

Inclusive Education and Community Living

Joe Whittaker, Bolton Institute of Higher Education*

The first U.K. International Conference on the Philosophy and Practice of Inclusive Education and Community Living ended on the 4th of June 1991. The conference, organized by Bolton Institute and TENETS Training, was held at two venues, St. Joseph's College, near Wigan, England and Dyffryn House, Cardiff, Wales. Both were fully booked and acknowledged by participants to be a great success. Inspiration for this conference came from the McGill University Summer Institute in Montreal, which has been host to a similar event for over six years.

The team of presenters from North America: Marsha Forest, Judith Snow, Jack Pearpoint, Herb Lovett, John O'Brien and George Flynn; all have considerable experience in the practice and advocacy of inclusive communities FOR ALL. The team have participated in similar conferences throughout Canada and the U.S.A. and are gaining an international reputation for challenging segregated services which, they argue, foster isolation, rejection, loneliness, oppression, exploitation, anxiety and fear. Services where negative labels of disability and difficulty are arbitrarily attached. The logical outcomes of such segregated provision, which include group homes, special classes, special schools, segregated institutions is a climate where violence and abuse can flourish. With excellent presentation skills, a refreshing vitality, powerful stories and a controversial message, the conference began looking towards a more positive vision.

Marsha Forest and Jack Pearpoint began the Institutes with the theme — the only criterion necessary for inclusion is "...the person has to be breathing." Such an all-encompassing starting point challenged the imagination and our abilities to look creatively at how we bring about total inclusion.

Judith Snow introduced us to the language of "Giftedness" and how we can recognize gifts from the most unlikely of sources within our school and communities if we are open to them. When we have full inclusion the whole community gains from the rich and diverse contributions of individuals, conversely the whole community is diminished if certain individuals are denied their contributions. Through the power of positive thinking and action, we can encourage all participants to work collaboratively towards their untold potential. Working from her damaged wheelchair, and having crossed the Atlantic just days after major surgery, Judith set the climate for a very positive experience.

Herb Lovett, a psychologist by training, recalled occasions when he had been invited by human services to advise on strategies to overcome behaviours of individuals which had been described as "highly challenging" or "self-injurious" individuals who had been excluded from a wide range of human services. Herb starts from the simple but sometimes shocking question, "Who loves this person?"

John O'Brien prepared us for the "monsters" that will continue to bar the way to full inclusion. Just when we think we have overcome one barrier, e.g. fear, new unforeseen monsters, e.g. complacency, can emerge to hinder progress. John's story line highlighted the need for continued vigilance against the obstructions to full inclusion, to see "Inclusion" as a philosophy of life and not simply the placement of a person from a devalued context into a valued community.



Inclusion NEWS

FALL 1991
Centre for Integrated Education and Community

Complementing the powerful imagery of inclusive community was a very clear and detailed approach to system change, "from classroom to central office". George Flynn, Director of Education from the Waterloo Region Separate School Board near Toronto, explained in graphic detail how this particular educational system is moving continually towards an inclusive educational community. Rejecting special schools and special classes, children attend their local school and teachers are trained to adapt and develop curriculum to meet the gifts of the children, not create new curricula for some artificial notion of collective disability or difficulty. This is linked to a philosophy of "Servant Leadership" in which the school students are seen as the focus of provision, the bureaucratic structure being organized to support, not dominate and control.

A unique feature of this conference was the "wall paper graphics" produced by Jack Pearpoint. He faithfully reproduced the main feature of the keynote lectures and seminars providing the participants with a powerful visual resource and a constant reference point from which a speedy recall of the significant points at issue was readily available.

From the outset the team were anxious to make clear that they were in the U.K. *not* with THE recipe on how inclusion works in Canada and North America. They were here to share their experiences of success and failure with the message that the stronger and more international network of friends we create, the quicker we all progress towards our vision of inclusive community.

Full inclusion is a human rights issue. Children, young people or adults excluded from mainstream schools or community living, because of disability or difficulty in learning are being devalued and discriminated against. The conference provided a timely focus for a change in emphasis away from having to argue for "integration", to collaboration on how we bring an end to segregated education and human services and how we utilize, in a more positive way, the wasted energies that go into the machinery of exclusion.

The participants discussed in detail a value base from which we should seek to operate, a base which recognizes the fundamental right of all people to receive a quality service, which recognizes each individual's right to contribute and hence her/his potential realized and where collaboration and negotiation should be an integral element of any human service.

So successful was the conference that the team have agreed to come back next year. Many participants have already booked their places.

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Segregation Goes by the Boards: A Victory!

(Ottawa) After three years at home and more than \$70,000 in legal fees and other expenses, 12-year-old Alixe Hysert is getting ready to go back to school next month.

...In an April 4 letter to the school board's counsel, the lawyer handling the case for the government said that "the present Ministry of Education policy encourages school boards to provide a range of placements, including integration" of disabled children, and that given this change in policy the government would not back the board in its efforts to keep Alixe out of the regular school system. [Quotes — Globe & Mail — April 25/91]

INCLUSION — THE BETTER WAY

For us, inclusion is not simply a matter of placement or changes in the curriculum. It is not something one does only from 8:30—4:00. Inclusion is more than a philosophy. It is a way of life. It is about "living together". It is about "welcoming back the stranger" and making us all whole again.

We believe inclusion is a better way to live. It is the opposite of segregation and apartheid. "Inclusion" determines where we live, get educated, work and play. This is our value judgement, but based on sound reasoning.

Educators must demand and fight for a public education system that will provide Quality Education And Equal Rights For All, in a reality rife with injustice and inequality. This challenge must be met if public education in North America is to survive.

We are far beyond the gossamer of "quick fixes". We know they don't work. Many are still frightened to try new, innovative and creative alternatives. Our perception is that we have no choice. We are faced with fundamental values issues. There can no longer be "softening" of the issues.

Two Roads

Our analogy is that our society and our schooling systems — are at a crossroads. There are two roads — the road of inclusion and the road of exclusion. We must choose. Advocates for the exclusion route promote elitism. They suggest that there is neither the time nor the money to provide quality education and equity for all. The conclusion of the exclusion road option is to "train the best, and take care of the rest." Exclusion accepts the validity of a permanent "underclass" in our society.

