

Introduction to A Common Countenance

WILLIAM F. PINAR

University of British Columbia

With A Common Countenance, the history of curriculum in Canada takes its place as a new and important field of academic inquiry.¹

I thank Catherine Edwards and Laraine Coates of Pacific Educational Press, Professor John Willinsky, and Mrs. George Tomkins for the republication of Professor George S. Tomkins' canonical *A Common Countenance*. I use the contentious concept of "canonical" to suggest that this text is not only indispensable for students in Canadian curriculum and foundational studies and teacher education, but that it can also function as a focal point for understanding the present and thereby presaging the future of Canadian curriculum studies. For thirty years I have been studying Canadian curriculum studies. Focussed particularly on phenomenological and post-structuralist studies,² I am not entirely an outsider to the Canadian scene. An outsider I am and will remain, however, and increasingly so, to my own (U.S.) field. It is more than consolation to know that "exile" and "estrangement" can be productive locations from which to gain distance from the everyday.³ Teaching in Canada since September 2005, I now contemplate Canadian curriculum

studies looking less for what might be useful to my understanding of the U.S. scene and more for what might be helpful to the Canadian one. This motive is also associated with my recent interest in encouraging nationally distinctive curriculum studies fields worldwide to cultivate their disciplinarity. In this project—the internationalization of curriculum studies—intellectual history is central.⁴ While Tomkins' study is not primarily intellectual history,⁵ it provides a skeletal structure of such a history. Focussed on the school curriculum and only incidentally on the university-based, academic field of Canadian curriculum studies, Tomkins draws upon scholarly sources to narrate this tale of “stability” and “change” in the school curriculum. While we have a map of contemporary Canadian curriculum studies—thanks to the scholarship of Cynthia Chambers⁶—what we are missing are intellectual histories of Canadian curriculum studies and (with the considerable exception of Gidney's study of Ontario schools) of the Canadian school curriculum after 1980, the date at which Tomkins concludes his study. I hope that the reappearance of *A Common Countenance* will inspire both orders of scholarship.

Updating and supplementation could proceed from Tomkins' scholarship, which provides a focal point for understanding and intellectually advancing Canadian curriculum studies.⁷ The categories of contemporary scholarship—as Chambers' map makes evident—are numerous and apparently unrelated: the indigenous;⁸ the phenomenological and hermeneutical;⁹ the autobiographical and narrative;¹⁰ the postmodern and the poststructuralist;¹¹ the psychoanalytic;¹² the historical;¹³ the postcolonial;¹⁴ arts-based inquiry;¹⁵ women's studies;¹⁶ and studies focussed on place.¹⁷ It appears that what Canadian curriculum studies scholars have in common is not the present but the past.

Installing Tomkins' study as canonical enables us to institutionalize

the “vertical” structure of the discipline.¹⁸ Scholars and students are free to pursue whatever line of research seems fruitful; what structures this intellectual freedom is knowledge of the past. Even when we disagree with Tomkins—for instance, it seems to me there is insufficient attention paid to Quebec and to indigenous education—it is Tomkins with whom we disagree. As an outsider, it seems to me “An Uncommon Countenance” would be a more apt descriptor of the Canadian scene, although Tomkins’ use of Fred Clarke’s phrase is certainly understandable.¹⁹

While my primary motive for reissuing this book is its contribution to the intellectual advancement of Canadian curriculum studies, I have other motives as well. Not only canonical for Canadian curriculum specialists, the book is also necessary reading for all prospective and practising teachers in Canada. Out of print for several years now, the book could not—until now—be easily assigned by faculty who share the judgement that professional preparation requires historical knowledge. Its republication means that *A Common Countenance* can be included in every educator’s professional library.

Studying Canadian curriculum history is also important for non-Canadians, specifically for Americans, whose history is simultaneously similar and quite different. Such study provides an opportunity for that “reflective distance”²⁰ that enables understanding, as I have suggested above. I believe Chambers overstates the case when she depicts Deborah Britzman as teaching Canadian students “who spoke the same language but shared none of the same cultural referents.”²¹ After studying Tomkins, it is clear to me that Canadians and Americans share several cultural—specifically educational—referents. What are they?

Canadian and U.S. Schools

As in the U.S., Canadian public schools have been enlisted in the process of political socialization. In anglophone Canada, patriotism has been decidedly anti-American and historically pro-British.²² Across Canada, concern has been constant over the U.S. content of textbooks; indeed, the fear of Americanization sometimes seems pervasive,²³ even phobic. While (over)exposed to U.S. popular media, historically Canadian students have received relatively little formal instruction about the United States.²⁴

In Canada as in the U.S.,²⁵ during the nineteenth century the dame school— instruction conducted by a woman in her own home—evolved into the public (common) school.²⁶ Late-nineteenth-century philosophers and educators influenced by Hegel—in the U.S., William Torrey Harris; in Canada, John Watson and George Paxton Young—emphasized the moral and intellectual functions of schooling, endorsing a common, compulsory, humanistic curriculum for all students.²⁷

Despite a Canadian tendency to emphasize the academic, there have been repeated efforts to employ school curriculum for social ends. One mid-nineteenth-century example is Egerton Ryerson's²⁸ formulation of education as the utilization of academic knowledge to educate future Christians and citizens.²⁹ A late nineteenth-century example is temperance education.³⁰ A twentieth-century example is the concern for mental health.³¹

