to build inclusive community at school, at work, at home and at play. 7-10 p.m., Resurrection College near the campus of the University of Waterloo. $40 Registration Fee.

November 15, 16
Building Relationships and Circles of Support
- 9.5 daily — location: Resurrection College
- 10.5 daily — location: Waterloo College

Reflection on Developing Christian Community in Catholic Schools
Father Patrick Mackan will explore the true meaning of Christian Community in Catholic Schools.

November 28, 29, 30 (at a location in Kitchener/Waterloo area)
- The Facilitator: How to Make the MAPS Process Happen

See Courses, page 2

Return Address: 24 Thome Crescent, Toronto, Ont. M6H 3S5
Inclusion vs. Exclusion


The Challenge is Hard Work...

If we choose to support our capacity to live together in communities, have no illusions, problems do not evaporate. In fact, one of the critical issues is that real life isn’t all champagne and hors d’oeuvres. Real life includes joy and pain, success and failure, life and death. Some of us have become so coconuted into 27-minute television plots, with commercials for cookies, that we have allowed ourselves to be numbed by this mythological construct. I propose that we support an alternative that includes love, tears, blood and sweat, grief and joy, work, poverty, success, families, and friends.

Judith Snow understands the alternatives conceptually. She delivered the ‘Bradwin Address’ at Frontier College’s 80th Annual Meeting in October 1988. She drives her wheelchair with her thumb, runs her computer with her mouth, and talks with her heart. She talked about the need for a new kind of community that includes everyone.

Those who are members of society, and those who are marginalized from society, have a great need for each other’s gifts.

The second kind of community is lived in community where people spend their days doing very ordinary things. They write, talk on telephones, teach children, play with babies, wash dishes, go for walks, read books, and cry on each other’s shoulders. All of this happens in ordinary places on commonplace streets, all the time, everywhere. This very commonness is a real gift, a real benefit for those who are excluded. The gift of surviving and growing through change belongs to the outcast.

Living on the margin either burns you out and kills you, or it turns you into a dreamer, someone who really knows what a difficult change will help and who can just about taste it; someone who is prepared to do anything to bring about change. If these dreamers are liberated, if they are brought back into the arms of society, they become the architect of the new community; a community that has a new capacity to support everyone’s needs and interactions.

The Right to Learn!

Few would challenge the right of every person to have solid educational foundations, work, a stable income, good health and a peaceful world in which to raise their family. Implementing that vision is more challenging. We need, for the year 2000, to shake off our barnacles, take a fresh look, and be willing to think about old issues, in new ways. It’s hard work, but it’s exciting. There will be many excises and much disillusionment, but if we are committed to humanizing education, these are the only excises. Because ‘you can only change where you’re going,’ not where you bin’ (Early American, Unknown).

For this reason means that the ‘literacy debate’ isn’t about further education. It certainly isn’t about reading and writing. It is about what kind of society we want. It is about what kind of values we espouse. We have the resources. We have the skills. It is a matter of political will.

The question is a lot of rethinking and readjustment ahead. We will have to think about how we learn, what we learn, and why we learn. Our choices are whether to invest in positive, constructive learning alternatives, or to observe the destractive power of ‘learning’ choices young people make — in gangs, in calls, with drugs, on the street, in jail. People need a sense of community, and they will find or make it — one way or another. People need to belong. People will learn. Our choices are only whether we want to create positive or negative options. And if we try the ‘way we bin,’ we aren’t ‘going’ very far. If we can be innovative learners, the opportunities are enormous.

Inclusion Versus Exclusion: Society is at a Turning Point...

Our society has reached a turning point where we must make decisions about values, direction and budgets. We no longer have the luxury of ‘buying’ a piece of all possible options — and thus never having to answer hard questions. The hard questions are about values — what do we believe in? What kind of future do we want for our children? How do we get there?

My analysis identifies two opposing trends, two waging factions — inclusion versus exclusion. This dilemma is broader than ‘schooling’ and education. Most post-industrialized societies have begun to come to terms with the fact of limited resources. The debate is between those who believe in exclusivity, and those who believe in inclusion (egalitarian opportunity as the predominant value).

