

ACADEMIC SECONDARY EDUCATION IN THE
FEDERAL PRISONS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA:
THE GUIDELINES FOR AN ALTERNATIVE
PROGRAM TO THE GENERAL
EQUIVALENCY DIPLOMA PROGRAM

by

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Abstract

The primary purposes of this thesis are, first, to argue that the existing secondary education program, the General Equivalency Diploma program (GED), offered to inmates in the Federal penitentiaries is not truly educational, and second, that there clearly exists the need to design a viable, alternative academic education program for potential secondary level students in the Federal penitentiary system of British Columbia.

A comprehensive survey of the literature reveals that the Canadian Penitentiary Service has historically held numerous false assumptions about the educational process. For example, the most commonly used program at the secondary level, the G.E.D., despite its seemingly academic content, (Writing skills, Reading skills, Social Studies, Mathematics and Science), is not directed towards educational ends. While the G.E.D. does have some value and could be useful for some students, it is inadequate for the following reasons: it is simply a battery of five content area tests; it is not worthwhile for its own sake; it is 'training' or to be more accurate 'drilling' and not education; its substance is not thought and ideas; it is not structured in such a way as to promote understanding and a 'cognitive perspective', it is not flexible enough to take into account the academic capabilities of some inmates; and it does not adequately prepare the student for post-secondary education.

Therefore an alternative education program at the secondary level is needed. In order to design an alternative program any inhibitors to education in prisons have to be identified. These inhibitors are noted and

are taken into account in the guidelines for an alternative academic education program. This program is based on a set of principles which are found to be defensible in relation to the needs of students and on educational grounds.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Although there are a few bright spots for example, in British Columbia, where a unique university degree program has been developed, penitentiary education has been mainly thought of either as a time-filling activity whose purpose is to relieve boredom and soothe the conscious state, or as a means of providing skill-training for the employment market, although no relationship has yet been discovered between criminality and employability. Even academic education in penitentiaries is largely a matter of skill training....

(Cosman, 1980, p. 46)

Historically, training and education have been an integral part of the Canadian Penitentiary system. However, in the twentieth century the emphasis has been on training and not on education; it has been on education aimed towards utility and work as opposed to education geared towards the full development of the human personality, the realization of self, the development of the powers of the intellect, the development of man as an historical person, and the development of a man as a member of society. While there is nothing undesirable in helping inmates attain work, there exists little evidence that shows a positive correlation between training or education in prison aimed towards the attainment of work, and finding and maintaining work (Blumstein, 1974; Duguid, 1984). Although, training can indeed be an integral facet of education, and on many occasions the two concepts do overlap, education is not only, and should never be used simply as a training vehicle directed specifically towards the attainment of employment. McCarthy (1985, pp. 441-442) is correct in asserting that:

The philosophy of any educational program, if it is truly to be called educational, must be based on the assumption that, as an activity, learning is undertaken solely for the sake of learning itself. Education is not a process with utilitarian purpose; nor is it a means to an end, except the end of developing the mind.

But even if, at the utilitarian level, employment was maintained as one goal of a particular program, it would seem self-evident that an 'educated' as opposed to a 'trained' student would have developed more than both the personal and academic qualities needed in order to find and maintain employment. Whereas a trained employee would generally be limited to performing the areas he/she was trained in, i.e. a lathe operator could only operate a lathe, an educated employee would have developed the abilities necessary to live in a complex world. These abilities would include those necessary to make rational decisions about how one should conduct one's life, and how one should relate to society at large.

Originally, education in penitentiaries was intended to promote a spiritual reawakening in the inmate. By the latter half of the nineteenth century various reformers were successful in adding a new dimension to education in prison. Education, i.e. Bible reading and study, was expanded to incorporate moral as well as spiritual reformation. This orientation, with its reliance on discipline, hard-work and punishment, would remain relatively intact until well into the twentieth century.

Following World War Two, behavioural scientists were successful in introducing and achieving the dominance of the medical-model which would become the principal component of what J.W. Cosman (1985) terms total training or education (known more commonly as 'Rehabilitation').

Specifically, Rehabilitation had three major components: the cell, the workshop, the medical-disease and one minor component, academic education.

During the 1960s and early 1970s, when the medical-disease component dominated, academic education assumed, in a rather subservient manner, a dual role of preparing inmates for work and for aiding in the therapeutic process. In fact, the dual roles were really only one for, as can best be determined, the education process, which in itself was perceived as a type of therapy, would provide the cured offender with the means, i.e. steady employment, that would reinforce and maintain that therapy while he/she was on the outside. Thus education had simply become just one of many therapeutic tools used to 'cure' an inmate or maintain that 'cure' upon release of an inmate.

By the latter half of the 1970s it had become quite clear that the Rehabilitation model was a major failure. As a replacement, prison officials latched on to something termed the Opportunities model. Simply stated, the medical-disease component, with its focus on therapy and cure, was replaced by a system where all sorts of programs or opportunities would be offered to inmates to the end of ensuring the safety of society. However, the model's authors (Wakabayashi, A., Braithwaite, J., Pisapio, L., & Meredith, H., 1977) were rather vague when it came to outlining the means, (other than to offer inmates lots of opportunities), to reach such an end. Furthermore, the four original components were maintained as the main vehicles for dealing with inmates. Even though academic education was no longer perceived as a minor therapeutic tool aimed directly at the rehabilitation of the inmate, it still retained its

role as the means for helping inmates obtain the prerequisites for a vocation.

In the penitentiaries of British Columbia visible proof of the vocational orientation of academic education programs can be seen at both the elementary and secondary level. Both the basic skills development programs at the elementary level and the General Equivalency Diploma program offered students at the secondary level are basically oriented towards providing students with the skills needed to obtain and maintain a vocation. (Goodall, 1978; McCarthy, 1985; Cosman, 1985; Fields, 1986).

While academic education at the elementary level in Federal penitentiaries in British Columbia is in need of a comprehensive study, given that my expertise lay with academic education at the secondary level, the primary purpose of this thesis will be to argue that the existing education program (termed the General Equivalency Diploma Program), is not truly educational. And second, my purpose is to provide guidelines for an alternative academic program for potential secondary level students in the Federal penitentiary system of British Columbia.

In order to accomplish this task I will:

1. expand upon the history of education in Canada prior to World War Two and British Columbia after World War Two;
2. ascertain the necessary conditions for calling something 'education';
3. provide a comprehensive critique of the present academic high school equivalency program offered inmates in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia;
4. discuss in detail the major inhibitors and facilitators of an academic education program in a Federal penitentiary; and,
5. present the principles for, and an outline of, an appropriate alternative academic secondary education program.

CHAPTER TWO

A Brief History of Correctional models and Academic Education in English Canada from the Eighteenth Century to the Present

In this chapter the history of correctional education will be reviewed. It will be argued that most of what has occurred in the name of 'education' would more properly be called 'training'.

Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984) view corrections in Canada, from the eighteenth century to the present, as moving through six distinct periods each of which can be defined in terms of how those concerned with criminality viewed the purpose of corrections. The periods are identified as: 1) Punishment (pre-Industrial) 1700-1830; 2) Punishment and Penitence (pre-Confederation) 1830-1867; 3) Punishment and Penitence (post-Confederation) 1867-1938; 4) Rehabilitation 1938-1970; 5) Reintegration 1970-1978; and, 6) Reparation 1978 to the present.

Period 1

Pre-Industrial 1700-1830

In the pre-Industrial, pre-penitentiary period, crime was seen as endemic in society and punishment was designed to deter both the criminal, who was perceived of as a deviant and had, "...consciously chosen behaviour they knew to be wrong, (Griffiths, 1978, p. 23)," from committing any further crimes, and to act as a deterrent to potential criminals.

Conditions in the local gaols and workshops were harsh. According to Baehre (1977-cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 22):

The group of twenty-five prisoners interned at York included three lunatics under restraint, nine debtors,

one of whom has cohabitated with him in the gaol his wife and children, and a motley assortment of criminals. The lunatics were confined in the basement 'dungeon' from which incessant howlings, groans, and 'disagreeable' smells were carried to the other floors. Indiscriminate mixing among prisoners convicted of capital crimes and those with misdemeanors was permitted.... There was little soap, and linen was changed infrequently. One inmate complained that he had not been washed in six to eight months.

During the pre-Industrial era the only known kind of education or training offered the inmate in a gaol or workshop was Bible training from a local pastor or priest.

Period 2

Pre-Confederation 1830-1867

The first penitentiary in Upper Canada was built at Kingston in 1835. It was in this penitentiary (which until 1867 was provincially operated) that the secular and ecclesiastic came together to introduce the deviant inmate to the code of the Protestant work ethic. According to H.C. Thomson, the chairman of the select committee to consider the propriety of establishing a penitentiary in Upper Canada, in his address to the House of Assembly in 1831, "A penitentiary...should be a place to lead a man to repent his sins and amend his life (Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, pp. 31-32)." Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984) also point out that, "...the primary task of the penitentiary was punishment and the emphasis was on hard labour and solitary confinement enforced by a strict code of discipline (Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 182)." And Weir (1973, p. 39) states that:

The administration felt it fitting to provide for an exhausting ten-hour workday of manual labor, scarcely augmented by a meagre starchy diet, with the remaining fourteen hours spent in solitary confinement. The

latter period was to provide ample opportunity for meditation, reflection, and hopefully repentance, thus building up the inner personal man to the point where he was ready, as a transgressor, to start his journey down the long hard road to total redemption. To make this journey more meaningful, the warden imposed a harsh and punitive code of discipline which called for corporal punishment and restricted diet for the most trivial misdemeanor.

Even though basic literacy training programs were developed for inmates following the report from the Brown Commission in 1848, the programs, "...were closely allied with the religious efforts in the penitentiary (Ibid., 1984, p. 182)." McCarthy (1985, p. 442) points out that:

The philosophy of this program viewed education as a process leading to spiritual reform. It was not concerned with education for its own sake. Instead, it was thought that, in learning to read and write, inmates could discover the Bible and discover God.

In design and implementation the early education program offered inmates at Kingston was equally restrictive in that:

The curriculum was limited to courses in reading and writing, the Bible being the main text, and the Chaplain the only teacher. Education was provided only to inmates who had been incarcerated for three months and who were noted for good conduct. Moreover, the program was structured on a cellular model of instruction which limited inmate interaction and forbade non-educational communication between teacher and student. Thus, penal education was characterized more by reform than by education.

(McCarthy, 1985, p. 442)

However, that reform played only a secondary role to the punishment and penitence of the inmate.

Period 3Post-Confederation 1867-1938

Following Confederation, jurisdiction for penitentiaries was split between the provincial and Federal governments. An offender who received a sentence of two years less a day would go to a provincial penitentiary, while an offender who received a sentence over two years would go to Federal penitentiary. This applied to all offenders notwithstanding age or gender. Furthermore, once a person was sentenced to a penitentiary no matter what the length of the sentence, he would have to serve all his time in that penitentiary.

This situation would change in 1886 when Parliament passed the Act Respecting Public and Reformatory Prisons. (Ekstedt and Giffiths, 1984, p. 44). Three of its major provisions were: 1) the mandatory separation of youthful and older offenders; 2) procedures for Federal-Provincial agreements on the transfer of prisoners; and, 3) the earning of remission or 'good time' by offenders in provincial prisons (Ibid., 1984, p. 44). While these were improvements, they were improvements intended to strengthen the control apparatus of the penal system, not to make prison life more amenable to those within its walls. Prison life remained austere, disciplined, controlled and brutal. According to MacGuigan (1977 - cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 46):

Punishments included: hosing of inmates by a powerful stream of cold water (used until 1913); ball and chain as they worked (used until 1933); handcuffing to bars from 8 a.m. to noon, and 1 p.m. to 5 p.m. (used in the 1930's); dunking in a trough of ice and slush, used as a 'cure' for mental defectives (abolished in the 1930's)

Basically the prisoner was still viewed as a deviant in need of discipline and punishment in order to assure his spiritual reform. Or to be more accurate his spiritual and moral reform for by the, "...latter half of the nineteenth century, the reformist view of education was enlarged to incorporate the ideas of education as a technique for moral as well as spiritual reformation (Foucault, 1979; Ignatieff, 1978; Rothman, 1980; cited in McCarthy, 1985, p. 443)." McCarthy (1985, p. 443) states that:

This perspective expanded the spiritualist position and argued that education should be concerned with demonstrating the wrongness of the inmates' ways through moral as well as religious reasoning thereby realizing a more complete amelioration.

Despite the intentions and efforts of those who supported prison education reform, there were few, if any, changes made prior to World War I in the way education was handled in the penitentiaries of Canada. McCarthy (1985, p. 443) points out that the authors of the 1914 Report of the Royal Commission on Penitentiary, "...advocated changing the penal education system because they found it highly repressive and non-conducive to learning." Weir (1973, p. 43) also notes that:

The publication of the justice minister's Report of Penitentiaries in 1879 provides a true picture of the approach of the time towards correctional education: the "rules and regulations for school" encouraged the enforcement of strict discipline and allow only those convicts noted for good conduct after a minimum of three months in prison to take part in classes. The opportunity to attend school was considered one of the highest rewards that could be bestowed on convicts. Generous use was made of inmate monitors in prison schools. Subjects taught included French and English, reading, writing, spelling, arithmetic, geography, and

grammar-all of these subjects, except writing, was to be taught with the students standing!