We reject the concept of permanent inequality. Our society is too rich. There are choices. There can be no excuses. We can build stealth bombers with a price tag of almost 1 billion dollars per plane. Surely we can educate all of our children to the best of their abilities. It is a values issue.

We choose the other road — Inclusion. There is a simple starting point — include everyone. Educate all children in regular classrooms and communities. We think it is a better way.

The End of Special Education

The Inclusion option signifies the end of special education and special classes — but not the end of necessary supports and services. Our road assumes and builds a caring society that will feed, house and clothe all children decently, with dignity and in comfort. The Inclusive road sees thousands of creative and daring alternatives that branch out from one unified education system. It is not an apartheid system of education that assumes separate is equal. In the 90's, there is no excuse for accepting any segregated alternatives. All have been exposed as lies, shams and deceptions to keep the poor poor and the unemployed jobless.

The Real Meaning of Inclusion

Inclusion means welcoming everyone — all students — all citizens — back into our schools and our communities. Schools are the best place to start because at least in theory, that is where we all begin. Historically, for reasons that seemed good at the time, we fragmented our system to ensure appropriate support to everyone (Special Education, I.Q. tests,

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**INCLUSION
NEWS**

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tions and donations, since Inclusion
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Balancing Formal & Informal Supports to People Who Rely on Human Services...

This is the invitation to a new seminar being conducted by John O'Brien and Connie Lyle O'Brien. We liked it so much we wanted to include it. In addition to being good friends, and John being an associate, John and Connie have been friends of people who have disabilities, their families, and service organizations throughout North America, Britain, Australia and New Zealand. They are the creators of "Framework for Accomplishment", a process for learning about improving the quality of life for people with disabilities.

The Issue:

Since the 1950's families and friends have worked to improve the quality of life for people with disabilities by focusing on increasing the number and variety of community-based services available to people... In many ways, these efforts have been overwhelmingly successful. There are more services (residential, vocational, support), more staff, and more money ... than ever before. Many settings, whether residential or vocational, group smaller numbers of people together and are fairly well situated in a community. But many people remain isolated and disconnected from the real life of the community...

Some say that service and service providers (**formal supports**) are the culprit and that we should just do away with service, and the community (**informal supports**) will come forward and accept people. Others say the community is not ready to accept people and that without service, people will be left without anything.

Some say that overprotective parents try to keep their sons and daughters in services rather than have them risk the dangers and inconsistencies

of community life.

Some say that people with disabilities themselves don't want to be involved or are not motivated to participate in community life, and prefer to be with other people who also have disabilities.

Some people say we can no longer continue to pay for the increasing cost of services and that the only way to assist people is to get non-paid volunteers to do the work the service has been doing.

About the Seminar:

"The perspective of this session is that the problem is more complicated than any of the above single explanations... We now recognize that well-intentioned efforts at **servicing** people into community life are likely to destroy a person's chances of shared membership... **BUT** up to now the spontaneous responses of most people's communities have left individual people alone or isolated within a family, and quite unlikely to find a home and a chance for meaningful activity without organized and (probably) paid for assistance.

This session will explore "**formal**" and "**informal**" supports and the possibility that part of what we must learn is how to get a better balance between service and community... What can service do? What does community offer? What do we currently know about the limits of each? What are the tensions between the two? Can we have one without destroying the other? Does payment determine whether something is formal or informal? What changes will services have to make to be supportive rather than undermining of participation and membership in community life for people with disabilities?"

A Personal Note

The Centre often appears bigger than it actually is. In reality, the Centre runs from our home and our secretary is an answering machine. We therefore ask your patience and understanding in returning calls and getting orders for books to you. We do our best. We are small and independent and enjoy working with groups and individuals struggling to find answers to complex social and human problems. We are one piece of a larger network working to create a more sane, humane and just world. We thank you in advance for your support.

Marsha & Jack

The Myth of Special Education...

The "magic bullet", the fairy dust of special education, is simply another case of the emperor wearing no clothes. A medical cure doesn't exist for children born with down syndrome, spina bifida or cerebral palsy. There is no curative pill for the child born into abject poverty, the child trapped in the ghettos of the Bronx, or the Native Indian children in Canada's North.

Special education isn't a cure either. In the Winter 1990 of Counterpoint, published by the National Association of State Directors of Special Education, Shirley Thornton,

Brother, Sister or Client...

"When I look at our culture in general, at my friends in general, and my own life in particular, I see how often making friends is a skill that requires practice and experience. As relationships become more intimate, the ways they work (or fail) are less obvious. Even casual working acquaintances require us to be able to negotiate in order for the parties involved to feel a sense of cooperation. It is only in folktales and popular dramas where fantasies are played out that the purehearted can overcome the truly evil to settle down to a life of happiness ever after. In ordinary life we are all mixes of strong and weak, wise and foolish, generous and mean, and our relationships with one another play off on those potentials in ways that are rarely all good or all bad. My own life has been rich in the opportunities and the necessities to learn how to get along with and to love others. And in spite of the many blunders I have made in this, this is obviously an aspect of life I would not lightly part with. Is your own life any different? And yet how many of our friends who have been labelled retarded can say another person needs them? And how many know they are needed in an important way?"

The chief barrier has been that we as professionals — still see persons labelled retarded as "clients" and not as our brothers and sisters. I was talking to a group of persons about Larry, a teenager who was just beginning to see himself as a man... He asked Paula, who worked there on weekends, if he could be her boyfriend. She said, "No, Larry. I'm staff and you're a client." I asked her what she would have said if Peter, a man who also worked at the group home, had asked her for a date. "I would have told him I already have a steady boyfriend."

*Excerpted from Cognitive Counselling, by Herb Lovett. (page 139)
— See Resources on page 5.*

Deputy Superintendent of Instruction in the California Education Agency, says she doubts special education helps children when she looks at outcome and drop-out data. Her summary is blunt: "Regular education can fail them a whole lot cheaper."

In education, the CURE is hard work, team work and intense struggle to figure out solutions to today's complex social and educational problems. The answers are going to be found simply by people taking time to work together. There are no "micro-wave" answers. It takes time, energy and commitment.

