

NATION BUILDING AND PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE CROSSFIRE:
AN EXAMINATION OF THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL BOARD'S
1981 – 1995 ORIGIN OF LIFE POLICY

by

SATNAM SINGH CHAHAL

BA, Simon Fraser University, 2002
B.Ed., Simon Fraser University, 2002

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Sociology of Education)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

April 2005

©Satnam Singh Chahal, 2005

ABSTRACT

How do Canadian education policy makers adjudicate between the competing claims of their multiple constituencies? In the absence of legislative guidelines, it is hoped—from a social justice perspective—that policy makers will advocate a non-discriminatory ‘cultural literacy’ (see Pinar, 1993) that facilitates equitable educational outcomes for all students. Unfortunately, education policies are sometimes developed in ways that violate such democratic principles. In order to understand what factors can contribute to the development and maintenance of such problematic policies, I examine the experiences of a semi-rural public school board—the Abbotsford School Board—with creationism instruction between 1981 and 1995.

The Board’s *Origin of Life* policy required teachers to supplement instruction in evolutionary theory by instructing students in literalist Christian understandings of the origin of life. This policy is anomalous insofar as British Columbia’s public schools steadily moved away from conflating Christianity and education throughout this period. This study seeks to determine what factors allowed and or prompted the Board to take this contrary stance and seek to actively privilege Christian beliefs.

After situating the Board’s policy within larger discourses concerning religion and public education, I engage in archival analyses of a series of publicly available documents from this period. These documents include: official accounts of the policy found in Board and Ministry of Education notes and correspondence; and, non-official perspectives and contextual information found in articles from the provincial and local print media.

My findings suggest that the Abbotsford School Board's 1981-1995 Origin of Life policy is best understood as one part of the Board's larger commitment towards promoting Christian hegemony in its schools. Additionally, this study shows how the Board's policy disposition alone does not adequately explain how it was able to implement and maintain this policy. Sentiment among the local and provincial electorate as well as the policy dispositions of the Ministry of Education are identified as key factors that mediated the Board's engagement with its policy. The implications of these findings as well as areas for future research are then discussed.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	II
TABLE OF FIGURES	VI
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	VII
INTRODUCTION	1
CHAPTER ONE: RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE CANADIAN STATE	7
TO WHAT END? UNDERSTANDING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE STATE, RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION	7
<i>Public Education as Nation-Building</i>	8
<i>A Blurry Continuum:</i>	10
<i>Perspectives on Religion and Public Education</i>	10
RELIGION AND CANADIAN PUBLIC EDUCATION: A SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP	13
<i>Religion and Public Education in Canada</i>	14
<i>Religion and Public Education in British Columbia</i>	15
CHAPTER TWO: CREATIONISM IN CANADA AND ABBOTSFORD	26
THEOLOGY MASQUERADING AS SCIENCE: UNDERSTANDING CREATIONISM AND INTELLIGENT DESIGN	26
<i>Scientific Creationism</i>	27
<i>Intelligent Design</i>	28
CREATIONISM EXPERIENCES IN CANADA	30
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	37
ASSUMPTIVE FRAMEWORK	37
METHODOLOGY	41
<i>Archival Research</i>	41
<i>Analysis</i>	44
CHAPTER FOUR: 1981	46
BIBLES, PRAYERS, THE STRAP AND EAST INDIANS: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL BOARD'S POLICY DISPOSITION PRIOR TO AND DURING 1981	53
SEARCHING FOR A SAVIOR: RELIGIOUS DISPOSITIONS AND PERSPECTIVES ON THE ORIGIN OF LIFE POLICY IN THE LOCAL ABBOTSFORD CONTEXT	57
CREATIONISM CONTESTED: AN EXAMINATION OF THE PROVINCIAL POLICY AND SOCIAL CONTEXT	61
CHAPTER 5: 1982-1993	66
THE MORE THINGS CHANGE, THE MORE THEY STAY THE SAME: UNDERSTANDING THE ORIGIN OF LIFE POLICY BETWEEN 1982 AND 1993	67
DEFENDERS OF THE STATUS QUO: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL BOARD'S POLICY DISPOSITION BETWEEN 1982 AND 1993	92
<i>Favoring socially conservative and evangelizing school policies</i>	92
<i>Shifting demographics</i>	99
THE DOMINANT ROLE OF RELIGION IN ABBOTSFORD'S LOCAL SOCIAL CONTEXT	107
CHANGING WINDS: THE SHIFTING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN CHRISTIANITY AND SECULARISM IN BRITISH COLUMBIA'S PROVINCIAL POLICY CONTEXT	112
UNWELCOME BEDFELLOWS: SHIFTING PERCEPTIONS OF RELIGION AND STATE IN THE PROVINCIAL SOCIAL CONTEXT	118
CHAPTER 6: 1994 - 1995	124
DEFENDING GENESIS WITHOUT NAMING IT: AN EXAMINATION OF THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL BOARD'S ENGAGEMENT WITH THE ORIGIN OF LIFE POLICY IN 1994 AND 1995	125
<i>Version Two – Creationism Masked: June 5, 1995 – June 26, 1995</i>	137
<i>Version Three – Creationism expounded: June 26, 1995 – September 14, 1995</i>	145

<i>Version Four – Creationism no more: September 14, 1995</i>	152
A CONVOLUTED KNOT: RELIGION AND EDUCATION IN ABBOTSFORD AND ITS SCHOOLS, 1994-1995	156
(THE LACK OF) RELIGION IN THE PROVINCIAL SOCIAL AND POLICY CONTEXT.....	160
CHAPTER SEVEN: NATION BUILDING IN ABBOTSFORD	164
LET YOUR LIGHT SHINE BEFORE MEN . . . AND GLORIFY YOUR FATHER WHICH IS IN HEAVEN: THE ABBOTSFORD SCHOOL BOARD AS CHRISTIAN STEWARD.....	164
YOU (GENERALLY) CAN'T HAVE ONE WITHOUT THE OTHER: ELECTORATE DISPOSITIONS THAT FACILITATED THE WORK OF THE BOARD.....	170
<i>When Silence Speaks Volumes: Understanding The Punjabi Sikh Response To The Board's Origin Of Life Policy</i>	171
THAT WAS THEN, THIS IS NOW: AN EXAMINATION OF THE RELATED, SHIFTING AND SOMETIMES CONTRADICTORY NATURE OF THE PROVINCIAL SOCIAL AND POLICY CONTEXTS	174
SIGNIFICANCE	181
FURTHER RESEARCH.....	183
REFERENCES	185

TABLE OF FIGURES

Table 1 - Sample Creationism Instruction Resources.....	77
Table 2 - Abbotsford News Letters To The Editor Regarding Creationism, 1982-1994	111
Table 3 – Proposed Revisions By Richard Peachey.....	143

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

This thesis would not have been possible without the guidance of my committee members, Leslie Roman, Mona Gleason and Charles Ungerleider. Many thanks to each of you, for reminding me—through comment and example—of the importance of maintaining a grounded critical stance that works from the data up. Additionally, special thanks to Leslie Roman, my committee chair for her high expectations, frequent feedback and consistent support.

INTRODUCTION

Crafting public education policies in Canada is no easy task. As with other pluralist democracies, policy makers in Canada face the primary challenge of facilitating substantive and equitable educational outcomes for all students. This challenge is complicated by the fact that the responsibility for developing and implementing educational policies is shared between provincial or territorial ministries of education and their subordinate local school boards or educational authorities. At both levels, policy makers are accountable to multiple constituencies including their respective electorate, each other and additional components of the State. Often, preexisting legislative guidelines aid these policy makers in adjudicating between the competing demands that originate within and between their constituencies. Examples of such legislative guidelines include those offered by provincial or territorial school acts and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In those situations where the issue of concern is not easily encapsulated by such legislation, it is reasonable to expect that policy makers will be guided by the underlying goals of facilitating substantive and equitable education outcomes. Unfortunately, policies are sometimes developed in ways that not only fail to adhere to such democratic principles, they violate them. In order to ensure that Canadian public education policies are indeed developed in this regard, close analysis of problematic policies is warranted. This study aims to contribute to such an understanding by examining the experiences of a semi-rural British Columbia school board—the Abbotsford School Board—with its novel and problematic policy supporting creationism instruction between 1981 and 1995.

