HIDING HOT TOPICS:
SCIENCE, SEX AND SCHOOLING IN BRITISH COLUMBIA, 1910-1916.

by

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Abstract

Between the years 1910-1916, the Vancouver Medical Association was responsible for designing a sex education program for the British Columbia Public School System. Through the course of the committee’s work, the Vancouver Medical Association Sex Hygiene Committee (VMASHC) familiarised themselves with the teachings of the Sex Hygiene movement. The program which they recommend for implementation can be seen as representative of the second stage of North American sex education which advocated the teaching of sex education from the standpoint of biology. The VMASHC can be seen as a pioneer in the effort to teach sex education within Canadian schooling. Considerable time is spent contextualizing and explaining the impetus for the creating the first sex education program in British Columbia. The historical conditions and constraints involved in the birth of sex education are considered. It is argued that the social and political climate of early Vancouver played a direct role in influencing the VMASHC’s final creation of what they called “a new line” of sex education in B.C.
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Introduction

An April 16th, 1916 report from the Sex Hygiene Committee of the Vancouver, B.C., Medical Association declared that “...so far as can be ascertained, this is the first city in Canada to give any attention to the teaching of Sex Hygiene” (Vancouver City Archives). The report gives an overview of the work and recommendations of a committee of three Vancouver doctors who, in 1911, were assigned the task by the Vancouver School Board of creating a series of lectures on ‘Sex Hygiene” to be used in the British Columbia public school system (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912). One argument put forth in the report, which highlights the doctors’ view of themselves as pioneers in the delivery of sex education in Canada, reads:

There appears to be an individual attempt here and there throughout the United States, to teach this subject in the School, but so little has been done, that we have practically been compelled to strike out a new line for ourselves (Vancouver City Archives, 1916).

Angus McLaren (1997) in a brief mention of this committee’s work describes the practical outcome of the ‘line’ of sex education they developed. He suggests the committee was responsible for adding to the school system: “A few special lectures on human biology” which “followed a regular science course” (p. 70). He suggests that these lectures “appeared to have been very discreet” (ibid). Christabelle Sethna (1996) has recently characterised this same committee’s achievements as indicative of the wariness of the British Columbia public school system to deal with sex education. She argues that it was Ontario which boldly took the lead in implementing sex education.

1 The report exists as written into the 1913 minutes of the Sex Hygiene Committee of the Vancouver Medical Association which are held in the Vancouver Medical Association Archives.
programs in Canada (p. 199). Her excellent work analysing the history of sex education in Ontario from 1900-1950 (1995) creates an awareness of the dearth of sources which deal with the topic in British Columbia.

In my thesis I focus on what is claimed to be one of Canada's earliest sex education attempts. While I don't attempt a complete history of the sex instruction of children in B.C. public schools, my interest concerns the social impetus which led to the decision to create a public school program of sex hygiene in the first place. Further, I am interested in understanding the logic behind the committee's proposed program, and in learning about what influences shaped this logic. Overall, my work reflects my general curiosity regarding the social and cultural context in which this report was produced. I would like to investigate how social and cultural factors, both generally and within the context of early twentieth century schooling, encouraged or prevented different approaches to sex education. I intend to find an answer to why the committee, as stated in the 1916 report, chose the exclusive standpoint of biology from which to teach sex education.

Before further introducing my topic, I would like to explain briefly the series of events which lead to my interest in this subject, for I feel this will help explain the overall organization and general approach of my thesis.
Arriving at a Topic: Discovering an Interest in Old and New Debates over the Contested Relationship between Sexuality, Morality and Schooling.

I became interested in the history of sex education in B.C. indirectly because of a heated debate which broke out on April 24, 1997 when the Surrey School Board passed a resolution which banned three books used as learning resources by elementary school teacher James Chamberlain for kindergarten and grade one students. The books were banned because they depicted children with same-sex parents. As a lesbian mother with a child in the elementary school system of Vancouver, I was immediately interested in the loud public debates which followed this incident. Broadly, the main debate concerned civil liberties and human rights on the one side, and parental rights and the role of an elected school board on the other. The controversy raised many questions over what constitutes legitimate curriculum and subject material to be used in the classroom, and who should be involved in making decisions over what kind of material is appropriate for children’s educational use.

Having used two of the books with my own son, I became concerned with this attempt to remove the topic of homosexuality from the school system by the censoring of texts. Following the logic argued by the Surrey School Board, I realised that the content of my son’s assignments could be potentially censorable. Would his stories of himself and his two mothers’ trip to the Imax theatre be material fit to ban in the eyes of the Surrey School Board? Would the board’s ideas spread to neighboring Vancouver where I lived? Clearly, the banned books, like my son’s assignments, were

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2 The books are: *Asha's Mums* by Rosamund Elwin and Michele Paulse, *One Dad Two Dads Brown Dad Blue Dads* by Johnny Valentine and *Belinda's Bouquet* by Leslea Newman.
representations of real, primary familial relationships in which many students, including my own child, were involved. The battle went deeper than three text books.

As time passed, the debate predictably went on to include more general issues relating to sexuality and schooling. The Surrey School Board publicly expressed an interest in trying to remove anything to do with sexuality from the school system, arguing that the home was the proper place for sexuality to be dealt with (Brook, 1998 p. 46). Chair of the Surrey School Board, Robert Pickering, "unfolded... a holy war" as he "made clear his antipathy to a B.C. Teachers Federation proposal to develop an anti-homophobia program for the province's schools"(p. 46). Pickering also expressed disdain for sex education. His board cut back the existing sex education program in Surrey, banned Planned Parenthood from the schools, and prevented public health nurses from discussing sexually transmitted diseases in Surrey classrooms (ibid).3

These actions were of particular interest to me given my relatively recent experience in developing community based sex education programs designed for the prevention of HIV/AIDS in Kelowna, British Columbia.4 As a community-based educator I was just as aware of arguments against school and community sex education efforts as I was about the dire need to get preventative information out to youth in the face of a medical emergency of pandemic proportions ("Vancouver, a city with everything, finds it has AIDS too," 1997).

While my curiosity in the general topic of sex education and issues concerning sexuality and schooling may have come out of my family and job-related experiences, it

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3 For a comprehensive history of the Surrey affair see http://www.lesbigay.com/bigots
4 From 1993-1995 I worked for the Kelowna and Area Aids Education, Resource and Support Society (KARES) as the Program Coordinator and Supervisor of the “Condom Cops” HIV/AIDS Prevention Program.
was my academic studies in the sociology of education, history, cultural theory, and sexuality which inspired my historical commitment to the topic. I was particularly intrigued by how 'science' and 'morality' were framed in the course of the debates and began to wonder about their historic role in the shaping of sex education in the province. My particular concern with academic issues of 'objectivity' and value freedom in relation to pedagogy were inspired in part by Max Weber's writing (1946) on the subject, as well as more recent feminist debates on the topic (Harding, 1991; Alcoff, 1991). My knowledge in this area led me to see that both sides' claim to fairness and objectivity in the classroom begged analysis. Christian fundamentalists, including Surrey School Board chair, Pickering, accused gay rights organizations of advocating that the school be a vehicle for the promotion of what they called the "lifestyle" of homosexuality, and described anti-censorship arguments as "a front to recruit children into homosexuality" (Brook, 1998). In response, some parents and gay rights opposition argued that it was in fact the Surrey School Board who wanted to use the classroom as a pulpit for preaching a Right-wing, Christian fundamentalist agenda. This latter argument proved crucial to the final court decision which settled the matter in 1998.

On December 16th 1998, Honorable Madam Justice Saunders, in the Supreme Court of British Columbia, ruled that the Surrey School board had indeed made the decision to ban the books based on religious principles. The court ruled that given that The School Act prevents an "overt religious influence in the conduct of the schools," the resolution banning the three books had to be "quashed" (1998, Section 108). After careful consideration, the court reaffirmed the secular nature of the British Columbia
school system. The ruling highlighted the principle that the social function carried out by the school, an institution publicly funded by the state, was constitutionally different from that carried out by the church. In short, freedom of religion was said to include freedom from religion where the schools are concerned (Section 101). While this Supreme Court decision may have quelled the particular debate over the controversial book banning, many issues with respect to schooling, sexuality, and morality remain a source of contention. Questions regarding the role of parents, the school, the school board etc., in dealing with these issues remain unanswered for many who were involved in the discussion.

With some of these issues in mind, I became interested in how topics relating to sexuality, and specifically sex education, had been dealt with in the history of the B.C. public school system. The issues pertaining to homosexuality in the classroom seemed to be a modern extension of older controversies. My initial instinct or hypothesis was that despite the long standing “secular” status of the public school system, morality and Christian morality had historically informed the treatment of issues relating to sexuality. I had, however, no real evidence to argue this point. From my own experience within the British Columbia public school system, I was aware that while there was an attempt to teach the topic of sex education from a “facts of life” point of view, the particular configuration of facts seemed guided by a strong moral agenda which did not support non-heterosexualities. Certainly, I could not characterize the classroom environment where I learned some facts related to sexuality as “value-free” even though science and not religion had been the primary perspective from which issues of sexuality were taught. Also, having had my own child directly before my
province high school exams, I knew that my knowledge of sex education was too little, too late!

My specific focus developed when I read the 1916 Report of the Sex Hygiene Committee of the Vancouver Medical Association. This report appeared to be relevant to my crude hypothesis in that it seemed to capture the desire on the part of the School Board and the Committee to use objective science (in the teaching of sex education) for an openly stated moral agenda— the curtailing of prostitution, known as the "social evil." Sex education was to be used as a tool designed to prevent prostitution and lessen the devastating effects of venereal disease associated with it (Vancouver Medical Association 1912). Having discovered this apparent contradiction, a more thorough reading of the report indicated that the issues and recommendations it raised were not to be fully understood without historical background. Indeed, the outdated terms used in the 1916 report shed light on the unexplained relationship between the Vancouver Medical Association, sex education, the Vancouver School Board, and the larger British Columbia Public School System.

In choosing to write a historical thesis about the origins of sex education in the province I found myself up against many challenges. Certainly, working in the Pre-WWI period was difficult because at the start of my graduate studies I had only a basic understanding of provincial history, and my knowledge of the early educational system in early 20th century B.C. was sketchy. While general information on both topics was available, detailed or critical analysis of early sex educational efforts in British Columbia simply did not exist. I could locate no more than a few lines of commentary on the subject in a handful of sources (McLaren 1990; Sethna 1996; Milham 1998). Also, much
of the educational history of the province assumes the dominance and leadership of central Canada over early education in B.C. (Thomson 1999), yet this offered no insight into my topic. The reality was that early sex education efforts in Ontario of the period came from sources in the purity movements (Sethna 1990) whereas this was not the case in British Columbia, possibly for reasons relating to the secular nature of the public school system. Furthermore, glancing though the minutes of the Sex Hygiene Committee it was clear that this group of local doctors relied almost exclusively on American sources: they turned South of the border and not to central or eastern Canada for direction.

Finally, while I wanted to write a historical thesis, writing history was not my ultimate goal. My interests were part historical and part theoretical. From the beginning, I was inspired by Max Weber’s (1906) understanding of history as being necessarily theoretical in the sense that history making is a constructive process. Further, Weber makes clear that the writing of history involves many choices on the level of the selection and presentation of material. Under his influence, I knew my goal would not be the construction of the ‘real’ history of sex education in this province (Weber, 1906/1978). Because of these issues I turned to ideas and methods taken from within the approach of historical sociology which encourages an interdisciplinary framework (Abrams, 1982 p. 8). This encouragement helps explain my somewhat eclectic mix of method and theory which borrows from classical sources such as Max Weber and Erving Goffman, as well as contemporary contributions from cultural geography, the sociology of science, and feminist theory. Also, my inspiration to write on this topic is indebted to the late French philosopher, Michel Foucault.
According to historical sociologist Philip Abrams (1982), history is essential to the discipline of sociology in that it can help “answer urgent questions about why the world is the way it is” and “why particular men and women make the particular choices they do and why they succeed or fail in their projects” (p. 8). To be clear, historical sociology is not just background and context; rather, it treats “what people do in the present as a struggle to create a future out of the past” (ibid). Historical sociology sees that “the past is not just the womb of the present but the only raw material out of which the present can be constructed” (ibid). By highlighting particular and varying features of social structures and patterns, historical sociology offers “possibilities for understanding how past patterns and alternative trajectories might be relevant or irrelevant, for present choices” (Scokpol, 1993 p. 17).

Critical historical sociology invites us to assess the taken forgrantedness or naturalism of practices or institutions and discover the ideological nature of common sense understandings. Certainly, in the case of the Surrey School Board, for example, much of the debate never raised the fact that heterosexuality was practically iconised in elementary schools around the province. Historical studies around sexuality (Vance, 1984; Weeks, 1986; D’Emilio & Freedman, 1988; Adams, L., 1997) have dislodged common sense understandings of heterosexuality as “natural” and “normal.”

Foucault’s insights on history and sexuality have also argued this point. Foucault observes that a

Recourse to history...is meaningful to the extent that history serves to show how that-which- has not always been; i.e. that the things which seem most evident to us, are always formed in the confluence of encounters and changes, during the course of precarious and fragile history (1990, p. 37).
Foucault’s work provides a considerable amount of evidence in *The Use of Pleasure* (1990), which illustrates his argument put forth in *The History of Sexuality* (1978) that no particular sexual practice is “natural” or untouched by culture. Foucault’s investigations into how relationships between power and knowledge have operated in particular institutions to help shape sexual identity are relevant to my own work studying schooling and its historical role in the regulation of sexuality. Broadly following his method laid out in the *Archaeology of Knowledge* (1997) and interested in his approach to the psychiatry, biology, linguistics, and economics laid out in *The Order of Things* (1994), I became interested in how the subject of sex education evolved and took the forms it did. How was sex education, as a field of study, to be created, defined, and implemented? Furthermore, how would this subject be involved in the creation of sexual identity and the regulation of sexuality? While I have chosen not to work extensively with Foucault in the body of my thesis, I must credit some of his ideas in shaping the questions I pursued in the course of my research.

Lastly, before introducing the substance of my three chapters, I would also like to acknowledge my debt to historical geographic work which integrates physical, social, economic, historical, and environmental factors in its analysis. I have appreciated the work and direction of Graeme Wynn and Timothy Oke (1992) whose historical look at Vancouver has deliberately sought a broader view by relying on an interdisciplinary approach. Again, from the perspective of historical sociology, it is “a mistake to tie sociology down to any one epistemological, theoretical or methodological orientation;” instead, fruitful eclecticism is desired (Skocpol 361). Following this advice, I have turned to cultural geography. For instance, Lawrence Knopp’s “Sexuality and Urban Space: A framework for analysis” (1995) has been a key source. Commenting on the
relationship of industrialisation, urbanism, and sexuality, Knopp inspired my attempt to look at how the physical proximity of brothels to schools prompted the Vancouver School Board to create educational programs to teach children that what was going on next door was not model behavior. Also, in light of work done by Gordon Brent Ingram, Anne-Marie Bouthillette, and Yolanda Retter on connections between place and sexuality (Ingram, Bouthilette, & Retter, 1997), I find it impossible to look at issues relating to the history of sexuality in Vancouver without taking into account the spatial structures and sexual codings of the city.

Chapter one reflects the influence of historical sociology and cultural geography. Here I paint a general picture of the social and cultural milieu of Vancouver’s so-called ‘Golden Years’ (1900-1916) - the time frame in which early sex education was introduced. In painting this picture I am interested broadly in identifying points of social and cultural restraint as well as junctures of possibility in the construction of a sex education program. I wanted to demonstrate why, for example, the doctors of the Vancouver Medical Association Sex Hygiene Committee (VMASHC) would not have turned to the traditions of the lower mainland’s First Nations, such as the Cowichan, Musqueam or Kwantlen, for advice on sex education. Nor would they have entertained any suggestion that the local prostitutes come in and share their expertise on the subject. These somewhat laughable suggestions do emphasize the importance of social context. As one way of exploring this context I have chosen to use an ideal typical framework whereby I work with the term cosmopolitanism in relation to early Vancouver. To be clear, I am not arguing that cosmopolitanism is especially relevant for understanding the topic of sex education in early British Columbia. Instead, I find it useful as a tool which lends itself to helping explain and describe aspects of the social
and cultural landscape which assist me in understanding the original impetus to create a sex education program in B.C..

My second chapter begins by identifying a conflict which occurred during Vancouver's city building era- a conflict which is described in Robert A.J. McDonald (1996) in his recent history of early Vancouver. The conflict McDonald elucidates has a spatial element. In short he looks at how Vancouver's rapid urban development, along with incoming ideologies about the kind of city Vancouver should become, spurred a conflict between the sexual recreation associated with the city's roots as a mill town, and the lifestyle of incoming families whose visions of the city's future had little room for the carryings on of the rough laborer. In the first part of my second chapter I argue that the impetus to create a sex education program can be traced to this conflict. In the second half of my chapter I explore the historical and social climate of the school in order to raise questions about how the environment of the school itself allowed for certain kinds of sex education and precluded others. In particular, I look at the relevance and meaning of non-sectarianism. On one hand, the Vancouver Medical Association Sex Hygiene Committee (VMASHC) rejected blatantly Christian approaches to sex education which were popular in Ontario. However, on the other hand, Christian moralism never disappeared from the school system. Finally, in my second chapter I investigate how schools in early Vancouver were influenced by ideas coming out of the Progressive Movement which saw education as a key vehicle for implementing social change.

In my final chapter I engage in an in-depth analysis of sources which the VMASHC was exposed to in the process of developing their recommendations for their 1916 report. Broadly, it is my argument that without a thorough investigation of the
minutes which record the weekly business and discussions of the committee, the work of this committee cannot be fully understood. Importantly, the minutes suggest that the final report in 1916 was a carefully constructed document which was created to pass through and gain the approval of the Minister of Education. In this chapter I seek to discover the impact of political considerations on the final shape of the report.

Secondly, I identify the nature of the varying approaches to sex education which the doctors had access to through the literature they ordered. Also, using the minutes as a source of clues, I formulate an hypothesis as to why the committee clung so firmly to biology and rejected a range of possible puritanical approaches. Further, I will demonstrate the overwhelmingly American influence on the committee and suggest that British Columbia was indeed ahead of Ontario with regards to progress in implementing sex education.

My thesis is an attempt to redress the gap of knowledge which exists concerning the history of sex education in British Columbia. It is my hope that this contribution will incite more research into the understudied area of the complicated relationship between the history of schooling in British Columbia and sexuality. Like Canadian historian Steven Maynard (1999), I remain convinced that the historical study of sexuality is crucial to the overall understanding of the processes of Canadian state formation. Certainly, the school system has had a strong historical role in creating model Canadian citizens. Also, like Maynard, I believe the goal of Canadian history "...should not be to inculcate citizens with one particular view of the nation's past, but to foster critical, historical thinking about whatever turns you on" (p. 15).
Chapter I: Setting the Scene: Exploring the Social Landscape of Cosmopolitan Vancouver 1900-1916

Introduction

Much has been said about the remarkable growth of Vancouver during what many cast as its Golden Years – from 1900 until the outbreak of W.W.I. There are many excellent histories describing Vancouver’s political, economic, social, and cultural life during this time. Chief among these is Robert McDonald’s (1996) recent study Making Vancouver: 1863-1913. Not surprisingly, however, there has been relatively little written about the sexual and emotional relationships held by the many individuals who populated Vancouver in this same period. Still less has been said concerning the impact of rapid city growth on the sexual landscape of the Burrard Inlet area. The history of sexuality in Vancouver during its Golden Years is understudied to say the least. Generally, as sexuality is, of course, in part a product of the social world, and shaped by the ideological and institutional features of society, the history of sexuality cannot be studied in isolation. In this first chapter, I want to colour sexuality back into conventional histories of Vancouver which generally omit this important topic. Given the limited scope of my current project, it is not my desire to write a comprehensive ‘history of sexuality’ in Vancouver; my ambitions are much less grand. Instead, I want to focus on the origins of sex education within the British Columbia Public School System between 1910-1916, a period which represents the duration of the Vancouver Medical Association’s Sex Hygiene committee’s work developing what they called “a new line” of sex education for the province.

In this chapter I provide the historical background I consider necessary for understanding the nature of the origins of sex education in Vancouver. First, my
intention is to paint a general impression of Vancouver during its Golden Years by writing a largely descriptive exposition designed as an orientation to the period. Second, I discuss briefly some methodological issues relating to my project. Third, I describe the social and cultural landscape of the city by working within a Weberian framework whereby I use the concept of the cosmopolitan as an ideal typical tool to highlight certain aspects of sexuality in early Vancouver. I highlight the relevance of class, race, and gender to expressions of sexuality in the province. This discussion leads into my second chapter which works further toward establishing links between the social and cultural landscape of early Vancouver, sexuality, and schooling. These two chapters both serve to set the stage for the final chapter which details the story of the first attempt to introduce a sex education program in the provincial school system.

A Note on Style

I have chosen to work with a period of time in which Vancouver underwent enormous change. The nature, rate, and scope of this change is key to understanding the motivation of certain individuals and groups to implement sex education within the public schools of Vancouver. For this reason, what follows is my attempt to 'set the stage,' so to speak, which allows for subsequent analysis around the specifics of my topic. I have chosen to describe the city using a style of writing which fashions a picture of the city. It is my wish that the picture I paint be adequate, not complete or all encompassing. As I go through this descriptive process, I make every effort to leave a trail of references which lead to other sources which can be used to elaborate on the many features, issues, events, figures, and aspects of Vancouver which I address in passing. In this process of setting a scene, I have chosen to be flexible in my style of
writing and have also purposely included a number of strategic sources from the genres of poetry, fiction and drama as well as from general histories of Vancouver. I have chosen to include excerpts from these different genres to create a feeling for early twentieth century Vancouver. The sources do not form the basis of analysis but rather exist for their descriptive and aesthetic effect. These excerpts will appear in italics at the beginning of each sub section. In most cases, excerpts have been taken from within my time frame of study, in many cases they come from local, Vancouver sources, and in all cases they convey an image, message, appeal, or effect which I feel academic writing cannot capture.