As in the U.S., Canadian politicians have asserted a causal relation between the state of public education and the national economy.³² U.S. concerns over international competitiveness did not begin with Sputnik³³ or with the Reagan administration's *A Nation at Risk*.³⁴ Tompkins reports that U.S. anxiety over the effectiveness of public education was provoked

as early as 1876 by the Germans and the Russians.³⁵ As it turns out, late-nineteenth-century Americans also envied the Canadian school system.³⁶

As noted, Canadians have emphasized patriotism (not to the extent as have Americans), understood (until relatively recently) as loyalty to the United Kingdom,³⁷ except, of course, in Quebec, where Britain was ignored in favour of France.³⁸ In Quebec, what began as religious separatism—a school system controlled by the Catholic Church³⁹—evolved into linguistic nationalism.⁴⁰ Whether in Catholic or Protestant schools, prayer⁴¹ marked the beginning of the school day.⁴² Over the course of the twentieth century, however, explicit moral instruction became secular,⁴³ replaced by reflective discussion of “values.”⁴⁴ Imperial patriotism was, Tomkins tells us, rerouted towards “the teaching of an often ill-defined Canadian identity suffused with a greater appreciation of the Canadian mosaic.”⁴⁵

As did the U.S., Canada enjoyed (or suffered, as many alleged at the time) massive immigration between 1890 and 1920, and, like their U.S. counterparts (who saw schooling as Americanization), Canadian politicians and educators imagined schooling as Canadianization.⁴⁶ As in the U.S., Canadian textbooks reflected the racism of the day.⁴⁷ As in the U.S.,⁴⁸ eugenics was influential during the first two decades of the twentieth century.⁴⁹ In recent decades, however, Canadian students have been taught to appreciate diversity.⁵⁰ In contrast to the U.S., with its right-wing insistence on “English only” and “being Americans,” in Canada cultural heterogeneity and bilingualism enjoy state legitimation.⁵¹

As in the U.S.,⁵² earlier generations of Canadians imagined that indigenous peoples could be culturally assimilated through public education.⁵³ As in the U.S., those of African descent were segregated.⁵⁴

Throughout the period from 1892 to 1945, the Canadian school curriculum promoted, in Tomkins' words, "an Anglo-conformist ethnocentrism" that provided "no room for any positive treatment of ethnicity or cultural pluralism."⁵⁵

As in the U.S., during the final decades of the nineteenth century, "mental discipline"⁵⁶—the idea that the mind was a muscle to be strengthened by intellectual "workouts"—was challenged by those committed to "scientific" study of education.⁵⁷ During this period, William James' *Talks to Teachers* was widely used in Canadian normal schools.⁵⁸ Stanley Hall lectured in Toronto in 1894; in 1895, a child study section was formed in the Ontario Educational Association; the study of adolescence followed.⁵⁹

In 1885, J.A. McLellan of the Ontario Normal School co-authored with John Dewey *The Psychology of Number*.⁶⁰ Dewey's first visit to Canada took place in 1901, but progressivism⁶¹—in Canada more commonly called the "New Education" in order to emphasize its British rather than American antecedents⁶²—enjoyed little influence in Canada before the 1930s.⁶³ Even then, its influence was limited,⁶⁴ largely confined to elementary schools,⁶⁵ and often directed towards conservative ends.⁶⁶

More influential in Canada than either Dewey or James was Edward Lee Thorndike.⁶⁷ Tomkins argues that Thorndike's mix of social conservatism and scientific progressivism was consistent with a Canadian educational tradition traceable to Ryerson.⁶⁸ Tomkins tells us that Thorndike's influence in Canada followed from his work on human intelligence, mental testing, classroom grouping, and retardation.⁶⁹ His student Peter Sandiford of the University of Toronto made one of the earliest uses of intelligence tests in Canada. Testing also contributed to what Tomkins terms the "formalization" of the Canadian curriculum,

thereby reinforcing “conservative, stabilizing influences.”⁷⁰

Despite Thorndike’s influence, Tomkins reports that Canadians were slow to abandon the older faculty psychology and to expand the curriculum.⁷¹ He notes that Harvard President Charles Eliot’s elective system⁷² had little appeal, as Canadians preferred a prescribed curriculum. Latin remained a curricular centrepiece decades after it had almost disappeared from the U.S. secondary school curriculum. As late as World War II, Tomkins reports,⁷³ most students in grade 12 were enrolled in the subject, a fact the American conservative critic Diane Ravitch would no doubt appreciate.⁷⁴

There was, evidently, no social efficiency *movement* in Canada. The American idea appealed to business interests, although not all of these were opposed to the traditional academic curriculum.⁷⁵ It appealed as well to educators concerned with making the curriculum more relevant to an expanding high school population. While vocational enrolments were not high, Tomkins reports, the American manual training movement helped to redefine the concept of equality of educational opportunity in Canada.⁷⁶ Reminiscent of the British system (if rationalized by the U.S. one), students were channelled into school programs according to their future job roles—decisions influenced by their social class backgrounds.⁷⁷

