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AUTHOR Darville, Richard
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ABSTRACT

Intended to assist in the formulation of effective policies for adult literacy in British Columbia, this paper reviews the current discussion of adult literacy policy and programming across Canada. It also reviews existing policies in Canada and in British Columbia, in education ministries, and in other ministries with interests and activities touching upon literacy. Recognizing the intentions of the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee, the paper outlines a framework for thinking about literacy policy that would realize a community-based strategy for literacy work, in which teaching is tailored to meet the needs of students in particular communities and programs often involve nongovernmental organizations, sometimes in cooperation with education institutions. The six sections of the paper examine the following: (1) adult literacy policy in the late 1980s; (2) federal government policy and institutional arrangements; (3) British Columbia policy and institutional arrangements; (4) mandates and responsibilities; (5) literacy policy strategies; and (6) understanding literacy programming. (KC)

POLICY EXPLORATIONS

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Centre for Policy Studies in Education
The Faculty of Education
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia V6T 1Z5 (604) 228-2593

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Please address all correspondence to:

The Editor
Policy Explorations
Centre for Policy Studies in Education
Faculty of Education
2125 Main Mall
The University of British Columbia
Vancouver, British Columbia
CANADA V6T 1Z5

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by

Richard Darville

CPSE CENTRE FOR POLICY STUDIES IN EDUCATION CPSE

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Adult Literacy Policy
in British Columbia

Contents

Prospects for Adult Literacy Policy in British Columbia

This paper originated as a report to the British Columbia Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee.[1] Intended to assist in the formulation of effective policies for adult literacy in British Columbia, the paper takes a broad view of "policy," including both explicit policy statements and the institutional arrangements through which they take effect. The paper reviews the current discussion of adult literacy policy and programming across Canada. It also reviews existing policies in Canada and in British Columbia, in education ministries and other ministries whose interests and activities touch upon literacy.

Recognizing the intentions of the Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee, the paper outlines a framework for thinking about literacy policy that would realize a community-based strategy for literacy work, in which teaching is tailored to meet the needs of students in particular communities, and programs often involve non-governmental organizations, sometimes in co-operation with educational institutions.

Discussion of Adult Literacy Policy in the Late 1980s

The issue of adult literacy has gained a marked prominence in the late 1980s. This is partly due to the efforts over the last decade by literacy advocacy organizations, such as the Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia and The Movement for Canadian Literacy. It is partly due to the growing perception of the importance of basic skills in the workforce for national economic competitiveness. It also reflects the imminence of the UNESCO-sanctioned International Year of Literacy, 1990.

Calls for more attention to the literacy issue have been heard across the political spectrum, from governments controlled by all major political parties, from business and industry, from the labour movement, from community organizations and anti-poverty groups.[2] In provinces across the country, processses of policy formulation and revision, and some new programming, are underway. The formation of a British Columbia Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee in 1988 is part of a national trend that includes recent adult education policy reviews in Ontario and Quebec; a public consultation in Alberta sponsored by three ministries; the creation of the Saskatchewan Literacy Council, the Manitoba Literacy Task Force and Literacy Nova Scotia; as well as the establishment of a new Literacy Policy Officer position in Newfoundland, and a Literacy Co-ordinator in the Northwest Territories.

The processes of policy review and formulation share a number of characteristics. The public advisory process generally includes the involvement of business, labour, community organizations, native organizations, and various government ministries, as well as traditional educators, in policy-setting, planning and programming. There is attention to public awareness of literacy issues, related both to political support for government action and to recruitment of learners and tutors. There is a common concern for the unique characteristics of various client groups for literacy programmes, and an increased acceptance of community-based programming arrangements as a means to bring

programmes closer to the people that they would serve. Finally, there is a widespread emphasis on necessary support services for both learners and practitioners.

What is "policy"?

The term "policy" (as in "literacy policy") is commonly used but often ill-defined. The term often refers to a specific government document whose title includes the word "policy." Such a document may refer to government principles and goals (perhaps a brief, general statement that the government will work to provide opportunities for adult basic education), government operating procedures, as well as statements of how the government hopes others will behave.

"Policy" is also used in a *de facto* sense to suggest the arrangements and assumptions upon which decisions may be based. "Policy" thus refers to the sometimes tacit assumptions of an organizational culture. It also refers to the ways in which certain actions are promoted in practice by institutional structures and routines. Every explicitly labelled policy statement presupposes a set of arrangements through which institutions operate and make decisions. These are essential to a policy's implementation in practice. Central in these arrangements, linking the most general policies with actual programming, are the formulas through which funding is provided to institutions and organizations, and the formats for reporting on activity by those institutions and organizations. These institutional arrangements, which may not appear in any policy document, may be called guidelines, procedures, formulas, or simply "paperwork".

This paper considers "policy" in the full range of its senses, from the broadest rationales for action to the institutional arrangements that make action possible. The discussion also necessarily touches on questions about people who don't read and write well, and the ways in which their learning is supported or discouraged -- that is, on the realities that adult literacy policy must address. The following sections review current federal government policy, and current British Columbia policy. Suggestions for new British Columbia policy are then developed.

Federal Government Policy and Institutional Arrangements

The federal government is not constitutionally the provider of education services. However, even in those areas in which the legitimate mandates of the federal government might allow it to support literacy programming, its activity is restricted. The only exception to this pattern is federal prison programs. The Solicitor General has initiated literacy programming throughout the federal corrections system, since 1987. Annually increasing targets for numbers of students completing grade 8 have been set through 1990.

The lead ministry for literacy in the federal government is the Department of the Secretary of State, which houses the National Literacy Secretariat, formed in 1987. The Secretariat works for the co-ordination of literacy-related efforts within the federal government, and between federal and provincial governments. It also provides funding for literacy support initiatives, including information and co-ordination of programs, public awareness, research, learning materials, and innovative community action projects.[3] Although there has been some confusion on the point, the Secretariat has been clear from its inception that its mandate is not to fund actual literacy programs — with the possible exceptions of cost-shared funding of markedly innovative projects, or of francophone or native programs. The Literacy Secretariat sees its role primarily as a "catalyst".

Employment and Immigration Canada (then Canada Manpower) provided funding for literacy through its system of "seat purchases" for Basic Training for Skill Development (BTSD), through much of the 1970s. These purchases dwindled at the end of the decade, and were completely discontinued after 1981-1982. As a matter of explicit policy, EIC does not assist with training below the grade 8 level. Preparation for Vocational Training is defined as "academic upgrading above grade 7 comprised mainly of training in mathematics, science and communication skills." However, limited support is provided under the program for the "severely employment-disadvantaged" which "gives training and work experience to persons who face significant barriers in securing and maintaining employment."[4] It is remarkable that the undereducated are virtually the only group excluded from access to EIC-funded training programs. This restricts their access not only to literacy training itself, but also to training for the many trades courses which require grade 10 or 12 for entry. Recently there have been limited signs of renewed EIC interest in literacy and basic skills. However, no major activity appears imminent. Similarly, the mandate of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development includes providing basic services to status Indian communities, and assisting native people to acquire employment skills. However, the Department has no significant adult literacy activity.