I believe that ‘inclusive’ options (all welcome) will utilize the talents of people who would be discarded and written off in the ‘exclusive’ model. The ‘outsiders’ will bring new perspectives and new talents to ‘policy conundrums’ where we are in a rut and need fresh ideas.

The meaning of a policy of exclusion is revealed by a ‘reliable senior government official’s retort when asked ‘What should we do about those who aren’t in the “mainstream”’? He responded partly in jest, partly in frustration: ‘We train the best, and shoot the rest.’ The comment was off-hand but it identified the dilemma. The unstated underlying assumptions are, among others, that:

- We are not all equal in capacity or value.
- It is not feasible to give equal opportunity.
- We must choose — and thus train an elite who will take care of the ‘rest’.
- ‘They’ will benefit through the trickle-down theory.

Inclusion is the opposite and works from opposite assumptions:

- We are equal in value; however, each person has unique qualities.
- All people can learn.
- All people have contributions to make.
- We have a responsibility and an opportunity to give every person the chance to make a contribution.

The criterion for inclusion is breathing — not IQ, income, colour, race, sex or language. Critics of inclusion say:

- It’s too expensive.
- ‘They’ can’t learn.
- ‘They’ don’t know what’s best for ‘them’.
- ‘It can’t be done’.

As a critic of exclusion, I say:

- It’s too expensive.
- ‘They’ can learn.
- ‘They’ know a tremendous amount.
- ‘It can be done’.

It is unethical, politically unacceptable and repugnant to ‘write off’ marginalized people in our society. The cost of ‘welfare maintenance’ is unbearable, either socially or economically. In short, exclusion does work. Carl Sandburg, the poet, was asked which was the ugliest word in the English language. He answered ‘exclusion.’ We agree.

The critics are right if our thinking and answers are limited to the solutions we already have in place. I want to think about a new system, one that really reforms the old, not just reforms it. My vision of the new system is based on the value that ‘everyone belongs’ — all welcome.

If we continue to do what we are doing now, our society will collapse. We are already at the juncture where policy analysts in virtually every field are saying ‘more of the same won’t work.’ Whether it is air traffic control, the new theory of physics (chaos), food distribution or world trade, world debt, international banking or simply educational levels, our society is telling us that our system is overstressed and breaking down. We need to try new things. More of the same — even if we succeed in it — isn’t good enough any more.

It is important to acknowledge reality. Our systems are turning out people who are functionally illiterate; who do not read or write well, whose problem-solving skills are underdeveloped. And this at the very time when learning to think, learning to learn, and learning to cooperate, are essential survival skills. We don’t need just rote learning, but innovative learning. We need to teach people how to think creatively about the problems that we don’t have answers to yet.

I believe pessimism, cynicism and fatalism are good excuses for inaction. We all must take an active part in deciding the present and future course of the society in which we live. It is in the interest of the majority of people to have quality education, jobs, reasonable nutrition and decent housing. Today, the scientific and technological revolution provides us with tools for the development of a wiser, kinder, juster society, or for faster, more horrific missiles of destruction. We choose not to blame the victim, but to look to this victim as one major source of strength to build a better future for us all.

We all have the power to listen to ‘voices’ that are seldom heard. If we choose to make the time, to learn to listen, and to struggle with the pain and frustration that disempowered people feel, we will see new visions, feel new energy, and find hope in our future. There is power in the powerless. We can be catalysts, or encouraged residue. The choice is ours.
What Exactly is the Centre for Integrated Education and Community?

The Centre is one piece of a larger movement "to include" those we have traditionally left out of our schools and our larger communities. We are proud to be part of this movement for social change. The Centre is a small team of individuals who share a common dream and vision about a just society where "all belong" and all share in the benefits of that society i.e. decent housing, secure jobs, quality education and good health.

The Centre team is small but our vision is big! We are interested in all people who are "at risk" of not receiving the full benefits of our society - at home, at school, at work and at play. Our mandate is to carry the message of "full inclusion" to all who ask for our assistance.

Specifically, we work with families, and those schools, organizations and communities that support families, to create innovative models that will reduce the terrible effects of drop-outs, violence, gangs, illiteracy and despair. We run workshops and seminars for parents, teachers, administrators and human service workers who want to welcome back those populations that have been segregated. We work with kids, and people who support kids who are labelled "disabled" and kids labelled "sad, mad, bad and can't add.