As in the U.S., the factory model—the curriculum conceptualized as a mass production assembly line—was accepted by many,⁷⁸ often in the service of the traditional academic curriculum.⁷⁹ Despite this dominant tendency towards the academic, since Ryerson there have also been tendencies to introduce social concerns such as health, anticipating, Tompkins suggests,⁸⁰ the “cardinal principles of education” enunciated

in 1918 by the (U.S.) National Educational Association's Commission on the Reorganization of Secondary Education.⁸¹

William Heard Kilpatrick's "project method"⁸² became, in Canada, "enterprise education" (a British term),⁸³ whereby the curriculum was organized around units of study, or enterprises. During the 1930s,⁸⁴ the method was practised in Alberta,⁸⁵ where it enjoyed almost "universal use"⁸⁶ and in Saskatchewan (where Counts' social reconstructionism also enjoyed influence).⁸⁷ In 1937–38, Superintendent of Toronto Schools

C.C. Goldring cautioned against "excessive use" of the method; he claimed that it was in use in 85 per cent of Toronto classrooms. Tomkins seems skeptical of this claim, countering that Ontario teachers remained tied to textbook teaching, dictated notes, formal testing, competition, and enforced classroom silence, all antithetical to practices associated with the project method, which encouraged the use of varied reference materials, the practice of continuous assessment, the cultivation of co-operative attitudes, and the noisy chatter of students engaged in "enterprises."⁸⁸

The New Education (of which enterprise education was only one expression) was widely advocated across Canada,⁸⁹ from British Columbia⁹⁰ on the west coast to Nova Scotia⁹¹ on the east. In addition to proposals associated with Dewey, Kilpatrick, Counts, and Rugg, the Dalton, Winnetka, and Unit Mastery Individualized Teaching Plans were also employed.⁹² U.S. reformers, among them Carleton Washburne, Boyd H. Bode, Harold Rugg,⁹³ Hilda Taba, and Ralph Tyler, were invited to address teachers' conventions in Canada.⁹⁴

As in the U.S., Canadian educators tried to anticipate post-War World II conditions. In 1942, a federal committee was established to study the problem.⁹⁵ As would U.S. educators, Canadians decided that a

more practical curriculum—one addressing a broader range of youth—was appropriate.⁹⁶ In 1945, the National Committee for School Health Research proposed compulsory high school courses dealing with marriage, parenthood, and related topics.⁹⁷ Like “life adjustment education” in the U.S.,⁹⁸ Canadian educators’ concerns for addressing a broader population⁹⁹ with more diverse, not always academic, ambitions also provoked right-wing resistance.¹⁰⁰

Despite “progressive” influences, Tomkins reports that Canadian high schools remained primarily academic institutions.¹⁰¹ Canadian curricula still emphasized “scholarship and character”¹⁰² as their main aims (in contrast to the concern for citizenship in the U.S.). The disparity between the school subjects and the university-based academic disciplines was kept minimal¹⁰³ with university academicians’ support.¹⁰⁴ Despite (or due to?) the academic emphasis of the curriculum, with its reliance on drill and memorization, despite the “dreaded” provincial examinations¹⁰⁵ and the “ordeal” that was the inspector’s annual visit, Tomkins, citing autobiographical accounts, concludes that the curriculum provided a “rich experience” that many students enjoyed.¹⁰⁶

As in the U.S., there was a conservative critique of the public schools during the 1950s. Like her conservative counterparts in the U.S., Hilda Neatby criticized “social adjustment” as a curricular goal, and she identified John Dewey as a key culprit.¹⁰⁷ She complained that teacher education emphasized professional knowledge over liberal education. Not all agreed with Neatby,¹⁰⁸ of course. As in the U.S., Canadian educators were, Tomkins reports, “caught off guard and unaccustomed to public debate.”¹⁰⁹ As in the U.S., by the late 1950s the stage was set for renewed emphasis on academic subjects.¹¹⁰

As in the U.S.,¹¹¹ public anxiety over the 1957 launching of the Soviet satellite Sputnik was displaced onto public education. As would critics in the U.S.,¹¹² the Gordon Commission on Canada's Economic Prospects expressed concerns over the presumed scientific-technological gap between the Soviet Union and North America. "As in that country [the U.S.]," Tomkins explains, "national shortcomings were laid out at the door of deficient school curricula and related educational neglect."¹¹³

While the Cold War was a source of national anxiety,¹¹⁴ it did not result in the same scapegoating of teachers in Canada as it did in the U.S.¹¹⁵ Moreover, prominent Canadian educators and scholars such as Northrop Frye contested military and national security rationales for curriculum reform.¹¹⁶ U.S. educators also protested militaristic and technological rationales for curriculum reform,¹¹⁷ to no avail.