Because of the restricted role of the federal government, it seems clear that significant programming activity will come only from the provincial government.

British Columbia Policy and Institutional Arrangements

The existing (1982) policy document in British Columbia[5] is formulated broadly. It recognizes the Ministry responsibility "to foster learning opportunities for adults in British Columbia who have not had the opportunity to develop some or all of those skills required to function successfully in Canadian society." The Ministry policy is "to provide, to adult citizens and landed immigrants residing in the province, reasonable access to high quality adult basic education programs." Adult basic education (ABE) is defined to include basic literacy, academic upgrading, pre-vocational training, and English language training. This policy document also states that the Ministry will assist educational institutions by co-ordinating programmes, developing resources, encouraging and supporting innovative programs, facilitating evaluation and needs assessment with necessary data, and co-ordinating GED provision. Subject to funding, it will provide for programmes, support services and professional development, and provide financial assistance to students who require it. The Ministry will also co-operate with other federal and provincial agencies in developing income support and child care; and will encourage co-operation among agencies with a role in Adult Basic Education.

In this policy, drafted within the "old" Ministry of Education — prior to the separation of the current Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training — colleges, institutes and public schools are identified as programme deliverers. Arrangements for school districts in the "new" Ministry of Education are outlined in a memorandum of January, 1989, jointly issued by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. This specifies that school districts will receive funding, for adult programmes "leading to secondary school graduation," through the Ministry of Education's Fiscal Framework. In practice, this does not appear to exclude literacy programmes. The underlying idea appears to be not that school districts are providers of adult programmes, but that there is no age restriction on access to school district programmes. The memorandum also emphasizes that school districts and colleges are expected to co-operate in identifying and serving local needs.

The recent *Access Report* proposes a novel expansion of educational activity and funding in the province. It specifically identifies literacy and adult basic education as a priority concern, and gives pride of place to colleges, which it suggests "provide, for adults, much more suitable environments than schools for a return to study."[6] The report recommends that colleges be provided with funding to cover the costs of fees, books and supplies for students enrolled in ABE programmes, and that a provincial advisory committee on literacy be formed.

Community Colleges

The British Columbia community college system, because it has the primary provincial mandate for adult education, has the primary responsibility for the provision of literacy education. Every community college in the province conducts some literacy programming. Under current reporting procedures, colleges prepare an annual programming and budget "profile" and send it to the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. This document serves as the basis for funding negotiation and approval between the colleges and the Ministry. It specifies the number of full time equivalent students (FTE's) the college intends to serve and specifies the level of service projected in each program area. (The FTE is the central concept in current funding arrangements. It is defined as the hours of instruction had by one student attending classes 6 hours a day, 5 days a week, for 10 months — roughly 1200 hours, varying from year to year, due to statutory holidays; the dollar equivalent varies somewhat from region to region.) Basic level literacy programmes are identified in the profile as "ABE Fundamental," defined as equivalent to grades 0-8.

Literacy programming arrangements in colleges vary widely throughout the province. Some colleges have long seen literacy as central to their mandate and have provided consistent support. Others view it as a peripheral concern, or one dealt with by school districts, and so provide little or no support. Present reporting methods do not provide data on the numbers of *people* served in literacy programs, as distinct from the numbers of FTE's provided. Reporting emphasizes projected, rather than actual, levels of enrollment. Although colleges are asked to detail their current activity in all areas, reporting is not uniform, and some colleges have literacy programs that are not clearly identified as such.

School Districts

Although fewer than one third of school districts offer programmes — there is a heavy concentration of programmes in the lower mainland and southern Vancouver Island — the great majority of the population of British Columbia is covered by school district adult literacy programming. Classes are offered in night school, tutoring programmes, drop-in learning centres, community schools, regular classroom situations, and daytime dedicated adult space and classes. However, there is no clear assignment of responsibility for issues of adult literacy programming, curriculum and assessment within the Ministry of Education. In the absence of greater encouragement from the Ministry, school district promotion of adult literacy programmes depends largely on distinctive community and school district traditions of adult education.

Until 1988 school districts were funded proportionately to the size of their all-inclusive adult education programmes from a common funding pool. As of 1988, only ABE programmes are programmes funded by Ministry grants. These grants are based on

the fiscal framework used for all education funding, and are now not capped. The school district FTE is defined as 640 contact hours or 8 courses. School districts may supply additional funding from local taxes. Grants are based either on September 30 enrollment, or on the previous year's ABE activity. Fiscal framework funding for adult education programming is not dedicated, and districts can add funding to or divert it from adult programmes. As ABE students are fully funded on an FTE basis, the collection of fees is prohibited.[7] Large urban school districts will likely benefit most from these changes, and the elimination of tuition fees may lead to increases in enrollment. Smaller school districts, however, may be inhibited in programme development by their lesser capacity to provide administrative supports, and by smaller population bases.

Ministry of Social Services and Housing

The Ministry of Social Services and Housing provides assistance to some literacy students within the context of the Ministry's own major service delivery areas — income assistance, child protection and support for the mentally handicapped. Under the Opportunities for Independence programme, approximately 13,000 income assistance recipients receive supplementary support to cover the expenses (tuition, books and transportation) of attending an educational or job training programme. Students are supported for up to a three year period in programmes that will enhance their employability and hence will assist them to get off income assistance.

There is significant variation from region to region in the accessibility of this support for education, suggesting that policy is not so clear as to be uniformly understood. Furthermore, a number of features of Ministry policy and practice tend to work against those who seek literacy education. The policy is worded in a restrictive manner: district supervisors are granted discretion to authorize language training "where it is deemed essential and no other funds are available." The Ministry only approves courses that lead to employment, and an individual with ten or twelve years of schooling and seeking a vocational training course will appear more likely to find employment after education than does a literacy student. Furthermore, income assistance recipients must ordinarily research their own educational plans; the absence of any Ministry counselling and referral cannot but hinder people who need literacy training.

The Ministry also provides some grants to community groups under Community Projects Funding. These grants do not specifically provide for literacy programming, but may include some support, to the extent that literacy activities fall within the overall purpose of the community group. For example, a grant to a multicultural organization may contribute to an ESL literacy programme sponsored by that organization. In other areas of the Ministry's mandate, in the area of child protection, for example, literacy may be identified as a need and clients referred to appropriate educational institutions. Ministry service to the mentally handicapped includes training in communications skills which can include literacy.