Even though there was a definite increase in the number of subjects taught, inmates by the latter half of the nineteenth century, the manner of, and the purpose for, teaching those subjects was the same as it had been since 1835.

Period 4

Rehabilitation 1938-1970

(1938-----1947)

There were no ostensive moves to change the education system in penitentiaries until well into the third decade of the twentieth century when, "In 1938, the members of the Royal Commission on Prisons released the Archambault Report which called for a complete restructuring of the school system and the introduction of a curriculum based on academic education and cultural enrichment (Weir, 1965 - cited in McCarthy, 1985, p. 443)." Cosman (1980, p. 46) argues that these recommendations came about because:

...the Royal Commission was appalled by the perfunctory manner in which the limited elementary academic programs were being conducted in federal institutions and by the small number of inmates exposed to any opportunities for educational advancement, and it called for a complete reorganization of the educational system.

Despite all the rhetoric surrounding the report, "None of the report's educational recommendations, however, have been implemented (McCarthy, 1985, p. 443)." The failure to reform education in prison is made clear by the Gibson Report of 1947 whose authors included, "the same observations of

the negative aspects of penal education and reaches the same conclusion as that of the Archambault authors (Ibid., 1985, p. 443)."

Rehabilitation

(1947-1970)

By the 1950s, the Rehabilitation model seems to have been in place in most Federal penitentiaries in Canada and all penitentiaries in British Columbia. In order to achieve the goal of rehabilitation, post World War Two prison officials incorporated or developed and applied the Rehabilitation model which according to Cosman (1985, p. 3) applied an approach termed total training or 'education'. Specifically:

What was intended for the prisoner was a process of 'learning', a total training to be provided by the thoroughgoing discipline of the prison milieu governing in detail all aspects of life in the institution, and to be based on three technologies: the cell, the workshop, and increasingly with the development of the behavioural sciences, "treatment" according to a medical-disease concept of criminal behaviour.

Basically, the cell component, apart from its utility as a securing agent, was used, "as a means of submission and as an instrument of reform, sometimes to habilitate prisoners to prescribed rules of conduct, sometimes to evoke stirrings of conscience...(Ibid., 1985, p. 6)." The workshop was the means by which the inmate was given basic working skills for survival on the outside. Through various skills development or training programs, i.e. woodwork, metalwork, automotives, and so on, the inmate was trained in the "...habits of work, order and obedience, to the end of preparing him for paid employment (Ibid., 1985, p. 7)." And finally there is the medical-disease component which considers criminality to be, "symptomatic

of mental, physical, emotional and/or social adjustment on the part of the offender (Correctional Service of Canada, 1981, p. 11)," and sets out to rectify or remedy the malady by providing,"...extensive 'therapy' and 'treatment'....(Correctional Service of Canada, 1983, p. 11)." Bartolas (1981-cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 50) states that, "The medical model was to turn the prison into a hospital to treat the disease of criminality. The therapist was to help offenders resolve the underlying conflicts that drove them to crime. Criminals would then be cured." In other words, the criminal (who had a disease called criminality) entered prison (which had become a hospital) to get cured (rehabilitated) by a prison staff (who were seen as either therapists or as aids to therapists) to the end of becoming a healthy citizen.

To this component list I would add education programs, i.e. basic literacy, number skills, and so on that were, much like training programs, "...oriented to meeting the requirements of some kind of work (Cosman, 1985, p. 7)."

Therefore by the 1950s and throughout the 1960s and 1970s many Federal penitentiaries, particularly those in British Columbia, would operate within a comprehensive system/model (based upon the following four components: the cell-discipline and self-reflection; the workshop-trade skills to the end of work; the medical-disease component-therapy and cure; and academic training or education--basic literacy skills oriented towards work), aimed specifically at realizing the goal of rehabilitation. According to the 1949 Annual Report of the Commission of Penitentiaries (1949-1950), "Continued progress has been made in the development of

facilities necessary to carry out an effective programme of rehabilitation in the Canadian penitentiaries (Annual Report-Cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 49)." And, the reviewers of the Third Report of the Strategic Planning Committee to the Correctional Service of Canada (1983) state that, "Many of the developments in the Canadian Penitentiary Service during the early seventies illustrate this commitment to the rehabilitative ideal.... (Correctional Service of Canada, 1983, p. 13)."

By the late 1970s it was quite apparent that the rehabilitation model with its total training or 'education' had failed to achieve the goal of inmate rehabilitation despite efforts to aid the process by introducing, with its reintegration factor/component, community based programs, i.e. probation, parole, attendance centre programs, bail supervision, pre-trial diversion, temporary absence, community based centres, fine option and restitution. According to Cosman (1985) it failed because, "...the methods or penal approaches that have been used are based on at least four very questionable assumptions about the educational process."

These are:

- 1) That education is essentially a matter of discipline which is achieved through control. The modern prison has governed in detail all aspects of individual life. It has had almost total power over prisoners, with its own mechanisms of repression and punishment. It has sought to achieve reformation through enforcement, through restraint, through imposing new ways of thinking and feeling and acting.
- 2) That the individual can exist and develop by himself alone. The modern prison has relied heavily on the principle of isolation, of isolating prisoners not only from the external world but also from each other.

- 3) That the aim of education is the training of the individual in habits of work, order and obedience, to the end of preparing him for paid employment. That aim has determined the nature of most training in the modern prison.
- 4) That the process of education or correctional training is a mechanical process. Most of the so-called treatment programs in the modern prison have been based on the assumption that criminal behaviour can be explained in terms of some psychopathological condition requiring cure through various forms of therapy. The extension of the mechanistic conception of the physical world to the non-physical world in the seventeenth century resulted in due course in the flowering of the behavioural sciences, which have tended to reduce man, in all his activities, to a conditioned and behaving animal. This seems to eliminate some genuine elements of human experience, for example, insight, imagination, creativity, freedom.

(Cosman, 1985, pp. 5, 6, 7)

Period 5-6

Reparations---Reintegration

1970 to the Present

The failure of the Rehabilitation model (even with the addition of the previously mentioned community based programs), caused prison administrators to develop new ways of thinking about the purposes of prisons. According to Cosman (1985) the three most common trends in penal thinking are: 1) Change the objectives so as to de-emphasize rehabilitation as an essential purpose of prison; 2) Hold the Community responsible for rehabilitation, and, 3) Hold the prisoner responsible for his own rehabilitation. Therefore, not only was rehabilitation de-emphasized but the Correctional Service of Canada assumed a role of sharing their responsibility with society and the inmate.

In order to achieve their new goals, correctional officials extended community based programming and introduced reparation programs,

i.e. Victim-Offender Reconciliation Services Program, and Project Restore, aimed at achieving restitution, and/or reconciliation between the offender and victim. Unfortunately their success has been limited. Concerning the community-based programming, Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984, p. 226) point out that, "...no consistent evidence exists to support many of the claims made by proponents of community based-facilities." Further concerning the Reparations (Service to Victims) programs it can be argued that while restitution seems to be a reasonable idea and has shown some success, particularly where the crimes are of a petty nature, it is difficult to imagine any form of restitution that could atone for the theft of millions or even thousands of dollars, or replace the loss of a human life.

Interestingly, these are not the only areas, all of which are encompassed within the Opportunities model, where inappropriate actions, incomplete ideas, ambiguity, confusion or vagueness was, and or is, of common occurrence. In 1984 the Correctional Service of Canada modified the Opportunities model. Simply stated, the modification called for extended contact between staff members and offenders and for keeping the inmates busier and more active by providing more opportunities. (Task Force, 1984-cited in Cosman, 1985, p. 15). While more contact between staff and inmates and more inmate activities are to be supported, the problem is that its proponents are extremely vague in how these adjustments are to be achieved both within or outside of the Federal penitentiary. A comprehensive survey of the Report on The Statement of CSC Values, 1984, written by the members of the Task Force on the Mission and Organizational Development of the Correctional Service of Canada, explains nothing about

how one could achieve the new modifications. Cosman (1985, p. 15) is correct to boldly exclaim, "Extend contact! Keep them busy! Motivate them to participate! In anything?"

Furthermore, and notwithstanding the claimed abandonment of the Rehabilitation model, "...the traditional penal technologies are assumed to be the only ones and continue to be practiced in varying forms, mainly without effect.... (Cosman, 1985, p. 16)." In other words, and despite the implementation or continuation of new programs that may or may not work, it is the old standby strategy, which has proven ineffectual in the past, which continues to dominate within the Opportunities model.

This patchwork of old and new, effective and ineffective programs, plus the reliance upon an approach that naturally incorporates at least four questionable assumptions about the educational process can be seen in the type of academic education programs offered inmates in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia. While on one hand we have the relatively new University of Victoria/Simon Fraser University program which is truly educational in nature and has shown some success in increasing both cognitive and educational development in its students, on the other hand we have the older secondary level General Equivalency Diploma Program (G.E.D.) which, as will be argued elsewhere in this thesis, is clearly not education and offers less than what could be gained from taking an appropriate academic secondary education program.

CHAPTER THREE

Academic education--what is it?

Given that the focus of this thesis is academic secondary level education in the Federal prisons of British Columbia, and given that the only academic high school level program offered inmates is the General Equivalency Diploma program (G.E.D.), it would seem sensible to determine whether this program is truly 'educational'. This will require a list of criteria for defining the concepts 'education' and 'academic'. However, there are a plethora of existing definitions and as Soltis (1968, p. 2) points out, "Under this barrage of definitions, however, a very crucial assumption is frequently hidden. That is, we assume that there is a definition of education or the definition of education." Peters (1972, p. 25) concurs with Soltis and adds that, "It picks out no particular activity or process. Rather it lays down criteria to which activities or processes must conform." Peters successfully argues that the three criteria of education are:

- 1) that 'education' implies the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who become committed to it;
- 2) that 'education' must involve knowledge and understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, which are not inert;
- 3) that 'education' at least rules out some procedures of transmission, on the grounds that they lack the wittingness and voluntariness on the part of the learner.

(Peters, 1972, p. 45)

Simpson and Jackson (1984, p. 42) translate Peter's criteria to read as follows:

...we think of education as being worthwhile for its own sake (as well as instrumentally valuable), broadening our understanding or "cognitive perspective", developing a sense of commitment to valuable things, requiring awareness on the part of the learner, and taking many different forms.

In essence education is much like reform in that no particular activity or process is picked out and, "both concepts have the criterion built into them that something worth while should be achieved (Peters, 1972, p. 25)." Despite their similarities, they differ in that, "Education does not imply, like 'reform', that a man should be brought back from a state of turpitude into which he has lapsed;....(Ibid., 1972, p. 25)" It is the manner of reform that clearly differs from that of education. While both concepts are similar in that they imply that something worth while is being or has been intentionally transmitted and that positive changes will take place, they differ in that it is only education which always does so in a morally acceptable way. Reform is not bound by such a noble standard. Reform can be carried out in various morally unacceptable ways, i.e. behavioural therapy along the lines of conditioning, could or would be used in an attempt to reach morally acceptable ends. Therefore any notion of reform or rehabilitation should be set aside for education which, "...implies that something worth while is being or has been intentionally

transmitted in a morally acceptable manner. (Ibid., 1972, p. 25)."

While the preceding discussion may seem enlightening it has only led to some unanswered questions, i.e. What is worth while?, How do we know? According to Kazepides (1984) knowledge is worthwhile. While fruitful to be told that knowledge is worth while it begs the question as to what constitutes knowledge. Despite the long standing debate which surrounds the definition of knowledge, in this thesis knowledge will be defined as "...justified belief, as opposed to ignorance, mere opinion, or guesses (McNiel, 1985, p. 59)." Furthermore, in order to prepare the student for such knowledge, the curriculum, "...must be made up of the following courses or content areas: mathematics, physical sciences, knowledge of persons, literature and the fine arts, morals, religion, philosophy (Ibid., 1985, p. 59)" and the Social Sciences and History (Kazepides, 1984, p. 7). One can further ask why these subjects, and not others are accorded educational value. According to Kazepides (1984, p. 7):

...the answer to that question is that it is through these disciplines of thought and action--and only through them--that we can make sense of a world and our lives. It is only through these disciplines--and not through typing and the like--that we can develop the minds and the character of the young and enable them to gain an understanding of what it means to be human and make the most of being human. There are no short cuts in education, no psychological tricks or magic potions that can produce the educated man. The young must come gradually to see and examine themselves through these forms of knowledge, and their decisions and choices must be enlightened by such knowledge and understanding.

During this brief discussion, it was noted that certain subjects, as opposed to others, were identified and presented as developing or leading to knowledge which was deemed worthwhile. A quick survey reveals that each one of the subjects is commonly categorized as academic in nature. While it was made clear why they are of educational value, the connection between educational value and academic seems vague at best. As such it therefore seems imperative that the discussion continues along the lines of what is this illusive concept termed "academic" and what criteria would clearly make a program or course academic as opposed to say vocational or technical in nature.