The "sixties" occurred in Canada as well, if with a rather different (and complex) result than in the U.S., where the right wing rose and continued to dominate.¹¹⁸ During that decade, minorities (Tomkins mentions francophone nationalists, feminists, Native peoples, and radical students) demanded equal rights and full participation in Canadian civil society.¹¹⁹ Anglophone fears focussed on the Americanization of the Canadian economy and culture. As in the U.S., the school and the university were key sites of "social revolution."¹²⁰

As in the U.S.,¹²¹ by the late 1960s, subject-centred and vocationally oriented curriculum reforms were replaced by what Tomkins terms "neo-progressivism," in which "the teacher-proof curriculum of the preceding decade was superseded, to a degree, by the curriculum-proof teacher."¹²² This shift was expressed in Ontario's 1968 Hall-Dennis report, a document, Tomkins tells us, "in the spirit of American progressivism of the 1920s with the significant and characteristic Canadian difference that

progressive ideology was enshrined in an official government document.

Since the early 1970s, the arts have been supported by federal and provincial governments on a per capita scale almost ten times that in the United States, support that included building new school facilities for expanded, largely extracurricular music, drama, and fine arts programs.¹²⁴ One of Canada's most important novelists, Margaret Atwood, produced a thematic guide to Canadian literature for schools, significantly entitled *Survival*,¹²⁵ a title expressing an enduring national theme.¹²⁶

"A narrow academic curriculum with limited choice was replaced," Tomkins concludes, "by a broader, more diverse, more vocationalized yet more personalized curriculum with a bewildering choice of options."¹²⁷ Decentralization meant decision making occurred more locally than provincially, and detailed provincial courses of study were replaced by guidelines. As policies that prescribed a single textbook and province-wide examinations were modified, "the concept of a common curriculum was further attenuated."¹²⁸ While Canadians may entertain fewer illusions concerning (and hold somewhat lower expectations for) their schools than do Americans¹²⁹, Tomkins maintains there remained (in the early 1980s) the collective fantasy that education can cure social, cultural, economic, political, and moral ills.¹³⁰

There is much more to appreciate in Tomkins' study of the Canadian curriculum, including his references to teacher education,¹³¹ the feminization of the teaching profession,¹³² nineteenth-century debates over the dangers of co-education,¹³³ the question of bureaucracy,¹³⁴ immigration and state-sponsored multiculturalism,¹³⁵ the rather different (than the U.S.) Canadian experience with sex education,¹³⁶ technical concepts of curriculum development,¹³⁷ the federal presence in

educational policy,¹³⁸ and globalization.¹³⁹ *A Common Countenance* merits careful study, critique, and supplementation.

Conclusion

Perhaps the observations of a post-Confederation (1867) British observer still summarize (at the risk of stereotyping) the differences between the U.S. and Canadian systems. Having arrived in Canada from the United States, the Englishman records that he missed “the life, the motion, the vivacity” of the American classroom.¹⁴⁰ In Canada, however, he found the instruction more methodical, more “sound.”¹⁴¹ Fred Clarke, another British observer whose phrase provided Tomkins with the title of his book, complained about the “standard of the average” and the “ritualization of the [Canadian] school.”¹⁴² That acknowledged, Clarke compared Canadian schools favourably to those in the U.S. In contrast to the U.S., where, in his view, bureaucratic categories such as “credits” and “units” undermined sound liberal learning, in Canada “a stable scheme of basic studies” was still being offered.¹⁴³

Other British observers, John Adams and A.F.B. Hepburn, criticized the “excessive academicism” and “formalism” of the Canadian curriculum, with its (from their point of view) overemphasis on Latin and neglect of subjects such as music and art.¹⁴⁴ Peter Sandiford, the “leading” interwar Canadian educational theorist, concluded that, while it enjoyed stability, the Canadian curriculum suffered from being “retrospective, not prospective.”¹⁴⁵

It was, however, the “academicism” of Canadian schools that impressed other observers, including U.S. scholar William C. Bagley, who concluded, in 1935, that Canadians were so much better prepared (than Americans) in the elementary school subjects that U.S. achievement tests were no challenge at all.¹⁴⁶ Decades later, another American, Michael

Katz, was struck by “the relative lack of wide discrepancies between schools in city and suburb” in Canada as compared with the U.S.¹⁴⁷ My impression is that there remain fewer extremes—of income, of political position, of religion, of educational quality—in Canada than in the U.S.

Another observer of the Ontario and U.S. systems, W.L. Richardson, a doctoral graduate of the University of Chicago under Franklin Bobbitt and Charles Judd, concluded that “some American schools were much better than those of Canada, but a great many were worse.”¹⁴⁸ I suspect that observation remains accurate today.

Tomkins’ views are complex and subtly expressed, but I believe that, overall, he judged the Canadian system favourably. He points out that many students have found the Canadian academic curriculum—despite its regulation, uniformity,¹⁴⁹ and control—satisfying. At one point, however, he complains that the Canadian system “discouraged independent thought and provided no opportunity to be creative.”¹⁵⁰ To explain this apparent contradiction between student satisfaction and the system’s discouragement of intellectual independence and creativity, Tomkins, citing his colleague Neil Sutherland (who composed the foreword to the 1986 edition, reproduced in this edition), offers that the “drabness, severity, and intellectual torpor” of the Canadian curriculum was offset by the lack of competing sources of knowledge in the pre-mass media era.¹⁵¹ Moreover, many living on isolated farms regarded the schools as a means of escape from limited rural employment opportunities. Many urban dwellers regarded the academic curriculum as the means to a university education and upward mobility.¹⁵²

Like W.L.Richardson (cited above), Tomkins thought it likely that the best American high schools and elite private colleges provided an academic experience “qualitatively superior” to any available in Canada.¹⁵³ If, however, the “centralization, uniformity, and formalism” of

the Canadian curriculum ensured “narrowness” and “mediocrity,” it also guaranteed some measure of solid academic achievement. The “bewildering variety” of the U.S. curriculum presaged greater extremes of both “weakness and excellence.”¹⁵⁴

The point in comparing national systems of education (and the scholarship that labours to understand them) is not to contribute to international competitiveness. For me, the point is twofold: first, to gain critical distance from one’s own system (and its history) in order to understand it more fully, and second, to study other systems in order to begin to understand how curriculum functions in different national cultures at different historical moments. Not only for Americans, then, is George Tomkins’ *A Common Countenance* an important reference in such a project.