We see ourselves as part of the new initiative to restructure schools and bring back energy, creativity and magic into our learning environments.

CENTRE... from page 1

- Aim: teach how to build lasting support circles (Carlton, Linn, Lyn's)

What is Inclusive Community?

- Ran a one day workshop with John O'Brien and John McKnight
- Aim: to explore the meaning of inclusive community.
- Poorly 85 participants rated it a resounding success. Many people suggested the Centre sponsor more workshops of this nature.

E. Major Conferences (partial list)

Centre team members have made contributions to numerous conferences in the USA and Canada. Highlights include:

- The University of Dayton in Ohio sponsored a major conference on Catholic educators from all over the U.S. (Dec 1, 2, 3) Patrick, Marshla, Lynn and Alex (Lyn's baby) were the work shop leaders. The conference was enti tled "Catholic Schools - The Inclusive or Exclusive Community?"

Out of this workshop, the University of Dayton is distributing 3 video tapes:

- "The Inclusive Catholic Community"
- "The Inclusive Classroom"
- "Building the School Team"

TASH Annual Conference (San Francisco, Dec, 1990). Much to Marsala's relief the TASH keynote is over. Over 2000 people heard Marsha (along with Judith) give a keynote that basically said, no more segregation. Two standing ovations tell the tale. This was Marsha's first major keynote. More will now follow.

California TASH Annual Conference (San Diego, 1990). Judith Snow, Jack Pear point and Marsala Forest did a keynote for over 500 people on the topic of "Building Friendships".

National Association for School Psychologists (NASP) - Jack and Marshla did a full day workshop entitled TWO ROADS at this national conference in April in San Francisco. The NASP group is going the route of full inclusion. A good network for us to be in.

F. Other Centre Developments and Work

1. New Centre Office in the West - Lethbridge

Patrick is on the move in the West. The University of Lethbridge has welcomed Patrick and provided him with an office for the Centre. He will be assisting school boards and families throughout the West to make full inclusion a reality. He is travelling far and wide and reports good things are happening in our Western provinces.

2. Family Support

All members of the Centre Team spend substantial time assisting families (on a pro bono basis) to develop the know-how, and to develop the confidence, leadership skills and support systems necessary to help their children. We also assisted "Self Advocates" to become empowered, giving them the knowledge to help themselves.

3. School Board Consulting/Support

The Centre Team is working with School Boards across Canada and the U.S. to help bring students back into regular classes with the appropriate supports and quality programming necessary for successful inclusion. These services range from informal and formal consultations and presentations to trouble shooting in difficult situations, staff training and policy development. These services are provided under contracts with each board.

4. Summer Get Together

Annamarie Ruttman continues to run the Summer Get Together in cooperation with the Toronto Board of Education. This is the 10th Summer of the Get Together Model. We have discovered 100s of children and their families have enjoyed a taste of true integration in this creative summer program for all children. The two locations are the Wilona Public School St. Clair and Alberta Road in downtown Toronto at the Market Lane Public School near the St Lawrence Market.

5. Oaklands Deinstitutionalization Project

Lyn Conner and Patrick Mackan are getting raves for their work with the Oaklands Regional Centre and their efforts to deinstitutionalize several residents. This will be written up in a new booklet.

6. Centred Care Action Coalition

Judith Snow has played a major role in the Attendant Care Action Coalition, a group that is attempting to change the way attendant care is delivered in Ontario.

G. Tape and Print

Video Tapes

Kids Belong Together - This 24 minute video, featuring Father Patrick Mackan, is a celebration of friendship and joy. It is the story of teachers and children living and learning together. It is a dramatic illustration of the MAPS process in action, as well as showing the vitality of friendships. The song at the end is destined to become the anthem of inclusion and we hope you to the year 90s.

Publications

The Centre is involved in publishing many chapters for new books on inclusion and has several outstanding publications in this past year:

- Stainback, Stainback and Forest, Educating All Children in the Mainstream, Brooks Publishing.
- Stainback and Stainback, Support Networks for Inclusive Schooling, Brooks Publishing.
- (Chapter by Pearpoint and Forest "Supports for addressing Severe Maladaptive Behaviours"

H. Funding

The Centre team members presently fund their own "salaries" through contracts and consulting. "Centre" money goes to support the day to day functions of our Centre - i.e. phone, duplication, mailings, travel, supplies, a part time business manager, bookkeeper and accountant.