The Dictionary of Education (1973) p. 3, defines 'academic' as, "...pertaining to the fields of English, foreign languages, history, economics, mathematics, and science;..." Hawes and Hawes (1982) add to the definition by stating that, "academic' has to do with the theoretical and not the practical..." and that an 'academic course' traditionally consists of courses that, "are classical, scholarly, or in the liberal arts, the substance of which is thought and ideas: for example, philosophy, history, English, and distinguished from technical and vocational training....(Ibid., 1982, p. 3)." As for technical and vocational education, Hawes and Hawes define the former as a, "Term loosely applied to studies in practical or applied fields as distinguished from studies in academic disciplines, (Ibid., 1982, p. 227)," and the latter as, "...Programs in secondary and post-secondary education designed to prepare the learner for employment in a specific occupation or industry by

coursework in fields like agricultural education, automotive education, or beauty culture education (Ibid., 1982, p. 242)."

There is still one more task that must be performed prior to proceeding with the critique of the General Equivalency Diploma program. That task is to determine the difference between education and training. This is a necessary step if one is to come to a better understanding of what is truly education. Furthermore, it should aid in determining to what extent, if any, the G.E.D. is an 'education' program.

Peters (1972, p. 34) argues that:

...the concept of 'training' has application when a skill or competence has to be acquired which is to be exercised in relation to a specific end or function or in accordance with the canons of some specific mode of thought, or practice. If it is said that a person is 'trained' the questions 'To do what?', 'For what?', 'As what?', 'In what?' are appropriate; for a person cannot be trained in a general sort of way...With 'education', however, the matter is very different; for a person is never described as "educated" in relation to any specific end, function, or mode of thought.

Furthermore, "To say that 'education is of the whole' is at least to make the negative point that it is not something that pertains to a person in respect of his competence in any specialized skill, activity, or mode of thought (Ibid., 1972, p. 35)."

According to Archambeault and Archambeault (1982-cited in Ekstedt and Griffiths, 1984, p. 170) the difference between training and education is:

...training is generally considered to be specific job-oriented knowledge or skills instruction which prepares a person to work in a given job in a given agency or type of agency. Education, on the other

hand, reflects a liberal arts orientation and is defined as developing a person's general knowledge and power....

And last but not least Cosman (1985, p. 22) sees the distinction between training and education as thus:

To educate is not just to teach facts and skills and rules of conduct. Education is not primarily a matter of memory and submission. Education is not just a matter of transmitting to passive recipients a given cultural and moral tradition. Education is not just a matter of schooling or training. Education, aimed at the "full development of the human personality," is a matter of developing the capacities of the student for dynamic intellectual activity and active moral judgment--potentialities capable of either being developed or being left in a undeveloped state. Education therefore must provide a method and an environment which will stimulate and enable the student to fashion the instruments of logical thought and of moral reasoning, in the formation of which the student must collaborate. Such collaboration cannot take place in an authoritarian atmosphere of intellectual and moral restraint...

Therefore, based upon the preceding, to be considered both academic and education a course or program must meet the following criteria:

1. The courses offered must pertain to the classical, scholarly or the liberal arts disciplines, i.e. philosophy, history, English, foreign languages, economics, mathematics and sciences;
2. The substance of each course or program must be thought and ideas;
3. Each course or program must be structured in such a way as to promote understanding, a 'cognitive perspective', and allow its participants to acquire worthwhile knowledge;
4. The course or program is not primarily designed to prepare the learner for employment in a specific occupation or industry.

CHAPTER FOUR

The General Equivalency Diploma Program:

A Critique

The General Equivalency Diploma Program or (G.E.D.) was originally developed in 1966 by the United States Army to provide potential draftees, who had educational deficiencies, with the requirements to meet Army standards (Smith, Archer, and Kidd, 1970; Goodall, 1978). Although the exact date is difficult to ascertain, the G.E.D. did eventually, with few modifications, find its way into the Penitentiary system of Canada and most major penitentiaries in British Columbia. According to Goodall:

Students must pass five separate examinations in order to receive the G.E.D. There are exams in Grammar, Literature, Math; Science and Social Studies. All of the exams are of the multiple choice variety.

(Goodall, 1978; p. 1)

The G.E.D. was originally designed as an individualized program. It has been slightly modified at some penitentiaries like Matsqui where, "We treat the class as a group most of the time and all students must write the exams during the specified exam period approximately 12 weeks after the beginning of the course. (Ibid., 1978, p. 1).

Notwithstanding the value of a group approach and some major advantages such as: ease of administration, availability of materials, official recognition by the Ministry of Education in the form of a diploma, a valid pre-requisite for some post-secondary programs (excluding B.C.I.T, S.F.U. and U.B.C.), immediate gratification, a sense of success, and increased abilities in simple mathematics and reading skills, the program

is severely flawed and does not come close to being academic education as has been defined earlier.

Basically all that is required of the instructor and the student is to get through successfully a series or battery of five content area tests. Both the manner (rote-memorization) and matter (booklets of previous or example tests) of the program revolve around, or are dedicated specifically, to accomplishing the aforementioned task. While most educational programs have tests, no true educational program is solely test oriented, nor for that matter is an educational program simply a battery of tests. While 'teaching to test' may be prevalent in some modern day high school programs, it is not the only thing that a good high school teacher does. To do so would clearly diminish the value of the program. Furthermore, any teacher that simply relied upon the methodological approach known as rote-memorization would clearly not be 'teaching' which Peters (1972, pp. 39-40) correctly argues:

is a complex activity which unites together processes, such as instructing and training, by the overall intention of getting pupils not only to acquire knowledge, skills, and modes of conduct, but to acquire them in a manner which involves understanding and evaluation of the rationale underlying them.

They would, at most, be only 'drilling' their students.¹

While most classroom tests are varied in format, i.e. multiple-choice, short answer, paragraphs, essays, and so on, and in most cases are varied in the level of learning outcomes they measure (a range from low level recall of specific facts and data to high level understanding)² the G.E.D. tests use a simple multiple-choice format to measure only low level

outcomes. The multiple-choice format only requires its users, "...to recognize the correct answer from a small range of alternatives (Goodall, 1978, p. 2)." Thus students may guess at some of the answers, and the exam may not accurately measure their abilities. Further, students may not have to learn the material as thoroughly in order to recognize a correct answer as they do to recall it,³ and brighter students may not be challenged because the task is relatively easy, and they may receive no or little intrinsic reward from just, "filling in a blank spot beneath the number of the correct answer (Ibid., 1978, p. 2)."

In addition it seems that all five exams are norm-referenced (a student's test mark is compared and ranked with the marks of his peers) as opposed to criterion-referenced (mastery) tests. Thus a student, "...may, however, have answered only 50% of the exam questions correctly (Ibid., 1978, p. 3)." Many students, therefore, may pass without even having mastered the basic content requirements of the course. While a student may gain a feeling of success from this procedure, to sacrifice academic achievement in such a manner is rather callous indeed. According to the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education reviewers, "If quality performance is not demanded the educational process will be of little real value (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 114)."

While it can be argued that the G.E.D. has some instrumental value in that one who takes the program receives (upon successful completion) a high school equivalency certificate that may allow the recipient to enter into some sort of vocational training program or qualify for some jobs, it is

not, in keeping with the established criteria, worthwhile for its own sake and thus cannot be construed as education.

Furthermore, even though the G.E.D. is labeled an academic education program, it is neither education nor academic. Simply being a battery of five tests that happen to test five academic content areas does not make the G.E.D. academic because: 1) the substance of each test is clearly neither thought nor ideas; 2) each test is geared towards the practical not the theoretical; and, 3) the battery of tests and their subsequent successful completion is primarily dedicated to providing the learner with the means (a high school equivalency certificate) to attain a vocation.

Another criticism of the G.E.D. is that it completely fails to promote a 'cognitive perspective' in its students. While there may be something of worth in the G.E.D., i.e. increased reading and mathematics skills and a diploma recognized by the Ministry of Education, and some of the students who take it probably do care somewhat about it, the G.E.D. does not promote a wide ranging conception of what the student is doing while studying for and writing the tests. In other words, a G.E.D. student could diligently be working away at the G.E.D., "...without seeing its connection with much else, its place in a coherent pattern of life. For him it is an activity which is cognitively adrift (Peters, 1972, p. 31)."

Further evidence of the G.E.D.'s inability to operate adequately as a regular academic high school program is presented in a recently released study (1986) conducted at and by the University of Wisconsin. Even though the G.E.D. Testing Service, administered by the American Council on Education, claims that its examinations allow people "to demonstrate a

level of educational achievement comparable to that of regular high-school graduates, (American Council of Education-cited in Fields, 1986, p. 30), the Wisconsin study revealed the following startling results:

- 1) that...62 per cent of the University of Wisconsin freshmen with G.E.D.'s in 1983-84 had dropped out within a year;
- 2) of the 238 who earned their certificates after 1978, 56 scored below the ninth grade level and 20 at the six-grade level or below; and,
- 3) at the Milwaukee Technical College, from 1980 through 1983, only 8 per cent of G.E.D.-holders enrolled in two-year programs completed them, compared to 10 per cent for dropouts with no certificate and 30 per cent of high-school graduates. In one year programs, 38 per cent of the G.E.D.-holders finished, compared to 31 per cent of the dropouts and 59 per cent of high-school graduates.

While it must be conceded that post-secondary preparation is not the only purpose of a high-school education program, it is one important purpose and when used as a measuring rod offers evaluators a very good indicator of the worth of a program. Lois Quinn, one of the two coordinators of the study, is quite right in asserting that:

The findings call into serious question the practice in Wisconsin and many other states of encouraging at-risk youth or older adults to enroll in two to three month G.E.D.-prep classes as a way to 'complete high school'. (Quinn-cited in Fields, 1986, p. 30).

Even though it might be argued that there clearly is some worth for the student/inmate who takes the G.E.D., the program falls far short of what could be attained by taking a truly academic education program. Not only would this program provide the student with the skills needed to

achieve instrumental benefits, but it would provide him/her with a better understanding and appreciation of both subject and self. According to Coşman (1985, p. 20):

...the nature of education is that someone becomes someone of quality or value by the incorporation of quality or value into his or her being. The more value an item has, the more being it has. A person has numerous potentialities. The more education contributes to the actualization of these potentialities, the more a human being he or she will be. The more a person realizes oneself, the more one makes of oneself, the more valuable person one becomes.

While these aims are laudatory, given all the inhibitors found both within and outside the modern penitentiary system, they would be utopian aims. Furthermore, one would have to be either extremely egocentric, naive or both to even suggest the notion that a single academic program or course could achieve these aims especially as most educational programs at the elementary and secondary levels are of short duration (three or four months).

The simple fact that a truly academic education program would at least attempt to realize these aims would auger well with most people concerned with the well-being, and dignity of the inmate in a Federal penitentiary. Even though the arrow falls far short of its target, along the way it does traverse some hithertofore untouched regions, i.e. intellectual achievement, aesthetic appreciation, and rational decision making. The G.E.D. could never conceivably cross all these regions.

While the G.E.D. or any other such 'drill' oriented individualized program, "...can be a useful ancillary for in-class quizzes and for homework, particularly for slower learners (Ayers, 1979, p. 5)," or it

might be suitable as a program for those inmates whose academic pre-requisites are at a very low level (particularly if to offer them a program at a higher academic and thus more difficult level could lead to frustration and an abandonment of all education programs), the G.E.D. falls far short of being an adequate academic secondary program for inmates in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia. Besides the other reasons given above, the G.E.D. operates at an educational level that is well below that of many inmates who opt to take a high school level program in a Federal penitentiary.

In 1979, (Waksman and her associates-cited in McCarthy 1985, pp. 449-450) released the findings of their study which convincingly contradicted the long held assumption that most inmates were intellectually incapable of handling other more academically oriented types of learning than those offered by programmed instruction. As such, simply offering the G.E.D. to inmates capable of handling more is unwarranted, unsound and clearly reflects a misunderstanding of the academic capabilities of many inmates. Surely nothing good can come out of a program that is operating at an academic level that is well below the capabilities of its participants. While the G.E.D. may have its place, it is not enough and more must be offered if one wants to, at least, insure that, "...the inmate is not worse off when he emerges than he was at the time of admittance (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 76)." Whereas a true academic education program would clearly offer, and be more than simply a counterforce to the ill effects of penitentiaries on inmates, one should not minimize the importance of any program that could possibly contribute

to, or aid in neutralizing, the ill effects of 'prisonization', which Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984, p. 220) define as, "...the process by which the offender becomes socialized into inmate social system, with its attendant behavioural and attitudinal prescriptions."

Even though I am not satisfied with, and thus do not favour the G.E.D., like the O.I.S.E. reviewers I, "...do believe that modest arguments can be made for the existence of a total range of educational opportunities based on the informed voluntary choice of the inmate (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 70)." As such, it would seem that there is indeed both a place and need for the G.E.D., i.e. with slower learners, as homework, and so on, as well as for some viable academic alternative, i.e. for those capable of handling much more than that offered by the G.E.D.