Ministries of the Solicitor General, Attorney General, and Health

High rates of illiteracy are often reported in inmate populations in the provincial correction system. While there is enthusiasm for literacy education among corrections staff,[8] there is no policy for the general promotion of literacy throughout the provincial corrections system. Programmes do exist in a number of institutions, and have been established on an institution - by - institution basis under service contracts with community colleges.

Similarly, there is no consistent policy or practice regarding the provision of post-release education programming.

The recent report of the Justice Reform Committee[9] for the Ministry of the Attorney-General raises issues with a strong relationship to adult literacy. In this case, the emphasis is not on the literacy skills of people who must read documents from the legal system, but on the literacy practices of those who write those documents. The Committee notes:

> people involved in litigation need to understand the documents that affect them, and especially those documents that they must sign or swear. They should be able to understand the words that are spoken to them in court, by lawyers and judges. And the laws that govern people's lives should be intelligible to them. The justice system of this Province must commit itself to speaking in plain language.

The report, which is still under discussion, recommends that a Plain Language Committee be established to develop a strategy for implementing plain language in legislation and legal documents, and to provide leadership not only to the justice system but also to the government at large. It would be assisted by a working subcommittee which would have the authority to establish guidelines, monitor plain language implementation in various branches and levels of government, and provide training.

Within the Ministry of Health, there is some attention to producing public health information at a broadly accessible reading level. The Ministry also provides some support for the education of physically handicapped people.

Strengths and Weaknesses of Current British Columbia Policy

British Columbia's stated policy for adult basic education, including literacy and ESL, both reflects and has guided a long period of work that has seen British Columbia take the lead in some aspects of ABE in Canada, especially in extent of programming, and in learning materials production. The policy already identifies inter-ministerial and inter-agency co-operation as a part of ABE activity. However, considered in the light of literacy programming experience and the policy development processes currently underway across Canada, British Columbia policy and institutional arrangements also show a number of weaknesses.

Existing policy expresses the mandate for literacy work in terms of British Columbians' effective "functioning" in society, or in terms of their access to the equivalent of secondary school education. A fuller statement might go on to be more clear about the economic and social aspects of participation.

Although it is clear that the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training conducts most activity regarding adult literacy, there is not a clear identification of responsibilities for leadership and co-ordination among various government Ministries. The relationships involved concern not only the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training and the Ministry of Education, but also ministries with an interest in literacy, including Social Services and Housing, Health, and the Solicitor-General. The literacy issues involved concern not only questions of educational programming, but also such matters as plain language in government documents.

Statements concerning the provision of "reasonable access" through measures "subject to funding" make no specific commitment to provide programmes, let alone to

programs, and there should be graduated increases in community college funding to ensure that graduated increases in literacy programming within the colleges can occur.

One interesting model of literacy promotion is the Ontario Basic Skills (OBS) programme, through which Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology are funded to provide ABE. OBS requires a special focus on people at the basic level (up to grade 9, or BTSD III), a group that includes many natives, older people, people with disabilities, members of visible minorities, and women, who find it difficult to participate in the labour force, who are underrepresented in the training system, and who have markedly diverse learning needs. At least 20% of funding goes to the basic level, to "ensure that training organizations do not focus primarily on the needs of the larger and more active groups requiring upgrading at the secondary level only."[22]

In British Columbia, it is not the practice for the province to set standards for programming at individual colleges, and responsibility for literacy promotion must be held at the institutional level. However, each community college might be charged with ensuring that literacy programming is adequately provided throughout the college region. Adequate provision should be defined in relation to rates of undereducation (defined as completion of fewer than 9 years of schooling) in the college region. (A reasonable benchmark is for colleges to provide 25% of their ABE programming at the Fundamental level.) Adequate provision should also be defined in relation to a literacy needs assessment for each community served by the college, identifying potential literacy students with reference to the social and economic development of the community. Each community college should also explicitly plan measures to assure accessibility to identified potential literacy students. Those measures should include the scheduling and location of classes, teaching materials and methods, and means of recruitment.

Some school districts have established successful literacy programmes; others are well situated to provide them. For some programmes — for example, intergenerational literacy programmes — school districts are natural providers. School district programmes should have a commitment to the principles of adult education, and recognize that the educational needs and learning modes of adults will differ from those of children and adolescents. This involves flexibility in matters of scheduling, location, teaching style, teacher backgrounds, teacher-student ratios, etc. The Ministry of Education should acknowledge that school districts may appropriately provide adult basic literacy programmes, as well as adult programmes that lead in the short run to a secondary certificate, and should identify specific staff positions with responsibility for supporting school district adult literacy activity.

It would be helpful for the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training to work with the Ministry of Education to ensure that resources and training activities to promote student-centred curriculum, teaching methods and evaluation, be available to literacy teachers and tutors working in school districts. Possibilities of co-ordinating programmes through articulation measures, including common certificates, could be explored. Community colleges and school districts should co-operate in providing support services — library use, assessment and counselling.

Efforts to ensure literacy development among children and youth are central in an overall strategy for literacy. Public discussion is needed regarding students who do not acquire substantial literacy skills in school, and those who leave school early. This discussion should involve parents, teachers, and interested provincial and community organizations.

Beyond the Institutions

Even when literacy programming is well provided within educational institutions, there are further necessary steps. Individuals and communities experience educational, employment, health, legal and family matters as a whole, but systems of administering educational educational provision are ordinarily fragmenting. The relations of literacy learning to other parts of students' lives may be difficult to pursue, if these are obstructed by school or college academic organization of subjects and levels, or by the catchment of students with a great variety of backgrounds and life experiences which makes a thematic or problem-based approach difficult to pursue. Those who are well integrated into the institutional forms of our society have learned to deal with such fragmented provision. But for literacy programmes to serve more than the "cream" of students, innovative community-based strategies are called for at the organizational level, to overcome this fragmention.

At the organizational level, the term "community-based" can mean that governments and institutions inform people, or consult with them; or that governments and institutions join with community organizations in "partnership"; or that governments and institutions devolve responsibility and authority — and funding — to community organizations. The term "community organization" also has various meanings. It can identify educational or social agencies in a municipality or region, most of which will themselves be governmental organizations. Alternatively, the term can identify non-governmental membership organizations such as native bands, trade unions, ethnic associations and the like, which are controlled by their members, and include potential literacy students as members. Finally, the term can identify literacy programmes that are themselves community organizations.