The Road Not Taken

by Robert Frost

*Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
And sorry I could not travel both
And be one traveler, long I stood
And looked down one as far as I could
To where it bent in the undergrowth;*

*Then took the other, as just as fair,
And having perhaps the better claim,
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;
Though as for that the passing there
Had worn them really about the same,*

*And both that morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black.
Oh, I kept the first for another day!
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
I doubted if I should ever come back.*

*I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I—
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference.*

THE THREE DRAGONS

There are three dragons that prevent inclusion from happening.

The first dragon is FEAR.

It is critical to name the fears and deal with them. All of us are afraid of the unknown, but instead of telling the fear like it is, we hide and blame others or say that something is impossible to do. But now we know that integration is possible. The data is in. The children will do just fine if we don't let our adult fears get in the way of progress.

The second dragon is CONTROL.

As professionals we have to give up control and share power with those who have been in trouble. The first step is to invite those who have been left out to join us at the table. By asking the "problems" to be part of the solution, we are entering into powerful partnerships for change. We empower both ourselves and our new partners. Everyone wins in this scenario.

TWO ROADS: Exclusion or Inclusion?

The Centre for Integrated Education and Community has chosen the road less travelled — the road of inclusive schooling and community. This road welcomes everyone on the jour-

ney. As we travel together, we figure out what to do about the daily challenges presented to us. There is no blueprint. This is the road of the pioneer, the innovator, the creator. People choosing this road believe that "together we are better," and that "cooperation and collaboration are the keys"

DANGER OR OPPORTUNITY?

The Chinese character for the word crisis is an amalgam of two pictographs — danger and opportunity. Few would deny that education is in crisis. This crisis presents an enormous opportunity to build something new. The issue is not to change the old, not to "move chairs on the Titanic", but to build a new ship with new seating.

The OUTCOMES of the old ways are clear. Today's education system serves one-third of its students well. But two-thirds are either hanging on or dropping out. For students with

disabilities, the post secondary school graduation picture is bleak.

The state of Colorado asked parents where their children (with disabilities) were five years after graduation. The findings were dismal and depressing. The majority of "graduates" were at home watching T.V. "What did we miss?" the Colorado educators asked. "You missed my child's social needs... My child has no friends... Nobody calls... My son/daughter has no where to go and nobody to go with."

Colorado is moving to change this

The Problem is the Solution...

The secret of making inclusion happen is to turn the problem on its head and make the problem into the solution. Those we have seen and labelled as "the problems" can be our greatest advocates and allies. It is often the "drop-outs", the "street kids", the people with disabilities, who have the most creative answers. They have the most to win or lose; and they have the most intimate knowledge of their own problems. Given an invitation to partner with skilled professional educators, this new team can truly resolve problems and change the system.

Each of Us Must Choose: Inclusion or Exclusion:

Both roads are open. Each of us has to make a conscious choice about the path we travel. Leaders on the exclusion path "blame the victim" for his/her own problems. The exclusion road creates new labels as old ones die. "Learning disability" and "attention deficit disorder" are the current labels of choice. Exclusionists hold fast to the "medical model" and still believe that IQ tests, diagnostic assessment and packaged programs will save the day. They buy and sell solutions, and promote "things" and "medications" that will solve all our ills. This road has architects who build more prisons, institutions and sanitized homes for the aged. As Dr. Norman Bethune, the noted Canadian hero and physician once wrote so poignantly, "These men make the wounds."

to solving problems. Most positive solutions are found not by "experts", but by people themselves, as they get involved in their own interests, in their own neighbourhoods, churches, schools to solve the real problem.

The Inclusion Road thrives on diversity and celebrates differences. It

Spreading the Word:

We spent an extraordinary 3 weeks travelling and working in Sweden. Marsha had the great honour to speak at the 70th Birthday of Dr. Karl Gruenwald, one of the world's pioneers in pediatric medicine and integration of all children. The Seminar was sponsored by the Institute on Integration and was aptly held at Noah's Ark, a hostel for people with aids in Stockholm.

Marsha and Jack also together did two seminars, one in Gothenberg and another in Ostersund for groups of parents, professionals and politicians. The workshops were called: "Acceptance, Belonging & Community", and stressed the value of building relationships around all vulnerable groups. Although Sweden has probably the best legislation and quality of care for people with disabilities and the elderly, they are still struggling with issues of isolation and segregation.

We shared our own struggles in Canada and the United States, and exchanged stories with our new colleagues and friends in Scandinavia.

June will see the Centre team conducting Institutes in England, Wales and Holland, as well as Chicago, and Kentucky. Earlier workshops were held in Cambridge, Sioux Lookout, Kenora, Ontario and Lethbridge, Alberta. We have also spent blocks of time in Colorado and Missouri. In California, we saw Lemoore High School — doing outstanding work integrating all kids. We were both in Bermuda in December to do work with the Human Rights Commission for Father Pat. We've been busy...

is the road which welcomes back those we have left out, kicked out or pushed out of systems, either through benign neglect or by systemic and institutional abuse.

The Centre is on the road less travelled by... We welcome you to join us on the journey.

the state's history. Money had to be transferred in its flow. The real challenge was how to use the existing budget differently.

Elsewhere in the USA and Canada, the same challenge is being met, and experience confirms that the barriers to "inclusion" are values, not budgets. Wherever change is occurring, two factors are common. Firstly, there is visionary leadership from senior management. Secondly, there is a grass roots parent movement that demands ALL children be served by our education system.

Dr. Brian McNulty, State Director of Special Education for Colorado, learned that inclusion was not a money issue as their transition took place in the worst economic downturn in

Inclusion continued...

... From page 1
Labels, etc.)

Over time, this small empire has turned into a support system for segregation. It has had unanticipated tragic long term outcomes for the vast majority of children who were and are labeled — often with the best of intentions. However, over time, too many reports, commissions and studies, confirm that once students are segregated, the consequence is that they are trained to live out a life without friends, without jobs. The brutal truth is that the statistical outcome is a "life?" characterized by poverty and loneliness, often terminating in institutions that no longer work, and are outrageously expensive in dollars and devastating to the human spirit.

A Return to the Basics

And so we return to "basics":

The ABC's — Acceptance, Belonging, and Community.

The new three R's — reading, writing and relationships.

We praise efforts to include all children together — not just because it is good for children with "labels", but because it is better for everyone.