**Part I: Describing Vancouver’s coming of age: A small town goes big on imagination and change**

*Like so many other Maritimers who moved to the West Coast, he [father] became a real Vancouver booster. He first visited the city in the late eighties when Stanley Park, he said, was still being referred to as the Coal Peninsula. Mother, who also thought Vancouver was the best place in the world to live, would tell us that when she first met father down in Washington, he told her that he was going to take her to Vancouver in British Columbia – a city that would someday be bigger than San Francisco and even more beautiful.*

(Hugh Palmer, *Circumnavigating Father*, 1990)

*...imagined geographies are as important as the material realities of population growth and areal expansion to understanding the story of Vancouver...*  
(Graeme Wynn and Timothy Oke (eds.) *Vancouver and Its Region, 1992*)

*There are many stories of Vancouver. There are many ways of telling these stories (Rachael Lynch, Interview 1999).*

If one thing is certain, at the turn of the 20th century, Vancouver was on a journey of rapid growth. The voyage from mill town to metropolis occurred in a remarkably short

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1 Hugh Palmer, *Circumnavigating Father* (Surrey: Hannock House 1990), 68. Hugh Palmer is the son of a pioneer Vancouver family and *Circumnavigating Father* is a portrait of his family and their experiences in early Vancouver.
period of time. There is no one story to tell about this development. As Graeme Wynn (1992) writes

The intricate web of reality [of early Vancouver] must be broken apart and its pieces examined systematically in order to understand how and why Vancouver developed as it did. Only pointed inquiry will reveal the physical and human consequences of urban expansion and uncover the mix of ideas, ambitions, possibilities, and constraints that gave form to the city as well as meaning to the lives of its inhabitants (p. 71).

Some stories of Vancouver’s development have taken priority over others. Of the many early Vancouverites who built this city, only a relative few have had their contributions and stories recorded. In Part I of this chapter, I offer a glimpse of some of the main themes which occur in the diverse range of historical writing on Vancouver’s Golden Years. These themes include population growth, urban development, modernisation, social and cultural dynamics, and economic and political realities. In this section I want to draw particular attention to the modernising process the city underwent in its early years while raising the point that this process, or more correctly, processes, were hardly organic; instead, they were guided by hegemonic ideas, institutions, and capacities. Within this context, the origins of sex education can be more easily queried: why was sex education even being discussed? Who was made responsible for creating it? And, what were the conditions of its origins? Answering these queries allows for an exploration in subsequent chapters of why sex education took the particular shape that it did.

To begin, it is frequently said that at the turn of the 20th century, Vancouver, British Columbia was bursting with life. The population was quite simply, exploding.

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During the first ten years of this century, the population nearly quadrupled: “by every statistical measure the city grew rapidly” (Roy, 1980).³ To give an example of this dynamic population growth, at the time of Vancouver’s incorporation in 1886, there were just over 1000 residents in the Vancouver area, by 1911 there were over 120,000 Vancouverites (Wynn & Oke, 1992 p. 69). Before the outbreak of W.W.I. Vancouver had become not only the largest urban centre of the province, but also the fourth largest city in Canada. In the process Vancouver displaced Victoria as the province’s leading city although the latter remained the provincial capital (McDonald, R, 1996).

The guidebooks of the day advertised the young, burgeoning Vancouver as an exciting, even thrilling place to be. Vancouver was described as Canada’s ‘romantic Western Gateway’ (Wynn & Oke, 1992) and advertised as a rapidly modernising, beautifully located, seaport city with irresistible vitality, spirit, and zest. One British foreign correspondent described Vancouver as “the seaport of the twentieth century! The Constantinople of the West!” (Ormsby, 1983 p. 95). Not only was Vancouver a seaport, it was also “the Western terminus of the Canadian Pacific Railway, a transcontinental line stretching from the Atlantic to the Pacific” (Vancouver Archives Pamphlet Collection, 1902). Vancouver was said to have “everything: scenery, climate, sea bathing, harbour, pivotal position, youth and energy” (ibid). Vancouver in this first decade was apparently becoming a “charming and dazzling city of action” (ibid).

Vancouver swam in metaphors at this time. One buzzword of the day was sophistication (McKechnie, 1972). The ‘San Francisco of the North’ was emerging as “a city of long streets, big blocks, handsome churches, and elegant villas” (Ormsby, 1983 p. 3).

³ For a visual display of how rapidly Vancouver grew between 1910 and 1911 see Appendix 1.
95). These prospects enticed a diversity of immigrants. Real estate agents and boosters, whose numbers increased from 46 in 1901, to 650 in 1910, swarmed visitors with grand speculations (Roy, 1980 p. 54). After all, Vancouver had “almost everything to be desired in a place of residence.” Not only did Vancouver boast a “splendid location, [and] an inexhaustible supply of pure cold water,” it also offered “civic equipment in the way of schools, libraries, public buildings, pavements etc. — superior, probably, to that of any other city, of equal age, in the world” (Vancouver Archives Pamphlet Collection, 1902).

While some visitors suggested the boosters ought to be “dumped in the sea,” many others bought, built, and stayed. Describing Vancouver at the turn of the century, Margaret Ormsby (1983) writes

Every boat and every train arriving in Vancouver brought distinguished visitors—and what was more important, new settlers. From every direction they came. From Yale and other deserted construction camps drifted engineers, carpenters and common labourers. From Manitoba arrived young English men, many of them graduates from Oxford and Cambridge, who had been “busted” on prairie farms; from Winnipeg, lawyers...from Toronto, Hamilton and London, journalists ...from Brockville, shrewd real-estate men and brokers...from Montreal, officials of the Canadian Pacific Railroad; from the Ottawa Valley and New Brunswick, lumbermen and loggers...from the Maritimes and New England, fishermen and cannerymen; from Philadelphia, businessmen...from San Francisco, capitalists...from Ireland...from England...from Wales...from Germany...from Italy...from China...!

(p. 95).

The list goes on. In short, there are records of men, and to a lesser extent women, coming from all over the world including Hawaii, the Caribbean, all parts of Asia, India, and elsewhere. Clearly, Vancouver was making the trek to becoming a major metropolis in record speed.
The gender composition at the turn of the century was also changing. Vancouver, like all parts of the province, had a skewed gender ratio in favour of men. Going into the twentieth century there were still twice as many non-aboriginal men as non-aboriginal women. Though this gap would even out in my period of study, the European, masculine nature of the province and city must still be taken into consideration when we look at the social landscape of early Vancouver. Gender has only recently been taken into account when looking at the history of the province. European men in leading positions in my time of study were “conveniently taken as the norm by which all else was judged” (Creese and Strong-Boag, 1992 p. 4). Broadly, the dominant view in the early decades of the twentieth century was that women, white and of colour, belonged at home in their traditional role as wife and mother. However, industrial capitalism had produced thousands of “working girls” in Vancouver who sought wage work within a limited spectrum of typically low paying jobs (Kloppenborg et. al eds. 1977). The phenomenon of women seeking jobs outside of the home had such a significant impact that the public school system in British Columbia took it upon itself to reiterate that “the home is the natural and rightful domain of women” through a program of home economics which was emphasised as an important subject after 1903 (Riley, 1992). The changing role of women in early Vancouver points to Vancouver’s coming of age.

Vancouver was rapidly shedding its mill town roots and becoming a full scale urban city in the period prior to W.W. I. Moreover, it was rapidly becoming the trading centre of the Pacific West Coast. Robert A.J. McDonald (1996) writes:
The traditional influence of sawmilling persisted, and lumber remained a principal source of wealth for the city's expanding business community. But Vancouver had something more, a metropolitan centre that provided trade, shipping and management services to coastal and inland parts of the province (p. xii).

In this early decade, Vancouver replaced "the capital as the province's economic metropolis" (ibid p. 52). Not only did Vancouver economically overtake Victoria; it became the preferred port over Seattle for many business ventures (ibid p. 52). By 1913 Vancouver was clearly the province's "major transportation, trading and financial centre" (Kloppenborg, Niwinski, Johnson, R, Gruetter, 1977). The young "charming city" was quickly coming of age; developing international allure and desperately trying to develop a reputation which would attract people with money, culture and style" (Vancouver Archives Pamphlet Collection, 1902). Certainly, with the "speed, economy and safety of travel by steamship and train" (Johnston, H, 1996 p. 165), Vancouver was a destination for more people than it had ever been before. 4

By 1912 Vancouverites prided themselves on their "modernity". Though surrounded by wilderness, the city was described as "so absolutely modern" that "no one would think of putting up a house without a telephone and electric light" (Ormsby, M., 1983 p. 95). Only four years after its incorporation, Vancouver had an electric streetcar system in 1890. Being a new city, Vancouver "had no legacy from the past to overcome, and moved more readily than older cities like Toronto or Ottawa to meet the advancing standards of the age" (Johnson, 1996 p. 188). Because of this, Vancouver was able to implement more quickly "effective sewage, pure water supply, hospitals, and

4 In Graeme Wynn and Timothy Oke (eds.) Vancouver and Its Region (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1992.) the staggering population growth Vancouver experienced in the Pre-W.W.I. period is recorded. As a brief example, Vancouver in 1886 (the year of its incorporation) had just over 1000 people. Within one year 2000 more people
public health and safety standards” (ibid). Not only did Vancouver, in its early years, have a better public health care system than the major cities of Eastern Canada, for some time, Vancouver’s Dominion Trust building was the tallest building in the entire British Empire (Vogel & Wyse, 1993).

Reading through eclectic personal narratives describing the Golden Years which dot general histories of Vancouver in its early years, one theme appears to receive consistent emphasis, namely the modern character of Vancouver during the Golden Years. Dr. Drew, president of the Vancouver Medical Association in 1906, proudly asserted “our city is not hoary with old legends and traditions, nor our archives musty with the accumulated records of consecutive centuries.” He saw nothing but “silver streaks” in the “advancing years” (Vancouver Medical Association, 1996). From my own experience in another study interviewing seniors in this city about their family background, I also found this emphasis on early Vancouver’s modernity to be apparent. The insistence that Vancouver was a very modern city is perhaps related to the speed of development. After all, a considerable amount of activity happened in a relatively short period of time. The impression of Vancouver in 1886 is radically different from the reality of the city in 1912. Also, there has been a tendency to view Vancouver’s late start as a sign which marks the West as always following the East in terms of development. Certainly, local history speaks out against this characterisation.

There are many records which suggest that early Vancouverites felt the newness of their city to be a benefit. They saw themselves as having the opportunity to start

came and by 1901 the population of Vancouver was 27,000. In 1911 the city of Vancouver and its neighboring municipalities Point Grey and South Vancouver had 120,000 people (p.68).

5 In 1996 I worked for the Society for Programming in Retirement Years interviewing seniors who had won the Annual SPRY AWARDS, Vancouver B.C.
things off anew. Also, conventional history, until relatively recently has downplayed Vancouver's strong connection with its close neighbour, the United States (MacDonald, 1987). As recent studies are more frequently showing, it was geographically far more reasonable in many cases to develop links with the west coast of the U.S. than it was to deal with Eastern Canada. This link is especially relevant for my topic as I will later argue.

For now it is important to mention that, because of this link, many Vancouverites felt themselves to be socially more advanced, modern, and progressive than Eastern Canadians. There is some evidence to support this point. For example, there was definitely more support for 'modern ideas' such as the franchise for women, in Vancouver as opposed to in Toronto. As I will later explore, Vancouverites were also socially more liberal on issues of temperance and prohibition. Finally, the perception of the West Coast as a more relaxed area of Canada needs to be addressed. Many Vancouverites of the time prided themselves on being more involved in health and recreational pleasure than the rest of Canada. This interest, also linked to the modern in ways I will discuss, can be seen in their love of the outdoors as their great passion in recreational sport suggests. How seriously these boastings about modernity can be taken is less relevant than the overall point that Vancouver was not some wayward, Western outpost with little contact to the happenings of modern life.

It is also important to point out how modernity was a positive symbol for many Vancouverites; at the same time, it was a source of a great deal of pain, abuse, and hardship for others. I will address the downside of modernity in due course. As the term, "Golden Years" suggests, the period is often characterised as new, bright,
exciting, youthful, dynamic, and energetic. The self-proclaimed moderns were thoroughly caught up in the excitement of the age and were deeply committed to the development of the ideas and institutions of modernity. While much could be said regarding the definition of modernity, the effect of development, and the complications and contradictions of the modernisation process, I will only comment briefly on the ideological and institutional aspects of modernity.

With respect to ideas and culture in 1909, one self-described British modern describes her stay on the nearby Gulf Islands. Jean Barman (1989) uses her quote in an essay concerning the Britishness of British Columbia. The quote reads

In the sunset we two moderns, in the primal glades, discussing the Fabian Society, Eugenics, Brieux and Tolstoy (p. 238).

Here the idea of the primal glade is just one of many examples which work around the metaphor of a pocket of modernity within a clearing between trees. Just twenty years earlier Vancouver itself had been seen by developers as a primal glade. As this open clearing in the trees became larger, as “the blessed forests came down,” the culture spoken of by the moderns manifested or rather “exploded” outwards, leaving behind the physical housings of its various institutions which would themselves reflect, contain, and further shape the modernity of which they spoke.

Who were the so called moderns and what was their intellectual character? While a wide range of people passed through and inhabited the ‘primal glades’ of British Columbia in my period of study, the moderns can be broadly understood as associated with the 'imperial' in that they viewed B.C. as part of the British Empire and hence part of an expanding European civilization (Reimer, 1995). In one study of the
intellectual history of Vancouver, Hunt (1987) looks at how various groups and voluntary associations were involved in creating a climate of Victorian and Edwardian intellectual thought in B.C. during the years 1886-1916. Hunt emphasizes the importance of the arts, history, and science in the creation of history and literary societies such as the Historical and Scientific Association. He argues that Vancouver's intellectual climate and cultural forms reflect the hegemony of the white middle-class in the social structure of early Vancouver. This hegemony was however, not unchallenged by radical and reformist intellectual views (Taft, 1983). Clearly, the intellectual climate associated with early socialist movements in B.C. must also be taken into consideration. Spencer (1990) shows the importance of the labour press (1870-1910) for example, in expressing criticisms of liberal-democratic capitalism.

With this in mind, here I am not so much interested in providing an elaborate intellectual history of B.C. in my period of study. Instead, I am simply making a point about the increasing dominance of intellectual thought in my period of study (critical or otherwise) which can be seen as modern in the sense that it was thought to be, in the words of Raymond Williams (1976) "...virtually equivalent to IMPROVED...or satisfactory or efficient" (p. 208). The two moderns quoted above discussing the Fabian Society may well have been modernist, in the sense of being associated with experimental art and writing (c.1890-c.1940), however, I am using them as an example of modernity in the wider sense of processes of change towards those types of social, economic, and political systems that developed in Western Europe and North America from the seventeenth century to the early twentieth century.
I discovered that many historical interpretations rely extensively on organic metaphors to describe the rise of modern systems and institutions in this city. Apparently buildings flew up where trees had just fallen, residential neighbourhoods sprang, street car stations sprouted, streets emerged, were macadamized or paved with wood blocks and then driven on by noisy Fords as well as by horse drawn carriages. The city quite simply blossomed or in some accounts exploded. These verbs seem certainly justifiable considering that by 1912 Vancouver boasted Canada’s first motion picture houses and hockey arena, a reliable postal service, famous hotels, an opera house, libraries, gas stations, golf courses, schools, an Elite Directory, large department stores, beautiful churches, landscaped parks, hospitals, aerodromes and exhibitions (Vogel, A & Wyse, 1993). Yet, though Vancouver was built on some of the best soil in the empire, this rapid growth was hardly supernatural.

The economic system which fuelled this growth is very relevant to understanding the cultural and social landscape of the city. The role of the capitalist mode of production in Vancouver has been widely discussed and elaborated on. A brief comment on economic factors is sufficient here. McDonald suggests that economic relations, from the 1860s to the 1880s in the Burrard inlet “shaped the structure of society” (McDonald, R., 1996 p. 230).

He goes on to suggest that at that time, “Mill owners and their families stood at the pinnacle of power” in a society where the “social contract was personal, harkening back to a pre-industrial era when patron-client relationships structured life in rural society” (ibid). After the 1880s, McDonald suggests that rapid urbanisation “broadened the economic base and class structure” (p. 231). With the arrival of the Canadian Pacific
Railway to Vancouver, this structure changed again and the predominately ethnic working class labour force gave way to “an overwhelmingly white working class of British Heritage” (ibid. p. 231). The upper class Vancouverites began to incorporate new owners or managers of the means of production. Generally the upper-class was “firmly committed to a defence of capitalism – especially the rights of private property,” (ibid p. 233) yet, McDonald makes the important point that while “Vancouver was hardly egalitarian…class does not by itself explain the differences in attitudes and behaviour of Shaughnessy Heights lumber barons, Mount Pleasant tradesmen and East End labourers” (ibid., p. 234). He argues that social identities were not exclusively fixed by economic relations though these relations must be seen as an important factor. McDonald cites the importance of ethnic and racial status as well as of gender and family status for the achievement of prestige in Vancouver during the Golden Years. These aspects will be explored in Part II of this chapter. For now, with a clearer picture of early Vancouver in mind, one last discussion concerning method is necessary.

When trying to describe the great many changes which occurred during the Golden Years, one important point should not be overlooked. This point is contained in a statement made by Mayor Thomas Neeland when asked to justify the location of the general hospital after the fact (Mathews, 1932). Neeland, speaking in the 1920s, said

Remember, we had nothing to go on but our idea of what a wilderness could turn into (Mathews, 1932 p. 64).

Neeland’s point is key because it emphasizes the fact that city building is an active process which is planned but not overly determined. Also, his point recognizes that city
building has to do with the perceptions of the people involved and the resources with which they have to work.

How do Neeland's comments relate to my exploration into the social, cultural, and sexual landscape of Vancouver? Neeland was eager to stress the limits of his vision in seeing into the future. He wanted to be clear there were a number of factors which early city builders could not foresee. I am eager to express the limits of my vision into the past, generally because of its ultimate intangibility, and specifically because of the sexual nature of my topic.

**Methodological Framework**

In trying to situate sexuality in the overall landscape of early twentieth century Vancouver, my methodological concerns relate to the idea of the limited vision, that provides a rationale for my choice to work within a Weberian framework. I would like firstly to address the problems of limited vision when dealing with topics of a sexual nature before going on to introduce some more general points concerning the obstacles and challenges involved in historical writing.

Sharon R. Ullman (1997) discusses the methodological difficulties involved in the search for windows into the sexual past. She suggests part of the problem involved in studying sexuality is that the records historians have to work with are limited to those which documented sexuality as it came into public view. Ullman argues (probably with legal and police records in mind) that these records are therefore typically distorted and often, she says, "perverse." Her point that sexual acts are typically hidden in the private realm is important. Within the course of my work I will discuss why I am not interested in a history of sexual acts, although here I want to
emphasise that Ullman’s point inspires an imagining of what can ultimately not be completely retraced, known, or discovered: the actual sexual relationships engaged in by the people living within Vancouver in the Golden Years. Many would correctly argue that these acts are private, and should rightfully be off limits for historians. Certainly, historians should not sink to the level of sexual gossip. Yet, it is quite another thing to suggest that the historian should not be in the business of imagining the sexuality of early Vancouverites, for silence could lend itself to historical inaccuracy. For example, Patricia Anderson (1995) argues that in Vancouver, as elsewhere, we suffer from wrong imaginings of the sexual past. She came to this conclusion after discovering what she at first thought was “underground erotica” but later realised was an example of popular Victorian entertainment. She writes,

As a historian of the period, I already knew that the Victorians were by no means Victorian as we used to think. Yet, this kind of public, exuberant sexuality... was news to me (iiv).

What is key in her assertion is that as researchers we must not make the mistake of writing sex out of the past even if it is not there, at first glance, in blatant exuberance. In attempting to address sexual landscapes, we must be careful not to confuse the lack of evidence with the lack of activity, and we must also be careful not to assume what kind of activity occurred based on misperceptions of the past.

The methodological challenges related to the limitations of evidence have been discussed generally in post-modern critiques of objectivity. It is worth reviewing some of these post-modern debates for they have influenced my decision to work within a Weberian framework.

D. Wishart (1997) argues that an exact replication of the past is impossible, and as a result, history should not be geared towards this task. His observation is not new.
In ‘The Logic of Historical Explanation’ (1906) Max Weber deals with the problem that the past is, in actual fact, infinite. As a result, Weber makes no apology when he states that all attempts to write history will inevitably involve theory. Wishart’s analysis is congruent with Weber’s in this regard. Wishart suggests that because we are simply left with accounts of reality and only selective accounts at best, history writing is in fact a kind of constrained narrative writing. Further, Wishart emphasises that the making of “historical narrative is always a personal creation and the presentation of facts varies according to interest and intended audience” (p. 113). Weber also argues that the personal element of history writing is found at the level of the selection of facts. Wishart goes further. He writes that subjectivity is involved at every step in the history writing process.

Despite this, both Weber and Wishart argue that there is an important difference in the writing of historical fiction and in the writing of history in general. This difference is that in writing history we are not only constrained by the facts, but are also judged by the validity of our arguments. Weber’s emphasis on theory allows for a method by which our arguments can be influenced by our own creativity which occurs on the level of abstraction.