Between 1981 and 1995, the Abbotsford School Board requested its teachers couple instruction in the evolutionary theory of life's origins with instruction in 'divine creation' (1981-1982) or 'special creation' (1983-1995) via its *Origin of Life* policy. While this policy did not specifically mention Christianity, its references to divine and special creation were clearly biblically oriented. Accordingly, the District's supporting resource materials consisted of texts and videos advocating or supporting either the evolutionary perspective on life's origins or an alternative literalist Christian conception of Creation.¹ I have found no evidence to suggest that any other origin of life perspectives were included as a part of this package. Not surprisingly then, both supporters and critics of the policy throughout this fifteen year period generally characterized the policy as introducing a Christian understanding of creation into the science classroom.² The resulting controversy over this policy's religious orientation and its (un)suitability in the public school curriculum peaked in 1995 with a highly publicized confrontation between the British Columbia Ministry of Education and the Abbotsford School Board. It was a confrontation that was resolved in favor of the Ministry of Education and resulted in a radical revision of this policy and the cessation of creationism instruction in Abbotsford's public schools (e.g., Todd, 1995; Balcom, 1995; Bocking, 1995).

The Abbotsford School Board's experience with creationism-instruction is unique in British Columbia's educational history. Although, as discussed below, it has been implied that other unnamed school boards may have engaged in creationism instruction, I

¹ This assertion is based upon a Board survey of its creationism materials in 1988 (School District, February 1, 1988); an uncontested claim that this was the case by a critic of the Origin of Life policy who had recently surveyed available materials at the district's resource centre (Goodman, January 27, 1995); and defense of this reliance upon the Institute of Creationism Research (ICR) by creationism advocate Bob Grieves (Grieve, n.d.).

² It was not until the very end of the policy that denials of the policy's Christian bias began to emerge. These denials are discussed in detail in Chapter Six.

have found evidence of only one—the 1976 Mission School Board—as formally enacting a creationism-instruction policy (British Columbia School Trustees Association [BCSTA], 2003). A review of print media from this time suggests that, relative to the Abbotsford School Board, the Mission School Board’s engagement with creationism did not attract comparable attention or sanction. The general absence of such policies in British Columbia makes sense since, as in the rest of Canada, this province enjoyed a general shift during the 1980s and 1990s towards recognizing individual and minority group rights. This shift occurred in conjunction with the development of a clearer division between church and state which first informed and was then further stimulated by the 1982 Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. From an education policy perspective, this shift was later embodied in British Columbia’s 1989 School Act revisions (which included the cessation of mandatory Bible readings and school prayer). Given the secularization of these broader social policy contexts, the Abbotsford School Board’s decision to formally advocate instruction in a literalist biblical understanding of life’s origins between 1981 and 1995 is surprising. Conversely, as discussed in detail in subsequent chapters, it is clear that this policy was received either favorably or without comment by the majority of Abbotsford’s electorate throughout this period. The extent to which Abbotsford’s high proportion of evangelical Christian churches and high rates of church attendance explain this lack of criticism and the establishment and maintenance of this policy is examined in subsequent chapters.³

Thus, the Abbotsford School Board’s 1981-1995 creationism-instruction policy holds great potential for shedding light on the factors that inform policy makers and the

³The sense that Abbotsford was atypically religious was a factor used by both critics and supporters throughout this period to explain this policy’s establishment and maintenance (e.g., Goodman, 1997; Rees, 1992)

processes they undertake in developing and maintaining novel policies that are not clearly addressed by existing legislation at their onset. In this way, this policy holds potential for illuminating the factors that can influence policy makers' attempts to adjudicate between the competing demands of their various constituencies (particularly within the confines of a shifting broader policy context). Therefore, in this study, I identify and examine the factors that led the Abbotsford School Board to institute its Origin of Life policy in 1981, maintain it over the next decade and a half and then end it in 1995. In other words, this study aims to explain how the Abbotsford School Board's creationism instruction policy—a problematic policy clearly favoring an explicitly Christian doctrinal perspective in the public school system—shifted from being deemed appropriate in 1981 to unacceptable in 1995.

I am guided in this analysis by Gale's (2001) conception of critical sociology policy analysis. As discussed in greater detail in Chapter Three, this approach entails asking the following questions:

- How has public educational policy at the Ministry of Education and the Abbotsford School Board levels historically addressed the issue of religion and education? How have they addressed the specific issue of creationism instruction?
- How have these policies changed over time?
- "What are the complexities in these coherent accounts of policy?"
- "What [if anything] do these [complexities] reveal about who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by these arrangements?"
- Why was creationism on the 'policy agenda' at all? To what extent were other similarly motivated policies included or excluded from this agenda?

- Who were the key individuals involved with this policy? And, “Why [were] some policy actors involved in the production of policy (and not others)?”
- “What are the conditions that regulate the patterns of those involved?”
- “How [, if at all, is] the rationality and consensus [model] of policy production . . . problematized [by the data?].”
- “How [, if at all, were] temporary alliances . . . formed and reformed around conflicting interests in the policy production process [?]”

(Gale, 2001, pp.385-391)

I begin in Chapter One by examining the broader contexts within which Abbotsford’s Origin of Life policy was situated. Specifically, I outline the Canadian debates on the relationship between religion and public education. Then, I review the ways in which this relationship has historically evolved in Canada’s public schools from pre-confederation to present. In Chapter Two, I shift my focus to the issue of creationism instruction. I outline the ‘evolution-creationism’ debates as they pertain to public school education and focus on how these debates have played out in the general Canadian context. This chapter concludes with a specific accounting of what current academic literature tells us about Creationism in British Columbia in general and Abbotsford in particular. In Chapter Three, I discuss both the methodologies I employed in completing this research as well as the theoretical constructs that informed my subsequent analysis. I present my findings in Chapters Four, Five and Six. In Chapter Four, I sketch out the development of the Origin of Life policy from its origins through to its formal implementation in 1981. In Chapter Five, I outline the further development and revision of this policy as it was affirmed—despite shifts to the contrary in the broader policy

context—over the next twelve years. In Chapter Six, I examine 1995, the final year of Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy. Finally, in Chapter Seven, I critically review the evidence presented in Chapters Four, Five and Six in light of the broader philosophical and historical contexts discussed in Chapters One and Two and with regard to the analytical frameworks discussed in Chapter Three. Finally, I relate this examination of the Abbotsford School Board's experience with its Origin of Life policy to the larger issue of education policy development and discuss its implications.

CHAPTER ONE: RELIGION AND PUBLIC EDUCATION IN THE CANADIAN STATE

In order to understand how the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy stands out as unique and problematic in the British Columbia context, it is necessary to review both the general debates concerning the role of religion in public education and, on a more specific level, the historical relationship between religion and public education in Canada and British Columbia. Therefore, in this chapter, I begin by examining representative perspectives on the relationship between religion and public education. In doing so, I include perspectives articulated by both writers concerned with the Canadian context in particular as well as those writing in regards to two of Canada's key policy influences, England and America. I then survey the historical relationship between religion and public education in Canada and British Columbia.

To What End? Understanding The Relationship Between The State, Religion and Public Education

To what extent should religious perspectives be incorporated in the public education curriculum? If they are incorporated, is it fair to emphasize some faiths over others in a multicultural state like Canada? Questions such as these have figured prominently in public education debates for some time. In this section, I outline these debates in a general way and locate Abbotsford's creationism instruction policy within them. First, I begin by setting the context for understanding these perspectives by addressing an underlying question: why debate the substance of public education at all?

Public Education as Nation-Building

Although there are many perspectives on public education, most share the conviction that it provides students with a core set of knowledge, skills and beliefs. In this regard, public education policies hold great significance for both the students they address and, in turn, the communities these students sustain. Since Canada's public school system enjoys high rates of participation from school aged children and youth, the knowledge, skills and attitudes public schools cultivate can be understood as constituting a type of cultural literacy that facilitates nation-building.

Whereas the notion that public education plays a significant role in fashioning future citizens by imparting cultural literacy elicits little debate, "what becomes controversial is the composition of such literacy" (Pinar 1993, p. 63). Thus, in the Canadian context, one must ask: What does our public education system advocate? Ideally, it would be clear that Canadian public education policies are designed to ensure that students are treated equitably and that educational outcomes are not stratified along factors of difference such as class, gender, physical ability or race. These are aspects of democratic public education that have been advocated—in part or whole—by a wide array of public education advocates and scholars in Canada and beyond (e.g., Apple, 1996; Barman and Gleason; 2003; Giroux and McLaren, 1989; Ungerleider, 2003). Despite their widespread appeal, these ideals have not always manifested themselves in Canadian public education policies.

The history of Canadian public education is replete with examples of policies and practices that perpetuated social inequities. For example, multiple researchers have

critiqued specific Canadian public school curricula and curricular resources as perpetuating racism by conflating notions of authentic Canadian identity with the myth of white Christian supremacy (e.g., Schick, 1995; Stanley, 1995). Likewise, experiences of Aboriginal learners demonstrate that the cultural literacy cultivated by early Canadian education was assimilatory and harmful. For example, this 'education' involved Christian missionaries working in cooperation with the state to advocate White supremacy, systems of private property and biblically-oriented gender roles among Aboriginal populations (e.g., Barman, 2003). In instances such as these, it is clear that oppressive nation building efforts have been undertaken under the auspices of Canadian public education. Still, it is a mistake to understand Canadian education as only oppressive.