To understand one’s own situation requires close attention to its history. Tomkins’ study is an indispensable—indeed, canonical—reference for studying Canadian curriculum history. Professor Tomkins would be quick to agree that there are other histories to report. As mentioned at the outset, what is needed now is for scholars and students to take up where George Tomkins left off, extending his narrative of “stability and change” in the Canadian curriculum beyond 1980. Needed too, as mentioned earlier, are intellectual histories of Canadian curriculum studies so that Chambers’ map of the contemporary field becomes genealogically layered.¹⁵⁵ Tomkins has provided Canadian curriculum studies with a focal point, one to be studied, supplemented, debated, and revised.

While Tomkins’ project is historical, it has theoretical moments. The one I appreciate most occurs in the epilogue where Tomkins reflects on what he has reported. “In a process that was essentially political,” he writes, “rational arguments for change were of little avail. This suggested that curriculum questions had some kind of deep psychic

significance.”¹⁵⁶ That last sentence is not only resonant with my life’s work, it also underscores the complexity and centrality of curriculum studies to the project of education. Curriculum studies scholars know the inestimable significance of our field. It is our professional obligation to study its past. In so doing, we might discern passages to a future worthy of those who have gone before and those who are yet to come.

Acknowledgement

My thanks to University of Ottawa professor Nicholas Ng-A-Fook for his critical reading of an earlier version.

Notes

¹ See Sutherland, 1986, xiv.

² See, for instance, Pinar and Reynolds, 1992; Pinar and Irwin, 2005; Pinar et al., 1995, pp. 404–514.

³ See Pinar, 2006a; Anderson, 2002, p. 7.

⁴ “[I]t has long been evident,” Tomkins points out, “that a distinctive Canadian education and curriculum clearly exist” (2008, p. 2). Regarding the specific project I have undertaken, see “Intellectual Advancement Through the Internationalization of Curriculum Studies” at <http://csics.educ.ubc.ca/projects.html>. See also Pinar, 2007.

⁵ While not primarily an intellectual history, there is mention of several prominent Canadian curriculum theorists, among them Ted Aoki, Kieran Egan, and Max van Manen (2008, p. 286).

⁶ See Chambers, 2003, 2006.

⁷ See Axelrod, 1979.

⁸ Chambers, 2003, p. 223.

⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 225.

¹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 235.

¹² Ibid., p. 238.

¹³ Ibid., p. 240.

¹⁴ Ibid., p. 240.

¹⁵ Ibid., p. 234.

¹⁶ Ibid., p. 224.

¹⁷ Ibid., pp. 233 & 245.

¹⁸ Perhaps adopting a version of The Canon Project of the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies (http://calvin.ednet.lsu.edu/~aaacs/canon_project.htm), the Canadian Association for Curriculum Studies could undertake its own naming of key figures and texts in Canadian curriculum history, knowledge of which constitutes a minimal measure of disciplinary expertise.

¹⁹ Tomkins, 2008, p. 213.

²⁰ Anderson, 2007, p. 2.

²¹ Chambers, 2003, p. 239.

²² See Tomkins, 2008, p. 18.

²³ Ibid., pp. 21, 134, 144, 158, 234, & 372.

²⁴ Ibid., pp. 150, 362.

²⁵ See Pinar et al., 1995, p. 360.

²⁶ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 20.

²⁷ Ibid., pp. 24, 129.

²⁸ "Having gained a reputation for political savvy and administrative skill, Egerton Ryerson was asked by Governor General Sir Charles Metcalfe to become Chief Superintendent of Education for Upper Canada in 1844. It is within education that Ryerson made his greatest contribution.

Ryerson's first goal was to draft a blueprint for the establishment of a new educational system for Upper Canada. After an extensive study of models in Europe and the United States, he submitted a landmark report that culminated in the passing, in 1846, of the first of three School Acts which would institutionalize education in Canada and lay the

groundwork for the contemporary system.

The changes and innovations were numerous and far-reaching. The overall control of the system, for example, was placed in the hands of the Chief Superintendent, who set standards for the curriculum; supervised the training, inspection, and examination of teachers; and oversaw the selection and distribution of textbooks through a central depository and press plant that encouraged the publication of works by Canadian (not U.S.) authors. Libraries were established in every school. The respected *Journal of Education* was published to keep teachers abreast of educational developments, and two days were set aside annually in every district for professional conventions. In the late 1840s, boards of trustees were established to raise money, supply teachers and textbooks, and report on a regular basis to district superintendents. And, between 1850 and 1860, government land grants were secured for all outlying universities, thus making it possible for these institutions to grow and fulfill their missions.