Weber advocates the fashioning of ‘ideal types’ in order to make sense of history. He begins with the notion of ideal as meaning abstract, theoretical, or in the realm of ideas (cited in Runciman G., 1978). He does not use the term to suggest ‘ideal’ in the sense of desirable. Weber advocates using ideal typical constructs in whose creation both the researcher’s subjective interests and empirical constraints are key. Here he emphasises that explanation is the overall purpose of history writing. Ideal types are heuristic tools which are “designed to engage, even constrain, comparative historical
researchers in a perpetual back and forth movement between the empirical case, relationship, or development under investigation and a conceptual framework” (cited in Kalberg, 1994, p. 12). To be clear, ideal types are the means through which meaningful, patterned action can be charted and documented: they are not the end (ibid p. 3). Ideal types work on a principle of multi-causality and also incorporate subjective elements in their formation. They can be characterised as constructs which, in their creation, allow for a constrained creativity, and, in their usage act as a yardstick by which historical phenomena can be measured, interpreted, and analysed.

I wish to use the definition of ‘cosmopolitan’ as such an ideal typical tool, or more clearly, as a theoretical construct useful in further setting the scene for my topic. Why have I chosen the term cosmopolitan as opposed to class, status, race or any number of other relevant concepts? There are three reasons for my choice. First, it is a term which comes up frequently in relation to early Vancouver both in primary documents which describe the city as cosmopolitan, and in current analysis of the Golden Years which deals with racial and ethnic diversity. Secondly, the term encompasses a series of contradictions which, as I will explain, can shed light on the sexual, social, and cultural landscape of the city in my period of study. And thirdly, the concept allows for an analysis of Vancouver which is not aimed at fashioning groups but rather is capable of identifying some of the key concepts involved in both the creation and regulation of identity. This point requires further explanation.

In the last twenty years, social histories of Vancouver have offered a portrait of social and cultural dynamics in early Vancouver by dividing Vancouverites into groups first of class and race, and then by gender. People’s lives have been understood to be

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6 This relates to Weber’s notion that the subjective element is inevitably involved in deciding topic interest and in the selection of historical materials.
marked but not overly determined by configurations of gender, class, race or ethnicity. Very recent studies look at how sexuality is involved in these configurations (Barman, 1998; Kinsman, 1996; Perry, 1995). Sexuality is typically only mentioned in passing or hinted at. Sexual reproduction has been looked at from a variety of angles, as have marriage customs, divorce rates, family planning etc. and yet, these studies fail to deal with the topic of sex in any direct or forthright manner.

I am intrigued by contemporary debates regarding the cosmopolitan nature of early Vancouver. I find this a very useful concept for exploring the complex social and cultural relations of the city in my time of study, and am tantalised by the taint of sexuality this label seems to encompass. Cosmopolitanism is a dense and contradictory concept which, as I will argue, can be useful in teasing out the complex social relations shaped in part by various identity markers in early Vancouver. These complex relations, though difficult, are highly relevant to understanding the development of sex education in B.C. for they help explain the limits and possibilities, the shape and logic, behind the creation of sex education in early Vancouver.
Part II: Surveying the Cosmopolitan Landscape in Search of an Understanding of Sexuality in Early Vancouver

_I am the mayor of a cosmopolitan city - I should rather say of a city of cosmopolitans whose sense of cityhood... has... all the jealousy and... self consciousness of youth... there are only 21 policemen—all told in Vancouver, a splendid showing when the cosmopolitan character of its population is taken into consideration (Speech by Vancouver mayor L.D. Taylor on August 31, 1910)_

_Cosmopolitan as it is—and there is a great charm living in such a city—it is composed of remarkably good elements; well trained professional men, retired military and naval men, business men of wide experience in various parts of the world, skilled artisans and so on (“Vancouver, the queen city of the wonderful west.” Vancouver 1898). _

The idea that early Vancouver was a city of cosmopolitans as opposed to a cosmopolitan city is intriguing. Also interesting is the idea that a cosmopolitan population usually requires a more extensive police force. As the second quote suggests the term seems to embody both positive and negative elements depending on the context of its usage. At first glance, there seems evidence that these elements are contradictory. The idea of a cosmopolitan city expresses the image of a mature, sophisticated city with an air of tolerance, class, or style. A cosmopolitan city implies a mosaic of cross-cultural contact and exchange. Yet, it also implies conflict and collision and raises thoughts of crime and of an under world. Finally, cosmopolitanism also seems to brush a city with a certain sexuality, an erotic sensuality which less mature cities lack. Cosmopolitan sexuality seems tied to sophistication, yet connotes a complicated atmosphere of sexual danger as well as freedom, intimacy and anonymity, dread and delight (Walkowitz, 1992).

A deeper look at the meanings associated with the term is necessary if these contradictory elements are to be addressed. The adjective cosmopolitan has several definitions according to Webster's Third New International (W.T.N.I.) and the Oxford English (O.E.D.) Dictionaries. I have chosen three to work with. The first definition I have chosen is from the O.E.D. It reads “belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants.” This corresponds with the Webster’s third definition which reads “composed of persons, constituents, or elements from all parts of the world or from many different places or levels.” The following appended example reads: “that queer, cosmopolitan, rather sinister crowd that is to be found around the Marseilles docks ---Rose Macaulay.” The second definition which I have chosen to use comes from W.T.N.I. and reads “1 : marked by interest in, familiarity with, or knowledge and appreciation of many parts of the world : not provincial, local, limited, or restricted by the attitudes, interests, or loyalties of a single region, section, or sphere of activity: world-wide rather than regional, parochial, or narrow.” The third definition I have chosen to work with also comes from Webster and reads “marked by sophistication and savoir faire arising from urban life and wide travel.” The adjoining example reads: “the instructor began to put on the airs of the city. He wanted to appear cosmopolitan ---Sherwood Anderson.” I will repeat the definitions as I use them to avoid confusion.

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9 For this project I used the online versions of both dictionaries. The Oxford English Dictionary, Second Edition can be found at http://www.library.ubc.ca/ssp/oed/ and the Webster’s Third New International Dictionary, Unabridged (1996) edition can be found at http.toby.library.ubc.ca/resources/infopage.cfm?id=73.

10 Again, with Weber’s understanding of the limitations involved in the ‘process of selection’ in doing historical work I have chosen to leave certain aspects of the definition of cosmopolitan out. Namely, I have not chosen to work parts of the 3rd definition (O.E.D) meaning: Widely diffused over the globe; found in all or many countries.
Vancouver, according to the first O.E.D. definition of cosmopolitan, which reads "belonging to all parts of the world; not restricted to any one country or its inhabitants" (O.E.D.), can be understood to some degree as cosmopolitan. Considering only the "varied origins of its residents," early Vancouver, according to Hugh Johnston (1996) was "cosmopolitan." Graeme Wynn (1992) agrees. He writes the "people of early Vancouver were far from homogeneous" (p. 130). Yet, while there was arguably a varied population present in Vancouver in these early years, both these writers point out that it would be misleading to suggest that this variance was in equal proportions. For these reasons, Robert A.J. McDonald (1996) offers the exact opposite argument of Wynn and Johnston.

McDonald suggests that pre-war Vancouver was "a relatively homogenous city" (p. 203). McDonald writes that by 1911 more than 85 percent of all Vancouver residents claimed birth in Canada, Britain, European parts of the British Empire, or the United States, with half of this group being Canadian. Residents born in Great Britain constituted the largest number of non-Canadians (30.6 per cent of the city's total population) and Americans the second largest (10.4 percent). People who did not speak English or more generally claim British Heritage were, in the language of the majority, 'immigrants' or 'foreigners'. Forming at the census time only 12.4 percent of city residents—though their numbers would have been higher in the wet months of winter when loggers, fishermen, millhands and construction labourers converged on the city—'foreigners' made up a surprisingly small proportion of Vancouver's population (p. 203).

At first glance it would seem that McDonald's argument could be taken as proof that Vancouver was not cosmopolitan, as if its Anglo nature somehow removed it from a cosmopolitan status. Yet attention must be paid to the fact that the Anglo majority also characterised themselves as cosmopolitan.
Despite this Anglo majority, two points are relevant. Firstly, the point that an 'Anglo-majority existed' does not necessarily imply that this majority was not itself cosmopolitan. Instead, they might be considered cosmopolitan in ways different from the so called foreigners. The second point relates to this. According to the first definition, the Anglo-majority group can still be considered cosmopolitan in that they did come from different parts of the world even if the diverse places from which they came may have had cultural similarities. Vancouver contained what Charles Jones (1987) calls a "cosmopolitan bourgeoisie." The Anglo-majority then must be understood as a mix of people coming from different communities, from a variety of places both within and outside of the British Empire (Jones, 1987 p. 66). It was in part because of this variance that the middle and upper-class Anglo majority frequently spoke about themselves, as well as about their city, as cosmopolitan.

A quote from Ethel Wilson's *The Innocent Traveller* (1949) emphasises the difference within members of the Anglo majority. It reads

Rachael wrote to her cousin Elise, '...it is so lovely here Elise, that I feel I've wasted my life not living here before. Housekeeping with a Chinaman in the kitchen is odd but I'll soon get used to it. People are so kind. I was rather amused at the church when a Canadian lady admired my pound cake and said I was so capable you'd never think I was English! It was supposed to be a compliment, I think! ...and Mother couldn't understand it when the bank manager said flatteringly that you'd never think we were Methodists, and then I heard Aunt Topaz say you'd never dream that Mrs. Shafto was a Roman Catholic! All these pre-conceived ideas! There seems to be more mixing up of people here than in Ware, and I like it' (p. 121).

Yet, as this quote suggests, the 'mixing up of people' was not a mix of equal parts. The reference to the 'Chinaman' in the kitchen is telling. Anti-Asian racism in early Vancouver has been discussed at length (Anderson, 1991). Going further into the
second definition enables an understanding of which elements of the mix were able to rise to the top and which were pushed or held on the bottom.

As the second leading quote suggests, from the perspective of the Golden Years, Vancouver was seen as a cosmopolitan city with both ‘good and bad’ cosmopolitan ‘elements.’ This idea must be considered when looking at the first part of the second definition which suggests if one is cosmopolitan one is “marked by interest in, familiarity with, or knowledge and appreciation of many parts of the world.” Presumably the mayor’s city of cosmopolitans can be understood in this limited context. A conservative understanding suggests that Vancouver was cosmopolitan simply because of the presence of a cosmopolitan bourgeoisie - elite men with broad political and economic experience. Thus the “well trained professional men, retired military and naval men, business men of wide experience in various parts of the world, skilled artisans and so on”("Vancouver, the Queen City of the Wonderful West," 1898) were presumably the cosmopolitans of which the mayor spoke.

Also adding to the idea of Vancouver as a cosmopolitan city in this elite sense was the presence of elite travellers, or early tourists who took advantage of the new railways, hotels and steamships in order to travel for reasons of personal pleasure, artistic inspiration, and scientific study (Simmons, 1994). Dennis Porter (1991) discusses how upper-class male travellers around the turn of the century used tours as an outlet for frustrated sensuality and enjoyed the erotic delights of foreign countries before returning to the responsibilities of their work (Porter 1991). Whether visitors or

11 For analysis on the rise and fall of the cosmopolitan bourgeoisie in international business in the later 19th and early 20th century see Charles A. Jones’ International Business in the Nineteenth Century: The Rise and Fall of a Cosmopolitan Bourgeoisie.
recent settlers, the so called good cosmopolitan elements can perhaps be better understood as privileged.

How these privileged cosmopolitans experienced the city as cosmopolitan is important. Baudelaire, writing about the french context, argues the experience of such cosmopolitan men was one of ‘flaneur’ (Blanchard, 1985). Operating from a position of independence and privilege, the bourgeois male could become a spectator of the different quarters of the city at a safe distance (Walkowitz, 1992). While Baudelaire bases his discussion of the flaneur on 19th century Parisian cultural life, the concept can be applied in some respects to early Vancouver. Take for example the activities of “remittance men” described by Roy (1980) as typically British men who lived in Vancouver while supplied with money from families back home (p. 60). These men were often rumored to have been sent out of the country for behavioural indiscretions and were often chastized for their idle and leisure oriented behavior (ibid). These men would not fit the category of the wanderer or the tramp. Idle but not poor, they could stroll the albeit rough streets of early Vancouver and find delight in ambling contentedly and un-hurriedly through the city.

The flaneur according to Walter Benjamin is “at home in the metropolitan environment” where the urban landscape provides “amusement, distraction and novelty” (cited in Gilloch, 1992 p. 108). Cosmopolitanism, according to Judith Walkowitz, established a right to the city for these men: “a right not traditionally available to the less advantaged” (16). This right involved “a privileged gaze, betokening possession and distance” which served as a bourgeois male pleasure (ibid).

Moving on to the adjoining aspect of the second definition with this idea of male bourgeois pleasure in mind, the Anglo Majority in Vancouver and visiting elite tourists
quickly lose their status as cosmopolitan. Hugh Johnston (1996) writes that “British
Columbia was not cosmopolitan in the sense that it was free from prejudice or open to
various cultural influences” (p. 165). The profound racism which permeated the Golden
Years is well known and widely documented (Warburton, R., 1989). The imperialist,
racist, and colonising effects of elite travellers have also been generally explored
(Mitchell, 1988; Pratt, 1992). Warburton suggests that Vancouver cannot be seen as a
plural society in a cosmopolitan sense whereby different racial groups lived “side by
side” (p. 221), having its own social structures and cultural identities. Without denying
the existence of communities organised primarily around race, Warburton suggests
that the vision of a plural society “ignores the processes of cultural legitimisation and
the incorporation of racial groups into the dominant systems of production” (p. 229).
Thus Vancouver should not be understood to be cosmopolitan in a socially progressive
sense that suggests pluralism. Certainly, while this point is not new it needs to be
continually restated.

The lack of racial equality is especially evidence when we look at the legacy of
colonial and imperial control over aboriginal sexuality in British Columbia. Jean
Barman (1997/1998) clearly demonstrates this and suggests that in British Columbia
“gender, power, and race came together in a manner that made it possible for men in
power to condemn Aboriginal sexuality” (p. 240). She goes on to argue that aboriginal
sexuality was presented as something “wild” and in need of taming (p. 241).
Importantly, this perception did not prevent men in power “to use for sexual
gratification the women they had turned into objects” (p. 240). Certainly there was no
pluralistic acceptance for the diverse forms of sexuality and gender organization in
First Nation communities in B.C., or elsewhere for that matter, by the dominant
European-Canadian social order (Kinsman, 1996 p. 92). The cultural bias which led to a characterization of aboriginal sexuality as wild, uncivilised, and immoral, is clear evidence against the existence of a progressive cosmopolitanism.

With the second definition in mind, though Vancouver should not be seen as a place of blissful pluralism, one cannot say that no pluralism existed. On the margins of Vancouver society, one example springs to mind which at least offers the possibility of a kind of pluralism.
Then the house of all nations. Good Night. You can get anything there from a chocolate coloured damsel up to a Swede girl. They are mixed so thoroughly that you don’t know whether you are in a coon joint or visiting a foreign city” (The Truth, 1912 Vancouver Archives Pamphlet Collection).

...There were Mama and Papa fuckers, doing it mostly the straight and traditional American way...Frenching was talked and joked about but rarely asked for or offered. The Italian way, entry from the rear...carried over from farm boys experimenting on themselves...(cited in Rosen, 1982 p. 95).

The instant we stepped inside that door, it became apparent that, though ornate, the taste reflected in the furnishings and decor was just miserable...Lulu White, herself greeted us after we’d been announced by a Negro doorman...she was a monstrosity...laden with diamonds...she wore a red wig that hardly pretended to be natural in colour...Lulu was obviously Negro. Her efforts to appear cultured were quite ludicrous. Her quick smile was as fake as the colour of her wig (ibid p. 95).

When a leading alderman went along with civic officials\(^\text{12}\) on an evening tour of downtown Vancouver in 1906 he discovered a few places of considerable openness and tolerance. While this walk was in keeping with the tradition of *night walking*, “...a male pursuit immortalised in accounts since Elizabethan times”(Walkowitz 1992 p. 18), this alderman’s response implied that he actually hadn’t been out much lately. After visiting the area of Vancouver where the streets glittered with “...long strings of red lights,” he later said to the press “...despite being a man of the world, I have seen things tonight that I have never before seen ...” (“Officials Make Tour of Shanghai Alley,”

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\(^{12}\) Names not given.
1906). Was this the case of one type of cosmopolitanism meeting another? His party had made their way though crowds of men who were gathered around ladies “attired in the briefest of skirts, with the décolleté apparel to the limit...”. These ladies were taking their “pick” of the “boys and men gathered around the doors” (ibid). What exactly this ‘man of the world’ saw in order for him to make such grand claims is at this point unclear, but one thing is clear, whatever he saw was being tolerated! Most likely he met up with what Walkowitz has called the “quintessential figure of the urban scene” - the figure of the prostitute who was a “central spectacle” in urban life (Walkowitz 1992, p. 21).

The House of all Nations, a remarkably successful brothel in early Vancouver, has not usually been historically recognised as a hallmark of cosmopolitanism, though there is certainly enough available evidence to suggest this argument. This brothel not only meets the criteria of the first definition, it could well have also met the criteria of the second. Not only did the house provide a home for people with a variety of nationalities; the success of the house has been characterised as showing remarkable cooperation from people representing many parts of the globe. Indeed, before 1912, Vancouver, according to The Moral and Social Reform Council, was a “wide open town” - it was “a landmark of tolerance.” The council suggests that many women in early Vancouver moved to the region from elsewhere because of Vancouver’s reputation as a place of tolerance (Moral Reform Council of British Columbia, 1912). The House of Nations was only one of many of these ‘tolerant’ places that many cosmopolitan women chose to stay in.

13 The Truth (1912) makes this comment clearly in jest, but still the suggestion remains on the record.
Deborah Neilson (1976) confirms that Vancouver in its early years was host to a transient population of prostitutes. She discusses the presence in Vancouver of "professional prostitutes who moved from city to city along the West Coast" (p. 114). Prisoners' records provide some evidence of the diverse ethnicity of these transient prostitutes. For example, from 1912 to 1917, 18.4 percent were black women, 15 percent of whom were American. Twenty-one per cent of the women on record were born in North West Europe. The remainder were simply listed as Canadian. Not surprisingly, given the head tax placed on Chinese women, they were not highly represented in the numbers (p. 112).

Now, whether or not the House of Nations was an ideal cosmopolitan niche in a progressive sense is really unknowable without further research. Here I have illuminated general aspects of the brothel in order to draw out some of the social and cultural contradictions which begin to surface as the definition is worked against some of the social and cultural realities of early Vancouver.

The last definition of 'cosmopolitan' suggests that a cosmopolitan is one who is "marked by sophistication and savoir faire arising from urban life and wide travel." In my next chapter, I wish to investigate this last definition in order to explore the relationship between sexuality, sophistication, cosmopolitanism, and the incentive to invent a sex education program in early Vancouver. This will lead into a discussion of how the process of becoming more modern or more sophisticated in concert with the increasing settlement of Vancouver by respectable society created several conflicts which were increasingly dealt with in the schools. One primary conflict I investigate revolves around sexuality, morality, and city space. As I will argue, sex education only
became an issue when certain schools were seen to border on what I call the wild areas of the city, where prostitution, partying, and sexual recreation flourished. I show how the goings on in these wild regions of the city were symbolically central to the dominant order and thus were problematised and vilified. In my final chapter, I will show how the link between this last aspect of cosmopolitanism involving the pretence of sophistication was related to a decision by educators to embrace modern science as the solution to the increasing social conflicts which emerged in early Vancouver.
Sex Education is not a subject typically associated with schools in British Columbia in the early twentieth century. Indeed, generally, the terms sex and education, especially in the context of the Victorian and early modern period, seem an odd juxtaposition; except perhaps, in erotic fantasy. Clichés in this area abound (Anderson 1995). The old school room with its ordered rows, disinfected smells, straps, and highly charged and monitored atmosphere, may, in the genre of erotic fiction, provide a perfect set for the kind of pornographic imagery where dominant school teachers spank misbehaving boys, or, bend school girls over desks. Of course, actual history books dealing with early schooling efforts in this province contain no such scenes. Indeed, these books serve to disrupt such fantasies. Firstly, not all classrooms were neat. A school near Wellington, B.C. in the 1860s was described by one visitor as "mean, dirty and melancholy...delapitated, unfenced, unsheltered" and littered with an "assortment of wild bushes, fruit, cowhorns, broken crockery, tins, boulders and logs" (Townsend, 1974 p. 94).

While educational history may predictably disrupt such erotic tales, history can also disrupt common sense assumptions. One such assumption is that schooling around the turn of the century had nothing to do with sexuality. For many people I have spoken to, the response to the idea of sex education in the pre World War One period is laughable, as laughable as the idea of studying the topic of sexuality within a university climate at that time. It seems to be a popular understanding that such things were not done before the 1960s. My own mother certainly laughed when I told her I was interested in historic sex education efforts in B.C. "Sex education" she chuckled,
“what sex education?, sex certainly had no relation with the schools at that time, my dear.” Her mother also laughed. Born in 1912, my grandmother responded to my project by saying: “I thought you young people had the idea that sex did not exist before your time.” She added, “but I can’t imagine it was discussed at school though, certainly not in Vancouver!”