We are trying to fundraise so we can stay afloat! All ideas welcome.

I. Where We've Been This Year

Places we've been: to do training, workshops and speaking engagements on the topic of inclusive community (a partial list):

- Twelve cities in Ontario
- British Columbia
- Manitoba
- Quebec
- Alberta
- Pennsylvania
- Ohio
- Vermont
- New Hampshire
- Indiana
- California
- Texas
- Michigan
- Minnesota
- Massachusetts
- Virginia
- Toronto
- Hamilton
- New York
- Minneapolis
- St Paul
- Chicago
- Winnipeg
- San Francisco
- Seattle
- Vancouver

COURSES...

- From page 4

- Marshla Forest and David Hasbury
- Intensive training on how to be a facilitator for the MAPS process. Limited enrollment. $350 Canadian, $300 U.S. Registration Fee.

COURSES IN TORONTO

November 9-10 in TORONTO at Frontier College

Parent Empowerment Workshop

Judith Snow and Amnmarie Ruttman

Parents need to know that they are not alone. They need to articulate their dreams and build strategies for inclusion. These two days are designed to restore dreams and give strategies for getting what you want and need for your child. $30 Registration Fee. To register with Carol Ralph or Judith Snow at 416 923-3591.

November 23-24 (location in Toronto)

How to Deal with Difficult Behaviour: Yours and Theirs

Marshla Forest and David Hasbury

"But what about the kid, or adult with difficult behaviour?" This intensive two-day workshop deals directly with the difficult behaviour of 'students' and parents in their struggle to deal with this challenging situation. $250 Canadian, $200 U.S. For further information call Marshla at 416-658-5363.

Something New and Different

AFTERNOON TEA AT THOME CRESCENT

With Marshla Forest, Jack Pearpoint and Centre team members who are in town.

Dates: Oct. 18. Thurs., 2-5 p.m. and November 8. Thurs., 2-5 p.m.

Often it's nice to get together with no particular agenda - just to have time to meet, share interesting conversation and laugh and cry together. The Centre Team has set aside two days this fall to do just that. We invite anyone to come and sit together for a few hours and share a cup of tea or coffee at Thome Crescent. Marshla will bake and serve her decadent and luscious scones and chocolate chips cookies.

Just let us know if you plan to attend by putting a message on the machine at 416-658-5363. This is compliments of the Centre. All Welcome. We hope new and old friends will drop by to say hello!
A Model Board in the West

This year I have been privileged to spend time visiting schools in the Yellowhead School Division, Edson, Alberta. In May, 1990, I was honored to address the Trustees and Administrators on the occasion of the passing of Policy No. 3033 which commits School Division No. 12 to inclusive education.

Complete integration of students with special needs in regular classrooms is now official policy of the Yellowhead School Divi-

sion. “The Board of the Yellowhead School Division believes that ALL children have the right to a quality education; an education that shall provide a sense of BELONGING and ACCEPTANCE in the school community and which will lead to personal growth, development and success of the individual child.” (Policy 3033-adopted May 1990)

What does this mean in terms of expectations for students? Let the Superintendent of Schools, Klaus Puhmann tell you. “Simply, it means that all children are welcomed in a regular classroom, allowing access to constructive interaction and instruction with their age-appropriate peers. The basic requirement here is that teachers are willing to accept all children as they are. This acceptance recognizes the child as a person first and secondly as a person who has unique needs. This also means that all children will be treated in the same manner, however, the difference will be in the nature of their educational programme.

In my opinion the Yellowhead Board is on the leading edge of schools for the 90’s where special and regular educators will join together to serve all children in a real community of learners. One of their major goals will be to deliberately plan for the development of relationships and friendships for the child with special needs. Interdependence and the need for each other will help children re-discover community.

This School Board has just won the “FIVE STAR AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN EDUCATION” from the Secretary of State announced during National Access Awareness Week.

To receive more information on Yellowhead and to congratulate them on their policy write to Klaus Puhmann, Superintendent of Schools, Yellowhead School Division No. 12, Box 1570, Edson, Alberta TOE OP0.