Linking Institutions and Community Agencies

Literacy programmes in colleges and school districts should be co-ordinated with one another and with health, welfare, and employment agencies, and community centres. A co-ordinating mechanism can provide a forum for local discussion of community educational priorities, and an outreach vehicle for educational institutions. One developed model for such co-ordination is in Alberta Advanced Education's Community Programmes branch, which provides grants to non-credit programmes that are "approved and co-ordinated at the local level" through a system of Further Education Councils. These Councils include representatives of various educational institutions in a region, but also of recreation, health, agricultural, library, multicultural and other agencies. Representatives of local business and labour organizations, and individuals interested in fostering further education, may also be members. Courses are offered by a Local Hosting Authority, which can be an educational institution, other government agency, or an incorporated society or co-operative that offers courses "on a non-profit, non-sectarian, public service basis."[23]

This system of Further Education Councils has a distinct Alberta history and could not be simply transplanted in British Columbia. However, there are numerous linkages in British Columbia between school districts and community colleges, and between either of them and other community organizations. Co-ordination can involve the linking of distinct services, e.g. in referring people from a health service or employment service to a literacy programme. It can involve an effort to integrate services, e.g. with a college providing teaching and another community agency or centre providing space. These links have been developed at individual institutions, by individual educators committed to such work. These arrangements need not be left entirely to the initiative of individual educators, but

materials and teaching methods, recruitment paths, programme schedules and locations, and support services. In every case there should be means for students and potential students to influence the planning of programmes.

However, conventional forms of educational programming tend to serve some potential students better than others — to fit with some clusters of life circumstance better than others. Numerous pressures work against educational institutions and their adult basic education programmes being oriented to those who have the most basic literacy needs, and the most complex needs. Indeed in British Columbia, the areas with the highest rates of undereducation are markedly underserved in relation to need.[13]

One set of pressures tends to limit the development of literacy programmes. Within educational institutions, literacy programmes may be seen as lower-status activity than academic programmes, or even higher-level ABE programmes. They are, if well done, more costly than other programmes; they require greater resources for recruitment and teaching.

Another set of pressures limits the kinds of people that existing programmes are likely to serve. As is commonly noted, literacy and ABE programmes tend to "cream," that is, to "address themselves to the more competent members of their target audiences,"[14] to reach people "on the edge of functional effectiveness."[15] Institutions may concentrate their programming in larger centres, where student recruitment is relatively easy and administrative and support expenses can be distributed across a range of programmes. Many literacy and ABE programmes also have links to various social and labour market agencies. Some links, such as those to the Workers Compensation Board, reinforce the recruitment of students for whom literacy is an isolated problem. The clienteles of Employment and Immigration Canada and the Ministry of Social Services and Housing — the unemployed and social assistance recipients — are perhaps by definition people with greater needs. However, the policies of these agencies, which target people who are employable in the short term, tend to favour the already relatively favoured.

Furthermore, students who actively seek out literacy tutoring programmes and classes likely experience limited literacy or education as an isolated problem. For example, people with relatively greater education and relatively fewer needs are more likely to respond to public recruitment appeals, to persist in their study, to be in employment contexts in which study is encouraged or provided, and to have friends or family that support their learning. It is often easier for people to say that they need to learn English (as a second language) than for people to say that they need to learn to read and write; even immigrants who are not literate in their mother tongue can say simply that they were poor and could not go to school — a statement not possible for most people born in Canada. People who have some stable employment history, who know both the discipline and the rewards of the workforce, who have had successes that don't depend upon reading and writing, are more likely to attend and persist in literacy programmes.

In short, any effort to increase literacy butts up against social inequalities, some of which are within educational programmes and institutions, and some of which extend beyond education to social welfare and labour market agencies, and to society as a whole. A strategy to make literacy learning accessible to all who might want or need it must set out consciously to counteract these social inequalities.

Mandate and Responsibility

A framework for adult literacy policy and strategy should begin with a clear identification of key responsibility within the government, and a clear commitment by the British Columbia government to address literacy issues. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training should act as lead Ministry for adult literacy within the British Columbia government. The government might well take advantage of International Literacy Year to announce adult literacy as an area for priority attention, and to outline a multi-year strategy to begin the reduction of illiteracy. There is no question of "eradicating illiteracy" in the short run. A "massive reduction" (the phrase coming to be used within UNESCO) is, however, realistic. A committed strategy to address adult literacy requires goals for numbers of people to be served. Federal corrections programmes, and the Saskatchewan literacy campaign, have both specified goals in terms of numbers of people to be served, or brought to some level of achievement, in literacy programmes.[16] In a similar way, to signify its commitment to literacy, the British Columbia government could declare numerical targets for literacy programming, with increases in numbers of people served, over each of the next several years.

A mandate statement should make explicit the general purposes that literacy programming is to serve, and general assumptions regarding its provision. It can provide a sense of guidance to that provision that goes beyond the more detailed statements of policy and institutional arrangements. The following themes should be considered for inclusion in a mandate statement:

1. People learn throughout their lives, and a strategy to promote literacy must assist adults as well as children. To develop literacy, it is not enough to focus on the schooling of children. This is so for both social and economic reasons. Children's success in learning depends upon co-operation between family and school, and the children of adults who have limited education and literacy skills are themselves likely to experience difficulties in school. Without the provision of literacy programming for adults, this cycle of restricted learning is likely to be maintained.

2. Furthermore, a large proportion of those who will make up the workforce of the province for the next decades are already adults. Their job skills more and more involve reading and writing, and their ability to retrain, usually in courses that require literacy, is crucial to their own economic well-being, and that of their employers. Adult literacy programming is one important element of an integrated strategy of basic education and training both for productivity growth and labour market flexibility, and for a fairer sharing of wealth and the benefits of technology. Literacy, numeracy and communications skills are essential to employment, to the search for employment, and to training, in an economy penetrated by successive technological innovations. Skill requirements for jobs even at the lower end of the labour force are rising, and, due to demographic factors, a larger proportion of the population will be needed to participate in the labour force.[17]

3. Literacy is important for much more than productivity, narrowly considered. It is also fundamental in preserving human values in a technological world, and in making possible a democracy based on the informed judgment of its citizens.[18] To assure both British Columbia's economic well-being and its democratic strength, it should be a central objective of adult education policy and programming to reduce gaps in educational attainment between the most and the least educated.

Literacy Policy Strategies

The Provincial Literacy Advisory Committee has recommended a community-based strategy for the province. The remainder of this paper will examine how the intention to see a community-based strategy for literacy work might be realized. The term "community-based" has a multiplicity of meanings, all of which point to teaching and programme arrangements that *in some sense* are embedded in specific communities and take their lead from learners. There is an ongoing dialogue among literacy practitioners about forms of literacy programming, in which terms such as "schooling" and "institution" are set against terms such as "learning" and "community." Proponents of a "community-based" approach make a critique of what they take to be "institutional" forms of education. These "institutional" forms assume that knowledge is objectively defined in a standardized curriculum, in the light of which the student is deficient or incomplete. By virtue of ignorance, the student is not yet capable of being a member of the community, is "marginal." The community-based alternative sees the learner as already knowledgeable, already a member of the community. This knowledge and this membership are then the bases of further learning.