J. Ayers (1979) identified such an alternative, of which part has been incorporated into the University of Victoria/Simon Fraser university program, when he wrote 'A Model for Prison Education Programs and Guidelines for their Operation'. Simply stated the alternative was to allow all prisoners with the ability to read, i.e. achieve a grade equivalent of 9.0 on standardized reading tests, to, "pursue university courses in the humanities and social sciences (Ayers, 1979, p. 6)."

Even though this is a valid alternative for some student/inmates, it is clearly not the only alternative for many inmates at the academic high school scholastic level.

While some inmates have been able to overcome their educational deficiencies via their life experiences and self-education, many have not,

and are clearly in need of a program that could aid them in their attempt to do so. Furthermore, even if an individual had educated him/herself, there are still many things (both intrinsic and extrinsic) that can be learned from taking a well designed academic education program.

While the G.E.D. may satisfy slower learners, and the S.F.U. university program, where available, clearly satisfies the needs of the more gifted, possibly self-educated student, there seems to be no program that is academically suited or satisfies the needs of a great many inmates who are presently betwixt and between the two academic alternatives offered students in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia. Furthermore, given that only four penitentiaries offer the S.F.U. university program, there are many gifted or above average students who clearly have no alternative but to take the inadequate G.E.D. or opt for some other vocational or training program. Ayers (1979, pp. 5-6) is correct when he states that:

The most important single requirement for successful learning experiences with the type of students that predominate in prisons is in determining the appropriate level and type of challenge. There should be a broad range of programs and procedures between that which frustrates the potential student because of learning disabilities and/or fear of failure and that which dulls his interest because of boredom...

Even though an academic high school program based upon sound educational principles would clearly deal with both the high and low achiever, given that these two groups are already offered viable alternatives, (particularly the high academic achiever), the academic high school level

program should be focused upon and dedicated to those who are offered less or more than what they presently need and are clearly capable of handling.

While it has not as yet been formally stated, overall, what is being advocated is an academic liberal education of a traditional nature. This type of education has various academic subjects that have been and are, "...directed to a broadening and deepening of the mind and imagination and they have combined with methods of instruction, depending heavily on discussion, that treated the student as though he were already an adult (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 78)." Specifically:

...the emphasis was not on the age of the participants, but in the ends of the education, which were to provide that type of experience and learning that helped the individual to achieve the highest standards of adult behaviour.

(Ibid., 1979, p. 77)

It is this focus upon the student as or as becoming an adult that augers well for liberal education in the penitentiaries of British Columbia. According to the O.I.S.E. reviewers:

If one combines this view with the somewhat startling observations regarding the age of most inmates, and the transition which seems to occur in the early thirties, some possible conclusions can be drawn. The type of education advocated in this case, that is the "liberal education", offers an opportunity for the maturing that seems to lead to a reduction in criminal behaviour to occur earlier than it does if left to other influences in the community, including those to be found in the prison.

(Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, pp.77-78)

What greater argument can be made for any prison program than that it may have the chance of reducing the criminal behaviour of its participants. If nothing else a program, that at least attempts to achieve a

self-actualized, and more mature adult, would seem to be a worthy and much needed alternative to the drill oriented General Equivalency Diploma program presently offered inmates at the high school level in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia.

Summary

In this chapter it has been argued that the Canadian Penitentiary Service has never been committed to education in prisons. Rather there has been an emphasis on training dedicated to a spiritual re-awakening or a vocation. Whereas education has to do with the transmission of what is worthwhile to those who are committed to it, involves knowledge, understanding and some kind of cognitive perspective, rules out some procedures of transmission, and is not limited to some specific end, function or mode of thought, training is limited in its scope to particular activities, usually vocational. Even the most commonly used program at the secondary level - the G.E.D., despite its seemingly academic content (English, Social Studies, etc.), is not geared to educational ends. Thus it is argued for a variety of reasons that a liberal, academic education program is necessary at the secondary level.

The next chapter will review the inhibitors and facilitators found in the prison system, in order to attempt to ascertain the feasibility of implementing an academic secondary education program in the Federal prisons of British Columbia.

END NOTES

- ¹ It should be noted that it is not my intention to imply that the G.E.D. would be more acceptable given a different methodological approach; i.e. inquiry teaching, and so on, but to point out that G.E.D. teachers need only 'drill' not 'teach' their students.
- ² I am not attempting to claim that all high school tests measure the higher order learning outcomes as discussed in Benjamin Bloom's book Taxonomy of Education Objectives: The Classification of Educational goals. Handbook I: Cognitive Domain (1956). What I am claiming is that most high school tests are constructed in such a way as to at least attempt to get beyond the low level recall of specific facts.
- ³ Goodall (1978) is clearly and correctly suggesting that the tests simply require a response (recognize) as opposed to some form of simple thought (recall). In other words, the tests are and act as agents of conditioning. This may be acceptable for animals but not for humans.

CHAPTER FIVE

Factors that facilitate and inhibit academic education programs in Federal penitentiaries

Before designing the conceptual framework for an educational program for inmates in prison, it is imperative that one clearly considers the plethora of factors which impinge upon education in prison. If one does not consider the factors which could inhibit the implementation of any new program, then this program is likely to fail. If key inhibitors are identified, then the program must, where possible, try to avoid them, counter them, or eliminate them. If there are major facilitators, then these may be used to advantage.

Whereas there are various and complex factors that impinge on an educational program in any setting i.e., teacher-student relationship, physical well being of students, economics, availability of resource materials and so on, this chapter will focus on those factors that directly pertain to education in prison. According to Boshier (1983), one problem, that of inmate participation in prison education, has three facets. These facets are:

- (1) person and environmental facilitators and inhibitors that impel inmates into and away from education programmes;
- (2) changes in motivation and behaviour associated with participation in programmes;
- and (3) long-term impact of prison education.

(Boshier, 1983, p. 10)

Notwithstanding the importance of all three facets, this chapter will only be concerned directly with facet number one i.e., person and environmental facilitators and inhibitors.

In order to provide an organized portrayal, the facilitators and inhibitors will be analyzed under two main headings: 1) External and environmental factors i.e., The Office of the Solicitor-General, The Commissioner of Corrections; Director of Education, Training and Personal Development; The General Public; Economics; and the Penitentiary System Bureaucracy; and (2) Internal actors and environmental factors i.e., Institutional Heads/Wardens; The Classification Officer; The Prison Educator; Prison Facilities; Endemic Tensions; The Prison Environment; Inmates--their attitudes and abilities, and Related Teaching Problems.

I. External Actors and Environmental Factors

(a) The Office of the Solicitor-General of Canada

The Solicitor-General is clearly a major external factor who, according to section 2, subsection 2 of An Act respecting the Solicitor-General, "...holds office during pleasure and has the management direction of the Department of the Solicitor-General (Solicitor-General Act, 1983-84)." Furthermore, section 4 of the Act reads:

The duties and functions of the Solicitor-General in Canada extend to and include all matters over which the Parliament of Canada has jurisdiction, not by law assigned to any other department, branch or agency of the Government of Canada related to

- (a) reformatories, prisons, penitentiaries;
- (b) parole and revisions;

- (c) the Royal Canadian Mounted Police; and,
- (d) the Canadian Security Intelligence Service.
(Solicitor-General Act, Section 4 - 1966-67, c.25,
s.4; 1983-84, c.21, s.95)

The Solicitor-General is also responsible for providing Parliament and the cabinet with a report, "...showing the operations of the department of the Solicitor-General for the fiscal year (Solicitor-General Act, Section 5)," and for appointing, "officers of the Service to be known as Directors of Divisions and Regional Directors (Penitentiary Act, Section 5(1))."

All of the above clearly suggest that the Solicitor-General has the power to either facilitate or inhibit education in prison. As evidence, one can review the recent conflict between the Solicitor-General and the proponents of university education in prisons. The conflict started in January of 1983 when the Honourable Robert Kaplan, claiming economic reasons, "announced that contracts between universities and the Correctional Service of Canada would not be renewed (Boshier, 1983, p. 29)."

Despite the concerted efforts of many people e.g., former and present inmates, Members of Parliament, reporters, newspaper executives, and educators, the Solicitor-General did not soften his stand until November 1983 (a full nine months after the original announcement) when, "... the government announced a compromise (Duguid & Hoekema, 1985, p. 190)" and, "... issued a call for bids from universities across Canada for post-secondary programs in each region of the country (Ibid, 1985, p. 190)." Unfortunately, inmates were now required to, "pay a minimum fee directly to the Correctional Service; \$20 per four month course (Ibid., 1985, p. 190)." This provision caused the University of Victoria to

withdraw from the negotiations. Interestingly, as they withdrew, the Solicitor-General announced another compromise which was, "that the fees were to be deducted from inmates' compulsory savings only, rather than from their 'disposable' income (Ibid., 1985, p. 190)." Furthermore, the Solicitor-General offered to provide loans to those inmates with insufficient incomes to pay for the courses. Thus, in April of 1984, Simon Fraser University, a second negotiating party, signed an agreement with the Solicitor-General to run the university program in British Columbia. Even though the university program was continued, in retrospect, the uncertainty created by the Solicitor-General's decision, and its possible reversal, serves to remind participation researchers that they are dealing with a phenomenon that stems from interactions of internal psychological and external 'system' variables (Boshier, 1983, p. 30).

(b) The Commissioner of Corrections

Even though the Commissioner of Corrections is appointed by the Governor-General in Council and receives direction from the Solicitor-General, this 'on-line' correctional officer has the power to facilitate or inhibit education in prison. According to section 4 of the Penitentiary Act, the Commissioner of Corrections, "....has the control and management of the Service and all matters connected within (Penitentiary Act, Section 4, 1960-1961, c.53, s.4, etc.)." Furthermore, the Commissioner's decision to implement or support or condemn or discontinue an educational program is given more weight by the fact that he/she has the power to, "suspend from duty any officer or employee of the service who is under his jurisdiction

(Penitentiary Act, Section 8(3), 1960-61, c.53, etc.)," and to appoint, "...a person to investigate and report upon any matter affecting the operation of the Service and, for that purpose, the person appointed has all the powers of a commissioner... (Penitentiary Act, Section 12, 1960-61)." In other words, the Commissioner is far from being the titular head of the Correctional Service. Not only does he/she give orders but he/she also has the power to investigate and take action. As such, the Commissioner of Corrections or his office has the power to investigate and thus effect any educational program in a Federal penitentiary in Canada.

Notwithstanding the aforementioned duties and powers, according to section 4, subsection 1 of the Penitentiary Act:

The portion of the staff of the National Parole Board known as the National Parole Service shall be under the control and management of the Commissioner who, in addition to his duties under section 4, is responsible, under the direction of the Minister, for the preparation of cases of parole and the supervision of inmates to whom parole has been granted, or who have been released on mandatory supervision pursuant to the Parole Act.

(1960-61, c.53, s.37)

One example of how the Commissioner of Corrections may inadvertently inhibit education in prison is in not clarifying the relationship between parole and entry into an education program. According to the Penitentiary Act, it is the Commissioner of Correction who oversees parole, which is important to most inmates serving time in a Federal penitentiary. The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education reviewers state, "For every inmate the most powerful incentive next to merely surviving will be related to his release. Nothing can compare with that in power of attraction (Report to the Solicitor-General, 1979, p. 109)." Unfortunately, neither

the Commissioner nor the Parole Board make explicit the terms of parole.

The O.I.S.E. (1979, p. 109) reviewers state that:

However, there is much obscurity regarding the relationship to parole. This uncertainty, shared by inmates and some officials, applies not only to general participation in educational programs but also to what view the Parole Board may or may not take of participation in a particular program.

It is this uncertainty that turns the whole affair into a cat and mouse game with the inmate trying vigorously to figure out what importance the Commissioner or Parole Board place on educational programs in relation to parole.

(c) Director of Education, Training and Personal Development

Another major player in the Correctional Service is the Director of Education, Training and Personal Development who directly oversees, "a chief of academic education, and a chief of vocational education (Cosman, 1980, p. 45)," and whose primary responsibility is to direct all facets of education in the Federal penitentiaries of Canada. According to section 7 of the Penitentiary Service Regulation:

Directors of Divisions may, under the authority of the Commissioner, issue instructions, to be known as Divisional Staff Instructions concerning the matters that are their responsibility and those instructions shall set out the procedures by which policy is to be given effect.

Even though this individual is ultimately responsible to the Solicitor-General (as are all correctional staff members) and tend to only perform such duties as are formally delegated by the Commissioner of Corrections, (Penitentiary Service Regulations, Section 4, 1978), where a problem may arise is in how a particular Director interprets and

subsequently carries out the Commissioner's directives. A director may (1) select or favour one mode or type of educational program over another; and (2) promote or neglect any existing educational program in a particular penitentiary. Considering this latitude, the Director could, at his/her pleasure, become a major facilitator or inhibitor of any or all education or education programs in the Federal penitentiary system of Canada.