Patrick Mackan

Marsha’s Reflections on her Sabbatical

I wrote the following reflection after my incredible 3 month sabbatical in Asia and India. It was an extraordinary trip which included trekking in the Annapurna Range of the Himalayas of Nepal, eating our way through Thailand and having a rare glimpse of Burma. The final month was spent traveling and working with a participatory research group in India. It was truly an “awesome” life experience. I have come back far richer in spirit and with a broader outlook than ever before.

Reflections on traveling in Asia and the USA

brown of nepal — earth tone — desert dust
india to arizona
rocks of red and rust

snow of annapurna — pure and crystal white
sands of alamagordo — pure and gypsum bright
royal thai palace towers
mirrors with chips of gold

the shwedagon pagoda
burma majestic bold

red rocks of sedona
pink the jaipur scene
noise the traffic of bangkok
varied the sights I’ve seen

fishtail mighty mountain
a petrified forest plain
walking the earth together
feeling the joy the pain
rich the culture of asia
riches felt not told

 asiastyle life is teeming
america life without meaning
in asia spice and tasty
america bland and pasty

america rich in wealth and power
leaves a taste bitter sour
beauty unmatched in a canyon
called grand
emptiness frigidity in this vast land
joyless flat mediocrity
in too many faces that I see
while life pours into each

avian street
nothing is hidden
the ugly the sweet

crafts markets colour life
plastic supermarkets joyless strife

unparalleled in the
amerikan scene
the silent spring
the silent scream

brown of nepal
earth to desert dust
india to arizona
rocks of red and rust

Marsha Forest, April 1990

Crisis or Opportunity? Half Full or Half Empty?

The Centre Team sees the world as full of opportunities — glasses half full, not half empty. The information base is the same. One interpretation enables the other.

There is a Chinese saying/curse: “May you live in interesting times!” We do. Whether one thinks of Nelson Mandela now free, the altered German reality, perestroika, the “cold” war, global information, free trade or Meech Lake — the world is moving dramatically. We live in interesting times. Question: Do we CHOOSE to be paralyzed by all the developments we cannot control, or do we CHOOSE to be aware, to act, to be proactive. It is a real choice. We are making it now. Being a couch potato is a choice — not fate. We at the Centre choose Action!

Our world needs new options. Many of the best people are to be found on the margins of our society. These are the people our society has rejected in the past. Unfortunately, in the “back to the rose tint” phase so popular today, one of the easy “cutbacks” is precisely those people on the margins. Thus, a key task for all of us is to assist those at “risk” to survive — to recognize and support everyone’s gifts. When we stand up for the rights of people traditionally oppressed and exploited, and assist them to dream of alternative futures, we are defending our own integrity, future and survival.

Patrick Mackan

From Frontier College Forward to Contact Offices

“We were strangers and they took us in,” says Patrick Mackan. “We were coming together — Marsha, Dave, Ammarie, Judith, Lynn, Victoria, Heidi and a host of other people. It was educators and activists to offer an articulate vision for integration and some innovative ways to help make it work. Frontier College offered us an office, resources and guidance.”

An appreciative resounding “THANK YOU!” to Frontier’s President Jack Pearpoint and to the imaginative and creative presence of John Daniel O’Leary, Jennifer Marcus, etc., etc., etc.

The eagle that is the Centre is leaving this nest and opening contact centres at the University of Lethbridge (Alberta), Kitchener-Waterloo, Peterborough, and an International office in Toronto.

Our response to parents, students, teachers, administrators and community workers of all kinds will be more immediate throughout Canada and the U.S.A. We will continue to network with Frontier College and will offer a few Toronto based events there, mostly in conjunction with Judith Snow who will remain in her office at Frontier.

Being part of the leading edge programs of Frontier College has been of immense value to our Centre’s strength and confidence. We move forward with thanks.

Jack Pearpoint

Note Re Our Newspaper

This edition of the Centre Newspaper costs a great deal in both energy, printing and postage. If you name and address are incorrectly spelled, etc., or if you do not wish to receive our mailings, please write and let us know. If you LOVE our work and spirit please write and let us know and send a small (or large) contribution to help us keep our work going. For large contributions we can send a charitable receipt.

Thanks!