Perhaps Egerton Ryerson's most visible achievement was the erection of the Normal School at St. James Square in Toronto in 1852, with its attendant model schools for the in-class training of teachers. In addition to the normal and model schools, the buildings housed the Department of Education and served to introduce the citizens of Ontario to a host of artistic, cultural, and scientific activities that laid the foundation for publicly supported museums, art galleries, and other institutions in Canada" (Retrieved on August 3, 2007 from <http://ryerrson.ca/archives/egerton.html>).

²⁹ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 32, 33.

³⁰ Ibid., pp. 28, 56, 80.

³¹ Ibid., p. 94.

³² Ibid., pp. 36, 251.

³³ "The Soviet Union successfully launched Sputnik I on October 4, 1957. The world's first artificial satellite was about the size of a basketball, weighed 183 pounds, and took about 98 minutes to orbit the Earth. That

launch provoked new political, military, technological, and scientific developments. It marked the start of the space age and the U.S.A.-U.S.S.R. space race” (Retrieved on August 1, 2007 from <http://history.nasa.gov/sputnik>). Why did politicians blame educators for this setback? I attempt to answer that question in *What Is Curriculum Theory?* (Pinar, 2004).

³⁴ U.S. President Ronald Reagan’s Secretary of Education T. H. Bell created the National Commission on Excellence in Education on August 26, 1981, directing it to examine the quality of education in the United States and to make a report within eighteen months of its first meeting. In accordance with the Secretary’s instructions, this report, entitled *A Nation at Risk*, contained recommendations for educational “improvement.” The Commission was created as a result of the Secretary’s concern about “the widespread public perception [manufactured by politicians and the press; see Berliner and Biddle, 1996] that something is seriously remiss in our educational system.” Soliciting the “support of all who care about our future,” the Secretary noted that he was establishing the Commission based on his “responsibility to provide leadership, constructive criticism, and effective assistance to schools and universities” (Retrieved on August 2, 2007 from <http://www.ed.gov/pubs/NatAtRisk/index.html>).

Economic problems (created, in part, by Reagan’s policies) and not military competitiveness (as was the case in the late 1950s) provided the animus for *A Nation at Risk*. Tomkins reports a similar alarm in Canada (p. 398).

³⁵ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 36.

³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 84.

³⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 40, 132–4, 145, 245, 395.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 41.

³⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 129, 137.

⁴⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 42, 247.

⁴¹ In Canada, separation between church and state has been less strict than it has been in the U.S. (see Tomkins 2008, pp. 55–6, 318). (Except in the states of the former Confederacy, the separation has not been strict at all.)

⁴² See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 137, 320.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, pp. 320–1

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 158, 321–2.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

⁴⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 30, 137.

⁴⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 135, 145, 300.

⁴⁸ See Winfield, 2007.

⁴⁹ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 162–3.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 39.

⁵¹ Within Canada, not all would use this verb, at least not without a sharp sense of its irony: see Gunew, 2004.

⁵² See Hoxie, 2001.

⁵³ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 37, 248.

⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁵⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 157.

⁵⁶ See Pinar et al., 1995, p. 73; see Tomkins, 2008, p. 52.

⁵⁷ Unlike many late nineteenth-century Americans (see Pinar et al., 1995, p. 80), Canadians did not travel to Germany to study Herbart's theories (see Tomkins, 2008, p. 96).

⁵⁸ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 98.

⁵⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 143.

⁶⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 98.

⁶¹ As in the U.S. (see Ravitch, 2000, pp. 59–60), “progressivism” referred to both liberal and conservative initiatives (Tomkins, 2008, pp. 162, 235). In the U.S., the “progressive” side of progressivism is personified by Jane Addams. Addams and her colleagues at Hull House in Chicago felt moved, Victoria Bissell Brown tells us, by spiritual and democratic

longings for a society in which stewardship was a responsibility shared by all and individual rights operated in harmony with community interests (2004, p. 3). Addams was present at the start of a twenty-year cavalcade of civic activism dedicated to the principle that, in order for a democracy to function, the entire community, from individuals to the national state, must take an affirmative role insuring the most basic conditions of health, education, and welfare so that every citizen could be optimally equipped to participate in the democracy.

⁶² See Tomkins, 2008, p. 96.

⁶³ As it was for Americans, for Canadians, the Great Depression was a traumatic event (see Tomkins, 2008, p. 146).

⁶⁴ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 98, 123, 182, 235, 327.

⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 259.

⁶⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 234–5.

⁶⁷ See Pinar et al., 1995, p. 90ff.

⁶⁸ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 98.

⁶⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 9.

⁷⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁷¹ *Ibid.*, p. 99.

⁷² *Ibid.*, p. 124; see also

http://www.highered.org/resources/Charles_Eliot.htm.

⁷³ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 124–5, 197.

⁷⁴ See Ravitch, 2000, pp. 26, 62, 116.

⁷⁵ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 128.

⁷⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁷⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 127.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 70.

⁷⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 100.

⁸⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 102.

⁸¹ See Pinar et al., 1995, p. 99.