In my period of study, the school was seen as a symbol of industry as opposed to pleasure; it was a place where work was to be done. Any kind of sexuality in the classroom was seen as a social taboo. The school was promoted as a sterile environment devoid of any hint of the sensual or the erotic. Whatever the reality may have been, the school was actively involved in the campaign to protect children from sexuality. However, in this chapter, I argue against popular conceptions which imagine that sexuality did not have a lot to do with schooling in early Vancouver. I contend that while the connection between the school and sexuality was not blatant nor publicly advertised, schools in early Vancouver were institutions strongly associated with the regulation of the sexuality of teachers, students, and, arguably, parents.

In part one of this chapter I examine the circumstances leading up to the decision by the Vancouver School Board to create a sex education program. My intention is to more fully understand the exact motivation behind the desire to deal with sexuality in an educational environment which had so much at stake in upholding a sex-free reputation. Working with the third definition of “cosmopolitan” will help with this inquiry. In my view the desire to incorporate sexuality into the public education curriculum had a lot to do with how the city was becoming increasingly “marked by sophistication and savoir faire arising from urban life and wide travel” (O.E.D).
what follows I argue that the impetus of sex education in B.C. arose in part out of a
socio-spatial conflict which occurred when, in crude terms, the school became
neighbours with the brothel. Here I am using the idea of social geography in a very
literal sense. Hart (1995) has argued that

People’s identities are in part constructed though the spatial locations they
inhabit and frequent...these spaces do not simply have a physical presence. They are imbued with symbolic meaning, often at once contradictory, confusing and challenging (p. 215).

The case of both the school and the brothel is a pertinent example of this. Hart’s
analysis of red-light districts is useful in that it shows how brothels are typically
located in spaces or areas inhabited by the city’s “marginal people”. They are
associated with a sexual leisure which “may be legitimate in some senses” but in the
case of the brothel is seen as a socially “illegitimate pursuit” (p. 219). The school, on the
other hand, is seen as a legitimate institution symbolic of productive work, and, more
recently, of productive leisure. The literal neighbouring of these ‘spaces’ has
historically caused controversy in Vancouver as elsewhere. After introducing this
conflict, I look more closely at the moral climate of the school, discuss the changing role
of the school, and end with a reflection on the role of the teacher as a role model of
desirable social and sexual behaviour.

Part I: Becoming Sophisticated: The public collision of the agenda of
schooling and the purpose of the brothel

During the growth of Vancouver, some schools would find themselves
neighbours with churches; other schools, however, such as Strathcona and Central
schools located on the eastside and downtown, would be built among neighbourhood
brothels. In 1906 the Vancouver School Board presented a petition dealing with the
issue of prostitution to the Board of Police Commissioners (Neilson, 1976). Apparently, the “growth in Vancouver’s school population” had caused some Vancouver school children to meet face to face with prostitutes whom the School Board found to be “...a standing menace to the moral well being of our boys and girls, especially those who attend the Strathcona and Central Schools” (p. 29). Not only did the real and symbolic meeting of ‘the child’ and ‘the prostitute’ cause the School Board to become active in the campaign to relocate the brothels, but the alleged meeting between ‘innocence’ and ‘corruption’ was also the impetus to design a sex education program to help shape the identity of the child in such a way that she or he might avoid later trespassing into the realm of the whore. Throughout this chapter I am concerned with how and why the socio-geographical region of the school conflicted with early Vancouver’s brothel district. Here, I would like to analyse this conflict, paying particular attention to how it was shaped by social discourses around work, leisure, respectability, the function of the school, childhood, and sexuality in early twentieth century Vancouver.

Robert McDonald (1996) cites one central issue in early Vancouver as being “whether Vancouver would cater to the needs of the ‘travelling miner and artisan,’ and the loggers who had always been so much a part of society on Burrard inlet, or protect the values of family and clean living” (p. 187). This conflict was not unique to Vancouver; industrialisation and modernisation produced many such tensions in Western cities. In early Vancouver, however, as I have argued, this urbanism advanced at such a highly accelerated rate that contradictions between the old and the new were readily visible and often existed side by side. Social geographer Lawrence Knopp (1995) has argued in another connection that
cities and sexualities both shape and are shaped by the dynamics of human social life. They reflect the ways in which social life is organised, the ways in which it is represented, perceived and understood, and the ways in which various groups cope with and react to these conditions (p. 149).

He describes late nineteenth century industrial cities as rigidly segregated by class, race, and ethnicity, characterised by very traditional gender-based spatial divisions of labour, dominantly coded as heterosexual and imagined and experienced in terms of public and private spheres of existence. The designs of neighbourhoods, homes, workplaces, commercial and leisure spaces all reflected this (p. 154).

Vancouver in its Golden Years was becoming more 'rigid,' but there was still considerable evidence of its roots as an 'unsophisticated' mill town. Thus, though evidence of early Vancouver's cosmopolitan sophistication is easy to see, evidence of the city's 'roughness' is readily visible as well. Vancouver was in a period of transition at this time.

Money could import almost any luxury imaginable for the sophisticated cosmopolitan class without much delay (McDonald, 1996, 150). Fresh food was plentiful and "Delicacies not available locally could be ordered from London, to be dispatched by responsible shops long experienced in sending supplies to a far flung empire" (p. 124). Shop hands regularly stocked shelves with "English jams, oriental spices." They also filled cellars "with French wines and champagnes and barrels of eastern Blue-Point oysters shipped from the Maritimes" (p. 124.). As the city developed, the options increased. "First class diners" could enjoy fine dining at the Strand Café, Dutch Grill Carlton Café, or Rainier Café. Those seeking culture could attend theatres and operas boasting the world's greatest performers such as Charlie Chaplin, Sarah Bernhardt, Melba, and Paderewski at the Frank W. Harts Opera, the Imperial Opera House and the
Emma Jurch Grand Opera Company (Hull, Soules, & Soules, G., 1974 p. 57). For sport
"in the way of shooting and fishing," Vancouver offered salmon fishing and a variety of
hunting. Expeditions for hunting bear, mountain goat, wildcat, lynx, mountain lion,
deer, and so on, took place on a regular basis. Vancouver was also the host to
memorable sporting events, including a "race for the championship of the world"
which was rowed on Burrard Inlet by Gaudaur and Johnson"("Vancouver: Queen City
of the Wonderful West," 1898).

The infusion of elite cosmopolitan sophistication took place alongside a changing
roughness. The opposite of 'sophistication' is of course to be unsophisticated – it is also
to be riotous, disorderly, or marked by rowdiness. This rough side was often cast as the
dark side of cosmopolitanism – the so called "evil city". Here I am speaking of the
other cosmopolitan, the 'bad elements' which, stripped of social prestige, were both
essential to the literal building of the city, and at the same time posed a threat to the
development of a modern and respectable Vancouver. It seems clear that as the city
took a more modern form the loggers along with "transients who lived in crude, split-
cedar shacks in the forest..." and others who "pitched dirty white tents on any vacant
stretch of land," were increasingly viewed as a social problem (McKechnie, 1972, p.
125). These 'other cosmopolitans' have been mentioned in almost every history dealing
with Vancouver's Golden Years, yet unfortunately little else is said about them other
than what is heralded to be their primary leisure activities: drinking, fucking, and
partying.

These other 'wilder' cosmopolitans, like their elite male counterparts, are often
associated with sexuality and disorderliness. They are represented as being in control
of the night - frequenting places where ladies of good social standing would dare not go. Unlike the upper-class flâneur, however, the groups of working-class, transient men who swarmed the brothel areas are presented as being more active and less inhibited than their voyeur counterparts. As in the American poem by W.J. Widdleton, these early Vancouver men were dynamic participants in the city's nightlife; roaming "From place to place," following "vapours of the night: they "acted all that's mean, and all that's base" (Freneau, 1865 p.253[emphasis mine]). Living with different criteria for reputation these men were said to have found 'glory' in what is now Vancouver's downtown Eastside. For some, this glory was clouded. The touring alderman, mentioned in the previous chapter, was convinced "The doubtful glory associated with Dupont Street [now Pender St.]" was best left " a thing of the past" ("Indignant Mayor says Women Must Not Scatter", 1906).

While it is not within the scope of my thesis to analyse what impact urbanisation had on the traditional lifestyle and leisure of the miners, loggers and transient labourers of early Vancouver, this conflict can be broadly seen as one important cultural and geographical feature of the city which had a direct impact on the motivation to deal with sexuality within the school system. My interest in the proximity of the brothel to the school is within this context. Symbolically, this conflict was key. Without this friction it is arguable that sex education would not have made its way into the school as a legitimate topic for discussion. The school could simply not live happily beside the brothel. Sex education was one strategy of many in the push to shut down the style of living associated with the brothels which was seen by dominant society as not only immoral, but also contrary to the building of a great city, province, and nation. In what
follows, I look at the specifics of the moral climate of the British Columbia school system in order to enable a better understanding of the kind of institutional barriers, issues and factors the school board would have to address when bringing the topic of sexuality into the classroom.

**Part II: The Ghost of Puritanism and the Meaning of the Non-Sectarian Public Education in a Modern, Capitalist British Columbia.**

In attempting to assess the moral climate of the British Columbia public school system in the early decades of this century, a reasonable place to start seems to be the issue of non-sectarianism. F. Henry Johnson (1964) asserts that British Columbia was "the first province to have a non-sectarian school system since the passage of the British North America Act" (p. 39). This fact, according to Joan Townsend (1974), has been used by many historians as further evidence that British Columbia has a unique history in Canada. Townsend suggests that the history of non-sectarianism in the public schools has contributed to the more general myth that British Columbians are somehow "a different breed of people" (p. 1). Indeed, many of B.C.'s history books begin by reflecting on how the tower of mountains, the Rockies, separate the province from the rest of the country.

Townsend asserts that the B.C. school system was, *on paper*, non-sectarian and yet, in reality it was strongly characterised by Protestant Christian morality. The colonial Free School Act (1865), for example, stated in Section XIII that all schools established under the provisions of this Act shall follow strictly upon non-sectarian principles. Books inculcating the highest morality shall be selected for the use of such schools, and all the books of a religious character, teaching denominational dogmas...
shall be strictly excluded therefrom (Johnson, 1964, p. 31). The first public school act after Confederation continued this principle. The provincial Free Public School Act (1872) called for the new school system “to be non-sectarian.” But, “teachers were encouraged to open with a prescribed prayer, to teach the ten commandments and to ‘inculcate the highest possible morality’” (ibid. p. 39). Townsend (1974), through an analysis of readers used within the schools from the time of confederation to 1900, suggests that the public school curriculum was steeped in distinctly Protestant messages. Certainly, the criticism found in some editorials of the day that the new public schools were ‘Godless’, was unfounded.

Townsend’s thesis is congruent with Van Brummelen’s analysis of late nineteenth century textbooks in British Columbia. Van Brummelen (1983-84) notes that in the decades preceding the turn of the century British Columbia’s “first prescribed textbooks all assumed a literal interpretation of the Bible and a belief in orthodox Christian doctrines” (p. 5). In an overview of the early readers the Canadian Series of Reading Books, popularly known as The Red Series, Van Brummelen suggests that the stories in these readers were distinctly Protestant. Without necessarily invoking Protestant doctrine exactly he writes that they exhibited the Golden Rule and were unambiguous about what was right and wrong. Children were encouraged to work hard and use their time well, and to be humble, prudent and courageous. Passions such as indolence, disobedience, miserliness and envy would have immediate catastrophic results. Cleanliness truly was next to godliness and lack of it went hand in hand with other evils (p. 9).

Such messages were typical of readers of the time. Certainly, America’s most popular nineteenth century readers, The McGuffey Readers, were similar. Elliot J. Gorn (1998)
comments on the ‘world view’ associated with these American readers. He suggests the readers can be thought of as a map “…drawn by bourgeois Protestants who were white, largely descended from English and Western European stock, and who expected the country to be just like them” (p. 31).

Gorn’s analogy can be readily applied to the Canadian case. Dealing with the later half of the nineteenth century, George Tomkins (1986) suggests that Canadian school curriculum was developed by “a relatively small number of key, mutually aquainted reformers whose similar beliefs and common visions derived from their common British and Protestant backgrounds” (p. 33). He notes the direct influence of Egerton Ryerson on John Jessop, B.C.’s first Superintendent of Education. Ryerson’s concept of education as quoted in Tomkins reads

By education I mean not the mere acquisition of knowledge, but that instruction and discipline which qualify and dispose the subjects of it for their appropriate duties and employment of life as Christians, as persons of business and also as members of their civic community (p. 34).

Tomkins suggests that “disciplined intelligence based on the teaching of religion and morality was the central goal of the Victorian curriculum” and that “textbooks were seen as the prime instrument of moral education” (p. 60). Townsend (1974) agrees with this and suggests that the text book was the basis of the curriculum in British Columbia before the turn of the century.

Van Brummelen (1983/84), like Gorn, notes a secularising tendency found in children’s readers towards the end of the nineteenth century. He suggests that by the 1920s, the “bond between religion and morality had been cut” (p. 10). Van Brummelen writes
Morality was no longer seen as being a consequence of serving God. Rather, the virtues of courage, unselfishness, loyalty, patience, and justice were characteristic of good citizenship. Throughout the period from 1872-1922, an ideal of personhood was held before children that changed little except with respect to personal piety. Children were to develop God-given abilities by showing backbone and working diligently. Individualism was stressed...students were to develop character by sticking to what they were doing and following the moral law...(p. 10).

Ken Osborne (1996), speaking about the same period, suggests that

The concern for citizenship and the school’s contribution to it was common throughout the western industrialised world. It sprang from the imperatives of the emerging capitalist economic order, with its need for a reliable and appropriately trained work force (p. 33).

Weber’s Protestant ethic thesis originally published in 1904-1905 is useful in understanding this process of secularisation and children’s near ‘religious’ training in capitalism.

Here the idea of an ideal type is applicable. Weber, in “The Spirit of Capitalism” (1904-5/1958) explores what he labels the “spirit” of capitalism as “an historical individual: a complex of elements associated in historical reality which we united into a conceptual whole from the standpoint of their cultural significance” (p. 47). He argues he can not “define” the concept of “spirit” at the beginning of his investigation because such a definition can only come at the end. The ideal type “must be gradually put together out of the individual parts which are taken from historical reality to make it up” (p. 47). With this in mind, I would like to incorporate Weber’s ideal typical analysis as a part of my own historical work around cosmopolitanism.

In “The Spirit of Capitalism” Weber characterises capitalism as an ethos. In this ethos, “money making” is no longer considered only a means of subsistence. Weber argues that the spirit of capitalism involves a struggle with traditionalism which he
defines as the tendency of people to work only as much as they need to fulfil their basic needs (p.63). Modern capitalism requires an almost religious belief to be instilled in workers: a belief in the drive to make money above and beyond what is needed to live. Values under capitalism come into play not for their own sake, but in relation to the money-making process. He uses the example of Benjamin Franklin's "preaching" on good credit to illustrate this point. The ideal of an honest man having good credit is hailed not for the virtue of honesty itself but rather because it shows a duty to increase capital (p. 51). He writes “Honesty is useful because it assures credit; so are punctuality, industry, frugality, and that is the reason they are virtues” (p. 52). It is how these virtues are arrived at that is of interest here.

Weber notes that people are not born with the desire to increase their capital. He writes “a man does not ‘by nature’ wish to earn more and more money, but simply to live as he is accustomed to live and earn as much as is necessary...” (p. 60). In order for people to get beyond ‘traditionalism’ (subsistence lifestyle) “labour must...be performed as an end in itself [as] a calling” (p. 62). For labour to be seen as an end in itself, as a calling, an “arduous process of education is required” (p. 62). Protestantism Weber argues, is related to the kind of education required for capitalism, as I will discuss.

Weber’s work on Protestantism allows an understanding of secularisation different that Van Brummelen’s which suggests the “bond between religion and morality had been cut” (p. 10). Instead, Weber argues that Protestantism is highly relevant to the distinctive characteristics of modern capitalism. He suggests that the secularisation of the modern world should not be understood simply as a move away
from traditional religion; instead, Weber (1956) sees Protestant religion as strongly associated with the rational organisation of formally free labour which implies a disciplined work force and the regularised investment of capital. Through Weber, we can understand this secularisation process as deeply related to Protestant religion.

Weber (1956) suggests that religion, rather than being severed from the process of capitalism is central to its formation. Puritanism is key. Weber takes up the idea of one's calling (Beruf) as first interpreted by Luther. This is the Protestant idea which argues that, although not everyone can achieve salvation (the choice of who will be saved being predetermined by God), everyone must consider oneself chosen and thus work hard in one's vocational or 'calling'. If success is then achieved, it can be understood as a sign from God of having been chosen for salvation (i.e. predestination). Importantly, operating from within this rationale, self discipline and hard work are essential. In addition, the accumulation of wealth is viewed as a reflection of success. Indeed, the accumulation of wealth is condemned only if wealth is employed to support a lifestyle of luxury or self indulgence. Thus, according to Weber, Calvinism supplied the moral energy and capitalist drive for the "spirit" of capitalism, an energy that was also taken up by the other Protestant sects that settled throughout North America.

Weber's understanding of the link between Protestantism and capitalism is useful when looking at the world view found very clearly in the *Canadian Series* and *Gage Readers* which were used in the early years of the public school system in B.C. Townsend (1974) has identified the following values in the readers: honesty, obedience, kindness, thrift, industry, patriotism, cleanliness, forgiveness, gratefulness, co-
operativeness, self-control, meekness, independence, courageousness, frugality,
punctuality, temperance, moderation, love, responsibility, perseverance, humility,
charity, industriousness, and piety (p. 56). While these values are not exclusively
Protestant, following Weber's analysis, it is useful to inquire about their relationship to
capitalism.

Clearly many of the values taught were closely related to shaping and regulating
the characters of children in a manner which would conform with the needs of the
workplace. Weber argues that key characteristics of modern Western capitalism are:
rational industrial organisation, separation of business from the household, and rational
book keeping. Rationality is key for it rests on calculation and science. The education
system in industrial capitalism played a key role in teaching the techniques of
rationality upon which capitalism depended. It also helped with the separation of
business from household in that it brought children out of the home. With this in mind,
virtues such as orderliness, effort, contentment, cheerfulness, dependability, and
obedience would help maintain the self-disciplined, self controlling work force needed
for Canadian capitalism (Van Brummelen, 1983-84 p. 11).
Part III: The Purpose of the School in a rapidly changing Province

Certainly, Canadian capitalism at the turn of the century was rapidly expanding along with industrialisation. The decades between the 1880s and World War One saw major changes in Canadian society according to Mariana Valverde in her study of the social purity movements of the time (Valverde, 1991 p. 15).

Adding to this discussion, early industrialisation and urbanisation were associated with a rise in the standard of living but also in ‘social problems’ such as poverty, crime, alienation, and a host of public health problems relating to water supply, sewage treatment etc. (Stamp, 1970 p. 300). During this period of great social upheaval, there was also a lot of social and political unrest in B.C. Timothy Dunn (1980) writes that

By the early 1900s middle class reformers from leading business and political circles thought that the social fabric was tearing under the heavy weight of radical politics, racial riots, highly visible poverty and dramatic confrontations between capital and labour (p. 33).

He goes on to argue that the school was seen by prominent reformers as part of a broader set of initiatives to solve.

The idea of the school as a social problem-solver is crucial and deserves exploration. Robert Stamp (1970) argues that many of the middle class reformers focused on the child as hope for the future. He writes

Many of these movements to reform urban industrial society were focused on the child; the adult residents of the slums were perhaps lost, but the child held out hope for the future. Though not all of these groups were directly connected with education, most looked to the schools as a vehicle for reintegrating the child into the existing (middle class) social structure (p. 301).

This view of the purpose of education was seized on by many social movements. Stamp suggests that the Child Saving Movement, the New Education Movement, the
Kindergarten Movement, the Social Gospel of the Salvation Army, the Temperance Movement, the Labour movement and groups like the YMCA, were all involved in efforts which tried to use the school as a vehicle for effecting social change (p. 300).

Children's health was one area in which the schools became more interested. George Tomkins (1986) writes that just before and during the first World War the “...new professional cadre of public health physicians, nurses and sanitary inspectors succeeded in making the health of children a national issue” (p. 101). He goes on to suggest that “The classroom provided a captive audience of children who could be easily examined, treated and propagandized” (p. 101). The idea that social health problems could be prevented by education is evident with Temperance education. Lynda Milham (1998) suggests that Temperance Education was taught in B.C. from the early 1890s until the 1920s when “prohibition made it a low priority in most places” (p. 44). Not only did children in B.C. schools hear about the evils of alcohol, they also participated in temperance concerts, picnics, lectures, marching bands and plays (p. 43).

Yet not everyone agreed with making Vancouver schools “the scapegoats upon which to place the sins of the people” (ibid). Tomkins (1986) echoes this point by providing a quote from educational critic Agnes Dean Cameron (1904), which reads

> The progressive doctor, the preacher, the moral reformer, the specialist of varieties... many who demand...that this particular fad shall be accorded...a place of prominence on our much ‘enriched’ school program...The truth is the large numbers of children gathered daily into schoolrooms form tempting fields of easy access to every hobby horse rider for the introduction of what each considered the *sine qua non* for reforming the world (p. 101).

Clearly, the purpose of education was to develop a good and intelligent character in children, regardless of debates about which subjects were best equipped to do this.
To this point I have discussed the role of the reader in promoting the cultivation of good character, as well as the pressures of social movements on the schools to produce good citizens. In my final section, I want to look at the role of the teacher as "essentially a moral tutor purveying a curriculum based on eternal moral principles and absolute standards of culture" (Tomkins, 1986 p. 301). I take up the idea of the ideal teacher in order to further understand the concept of moral character and the associations between notions of respectability, good character, sexuality, and schooling. In doing so, I posit the late nineteenth and early twentieth century classroom as a stage which restricts the treatment of sexuality in a number of ways. In this section I explore what sexuality had to do with the classroom in my period of study. By creating this theoretical 'stage,' I prepare the scene for the Vancouver doctors who deliberated about the best approach to delivering sex education in B.C.