Theoreticians have known for decades that "peer tutoring" is enormously powerful for all children. As "behaviour" problems hit the crisis point, one of the most constructive and creative responses we can make is to include all children together. We simply have to reach out and ask children to help each other with real problems in the real world. It may come as a shock, but our children know these problems exist. Their struggles are not to run from these challenges, but rather to find meaningful ways to engage themselves in these critical issues.

Children of all ages are our most underutilized force for change. They are there in abundance — itching for involvement. All we have to do is ask. It is amazing to observe. The children with the "obvious" handicaps have a unique and profound gift to contribute — the gift of their presence — the gift of needing to be needed. In a society where it is perceived as "weak" to ask for help, excluded children's very presence challenges us to help each other. And as if by magic, those truly in the greatest need (not those with the obvious labels) snatch this opportunity to reach out to another, to help, to invest energy in a constructive supportive endeavor. Helping another person builds friends and community. If kids are unfulfilled in challenges and support, they make other choices — like gangs. Our present unworkable alternative is to hire more and more "experts", build bigger and better

prisons, and see more gang violence in our schools and on our streets. Inclusion is a better way...

Ironically, one of the best kept research secrets in education today is that when people feel good about themselves and feel they belong, they learn to read, write and do arithmetic. It has been confirmed too often that not learning to read is more a matter of a child not trusting an adult, or refusing to learn as a protest, than to anything wrong with a child's brain.

As we travel around Canada and the USA we find two roads — inclusion and exclusion — literally in conflict. For some there is a defensive individualism that focuses only on: "What's in this for me? Will I have to do more work? Isn't this all just a new fad."

These questions reveal a scary and not so subtle elitism — one that challenges the very notion of a democratic society. Other voices are searching for love and meaning in a complex and confusing world.

This is not a challenge for the meek. It is vital, dynamic and will renew our schools, our communities — and our lives. Take a risk. Begin now. Include someone new — and different in your life today.

Conclusion

We believe that good schools and communities that welcome everyone can be places that help create a more loving, just, humane and saner world.

Some will call us and our Centre "naive, idealistic, dreamers." "YES! We are!" We are proud of our commitment to building a positive future for all, and we work hard and take stands for a world that rejects self immolation — and blowing itself and its children into oblivion. An inclusive world will not destroy its atmosphere or rainforests. It will not destroy all possibility of human life, community, joy and health.

Education is a powerful tool that can be used for good or evil. We still believe that education can liberate hearts, souls and brains to make this planet a better place to live for all of us.

Jack Pearpoint & Marsha Forest

INCLUSION PIONEERS

There are some people who talk about inclusion — and some who actually make it happen. George Flynn, Director of the Waterloo Region Roman Catholic Separate School Board makes it happen. For his support, his encouragement and for the quality education system he and his excellent staff run for ALL kids, thank you.

Giftedness vs. "Un" Giftedness

We urge readers to join us on the Road to Inclusion by shifting from the disability myth to the giftedness paradigm. This is the heart of the road of INCLUSION. On the Inclusion journey, all children, and indeed all people, are gifted — all are unique and all have treasures to offer. If we fail to find the gift in a child, that child will most likely end up rejected, illiterate and institutionalized — possibly in a jail. If we continue to label and test, we will see more and more gangs, violence and despair. An Inclusive School labels all children "gifted and talented", and works toward an outcome that deals with the full human potential in each of us.

The GIFTEDNESS model is exciting, challenging and dynamic. It is the antithesis of labels and IQ scores. You call tell a "giftedness" school instantly. You feel the magic and energy. The halls are full of art, music and kids. The principal and staff are excited. No one is burned out and the parents and children are INVOLVED.

The "Giftedness" School is noisy, messy, and full of books, creative art work, music and people. Older citizens can be seen in the halls reading to younger children. High school students do their cooperative job placements helping in the younger grades. There is cross-age and same age peer tutoring and field trips happen all the time. The principal is hardly ever in her office.

The student population reflects the diversity of the society. Hair and

clothing styles vary and some kids run around while others zoom by in their motorized wheelchairs. A sign language class is given at lunch so all the student body can communicate with Michael who is hearing impaired.

The fully inclusive quality school is still school of the future (and in some cases it is the school of the present). Unfortunately, this school is not the norm. Our hope is that by 2000, the Inclusive school will be the norm in education, and that the road to exclusion will be an historical anomaly.

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 not work.

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

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 encrusted residue. The choice is ours.

Es Tu Lucha, It's Mine

*It's your smile, my friends
That is always on my mind.*

*It's your courage, my friends
That makes all fear blind.*

*And your love of all people
that don't leave justice behind!*

It's your struggle, amiga, It's mine.

*Damn, pero que pasa?!
That our plea they can't find!*

*It's your courage, your love,
And our struggle, that will bind*

*To conquer with our friends
all the fears and injustice*

That we must leave behind!

Es tu lucha, amiga, It's mine.

*Dedicated to all my dear friends
from Canada who are with me in
heart and spirit.*

*Tu amiga,
Carmen Ramirez,
El Paso, Texas*

*(Carmen attended the McGill
Summer Institute in Montreal,
Summer 1990, and has been
fighting for quality education for
all her children in El Paso under
incredible odds.)*

Creating Rainbows

Quartz Crystals grow quite naturally in the environment. The most highly valued crystals are not the smooth, perfect gems. In fact, the crystals most desired are those with imperfections within their walls.

These imperfections are known as "inclusions". It is the presence of inclusions that make rainbows possible. Thank you for helping us see the rainbows.

McGill Summer Institute —
Class of 90.

We Recommend RESOURCES...

6955 Lehman Drive, Suite 101
Colorado Springs, Co. 80918

BOOKS & VIDEOS

Action for Inclusion

*Forest and O'Brien
with Pearpoint, Snow & Hasbury*
Over 5000 copies in print — "A down to earth blueprint of what 21st century education ought to be doing for all kids in regular classrooms. Modest but powerful strategies for making it happen in a jargon-free, step-by-step book."

Herb Lovett, Boston

From Behind the Piano The Building of Judith Snow's Unique Circle of Friends

*by Jack Pearpoint,
afterward by John O'Brien*
"Everyone's life is a story lived. Jack's story of Judith's life is amazing. In fact, life is so filled with vitality, courage, defeat and victory that the reader learns that a life story of some people fascinates more than any fiction."