Public education in Canada is better understood as dynamic: the cultural literacy it attempts to impart shifts in response to the pressures brought to bear on it by its constituent interest groups. Clearly, the substance of this cultural literacy is sometimes oppressive. At other times, however, the struggles for positive change enjoy greater success and the substance of this literacy shifts. These qualities are not unique to Canadian public education. For example, Michael Apple makes the same point regarding the American context when he argues that "educational policies and practices were and are the result of struggles and compromises over what would count as legitimate knowledge, pedagogy, goals, and criteria for determining effectiveness" (Apple, 1996, p. xvi).

It is precisely this recognition of public education's contested status that brings hope to its advocates. For example, Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry (1997) argue that public education is uniquely suited to addressing social inequities since it can provide

students with opportunities to develop “capacities and qualities...that help them to lead creative and fulfilling lives and...[at the same time] create conditions necessary for the development for a caring and equitable society” (p. 19). Thus, whether one sees public schooling as having emancipating or oppressive effects, public education clearly plays an important role in nation formation. This recognition has brought the role of religion to the forefront of contemporary public education debates.

A Blurry Continuum:

Perspectives on Religion and Public Education

The relationship between religion and public education has been a source of significant debate in Canada and two of its primary policy influences: Britain and America. Generally, these debates occur across a continuum ranging between those advocating secular public schools that treat religion as a subject of study and those advocating an educational climate favoring particular religious practices.

Within the secularist perspective, critics generally argue that religion should be understood as a topic of study rather than a school-advocated system of belief. The forms and purposes of the models advocated by such critics vary. Some advocate an arms-length style of instruction outlining religious perspectives and their significance to aspects of our lives such as law and literature. For example, in his call for religiously-neutral schools in Canada, Lupul suggests that the “neutral school ...would not ignore religion, nor would it be hostile to it; it would merely study religion like any other subject. It would operate on the premise that to do more is to indoctrinate: to do less is to perpetuate ignorance...” (Lupul, 1969, p.146). Not all advocates of such instruction

justify education about religion as a way to maintain academic breadth or rigor: some identify social cohesion as its end goal. For example, writing almost three decades after Lupul, Sweet reviews the state of religion in Canadian public education and concludes that religion-education classes are desperately required. The resulting 'religious-literacy', she argues, would foster both students' appreciation for the multicultural and multi-religious nature of Canadian society and, also, cultivate a sense of belonging for religiously minded youth and their families (Sweet, 1997). This commitment to ensuring that public schools attract religiously committed youth is extended by Spinner-Halev (2000). Writing in America but with a broad liberal democratic context in mind, Spinner-Halev (2000) argues that secular schools should actively accommodate student/parent religious dispositions by allowing parents to exempt their children from activities that are incompatible with their religious convictions so long as the exemptions do not constitute an entirely new curriculum (Spinner-Halev, 2000). Reasonable accommodations, he argues, will help to ensure that a wide cross section of the community will continue to enroll their students in public schools and thus provide children from a variety of backgrounds opportunities to interact with one another (Spinner-Halev, 2000).

Webb's (2000) proposals for reforming religion-education classes in America illustrate the blurring of the lines that occurs as we move across this debate-continuum. Unlike those who see religion-education classes as primarily sociological and historical in nature, Webb sees them as a place where students can engage in theological and philosophical inquiries. He argues, further, that religious education deserves to be understood as particularly suited to character building and advocates religious education classes that are undertaken with a passion that encourages theistic belief among its

learners: “If we want students to take religion personally [he argues] we must risk the possibility that they will take it religiously” (Webb, 2000, p.72).

Advocates on the other end of the continuum see the public school’s role in cultivating cultural literacy as tied to acknowledging and perpetuating particular religious traditions. Cooper (1997) argues that the late 1980s and early 1990s British educational reforms which instituted mandatory religious education classes and school prayer illustrate this position well. The former are survey courses which are required to “reflect the fact that the religious traditions in Great Britain are in the main Christian...”, whereas the latter is, by default, Christian (Cooper, 1997, p. 46-47). Cooper critiques these policies and dismisses as discriminatory their accompanying provisions for student exclusion and the institution of alternative school prayers in accordance with school demographics. These provisions are problematic, Cooper argues, because they establish Christianity as the norm and therefore conflate it with authentic British identity (1997, p. 46-7). Cooper extends this claim by suggesting that this conflation reinforces a concurrent shift towards conservative values in British politics that posit social problems—and their solutions—as rooted in individuals rather than structures (1997, p. 49).

Much the same is echoed in Michael Apple’s (2001) assessment of creationism instruction and American public education. Apple dismisses the notion that creationism-instruction serves the purpose of broadening academic debates and identifies it instead as part of a larger attempt by fundamentalist and evangelical Christians to infuse American public institutions with explicitly Christian biases. Like Cooper, Apple extends the critique that conflating religion and public policy is problematic because it is inequitable

by examining the effects of this conflation. Conflating fundamentalist and evangelical Christianity with public policy, Apple argues, is problematic because it engenders a social ethic that belittles attempts to mobilize public policies in favor of improving social conditions by reifying personal faith: “the dispossessed and oppressed—for them there is to be no recourse through the state. Faith will solve all” (Apple, 2001, p.167).

As shown in detail in Chapters Four, Five and Six, this characterization of creationism instruction as advancing a particular religious and social agenda was generally rejected by the Board throughout this period. However, as I demonstrate in greater detail below, the absence of alternative religious perspectives on life’s origins; the ways in which the policy was presented and defended; and the additional policies adopted by the Board between 1981 and 1995, suggest that this policy was one part of a larger attempt by the Board to present Christian religious beliefs as having special merit. The extent to which the Origin of Life policy and the Board’s general disposition to such policies can be understood as an attempt by the Board to conflate religion and Canadian identity will be examined in subsequent chapters. In order to properly evaluate this possibility, it is important to understand the broader contexts within which the Origin of Life policy was formed. Accordingly, a survey of the historical relationship between religion and public education in Canada and British Columbia follows.

Religion and Canadian Public Education: A Shifting Relationship

In this section, I trace the relationship between religion and Canadian public education from confederation to present. I begin by identifying key historical precedents and developments that have given Canada its unique education system. Then, I narrow

my focus and conduct a more detailed survey of the British Columbia context from its initial European colonization to the present.

Religion and Public Education in Canada

Attempts to conflate Christianity and Canadian identity are evident in the earliest beginnings of Canadian public education. This makes sense since early schooling efforts were headed mainly by Christian denominations and their missionaries. As European settlers made their way across Canada, variations occurred in the extent to which particular denominations were allowed to play a role in the public schools. In 1867, the British North America Act offered these provincial variations official recognition and protection.

Section 93 of the British North America Act formally recognized public schooling as a provincial domain. Additionally, the Section protected denominational relationships already established in various provinces by stating that schooling systems in place at the time of Confederation could not be changed by federal law (Warren, 1988, p. 103). The immediate result of this legislation was to freeze particular Church-State relationships in time and therefore commit individual provinces to funding their previously established systems for denominational and non-denominational schooling.

Although more than a century has passed since the institution of this constitutional provision, it continues to affect the nature and structure Canadian public education. The experiences of religious groups in Ontario exemplify these consequences well. Representatives for two groups of Ontario residents—residents advocating independent Jewish and Christian schools, respectively—asked the Ontario Court of

Appeal to force the Ontario government to extend its practice of funding Catholic schools to other religiously oriented schools (Adler vs. Ontario, 1996). Their request was denied by the Court which ruled that although this funding discrepancy was discriminatory, it was acceptable because Ontario was obliged to fund Catholic schools due to its relationship with Catholic schools at the time of Confederation (Adler vs. Ontario, 1996).

Religion and Public Education in British Columbia

British Columbia joined confederation without a formal system of denominational schooling. The absence of such a system, however, does not mean British Columbian public schooling has been historically free from religious influence. To the contrary, British Columbia public schools have a long history of negotiating and often privileging the role of Christianity.

Prior to 1866, British Columbia consisted of two separate colonies: Vancouver Island and the Mainland. Although both colonies pursued independent public schooling policies, both their policies and the debates that preceded them shared key similarities. For example, each colony housed an influential newspaper publisher—Amor Des Cosmos on Vancouver Island and John Robson on the mainland—who advocated non-sectarian public schooling. Interestingly, both Des Cosmos and Robson would go on to influence public policy, not only through their newspapers, but also through their subsequent tenures as premiers of British Columbia.