**Part IV: The Character of the Quintessential Teacher**

I want to further explore the concept of 'character' using Erving Goffman's *The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life* (1956) as a theoretical guide. Using Goffman's idea of social performances, I wish to discuss the late nineteenth and early twentieth century classroom as a stage which holds the characters of teachers, students, and, at times, parents and administrative staff. By doing this I want to show how notions of 'good' and 'bad' character limited the field of possibilities for the treatment of sexuality in the classroom. Jean Barman's "Encounters with Sexuality: Inappropriate Gender Behaviour, Local Initiative and Teacher Feminisation in Late-Nineteenth-Century British Columbia Schools" (Barman, 1998) provides a wealth of empirical examples of
the consequences of ‘inappropriate gender behaviour’ for teachers leading up to my period of study.

John Calam (1986) in “Teaching the Teachers: Establishment and Early Years of the B.C. Provincial Normal Schools,” suggests that not all teachers working in my period of study measured up to the ideal. He quotes an inspector who suggested that “many who held normal school diplomas could not manage a classroom” (p. 77). Many teachers lacked neatness, order, and what we would call today ‘time management skills’. Yet, he goes on to emphasise that there was a notion of “the quintessential teacher” (ibid). Thus, the fact that success in achieving the ideal was not always achieved is not relevant. I want to seize on this ideal typical teacher and position ‘her’ on the main stage of the classroom. Important for my work here is that the key attribute of this teacher would be her ability and desire to see to the true work of the school - the development of character (ibid, 1986 p.78).

The quintessential teacher is then necessarily a role model who must hold and demonstrate good character. There exists a seemingly infinite supply of discourse on what constituted ‘good character’. In creating the ideal character for our quintessential teacher there is no shortage of places to turn to. As Calam (1986) has pointed out the role of the normal school was crucial in this preparation. Above, I have already outlined the Protestant values which are seen to contribute to good character. Now, as an illustrative example, I tap into one of many Victorian and early Modern advice books on how to achieve good character. I have chosen a book which clearly articulates a connection between ‘character’ and ‘sexuality’.
Before proceeding I would like to review the wider meanings associated with the word 'character' and highlight which meanings are especially relevant beyond Goffman's use of the term. Character is a key term which had significant meaning in relation to both sexuality and education in my period of study. According to the Oxford English Dictionary, (1999)\(^2\) as the term character stems from the Greek work xarakthr which means "an instrument for marking or graving, impress, stamp, distinctive mark, distinctive nature." Its literal sense still means "A distinctive mark impressed, engraved, or otherwise formed; a brand, stamp." The word moves beyond this literal definition when the "distinctive mark" stands for "symbol" as in the case of a letter of the alphabet.

Important for my purpose here, character also means "The sum of the moral and mental qualities which distinguish an individual or a race, viewed as a homogeneous whole; the individuality impressed by nature and habit on man or nation; mental or moral constitution." Also important is the meaning "Moral qualities strongly developed or strikingly displayed; distinct or distinguished character; character worth speaking of" (O.E.D.) Interestingly, in this latter definition people can have 'no character.' The example provided from 1735 (Pope Ep.) reads "Most Women have no Characters at all." Only "a person who has been developed and modified by his own culture is said to have a character" (ibid). Building character is therefore especially relevant. Character is "The estimate formed of a person's qualities" which translates into "reputation".

\(^2\) For clarification of the numbering of the meanings or of any example used please see http://www.library.ubc.ca/ssp/oed/
Here, following Goffman, I wish to discuss the teacher as a conventionalised figure, a representation or expression of certain scripts or lines drawn from the moral circles of the day. Thus I am interested in general characteristics associated with the 'ideal' teacher in my time of study and the "complex of accustomed mental and moral characteristics and habitual ethical traits marking" this ideal (p. 22). I am interested in the teacher as a composite of salient traits in much the same way I looked at cosmopolitanism and the Protestant Ethic. Again, following Goffman, I am interested in the position, capacity and status of the teacher which serves to keep him or her "in character," that is; ideal notions of the teacher characterised by or exemplifying distinctive or notable traits.

Returning to the idea of the classroom as a set or stage, I want to turn to Goffman's ideas of both 'performance' and 'front'. Goffman (1959) uses the term 'performance' to refer to

all the activity of an individual which occurs during a period marked by his continuous presence before a particular set of observers and which has some influence on the observers (p. 22).

He uses the term 'front' to mean

that part of the individual's performance which regularly functions in a general and fixed fashion to define the situation for those who observe the performance. Front, then, is the expressive equipment of a standard kind intentionally or unwittingly employed by the individual during his performance (p. 22).

Goffman suggests that part of the front involves a 'setting' involving "furniture, decor, physical layout, and other background items which supply the scenery and stage props for the state of human action played out before, within or upon it" (p. 22). The

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3 Taken from Webster's definition of character acting which is more in depth that the O.E.D.
performer also has a 'personal front' which includes "insignia of office or rank; clothing; sex, age, and racial characteristics; size and looks; posture; speech patterns; facial expressions; bodily gestures; and the like" (p. 24).

Goffman associates performances and fronts with specialised social routines, some of which become institutionalised. Goffman writes

In addition to the fact that different routines may employ the same front, it is to be noted that a given social front tends to become institutionalised in terms of the abstract, stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise, and tends to take on a meaning and stability apart from the specific tasks which happen at the time performed in its name....When an actor takes on an established social role, usually he finds a particular front has already been established for it (p. 27).

Goffman's ideas of performance are enhanced by Judith Butler's ideas around performativity. Butler (1993) suggests that "performativity must be understood not as a singular or deliberate 'act,' but rather, as the reiterative and citational practice by which discourse produces the effects it names" (p. 2). The reiterative nature of performativity is highly relevant to the idea of achieving a 'good character.' Butler's ideas about performativity help emphasise that character is not only related to discourse, but also is related to repeated action (including speech acts.) A good character is established by a series of actions which work together to establish a reputation.
Part V: Entering the Teacher’s Reputation into the ‘highly bounded region’ of the classroom.

Prof. B.G. Jefferis, the author of, Light on Dark Corners, A Complete Sexual Science: A Guide to Purity and Physical Manhood, Advice to Maiden, Wife and Mother (1897), suggests that one of the most important aspects of character is reputation.

Section One reads

Reputation. - The two most precious things this side of the grave are our reputation and our life. But it is to be lamented that the most contemptible whisper may deprive us of the one, and the most weakest weapon of the other. A wise man, therefore, will be more anxious to preserve a fair name than to possess it, and this will teach him so to live as not to be afraid to die (p. 73).

Another section asks “Who shall estimate the cost of a priceless reputation” and suggests that without a good reputation “we stand despised, debased, depreciated” (p. 73). Without a good reputation

...gold has no value; birth has no distinction; beauty no charm; age, no reverence; without it every treasure impoverishes, every grace deforms, every dignity degrades...(p. 3)

Light on Dark Corners contains of around five hundred pages of advice on how to avoid the dire consequences suffered with the loss of reputation. Sexuality has a place of priority throughout these pages. In short, anything but chastity and reproductive sexual activity was condemned at the turn of the twentieth century.

Reading through the guide, the true “essence of character” is said to be “self control.” Self control must be demonstrated in all aspects of life, but especially over base, pleasure-seeking impulses (p. 14). The guide continually reminds the reader that the definition of the civilised rests on the distance we travel from our ‘animal instincts’. Thus, we must struggle for self control in order to prevent vice. Vices such as
unchastity, alcoholism, masturbation, homosexuality, and sexual excess were to be avoided at all costs.

The quintessential teacher around the turn of the century would no doubt be keenly aware of the importance of self control with respect to the control of sexuality. As Jean Barman (1998) writes about teachers in the late nineteenth century, "Respectable people did not experience sexual desire" because "topics of sexuality were taboo" yet she adds "everywhere present" (p. 2). Certainly, the quintessential teacher would have been very much aware of the danger sexuality could pose to his/her reputation. S/he knew first that "any person who interrupts or disquiets any Public School by rude or indecent behaviour" could be legally charged (p. 2) and second that "even an accusation of inappropriate gender behaviours, however unjustified, be it against them or a student, could cause a teacher to be dismissed or to resign out of frustration" (Barman 1998, p. 8). Certainly, the thirty-four cases of public school misdemeanours Barman examines suggest that any whiff of a scandal could result in boycotts, strong discipline, and/or resignation or dismissal. Thus the classroom, for example, can be understood in Goffman's terms as a "highly bounded region" particularly with respect to sexuality.

Returning to Goffman's notion of the front, it is clear that the personal front of the teacher was strictly governed with respect to sexuality. The classroom, seen as the primary setting for her front, can also be understood as the region of performance. Goffman suggests that

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4 While Barman deals with non-urban cases, it is reasonable to assume urban examples also exist but have not yet been studied.
The impression and understanding fostered by the performance will tend to saturate the region and time span, so that any individual located in this space-time manifold will be in a position to observe the performance and be guided by the definition of the situation which the performance fosters. (p. 106)

Thus, the classroom can be seen as a "highly bounded region" governed by decorum, which, Goffman suggests, has moral and instrumental requirements. He observes that moral requirements "are ends in themselves" and refer to rules regarding non-interference. Relevant for the topic at hand is that non-interference involves rules regarding "the non-molestation of others" and "sexual propriety" as well as such things as respect for property. Instrumental requirements, for example, refer to "the duties an employer might demand of his employees" (p. 112). It is under this latter category that I will deal with the demand for teachers to teach sex education given the constraints of moral requirements.

Lastly, Goffman discusses backstage regions as

...a place, relative to a given performance, where the impression fostered by the performance is knowingly contradicted as a matter of course (p. 112).

The teacher's living quarters can be partially seen as a backstage which is "kept closed to members of the audience... and entirely hidden from them" (p. 112) In backstage moments, the teacher might defecate, perform toiletries, etc. Yet, even in this backstage, the quintessential teacher should presumably not perform vices. Alcohol was, in the ideal, forbidden: "no teacher should tipple, no tippler should teach" (Milham, 1998 p. 42) Even worse, solitary vices such as masturbation, homosexual activity, and pre-marital sex were all practices to be avoided.
As Barman’s paper emphasises, not all teachers in the early years of B.C. schooling were able to avoid scandal caused by sexual misdemeanours. Some of the allegations include:

At Stanley ‘some people began to pass remarks’ about the young unmarried teacher boarding at the home of a trustee after his wife had left for a month’s visit to Victoria. At Cache Creek public boarding school, established in 1874 for children living too far away to attend day schools, the details are sketchy, except that a music teacher,” by a determined manipulation of her shawl and by a delicate cough, which no doubt was assumed for the occasion, managed to deceive everyone till it was too late to prevent the evil.” At Hope it was an excluded female boarder who spread the story, to quote the teacher, “that something very improper had occurred between myself and a Half-breed boy about 18 years of age” after spying her and the landlady entertained “a young Frenchman” by dressing him “as a woman” (Barman, 1998 p. 5).

The stories continue. What is also interesting is the community response. Barman lists a series of actions taken against teachers who were seen to act inappropriately. Dismissal, resignation and boycotts by parents seemed to be the most common methods of resolving bad situations.

It is clear that in the early decades of this century, the school was a highly bounded region with respect to sexuality. Institutional constraints would make the entry of the topic of sexuality into the classroom difficult. In 1910, after having decided children desperately needed some guidance with regard to sexuality, the Vancouver School Board turned to the ‘experts’. In 1910 the board turned to the Vancouver Medical Association to “take charge of the teaching of Sex Hygiene in the school.” The doctors, aware of the moral climate, were keenly cognizant of the need to exercise tactical intelligence and extreme caution when implementing a sex education program. In the final chapter, I discuss the sex education program developed by the Vancouver Medical Association, the influences they turned to in the creation process, and the final
results of their prescription. I argue that, despite their awareness of the difficulties, it is clear that the doctors were passionately committed to introducing a sex education program into the schools. Science was the solution for the doctors, for it seemed to offer the only hope that the 'hot' topic of sex could be slipped coolly within the public school system without raising eyebrows, ire, emotion, or excessive cultural debate.
Chapter III: Handing Sex Education over to the Experts

In 1910, the Vancouver Board of School Trustees turned to the Vancouver Medical Association (V.M.A.) for assistance in designing a sex education program for the British Columbia school system. They asked the Association to select a committee of physicians to develop a series of lectures on the topic of sex hygiene for school use. The decision of the school board to turn to the medical profession is significant. This decision can be seen to symbolise an attempt by the school board to align themselves with what was at the time a very new educational trend. Ontario during this time was still relying on sources inspired by social purity (to be explained below) for such teaching. By contrast the decision to turn to the V.M.A. reflects Vancouver's modern inclinations as discussed in Chapter One, and shows a desire on the part of the school board to utilise a modern, scientific approach to curriculum building. This decision is in keeping with the non-sectarian nature of the British Columbian educational system detailed in Chapter Two. In my view, the decision to ask the local doctors to generate sex education curriculum cannot be understood without a historical understanding of the progressive social movements of the day. Some understanding of social purity attempts at sex education, the Social Hygiene Movement and the vigilance or anti-prostitution movements is necessary to understand Vancouver's earliest sex education efforts. Exploring these movements involves navigating complex relationships between science, morality, modernism and sexuality.
The first movement of significance in relation to the history of sex education is the social purity movement (Moran, 1996; Strong, 1972). David Pivar (1973) provides a comprehensive discussion of purity reform in the United States which was carried out by urban Progressives at the end of the nineteenth and beginning of the twentieth centuries. He suggests that “two impulses forged the reformers’ program: An unstated utopian vision and the concrete new social realities of the city” (p. 9). Two social realities provided much of the focus for purity reformers: prostitution or social vice, and temperance. These ‘twin evils’ of lust were seen as the primary causes of the perceived moral downfall evident in modern North American cities. The city offered a growing anonymity within which vice was said to flourish. While Pivar deals with the American purity ‘crusade,’ his work is relevant because of the extent to which the movement influenced Canada. Pivar complains that American purity movements are largely unexplored but sources on the Canadian movement are even more sparse.

The most significant recent book dealing with the Canadian purity movement is Mariana Valverde’s *The Age of Light, Soap and Water* (1991). While Valverde says it “is very difficult if not impossible to make any general statements about the specificity of Canadian social reform movements,” it can be said that “the well-educated urban English Canadians who led these movements
were definitely learning from English and increasingly American sources” (p. 16). The agenda of Canadian reformers was very similar to the American one with a few exceptions. Issues such as “prostitution, divorce, illegitimacy, ‘Indians and Chinese,’ public education, suppression of obscene literature, prevention (of prostitution) and rescue of fallen women, and shelters for women and children...” were the primary foci of the movement (p. 18). Valverde stresses the movement’s close link to the ‘social gospel’ in Canada, though she maintains that this link was only partial. The social gospel movement “refers to the attempts to humanise and/or christianise the political economy or urban-industrial capitalism” (p. 18). The Christian element is key to understanding social purity attempts to introduce sex education.

Chistabelle Sethna (1996) provides a detailed analysis of Christian attempts within the social purity movement to establish sex education in Ontario public schools. Sethna discusses the role played by the Ontario Women’s Christian Temperance Union and their use of sex educator Arthur Beall in the introduction of sex education to Ontario schools and WCTU mothers’ meetings. Sethna’s work is extremely useful in that it offers a key site of comparison for the Vancouver case.

Sethna’s work, like Valverde’s, stresses the importance of Eastern Canada in the shape and substance of the Canadian purity movement. She uses the

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1 Pivar, dealing with the American movement, states that the purity leadership was a well defined group consisting mainly of moderate and conservative women reformers who were members of such groups as
Ontario example to illustrate what she considers to be the first public school sex education attempt in Canada. Sethna argues that "In Canada the Ontario branch of the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), one of the country's largest women's organisations, took the lead in introducing children to both home- and school-based sex instruction" (p. 186). The WCTU accomplished this task in the first decade of this century by providing mothers' meetings where "strategies and materials on the sex instruction of children" were discussed (ibid). In addition to meetings, the WCTU hired Arthur Beall to "lecture social purity to school boys" (ibid). Beall's lectures are remembered for their "dire warnings" about vice with a particular focus on "schoolboy masturbation," the so called solitary vice (p. 187).

Sethna (1989) suggests that one of the primary literary resources used for Beall and the WCTU's efforts generally was a series of American books, *The Sex and Self Series* written by social purist Sylvanus Stall. This series is a prime example of sex education literature which came out of the social purity movement. Sethna (1989) describes Stall's books as "prescriptive sexual literature" (p. 3) because of the centrality of moral advice in these texts. She suggests that the manual "furnished readers with highly structured models of ideal Anglo-Saxon, upper and middle class Christian manhood and womanhood" (ibid). This immensely popular, best-selling series provided advice on "...child and adult sexuality, human reproduction, child bearing and
child rearing...health, disease, dress, diet, exercise, toilette, and etiquette” (ibid).
The series in particular “railed against non-reproductive [sexual]activity” (p. 31).
In this regard the series typified sex education attempts coming from the social purity movement which advocated a strong repression of sexual impulses not associated directly with procreation. This intense “...struggle against lust...” which characterised purity efforts was declared bankrupt by the Social Hygiene Movement (to be discussed shortly) which argued that the negative approach to sex education was ineffective and counterproductive (Strong, 1972).

It is important to understand the Vancouver case as part of the movement which argued against the negative approach used by the social purity movement. Sethna (1996) mentions briefly the Vancouver Medical Association’s Sex Hygiene committee (VMASHC) and their 1916 report. She concludes that while Ontario “had no qualms about school-based sex education as undertaken by Beall,” British Columbia did have deep reservations (p. 199). Yet, while Sethna is not exactly wrong in her characterisation of the VMASHC’s reservations, the rationale for Sethna’s reservations is not made clear in her work. My close reading of the extensive minutes\(^2\) of the VMASHC which were recorded during 1912 and 1913 shows that the committee did indeed have grave reservations about sex education, yet these reservations were not at all based on a lack of support for sex education generally. On the contrary, the doctors were

\(^2\) both of which had Canadian counterparts – WCTU and National Council of Women.
especially concerned with the type of sex education delivered by purity movement attempts (e.g. the sex education taught by Beall) which they considered outdated and ineffective. Sharply aware of events in the United States, and in keeping with the latest information available from the Social Hygiene Movement, the Vancouver doctors’ intense commitment to sex education led them to create what they saw as the only politically viable option at the time. They produced a program which would slip unnoticed by the potentially volatile public and serve to lay the foundations of a modern, scientific program which would encourage children and youth to approach their sexuality from a more positive, informed, and rational position. I argue that the doctors’ decision and recommendations must be understood in the context of their relation to the teachings of the Social Hygiene Movement, a movement which at the time of their work was still separate from social reform. Below, I am concerned with the uniqueness of the Vancouver approach.

Before going on to analyse the minutes of the VMASHC, two general points regarding differences between British Columbia and Ontario must be highlighted. First, it must be noted that British Columbia was not home to an especially vigilant social purity movement such as was present in Ontario. Deborah Neilson (1976) finds evidence of this in her exploration of the different responses to prostitution found in Vancouver and Toronto during the years 1900-

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2 The minutes which are held at the Vancouver Medical Association Archive in Vancouver are 63 pages long. They begin with the first meeting of the committee on Nov 18th 1912 and end on Sept 16th 1913. Meetings were held each month.
1920. In short, she argues that Vancouver did not experience the White Slavery panic to the extent that Toronto did. Though there was opposition to the social evil in Vancouver, much of this opposition came from business interests who were worried about their property value. The Moral Reform Council of British Columbia (1910) was the primary voice concerned with social purity. Neilson suggests that this council had a weak political voice in the province. Second, it must be further stressed that many new professionals in Vancouver turned to the U.S for leadership in the early twentieth century. It is well known that many professionals went south to Seattle or Spokane, or to California for professional development. In keeping with this trend, the VMASHC reached out overwhelmingly to American institutions, literature, and sources which they considered to be the most modern. In order to understand their recommendations it is necessary to understand the movement which they were a part of: the American Social Hygiene Movement.
Physicians, Sex and Science

To understand the deliberations of the VMASHC it is useful to start with their name which is a clear indication of their connection with the Social Hygiene Movement. The Social Hygiene Movement began at the turn of the century and was initially associated with the efforts of the New York physician Prince Morrow whose goal was to limit the spread of venereal disease in the United States (Imber, 1982). The VMASHC demonstrated their support for and appreciation of the work of Prince Morrow in various places throughout the minutes. Not only did the committee mention the importance of his involvement in the first International Conference for the Prophylaxis of Syphilis and Venereal Disease in Brussels in Sept 1899 (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912); they also relied heavily on his book, Disease and Marriage: Social Prophylaxis (Morrow, 1904) for guidance. Finally, the committee also took time to mark Morrow’s death. On April 23, 1913 they wrote “Dr. Pearson expressed regret at the death of Dr. Morrow. Paying tribute to the work he had so very faithfully and energetically carried on” (p. 43).