(d) The General Public

Another external factor is a general lack of public support for corrections education. While difficult, if not impossible, to determine the exact numbers, it is clear that there are some members of the general public who are opposed to educational programs in Federal penitentiaries. The Report to the Solicitor General (1979, pp. 1-2) states that, "...in the minds of ordinary citizens, the admission of a prisoner's right to education does not follow with blunt evidence; on the contrary, resistance runs deep (quote cited in Wright, et.al., 1980, p. 18)."

(e) Economics

Economics clearly plays an integral role in determining the nature of the educational enterprise in Federal penitentiaries. Without adequate funding, the educational enterprise would wither away and die. In fact, without the basic funding, there would exist no educational enterprise. While the former as opposed to the latter seems to be the case in the Federal penitentiary system, it was not too long ago when a high ranking

Correctional Service official attempted the latter. In 1983, as was previously noted, the Solicitor-General, the Honourable Robert Kaplan, attempted, for economic reasons, to eliminate altogether one major component of the educational enterprise - the university program. As Kaplan stated during the January 24th Commons debate:

....These programs cost \$3,500 per inmate per year. This is a high amount. My hope is that post-secondary education can still be brought to them by self-help, by group sessions and by correspondence courses. I believe that, if those inmates really want to have the benefit of post-secondary education, they can develop it in some way that will cost the taxpayer less money. (Kaplan's statement cited in Duguid & Hoekema, 1985, p. 200)

Even though a compromise was found, the bottom line was economics.

Related to both economics and public economic support is a factor loosely termed public economic support. According to Wright et.al. (1980, p. 18), "In Canada, only four per cent of C.C.S. expenditures is devoted to educational purposes." This is a relatively small percentage, and Roberts (1971) quite correctly states:

As it is difficult to prove that education can be justified in terms of recidivism and 'good citizenship', educational programs are vulnerable to the criticism that they are a waste of taxpayers' money as they merely produce better educated criminals. (Roberts, 1971, cited in Wright, et.al., 1980, pp. 18-19)

While it is true that it is difficult to quantitatively assess the worth of education, particularly if recidivism and 'good citizenship' are the major indicators of a program's success, there are several points that should be made. First, little evidence is presented to defend the charge that education programs lead to better educated criminals. That one, or a few

inmates who participated in education programs, returned to criminal activities upon release, does not warrant the general charge. This argument commits the fallacy of hasty generalization. Second, there is some evidence that recidivism can be reduced. This is borne out by the evaluation study of the University of Victoria Program (Ayers, et.al., 1980), results which, in the main, are supported by Ross (1980) in his evaluation of the Ayers et.al. research. Third, to insist that any educational program guarantees a reduction in recidivism is to misunderstand, in part, the educational enterprise. Education is a life long process and to expect any educational endeavour (especially one of short term duration) to reduce recidivism is to demand too much.

(f) Penitentiary System Bureaucracy

A final major problem, one that runs throughout the penitentiary system, has to do with the attitude and status of the existing penitentiary bureaucracy. According to Cosman (1985), p. 30:

Prisons today have a highly ambiguous status. On the one hand, they are created to administer justice, penal justice, a justice based on punishment... On the other hand, they are expected to play a role in the prisoner's rehabilitation and social integration.

The ambivalent situation is made worse because, "The existing penitentiary bureaucracy is made up almost entirely of people who are experienced in the

established penal practices, trained in the old approaches, intellectually oriented to the conventional wisdom, and emotionally committed to the status quo (Ibid., 1985, p. 31)." Furthermore:

There are very few educators in the penitentiary system. And what makes the prospect seem hopeless is that the Federal government does not have available to it either the necessary body of knowledge, insight and tradition in the field of education or a resource pool of people trained and experienced in that field...

(Ibid., 1985, p. 31)

Thus ambiguity, a lack of tradition in offering educational programs, few experts in prison education, and an over-bureaucratized system characterizes the Federal Government's foray into education in prisons.

Having identified the major external actors and factors, we turn to a survey of internal actors and variables which impinge on education in prison.

II. International Actors and Environmental Factors

(a) Institutional Heads/Wardens

A major internal factor is the institutional head or warden of a Federal penitentiary. Notwithstanding the fact that wardens must follow the orders they receive from the Commissioner of Corrections, they are officers who could facilitate or inhibit educational programs in prisons. According to section 5, subsection 1, of the Penitentiary Service Regulations:

The institutional head is responsible for the direction of his staff, the organization, safety and security of his institution and the correctional training of all inmates confined therein.

(Penitentiary Service Regulations, Section 5, Subsection 1)

While it could be argued that most wardens attempt to ensure both security and safety, there is little evidence to show that education is high on their list of priorities.

As Shea (1980, pp. 42-43) points out:

Prison authorities are often negative in their attitude toward school. The more conservative officials regard school as part of the trend toward being too soft. School is not punitive enough - it is a form of babying the individual.

Furthermore, where educational programs are offered and supported in institutions, the purpose behind that support is antithetical to the main purpose of education. Despite the fact that training the inmate for work may be a noble endeavour, to equate control and security, discipline, work, and isolation with academic education is a clear misinterpretation and violation of the term and most assuredly acts as a major inhibitor of academic education in a Federal penitentiary.

(b) The Classification Officer

A correctional officer that may inhibit or facilitate an educational program is the placement or classification officer. In British Columbia, a judge determines the offenders' length of sentence and a placement or classification officer makes the final determination of where the offender will reside in the penitentiary system. According to Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984, p. 179), "The predominant factor at this stage of classification is the security requirements of the offender, although assignment to a specific institution may be affected by available bedspace." Although the classification officer is officially bound by the benchmark system,¹ he/she

still has some options. At the interview and needs assessment stage, the officer determines whether the offender needs training, treatment, 'tight' security or a combination of two or all three. According to Ekstedt and Griffiths (1984, p. 179), "The offender is interviewed by a placement officer who makes a needs analysis, including the training, treatment, and security requirements of the offender."

As has just been noted, the classification officer is limited in any actions he or she takes, but this officer could clearly become a major facilitator or inhibitor to any education program. First, the classification officer could either suggest or not suggest to the offender a particular education program. Second, this officer could either decide to, or decide not to, send the offender to an institution which offered such a program. While the Benchmark system and the needs analysis may limit the scope of any decisions made by the classification officer, it is this officer who makes the final decision and as such could clearly aid or hinder education or any educational program.

(c) The Prison Educator

Generally, most educators, whether outside/contract or regular staff, lack enough training for dealing with inmates in a penitentiary setting. This seems true despite the constant contact regular staff teachers have with inmates in the person setting, or the teacher training received by many outside educators. Methodology without experience or vice-versa is clearly not enough when dealing with inmates in a Federal penitentiary. According to Wright, et.al. (1980, p. 19), "This person must be well

trained, must be cognizant of the prison environment, must be committed to education, and must have teaching abilities which are superior." This latter criterion is justified on the basis that:

Teaching in a prison is not the same as teaching in other institutions. Whatever the teaching situation, teachers need special training in order to understand the background and special problems associated with their particular student population (Campbell, 1974; Horan, 1975).

Even assuming that teachers, particularly outside contract ones, could be given adequate training or appropriate orientation, they would probably still be confronted with the problem of being resented by both inside teachers and regular custodial staff. While there may be many reasons for this hostility on the part of the custodial staff i.e., usurping territorial authority and threatening security and control, one of the main reasons seems to be a resentfulness or envy on the part of some members of the regular staff. Some seem to feel that teachers are offering inmates something neither they nor their family can afford to attain. According to Shea (1980, p. 43), "...some prison workers also resent the opportunity that inmates have, and are jealous of the access that they have to school facilities." Related to this is the perception of many regular staff members that contract teachers tend to side with the inmate instead of with themselves. Interestingly, there are some inmates who suspect that the reverse is true. According to one anonymous prison educator, "...I found it very difficult when I started, since both staff and inmates tended to circle around me speculating whose side I would be on... (Duguid, 1985, p. 17)."

Thus, the teacher enters an environment where both parties, the regular staff and inmates, may require the teacher to make a choice between "them and us". According to Duguid (1985, pp. 15-16):

In the literature on prison education there is a recurring theme which attests to the difficulty or even impossibility of 'outside' instructors maintaining a middle position between prisoner/students and the demands of the prison regime. Whether pulled toward identifying with or being overly sympathetic towards either side in the equation, the prevailing consensus seems to be that the middle ground is untenable in the long run.

Therefore, it seems apparent that holding a middle ground position is difficult. Interestingly, a few anonymous teachers who were asked by Duguid to offer their ideas and knowledge on inmates and education in prison seem to have solved the dilemma. According to one of these anonymous teachers, "This position should not be a 'middle' position but should favour the prisoner in a direct educational posture. This does not invite conflict with the prison authority (Ibid., 1985, p. 17)." In other words, the ideal position of the teacher is to serve the educational needs of the prisoner/student and do nothing more or less that could be construed as offensive or dangerous to either side of the 'us-them' conflict. A misreading of the 'us-them' situation by teachers i.e., trying to please both sides without attending to one's official job (the teaching of students), or taking a side out of fear or preference, could 'fire-up' the already uncomfortable relationship that exists between inmates and custodial staff and destroy the fragile creditability that some very good educators have painstakingly created and are attempting to maintain.

Another major problem for the prison educator is that not all institutions nor the endemic tensions that exist within them are the same. While some institutions have few disruptions and there exists the minimum of hostility between the staff and inmates, the picture is reversed in other institutions. According to Duguid (1985):

At Mountain Institution the hostility between prisoners and staff appears virtually non-existent, while at Williams Head it is at least severely muted. At Kent and Matsqui Institutions, on the other hand; the conflict appears to be quite real.

(Duguid, 1985, p. 16)

Thus, the dilemma is twofold for the prison educator. First, as not all institutions are tension filled, a prison educator's approach will have to differ depending on the placement; and, second, where tensions are high, the teacher must come to a very quick understanding of them and thus avoid real problems before attempting to teach their program.

Another problem that could quickly face the classroom teacher, and if unresolved could inhibit education in prisons, is the constant, "...fluctuations in class size due to dropouts and inmate transfer and absences for various purposes--visits, classifications, interviews (Griffin, 1978, cited in Wright, et.al., 1980, p. 20)." As Shea (1980, p. 43) points out:

...one problem which exists at Collins Bay Institution, and I presume in many other institutions, is the transient nature of the population. Many inmates do not finish school programs thorough no fault of their own. They may be transferred, paroled, or reach the end of their sentence....

More will be said about the above mentioned problems in Chapter 6.

The fact that inmates are individuals with certain needs, and most prison educators are only skilled in teaching one or, at best, two subjects, leads to yet another problem. According to McCollum (1973), "...if programs are to meet the needs of all inmates, corrections institutions will have to offer an almost universal range of opportunities (McCollum, 1973, cited in Wright, et.al., 1980, p. 21)." This, of course, would create:

...problems for prison instructors. Either because of economic restraints or relatively small numbers of students in any given course, instructors will have to teach several different courses, and/or they will have to encapsulate their courses into a short time period. Most instructors at the adult level are specialists in a subject area. Usually, they have been trained to teach their subject and not others, and they may find it difficult to develop a curriculum which has to be implemented in a 'short course' situation.

(Wright, et.al.; 1980, p. 21)

(d) Prison Facilities

In order to run an adequate education program, it is imperative that a teacher teach and students learn proper research skills. The days of the one reader-one student are hopefully gone for good. Unfortunately, as Duguid (1985, p. 6) notes:

Despite efforts over years to build research libraries in the prisons, it is obvious from their student comments that much more needs to be done if these students are to develop skills in this area. While research skills are weak for students on campus as well, the instructors note that the absence of "real" libraries with a proper reference system makes it virtually impossible for the students in the prison to overcome this deficiency.

As Wright, et.al. (1980, p. 21) points out, "One of the facilities is the library. It can be argued that library facilities are even more vital in prison education than in 'outside' education. Regular students usually have access to a variety of resources, inmates do not."

(e) Endemic Tensions

Endemic tensions are clearly an inhibitor to education in Federal penitentiaries. In order to understand the role played by these tensions in inhibiting education in prisons, one must deal with the question, "What are these tensions in a Federal Penitentiary?" While difficult to give a full account, the following should suffice. On one side are the prison staff who are under an extra-ordinary amount of pressure. According to the authors of the Report to Parliament by the sub-committee on the Penitentiary System (1977):

Pressure and tension are constant on staff; the fear of making a mistake which could result in an escape, a hostage-taking situation, or some other form of violence, is always present. Threats are regularly received by staff--sometimes from friends of inmates or former inmates, sometimes from fellow staff members. Many of them keep weapons at home and have unlisted telephone numbers. Reported incidents are rare but those that have occurred were serious.

(Report, 1977, cited in AVER, 1981, p. 26)

On the other side are the inmates who, despite their conscious choice to commit crimes (Duguid, 1981; Duguid, 1985), lose much of their ability to choose once the steel bars close behind them. According to Michael Enright, in his article Halls of Anger, (AVER, 1981):

When a man is consigned to penitentiary, he becomes a member of a closed but fully operational society,

independent of everything he's known before, with its own code of behaviour, its own system of justice and punishment and its own set of values. He becomes a target individual, forced to conform to a social structure of which he has no working knowledge. If he is friendly with the guards, he becomes the object of hatred or even violence by his fellow inmates. If he conforms too readily to his peers, he opens himself up to harassment from the guards and administration.