Despite these calls for non-sectarian education, early education in both colonies was run by missionaries from various denominations (Sissons, 1959; Johnson, 1964, p. 16). The earliest of these schools—a school run for the Hudson Bay Company by Church

of England representatives—illustrates the resulting conflation of religion, education and notions of national identity well. As might be expected, this school adhered to its Church of England mandate and interspersed its instruction with religious exercises. This emphasis, however, held greater significance than might be otherwise expected insofar as it did not simply involve reemphasizing a belief system that might have been otherwise taken for granted. For students identified by the Company as being of ‘special concern’ because they had British fathers and Aboriginal mothers (Johnson, 1964, p. 16), this instruction was especially important insofar as it introduced (indoctrinated) them to recognizing Christianity as a belief system synonymous with British identity.

Calls for non-sectarian education were eventually heeded in both colonies. On the Mainland, the first public school—funded partly by the Governor—was opened in 1863 and, despite critics advocating otherwise, it remained non-denominational (Sissons, 1959, p.376). This disposition favoring non-denominational schooling was confirmed two years later by the New Westminster municipal council’s 1865 decision that public funds would not be allocated to “denominational or sectarian schools” (Johnson, 1964, p.35). Likewise, on Vancouver Island, the responsibility for organizing public schooling shifted to the Governor via the *Common Schools Act* of 1865. It was within this context of centralization that clear parameters were set in regards to the role of religion in Vancouver Island’s public schools: all schools, the Act noted, “shall be conducted strictly upon Non-Sectarian Principles” (Homeroom, 2003 C). These principles dictated the exclusion of “all Books of a Religious Character, teaching Denominational Dogmas...”; the limiting of religious instruction to specific times and places where denominational

instruction could be imparted; and, the assertion that public schools be open to all students regardless of their sectarian affiliation (Homeroom, 2003 C).

These policies should not be misunderstood as calls for secular schooling. Instead, they were calls aimed at avoiding the type of inter-denominational strife that had characterized public schooling debates across the country. Robson, for example, advocated for Bible-instruction in non-sectarian schools (Johnson, 1964, p.34). As Sissons puts it: “[these advocates were] largely responsible for forming a public sentiment averse not from religion but from particular concessions to any denomination in the schools” (Sissons, 1959, p.376).

In 1866, both colonies joined and in 1869 a new public schools legislation—the *Common School Ordinance*—was established. Responding to the growth of settlements throughout British Columbia, the Ordinance allowed for increased local control through the establishment of more elected local school boards (Homeroom, 2005a). This relative autonomy was short-lived: in 1870, the government instituted a mechanism for increasing central control via the Common School Amendment Ordinance. The Common School Amendment Ordinance created the position of Inspector of Schools (Homeroom, 2005 b). Both ordinances were in effect as British Columbia joined Confederation in 1871 and, together, they recognized and provided a mechanism for ensuring that British Columbia’s public school system remained non-sectarian.

In terms of specific significance for actual everyday schooling, both the Ordinance and its amendments did little more than reiterate each colony’s disposition for limiting the role of religion in public schools at this time. Thus, as Sissons points out, the Ordinance and the Amendment did not explicitly forbid religious exercises in public

schools but did insist that the “textbooks used in Common Schools be of a proper and non-sectarian character” (Sissons, 1959, pp. 378-379). Likewise, denominational instruction was not banned but restricted to “before and after the regular school hours...” (Sissons, 1959, p.379). The 1870 Inspector-General of Schools, E. Graham Alston, interpreted the act in his *Rules and Regulations for the Management and Government of Common Schools* accordingly. On the one hand, Alston maintains the status quo of a general Christian temperament in the schools by identifying the recitation of Christian prayer and instruction in the Ten Commandments as requisite daily school activities. In keeping with the emphasis upon non-sectarian practices, he also provides examples of general (non-denominational) prayers that could be used. Additionally, Alston extends formalizes the common schools wish to accommodate different religious perspectives by stating that “no person shall require any pupil to read or study in or from any religious book, or to join in any exercise of devotion or religion [including recitation of prayer or the study of the Ten Commandments] objected to by his parents or guardians” (Homeroom, 2005c).

After confederation, both ordinances were succeeded by the 1872 Public School Act as British Columbia was subjected to a new era of centralized educational governance. The Act itself is attributed to John Jessop, British Columbia’s first superintendent of schools and “a graduate of Egerton Ryerson's teacher training college in Ontario” (Fleming & Hutton, 1997). Its emphasis upon central control fits in well with Ryerson’s own opposition to what Katz (1973) would later call *democratic localism*, the governing of schools by local communities rather than a central government. Clearly advocating strong central ministries of education, Ryerson argued: “if Government exists

for the prosperity of the public family, then everything relating to educational instruction demands its practical care, as well as its legislative interference” (Ryerson, 1973, p.52). Accordingly, Section 36 of the Act articulated a province wide position on religious instruction: “All Public Schools...shall be conducted upon strictly non-sectarian principles. The highest morality shall be inculcated, but no religious dogma or creed shall be taught...” (Homeroom, 2003 b). According to Johnson, however, Alston’s rules continued to be in effect, thus confirming participation in basic Christian prayers as a public norm rather than a religious dogma or creed (Johnson, 1964, p. 39). Still, it is clear that the Act called for a degree of separation of church and state. For example, a subsequent revision—the 1876 Consolidated Public School Act—explicitly states that “no clergyman of any denomination shall be eligible for the position of Superintendent, Deputy Superintendent, Teacher or Trustee” (Homeroom, 2003 b). Thus, the province, at this time, aimed to create a system of public education that would cultivate a generic Christian temperament in its schools while avoiding practices that might spark denominational strife.

What did this look like in terms of actual teaching practices? With regards to secondary schooling at this time, Sissons notes that “no provision was made for religious instruction in the high schools, and religious exercises were voluntary and limited to the Lord’s Prayer and the reading without comment of scripture selections” (1959, p.385). Significant religiously oriented changes were not instituted for the next five decades.

In the 1940s, British Columbia public schools began to reemphasize Christian belief and ritual. For example: Between 1941 and 1943, three courses in Bible study were introduced into British Columbia’s provincial high school curriculum; in 1942, “Bible

readings [were] authorized by the Council of Public Instruction” (Homeroom, 2003); and, in 1944, the Public School Act was amended to read: “All public schools...shall be opened by the reading, without explanation or comment, of a passage of scripture...to be followed by the recitation of the Lord’s Prayer” (Homeroom, 2003). In reflecting upon concurrent changes in Ontario’s public schools, Sweet suggests that these attempts to reemphasize Christian doctrine in the public school system can be partly understood as a reaction to the horrors of both world wars. The public, she argues, was left disillusioned with human character and searching for methods for “instilling a moral purpose in the young...” (Sweet, 1997, p. 31). It is quite possible that the same explanation applies to these developments in British Columbia.

Subsequent decades brought a weakening of the church state relationship in public schools. As discussed in detail below, the emphasis upon school prayer was openly challenged during the late 1970s and early 1980s as some school boards publicly refused to enforce it. Additionally, the passage of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 stimulated a reevaluation of the role of religion in education and led to a series of changes including the 1988 cessation of mandatory school prayer in British Columbia’s schools.

A Royal Commission on Education—the Sullivan Commission—was undertaken in 1988. The commission’s findings are significant insofar as they provide explicit guidance for the future relationship between religion and public education in British Columbia and, at the same time, provide unique insights into the general public’s thoughts on this relationship during the late 1980s. Specifically, a subset of the commission’s report entitled, “The Learners of British Columbia. Commissioned Papers:

Volume 2," by Marx and Grievess is particularly relevant in this regard. Although there is no mention of creationism instruction in these papers or the Commission's final report, some relevant patterns are revealed. Of the seven hundred and ninety seven submissions received by Marx and Grieve, the third most frequent group of recommendations advocated cultivating an explicitly Christian character in the public schools. As Marx and Grievess note in their report:

[Such submissions were generally] concerned with preserving, protecting, and enhancing the Christian way of life. Most requests are for the retention of the regulations requiring daily scripture readings and prayer. Many of the submissions ask that all immigrants to Canada be assimilated into a Christian society and that the concern for multiculturalism should not take precedence over the maintenance of a western and Christian way of life (Marx & Grieve, 1988, p.3).

Whereas such requests may have been received sympathetically a few decades earlier, Marx and Grieve reflected the intervening shifts towards an increasingly rights conscious democracy by rejecting them as inappropriate:

In a pluralistic society, public schools cannot endorse a particular set of values and an associated moral code that is derived from one religion or creed....it is not the role of the schools in British Columbia to foster one set of religious preferences over another (Marx & Grieve, 1988, p. 76).

Overall then, British Columbia has a long history of formally privileging Christianity in its public schools despite the absence of a public denominational system

of schooling. As illustrated above, this relationship has shifted over time towards the establishment of an increasingly secular public school system. British Columbia's policy for funding private schools is a related issue that requires examination. The status for these schools is important to consider because they were—and continue to be—mostly Christian and, thus, constitute an important part of the historical context within which Abbotsford was able to secure permission to teach creationism in its schools.