In the first five years of the twentieth century, Morrow engaged in extensive study on the causes of VD and worked at creating theoretical solutions by keeping in contact with participants at the Brussels conference (Imber 1982). In 1905 he organised a meeting through the New York Academy of Medicine to discuss the topic; out of the meeting the American Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis (ASSMP) was formed (p. 343). In the next five years, this
organisation was remarkably successful in attracting membership: by "1910, there were over 700 members and at least 16 state and local affiliates in all sections of the United States" (p. 343). In 1910, a wealthy Bostonian, Delcevare King took on the task of fundraising for ASSMP and initiated a widespread subscription campaign. His efforts were enormously successful and helped the organisation to join forces with leadership around the country. In 1910 the ASSMP became the American Federation for Sex Hygiene (AFSH). At this point the organisation was still separate from the American Purity Alliance and the National Vigilance Committee whose agendas increasingly crossed paths with the Social Hygiene Movement. In late 1913 the anti-prostitution movement merged with the Social Hygiene Movement and the American Federation of Sex Hygiene and the American Vigilance Association became the American Social Hygiene Association (p. 346).

The merging of the two movements was one of necessity and not of ideological uniformity. The wide range of conflicting opinions which came out of the merger speaks to this. In rough terms, the vigilance or purity side of the consolidation was more concerned with the improvement of public morality and with the Christian state of society. The Social Hygiene Movement was more focused on public health, sanitation, and combating venereal diseases; morality was eventually taken on as part of the larger solution but was never the primary focus of attention.

3 The organization continued to use the ASSMP name as well for a number of years.
Key to the Social Hygiene Movement was the idea that the problem of venereal disease could only be solved by science - both social and natural science which could deal with the problem openly, plainly and rationally. Thus a commitment to the standpoint of 'science' (Imber 387) was the defining aspect of the Social Hygiene Movement to which morality was later added in a variety of conflicting ways.

The Social Hygiene Movement's commitment to science was also a commitment to the belief in the power of learning and knowledge in overcoming social problems I discussed in Chapter Two. As a result, education was a central task of the organisation. Education of the young was increasingly seen as the only hope to prevent the devastating effects of venereal disease. Yet, just how this education should take place was open to a wide diversity of opinions, most of which claimed to be scientifically sound. The VMASHC made a point of becoming aware of the many different approaches advocated by various members of the American Social Hygiene Movement. After an intensive study of the current literature they came to the conclusion that they were practically "compelled to strike a new line of sex education on their own" because "no two sources seem to agree on an appropriate method" (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912 p. 21). Thus, the most important influence the doctors took from the Social Hygiene Movement was its overriding commitment to modern science.
Adapting Foucault

Before continuing on with the story of the VMASHC, I would like to raise some theoretical and methodological insights taken from Foucault’s *The History of Sexuality, Volume I* (1978) because of the relevance of Foucault’s work to this chapter. Firstly, the Social Hygiene movement in general can be seen as part of what Foucault calls “the steady proliferation of discourses concerned with sex” which occurred in nineteenth century Western culture (p. 18). Foucault’s “repressive hypothesis” is useful in that it reverses a common understanding of the Victorian era: that sexuality was repressed during the reign of Queen Victoria. The widespread development of the Social Hygiene Movement is a case in point. To be clear, Foucault’s argument does not deny that sex may well have been a taboo subject in many respects on the level of ordinary conversation (p. 18). His argument is not a quantitative one (concerned with how much people spoke about sexuality for example). Instead, Foucault is arguing that

the multiplication of discourses concerning sex [was] in the field of exercise of power itself: an institutional incitement to speak about it...a determination on the part of the agencies of power to hear it spoken about, and to cause *it* to speak through explicit articulation and endlessly accumulated detail (p. 18).

It is this “institutional incitement” to speak about sexuality which is of concern here. Foucault’s analysis makes it possible to see the Social Hygiene movement as part of the institutional apparatus which both created and regulated sexuality. Foucault’s repressive hypothesis also allows for a view of the early twentieth century school which sees sexuality as central to schooling as opposed to popular
ideas which see sex and schooling as unrelated in Victorian and Edwardian periods (p. 27).

Foucault suggests that “sex was a constant preoccupation” in the eighteenth century school. There is no reason why his analysis can not be applied to subsequent centuries. He argues that “the architectural layout, the rules of discipline, and [the] whole internal organisation” of the school reveals how the organisers of the school took sex “permanently into account” (p. 28). In the case of the early school system in B.C. the practice of using separate entrances for boys and girls is an example. Foucault argues that in the eighteenth century “the sex of the school boy became...a public problem” (p. 28). The question of how this happened is relevant here and requires a brief look at Foucault’s notions of ‘power’ and ‘discourse.’

Foucault did not see the relationship of the school to the school boy as simply one of domination in the traditional sense. This is because he rejects the idea that there is “a binary and all encompassing opposition between ruler and ruled” or, stated more clearly that power is exerted “from the top down” (p. 94). Foucault therefore offers a revolutionary understanding of power which does not see the effects of power only in negative terms. In *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison* (1977) he argues that we should think of power as a productive force which “produces domains of objects and rituals of truth” (p. 194). Foucault sees power as “manifold relations of force” which occurs within many different levels of relationships which themselves take place within “a
comprehensive system” or “structure [of] institutions” (p. 94). Importantly, Foucault argues for a historical inquiry into the relationship between power and knowledge because he argues that it has historically been through discourse (knowledge) which power was articulated and exercised (p. 27).4

In this study, I have chosen to work with the specific discourses which influenced the VMSHC in creating a sex education program for the B.C. public school system. For this reason, a few words on Foucault’s understanding of discourse are required. Foucault’s term discourse can be understood here as referring to a body of knowledge. Given the relationship between power and knowledge alluded to above, it can be said that the idea of discourse raises two key questions: what can be said and what can be thought. Clearly, given that power and the discourse through which it is exercised operates within social

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4 Foucault argues that the “institutional incitement to discourse” can be traced back to a main ritual of western culture – the confession (58). He suggests that the method of the confession “has spread its effects far and wide” meaning that it has left the confines of the church. The method of confession, increasingly in the nineteenth century played “a part in justice, medicine, education, family relationships” (p. 59). Perhaps it is useful to see the relationship of the confession to scientific or rational fields of knowledge production as similar to the relationship earlier described between the Protestant ethic and the spirit of capitalism. Key is that the technique of the confession (in a secular or non secular usage) involves a relationship of power and truth. It shows “that truth is not by nature free — nor error servile — but that its production is thoroughly imbued with relations of power” (p.60). Here, Foucault sees the confession as “a ritual of discourse” necessarily involving a relationship: one does not confess without a partner. (p. 60) Foucault sees the method of the confession as “the general standard governing the production of the true discourse on sex” (63). Foucault argues the method of the confession led to a method of interpretation whereby “The truth did not reside slowly with the subject” but would only emerge with the confession where “it was assimilated and recorded.”(63) Medicalised, the confession translated into a system of creating knowledge about sexuality. It incited a body of discourse to grow inside of a scientific apparatus whereby “listening techniques, the postulate of causality, the principle of latency” etc. worked to have the effect that sexuality was to be defined “by nature” as “a domain susceptible to pathological processes and hence one calling for therapeutic or normalising interventions.” (68)
structures and institutions (again not in a 'from above' manner), what is being said and by whom, is as relevant as how power orders the kinds of speaking which have taken place. Here, Foucault is interested in how discourses are collected into disciplines such as, taking my own example, sex hygiene. As I demonstrate in Chapter One and Chapter Two, not just any kind of knowledge about sexuality was speakable or teachable. Foucault’s analysis of the relationship between power, discourse, and sexuality help explain not only why but how this was the case.

With this in mind, I explore who the doctors of the VMSHC were and raise the question of what it meant that they, in their capacity as local doctors, were asked to come up with a sex education program for the Vancouver school board. Finally, I want to examine some of the ideas and discourses found in the various methods of sex education which the doctors were exposed to. From this exploration it is possible to argue that the VMASHC chose to align themselves with, as I will later explain, what has been referred to as the ‘second stage’ in sex education recommendations which came out of the Social Hygiene Movement.

**Drs. Riggs, Brodie and Pearson: A Brief Look at the Men in Charge**

The task of building a sex education curriculum in British Columbia fell on the shoulders of three local Vancouver doctors: Dr. H.W. Riggs, Dr F. Brodie and Dr. J.M. Pearson. Unfortunately, after a thorough search I have been unable to find any secondary sources which deal with these particular doctors. Dr.
Riggs is the only member of the committee for whom I have been able to find any substantial information. From archival information and news clippings it seems that Dr. H.W. Riggs had the highest profile of the group. Riggs is best remembered for his work as the founder of the "I am Among You as One Who Serves" (AOTS) club in 1923. This non-denominational, philanthropic club was "modelled...along service club lines with supper and entertainment, discussions and business at its monthly meetings." AOTS "did not insist on too much formal religion" (Valentine E., 1948). The club was known for its "free and easy attitude" and, although Christian, encouraged "Deeds and not words." The AOTS club is remembered for its sponsorship of playground equipment, music lessons for needy children, and a Christmas Hamper program. Aside from the AOTS club, Riggs participated in the Kiwanis Club and was a member of the Masonic Order (AOTS Pays Tribute to Founder, 1950). Riggs graduated in medicine from Manitoba College in 1898 and moved to Vancouver a year later. It is interesting to note that his daughter Eleanor Riggs became a doctor and practised with her father.

5 The Vancouver Medical Association has one page biographical records on some early physicians. Dr. J.M. Pearson's practice is briefly described on one such record. The only information listed is his date of entry in Vancouver (1897) and his office locations which are worth mentioning because of their proximity to the Red Light District. He worked in the first decade of this century at 415 Hastings St, 603 Cambie St. and 1229 Georgia St. (Vancouver Medical Association, Bibliographic reference Sheet, 06/01 1952.)
The Workings of the Vancouver Medical Association Sex Hygiene Committee

Dr. H.W. Riggs, Dr F. Brodie, and Dr. J.M. Pearson worked together for almost a year at creating a sex hygiene curriculum. I have approached the details of their monthly meetings as a map: first, a map which leads to many other primary sources which I have examined and reflected on, and second, a map in the broader sense of a source of discourse to be analysed. In these two senses I am attempting a limited genealogy of the minutes. Working from the Foucauldian assumption that knowledge is organised within social systems, power relations, and social practises, I view the minutes as an example of knowledge production. Discourses “crystallise into institutions, they inform individual behaviour, they act as grids for the perception and evaluation of things” (Adams, 1997 p. 6). Discourse analysis aims “to determine which discourses are operating” and to discover the “possibilities for the construction of meaning” within their circulation (p. 6). The goal of my work is to situate the Committee’s minutes within a broader context in order to more fully understand the process of creating a line of sex education in B.C. In this investigation of the origins of sex education, I want to look at how it was decided that sex should be taught at school through the subject of biology. By questioning the process by which biology came to be the legitimate and preferred approach for the teaching of sexuality in the school system, this approach itself can be understood not as the true and most correct approach but as one method among others.
The first task accomplished by the VMASHC was to become a member of The Society of Sanitary and Modern Prophylaxis (SSMP)\(^6\) which, as mentioned, was also known as the American Federation for Sex Hygiene. The committee promptly received copies of *The Journal of The Society of Sanitary and Modern Prophylaxis* (SSMP) dating back to 1910. The SSMP also sent them a series of pamphlets published by the society including "The Young Man’s Problem," “The Boy’s Problem,” “Health and Hygiene of Sex,” “Need for Instruction of Sex Hygiene,” etc. Also, the SSMP directed the VMASHC to chapters of the organisation within a closer geographic reach. After writing to societies in Spokane, Portland, Oregon, and San Francisco, the Vancouver Committee received more literature.\(^7\) For example, from the Spokane Society of Social and Moral Hygiene they received "A Plain Talk with Girls About Their Health and Physical Development" and "The Need for Education in Sexual Hygiene." The committee also made contact with the Seattle Society of Hygiene which had started up just prior to their first committee meeting.

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\(^6\) According to the 1912 Report on Progress by the Society of Sanitary and Moral Prophylaxis it can be ascertained that prior to the time of the doctors application for membership there were only requests for Canadian membership rather than actual Canadian members. That this committee held the first Canadian membership seems likely, though at this point not firmly established.

\(^7\) While the actual correspondence has been lost, a summary of the nature of the correspondence is written into the minutes.
The Focus on Prostitution

In assessing the information the committee received from the various arms of The Society of Sanitary and Modern Prophylaxis, it must be stressed that a large portion of the material received by the doctors dealt with debates over the legalised regulation of prostitution. Because of this pervasive focus, the prostitution connection with social hygiene needs to be addressed in further detail to understand the kind of arguments the doctors were exposed to.

Initially, the VMASHC received the first several volumes of SSMP’s journal entitled *Social Diseases.* Through the first issues of *Social Diseases* the Committee was exposed to a series of debates around the Mann Act (1910) and the Bennett Act (1910) which “prohibited the interstate and international transportation of women for immoral purposes” (D’Emilio & Freedman, 1988 p. 201). Clause 79 of the Page Bill was also discussed and heavily debated in the journal. This clause called for the incarceration of any person who fell under vagrancy laws, sought charitable help, and was diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease. The clause allowed for persons found to be carrying either syphilis or gonorrhoea to be detained for up to one year in order to receive medical attention for their ailments (Morrow, 1910).

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8 I have read through Volume 1, Numbers 1-4 of *Social Diseases.* I have read some of the subsequent issues as I will document throughout this chapter. The earliest volumes are available though Interlibrary loan. The Journal evolved into the *Journal of Social Hygiene* in 1914. The U.B.C. library has volumes 1-40 of this journal.
What is striking is the rich and detailed debates surrounding these bills and the issue of prostitution in general. The early volumes of *Social Diseases* contain a great diversity of opinion on the subject. While typically all participants in the discussion were in agreement that prostitution “was a breeding ground for venereal disease” and thus had to be addressed, the solutions proposed were vastly different and, at times, contradictory. Bearing in mind that at the time of the doctors’ initial membership in the ASSMP Vigilance organisations were still separate from the ASSMP, it is interesting to note that some arguments paralleled the vigilance movement’s faith in punitive legislation. Other arguments resisted legal solutions. The issue of legislation and regulation is complex and has been well addressed in a number of sources (D’Emilio & Freedman, 1988; Mackey, 1987; Butler, 1985; Bell 1994). A few key points surrounding the debates are important here.

First, as mentioned, physicians historically had been in favour of and involved in attempts to regulate prostitution. In Europe, the system of regulation was well established in France and Germany in the nineteenth century whereby prostitutes were issued certificates to show whether or not they had a clean bill of health (Bell, 1994). Infected prostitutes were given medical care sometimes with and sometimes without their consent in either hospital or reformatory settings. While the United States had no such system, as mentioned, it introduced a similar scheme utilising existing laws whereby women could be arrested for vagrancy and sent for medical inspection in 1910 (Morrow, Prince,
1910). If found diseased, prostitutes were supposed to be given hospital treatment but because of a lack of funding, most were sent to work camps. Physicians both for and against regulation expressed grave reservations at this practice. The overwhelming sentiment in Volume 1 Issue 4 of *Social Diseases* for example argued that work camps were not hospitals and therefore should not be places of refuge for the sick. Also, hospitals were not to be considered reformatories as their primary purpose was the healing of organic diseases. Dr. Prince Morrow was stridently opposed to a punitive approach to combating venereal disease.

Morrow (1910) was opposed to regulation because he believed regulative efforts always targeted the wrong culprit. He suggests that regulation typically has the effect of punishing a “class of poor women” (p. 8) who need support rather than laws whose “object is to make the life of these women as hard and difficult as possible” (p.17). Again, Morrow, offering a strong feminist argument, argued that the real “criminals” in prostitution were the men who had sex with prostitutes and then failed to inform their wives of the risk associated with their extramarital liaisons. Morrow therefore not only asked men to give up their privileged ‘double standard’ but also called for honesty in sexual relationships (p. 15). Furthermore, Morrow argued that regulation was not scientifically sound because of the unreliability of diagnostic tests, the lack of effective cures, and the instant reinfection of ‘clean women’ upon resuming
sexual contact. Thus, certification was a farce and led to a false sense of security (p. 18).

While it is impossible to fully determine the opinions taken by Riggs, Brodie, and Pearson with respect to the complex issue of regulation, their position seems in keeping with Morrow’s arguments. In a letter to Hon. H. E. Young, the British Columbia Minister of Education, they wrote about the importance of sex education: they write

...the appeal of religious bodies to popular morality has not been effectual and their legislation [designed to] control the Social Evil has not only proved inadequate but a source of danger to adolescents... (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912)

They go on to suggest that while there is great enthusiasm in the “lay press” for legislative measures, the best results would not come through legislation and instead “could be obtained by systematic and scientific interaction in the schools” (P. 47). The situation of prostitution in Vancouver was of course relevant to the doctors because, as discussed in Chapter One, the very existence of prostitution sparked requests for the school board to deal with sex education in the first place.

It is worth reasserting that in Vancouver, prostitution was tolerated in certain areas, yet there was no system of regulation in place for the screening of venereal disease. Prostitutes, like other citizens, were treated of their own volition. There is little evidence available in the minutes regarding the personal views of members if the VMASHC on the subject of prostitution. Further
research may provide some more indication of their views; at the very least, the question of whether the doctors had any contact with prostitutes within their medical practices could be answered. The location of their offices suggests that this may well have been possible, indeed probable, but I have not found anything to substantiate this.

It is, however, interesting to note that there is at least some evidence of a positive relationship between certain Vancouver doctors and prostitutes. In a study by Margaret Andrews (1978-79) of medical attendance during Vancouver’s first thirty-four years, the example of a young “gregarious” bachelor doctor, who served prostitutes is given (p. 37). Henri Evariste Langis, who was “fond of theatre, romantic verse and evenings with friends”, worked with “Laura Scott and her employees” from a brothel at 111 Dupont St (now Pender) (p. 44). As was the general practice of the day, medical care was never refused to those who could not afford it, but payment was highly encouraged. Langis had a positive relationship with the “second-class citizens” (p. 44) of this brothel, according to Andrews. Also interesting is that Langis “adopted a scientific approach to medicine earlier than most doctors” (p. 44). Andrews notes that “he bought a microscope in 1885, at which time microscopes were not yet used by most American medical schools” (ibid). This adds further evidence to the argument that Vancouver was not suffering from a lack of modern medical care at the turn of the century.
To my knowledge no studies have been done documenting the impact of either syphilis or gonorrhoea in early Vancouver. While, the existence of these diseases is recorded in a number of places (McKechnie, 1972; Rose, 1972), the inconsistent nature of recording and diagnosing specific venereal infections would hamper in-depth analysis.

**Quacks in Oregon: Getting Rid of the Competition and Securing Medical Dominance**

Finally, it is worth mentioning that physicians did not hold a monopoly on public health care at the turn of the century. The existence of what the V.M.A. Sex Hygiene committee referred to as 'quack doctors' points to the relatively unregulated state of medical health at that time. In Vancouver, as elsewhere, non-medical healers advertised cures to all sorts of things including venereal diseases. Part of the Social Hygiene movement was dedicated to exposing these non-licensed healers as quacks and charlatans. This aspect of the movement was made clear to the Vancouver doctors who learned via correspondence that from 1911-1913 the Oregon Social Hygiene Society’s first objective was to rid the state of quacks (Vancouver Medical Association 1912, Foster 1916). The experience of the Oregon society was considered “valuable” and the doctors learned from their experience and the difficulties they encountered.

In July, 1916 the Oregon Social Hygiene Society (OSHS) published a history of their achievements in Social Hygiene. Because of their communication with the VMASHC, as well as their close association with
Vancouver's close neighbour Seattle, their work in this regard will be briefly described. The work of the OSHS began in 1911 when the society concerned itself with the spread of what they saw as 'medical falsehood' which they argued was rampant among non-licensed healers (p. 310). In 1911, detectives were hired to investigate what they saw as 'fake' doctors: they "camped at the trail of every 'medical institute', and 'leading specialist for Men,' and 'Chinese Wonder' and 'Lost Manhood restorer' who was operating in the state of Oregon" (p. 310). After exposing what they saw as one scam after another, they pushed for and achieved a state law which made it unlawful for any person to print or distribute in any manner the kind of advertisement to which they, as a society, objected! In effect they became a policing arm and virtually shut down such advertising in their state (p. 312).

The situation of 'quack doctors' in Vancouver would prove an interesting study; whether Vancouver received any 'quacks' fleeing Oregon or Washington is a question for further research. Clearly, browsing through the classified ads of The Province for example in the years 1911-1913, the existence of such healers is evident. Also, very blatant advertisements can be found in the free newspaper The Truth which circulated in Vancouver 1912. In the November issue (1912), "The Old Soldier Cure" is advertised as, "A swift and certain cure for Gonorrhoea, Gleet, Urinary Discharges and all Seminal Weaknesses" (See Appendix I).
The information received by the VMASHC from Oregon must be seen as part of a larger battle over standardisation in medical practice. In the United States, nation-wide changes were being made to regulate medical training and practitioners. After all, it was only in 1890 that the National Association of Medical Colleges had a definite set of criteria for medical training and strict membership rules (Duffy, 1993). In the early 1900s many Americans lacked faith in scientific medicine and relied on a variety of nutritional products, astrology, and 'quack remedies' (Young, 1997). The backbone of the Social Hygiene movement was the idea that healthcare should be governed by modern science. This in part involved hailing the place of physicians within the community. In Morrow's *Social Diseases* (1904), it is clearly argued that physicians are the natural leaders in sex education. At the time, this was not an established tradition. Traditionally it had been the place of the family or perhaps the minister to discuss such topics. It is worth considering Morrow's arguments regarding the place of doctors, for they seem congruent with the VMASHC's ideas, discussions and reports as captured in the minutes.