This constant, never ending tension weighs heavy on both groups and may cause them to perform actions which are abnormal. Interestingly, despite the fact that both groups are caught in the same trap, neither group seems to know how to come together and ameliorate their common tribulation. As Enright states, "Hanging in the air in Canada's maximum security prisons is the constant aura of incipient violence. There is a feeling that everyone on the inside, guard and inmate, is at risk (Ibid., 1981, p. 24)."

(f) The Prison Environment

Another major inhibitor is the prison environment. Even though there have been some major changes made by, or because of, prison reformers i.e., better living conditions, conjugal visits, and so on, as Duguid (1984) points out, "Despite the best intentions of prison reformers, no amount of architectural facades, improved living conditions, or conjugal visits can diminish the punishing and degrading quality of the prison (Duguid, 1984, pp. 10-11)." All this is reinforced by Ayers (1976) who states that, "...the traditional prison appears to have no aim, purpose or ideal beyond pragmatic custody and control... and lacks any of the elements of experience required for intelligent, social or moral growth (Ayers, 1976,

cited in Duguid, 1984, p. 7)." In other words, the Canadian Penitentiary seems to be a place where there exists much confusion or darkness.

According to ex-inmate Andrea Schroeder in Shaking It Rough:

Prison is a huge lightless room, filled with hundreds of blind, groping men, perplexed and apprehensive and certain that the world is full of nothing but enemies at whom they must flail and kick each time they brush against them in the dark. Prison is a bare and bewildering market place in which sellers and buyers mill about in confusion, neither having the remotest idea of what to buy and sell.

(Schroeder, cited in AVER, 1981, p. 24)

Notwithstanding its aesthetic and physical harshness, the genre of the penitentiary poses other problems for the educator. As order and regulations are the two operative words in a Federal penitentiary, nothing, especially the movements or actions of the inmate, is taken for granted.

According to Orlando (1975):

A prison is many things, but most importantly it is a place where rules of behavior are prescribed in minute detail for every aspect of life. The most intimate details of living in a prison are regulated not by the inmate but by the staff. The aspects of life left to the inmate's choice are so small as to be non-existent. The inmate man is reduced to the inmate child, who must ask and receive permission before he can do anything, and the inmate is constantly warned that failure to adhere rigidly to the system of childlike request and response, or to obey any order, can have the most dire consequences.

(Orlando, 1975, cited in AVER, 1981, p. 25)

All this regimentation in, "The prison spoil the students. It encourages them not to take responsibility for their own lives--they don't have to work to survive. So, we have a flock of boys swarming around our ankles, tugging at our skirts for attention and help, instead of self-sufficient

men (Quote from an anonymous educator, cited in Duguid, 1985, p. 12)." Or, as another anonymous educator states:

One of the primary influences of the prison environment is that it deprives the inmate of responsibility for his actions. Since the prison is regimented, it is possible for the inmate to make almost no decisions and thus be regulated by institutional requirements alone.. (Quote from an anonymous educator, cited in Duguid, 1985, pp. 12-13)

As such, one can see that the environment has the, "Tendency to instill a lack of responsibility, dependency, and anger in students (Duguid, 1985, p. 12)."

It is the latter of these, anger, which leads to yet another problem. Given the harsh environment and atmosphere that exists in the penitentiary, it is no small wonder that inmates become angry and lash out at themselves, the custodial staff, educators, and society. According to Duguid (1981). "The most pervasive quality of the criminal world view is the off handed contempt most of them have for the average, honest, 'straight' citizen. Such people are regarded as weak, to be pitied, and among the most hardened [criminal], stepped on... (Duguid, 1981, p. 3)." Or to Enright, "... Some inmates make a practice of throwing bags of excrement into guard's faces... (quote from "Halls of Anger", cited in Prisons, 1981, p. 24)." And even teachers, according to Shea (1980), "are fair game as much as anyone else. Conning is a way of life for criminals, and prisoners reinforce this activity as a means of dealing with the system... (Shea, 1980, p. 43)." Unfortunately, this latter inmate behaviour leads to yet another problem. As Shea (1980, p. 43) states, "The result is that teachers may easily be "taken" once or twice, and they then become suspicious or negative in all

dealings with inmates." Nothing is less conducive to education and the learning process than a situation where, "teachers have difficulty developing trust between themselves and students in an atmosphere that fosters suspicion and hatred (Ibid., 1980, p. 42)."

Although the previous evidence shows the prison environment is a major inhibitor to education programs in prison, there is also some evidence to suggest that that very same environment can become facilitative as well.

As Duguid (1985, p. 13) points out:

Perhaps less to be expected were comments which highlighted the more positive aspects of the prison environment's impact on the education program. These ranged from the somewhat utilitarian idea that the students had more time to study and more motivation because of the boredom of the prison, to the more complex notion of the university program as a sanctuary from the prison.

Interestingly, it is the negative aspects of the prison environment which inadvertently facilitates education programs in prison.² According to an anonymous prison teacher for the Simon Fraser University program:

The students often wish to escape prison mentality or the repetitive complaints that typify life in prison, and they see in the academic centre, quite rightly, a refuge from prison politics, parole board, classification complaints, etc... The education program provides as normal an environment as possible. It ministers to their psychological problems indirectly by changing the terms of their lives and values in a manner that is entirely unofficial and unstated... The Academic Centre, in short, serves as an alternative culture within the prison; it is as close to the normal world of social expectations as anything in the prison environment.

(Quote from an anonymous teacher, cited in Duguid, 1985, p.14)

Unfortunately, most education programs are not afforded their own operational space which may make the program a prime inhibitor to education in prison.

Another facilitator is the relatively small class sizes found in most educational programs. This allows for more individual teacher attention and various alternative teaching strategies. While the O.I.S.E. reviewers (1979) found evidence that, "there are some institutions where there are gross over-crowding in the academic areas, and long waiting lists (Report to the Solicitor-General, 1979, p. 105), they also found evidence, "...of underuse within those schedules (Ibid., 1979, p. 105)."

(g) Inmates - their attitudes and abilities

The inmate is clearly a major actor who could facilitate or inhibit education in prison. As such it is imperative that both their attitudes towards education and their general abilities are given a brief review.

While there are inmates like Fred (a pseudonym for an inmate interviewed by Roger Boshier in Education Inside, (1983) who found the benefits outweighed the burdens of education, overall many inmates weigh the cost in reverse. Compounding the dulling effects of the prison atmosphere and environment are: 1) all the alternative activities offered inmates, i.e. television, cards, films, sports, and, "Even some prison shops are more attractive than school, especially if the wages or bonuses are better (Shea, 1980, p. 42)"; 2) the fact that, "most offenders have few academic or vocational skills, and most are characterized by unstable employment experiences and apathetic work attitudes (Ibid., 1980, p. 42)";

and, 3) many inmates, "...have in some way or another failed at school and who have predictable attitudes to any further attempts at education (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 35)." Furthermore, Shea (1980, p. 42) points out:

Most inmates have dropped out of school at an early age and, because of the high value our society places on education, quitting school does much to form a failure identity. It is not at all surprising, then, to find a negative attitude toward school and everything for which it stands. Schools are identified with middle class values, the work ethic, and straight society. They epitomize what most prisoners have rejected. This is the situation that prison teachers face, an atmosphere that is foreign to learning, and pupils who are turned off school.

Fortunately, "...there is evidence that intelligence seems to be distributed amongst inmates much as it is in the general population (O.I.S.E. Report, 1979);" that inmates can learn (Yochelson and Samenow, 1976; Waksman, Silverman and Weber, 1979); that inmate students may be more energetic than 'regular' students (Marken, 1974); and that inmate students are more intellectually curious (Laird, 1972). This makes problematic the overall issue but if correctly understood, forces, in a positive manner, the prison instructor to, "be aware of the complex backgrounds of inmate students in order to teach effectively (Wright, et. al., 1980, p. 23)," and supports the argument that education is indeed possible in prison. Furthermore, the O.I.S.E. reviewers (1979) found that, in the majority of institutions they visited, many inmates and officials regarded the school as "...a source of stimulation and satisfaction (Report to the Solicitor General, 1979, p. 73)." And, "Many inmates who had chosen other activities spoke positively about the school.... (Ibid., 1979, p. 73)."

(h) Related Teaching Problems

Even though the situation would be ideal, generally the problems with education in prison does not end when the inmate decides to take an education program and from then on maintain a regular attendance in class.

The first problem is one of teaching a group of men or women who may have different needs, i.e. developing the ability to compete in the job market, eliminating boredom, developing basic literacy skills, increasing self-esteem, and so on. This requires individualized instruction when, "...the practicalities of prison education make it difficult, if not impossible at times, to individualize instruction, and account for individual needs (Wright, et. al., 1980, p. 23)."

Second, the pressure of the classroom may lead to major problems. Forster (1976, p. 31) states:

...there are features of the educational scene which, although common to both the imprisoned and the free student, may be perceived much more clearly in prison because the extreme nature of prison brings them into sharper relief. A striking example of this is the degree of stress felt by an adult when exposed to academic assessment of any sort and the accompanying sense of exposure: a prime problem with the inmate student, this could be a much greater problem outside than appears at first.

Third, as the inmate receives further exposure in the humanities, i.e. psychology of deviant behaviour, law, Social Studies, and so on, "There may be an increase in feelings of isolation in that horizons may be broadened, but the inmate is confined both in terms of physical space and facilities, i.e. library resources (Wright, et. al., 1980, p. 24)."

And lastly, because the average inmate age range is between 19-34 it puts them in an historical period when different teaching approaches were offered them at the schools they attended, and thus the teacher, in order to satisfy all their demands will, "...have to be cognizant of institutional and student characteristics not only in their actual instruction but also in the preparation of curriculum materials (Sackett, 1974-cited in Wright, et. al., 1980, p. 24)."

SUMMARY

The primary purpose of this chapter was to identify and present the many inhibitors and facilitators of academic education in prison. While some facilitators were identified, i.e. the perceived possibility of 'easy time' for the inmate, small class sizes, opportunity for inmate self-betterment, more study time for inmates, and more motivation because of the boredom in the prison, the evidence suggests that there are many more inhibitors than facilitators to education in most, if not all, Federal penitentiaries. Some of the major inhibitors lay in the realms of: economics; the actions of correctional managers, officers and staff; the tensions between staff and inmate; the lack of training and understanding of some teachers (both contract and staff); the prison environment and atmosphere; an unclear picture of what education would do for the inmate; numerous alternatives to education; the lack of proper facilities or study space; the Federal bureaucracy; prison authorities having at least four very questionable assumptions about the educational process; and lastly some inmates' hostility towards any educational program.

Notwithstanding all the inhibitors, the situation is not so bleak as to make impossible the maintenance of existing education programs and the design and implementation of an appropriate high school level academic education program. For example, the University of Victoria/Simon Fraser program has clearly been able to operate with some success within four British Columbian prisons despite, or inspite of, all the inhibitors.

Furthermore, it will be argued elsewhere in this thesis that it is possible to deal with some of the inhibitors to education and education programs in the Federal Penitentiary System of British Columbia.

END NOTES

- ¹ The Benchmark system is a system that labels each offender in such a way as to suit one of the seven security levels which identify various institutions, i.e. an offender found to be in the "high escape risk category" is assigned to an appropriate S-6 level institution.
- ² It is not my intention to argue for the continuation of the negative aspects of the prison environment, but to point out that that environment may inadvertently aid educational programs in prison.

CHAPTER SIX

Program Guidelines

A. Inhibitors to Program

When designing an academic education program at the secondary level for adult students in a Federal penitentiary, it is imperative that one considers all the possible inhibitors to the implementation of such a program. While the plethora of inhibitors to such a program were discussed at length earlier, and all of them could affect the program, there are a few that directly affect it and thus need to be outlined in more specific terms.

A major problem that may arise is that not all educators would be acquainted with, or be able to handle, an approach that requires a multitude of instructional techniques. It would not be too difficult to envision a scenerio where a reasonably sound program failed because of the inexperience of the teacher and/or teacher resistance. It would therefore seem to be an imperative that a potential teacher of the program: 1) would have taken a teacher training program at a recognized university; 2) would have previous experience with a variety of teaching techniques and activities (particularly those appropriate for adult learners; or 3) would be suited, willing and capable of undertaking some sort of appropriate orientation training program. This entails either the hiring of qualified outside teachers or providing appropriate education or training courses to regular prison staff teachers. While both alternatives have some merit, it would seem to be more satisfactory to utilize outside contract teachers

because of their experience with various teaching strategies and activities. Further they are less likely to be 'contaminated' by the prison environment; and would not be perceived by the inmates to be a member of the prison establishment; or to put it in more colloquial terms, 'as one of them'.

Another problem that could clearly affect this program is the constant fluctuation in class size due to parole, drop-outs, inmate transfers and absences for various reasons, i.e. visits by lawyers and relatives, interviews, sickness and so on.