British Columbia's Funding of Private Schools, 1875 to present

As noted earlier, public education in British Columbia has evolved along the lines of one public non-denominational system. Private denominational schooling, however, has an equally long history in British Columbia. Such systems of schooling received little support from the provincial government until the 1970s. Prior to this time, denominational schooling received formal assistance in the form of two minor subsidies for Catholic schools: in 1876 Roman Catholic clergy were exempted from paying school taxes (Johnson, 134-5, Sissons, 1959, pp. 381); and, in 1957, the Municipalities Act was amended to exempt private Catholic schools from paying property taxes (Johnson, 134-135, Sissons, 1959, pp.382-383). These subsidies are minimal in comparison to the developments in the 1970's and 1980's.

In 1966, three general groups of private schools—Catholic, Anglican and Dutch immigrant Christian—joined to form a lobby group, the Federation of Independent School Associations, to press for funding support from the Provincial government (Barman, 1995, pp.393-395). By 1977, they were successful. The Social Credit party government of the time responded to their requests by instituting the School Support

(Independent) Act which provided them with either 10% or 30% funding contingent upon their ability to meet particular criteria (Barman, 1995, p.395).

The Social Credit Party subsequently implemented a series of policy amendments steadily increasing the support these schools received over the next decade. Between 1982 and 1987, the minimum time of operation for applicant schools was decreased from five years to one, the date of funding allocations moved up and maximum funding increased to 35% (Barman, 1995, pp. 395-396). In 1989, in response to the recommendations of the Sullivan Royal Commission, the Social Credit government of the day implemented the Independent School Act and raised maximum funding levels to 50% (Barman, 1995, p. 396). Whereas some have critiqued this policy direction (e.g., Wilson in Sweet, 1997), others have argued in its favor since it brought private schools—most of which were and are religious—under greater government scrutiny and control (e.g., Barman, 1995, p. 392). Incidentally it was Christian private schools—both those that qualify for funding and those that do not—that enjoyed the greatest increases in enrollment between 1989-1995 (Barman, 1995, p. 399). Reasons for the increases are not altogether clear, although some—like Barman—have suggested that they are a response to “perceptions of public-school permissiveness” (Barman, 1995, p. 397).

The Social Credit party’s role in enabling these changes is important to note since they were also in power when the Abbotsford School Board first introduced Creationism into their school curriculum. Understanding the Social Credit party’s disposition to religiously oriented education should help to give some indication of the political climate within which the Board instituted its Origin of Life policy. In reflecting specifically upon the Socred’s involvement with extending support to private schools, Barman argues that

this policy direction can be partly attributed to the party's political stances which favored conservative values and increased parental choice in relation to education. Barman goes on to suggest that this policy direction is also attributable to the party members' religious beliefs: "evangelical Christians [she writes] have played a growing role in government as members of the legislature and as ministers" (1995, p. 402). The result, Barman argues, is that "the vision of society held by some members of government more closely approximated the non-public sector, or at the least the freedom to choose, than public education" (Barman, 1995, p.402).⁴ This argument's relevance for Abbotsford's experience with Creationism is critically evaluated in the coming chapters.

Thus, the relationship between religion and education is a significant one that deserves our attention insofar as it holds clear consequences for the type of national identity Canadian public schools cultivate. In Canada as a whole, this relationship has historically favored Christian beliefs and rituals. Despite British Columbia's distinction as a province that joined Confederation free of established denominational systems of public schooling, it has clearly favored Christianity-oriented practices for the majority of its educational history. This disposition, however, clearly shifted during the late 1970s and 1980s.

Together, these two decades form the general context within which the Abbotsford School Board developed, implemented and maintained its Origin of Life policy. For some, it was a period of lamentation, as a subset of British Columbia's electorate opposed what they saw as a waning Christian presence in British Columbia's

⁴ This is not an uncommon characterization of the Social Credit Party during the 1980s (e.g., Ungerleider, 1986).

schools (as evidenced in the submissions to the Royal Commission). However, this movement towards a more secular system of schooling was not without its contradictions. Thus, this period was also characterized by Ministry shifts opposing (e.g., the ending of school prayer) and supporting (via the funding of private schools) the role of religion in education. Both the function of the Board's Origin of Life policy within this context as well as the effects these developments had upon the Board and its policy disposition will be discussed in the coming chapters.

CHAPTER TWO: CREATIONISM IN CANADA AND ABBOTSFORD

Although understanding the relationship between religion and public education in Canada and British Columbia provides a useful context for understanding the uniqueness of the Abbotsford School Board's decision to present particular Christian theological beliefs as scientific curriculum, it is not enough. The Board's decision also needs to be understood in relation to creationism-instruction debates that have taken place throughout North America since the 1920s. In this chapter, I begin by examining recent literature attesting to the general nature of two key creationist perspectives: Scientific Creationism and Intelligent Design. I follow by summarizing their role in key creationism debates preceding and during this period of study. I then outline the extent to which such debates have manifested themselves in Canada as a whole and BC in particular. I conclude this section with a detailed accounting of the ways in which the Abbotsford School Board's policy has been interpreted outside of the general media.

Theology Masquerading as Science: Understanding Creationism and Intelligent Design

At its core, Creationism can be understood as a world view advocating the Bible as the primary source for understanding life's origins. However, it is important to note that there are multiple competing Creationist philosophies which differ in regards to the specific claims they make, their histories and their relative popularity. In this examination, I focus upon Scientific Creationism and Intelligent Design. Both require our attention since the tenets of Scientific Creationism were advocated in Abbotsford

beginning in 1981 and an appeal to intelligent design was used by some to defend the Origin of Life policy in 1995.

Scientific Creationism

Although the official Origin of Life policy documents refer to instruction in ‘special’ or ‘divine’ creation, the resources secured by the Board and its subsequent justifications of the policy (as discussed in Chapters Four, Five and Six) indicate that it was referring specifically to Scientific Creationism. For this section, I focus upon scientific creationism as expounded by the Institute of Creationism Research since this was the primary source of Creationism-oriented materials used by the Abbotsford School District between 1981 and 1995.

The Institute of Creationism Research advocates what it presents as two variations of creationism: Scientific Creationism and Biblical Creationism. These two variations, however, are more alike than not. Scientific Creationism is, as a brief survey of ICR’s website demonstrates, simply a censored version of Biblical Creationism. Scientific Creationism is the creationism theory that is marketed to schools as an alternative to evolutionary theory and, as such, it contains no explicit Biblical references. However, like Biblical Creationism, it is based upon the following core beliefs: the theory of Evolution is incorrect; life’s origins are relatively recent; and life is best understood as having its origins in a divine creator (Institute of Creationism Research, 2003). The ICR makes the identity of this divine creator and its assessment of evolutionary theory clear in its tract on Biblical Creationism:

All things in the universe were created and made by God in the six literal days of the creation week described in Genesis 1:1-2:3, and confirmed in Exodus 20:8-11. The creation record is factual, historical, and perspicuous; thus all theories of origins or development which involve evolution in any form are false (Institute of Creationism Research, 2003).

The Biblical tenets underlying Scientific Creationism have been the focus of American creationism-instruction debates for most of the twentieth century. A pivotal trial that exemplifies these debates well and occurred during this period of study took place in Arkansas in 1981. Arkansas had previously adopted an equal time instruction policy mandating its teachers spend equal amounts of time on the topics of Evolution and Creationism. In 1981—the same year the Abbotsford School Board instituted its own creationism-instruction policy—the Arkansas State Board of Education's equal time policy was challenged in court. Arkansas' policy was eventually defeated despite testimony that scientific creationism was indeed scientific from a variety of supporters, including the Henry Morris, the founder of the Institute for Creationism Research. The judge concluded that Scientific Creationism did not qualify as science and, instead, was better understood as an attempt to introduce Biblical teachings into the science classroom (Ruse, 1984). Critics have argued that the same is true of Intelligent Design.

Intelligent Design

Unlike Scientific Creationism, Intelligent Design theory favors the notion of an ancient Earth as forwarded by conventional evolution theories. At the same time, however, Intelligent Design differentiates itself from theories of evolution by positing the

presence of a creator who is responsible for all life on earth as well as the processes of evolution theorized by scientists (e.g., natural selection) (Forrest, 2000). Proponents of Intelligent Design attempt to lend their arguments legitimacy by publishing popular science texts; organizing conferences where evolutionists are invited to debate; and by establishing of research centers (Forrest, 2000).