Morrow (1904) argues that plans for sex education should most correctly be drawn up by physicians (p. 357). He suggests that the physicians' natural leadership comes with the nature of the profession. It is "the freedom with which his vocation permits him to talk on topics ordinarily forbidden" that makes him/her a natural leader. Secondly, the physicians' "professional knowledge" and scientific training makes him/her the most appropriate
community member to be involved in a sex education program (p. 357). Morrow
does not exclude the involvement of others such as parents or clergy but he is
very clear that it should be physicians who take the lead. Morrow deals with the
question of morality rather delicately. His writing shows a full awareness of the
traditional opposition between physicians and moralists with regard to
understandings of sexuality.

Morrow suggests that at the time of his writing, many physicians held a
very pragmatic approach to sexuality, accepting the status quo - the flourishing
of prostitution and sex outside of marriage - as a human, natural, and somewhat
uncontrollable state of affairs (p. 360). Morrow also states more generally that
the physician's scientific background makes it impossible for him to view
medical problems as directly caused by "sin." He implores the reader to reject
such religious explanations and in this regard he writes that there had always
been "an irreconcilable conflict between the moralists and the hygienists"(p. 360).
Nevertheless, he cautions doctors to see that "licentious living," meaning casual
sex and excessive alcohol consumption, may "provide injury to the body" (p.
361). In this regard, he argues that doctors should be aware of the physical harm
which could result from the behaviour the moralists were railing against.
Arguing that "the duty of reforming morals is not within the province of the
physician," the physician still is within his jurisdiction to deal with problems
whose solutions have traditionally been devised by moralists and the clergy.
Finally, Morrow argues that physicians and clergy can and should solve "their
fundamental opposition” and work side by side, as a coalition, in the mutual fight against venereal disease (p. 360).

Here Morrow’s arguments subtly point to what has been called the rise of the expert. His cautious arguments concerning the social place of the clergy versus the role of the physician in dealing with areas traditionally deemed ‘moral’ can be seen, in part, as a secular attempt to replace old, religious institutions with modern, rational ones. This is the argument put forth in a recent article by Jeffery Moran (1996) which deals with the first American sex education attempt in Chicago which occurred in 1912. Moran characterises early social hygiene sex education attempts as evidence of both the rise of the expert and of “popular opposition to this attempted ascendancy” (p. 483).

In describing the “earliest Sex Education attempt in an American public school system,” Moran suggests that the eventual failure of that attempt must be seen as evidence of “popular antagonism towards bureaucracy, scientific naturalism, and expertise” (p. 483). Moran’s analysis as well as his description of the failure of the Chicago Sex education attempt is key in understanding the extreme caution and political adeptness which the Vancouver doctors demonstrated in their proceedings. His arguments further show the precarious nature of the VMASHC’s project and help to explain their tactics and eventual choice to ground Vancouver’s sex education curriculum as deeply as possible in science.
The Failure of the Front Door: Chicago's Experience with Sex Hygiene

Again, what is interesting, are the dates. According to Moran, in 1913, during the meetings of the Vancouver committee, Ella Flagg Young, Chicago’s superintendent of schools, attempted to bring sex education into her school district. Young, Moran suggests, was appalled by the fact that, in her own words, “So far as any information the Illinois school physiologies contain...people have no sex organs” (p. 481). In order to correct this situation, she “proposed a series of lectures to be given [in schools] by outside physicians” (ibid). This task was familiar to the VMA doctors who were asked in 1910 to produce such lectures. While the Vancouver committee was wary of the lecture approach, Young was determined to provide lectures on “physiology, moral hygiene and venereal disease” (p. 506). In taking action to accomplish these goals within her school district, Young met up with “a substantial body of Chicagoleans” who “disagreed strenuously” with her agenda (ibid).

While the complete story is available in Moran’s work, it is enough to summarise the outcome of the program. In short, Young pressed on despite widespread opposition which was publicised in the press. By June 1913, the school board had rescinded its endorsement of the program and Young was forced to resign in July, 1913 (p. 507). Her experiment which was implemented for a brief time, did not last past the 1913-1914 school year (ibid). Opposition to the program was solidified when, in November, 1913 “...the United States
attorney had ruled that the circulars containing excerpts from the physicians’
talks were obscene and therefore, by the “Comstock Act” in the U.S., could be
excluded from the mails” (p. 508). Interestingly, the Sex Hygiene Committee in
Vancouver appears to have had the last of its regular meetings on Sept 16, 1913.
Given the Comstock Act, it is perhaps fortunate that their primary literature
concerning sex education had already been ordered by mail and delivered.

How aware the Vancouver doctors were of the Chicago experiment is not
entirely clear from the minutes. The doctors had some contacts in Chicago but
because the actual correspondence has been lost it is difficult to say how much
the doctors knew. Certainly the doctors were aware of the customs problems
and Catholic opposition to sex education being expressed in the mainstream
press (Vancouver Medical Association 1912). The committee suspected in April
1913 that some of their mail was being held up in customs (p. 43). While the
specifics of their knowledge of the Chicago situation is at this point unknown,
certainly, the committee had contact with much of the same social hygiene
literature which Young used to create her program. This is clear simply by their
mutual association with the American Federation for Sex Hygiene. Perhaps it is
enough to note that the doctors were very conscious about the possibility of
failure caused by public opposition. This possibility of failure seemed
paramount to VMASHC, and the program they designed was very much
influenced by this fear.
It is also worth mentioning that the VMASHC seems to disappear at the same time as Young’s program failed. Unfortunately, the Vancouver Medical Association is not aware of the whereabouts of any minutes of the committee between the last recorded meeting of Sept 1913 and a report of the committee dated 1916. Interestingly, the report of 1916 is contained within the 1912-1913 minutes which indicates that it is very possible the committee was not very active between the years 1913-1916. With this in mind, I now turn to examine some of the suggestions around sex education curriculum that the VMASHC was exposed to before outlining their proposed program.

According to the VMASHC’s 1916 report, in the course of their committee work they were confronted by “a wide range of diverse sources” (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912 p. 19). The committee reviewed a number of books, journal articles, pamphlets, and reports. Some of the literature they reviewed is available. I have chosen to separate the material I have been able to access into two categories of Sex Hygiene literature. I have borrowed these categories from M.J. Exner (1915), former specialising secretary in Sex Education of the International Committee of Young Men’s Christian Associations. Writing in 1914, Exner suggests that sex education literature can be identified as belonging to three stages of the sex education movement. The first two stages concern us here as the third stage was not in effect until after the doctors had finished their meetings. Exner suggests that the first stage “was that of pathologic emphasis” (p. 573) which concerned itself chiefly with the gross physical and
disease aspects of the question and which made its appeal almost entirely to fear over the unhealthy consequences of sex. The second stage, “was that of the physiologic emphasis” (p. 573). According to Exner this stage “took much higher ground in its appreciation of the value and dignity of the sex instinct and sought to interpret its relation to developing manhood” (ibid). Exner’s criticism of the second stage was that, although he found it to be “fairly constructive” the main problem was that “it still emphasised too exclusively the physical aspects of the question and failed to deal adequately with its higher psychic, sociologic, and ethical bearings” (ibid). It would be in the third stage where dealing with “higher ethical bearings” would occur; a stage, at the time of Exner’s writing, the sex hygiene movement was still “groping for” (p. 573). As I will argue, the doctors’ proposed program is consistent with the second stage which, given the time of their committee, shows how absolutely up-to-date the committee was in their work.

The VMA Sex Hygiene Committee received a variety of pamphlets and literature representative of the first stage of sex education attempts. I have chosen to use Irving Steinhart’s (1914) “Ten Sex Talks to Girls” as an illustrative example of the first stage literature reviewed by the doctors. Strategies which focused on a detailed education of the negative effects of venereal diseases, as evident in Steinhart’s lectures, were to be rejected generally according to Exner (1914) because of their blatant and fear mongering tactics (p. 573).
The Route Not Chosen: Irving Steinhardt’s Ten Sex Talks for Girls

In March 1913, The VMA Committee received bound copies of the *New York Medical Journal* for the latter half of the year 1912. Published within the copies they received was a series of lectures written by Irving Steinhardt who had originally delivered the lectures at the Hebrew Educational Society of Brooklyn (Steinhardt, 1914 p. 3). Later, in 1914, the lectures were reprinted in the form of a short book.

Taking up almost 200 pages, the lectures created by Steinhardt cover a lot of ground and deal with anatomy, venereal diseases, dating, marriage, and infant care. Like many sex educators, he stresses that the topic of sex need not be veiled in secrecy “owing to a false idea of modesty or to ignorance” (p. 9). In his first lecture, Irving discusses in detail the female sex organs. Covering the uterus, bladder, urethra, vagina and rectum, Irving describes the size, shape, feel, weight, and look of the sex organs. Figures assist his description. One figure (see Appendix II) (fig 6 p. 19) in particular stands out for its remarkable detail. Interestingly, though a clitoris is drawn very clearly, it is left unlabelled and never discussed. Thus, Irving’s anatomy lesson is typical in that it fails to discuss the vagina, and the clitoris in particular, in relation to female sexual pleasure (Roberts, 1998). In analysing sex hygiene materials in France, Mary Lynn Stewart (1997) has offered the general observation that these materials, regardless of country of origin, avoided being graphic about the relation of pleasure to genitalia (p. 384). While, detailed descriptions of ‘detumesence’ (swelling of
tissue) and 'tumescence' (release of swelling) were available in medical texts with respect to genitals, discussions such as Steinhardt's relating to sexual excitement and release especially in relation to the female body were not usually discussed in relation to the anatomy of the vagina.

Steinhardt's second lecture details the processes of menstruation and explains its function and typical cycles. Noteworthy is his plea for women to avoid lacing their waists too tightly, corsets being a "health wrecking" foolish choice in apparel (p. 43). Steinhardt's discussion of the importance of menstrual regularity leads into his third lecture which is on "the bad habits of girls" (p. 47). Steinhardt lists the negative consequences associated with poor bowel habits suggesting that the conscious formation of a "proper habit" is the only way to avoid problems associated with constipation (p. 48). Girls must also regularly empty their bladders for good health. Irving then goes on to describe the importance of washing, as cleanliness generally, and including the genital region, "is an asset toward good health" (p. 52). In "the region of the external genitals....residues of dried urine, and perhaps discharges...means chafing...annoying itching etc." (p. 52). Lastly, girls should avoid the "pernicious habit" of sexual relations outside of marriage. Here Steinhardt's moralism is evident.

Steinhardt writes that "Many girls who imagine they feel the need for sexual gratification are entirely mistaken" (p. 57). He suggests that "bad habits" such as indulging in "so-called funny stories or jokes dealing with the sexual
relation” and reading “trashy” books lead to the arousal of sexual passion and hence should be avoided (p. 58). Here Steinhardt’s advice seems to encompass a purity message. Predictably, he also advises against masturbation though he does not spend too much time on this topic. He advises those who masturbate to “stop it at once, for your own present and future good” (p. 59). Steinhardt spends more time arguing that girls should avoid other girls “who are too affectionate in their manner of talking and acting with you” (p. 60). He suggests staying away from girls “who are inclined to admire your figure and breast development” (p. 60). He also suggests that girls should “avoid snuggling up” in bed and, he adds, “I might say avoid contact of any parts of the body at all” (p. 60).

Steinhardt’s following lectures proceed to discuss the subject of venereal diseases. He writes “Only those who practice medicine can realise the enormous damage done to the human race by these diseases,” and goes on to say that his statements on the subject are not exaggerated and “the language in which they are couched is far too mild.” (p. 65). Yet Steinhardt’s discourse is hardly mild as he details the effects of the “two principle venereal diseases...gonorrhoea and syphilis” in a most graphic manner (p. 66). Here, we see evidence of the fear mongering Exner associated with the first phase. Suggesting that 75 women out of every 100 requiring surgical operations upon the sexual organs “could trace the origin of their trouble to venereal disease,” Steinhardt stresses the widespread nature of such diseases (p. 65). He also emphasises the dire
consequences of contracting either gonorrhoea or syphilis. He talks about painful abscesses of the urinary tract, "chills, fever and languor," infection of mucous membrane linings, etc (p. 69). He warns of the possibilities of a mother passing gonorrhoea on to her child and how this may result in the child being left blind. He writes, "You do not want to have a blind baby—to blast a helpless, innocent little being's life at the very beginning of its existence" (p. 73). Finally, he provides gruesome photos of a syphilitic baby's face and feet, writing "Poor little syphilitic baby! No one loves you nor wants to hug and kiss you except, perhaps, the poor mother who had the misfortune to bring you into the world" (p. 96).

Steinhardt's lectures represent a route of sex education not chosen by the doctors in Vancouver. Even though the original mandate of the VMASHC was to come up with a series of lectures which could be delivered by doctors to students in Vancouver public schools, the doctors were clearly uncomfortable with a method which isolated and pathologized the topic. Importantly, the VMASHC was aware of how the subjects of hygiene and temperance were taught in the school system. Steinhardt, for example, was in favour of simply adding sex hygiene to the already established hygiene programs as was the case in Chicago. The minutes make it clear that the VMASHC was aware of this route but chose not to follow it (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912). Their decision followed their eleventh meeting when they examined the Health curriculum used in the B.C. school system of their day (p. 37) The two primary textbooks
used – *The Essentials of Health* and *How to be Healthy* were examined by the committee. For the sake of clarifying the nature of the hygiene and health program, I will briefly describe both books.

While *Essentials of Health* (1909) offers the promise of teaching “anatomy, physiology and hygiene,” the book offers nothing with regard to sex education per se. After detailing several bodily processes such as digestion, the nervous system, the circulatory system, and sleep, as well as discussing the importance of clean clothing and good ventilation, the most controversial aspect treated in the text describes the negative affects of alcohol consumption. *How to Be Healthy* (1911) also contains no reference to sexuality in any form. It goes into even more detail regarding the evils of drink. Listing statistics on the amount of money spent on alcohol in Great Britain and Canada in 1913, it argues that alcohol not only costs the nation a great deal but results in “nothing but harm” and “must be banished completely” (p. 127). The book offers the results of a scientific experiment where four dogs, given varying amounts of liquor over a period of time, are monitored for negative side effects. “Bum, Tipsy, Nig and Topsy” are used to illustrate the health detriments of alcohol consumption (p. 127-133).

It is possible that students learned more about their bodies from activities suggested by teachers. In *Guide to Nature Study: For the Use of Teachers* (Stowell 1909) sold through the General News Agents in Vancouver, B.C. teachers are encouraged to teach the “beauty of the human body” (p. 146). By directing “the pupils to observe the bodies of one another and to examine their
own when undressing,” the students were encouraged to “Note the beautiful curves, the symmetry of form and the rhythm of movement” (p. 146). While the VMASHC says nothing in their minutes regarding the importance of students appreciating anatomy, their own or others’ anatomy, - their recommendations do follow the wisdom of Stowell’s opening quote by Wordsworth which reads: “Let Nature be your teacher” (p. 1).

The VMASHC ordered and received a considerable number of sources from the natural sciences. They were particularly interested in zoology, botany, and biology textbooks (p. 37). These books from the natural sciences were part of what Exner would describe as the second stage which relied solely on the natural sciences for sex instruction. Given the doctors’ eventual recommendations, these texts clearly had more influence on their proposed program than did the material such as Steinhardt’s which isolated the topic too much for the doctors’ liking and used fearmongering as a strategy.
The Birds and the Bees and the Flowers and the Trees: Deciding to Let Nature Instruct Children about Sexuality

The VMASHC’s final recommendations are directly influenced by a book they received written by Robert N. Wilson, M.D. (1913) (Vancouver Medical Association 1912, p. 38). Wilson sent the committee copies of a draft of his book *The Education of the Young in Sex Hygiene: A Textbook for Parents and Teachers* in 1913. Wilson’s method is more congruent with the doctors own proposed sex education program. It will be analysed here as part of the second wave of sex education in Exner’s terms.

Wilson (1913) argues that “plant life furnishes the simplest and most natural beginning…” for the sex education curriculum (p. 162). Working from the principle that “Nearly all children find an interest in flowers” (ibid.), Wilson finds plants to be a “natural” starting point into the subject. He also feels that most teachers will be able to handle such an approach. He writes “The most simpering prude could teach health and hygiene and morals from plant and lower study…” (p. 162). From an exploration of the reproductive processes of plants, according to Wilson “We are led from plant and flower study to a knowledge of the insects, whose influence on plant fertilisation has already attracted the attention of the children” (p. 163). After this, fish may be considered and then frogs and birds (p. 162). From the study of birds an understanding of “the natural comradeship of the close intimacy of mother and child” can be understood as well as “the stimulus of a sex attraction between the
male and his mate" can be described to "set the seal" on the idea that it is "in the home union" whereby this attraction should properly exist (p. 164).

I have tried (unsuccessfully) to imagine how starting with flowers could lead up to an understanding of human sexuality, for example, an understanding which would be useful in explaining the activities of the neighbourhood brothel, a teenaged girl's same-sex desire, or the intricacies of masturbation. Still, the plant-to-human transition was taken seriously and was popular. Evidence of the 'marriage' between sex, culture and biology is evident in many textbooks used in my period of study. In the textbook *Plant Life* (1911), for example, one chapter is entitled "How Plants Marry" (p. 80). Another explains the "Various marriage customs of plants" (p. 81). This is one typical and clear example of how morals were infused with biology and taught as 'science.' In *The Education of the Young in Sex Hygiene* (1913), Wilson recommends employing such botany texts along with biology and zoology texts in sex education programs (p. 166).

From the perspective of biology and zoology, Wilson suggests sex education curricula should broadly cover the following areas: the cell, sex, and heredity. When dealing with the cell, the following topics were recommended: animal and vegetable forms of the cell, cell division and reproduction, the animal and vegetable ovum, the male element, pollen grain, and spermatozoon (p.167). In relation to sex, "the earliest signs of sex determination in plant and animal embryonic life," must first be addressed. Secondly "anatomy of plant reproductive organs" is essential, and the reproductive organs of "animals and
human beings” are recommended as appropriate material to be studied (ibid.). Under the category of heredity, “The transmission of colour, form, and traits in plants; in animals; in human beings” is recommended (p. 167). Specifically, discussions of heredity, in human beings, were to include “physical and mental and moral legacies” as well as “The transmissibility of disposition and talent by deliberate maternal and paternal impression” (ibid). Finally, “the transmissibility of physical and moral tastes and habits, good and bad” (p. 167) was to be discussed. Here, the infusion of morals into biology is a little less innocent. An early eugenics influence is clear. Eugenics, a Greek word that means "wellborn," sought to change the human race through the controlled breeding of people who have certain physical characteristics or mental abilities. As Angus McLaren and others have demonstrated, eugenics is now seen as racist and founded on bad science.

The VMASHC was already receiving literature on eugenics in 1913. (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912, p. 38) McLaren (1990) has explored eugenics in Canada from 1885-1945. Thomson (1999) has explored the influence of Eugenics on the Vancouver school system. At the time of the VMASHC there was little general activity around eugenics in British Columbia with the exception of the work of Alice Ravenhill who “spread the eugenics message” along with her teachings in domestic science (McLaren p. 26). The committee made no mention of Ravenhill. Within the school system there was, however, some interesting developments. Gerald Thomson (1999) notes that in 1909, a
Medical Health Officer, Dr. F.W. Byrone-Jack, was hired to work within the Vancouver school system along with nurse Elizabeth G. Breeze (p. 132). These two medical workers were the first to pipe eugenics teachings into the school system. Concerned mainly with identifying and separating the feeble minded they began the process of determining 'normality' among students (p. 151). Thomson notes that both Byrone-Jack and Breeze turned south of the border to gain literature about eugenics (p. 213). Interestingly, there is no mention of either person in the minutes of the VMASHC. While B.C. went on to be “a hospitable climate...for hereditarian doctrines,” at this point I have no evidence linking the VMASHC directly to the Eugenics movement in B.C. Whether the VMASHC was officially connected with the eugenics movement is less relevant than the fact that their argument for the use of biology as a base for teaching sex education opened the door for eugenics-influenced texts to find their way into the classroom in the 1920s and 1930s.


\[ In a phone conversation with Thomson, (Nov 1998) he said that he had not run into the names of the three doctors on the VMASHC in his extensive research. \]
Choosing the Standpoint of Biology: A Cold, Calculated Approach to a Hot Topic

It is important to stress that the Vancouver Medical Sex Hygiene Committee “after a careful consideration of the methods employed by societies and Educationalists,” rejected their original mandate which was, as stated, to prepare a series of lectures to be delivered by doctors” (Vancouver Medical Association 1912, p. 50). Again, like Wilson, they considered that “the proper way of teaching this subject of Social Hygiene is by means of and from the standpoint of biology” (Vancouver Medical Association 1912, p. 23). The reason for this suggestion was “that the child’s mind from the earliest possible age should be gradually trained along this line [of biology] so that the whole subject will gradually unfold itself in a natural manner” (p. 24). Also, as previously mentioned, wanting to be modern and scientific, they were not in support of religious-based sex education for the school system: They argued that coming from the standpoint of biology “when the application comes to be made to the human race the perception of the pupil shall have already been trained to grasp such application in a natural manner” (p. 24).

Clearly, the idea of “natural” in this regard is curious and deserves exploration. Also relevant is the committee’s strong faith in the ability of science to teach sexuality to children. First, the committee felt that the “child’s mind, from the earliest age possible” should be “trained” in biology so that when it came time to speak of reproduction in the human case this would not cause a
severe reaction in the child (Vancouver Medical Association, 1912, p. 51).
Clearly, such “training” seems anything but “natural.” The question also remains what exactly nature would teach. Apparently, dealing with the “fertilising of spawn and the hatching of the bird” would enable “reproduction in mammals” to be “readily approached” (p. 51). Would this knowledge prepare children for an understanding of the less romantic sexual happenings in nature? Would the program continue to discuss the homosexual acts of animals or perhaps the intergenerational mounting attempts so frequently seen among cattle, for example, on the farm? No, these things would not stand beside the ‘marriage of flowers.’