Indeed, many educators who work in educational institutions adhere to community-based ideas about knowledge and learning. A useful distinction can be drawn between a community-based strategy at a teaching or classroom level, in which all aspects of teaching are "learner-centered," and a community-based strategy at an organizational level, in which the literacy programme either is itself a community organization or has links to a community organization or organizations. A community-based teaching strategy *tends* to go together with a community-based organizational strategy, but either can be adopted, in practice, without the other.

Community-Based Teaching Strategies

A community-based approach to teaching[19] adopts a learner-centered curriculum, one which is based on learners' objectives, as opposed to a prescribed set of activities and subject matter. Grade level designations, and standardized materials, are avoided except in response to specific student needs. The curriculum is in this sense "adult." Learner-centered teaching methods are used, as opposed to methods that are didactic or authoritarian in approach. These methods are learner-*controlled* in the sense of being negotiated between teachers and learners. They make learners' knowledge and strength the basis of further learning. This often implies the use of the "language-experience" or "whole-language" approach, sometimes including the publication of student writings, sometimes using a thematic or problem-based approach in which groups of students develop reading and writing as they study themes defined from their own lives. It may also imply education in mother-tongue literacy, for people not literate in their mother-tongue, and as a basis for the most effective subsequent learning of English literacy. A community-based approach to teaching also conducts the evaluation of student progress in terms that are negotiated between teachers and students. It aims at economic and social self-sufficiency of both individual students and the students' community, in a process of "empowerment."

Such an approach to curriculum, teaching methods and evaluation has numerous advocates within British Columbia, and has already been promoted through in-service training and materials.[20] The Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, in order to promote community-based teaching, might continue to support adult literacy resources that promote student-centred curriculum, teaching methods and evaluation, and to support training activities for literacy teachers and tutors, to the same end.

Definitions of literacy are important for setting the tone of literacy work and for structuring teaching approaches. The two most common definitions of literacy are those which make it equivalent to levels of children's public schooling ("grade 0-8" or the like), and those which emphasize learners' needs and self-definitions. (Saskatchewan, for example, defines literacy expressly as those reading and writing skills that enable one to improve one's living and working conditions.) A broad general definition of literacy would support flexibility in programming, and a community-based approach to teaching.

Definitions of literacy, especially when they become the terms of programme outcome reporting or of funding formulas, can be effective determinants of teaching. For example, when literacy is defined as scoring at a certain level on a standardized test, and programme success is measured (and perhaps funding allocated) on the basis of numbers of people attaining that score, definitions of literacy can effectively deform literacy work. Programmes should therefore be able to report their success in terms of students' progression through academic levels, when that meets students' own goals, but also in terms that are sensitive to the variety of students' contexts and and purposes.

Community-Based Organizational Strategies

Promotion of literacy requires inducements to educational institutions (both funding and encouragement for minimum activity at this level), and inducements to community organizations (program funding and organizational support). A discussion of community based *programming* strategies in British Columbia should consider (a) college and school district programmes, (b) links between institutional programmes and other community organizations, and (c) literacy programmes that are themselves non-governmental community organizations, or are sponsored by community organizations.

College and School District Programs

The first necessity is adequate provision of and support for programmes in educational institutions, so that learners who use those programmes can have secure access. Currently, as described above, provincial policies only enable and do not ensure the delivery of literacy programming, and community college activity at the literacy level depends on initiatives within individual institutions.

Among adult British Columbians, according to 1986 census data, 11% have fewer than 9 years of schooling; 41% have less than a secondary certificate. People with fewer than nine years of schooling are more than one quarter (28%) of those with less than a secondary diploma.[21] When people are also considered whose literacy skills have diminished since leaving school, or who completed nine years in school but did not acquire substantial literacy skills, the proportion is surely higher. Available data don't allow us to know what proportion literacy students are of all ABE students, but they are predictably underrepresented — in the light of the pressures, described above, that work against educational institutions being oriented to those with the most basic literacy needs. For literacy programming to claim its share of space within institutions, there needs to be special provision for it, and special promotion of it. Special provision includes allowance for the special expense of quality literacy programming, and allowance for gradual funding increases to permit orderly programming growth over a period of years. With this in mind, community colleges should be funded at a higher level for literacy programs than for other

specified goals for programming, for example in terms of how many should be served. The absence of policy and financial commitment to programming holds true for both community colleges and school districts. There is no stated commitment to provide programming uniformly across the province, or across community college regions. The provision of both college programmes and school district programmes is uneven, due both to the absence of central policy and to limited funding.

There is no policy direction for extra-institutional arrangements, in community programmes that are planned closer to the people who participate in them, and that might serve learners who are generally not served by existing programs. Neither is there a policy direction for workplace-related programmes for people who are not impelled by personal circumstances to search out institutional programmes.

In the recent history of government financial restraint, literacy programmes, particularly community-oriented efforts, and the skills of facilitating them, have been eroded. In the province there has also been an effective (if unintended) absence of public discussion, to date, about literacy policy. This recent history means that the implementation process of any new policy for literacy in the province needs to be conducted very carefully.

Understanding Literacy Programming

Before proceeding to consider a framework for literacy policy in British Columbia, it will be useful to consider some central issues in the provision of literacy programming. A number of common understandings developed in literacy programs and in publications arising from the field should provide guidance to both policy and institutional arrangements.[10] These understandings may be summarized in a series of points.

• Promoting literacy can not be a process of "eradicating" illiteracy in a few years. There's no reason to suppose that in the foreseeable future all youth leaving school will achieve reasonable literacy competences; and not all adults with low literacy skill are attracted to study at any one time — even when study is available. Consequently, the need is not for a short-term campaign but for an extended strategy. In this strategy, public awareness and the development of programming need to work hand-in-hand.

• Effective programming focusses on skills linked to students' expressed needs for general education, parenting, training and employment and democratic citizenship, not on skills alone or for their own sake.

• Volunteers have roles to play — in tutoring, in classroom assistance, in advocacy, in programme support — but they are not the whole answer and they should not be mistaken for a "cheap and easy" solution. Effective volunteer tutoring programmes require high quality recruitment, selection, training and supervision of volunteers; they require adequate provision of learning materials, resources and facilities; and they require the means to show recognition of volunteers' dedication.

• Literacy programming necessarily involves community action. It also necessarily requires government support. Secure programme financing is necessary, so that students involved in or considering programmes don't find their progress stymied, and so that a body of experienced literacy practitioners can be formed.

• Partnerships among the many communities, organizations and institutions interested in literacy are essential. Partnerships between business and labour are key. Many government

departments and agencies, and many community organizations, have roles to play; and these need co-ordination. Public participation in educational planning and decision-making makes sense for both practical and democratic reasons.

• Groups with the least developed literacy (e.g., the poorest, some immigrant groups, natives) are not generally well served by conventional educational initiatives, and must be served in flexible and innovative approaches, often called "community-based". Such approaches may also serve literacy students generally.