Still, despite making claims shared by conventional evolutionary theories, there is clear evidence indicating that Intelligent Design is only marginally different from Scientific Creationism. For example, although Intelligent Design theory does not make explicit Biblical references, its key proponents clearly understand it as having a religious intent. Forrest's quotation of Phillip Johnson, the founder of the Intelligent Design movement, is a typical example. Speaking to an audience favoring Intelligent Design instruction in public schools, Johnson argues that its significance lays in its ability to prompt others to question scientific methodologies. His subsequent elaboration upon the significance of this shift reveals the proselytizing purpose behind Intelligent Design:

When we have reached that point in our questioning, we will inevitably encounter the person of Jesus Christ, the one who has been declared the incarnate Word of God, and through whom all things came into existence...For now, my point is merely that a question which was long assumed to be off the table will become important again if the cultural debate over Darwinism and naturalism goes in the direction I am predicting (Johnson quoted in Forrest, 2000, p.34).

Clearly then, both Scientific Creationism and Intelligent Design are perspectives that aim to guide students towards recognizing Christian religious beliefs as factual. Thus, an appeal to either perspective is clearly problematic. Given this information, it is

clear that the Board's inclusion of creationism in science class as the sole alternative to evolutionary theory is fairly understood as falling into one or more of the following categories: to reaffirm particular student faith commitments; to indoctrinate; and or to reify Christian beliefs. It is beyond the scope of this study to ascertain the effects of this practice in Abbotsford. The extent to which the Abbotsford School Board was motivated by such concerns shall be interrogated in subsequent chapters.

Creationism Experiences in Canada

In comparison with the creationism-instruction debates in America, the topic of creationism instruction in Canada has received little attention. Only a handful of scholarly accounts of the Canadian context exist and they vary significantly in terms of the quality or extent of their analysis. Each account generally focuses on a specific provincial context rather than Canada as a whole.

Generally, scholarly accounts of the Canadian context refer to it in passing often devoting only a citation or two to the topic. Writings by Michael Ruse, a Canadian philosopher of science who played a central role in the pivotal Arkansas Trial of 1981, exemplify this tendency well. In *Darwinism Defended*, a three hundred plus page tract critiquing Scientific Creationism and outlining the American Creationism debates, Ruse offers a typical excerpt concerning Creationism in Canada. It reads—in its entirety—as follows:

Finally, in this brief survey, let me prick the smugness of those of us who do not live and work in the United States. Already, the influence of creationism has spread beyond the borders. In Canada, for instance, in the province of British

Columbia, at least one school board gives Creationism equal time in biology classes. In parts of Alberta, apparently, one has nothing but Creationism taught! And, teachers in many other provinces are warned to tread very carefully around the subject of evolution. (Ruse, 1982, p. 293)

Likewise, in a later article, Ruse again warns against the "threat of Creationism in Canada," Ruse does not provide readers with any additional evidence or references (Ruse, 1984, p. 26). Writings by McGill University Education professor, Brian Alters, the Canadian head of the Harvard / McGill Evolution Education Research Centre, exemplify this trend as well. In his most recent text, Alters outlines the Creationism debates in America extensively but refers to Canada only once, noting only that there is a Creation Science Association in Quebec that claims to be popular (Alters, 2001, p. 24).

A more detailed but still brief account of creationism-instruction in Canada is found in Crawford Killian's polemic: *School Wars: The Assault on B.C. Education*. Killian, a Vancouver newspaper columnist, examines a series of educational policies enacted by British Columbia's Social Credit governments of the late seventies and early eighties and the unprecedented labor strife that followed. Although Killian's review of creationism-instruction in British Columbia is brief, it provides some interesting insights into the context within which the Abbotsford School Board first implemented its Origin of Life policy. Killian does not mention the Board itself but does note that the subject of creationism affected the British Columbia Grade 11 and 12 biology exams in their second deployment in June 1984 (exams were introduced in January 84) (Killian, 1985, p. 108). According to Killian, the exam was amended so that students could "state their preference for "creationism" over evolution, as long as they could still explain the basics

of evolution theory” (Killian, 1985, p.108). Killian attributed this change to “the efforts of a fundamentalist woman in Dawson Creek who had written the ministry to ask that evolution be taught as ‘theory only’...” (Killian, 1995, p. 108).

I have found only two texts that offer more substantive accounts of Canadian creationism-instruction experiences: one by British Columbia school law lawyer Terri Sussel and the other by newspaper columnist and journalism professor, Lois Sweet.

In her text, Sussel examines the effects of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms upon a series of school practices and policies. In the chapter most relevant here, Sussel examines the post-Charter of Rights and Freedoms state of Creationism-instruction in Ontario and British Columbia. Sussel begins by examining the Creation Science Association of Ontario’s unsuccessful attempts to influence the Ontario Biology curriculum during the late 1980s and early 1990s (Sussel, 1995, p. 152). Sussel explains their lack of success in the 1990s as a result of an earlier precedent based upon public opinion rather than the Charter. According to Sussel, a creationist lobby successfully pressured the 1987 Ministry into agreeing to alter the language used to describe the Universe’s evolution in the high school Physics Curriculum. However, the Ministry rescinded its accommodation soon afterwards in response to negative media coverage of the issue (Sussel, 1995, p. 152).

In her examination of British Columbia’s experience with Creationism, Sussel makes a number of claims that I have not been able to corroborate. For example, Sussel traces the beginning of creationism instruction in BC to a 1984 controversy:

a science lab in a BC school became the focus of tension between school officials and a fundamentalist parent lobby. Arguing that the high school biology

curriculum indoctrinated students with the false theory of “evolution”...the parents demanded that creationism also be included in the biology curriculum (1995, pp.151-152).

The result, according to Sussel, was “a long and rather heated public debate, [after which] the fundamentalist lobby succeeded in having creationism included in the biology curriculum as an alternative theory to evolution” (1995, p.152). Sussel also notes that, as a result of this lobbying, “the BC Ministry of Education also agreed to alter the evolution question on the grades 11 and 12 exams” (1995, p.152). Although this latter point is one that has been confirmed by others (e.g., see Killian above), I do not know which British Columbia school or school board Sussel is referring to. My review of both provincial newspapers, *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*, during this time period and the British Columbia School Trustees Association online policy archives identify only the 1976 Mission School Board and the 1981 Abbotsford School Board as adopting a creationism instruction policy. Also, to the best of my knowledge, the provincial biology curriculum guidelines were never revised to include creationism-instruction. It is possible that Sussel is suggesting that it was a local school board’s implementation of curriculum that was altered to accommodate creationist-perspectives. As with her reporting of the Ontario Ministry of Education’s experience with creationism, Sussel’s report on British Columbia suggests that the Charter of Rights and Freedoms had had little initial effect upon the question of creationism-instruction.

In her text, *God in the Classroom*, Lois Sweet offers the only accounting of the Abbotsford School Board’s 1981-1995 experience with Creationism-instruction outside

of those offered by newspaper and news-magazine reports⁵. Throughout her text, Sweet examines the contemporary relationship between religion and public education in Canada and a number of other Western countries. Public education, she concludes, must substantively engage with religion in order to promote 'religious literacy'. Sweet profiles the Abbotsford School Board's experience with creationism in a portion of one chapter devoted to examining recent public school controversies. Unfortunately, Sweet's coverage of the Board's experience is over-dependent upon one primary source of information.

Sweet argues that Abbotsford's creationism-instruction policy was best understood as an attempt to respect students' religious beliefs and cultivate critical thinking skills. Accordingly, she characterizes the 1995 Ministry of Education's insistence upon the termination of the policy is an example of "overzealous secular fundamentalism" (Sweet, 1997, p. 211). Sweet draws upon an interview with John Sutherland, the 1995 Chair of the Abbotsford School Board, to support this argument. Through Sweet, Sutherland makes a number of points that portray the policy as being relatively unproblematic. First, he argues that the policy simply made instruction in creationism a possibility rather than a requirement (Sweet, 1997, p. 209). Second, he notes, the notion of Divine creation was flexible. Whereas the 1981 Board, he hypothesizes, was likely to have used a literalist interpretation of the Bible to define Divine creation, the 1995 Board, he argues, was more oriented towards intelligent design (Sweet, 1997, pp. 208-209). Third, Sutherland asserts that the actual effects of the policy were minimal in that they amounted to "one period or less of exposure to creationism" during Grades 11 and 12 (Sweet, 1997, p. 209). Sweet does not consult additional

⁵ This media coverage is discussed in detail in chapters four, five and six.

sources to corroborate Sutherland's claims. Instead, she concludes her analysis by portraying the Ministry in dire circumstances: "They're [the British Columbia Ministry of Education] demanding unquestioning adherence to one theory, a position that's not only a poor model for future citizens, but could have the effect of driving moderates out of the public system—neither of which bodes well for the future of the public system" (Sweet, 1997, pp. 212-213).