While no one as yet has documented the definitive reasons as to why students drop-out of education programs, one can at least surmise that the relevance of the programs, their nature, and the manner in which they are presented are all plausible reasons. Given that the proposed program is designed specifically for a certain target population, offers a plethora of teaching techniques and activities, and will be taught by teachers, who, having undergone some sort of adequate training program, would be aware of many of the needs, attitudes, dispositions, and educational background of its students, the drop-out rate should be minimized although probably not eliminated. It would be rather presumptuous to make such a claim for an as yet untried program.

Although a problem, the matter of transfers could be dealt with by initiating such a program in all or most Federal institutions. As such any transferred inmate would have the opportunity to complete the program in the new institution. Continuity of programs among institutions would go far in eliminating the problems posed by inmate transfers.

A second solution would be to allow open entry into the program. Even though open-entry could pose a problem for the classroom teacher and the students, if handled correctly (and this is where appropriate training comes in for classroom management skills are vital) the classroom situation should not deteriorate to such a state as to become completely unmanageable and totally uncondusive to learning.

Any adequately trained teacher could clearly deal with a late entry or two into their classroom. Of course, in all fairness, the new student(s) would have to be informed of where, or at what stage in the course, the class was at, and the possible difficulties of catching up. While this might be done by a classification officer, the teacher could, before or upon entry, aid the student in making the correct decision. Overall though it is the student who makes the final decision and on no account should a student be turned away from a class, unless there simply is no room, or the class is in the last week or two of the course. While academic content is important, it is not the only thing that can be learned by a student who takes an educational program. To turn a student away, who for whatever reason wants to take the course, may turn off the inmate from taking any educational program in the future.

Another related problem concerns a students inability to meet the requirements of the program. Should any student fail to complete the requirements of the program or to be more specific, fails to complete the requirements of any course in the program, (i.e. class performance, regular attendance, quizzes, essays, research papers, readings, or a final examination), the inmate would be allowed to retake the course. The

teacher would be required to keep students up-to-date on their progress and allow them the chance to improve on one or more of their deficiencies. Also, where appropriate, a quick learner or above average student could be given the option of tutoring or mentoring slower learners, or where available, opt, with full creditation, to take the university education program. Furthermore, where available and acceptable, a teacher may request the aid of some past program graduates or undergraduates or graduate university level students.

This latter option would be beneficial for a number of reasons. For graduates of the program, it would allow them to utilize their acquired knowledge and expertise by presenting it to needy students. University students or graduates would benefit because they would have the opportunity to apply some of their educational skills and would in turn learn something from having to assume a position of mentor/tutor or teacher. Furthermore, by their very presence, the high school and university program would be brought closer together which would aid in uniting the presently fragmented educational enterprise in prison. Teachers would benefit because the additional help would lighten their workload. And lastly the students would clearly benefit both academically and personally by interacting with past program graduates and academics.

The problem of absences should be no problem if the teacher (with the aid of the students) initiates, during the initial class meeting, some operating guidelines, procedures and rules. While every effort should be made by the teacher to up-date the missed lesson for the student, (particularly if they were absent through no fault of their own), given

that the student is and must be treated as an adult, some onus must be placed on them as well.

The problem of lesson structure can be broached at the initial procedures meeting. How lessons are structured can be left, to an extent, to the discretion of the students. They must bear some responsibilities if the program hopes to operate as an adult oriented program. Given that the operating rules of a penitentiary may diminish inmate responsibility, this meeting, if appropriately conducted, could be like a breath of fresh air for students who are constantly treated as less than adults. Of course this may not always be the case and where some students, for whatever reason, refuse to take part in setting the rules, or where they want no responsibility, their wishes should be acknowledged and respected. Given that no two classes nor students are the same, the ideosyncracies of the collective as well as the individual should be respected. While this is quite a task for the teacher, it is one that must be undertaken, otherwise the atmosphere of the classroom may soon come to resemble that of the prison. While some teachers may resent this approach, given that the major stakeholder in the class is the student, there is no real argument why any students should not have some input into how they will be educated.

By 'some input' I mean that it is the teacher who must have the ultimate responsibility because of their position of authority. This is imperative because some students may take advantage of the situation. Given that the task at hand is the education of the student, the teachers' role becomes one of making sure that the class remains on task and does not end up merely becoming a debating society or social group.

One problem that arises from all this is the position of the new, late or transfer student and how he/she would fit into a class that had already established its own working rules and procedures. As in most classrooms, it is the onus of all newcomers to find out and abide by the working arrangements that have already been established in the classroom. Further, the rules or operational procedures should not and would not (in this proposed program) be so inflexible as to make it impossible for most students to fit into the classroom. Also, the operational procedures would be periodically reviewed and up-dated so as to suit both the particular students and the teacher.

Another problem concerns the lack of study facilities in a prison setting. Cell blocks or dormitories are noisy and libraries, where they exist, may have very restrictive hours of operation. Notwithstanding the effect these inhibitors have on the overall educational process, at the utilitarian level they pose immense barriers for a student required to complete a prescribed educational assignment. It would be like trying to read or write at a rock concert or to try to write an essay without supplemental materials. The odds for success would be rather minimal to say the least.

Ayers (1979, pp. 4-5) argues that this situation may be corrected, "...by having libraries open in the evenings and on weekends, or alternatively, where a tier or dormitory can be made reasonably quiet, students could be housed together, with provision made for study areas." Although Ayers' proposals have merit, it might not be feasible to implement them in all Federal institutions. Security, lack of space, and staff

objectives may be reasons why such proposals would be rejected by institutional administrators. As such, teachers in some institutions would not be able to provide their students with out of class activities or projects. Unfortunately, this could lead to a situation where students in one institution would be receiving a more comprehensive educational package than their counterparts in another institution. Fortunately, this unacceptable situation could be circumnavigated, to some extent, by using class time in a more productive manner. To cite but a few possibilities, the teacher might incorporate after class activities, i.e. readings, research papers, and so on, into the allotted time frame established for each classroom period or he/she could set aside one or two classroom periods a week for such activities or projects. Thus the classroom would serve, among other things, as a facility for study and the teacher would assume the roles of instructor, librarian or resource person. This is generally what a good teacher does anyway.

Another problem concerns the prison environment. Generally, as was noted earlier, the prison environment would not be conducive to the proposed education program. This is particularly true since, among other things, the proposed program attempts to address critical thinking and moral issues in a way that the outcome would not be a more reflective criminal but a more mature and ethical adult decision-maker. Given that the prison environment, with its authoritarian infra-structure, is not conducive and would not support such an aim, it would seem that one plausible avenue would be to design an alternative environment. According to Duguid (1981, pp. 8-9), "The environment most conducive to this kind of

program has been described by Kohlberg and Scharf as a 'just' or 'democratic' community, a community run according to democratic norms with principles of justice as guides for interaction among students and between students and staff." Although Duguid has been able to set up such a community for his university students at Matsqui prison, given that most Federal institutions do not and their administrators can not set up such a community, the next best thing would be to try and set up a scaled down version of the "Just Community" in the classroom. While not as good an alternative as a separate, semi-autonomous community, it would, at least, be a step in the right direction and would be much better than a classroom with a traditional, authoritarian environment. Unfortunately, upon completion of each lesson, prison regulations would force each student to depart the democratic environment of the classroom for the hostile, non-democratic domains of the prison. To rectify or at least 'soften' this situation it is recommended that the classroom periods for each course operate for a minimum of two hours a day or night depending on the particularly needs of the students. Furthermore, the classroom, staffed by teachers or student graduates, is to remain open for a minimum of two hours or longer each evening where possible and feasible given the security needs of the particular institution. This would not only satisfy the academic needs of the students but act as further reinforcement of the democratic principles enacted in the classroom.

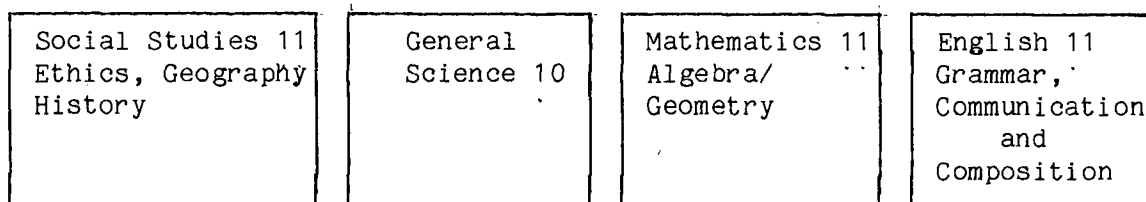
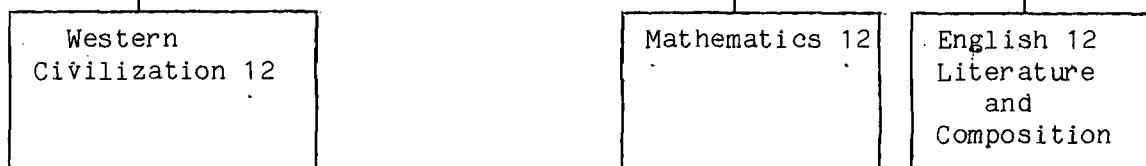
Now that the major inhibitors to the proposed academic education program has been outlined in more specific terms it is time to describe in detail the model.

B. Program Guidelines

Specifically, the program is concerned with academic education at the senior secondary level (Grades ten to twelve). I will not discuss the elementary or junior high levels, not because these are not of importance, but because the focus of this thesis is on academic secondary education. Furthermore, as was discussed earlier, there is clearly a need for an appropriate academic senior secondary program in the Federal penitentiaries of British Columbia.

The program will have four academic content area subjects: Social Studies (History, Geography, Ethics, and Western Civilization), Mathematics (Algebra, Geometry and Calculus), General Science and English (Communications, Composition, Grammar and Literature). (See Figure 1). These subjects were chosen because, as noted earlier, they are collectively concerned with the theoretical and not just the practical, they promote understanding and a 'cognitive perspective', they allow their participants the chance to acquire worthwhile knowledge, and they are concerned with developing the student's mind and character. Individually, Mathematics and Science are useful for teaching logical thought and reasoning and English and History-subjects generally concerned with argumentation, philosophy, law, ethics, and the analysis of data and ideas are useful tools for the development of critical thinking and moral reasoning (Duguid, 1981, pp. 9-10).

FIGURE 1

Conceptual Framework of ProgramA. Beginners Level:B. Advanced Level:

Specifically, the program and all of its parts are designed in keeping with the notion that learning takes place at successive gradations of complexity. Although a particular situation may warrant a different organization, generally the program will be, "...organized in a linear fashion based on some provision for progressive development.... (McNiel, 1985, p. 71)." The organizational principles that guide this development include: simple to complex; whole to part; chronological narration; and learning hierarchies (Ibid., 1985, pp. 71-72).

All four subject areas will have two components parts: a) Beginners level and b) Advanced level.

a) Beginners Level

All four level courses will run for a three month term. The classroom periods will be two hours in duration and will operate for four or five days a weeks. Each subject area at the beginners level deals with content at the grade eleven (or ten for Science) level established by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia. (Social Studies Curriculum Guide, 1984). No inmate of a Federal penitentiary would be excluded from entering a beginners component in any subject area since some basic level skills will be dealt with by this component within the program. However, a potential student who could not read, write or compute at a grade nine level might be asked to undergo a basic skills development program. If possible the student would be allowed to attend concurrently both programs.

Furthermore, a student may opt to take all four subject area beginners components at the same time or take just one or two. Also, a student who

completes the beginners component in one subject area may opt to by-pass the advanced educational level and start another beginners component(s) (after a three month waiting period) in another subject area. A student could also be at a beginners level in one subject area and at an advanced level in another subject area.

Each classroom teacher will have the liberty to design his/her own classroom assignments to a maximum fifty per cent of the course. The remaining fifty per cent will come from the British Columbia Departmental Examinations. This latter component will satisfy the guidelines as established for grade ten by the British Columbia Ministry of Education. Even though a departmental examination, particularly one that is designed specifically to test for a knowledge of content, may inhibit an instructor who intends to develop the mind (thinking skills) and character (moral development) of his/her students, given that the teacher is responsible for fifty per cent of the course content and grade, he/she could organize each lesson so that both a knowledge of content and the more 'loftier' aims could be realized within the two hour classroom period. For example, the teacher might spend the first hour dealing with the topic in a didactic manner, (which would deal adequately with content, facts, data, etc.) and the second hour using either an inquiry approach (which would develop such cognitive skills as logical reasoning, research techniques, and so on) or an issues-oriented approach, (which could facilitate normative reasoning skills).

b) Advanced Level

The three advanced level courses are much like the beginners courses in that they are organized in a linear fashion based on some provisions for progressive development and their students are required to write the British Columbia Departmental examination. However they differ in the type of academic skills learned, the difficulty level of the course content, and in the amount of focus placed upon the various instructional techniques. Simply stated, Expository instruction will play a less important role at the advanced level than it did at the beginners level. While course content and the reinforcement of basic skills are important, the former can be met by an Inquiry approach and the latter should have been met either by other basic skill development courses or by the beginners component of this program.