Learners Served and Not Served

An examination of literacy programming should question who literacy programmes serve.[11] One approach is to ask what backgrounds people with limited literacy come from. Here are some examples. Some older people, especially those who grew up with the expectation of working in farming, mining, trapping, fishing or the home, may have seen formal education as unnecessary. Some children — most likely those who suffer hunger or abuse — don't learn the rudiments of literacy in the first few years of schooling. Many more young people leave school when they perceive that their programmes are not relevant, or that they are not learning significantly, or that they might gain some financial security by leaving school and going to work. Native children drop out of school — especially high school — at a very high rate. Immigrants and refugees to Canada often experience years of difficulty in learning to read and write English, especially if they are not literate in their mother tongues.

It may be more relevant to ask about the current life circumstances of people who might come to programmes. The following list is not exhaustive, but potential students in literacy *include*:

- social assistance recipients
- single parents, primarily women
- the working poor
- workers in situations of technological change
- women re-entering the labour force
- undereducated youth
- physically and mentally handicapped people, including those moving from institutions into the community
- native people
- new immigrants
- longer-term immigrants
- francophones
- prison inmates
- parolees.

Individuals in these groups vary both in their own circumstances, and in the programme arrangements under which they could be well served. Some are already relatively well integrated into our society, as workers, property owners, active citizens. For them, limited literacy is an isolated problem — primarily an embarrassment, or a problem of credentials, or a restriction on job advancement. For others, however, limited literacy is one problem among many — part of a pattern of disadvantage that may include unemployment, poverty, inadequate housing, poor health and a sense of alienation.[12] It is clear that there is a complex and heterogeneous population of potential learners. To reach them, there needs to be a variety of learning situations — a variety of specific learning

could be promoted in governmental or institutional policies. In particular, community college policies could ensure that Fundamental level programmes work in co-operation with other agencies in the community, and with school districts. British Columbia public libraries could also contribute to efforts to develop literacy, through expansion of their collections, through making their facilities available to literacy programmes, or through direct provision of teaching.[24]

Literacy Programmes in Community Organizations

Many potential students are not attracted to programmes in educational institutions. This includes those for whom limited literacy is one among multiple disadvantages. It also includes workers who need greater literacy skills as a result of changes in technology or work organization, or in order to take promotions, but who are not led by individual circumstances to actively seek schooling. To serve people who are not habituated to schooling systems, educational strategies can developed in relationship to clusters of experience, ideally with the participation of potential students and the organizations in which they are involved. Language learning can be facilitated when there is some organizational connection between a literacy programme and a community centre, trade union, or native organization. To include people who may not seek out an educational institution, or be referred through the network of social agencies, community-based programming strategies can take educational programmes closer to the people that might participate in them. Students can be attracted by arrangements through community organizations that spread knowledge of programmes, or allow community input into programmes, or both. People who begin their study in community-based programmes will often gain the knowledge or confidence to continue their study in a college or school district programme. Community-based programmes, that is, will predictably operate as feeders to institutional programmes.

Such an effort to penetrate deeper into communities requires community-based programmes as traditionally defined. Such programmes[25] are oriented towards a specific community, and may be staffed by members of the community. The community is some coherent group of people, perhaps a geographic neighbourhood, but perhaps also, for example, single mothers, workers in a particular industry, or native people. Programme emphasis can be placed on the unique needs of the particular group. Such programmes are accountable for the activities they perform, but are autonomous in the sense that they are not governed through the managerial structures of a larger educational institution. Community programmes reach underserved populations — especially those that typically do not join more conventional programmes. "Community-based organizations have been able to reach groups of participants usually thought of as difficult to reach, including those with the lowest literacy abilities."[26]

Policies to promote such literacy programming exist in several provinces. For example, Ontario Community Literacy grants[27] are made to provide programmes and services to people "for whom a lack of literacy skills has been a barrier to participating fully in society, and who have been unable to benefit from the existing institutional delivery system." Grants are made to not-for-profit community based organizations, operating under a board of directors, with a demonstrated capacity to deliver literacy programmes in co-operative relationships with other community organizations, boards of education and community colleges. Funds are available for programme operation, and for outreach and publicity, and for co-ordination between programmes. One Toronto model calls for community literacy programmes to be developed in co-operation with other community services, and planned by a community working group on the basis of an investigation of

local needs. Programmes are said to be best located in space provided by a settlement house, library, church or community centre. Tutors and students are to be actively involved in the routine operation of the programme and in its governance, which is to be based in an autonomous volunteer board of directors, drawn from the local area.[28] In other provinces there are other models for literacy programmes in community organizations. For example, Manitoba funds many Indian and Métis organizations to operate literacy programmes.[29] Québec funds a number of *groupes populaires en alphabétisation* through its OVEP fund (*Organismes volontaires d'éducation populaire*).[30]

In British Columbia, Project Literacy organizations developing as non-profit literacy societies might begin programmes, as might other organizations formed specifically for literacy. Existing community organizations — community centres, multicultural societies, native groups, trade unions, women's centres — might include literacy programming in their activities. Community colleges or school districts might work in conjunction with independent literacy organizations or other community organizations to plan and operate literacy programmes.

Such programmes could be promoted through a system of community literacy grants, available to community organizations to develop and operate literacy programmes that serve a definable geographic community, or a specific community of interest. Because of the great variability of conditions in which such programmes operate, funding should be for overall programme operation, not on an FTE basis. Grants might be available not only to independent literacy organizations and other non-governmental organizations, but also to community colleges or school districts that develop projects in partnership with non-governmental community organizations. There would well be both developmental grants, allowing for needs assessment, research, programme planning, recruitment, and ongoing evaluation; and programme grants, allowing for the operation of programmes, and renewable upon review of programme achievements and plans. Grant applications would require descriptions of the organization providing the service, staff positions, plans for the training and use of volunteers (if any), the identification of potential students, the involvement of community organizations and students in programme design, plans for recruiting students, the results sought and means of evaluation, and co-ordination with other ABE providers and organizations interested in adult literacy.[31] It is crucial that funding provide consistent ongoing support to such community literacy programmes for a period of years. Literacy co-ordinators and planners commonly report that it requires two to three years for programmes to take root in communities, especially where the aims and principles of a community-directed programme are novel.

Programmes in various specific communities will involve close co-operation among various provincial and federal ministries. The provincial Ministries of Education, and Advanced Education and Job Training, and the federal Departments of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, and the Secretary of State, should co-operate with one another and with native organizations to ensure that adequate literacy programming for native people is available. The Solicitor General should ensure that literacy programming is available in provincial correctional institutions, and in post-release programmes.

Literacy Programmes for Workers

One weakness in literacy programming across the province (and the nation) is a lack of programming readily available to people in the workplace, where felt demands for literacy might be met by learning opportunities close at hand; and where a very powerful "natural" grouping, with possibilities for word-of-mouth recruitment and peer support for study,

might support programme participation. For workers who are experiencing change in the workplace, that is surely a reasonable "community" for literacy work. As with community programmes, workplace programmes would predictably serve as feeders to institutions.