Although I'm not sure that it would have changed Sweet's conclusions, it should be noted that her use of John Sutherland's comments is problematic insofar as his first two claims are demonstrably false and his third is misleading. Although each of these points is discussed in greater detail and in context below, it is important to note the discrepancies in Sutherland's claims. First, it is unreasonable to suggest that teachers were offered only the option of discussing creationism. The Origin of Life policy was revised three times prior to 1995 and each of these revisions "requested" that teachers "expose students...to both...[Divine/Special] creation and the evolutionary concepts of life's origins." The last of these revisions was reaffirmed by the 1995 Board just prior to the Ministry of Education's involvement. Likewise, despite claims to the contrary, the policy's emphasis was clearly Christian as opposed to multi-religious insofar as all resources actually made available to teachers between 1981 and 1995 presented variations of only two perspectives: the scientific evolutionary paradigm or scientific / biblical creationism. Third, Sutherland's claim that creationism-instruction constituted a period or less for Biology 11 and 12 students is misleading since it ignores at least two reports from the Superintendent suggesting that students were required to follow up on

classroom discussions on the Origin of Life with reports examining either creationism or evolutionary theory (Dyck, 1988; Brief Report, 1988).

Thus, despite claims to the contrary, the Abbotsford School Board's decision to implement a creationism instruction policy between 1981 and 1995 needs to be understood in the larger context of North American creationism debates. Importantly, these debates have clearly shown scientific creationism to be biblically oriented despite assertions by its formal defenders to the contrary. In Chapters Four, Five and Six, I provide further evidence to show that the Board also perceived its policy as being biblically oriented although this was not always acknowledged.

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study conflates sociological and historical policy analysis. I am cognizant of the constraints that studying the past brings and, in this regard, I will be explicit in regards to the theoretical perspectives informing my analysis and the methodology I employ.

Assumptive Framework

Conceptually, this analysis is informed by some broad assumptions about the ways in which public policies, especially those related to education, ought to function in a democracy like Canada. I am generally in agreement with Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry's assertion that public sector policies should be "based on the principle of equality of treatment of citizens" and that they ought to "embody the principle that all public authority must only be used in the public interest" (1997, p.2). The former goal ensures that the rights of minorities are not subjected to the whims of the majority, whereas the latter provides an overarching principle that may prove useful in adjudicating between otherwise incompatible rights-claims. As noted in Chapter One, people's lived experiences suggest that these principles are not always realized in practice. For this reason, a commitment to these principles is important because it allows for progressive social change.

As indicated in the introduction, I reject the idea of a homogeneous and politically disinterested state. I also see educational policy development as a process involving multiple actors. In the British Columbia context, I understand the key state actors to include the Ministry of Education and its subordinate school boards (the two formal

policy makers) and the judiciary (which is intermittently required to rule in areas affecting school law). In turn, I understand that each of these policy makers is vulnerable to and must therefore carefully adjudicate between the competing claims of their various constituencies. This is a complicated endeavor insofar as the constituencies themselves enjoy differing levels of influence. The result, as Taylor, Rizvi, Lingard and Henry remind us, is that educational policy development is often “linked to political compromises between competing but unequal interests” (1997, p.3). Sometimes, the result is that “state power is exercised at least in consonance with, if not on behalf of, key demands of special interest groups and classes” (Torres, 1995, p.270). This is not always the case since the resulting political alliances are never complete or uncontested but are, instead, “always disputed, resisted, and challenged” (Torres, 1995, p.270). It is, in part, the salience of this resistance to state policy makers that affects the extent to which such challenges affect policy. And, it is in this regard that I understand policy makers to be politically interested and active actors rather than neutral or rational proponents of the public good. Thus, in the coming chapters, my interrogation of the Ministry of Education’s and the Abbotsford School Board’s engagement with the Origin of Life policy involves an examination of the roles that specific stakeholders—including concerned citizens groups, individual citizens, teachers, the British Columbia Teacher’s Federation, the B.C. Civil Liberties Association and the print media⁶—played in regards to the Origin of Life policy.

I am also aware that the Ministry of Education and the Abbotsford School Board should not be understood as discrete static entities. As I show over the course of the

⁶ I draw upon the two province-wide newspapers, *The Province* and *The Vancouver Sun* as well as Abbotsford’s primary community newspaper, *The Abbotsford News*.

coming chapters, the actual makeup of these two groups changes over the course of this study. This is particularly significant in regards to the Ministry of Education since its political affiliation shifts across the political spectrum during the 1990s. Likewise, I am also in full agreement with Hogwood and Gunn who paraphrase J. D. Thompson to remind us to pay close attention to the individual composition of such groups since “the goals *of* the organization are in fact the goals *for* the organization held by those in the dominant group or coalition within it” (1984, p. 155). Thus, in subsequent chapters, I pay close attention to the roles that particular individuals played in the development of the Origin of Life policy.

Just as I do not see the state or its actors as static, I also understand that the policy itself needs to be understood as dynamic. I am aware that the processes of policy development, implementation and assessment are affected not only by individual actors but by the broader political and social contexts within which they are situated. Accordingly, I organize the coming chapters chronologically around an examination of the various versions of the policy starting with its very beginning in 1981 and ending with its final version in 1995.

Additionally, I am cognizant of the need to move beyond the official policy documents themselves in this analysis. As Hogwood and Gunn note, formal proclamations tend to propagate the ‘official’ purposes of the policy (1984, p.155). Thus, as explained below, I consult a wide array of sources in an attempt to discern the factors that led to both the initial institution and the eventual termination of the Abbotsford School Board’s creationism-instruction policy. Drawing upon multiple sources of data allows me to evaluate and corroborate my findings. In addition to ongoing commentary in

regards to the patterns, inconsistencies and gaps in the evidence that I gather, I critically examine these findings in Chapter Seven.

As noted in the introduction, I propose drawing upon Gale's (2001) conception of critical policy sociology in order to achieve these goals. Specifically, in the coming chapters, I outline the Board's experiences with Creationism in a way that conflates what Gale identifies as three distinct approaches to policy analysis: 'policy historiography', 'policy archaeology' and 'policy genealogy'. In regards to Creationism, this conflation means asking the following questions:

- How has public educational policy at the Ministry of Education and the Abbotsford School Board levels historically addressed the issue of religion and education? How have they addressed the specific issue of creationism instruction?
- How have these policies change over time?
- "What are the complexities in these coherent accounts of policy?"
- "What [if anything] do these [complexities] reveal about who is advantaged and who is disadvantaged by these arrangements?"
- Why was creationism on the 'policy agenda' at all? To what extent were other similarly motivated policies included or excluded from this agenda?
- Who were the key individuals involved with this policy? And, "Why [were] some policy actors involved in the production of policy (and not others)?"
- "What are the conditions that regulate the patterns of those involved?"
- "How [, if at all, is] the rationality and consensus [model] of policy production . . . problematized [by the data?]"

- “How [, if at all, were] temporary alliances . . . formed and reformed around conflicting interests in the policy production process [?]”

(Gale, 2001, pp.385-391)

Together, these questions will form the primary basis for my analysis. Chapters Four, Five and Six will present information pertinent to these questions regarding the Abbotsford School Board’s experience with Creationism instruction. Specifically, each of these chapters is organized into sections that document the Board’s engagement with the policy; examine the Board’s general policy disposition; evaluate the provincial government’s and Ministry of Education’s policy disposition; and evaluate the local general provincial electorate’s disposition towards Abbotsford’s creationism instruction policy and the relationship between religion and education in general.

Methodology

Archival Research

In addition to the various texts surveyed earlier to provide a broader sense of the philosophical and historical context within which the Abbotsford School Board formed, implemented and maintained its Origin of Life policy, I consulted a wide variety of archival sources in order to ascertain the Board’s specific experience with this policy. Specifically, I consulted sources highlighting both the official policy discourses regarding the Abbotsford School Board’s experience with Creationism during this period of study as well as additional sources that shed light on the contexts within which these discourses took place. Both these sources and my methods of analysis require further explanation.

Official Policy Discourses

For the purposes of this study, I defined official policy discourses as documents authored or maintained by either the Abbotsford School Board or the Ministry of Education.

I began my archival analysis by examining meeting minutes of the Abbotsford School Board because they were more readily available in their entirety than the Ministry of Education records. Since a brief survey of newspaper accounts of the policy had previously suggested that creationism-instruction in Abbotsford had been first implemented in 1983 and had been brought to an end in 1995, I started by limiting my archival research to the time period 1980 to 2000. I searched these records for any mention of creationism and of any evidence of the Board's experience in addressing the general issue of religion and public education. After finding materials that suggested that the Board may have had an involvement with creationism instruction earlier in 1977 or 1978, I also reviewed the Abbotsford School Board meeting minutes for the years 1976, 1977, 1978 and 1979.