John McKnight, Chicago

It's About Learning

Marsha Forest & Bruce Kappel
"An exciting approach to teaching adults who have been labelled "bad, sad, mad and can't add" and have been pushed out, kicked out or dropped out of traditional education. The Student Centred Individualized Learning (SCIL) program is told through stories from the streets and from the heart."

Patrick Mackan, C.R.

With a Little Help From My Friends

Producers:

Marsha Forest and George Flynn
An award winning one hour (three part) video about creating schools where all students belong and learn together. Hear Grade 7 and 8 students talk about the impact of having kids with disabilities in their classrooms.

Kids Belong Together

*Producer: People First Association
of Lethbridge, Alberta*

This 24 minute video featuring 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. The closing song is destined to become the anthem of inclusion leading us to the year 2000.

The Labelling Blues

Greg Hoskins & The Stick People
A powerful ROCK VIDEO of a boy's journey from a rural farm to an institution. Compelling images of isolation and community.

Also: a new CD — *Moon Come Up* by the Stick People — produced by True North (buy at your record store).

Assorted Centre Articles

Articles on Maps, Circles, etc. by the Centre Team.

Coming Soon:

*** Patrick Mackan's Book: **Kids Belong Together; Reflections on Inclusion** (Inclusion Press)

*** A Special Edition of the **Developmental Disabilities Journal**, University of Alberta on **Inclusive Community** — Dedicated to Patrick Mackan, available Fall, 1991.

Univ. of Dayton Videos:

The Inclusive Catholic Community — featuring Patrick Mackan
Building the School Team — featuring Patrick Mackan
The Inclusive Classroom — featuring Marsha Forest

Video tapes from the 1989 & 90 conferences on Inclusive Education, sponsored by the Centre for Ministry with Disabled People, (\$30 per copy) University of Dayton, Dayton, Ohio, 45469-0317 Attn. Marilyn Bishop. Tel.: 513-229-4325

Circles of Friends

Bob & Martha Perske,
Abingdon Press
(Anything by the Perske's)

Cognitive Counselling & Persons With Special Needs

by Herbert Lovett, Praeger Press
1 Madison Ave., NY, NY 10010

Hot Off the Press:

*** **Opening Doors**
by PEAK, Peak Parent Center, Inc.
Integration Project (great resource!)

Other Resources:

The Communitas Communicator
Communitas, Inc., Box 374
Manchester, Ct 06040
(fabulous newsletter +)

SAFE - Schools Are For Everyone
P.O. Box 583, Syracuse, NY 13210
— International coalition for full inclusion of all students through supported education.

Expectations Unlimited

P.O. Box 655, Niwot, Colorado,
80544 USA Ph.303-652-2727
(great resource catalogue)

The Integration Action Group

P.O. Box 10, Station D
Etobicoke, Ontario M0A 4X1
416-857-0251
— Action oriented association concerned to help achieve integration.

Centre for Inclusive Community
Rosalyn Cormier, 95 College Street
Kitchener, Ont. N2H 5A2

— Sponsors workshops and training to create community, friendship and integrated education.

Centre for Studies on Integration in Education (CSIE)

Mark Vaughan, Linda Shaw
4th Floor, 415 Edgeware Road
London, England NW2 6NB
Tel: 081-452-8641
Excellent resource catalogue
& publication

From Behind the Piano by Jack Pearpoint A Review by Doug Gruber, Assist. Supt. of Education, KWSSB

I have never met Jack Pearpoint; I have never met Judith Snow. But I read her story, Jack's story, and now I need to meet them both.

I have spent most of my years in education in the areas of regular classroom teaching and curriculum improvement. I did not become directly involved with students with challenging needs, and I only met a few people who challenge us to be truly human and truly spiritual. In developing a measure of expertise in broad curriculum areas, such as thinking skills and program design, I was left unaware of many other things.

That changed in 1987 when I joined the Waterloo Region Catholic School Board, as a supervisory officer. This Board is an inclusive community. Every student is treated as an individual; every student presents

a challenge — some more than others but none are excluded or isolated.

I have learned more about what being human and spiritual is by meeting these people, their teachers, and others who support their education.

This book reconfirmed my conviction that ALL of us need to be able to be and live humanly, as social beings, as being with intelligence, as children of God. Judith Snow's achievements, conquests, endurance, determination, fragility, and love close the door on doubt. Jack Pearpoint's love and fondness for life and living came through in the simple elegance of his prose. In his story, Judith's story, he captures the readers interest by creating a story that reads like a novel. It is about a group of people helping one another to survive.

I recommend this book to all educators, their families, and anyone interested in how we can all live together.

Doug Gruber

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John McKnight: Literacy & Inclusion

On January 24-25, 1991, John McKnight spoke at "Literacy and Inclusion" in Cambridge, Ont. His words were inspiring, encouraging, challenging and humbling. McKnight weaved a rich tapestry focusing on what we already knew, but have lost confidence in as we have donned our professional hats, and our theoretical learning. He encouraged us to trust in our own knowledge, intuition and what we know to be true about community.

What is community? This question echoed throughout. What became clear is that there is a very definite distinction between community and service systems. Systems are based on control, specifically, the control of many by only a few. People are in systems, according to McKnight, because they are obligated to be there — there is no freedom of choice. Systems work towards the production of goods and services. Systems are incapable of producing care, but must "produce" clients in order to justify their existence.

Communities were seen as being completely different. Communities are grounded on consent wherein there is no control of hierarchy. Communities produce care not service. Communities are built up of people named citizens.

McKnight emphasized that when people are labelled they lose their citizenship. They are taken over by a "service" system, segregated, isolated, and disempowered. John says that the literacy movement must be a community movement in which the "values of care, consent and citizenship are expressed".

Once an individual is "tagged" illiterate, he or she becomes a victim of "system abuse". Think about it! This person has gone through the school system, and still cannot read. What an injustice! The only way to reach out to this person, to teach this person, is to teach through community and community ways. The service system has miserably failed this person. The community is the only way to right the injustice.

McKnight speaks of community guides as "subversives going into systems — sneaking into systems, finding labelled people and leading them out into communities." These guides serve as bridges from systems to the communities: They create a pathway from clienthood to citizenship.