⁸² See Kilpatrick, 1918; Pinar et al. 1995, p. 114ff.

⁸³ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 174.

⁸⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 165.

⁸⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁸⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁸⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁸⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 182.

⁸⁹ *Ibid.*, pp. 131, 174.

⁹⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 178.

⁹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 176.

⁹² *Ibid.*, p. 175.

⁹³ Rugg made a nationwide broadcast on the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation). In the U.S., he was vilified by a vicious right-wing smear campaign (see Zimmerman 2002, p. 55).

⁹⁴ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 178–9.

⁹⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 153.

⁹⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 331.

⁹⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 168.

⁹⁸ See Pinar et al., 1995, p. 46ff.; see also Pinar, 2004, p. 165.

⁹⁹ As in the U.S. (see Pinar, 2006b, pp. 124–5), in Canada in the post-World War II period, veterans “flooded” the universities (see Tomkins, 2008, p. 249).

¹⁰⁰ See Tomkins 2008, pp. 154–5, 334.

¹⁰¹ *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹⁰² *Ibid.*, p. 187.

¹⁰³ *Ibid.*, p. 197.

¹⁰⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 207, 255. For an exception, see p. 207.

¹⁰⁵ Ontario did not abolish the high school entrance examination until 1949 (Tomkins, 2008, p. 217). After 1930 (and for fifty years following), the University of Toronto required senior matriculation (grade 13) for entrance, thereby mandating a five-year high school program and greatly increasing university dominance of the high school curriculum (p. 240).

Most provinces, however, proceeded “cautiously,” Tomkins tells us, and Canada remained “relatively free” of the testing “mania” that developed in the U.S. (2008, p. 220). “More uniform curricula, more conservative attitudes, centralized textbook policies, and province-wide examinations,” he continues, “probably qualified the Canadian response to the [testing] movement” (see 2008, p. 220).

¹⁰⁶ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 208.

¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 287.

¹⁰⁸ Neatby’s charge of anti-intellectualism in Canadian schools resonated with Canadian historian Frank Underhill. However, the historian defended Dewey as a “tough-minded political progressive” (Tomkins’ words, 2008, p. 264). Underhill blamed instead a bureaucratic, authoritarian system of educational administration that prevented teachers from exercising the academic—intellectual—freedom taken for granted by university-based scholars (see Tomkins, 2008, p. 264). While it is five decades later and I am thinking of U.S., not Canadian, schools, Underhill’s critique rings true still. In the U.S., however, it is right-wing extremists who prevent administrators and teachers—during the Bush administration, through the use of standardized testing—from exercising professional discretion, and specifically intellectual freedom, in teaching the curriculum (Pinar, 2006c).

¹⁰⁹ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 263.

¹¹⁰ *Ibid.*, pp. 263–4.

¹¹¹ See Pinar, 2004, pp. 67–8.

¹¹² *Ibid.*, pp. 68–9.

¹¹³ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 265.

¹¹⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 246, 256.

¹¹⁵ See Pinar, 2004, pp. 65–92.

¹¹⁶ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 267.

¹¹⁷ See Pinar et al., 1995, pp. 161, 179.

¹¹⁸ Even so, Tomkins (2008, p. 374; see also pp. 377, 380) reports, a “new

conservative mood” emerged during late 1970s, leading to “greater curriculum control through control of materials.” The “Reagan Revolution” was, unfortunately, much more than a “mood.” In the U.S., curricular control was tightened considerably, so that today many U.S. teachers enjoy relatively little academic freedom (Pinar, 2004).

¹¹⁹ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 246–7.

¹²⁰ *Ibid.*, p. 247.

¹²¹ See Pinar et al., 1995, pp. 188–9.

¹²² Tomkins, 2008, p. 275.

¹²³ *Ibid.*, p. 276.

¹²⁴ *Ibid.*, pp. 246, 363.

¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 246. The primacy—and grandeur—of Canada’s natural landscape provides another sense of the phrase “common countenance,” one that led me to choose Rita L. Irwin’s beautiful painting for reproduction on the cover of this edition. My heartfelt thanks to Professor Irwin for this breathtakingly beautiful gift.

¹²⁶ See Chambers, 2003, p. 245; see also Tomkins, 2008, pp. 21, 40.

¹²⁷ Tomkins, 2008, p. 395.

¹²⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 395.

¹²⁹ See Pinar, 2004, p. 255.

¹³⁰ See Tomkins, 2008, p. 396.

¹³¹ See, for instance, Tomkins, 2008, pp. 220–1, 224.

¹³² See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 221–2; see, also, Grumet, 1988.

¹³³ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 118–19; see also Pinar et al., 1995, pp. 360–3.

¹³⁴ The British observer Fred Clarke criticized the “excessive centralization of Canadian schooling.” The words are Tomkins’ (2008, p. 230). Tomkins himself seems to accept centralization, if not in excess. Referring to teachers’ academic freedom, he allows that, “although such freedom was desirable, there was still a need for centrally co-ordinated provincial leadership” (Tomkins, 2008, p. 425). See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 226, 384, 395.

¹³⁵ See Tomkins, 2008, pp. 242, 248.

¹³⁶ *Ibid.*, p. 243.

¹³⁷ *Ibid.*, p. 282.