A useful policy model is the Ontario programme, Basic Skills in the Workplace, which provides grants to employers, unions or employer or employee groups. These cover instructional costs for literacy, communications and mathematics, and basic technical and scientific knowledge. Programmes are held in the workplace, at the union hall, or in some other employer or employee-related facility. It is recommended that workers studying in the programme do so half on their own time and half on company-provided time.[32]

In British Columbia, the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training could make workplace literacy grants available to employers or trade unions, or groups of employers or workers, to develop literacy programmes. Grants could also be available to community colleges that design programmes co-operatively with employers and/or trade unions. There could be both developmental and programme grants, with application requirements similar to those described above for community programmes.

Funds for community literacy grants and workplace literacy grants would well be distinct, to ensure the possible development of both types of programmes. However, if in any college region suitable applications are not forthcoming for programmes of either type, then funding allocated to that type could be available to the other.

Community-Institutional Relations

Community-based programmes, from the governmental point of view, are those with which government has a contractual and not a managerial relationship. Government support for community-based programmes may be inspired by a desire to reduce the size of government institutions, or to maintain "flexibility" in the deployment of funds. Institutions may want to promote community programmes, to fill out their range of service. On the other hand, from the community advocate's point of view, a community-based programme is one whose goals are defined by and in relationship to a community rather than a government or institution. Such a programme can maximize the tailoring of teaching to its community, as it emphasizes programme visibility and accessibility, small size and informality, and democratic control over programming.[33]

These differences of perspective may produce divergent views or interests. Community programme costs may be higher than for standard institutional programmes. Community programmes may define learning needs in ways that institutions do not, or assert interests that institutions are not recognizing. If this results in conflicts of view between institutions and community organizations, there need to be venues for those differences to be negotiated.

This implies, first, a recognition of the necessity for negotiation between educational institutions and other non-governmental organizations. Further, it would be helpful for each college to provide a specific staff position with the responsibility to make college expertise and resources available to other community organizations interested in literacy, to bring community groups together to clarify local literacy needs and programming possibilities, and to mediate between community organizations and educational institutions.

Removing Barriers and Providing Supports

Much of a strategy for literacy must involve extending the scope of programming and the range of program types, and devising innovative measures to attract students. But as a foundation for programs of all types, barriers to the participation of those with low literacy skill should be removed. These barriers may involve fees, materials, transportation and child care. They are particularly likely to affect low-income and disabled people, native people and prison inmates. Ensuring that inability to pay fees, purchase materials, or secure transportation or child care is not a barrier to participation would first require action from the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training. Minimally, the adequacy of the recent expansion of the Adult Basic Education Student Assistance Plan could be monitored.

Government ministries that deal with the employed and social assistance recipients should be encouraged to adopt policies that invite rather than discouraging literacy programme participation. Thus the Ministries of Advanced Education and Job Training, and Social Services and Housing, could co-operate to ensure that financial support and counselling are available to social assistance recipients who want to take part in literacy programmes. The Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training could encourage Employment and Immigration Canada to adopt flexible criteria that would allow unemployment insurance recipients to pursue literacy training, and would make EIC training sponsorship available to literacy students.

Finally, the Ministries of Advanced Education and Job Training, Health, and Social Services and Housing, might co-operate to ensure that the unique learning needs of disabled people who wish to improve their literacy skills are addressed, through programme access, the development of learning materials and in-service training, and technological aids; and through support for community organizations assisting handicapped people to live independently in the community.

Plain English

Plain English efforts are significant in an overall strategy for literacy. Plain language helps to create a situation in which people who develop literacy skills will find them useful. Plain English efforts should be encouraged and supported throughout the British Columbia government, in all those Ministries and departments that deal with a broad public, including those with the least education. These include the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labour, the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social Services and Housing, the Attorney General, the Workers Compensation Board, and the Insurance Corporation of British Columbia.

Implementation and Support

There can be no *pre-established* detailed plan for a literacy strategy focused on serving particular community needs. Before the announcement or implementation of any policy, there should be wide consultation and discussion of policy and programme proposals, involving literacy students, tutors, teachers, and co-ordinators, interested community members; business and labour leaders; and administrators, civil servants and politicians.

Furthermore, a process of policy implementation in reasonable stages is necessary to assure effective programming. Those at the front-line are key in any policy implementation. Their co-operation and involvement are essential, and any implementation plan should consider needs that may arise for them. A community-based strategy cannot

only work downwards, from government and literacy practitioners to communities. It must also work upwards, from communities to literacy practitioners, and laterally, among literacy programmes and practitioners — allowing the exchange and development of skills and strategies. A literacy strategy should include an animation process to provide initial training of new programme staff — co-ordinators, teachers, tutors; to provide assistance in materials development; and to make experienced literacy educators available to serve as resource people for programmes. As a practical matter this animation would involve funding for governmental staff positions, and especially for special projects to promote the exchange and development of programming strategies, teaching skills and learning materials among literacy practitioners.

To monitor policy and programming results, it would be crucial to have comprehensive and consistent data collection on those who attend programmes. This should be provided through both the Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training and the Ministry of Education, and should include not only FTE's at the literacy or Fundamental level, but also actual numbers of individuals in each college campus or school district involved in programmes. To identify the nature of programme effectiveness, there should be at least sample data on referrals and their sources, students' previous education, family circumstances, age, sex, ethnic origin, employment and income. There should also be at least sample data on student perceptions of programmes.

To have continuing representation of the partners in literacy in the development of a provincial literacy strategy, an ongoing provincial literacy advisory committee might be established. Its membership should include learners, educators, and business, labour and community groups. Such a committee would do well to report annually on successes and limitations of the literacy strategy, in both narrative and statistical form. Such a committee should also consider advisable strategy changes, in an area of education in which educators have much to learn.

Notes

[1] Many literacy teachers and program co-ordinators, educational administrators and civil servants have helped to develop this report. The assistance of Tom Walker has been central.

[2] For example, Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, *Adult Illiteracy in Canada*, 1988; and *Adult Illiteracy in Canada: Identifying and Addressing the Problem*, 1988; Brian Mulroney, "Notes for an Address by the Right Honourable Brian Mulroney, Prime Minister of Canada, on Literacy," Casa Loma, Toronto, September 8, 1988; Canadian Business Task Force on Literacy, *Measuring the Costs of Illiteracy in Canada*, Toronto, 1987; National Anti-Poverty Organization, *Employment Barriers, Employability and Employment Training*, Ottawa, 1989.

[3] Canada, Department of the Secretary of State, "Discussion Paper on Literacy," 1988.

[4] Employment and Immigration Canada, "Canadian Jobs Strategy Operational Procedures."