How do Community Guides create such a bridge? There were six characteristics of a guide highlighted by McKnight. Guides must care; always seeking the cup as "half full". Guides see the capacities, the gifts, the po-

tentials in those that have been "service abused". Guides have "kinds of eyes to see the gifts in people".

Secondly, guides believe that communities are filled with hospitality. They realize an injustice has been done, and they now stand ready with open arms saying: "Welcome, we've been waiting for you!"

The third and fourth characteristics go hand-in-hand; a guide must be very well connected to the community — as well as being a trusted member of that community.

Fifth, a guide is someone who can make offers which "others can not refuse". Introducing friends with enthusiasm, confidence, excitement and caring makes others want to meet and come to know these citizens themselves.

Finally, the 6th characteristic a guide must possess is the ability, strength and trust to "leave" the person he or she is guiding. She must know when and how to pull back.

The stories John tells give powerful testament to the capacity of community to care. He tells of Eddy, a man who has a smile bright enough to make anyone happy, and how he now delivers the mail in the Norwegian American Hospital in Logan Square, Chicago. In the two years Eddy has been delivering the mail there, he has not done it right once, but he is an integral part of this hospital. He tells of Helen, an older woman, who in the name of "help" and "service" has been institutionalized for 67 years. She now acts as a grandmother for a family who needs a person just such as her.

These stories are inspirational, like the song by the Hollies: "And I'm not strong enough to carry him. He's not heavy. He's my brother". We must tear aside the labels we have manufactured, and dare to look at the person: To see the brothers, the sisters, and the grandmothers. As John McKnight reminds us, what our communities so desperate need are citizens, not clients!

(Article adapted from a summary by Heather Rennie). Judith Snow, Marsha Forest, Jack Pearpoint and Tracy Odell (from the Literacy Branch) also gave presentations at the conference attended by over 100 individuals from across Ontario. The Conference was sponsored by The Centre, in cooperation with the Literacy Branch, Ministry of Education (Ontario), and The Literacy Secretariat, Secretary of State. The Literacy & Inclusion Conference Report entitled "You Will Only Learn What You Already Know", will be available shortly (Inclusion Press).

Tributes to Fr. Patrick Mackan:

(partial listing)

- * Frontier College Annual Meeting — Nov. 24, 1990
- * Lethbridge — Thursday, Nov. 29
- * Winnipeg — Thursday, Nov. 29
- * University of Ohio — Dayton - Thursday, Nov. 29
- * Edmonton — Saturday, Dec. 1
- * Vancouver — Sunday, Dec. 2
- * Human Rights Day — Hamilton, Bermuda, Dec. 10
- * Integration Action Group, Ontario Annual Meeting — Kingston — April 26, 1991

We know there were more — but this gives a flavour of the love people felt for Pat and his work — everywhere.

A Dedication to Our Friend, Mentor, Colleague Father Patrick Mackan, CR

Yesterday, hours after I took this book (From Behind the Piano) to press, Father Patrick Mackan, my friend, mentor and colleague arrived at our house. Patrick, with Judith Snow, Marsha and myself was one of the founders of the Centre for Integrated Education and Community. At that time, there was no dedication. Now there is.

We went to dinner together. Pat was excited about the decade ahead. His new mission as "spiritual mentor" — to create a world where all kids belong together.

After dinner, Pat watched his video tape "Kids Belong Together" with an Australian friend, Joan Reedy.

He had been having leg troubles, so he asked me to help him walk to the window to get a breath of fresh air. Pat took in a deep breath, and collapsed in my arms. He died there — in my arms.

He had a wonderful day — and a great life. He is a great spiritual leader and is with us forever more. He wanted to be with his community — his circle — and he died in our arms.

The wind chimes on the back porch had been quiet all day, but they suddenly began to ring — and continued throughout the night.

Patrick is at peace. He also is working on his chosen vocation — in a way I had not understood. He talked of being a spiritual mentor, and he meant it. He is very with us now — and through the work of the Centre — forever.

It was a privilege to have him die in my arms and breathe his spirit into

Marsha and I — and all of us who are committed to building a world where "kids belong together".

Jack Pearpoint
Nov. 24.90

(This is the dedication in From Behind the Piano — a book about Judith Snow, by Jack Pearpoint.)

Father Pat died on Nov. 23, 1990. He was only 64. He left a wide array of dear friends who miss him dearly. Many of them organized tributes in his honour.

To Keep the Spirit and Vision of Father Patrick Mackan Alive, a Trust is being established. Preliminary activities will include editing & publishing Pat's book:

Kids Belong Together,
Reflections on Inclusion

Donations are welcome:

**Father Patrick Mackan
Charitable Trust**
c/o Centre for Integrated
Education & Community
24 Thome Crescent
Toronto M6H 2S5

Please accept our apology for delays in responding to many of you who have already made donations. It takes time to establish a trust. Please be patient.

Denmark: One School for All

In our recent trip to Sweden where we worked with the International Council for Adult Education and visited and spoke with numerous educators and parents, we found a new circle of friends including Lars Bolander and his family; Inge Clausen Wastberg (Institute of Integration). As well, Lars took us by ship to spend time with Ole Hansen (sort of the George Flynn of Denmark). Ole is a psychologist who directs a centre — School Seculodis Rode — providing training & support for parents and teachers to avoid segregation (not promote integration), in a region of central Denmark. Ole explained: "Integration is focused on individuals; segregation allows one to focus on the system." He uses cartoons and images to make his points. Ole says we must switch from seeing the image of the chalice, to focusing on the surrounding shadow which creates the image. Focus on the system not the individual. Ole believes:

1. Neighbourhoods are for everyone
2. Organizations are for everyone
3. Rights are for everyone
4. Local Community for everyone

Integration/segregation — A Major Shift in International Attitudes

Ole Hansen, with illustrations by Allan Stockholm — pages 161-171

...The World Health Organization (WHO) puts forth a set of values

which play a significant role in the development of schools in some parts of the world. The key words: unity, equality, and independence originate with the WHO and influence international thinking. When school systems are built, we listen to each other.