¹³⁸ *Ibid.*, pp. 388–9.

¹³⁹ *Ibid.*, p. 398.

¹⁴⁰ Tompkins (2008, p. 232) reports that U.S. observers found that the Canadian curriculum was “less elaborate”—which I take to mean less differentiated—and the pupils “less spontaneous” than in the U.S.

¹⁴¹ Quoted in Tomkins, 2008, p. 72; see also pp. 229–30.

¹⁴² *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁴³ Tomkins, 2008, p. 231.

¹⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 230.

¹⁴⁵ In Tomkins’ judgement: see 2008, p. 233.

¹⁴⁶ Tomkins, 2008, p. 232.

¹⁴⁷ Quoted in Tomkins, 2008, p. 253.

¹⁴⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 228.

¹⁴⁹ To an extent not characteristic of the U.S. (until relatively recently), Canadians emphasized curricular uniformity (see 2008, p. 61), enforced by uniform examinations and school inspections (2008, p. 62). Indeed, Tomkins (2008, pp. 215–16) suggests that there has been a Canadian “passion for uniformity.” Perhaps that paradoxical phrase captures the complexity of contradictory impulses captured in the Canadian term “progressive conservatism” (2008, pp. 195, 189–90, 234).

¹⁵⁰ Tomkins, 2008, p. 192.

¹⁵¹ *Ibid.*, p. 192.

¹⁵² *Ibid.*, p. 218.

¹⁵³ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹⁵⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 232.

¹⁵⁵ See Pinar, 2007.

¹⁵⁶ Tomkins, 2008, p. 398.

References

- Anderson, A. (2006). *The way we argue now: A study in the cultures of theory*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Axelrod, C.D. (1979). *Studies in intellectual breakthrough*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Berliner, D.C. and Biddle, B.J. (1996). *The manufactured crisis: Myths, fraud and the assault on America's public schools*. Cambridge, MA: Perseus.
- Brown, V.B. (2004). *The education of Jane Addams*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press.
- Chambers, C. (2003). "As Canadian as possible under the circumstances": A view of contemporary curriculum discourses in Canada. In W.F. Pinar (Ed.), *International Handbook of Curriculum Research* (pp. 221-252). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Chambers, C. (2006, February). "Where do I belong?": Canadian curriculum as passport home. *Journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies*, 2. Available online at <http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/jaaacs/vol2/chambers.htm>
- Gidney, R. D. (1999). *From hope to Harris: The reshaping of Ontario's schools*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Gunew, S. (2004). *Haunted nations: The colonial dimensions of multiculturalisms*. London: Routledge.
- Grumet, M.R. (1988). *Bitter milk: Women and teaching*. Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press.
- Hoxie, F.E. (2001 [1984]). *A final promise: The campaign to assimilate the Indians, 1880-1920*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Kilpatrick, W.H. (1918). The project method. *Teachers College Record*, 19 (4), 319-335.
- Neatby, H. (1953). *So little for the mind: An indictment of Canadian Education*. Toronto: Clarke Irwin.

- Pinar, W.F. (2004). *What is curriculum theory?* Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W.F. (2006a). Exile and estrangement in the internationalization of curriculum studies. *Journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Curriculum Studies*, 2. Available online at <http://www.uwstout.edu/soe/jaaacs/vol2/pinar.htm>. Reprinted in Pinar, W.F. (in press). *The worldliness of a cosmopolitan education: Passionate lives in public service*. New York: Routledge.
- Pinar, W.F. (2006b). *The synoptic text today and other essays: Curriculum development after the Reconceptualization*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Pinar, W.F. (2006c). Independence. In J. Milam, S. Springgay, K. Sloan, and B. S. Carpenter (Eds.), *Curriculum for a Progressive, Provocative, Poetic and Public Pedagogy* (xi-xxiii). Troy, NY: Educator's International Press. Reprinted in Pinar, William F. (in press). *The worldliness of a cosmopolitan education: Passionate lives in public service*. New York: Routledge.
- Pinar, W.F. (2007). *Intellectual advancement through disciplinarity: Verticality and horizontality in curriculum studies*. The Hague: Sense Publishers.
- Pinar, W.F. and Irwin, R.L. (Eds.) (2005). *Curriculum in a new key: The collected works of Ted T. Aoki*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum.
- Pinar, W.F. and Reynolds, W.M. (Eds.). (1992). *Understanding curriculum as phenomenological and deconstructed text*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Pinar, W.F., Reynolds, W.M., Slattery, P., and Taubman, P.M. (1995). *Understanding curriculum*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Ravitch, D. (2000). *Left back: A century of battles over school reform*. New York: Simon and Schuster.
- Sutherland, N. (1986). Foreword to George S. Tomkins' *A common countenance: Stability and change in the Canadian curriculum* (x-xiv). Scarborough, ON: Prentice Hall.
- Tomkins, G.S. (2008 [1986]). *A common countenance: Stability and change in the*

Canadian curriculum. Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press. [First published in Scarborough, ON by Prentice-Hall.]

Winfield, A.G. (2007). *Eugenics and education in America: Institutionalized racism and the implications of history, ideology, and memory*. New York: Peter Lang.

Zimmerman, J. (2002). *Whose America? Culture wars in the public schools*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.