Perhaps the greatest irony is the fact that as the doctors turned to science for the sake of objectivity, in order to wash out the moral baggage which had been so associated with the teaching of sex education, their turn would not lead them away from moral or cultural influence. Certainly, studies in the history of science, and of biology in particular, have by now overturned the idea that nature speaks for itself and that science can therefore be “neutral” (Young 1992). The frequent anthropomorphizing of nature present in early botany, zoology, and physiology school text books is a great testament to the interconnectedness of nature and culture in the history of biology. However, in choosing the route of biology, the doctors felt confident that they could not only offer a thorough treatment of the subject; it could be taught without parents or students really being aware of what was really being taught.
The VMASHC thought the subject of "sex hygiene" should be taught "in the ordinary spaces of the teaching day" (p. 25). Also, they suggested that "the term Sex Hygiene shall be entirely excluded during the course and the terms 'nature study' in public schools and 'applied biology' in the High Schools be substituted" (p. 25). They assert that "No stress should be laid on the purpose of the teaching..." (p. 50, their emphasis). The deliberate 'hiding' of human sexuality under the guise of 'nature study' is intriguing. Certainly, the explosion of popular songs 'Bout the birds and the bees, And the flowers and the trees, And the moon up above" (Akens, 1965) suggests that this hiding was not entirely effective. The connection between flowers, sex, bees, and love, and biology in popular culture is a topic which deserves close explanation.

After reviewing the public school science curriculum with Vancouver School Inspector Mr. J.S. Gordon, the committee recommended that the present text in use entitled Nature Study might be altered by "rearranging the chapter on cells, insects and plant composition so that they would lead up to the vegetable reproduction" (p. 52). Secondly, they recommended that "the section on physics, fruit farming and irrigation be omitted", and in their place, "chapters to progressively elaborate reproduction in higher organisms could be substituted" (ibid.). These changes were clearly significant for the committee.

The committee was convinced that their program was not only progressive but also one which would set the standard. They wrote "So far as we can learn, no such branch of science, although several times discussed has
ever been adopted in any provincial curriculum in Canada.” They continue: “British Columbia, having always been at the forefront of Educational progress cannot neglect a subject attracting world wide attention…” (p. 53). The nervousness of the committee about making changes in the school curriculum is evident. This nervousness can be detected when reading their deliberations about the best way to approach the subject with the provincial Council of Public Instruction which had the power to preside over curriculum. This council, according to J.S. Gordon, is “practically cabinet” consisting of “most influential members Hon. Dr. Young and Mr. Alexander Robinson” (p. 32). The committee, in an interesting discussion with Mr. J.S. Gordon are careful to find out if the council “would work out the detail’ in their proposed program. Mr. J.S. Gordon assures the committee: “I am afraid they would be much too busy for that, but if they could be convinced that the subject can be made worthwhile and that a course can be prepared….the department might delegate a man to elaborate and put into operation the whole scheme just as they did for the subject of drawing” (p. 83).

The committee showed its political savvy in many ways. Firstly, they were careful to get Mr. Gordon’s support in writing, asking somewhat formally during a meeting “Are you, yourself, Mr Gordon as an educationalist in favour of the idea?” (p. 83) Mr. Gordon agreed “the youth, both boys and girls, should be instructed” (ibid.) Secondly, the doctors discussed at length the tactics of “whether to write the Department outlining our plan and desires or to present
them in person...” (p. 43). They were leery about both approaches, suggesting that “if communication were filed in the ordinary course it might at the same time be shelved.” At the same time, the committee felt that “again appearing as a deputation might appear too weighty an introduction for a preliminary presentation” (p. 43). They decided to ask Mr. Gordon his views on the best approach and agreed with his request to arrange an “unofficial interview with Hon. Dr. Young” (p. 44). The last item recorded in the minutes is a letter to Hon. H.E. Young outlining a very strong argument for their program: unfortunately, the minutes end there.

What remains interesting is that within “the detail” of the doctors’ recommendation there remains room for the possibility of lectures. In several places they mention the possibility of adding lectures to the program as it becomes more entrenched in the curriculum (p. 50). It is my feeling that the doctors wanted to have the general idea of teaching Sex Hygiene accepted, and for this they found biology to be the best approach both politically and pedagogically. It is clear they felt that as the program was implemented and students were “naturalised’ on the topic, the subject could be addressed in more explicit terms (ibid). They suggest that once students were used to the whole idea, “pathological” issues could be addressed (meaning the specifics of venereal diseases). Interestingly, while “hygiene” was already a subject taught in the schools along with temperance, the doctors were not interested in adding sex into the curriculum through the hygiene courses. They were clear that
“nature study and hygiene” must be treated as “distinct entities” and “taught in different spaces of the day” (p. 25). I argue that the committee was fearful that the public would be quick to notice adding “Sex Hygiene” to hygiene, whereas they would be less alarmed by what went on in the science curriculum. Again, the committee was acutely aware of the possibility of “Catholic opposition” having been warned by Dr. Evangeline Young from Boston who described Catholic opposition to sex education attempts there (p. 13). In their 1916 report to the Vancouver Medical Association, the Sex Hygiene Committee writes “…we feel that a precipitancy or sudden bringing forward of such knowledge will probably arouse violent antagonism on the part of Parents and others” (p. 19). Clearly, their reservations were correct given the experience of the Chicago attempt.

Unfortunately, I have found nothing further in the Vancouver Medical Association Archives or in the Vancouver City Archives which tells the story of how the VMASHC’s report was received ‘in Victoria’ by the provincial Ministry of Education. A preliminary search of the B.C. provincial archives also reveals no clues. It is possible Nature Study which shows up as a subject in the *Forty Fourth Annual Report of The Public School of the Province of British Columbia 1914/1915* was a direct result of the VMASHC’s recommendation. This conclusion, however can not be made without further archival work. What is clear, looking through subsequent annual reports, is that the school system of British Columbia did not progress beyond Exner’s second stage of sex education.
before the 1920s. At least there is no blatant evidence of the third stage which would “concern itself more largely with how one may relate his sex instinct to the whole life as to enable him to live in his own inner life and in every human relationship” (Exner, 1914 p. 573) until decades after the VMASHC’s initial recommendation.
Conclusion

Perhaps the quiet ending to the story of Vancouver's first attempt to introduce sex education indicates on some level an ironic success on the part of the VMASHC: a success arguably within a larger failure. By this I mean that the overall program proposed by the doctors, judged by today's standards, can hardly be described as a comprehensive model for the teaching of sex education. Yet, judged by the standards of the day, the Committee's approach can be seen as a successful one, in comparison to more blatant approaches such as the foiled attempt in Chicago in 1912. As I have discussed, a very detailed, up front, clear program of sex education was introduced into the Chicago school system. This program can be seen as similar to that proposed by Steinhart. The Chicago attempt was dramatically tossed out of the schools after much protest from the community and especially, the parents.

In describing the first sex education attempt in Chicago, Moran (1996) notes that many supporters of sex education "interpreted the 'Chicago example' mostly as a case study demonstrating how not to implement sex education" (p. 508). He quotes one friendly critic: "To appoint physicians to give such instruction and ask the board of education for a special appropriation to pay them, and then announce in the public press what is proposed to do...is the most effective way I conceive of making such instruction impossible" (ibid.) This critic represents a general viewpoint which was shared by the VMASHC. While I have not found enough evidence to prove the VMASHC was directly influenced
by the events in Chicago, it is clear that they were warned about the failure of
American attempts at sex education by Dr. Evangeline Young of Boston.¹

Here Weber’s method of using ‘thought experiments’ when doing history
is useful. In “The Logic of Historical Explanation” (1906) Weber argues that “in
order to gain insight into real causal connexions, we construct unreal ones” (p.
128). Very simply, for the purpose here, by this he means that it is possible, and
indeed, desirable to use imagination as well as logical, deductive thinking in
order to make sense of the past. In my Introduction I raised the idea of a
prostitute being asked to give sex instruction in the public schools. In Chapter
One and Chapter Two, I provide ideal typical understandings of the social and
cultural climate of early Vancouver and specifically, the BC public school system
in order to demonstrate the ‘unreal’ nature of accepting prostitutes’ knowledge
as legitimate knowledge. It was not my ultimate goal to claim that the school
board would have never turned to the red light district for answers in dealing
with sex education. Instead, I aimed to explicate why such a move was not
possible in the social climate of early Vancouver. I wanted to better understand
the School Board’s decision to turn to the Vancouver Medical Association for
assistance; and, I wanted to help explain why the VMASHC made the
recommendations they did. In the end, it seems clear to me that the red light

¹ While the minutes record correspondence with the University of Chicago (p. 13), the content of
this correspondence is not fully specified. Also, Moran notes that parents in Boston were aware
of events in Chicago so it is likely that Dr. Evangeline Young was as well.
district, schooling, and biological science were related in the story of Vancouver’s first sex education attempt.

I argue that had the VMASHC decided to propose a similar program to Chicago’s trial, it is very possible a similar hostile public reaction would have occurred. At the very least, there was a risk of public censure - a risk which proved too high for the VMASHC. In Chicago, after a clearly defined sex education program was introduced through the “front door” of the school system, the “school board suffered an avalanche of mail” (p. 503). The battle was dragged out all over the presses and “viewing the Chicago controversy from afar, one intemperate Boston mother threatened to ‘horsewhip’ any educator who needed a lesson ‘respecting the rights of parents to bring up their little ones in innocence of the terrible evils of life’” (p. 503). In Vancouver, the VMASHC chose “the backdoor” tactic of advancing sex education under the skirt of modern science in order to avoid such rancorous reactions.

Yet, while it may have avoided public outrage or at the very least controversy, the question of what the VMASHC’s proposed plan did allow for is entirely relevant. To be clear, the approach taken by the VMASHC represents one path of many. Choosing to teach sex education from the standpoint of biology was, as I have discussed, not a novel idea. But, even at the time, this idea was not without controversy. Exner (1914) makes the point that such a method represents one stage in the teaching of sex hygiene. For Exner, and others, the next stage would be an improvement because it would embrace emotional
aspects, human love and even spiritual aspects of sexuality (p. 573). Yet, here I
would like to turn briefly to criticism of purely biological approaches to both the
studying and teaching about sexuality outlined by early German sexologist Iwan
Bloch. I argue that Bloch’s assertion that sex education should also be taught
from the standpoint of anthropology is relevant.

In *The Sexual Life of Our Time in its Relation to Modern Civilization*,
Bloch (1914/1930) argues that approaching the topic of sexuality from the
standpoint of the natural sciences alone is inadequate. Writing in 1907, he
argues that a scientific approach not only fails to address human love and
relationships, but more critically, fails to include cultural differences with respect
to sexual behaviour. Quoting Frederick S. Krass, Bloch writes “I hope that in the
not distant future, for the advancement of science, physicians will be glad to ally
themselves with folk-lorists and ethnologists” (p. 453). Why should the
physician or the scientist take culture seriously? How does this relate to sex
education? Anthropology, Bloch argues, provides necessary evidence of the
diversity of sexuality among races and nationalities, and therefore, helps call into
question the production of ‘psychopathia sexualis’ common in his day (p. 454).

Bloch’s argument that “culture and civilisation which has exercised a
certain influence on the external mode of manifestation, and also upon the inner

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2 Published in German in 1907.
3 The point goes against the grain of many arguments coming from sexologists. Gert Hemka (1989) argues
that “Sexologists believed in the rational transmission of biological facts within social reality and stressed
the necessity of sex education based on these biological facts, as they put it using a terrible term,
‘reproductive biology’ education (p. 186). Bloch’s work must be understood as disputing this position.
psychical configurations of sexual [ality]" (p. 471), makes it impossible to teach sexuality solely from the standpoint of biology. Bloch argues that important difference between humans and animals is culture. With respect to sexuality, he sees culture, as well as human emotion, entwined with biology. For Bloch, this entwining of "sex instinct" with culture is a result of evolution and civilisation. Though it is beyond the scope of my thesis to synthesise his complex and detailed reflections, Bloch's appreciation for the role of anthropology in the study and teaching of sex education has radical implications. First, his thinking encourages a method of teaching sexuality which does not assume the Western norm of heterosexuality against which all else is to be pathologised or problematised. I will discuss this shortly. Second, Bloch's argument prefigures critiques made by contemporary sociologists of science which identify cultural bias within sciences, such as biology, physiology etc. Bloch, in a radical, counter-hegemonic move almost one hundred years ago, argued against the view that there is a 'natural' sexuality to be taught.

Feminist philosopher Sandra Harding (1991), in critiquing the general notion of value neutrality in the natural sciences, maintains that cultural values are not eliminated by methodological processes. She argues that the racism, sexism, and class inequities at work in the institutional structures of academia affect not only what she calls the context of discovery where hypotheses are formulated, but also the context of justification. For example, scientific racism and scientific sexism in the 'pure' science of biology have been widely discussed
in the sociology of science literature (Cravens, 1996; Aronowitz, 1988). This work goes beyond the easily identifiable racism involved in the eugenics movement to tackle the racism and sexism structuring biological work around ‘sex hormones’ and areas of genetic research (Heath, 1997). With these issues in mind, the idea of teaching sex education from the standpoint of biology is problematic because it is premised on the false security of value freedom. To be clear, the VMASHC clung to biology because of its common sense status as an “objective” science. The doctors relied on unquestioned public acceptance of their approach to sex education: after all, biology was “pure science.” With Harding’s views in mind, this is problematic. By contrast, feminist critics of science (Harding, 1991b; Tuana, 1989) question the nature and content of biological approaches to sex education, both past and present. This work suggests that careful attention must be paid to the cultural and political ideologies implicated in the biology-based curriculum of all kinds.

In my thesis, I have discussed the ‘origin’ of a ‘line’ of sex education which was foundationally rooted in biological knowledge. With respect to further research in this area, I would very much like to see how discourses of gender, race, and sexuality shaped the ‘line’ of biology taught in the British Columbia public school system. Thomson (1999) has looked at how eugenics affected the method of streaming students according to standards of intelligence in B.C. I am interested in how eugenics affected the content of the subject of biology which then became so pivotal to the field of sex education. While studies
have been done documenting racism in school texts used in British Columbia, they have focused primarily on school readers (Aziz-Al Ahsan, 1984) or have looked at how, for example “Canadian identity” was fostered by social studies textbooks in discussions of what constitutes good citizenship (Clark, 1996). Biology textbooks used in British Columbia in the early twentieth century, have not, to my knowledge, been the subject of critical attention. I am curious to know how these texts may have been adapted to fit the perceived needs of a sex education.

Also, while there has been some work done on the creation of Canadian identity in the history of the British Columbia school system, this work has largely ignored sexuality as a factor in identity-making. My work in Chapter Two demonstrates the importance of looking at relationships between schooling, sexuality, and citizenship training. Adams, in The Trouble with Normal: Post-war Youth and the Making of Heterosexuality (1997), has looked at post-war sex education in Ontario with this in mind. She argues that sex education programs in Ontario historically “had very little to do with the sexual concerns or the sexual well-being of young people themselves” (p. 108). Instead, the programs were devoted to “character building” which was in turn linked with notions of citizenship (p. 112). Adam’s work raises questions regarding the connection between sex education and what Katz (1990) has called the invention of heterosexuality. Foucault’s work is also key in this regard. In the History of Sexuality (1978) his critique of the ‘repressive hypothesis’ suggests that subjects
likeness, sex education be viewed as part of the accelerated multiplication of discourses which developed from the Victorian age on. His work allows for an understanding of how discourse is involved in shaping and regulating human sexuality. Further study into the history of sex education in B.C. could critically investigate how the discourse of normality operated to discipline and constrain the emergent subject of sex education.

More specifically, in relation to my own work, a more thorough biographical investigation of the individual physicians on the VMASHC would answer many questions. For example, did the members of the committee carry out their interest in sex hygiene outside of the VMASHC, perhaps in the community? Also, I am very interested in what sex-related sources these doctors were familiar with or had access to; in the minutes, they make frequent mention of European sources with regard to sex education. Dr. Riggs for example, studied in Vienna and Germany in 1911-1912 (Rites Thursday for Pioneer Physician, 1950). Further research might reveal if his studies in Europe were influenced by debates about sex hygiene. Also interesting would be an investigation into library resources available in early Vancouver on the topic of sexuality. In my own work, I came across a number of pre-WWI books on sexuality in both the Woodward Memorial Medical Library and in storage at the Main Library at U.B.C. Many of these books relate to sex education, although it is unclear, in many cases, when these texts arrived in Vancouver. Also, the minutes of the VMASHC make specific mention that the committee indexed all
of their resources catalogued in the Vancouver Medical Association's own
library. Unfortunately, these cards have not been found but apparently,
according to the archivist, this does not mean they do not exist.

Further archival work may answer the question as to what happened to
the VMASHC's proposal after it went to Victoria. I have been unable to do any
more than preliminary work inside the Provincial Archives of Victoria (BC
Information Management System), and have turned up no answers. In relation
to my second chapter, research at the British Columbia Teachers' Federation
Archives could prove fruitful in further attempts to understand the moral
atmosphere of the school system in relation to sexuality. The firing of A.M.
Stephens, socialist reformer and teacher in the 1920s, deserves more attention in
this regard. Stephens was well known in Vancouver for his radical views on sex
education and for his work advocating the creation of a birth control clinic.
Stephens was responsible for bringing Margaret Sanger to Vancouver in 1923.
The reasons behind his firing have never been fully examined; it is very possible
his radical views on birth control were related to his firing (McLaren, A., 1990).
Finally, with respect to archival resources, in my research at the U.B.C. Special
Collections, I have come across archival material relating to a series of public
lectures on the subject of sex education provided by the Greater Vancouver
Health League in 1937.\(^4\) The existence of community-based lectures points to the

\(^4\) Found in the Greater Vancouver Health League Manuscript Collection (1930-1962) under subject heading
Sex Education.
importance of doing a comprehensive history of sex education in Vancouver which is not restricted to the school system.

In my work here, I have told one story about the VMASHC's work in developing a sex education program for the public school system. I have spent considerable time furnishing historical context in order to demonstrate that the Committee's efforts should not be understood as 'backward' or behind the times. I have shown that their proposal to teach sex education from the standpoint of biology was related to a sharp awareness that hostile public reaction could very well prevent sex education from reaching the school system. Clearly, the members of the VMASHC were strongly committed to getting sex education into B.C. schools. As I have demonstrated, their reports and letter to the Superintendent of the province reveal the strength of this conviction. Further, I have shown that the Committee was not in favour of religious-based sex education attempts such as those in force in Ontario at the time. The Vancouver doctors described such attempts as regressive and inefficient. In proposing that human anatomy be taught within 'the regular spaces of the school day' and refracted through the legitimate frame of plant and animal sciences, they saw themselves "at the forefront of educational progress" in all of Canada.

As my project comes to a close, the Surrey school board is drafting regulations which would prevent any religious-based education from occurring in their school district. If the school system is legally a non-secular one (as the Board was reminded when they lost their court battle), they argue, any sort of
religion should have no place in the classroom. Attacking a demonstration given by First Nations in a Surrey high school, the school board opposed the burning of sweet grass in a talk about native culture. Critics argue that “given that culture is partly based on religion, this clause has the potential to stop the cultural studies from taking place” ("Students Need to See Culture to Respect it," 1999). In Surrey, the board is working under the assumption that it is possible to teach ‘pure science’ in the classroom, or a curriculum which is not affected by religious or cultural values.

These arguments strike a familiar chord to the example of the VMASHC who was at least clear that they were using science for political ends. One final return to Weber is useful here. In “Science as a Vocation” (Weber, 1919/1946) Weber argues that it is impossible to speak of “science as ‘free’ from presuppositions” (p. 142) He makes the important point that science is not eternal truth and must not be taught as such (p. 144). Finally, he makes the point that while it is not possible to teach knowledge free from suppositions, “The task of the teacher is to serve the students with his knowledge and scientific experience and not to imprint upon them his personal political views” (146). To be very clear, in Weberian terms, the non-secular school system of B.C. can better be understood as an ideal, which aims to avoid the classroom being used as a pulpit. With this in mind, the complex connections between power and knowledge as Foucault has addressed make the dream of a school system which teaches only ‘science’ as truth, impossible. However, in reality the classroom
can be made a place where knowledge can be freely discussed, evaluated and taught without the teacher tyrannically imposing his or her own views.

Relating these discussions to sexuality, Bloch’s ideas about the necessity of teaching sex education from the standpoint of anthropology are key. This standpoint can be used to critique and challenge the culturally-specific ideas about sexuality which have been taught through the standpoint of biology. Despite critical studies which point out sexist and racist bias in biology, advocates of ‘pure’ biology endeavour to slip in into the classroom unchallenged. In a recent notice advertising a “talk about healthy sexuality” taking place at my son’s school this month, parents are assured that in the session they will be encouraged to “…remain calm, use science and teach your own moral values.” My question concerns how “science” is used today to teach “Good hygiene and health habits” for a “healthy sexuality”. What is a “healthy sexuality” from a biological viewpoint? It might well be time to reiterate Harding’s point that the culturally ‘pure’ reputation of the natural sciences must be put into serious question. Going into a new millennium, it is clear that further work exploring the hot intersection of sexuality, schooling, and science needs to be done.

I plan in my doctoral research to address some of these issues by pursuing questions regarding sex education from 1916 up until the present day. For now, I hope that my work has shown the importance of looking back into history in order to make better sense of the still controversial issue of sex education today.
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