...Integration activates our values and attitudes and enables us to realize the strengths of being different. Integration is not a drive to normalize, but it means that systems and services must be arranged so as to ensure that the special needs of the individual may be satisfied under the most appropriate conditions — as close to the individual's home base as possible. Integration is the approach which may be applied when a society or community wishes to instill in a new generation of pupils such democratic concepts as versatility and pluralism. Integration presupposes that special rules are dismantled and that the standard system is enhanced to cover all the individual's needs.

...The Nordic education concept, "One School for All", builds upon the following cornerstones:

* The concept of the comprehensive school: The comprehensive school concept means that pupils attend the same class for the entire ten-year school period.

* The principle of class teachers: The same one teacher is assigned during the entire ten-year period to the task of ensuring that individual and social problems are solved optimally.

* Educational/psychological service systems: The purpose is to en-

sure that the particular educational needs of all the pupils are satisfied by the school.

...Acceptance, understanding, and appreciation of the strengths of being different became basic concepts along with and in addition to compulsory education itself. The methods of the specialized educationist became manageable instruments for the ordinary teacher in ordinary teaching...

The Whole

Hindsight has taught us the lesson that integration fails when the handicapped pupil is not seen as part of the social whole. This means:

* When the focus is on the school only, without considering after-school life and the individual's needs for meaningful leisure time.

* When the focus is on the organization of education only, and not simultaneously on the content of education.

* When one preserves established and ingrained ideas as to what constitutes education and what does not.

* When the school in its organization and way of thinking is directed towards academic streaming and no alternative efforts are made to teach socially relevant subjects.

Working Against Segregation

The 1990's are likely to be the period in international history where public education and teaching for the handicapped will work against segregation. Only in this way can we obtain real integration. Integration will arrive when:

* Children start school together.

* Nobody comes from a "special" school or institution.

* The handicapping categories do not run the placement, but on the contrary direct the educational aims.

* Every teacher understands how to use his or her knowledge or how to obtain relevant help from experts in order to solve educational problems.

The Parents' Commitment

Acceptance, tolerance, and understanding must be notions that characterize class parent meetings. Openness, honesty and confidence must be keywords when planning educational subject matter so that all the pupils of the class may profit optimally from the teaching.

Children and classes that have difficult special pedagogical challenges as part of their everyday routines will reach the same goals as the other classes, and in addition so that they will learn something very important: better life quality through a feeling of togetherness, and respect for and understanding of other people's problems — qualities which parents around the world agree should be cornerstones for any grown-up generation.

Segregation and integration are not aims per se. They are methods used internationally to emphasize notions like versatility and variety. Segregation and integration will become instruments to ensure that the next generation understands the elements of a democratic society.

Excerpts from: *World Yearbook of Education, 1991: International Schools & International Education*

european vistas

may 17 – june 19, 1991

scotland, england, wales, holland working, teaching, meeting old friends, new friends, same issues, new context — judith, who can't be here, is here... from intensive care to wigan she made it (without kidney stones) smiling and eating on the wigan pier. the team is assembled — o'brien, pearpoint, forest, snow, flynn, lovett discussions fly late into the night european unity, 1992, inclusion, integration the gulf war, racism, eastern europe... one free day and a ten hour drive to stonehenge judith, grant, jack in the middle of the pagan circle ancient stones surround a radiant trio of friends "may the circle be unbroken..." we have crossed the ocean and done the impossible again the european institutes have begun...

we have joined yet another new network... same issues/different context/new circles...

next is holland ... sharing and learning ... utrecht, amsterdam ... new names/same issues/different context/new friends... and a magic moment—the symbol of the future... we sit at the 100 year old concertgebouw in amsterdam in the shadow of the riksmuseum and the van gogh collection surrounded by the namesplates of mozart, schumann, mahler, brahms, handel, we get cancelled tickets to a concert long sold out yehudi menuhin conducts the netherlands philharmonic... we sit behind the orchestra facing the conductor... our seats look down on the face of this kaleidoscope of musicians in the old concertgebouw... beethoven's fifth begins — tears stream on my face... sound fills me in this ancient hall...

i sit in rapt wonder as the pure music of beethoven's soul fills the air fills my heart with hope, with healing, with the future. it is impossible, we are here... many have told us "you can't — you can't!" but we can, we did and we will...

for three years we have walked through fire and walked on hot coal both we and the world have changed dramatically... we are not bitter or angry, we are strong and resolute in our intention to build a saner, more just and peaceful world... we have found and founded our centre... our spiritual mentor is with us on this journey... hard choices have been made goodbyes have been said the new path is open... the new road is being built... the maestro handi looks directly at us with his hand held gently on his breast... the oboe sings alone joined by a solo flute

and now the strings join this heavenly sound as tears wind down the lines and creases of my face... the tune of an old black spiritual merge with the beethoven "the road will be muddy and rough but we'll get there heaven knows how we will get there but we know we will..." all those we meet want peace, want integration, want to solve the problems of inequality and poverty and war... the majesty of beethoven booms out the finale of the fifth the horns, right in front of us blare out the final moments of truth of music heard in beethoven's heart-not in his ears. tomorrow we go back across the ocean to our basecamp/home stronger and wiser more humble and with new lines in the circle together we are better together we are better together we are better...

june 19, 1991
marsha forest

A Diamond in the Rough: Kanienkha:ka/Gayok'ohno Immersion Schools on the Six Nations Reserve

They are everywhere — in the most unlikely places — pockets of excellence, quality and learning.

We were hesitant to write about the First Language Association on the Six Nations Reserve — because sometimes, notoriety can spoil the beautiful simplicity and clarity of a program we were recently privileged to see.

We spent a day with several parents — visiting the community and classrooms. There are 156 students participating in full time immersion in the Mohawk and Cayuga languages. The classes began five years ago when several families on the Six Nations reserve grew frustrated with the high incidence of failure for Aboriginal students — on their reserve and across Canada. They wanted to do something.

They met and talked, and cried and talked and talked. They wanted a future for their children. In their conversations, they realized that only 250 of the elders of the community of 16,000 were still speaking their own languages — Mohawk or Cayuga. They realized that their children's future depended on giving them an understanding of who they were and where they came from. They decided to create a school that would be rooted in the history and tradition of the culture of the Six Nations Confederacy. The key was to preserve the soul of their culture — their languages. They started.