[5] British Columbia Ministry of Education, "A Ministerial Policy on the Provision of Adult Basic Education Programs Including English Language Training in the Public Education System of British Columbia," 1982.

[6] British Columbia, Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, *Access to Advanced Education and Job Training in British Columbia*, 1988, 14.

[7] British Columbia Ministry of Education, Information Circular #353, May 26, 1989.

[8] Mary Carlisle, "A Survey of Existing Literacy Programs: Initial Steps of a Provincial Needs Assessment," 1989.

[9] British Columbia Ministry of the Attorney-General, *Access to Justice: The Report of the Justice Reform Committee*, 1988.

[10] Such publications from the literacy field include Audrey M. Thomas, *Adult Illiteracy in Canada. A Challenge*, Ottawa: Canadian Commission for UNESCO, 1983; Movement for Canadian Literacy, *Think-*

Camp Discussion Paper, 1984; "Cedar Glen Declaration," *Literacy/Alphabétisation* 12:1, 1987; Richard Darville, *Literacy in British Columbia and the Yukon*, Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia, 1987; Adult Basic Education Association of British Columbia and Project Literacy B.C., *Proceedings: Adult Literacy Consultation*, 1987; *Women and Literacy*, special issue of *Canadian Woman Studies/les cahiers de la femme* 9:3 & 4, 1988; Adult Literacy and Basic Skills Unit (U.K.), *Organising Provision: Good Practice in Adult Literacy and Basic Skills*, 1986; Arlene Fingeret, *Adult Literacy Education: Current and Future Directions*, Columbus, Ohio: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, 1984; David Harman, *Turning Illiteracy Around*, New York: Business Council for Effective Literacy, 1986; David Harman, *Illiteracy: A National Dilemma*, New York: Cambridge, 1987; Jonathan Kozol, *Illiterate America*, New York: Doubleday Anchor, 1986; Margaret Gayfer (ed.), *Literacy in the Industrialized Countries*, Toronto: International Council for Adult Education, 1988; Francis E. Kazemak, "Necessary Changes: Professional Involvement in Adult Literacy Programs," *Harvard Educational Review* 58:4, 1988, 464-487.

[11] In characterizing or defining "the illiterate", it is easy to misrepresent, even to malign, those who should be served. Any definitional exercise, including this one, should be continually tested out against the experience of those who do not read and write well, those who come to literacy programs, and those who work in them.

[12] This distinction between those for whom limited literacy is an isolated problem, and those for whom it is one problem among many, has been influential in the literature about literacy. It became widely known with Carman St. John Hunter and David Harman, *Adult Illiteracy in the United States*, New York: McGraw Hill, 2nd edition 1985. It figures importantly in the policy documents that preceded the initiation of the Saskatchewan Literacy Campaign, especially Saskatchewan Education, *A New Beginning: A Background Paper on Adult Illiteracy and Undereducation in Saskatchewan*, 1987.

[13] Carlisle, "A Survey."

[14] Harman, *Turning*.

[15] Kozol, *Illiterate*.

[16] Saskatchewan (Saskatchewan Education, *A New Beginning*) calculated that before the start of its literacy campaign, about 3% of potential learners (defined as adults with fewer than 9 years of schooling) were served each year. The campaign's goal of reaching an additional 10,000 learners over three years would raise this to slightly better than 5% a year. Federal corrections targets for numbers of inmates completing grade 8 have risen from 750 in 1987-88 to 4000 in 1989-90.

[17] This is the current best judgment of labour market planners, see Economic Council of Canada, *Jobs and Innovations in Canada*, 1987; Employment and Immigration Canada, *Success in the Works: A Profile of Canada's Emerging Workforce*, 1989; and, *Success in the Works: A Policy Paper*, 1989; Richard Darville, "Adult Literacy and Public Policy: Report of an International Seminar," *Policy Explorations* 3.2, 1988. For a convenient summary of parallel arguments being made in the U.S., see Richard M. Cyert and David C. Mowery, "Technology, Employment and U.S. Competitiveness," *Scientific American* 260:5, 1989, 54-62; these arguments are closely tied to literacy policy in Forrest P. Chisman, *Jump Start: The Federal Role in Adult Literacy*, Final Report of the Project on Adult Literacy, Southport, Conneticut: The Southport Institute for Policy Analysis, 1989.

[18] This was recently emphasized in British Columbia Ministry of Advanced Education and Job Training, "Speaking Notes for the Hon. Stan Hagen, Minister of Advanced Education and Job Training," Access for All Press Conference, 1989.

[19] Chris Zachariadis, *Adult Literacy: Study of Community Based Literacy Programs*, Washington, D.C.: Association for Community Based Education, 1983, cited in Paul Ilsley, *Adult Literacy Volunteers. Issues and Ideas*, Columbus, Ohio: ERIC Clearinghouse on Adult, Career and Vocational Education, 1985.

[20] Notably the *Adult Basic Literacy Curriculum Guide and Resource Book*, 1987.

[21] In British Columbia, there are 256,880 adults with less than grade 9; another 672,255 have grade 9 or more without a secondary certificate; thus 929,135 have no secondary certificate; the total provincial adult population is 2,259,310 (Calculated from Statistics Canada, *Census, 1986*, Cat. 93-110, Table 2).

[22] Ontario Ministry of Skills Development, "Ontario Basic Skills: Program Guidelines for Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology," 1987.

[23] Definition 13, Further Education Council, and Definition 9, Local Hosting Authority, Alberta Advanced Education, *Further Education Policies, Guidelines and Procedures*, 1988.

[24] The most extensive Canadian report on library involvement in literacy is Elaine Gaber-Katz and Gladys M. Watson, *Libraries for Literacy: The 1987 Toronto Public Library Literacy Study*, Toronto: Toronto Public Library, 1987.

[25] Zachariadis, cited in Ilsley, *Volunteers*.

[26] Harman, *Turning*.

[27] Ontario Ministry of Skills Development, "Ontario Community Literacy Grants Program. Applicant Package and Instructions," 1988

[28] Metro Toronto Movement for Literacy, *Community-Based Literacy in an Urban Setting. A Model*, 1984.

[29] Johanna Faulk, "A Manitoba Perception," *Learning* 5:1, 1988, 12.

[30] Louise Miller, "Le Regroupement des groupes populaires en alphabétisation du Québec," *Learning* 5:1, 1988, 16-17.

[31] Both the Saskatchewan Literacy Campaign and the Ontario Community Literacy programme have developed thoughtful and comprehensive application forms for such a system of grants. These cover many aspects of programme design and evaluation, and specific issues arising regarding re-applications.

[32] Ontario Ministry of Skills Development, "Ontario Basic Skills in the Workplace: Program Guidelines," 1987.

[33] A useful study of community-based policies and services is Michael Clague et al., *Reforming Human Services*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1987.