Principles of Program

As was noted earlier, the focus of this thesis is on academic education at the secondary level. Although the proposed education program incorporates four academic subject areas, Mathematics, Science, English and Social Studies, the following discussion of the principles of the program will be undertaken with a focus on Social Studies. Social Studies is chosen because my expertise lay with this subject area as opposed to the other disciplines.

The program is guided by the following principles:

1. The program focuses on being a liberal, academic education program.

2. The program incorporates a variety of courses and instructors.
3. The program has two component parts: beginners and advanced.
4. The program, courses and lessons are generally organized in a linear fashion based on a logical progression for development.
5. The content of each subject area will follow the guidelines established by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.
6. The program will develop the Basic skills, i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and computing, to a senior secondary level.
7. The program will develop critical thinking skills.
8. The program will use a variety of teaching strategies or approaches.

Principle One: The program focuses on liberal, academic education.

Harrington (1977-cited in Duguid, 1984, p. 17), defines a liberal education as, "...the organized study of some part of the humanities or arts, or the social or natural sciences, having as its purpose the cultural and intellectual rather than the occupational improvement of the individual." Thus a liberal, academic education program, via academic courses in the humanities, arts, natural and social sciences, attempts to develop the cultural and intellectual skills rather than just simply the vocational skills needed to attain employment.

Also, apart from developing the intellect, liberal education clearly attempts to bridge the gap between thought and conduct to the end of the formation of a positive character in the student. Duguid (1984, p. 15) states that, "A liberal education,...., can affect both thought and conduct and is concerned with the formation of character as well as the development of the intellect." This is necessary for as Duguid (Ibid., p. 14) warns us:

Given the unique qualities of the students, education must attack the core of the problem. It should not merely produce educated criminals. It must be a civilizing experience, which stretches existing thinking and encourages a re-evaluation of values.

Such academic courses as Mathematics, Science, History and English are suited for realizing these aims because the former two disciplines are effective tools for logical thought and the latter two are broad based disciplines that develop critical thinking or cognitive skills that, "...address themselves directly to the problems of egocentricity and impulsiveness...key factors in the decision-making patterns of criminals (Duguid, 1981, p. 10)."

Principle Two: The program incorporates a variety of courses and instructors.

The program has a variety of courses and instructors. The advantage of this is that it offers, "...a wide range of vehicles for the delivery of ideas (Duguid, 1981, p. 10)." Furthermore, because the student, "takes several courses at a time over several terms, interacting with different instructors and with different groups of students,...no one course or instructor is the key to the development process (Ibid., 1981, p. 10)." As such, "the education program as a whole is responsible for whatever development takes place and the primary cause or change agent may vary with each student in the program (Ibid., 1981, p. 10)."

Principle Three: The program has two component parts: beginners and advanced level.

As was mentioned earlier, this program will have two component parts; beginners and advanced level. The major differences between the two levels are in the types of academic skills taught and the type and difficulty

level of the course content or subject matter presented the students.

Furthermore, didactic instruction may be used at more regular intervals at the beginners level than at the advanced level. Although the particular topic, concept, and so on, and the academic abilities of the students should determine to what extent didactic instruction will be necessary at either level.

The reason that the terms 'beginners' and 'advanced' are used instead of grades ten, eleven or twelve is because the courses within each component have been modified and as such are not exactly like their counterparts in the regular high school. While the courses within these two components are similar to their regular high school counterparts in that they satisfy the British Columbia Ministry of Education guidelines, i.e. focus on similar academic skills development, apply the same course content, and so on, they are different in that they deal specifically with adult learners, the operational hours and length of each course has been modified for suitability in a Federal penal institution and a critical thinking component has been added to each course. More will be said about the latter difference elsewhere in this thesis.

Principle Four: The program, courses and lessons are generally organized in a linear fashion based on a logical progression for development.

Generally, all facets of the program are organized in keeping with the notion that learning takes place at successive gradations of complexity. The developmental process starts on the first day a student takes a beginners level course and should reach its pinnacle when he/she has completed all of the beginners and advanced level courses. Like pieces to

a puzzle, each successive lesson should build upon the themes, problems, concepts, ideas, or topics that were introduced in the preceding lessons. In this way the student is either presented with (didactic instruction) or helps discover (Inquiry approach) all the pieces of the puzzle. Although the former, didactic approach, may be of value in the early stages of the beginners level courses or to introduce or deal with some topics, ideas, etc., it should have limited use, and where possible it should be replaced completely by the Inquiry approach. This is particularly true if one aim of the lesson(s) is to not only develop extrinsic educational outcomes, i.e. students will be able to define and analyze the term 'democracy' and interpret the ideas behind and practices of democracy, but to develop intrinsic education outcomes, i.e. develop the student's mind and character, as well.

Principle Five: The content of each subject area will follow the guidelines established by the British Columbia Ministry of Education.

This program will follow the curriculum guidelines that have been established by the Ministry of Education. One major reason for this choice is that these guidelines promote the principle that learning takes place at gradations of complexity. Another reason is that it deals adequately with most of the aims/goals of this proposed program. And lastly, any program that adheres to these guidelines would be likely to be granted accreditation by the Ministry and institutions of higher learning.

Principle Six: The program will develop the Basic skills, i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and computing, to a senior secondary level.

A major aim of this program is the development of the basic skills to the senior secondary level. Even though it will not be easy given the previously discussed inhibitors, the aim can be achieved if the teacher(s) follows the Ministry of Education curriculum guidelines, make a concerted effort to establish a classroom atmosphere that is conducive to developing these skills, and help, with the aid of the students, design and promote activities that will develop the skills, i.e. weekly debates, class journals, a class newspaper or magazine, weekly speeches, and so on. Principle Seven: The program will develop critical thinking skills.

One aim of this program is to develop a student who can think critically. Ennis (1984, p. 1) defines thinking critically as, "...reasonably going about deciding what to believe or do." Thus a critically thinking student is characterized as one who holds rational beliefs and makes rational decisions. In order to realize rational beliefs and make rational decisions a student must have developed certain competencies or abilities, i.e. determining appropriate meanings, analyzing arguments, recognizing fallacies, and so on, and have certain tendencies, i.e. open-mindedness, take or change a position when the evidence and reasons are sufficient to do so, seek reasons, and take into account the total situation (Ibid., 1984, pp. 1-6).

The development of critical thinking is also an aim of the British Columbia Ministry of Education. While a survey of the Ministry's curriculum guides reveals the fact that critical thinking is indeed included, as can best be determined, that ideal is to be reached or will emerge through a process of 'osmosis'. This fact is quite evident in the

Social Studies curriculum guide where there are no topics focused specifically on the teaching or development of critical thinking skills. (British Columbia Ministry of Education Social Studies Curriculum Guide, 1984).

Despite the need for more research pertaining to the effectiveness of the approach identified by the Ministry of Education in British Columbia, recent evidence suggests that a, "mastery of thinking skills does not automatically emerge from the standard curriculum. (Focus, 1984, p. 6)." Therefore, given that this program is based upon such a standard curriculum, (although modified for suitability in a Federal penal institution), it would seem appropriate to introduce a more robust approach.

Prior to offering an alternative approach, it is imperative that some reasons are given to justify the ideal of critical thinking. Siegel (1980) identifies three such reasons. The first has to do with the manner of teaching. Siegel (1980, p. 13) argues that a teachers, "manner ought to accord with the critical manner." Such an approach has built into it a facet which requires the teacher to, "...treat all persons, including students, with the respect due them as persons having, from the moral point of view, human worth (Ibid., 1980, p. 15)."

Second, by organizing educational activities according to the dictates of critical thinking, the student becomes an individual who, "...looks for evidence, seeks and scrutinizes alternatives, and is critical of their own ideas as well as others (Scheffler, 1973-cited in Siegel, 1980, p. 16)." Thus the student becomes a self-sufficient thinker which should 'free'

him/her, "...from the unwarranted control of unjustified beliefs, unsupported attitudes, and paucity of abilities which can prevent that person from competently taking charge of his or her own life (Siegel, 1980, p. 16)."

And lastly, the development of critical thinking is necessary if education is largely a matter of initiating students into the rational traditions, i.e. science, literature, history, the arts, mathematics and so on, and if, "...such initiation consists in part in getting the students to appreciate the standards of rationality which govern the assessment of reasons (and so properly judge) in each tradition...(Ibid, 1980, p. 17)." Siegel (Ibid., p. 17) continues:

Critical thinking,...,recognizes the importance of getting students to understand and appreciate the role of reasons in rational endeavour, and of developing in students those traits, attitudes, and dispositions which encourage the seeking of reasons for grounding judgement. Understanding the role of reasons in the several rational traditions is crucial to being successfully initiated into those traditions.

A sound approach would directly incorporate critical thinking instruction within the subject matter area. Critical thinking would thus become an integral facet of most classroom activities. Furthermore, this approach would develop those abilities needed for a person to think critically. All the above would apply to classroom activities at both the advanced and beginners levels. This strategy is clearly superior to one that attempts to develop critical thinking through a process of 'osmosis'.

One reason for its superiority is, as has been noted above, that the development of critical thinking would no longer be left to chance. And

another reason is that it allows the classroom teacher the liberty, (although that liberty is subject to the particular content being dealt with, the dispositions, attitudes, as well as, the abilities or capabilities of the student, and the numerous inhibitors to education in prison), to teach or develop critical thinking in a variety of ways.

Furthermore, this approach would provide the classroom teacher with the freedom to teach or develop critical thinking in either, "the 'weak sense'--providing student with only the technical skills of philosophical inquiry," or in the "strong sense'--making students aware of the egocentric proclivities that distort the reasoning of everyone including themselves. (Focus, 1984, p. 5)". Instruction in the 'strong sense' is necessary if one wants to avoid the major pitfall of sophistry which Paul (1983, pp. 2-3) defines as:

the student unwittingly learns to use critical concepts and techniques to maintain his most deep-seated prejudices and irrational habits of thought by masking them in more "rational" form and by developing some facility in putting his opponent on the defensive.

Thus the approach to implementing critical thinking in the classroom is flexible and can take into account the content being covered, the student's knowledge and abilities and the instructor's teaching style.

Principle Eight: The program will use a variety of teaching strategies and approaches.

First, this principle satisfies the Ministry of Education guidelines. Second, it takes into account the many inhibitors to education in prison. For example, should a teacher want to apply an Inquiry approach for dealing with a particular topic, problem, concept, or idea, but the environment of

the particular institution is not conducive because of a lack of freedom, he/she would, because of this open-ended principle, have the option to either modify the Inquiry approach (a common practice among educators) or use an alternative approach. Thus the teacher would not have to abandon or eliminate a particular topic because he/she was locked into a particular approach.

Third, this principle gives classroom teachers the latitude to take into account the attitudes and dispositions of their students. For example, if a teacher, who was locked into a Expository approach, were to try such an approach on students who needed to express opinions and thrived on research, the results would be less than desirable.

And lastly, as was noted earlier, this principle allows classroom teachers the flexibility to alter their approach to deal adequately with a particular topic area.

CONCLUSION

In this thesis I have argued that the present secondary program (General Equivalency Diploma Program) is inadequate. It is inadequate for the following reasons: it is simply a battery of five content area tests; it is not worthwhile for its own sake; it is merely 'training' or to be more accurate 'drilling' and not education; its substance of each test is not thought and ideas; it is not structured in such a way as to promote understanding and a 'cognitive perspective'; it is not flexible enough to take into account the capabilities of some inmates; and it does not adequately prepare the student for post-secondary education.

Therefore an alternative secondary education program is needed in the Federal penitentiary system of British Columbia. However, to provide an alternative requires that inhibitors be noted. These were identified as: the tensions between staff and inmate; the actions of correctional officers, managers and staff; the lack of training and understanding of some teachers; the unstable and tension filled prison environment and atmosphere; an unclear picture of what education would do for the inmate; the numerous alternatives to education; the lack of proper facilities and study space; the Federal bureaucracy; prison authorities having four very questionable assumptions about the educational process; some inmates' hostility towards any educational program; and lastly, economics.

Despite all these inhibitors, it was noted that the University of Victoria/Simon Fraser University program has been able to operate with some success within four British Columbia prisons. As such, these inhibitors

can be overcome to an extent that would not make impossible the design and implementation of the proposed academic education program

The proposed program would be guided by the following: the program focuses on being a liberal, academic education program; the program incorporates a variety of courses and instructors; the program has two component parts: beginners and advanced; the program, courses and lessons are generally organized in a linear fashion based on a logical progression for development; the content of each subject area will follow the guidelines established by the British Columbia Ministry of Education; the program will develop the basic skills, i.e. reading, writing, speaking, and computing, to a senior secondary level; the program will develop critical thinking skills; and, the program will use a variety of teaching strategies or approaches.

Having argued that these guidelines are defensible the next step would be the development of the specifics of the program. This would entail research into the following sorts of questions:

1. In each of the disciplines recognized as academic what knowledge and skills are most appropriate at the beginners and advanced levels?;
2. What knowledge and skills are required for entry into the program?;
3. What would be the most appropriate teaching techniques for inmate learners?;
4. In what capacity would the G.E.D. fit into this new program?;
and,
5. How can critical thinking skills be incorporated into academic education programs?

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