Five years later, we visited one of two locations on the reserve where a collection of "portables" (trailer classrooms) corners a rural junction.

Then we walked in. It was small, cramped — a grade four class with a marvellous teacher who was squeezed on a tiny chair in one of five foursomes. Each grouping was totally immersed in stripping small piles of local roots (a traditional wild horse radish) which they had just picked. They would be canning them the following day. There were no discipline problems. The teacher, a venerable Mother Earth, led a choral practice of a traditional lullaby in Mohawk as they stripped the roots. A woman from the reserve had moved to British Columbia. They were making a tape to send to her new baby — a new member of the Six Nations.

We had a one-word synopsis of what we saw and loved. The children exuded PRIDE! They were Mohawk Indians from the Six Nations Reserve. They were all getting jackets with their names, and the name of the school — IN MOHAWK. That is a red badge of courage these children

will wear lifelong because of the remarkable educational foundation being built in this little school.

There were several teaching aides — some of whom were also learning Mohawk. They never had the opportunity before. Many of them will spend their lives learning to overcome the cultural genocide that was imposed in the Residential Schools for over a century. They were beaten when they spoke "Indian", and gradually came to believe they were inferior. It takes hard work to unlearn lies that have been beaten into little children. That is why this school is so different — so important. These children have a new foundation. They are proud of their heritage and secure in their culture.

One of the symptoms of health was that elders are regular visitors. We were told they glowed when the children could understand the language of their forefathers & mothers. Now the stories can be told the way they were meant to be told — not translated and watered down. The children chatter in English and Mohawk. They are quite delighted that we can't understand and they can teach us. Their teacher tells us that the children she has nurtured for five years are beginning to have the confidence to speak outside the school. She hears them on the playground. Next, she wants to build their confidence so they will speak Mohawk in the Mall. That will be the real test. We are sure they will pass.

Later, we visited the Grade One group. Pride beamed from tiny faces. An equally radiant elder teacher drilled the class through a Mohawk lesson that Paulo Friere would have been proud of. The teacher later explained hesitatingly that she didn't have much formal education. We affirmed her wonderfully common sense approach. She simply listened to the children talking and taught them Mohawk for their issues of the day. Naturally, the children learned.

That night the parents met in the fire hall. We were invited. They have been meeting Monday nights for five years. They care about their children. They are committed to building a future for them. We didn't know the agenda — or how long the meeting would last. The meeting just began. Fifteen parents — all ages. The first issue was a presentation on a proposed structure for a new school board. It was complex and full of legal frameworks.

We weren't sure what we were to do — if anything. Then we were on the agenda. Mike Doxtater asked us

to talk about what we had seen.

It was a magical moment — sitting in the Ohswekan fire hall around a rickety table on blue plastic chairs. There were no videos, no overheads — just parents who were fighting to create a future for their children. Marsha spoke from her heart. She told parents she had seen a little school that was a gem — that filled students, teachers and parents with pride about being Mohawk Indians. She told them that they were right to fight for their culture — and they should not stop because the children in those classes would not be filled with despair. They would not commit suicide. The little fire hall was awash in tears. This tiny group of parents, struggling in isolation to create a future for their children, desperately needed to hear that they were on the right track. They understood fighting. They could stand up to government bureaucracies. But for a moment, they let their pain bleed through. They were so terrified they might not be right. They feared for the survival of their children. And they were bruised by the internal attacks. Their little school experiment was so threatening to "the system" that many neighbors and friends challenged their choice. They were not accepted within their own community. It was painful — when the essence of their little school was to build a stronger community for the future. But, it is terrifying for individuals to admit how much of their culture they have forgotten after centuries of colonial domination. The little school that is building a future based on their own heritage dredges up that recognition — that pain. It is very threatening.

These parents needed to be told that they were doing the right thing. When Marsha finished, I told them what they already knew — that North American school systems were failing all minority groups miserably. I told them that their language was the key — and that they were building a future for their children. They should let nothing and no one stand in their path.

There were more tears and a long silence.

Parents began to speak. They talked of the pain of being challenged by their own people. They shed tears as they talked of their own insecurity. A mother told a story. The whole school had a rally in the arena. There were teams. The parents from the Immersion school were recruited to help out. The question was what would the children from the Immersion school shout — Go Reds Go — or "Haoni Onikentara". The real issue was that the parents who were asked to lead were being asked to stand up in front

of others — their families and friends and speak Mohawk and Cayuga. They were ashamed and frightened. It took enormous courage to cheerlead for six year olds in Mohawk. The children didn't have any trouble. They just liked shouting — Mohawk or English — it didn't matter. But the parents and teachers had to overcome their inhibitions to speak out — to speak up — in Mohawk in their own community. The insecurity runs very deep.

And from a classroom, a parent teacher's aid grasped for the tools to help her children. She said she was taking an "unqualified teachers aide" program, but it wasn't giving answers to the real problems of her children. Through tears, she told us she was trying out the lessons in behaviour management, but that was when the kids began to act up. In despair, she would fall back to being mother, and everything seemed to work better. She told us that one of her students was acting out. As a mother, she asked the other students to help her. Together, as they talked, the child wept, "No more hydro..." Like children all over the world, she acted up when her family was in crisis. She didn't know how to tell her friends and teacher that their power had been cut off. She was too embarrassed and too proud to announce that, so she messed up her school work. She wanted to stay at school. It was safe and there was hydro.

We told a weeping mother/teacher's aide that she should never lose her maternal instinct — regardless of what teacher education classes might direct.

That little girl still doesn't have hydro, but at least she knows she is loved, and won't be rejected because of poverty. And the hydro will come back in time — but self confidence, once destroyed is very hard to rebuild. In the First Language Association schools on the Six Nations Reserve, self confidence and pride is still secure. And thus, we believe, the future has a solid foundation. No illiteracy here!

It was a privilege to be invited to a small community and find an educational diamond in the rough. It would be a privilege to assist that community to polish their diamond — but not too much. The children in the Immersion School can already see the star within the diamond. It doesn't need to go on public display to convince them of its value. Better to be closer to the rock, and the earth and the water — where Aboriginal values are rooted. That is their future.

Inclusion, Integration and Education took on new and deeper meanings in Ohswekan. Jack Pearpoint