As a result of my research at the Abbotsford School Board archives, I established a more accurate timeline concerning this policy and creationism instruction in British Columbia in general and forwarded a request for related materials to the Ministry of Education via my committee member, Professor Charles Ungerleider. A series of materials including internal ministry correspondence, ministry correspondence with concerned citizens and a relevant issue paper were received.

Both the Abbotsford School Board and the Ministry of Education archival materials are used in Chapters Four, Five and Six to outline the Board's experience with

creationism-instruction from its initial policy implementation in 1981 to its cessation of creationism-instruction in 1995. These materials, however, do not constitute the only source materials for these chapters.

Archival research related to context

In order to gain a better understanding of the local and provincial social and political contexts in which the creationism policy took place, I also consulted print-media and statistical resources for the time period 1980-2000.

In terms of the print media, I consulted the provincial newspapers, *The Province* and *The Vancouver Sun*, and Abbotsford's primary community newspaper during this period *The Abbotsford News*. Specifically, I searched each provincial paper's indexes for articles related to the Abbotsford School Board's and the Ministry of Education's experiences with creationism in particular and religion in general during this time period. I used the same parameters in my examination of archived issues of *The Abbotsford News* for which there was no available index. Additionally, I examined locally generated surveys as well as Statistics Canada censuses from throughout this period for information regarding both Abbotsford's demographics and British Columbia's general demographics. I focused specifically on ethnicity and religion in order to see if they correlate with what I show to be Abbotsford's disposition to maintaining Christianity privileging policies throughout this period while the remainder of the province moved away from them. This information has been incorporated, where relevant, in the coming chapters.

Analysis

In addition to the policy analysis literature discussed above, my comparative analysis of these various archival texts is informed by Smith's (1990) method for textual analysis. Rejecting the notion that all readers construct texts so differently that they defy analysis, Smith emphasizes the importance of recognizing texts as representing purposeful social relations. Thus, Smith argues, there are intended readings that the author anticipates which vary in accordance with the targeted audience. Accordingly, Smith identifies the task of the analyst as adopting "interpretive practices [that] conform to those intended by the text..." (Smith, 1990, p. 121). Smith's method influenced my own analysis in a number of ways. First, in my initial readings of the archival materials, I reviewed these texts in chronological order with an attempt to understand them from the viewpoint of their intended recipients. Second, recognizing that many of these texts were written for particular audiences, I cross referenced the various texts with one another, identifying and examining their similarities, differences and omissions as described above.

In the preceding chapters, I have surveyed the philosophical and historical policy contexts that preceded the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy. In the coming chapters, I focus on this policy itself and identify key factors that contributed to its institution in 1981 and its dissolution fourteen years later. As explained earlier, I accomplish this by presenting and analyzing findings from a variety of archival sources while, at the same time, identifying and examining the similarities, inconsistencies and omissions that occur within and between these accounts. In cases where competing truth

claims are made, I identify these and critically evaluate them in an attempt to ascertain the most plausible explanation.

CHAPTER FOUR: 1981

How is it that the Abbotsford School Board implemented a policy advocating instruction in creationism in 1981? Specifically, what factors led the Board to develop this policy and identify it as a plausible course of action? These questions guide this chapter's examination of the Board's initial engagement with creationism instruction. I begin by examining the Abbotsford School Board's initial implementation of its *Origin of Life* policy in May 1981 as well as the Board based discussions that preceded it. Then, in order to understand how it was possible for this policy to be considered appropriate, I identify factors in the broader context that not only allowed this policy to exist but actually encouraged it. Specifically, I draw upon a variety of sources including letters to the editor, news media accounts and school board meeting minutes to show that key policy stakeholders at this time—including the Abbotsford School Board, the Ministry of Education and a vocal portion of the local electorate—were disposed towards supporting public school policies that were socially conservative and or espoused an explicitly Christian perspective. There were detractors, of course, and I look closely at local critics, the actions of relevant professional associations and the general social sentiment outside of Abbotsford to show that although the Origin of Life policy was generally met with either overt support or a lack of public comment, some indication of discontent was evident from the very beginning.

And Then There Was Creationism: An Examination Of The Abbotsford School
Board's 1981 Institution Of Its Origin Of Life Policy

Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy was enacted with little in the way of formal delegations or lobbying on the part of the local electorate. In considering this issue, local media accounts at the time suggested that individual trustees may have been informally lobbied by concerned parties (Individual photos, 1981; Creation concept, 1981).

Although no evidence of such lobbying was found, the Board meeting minutes do reveal a pattern of intermittent interest in the question of creationism instruction dating back to the late 1970s.

A review of the Abbotsford School Board's meeting minutes between 1976 and 1980 reveals two incidents during which the Board concerned itself with instruction regarding the origin of life. Unfortunately, these records offer few details. On June 9, 1977, meeting minutes note that "Copies of reports for Secondary and Elementary Schools based on responses of Principals in respect to the teaching of evolution in School District No. 34 were circulated to the Board for information" (School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), p. 9)⁷. These reports were not appended to the meeting minutes and it is unclear as to what questions had been originally posed to the school administrators or how they had responded. These reports were again referenced on June 23, 1977, when they were referred to the Committee of the Whole (School District, p. 8). Although a documented outcome of this meeting was not found, subsequent references to creationism materials being purchased in 1977 or 1978 indicate that these responses preceded and

⁷ In subsequent references, the institutional author 'School District No. 34 (Abbotsford)' will be cited as 'School District'.

therefore may have influenced the Board's decision to begin a collection of creationism materials (please see the next paragraph for details). Although Board meeting minutes for 1978 and 1979 lacked any further references to creationism, the question of creationism instruction figured prominently in the coming year.

On June 26, 1980, the Board was approached by Mr. H. Hiebert, a member of the electorate concerned "with the lack of material expounding the creationist theory being made available to teachers in School District No. 34 (Abbotsford)" (School District, June 26, 1980). According to his subsequent submission to *The Abbotsford News*, Hiebert was concerned the Board had relegated creationism resources purchased two years earlier to the Instructional Resource Centre from where they had either fallen out of use or disappeared (Hiebert, November 12, 1980). Not satisfied with the Board's decision to "request the Superintendent to investigate this matter and report back to the Board" (School District, June 26, 1980), Hiebert used this submission to *The Abbotsford News* to pressure Trustees into acting by suggesting that readers make creationism-instruction an issue in the upcoming school board elections (Hiebert, November 12, 1980). I found no evidence suggesting that creationism-instruction became an election issue in either *The Abbotsford News* or in subsequent Board meeting minutes.

Although no copy of a Superintendent's report on creationism instruction or resources was found in subsequent Board meeting minutes, the topic did come up again later that year during the Board's Second Annual Retreat. Meeting minutes indicate that the matter was one of a few unrelated issues which "were briefly discussed, but [for which] no consensus was achieved . . . because limitations of time curtailed discussion" (School District, November 29, 1980). It is clear, however, that further discussion was

undertaken in this regard since a draft policy formalizing the Board's commitment to creationism instruction was put forward a few months later (School District, January 22, 1981). This draft reads as follows:

TEACHING OF THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

In view of the fact that neither the special creation nor the evolutionary concepts of the origin of life are capable of verification by means of scientific experimentation, and because the teaching of one view of origins to the exclusion of the other view will almost certainly antagonize those parents and/or pupils who hold to the alternative view, all teachers, when discussing and/or teaching the origin of life in the classrooms, are requested to expose students, in as objective a manner as possible, to both special creation and the evolutionary concepts of life's origins, with the evidence that is presented in support of each view, and to refrain from any assertions that would purport to scientifically verify or falsify either view.

Further, the Principal of each elementary and secondary school in the district, in cooperation with the Librarian of that school, will be responsible for ensuring that a reasonable selection of print and non-print materials on both evolutionary and creation views of life's origins is maintained in the Library of each school, appropriate to the age ranges of the pupils in that school. A current list of recommended materials written from creationists' points of view will be available from the office of the Superintendent of Schools or his designate.

The Instructional Resources Centre will also endeavour to maintain a substantial selection of print and non-print materials on this subject for purposes of teacher inspection and use. (School District, January 22, 1981)

Local newspaper coverage of this proposed policy suggests that the Board initially portrayed the policy as pragmatic and almost mundane as opposed to possibly controversial (Creation concept, 1981). For example, trustee Deane Downey summarized the policy as merely formalizing a process that was already in place: "[the policy is] meant to make evidence for the creationist theory more accessible....[since] a very modest amount of evidence for the creationist theory is in the Instructional Resources

Centre and not obvious" (Creation concept, 1981). When asked why the policy was being enacted at this point in time, Chairman Hambley claimed creationism instruction was a matter of "concern and interest for a number of people in the community" (Creation concept, 1981). The writer, however, disputes this claim by noting that, with the exception of a 'one-man delegation' the previous year, "there was no petition, survey, or formal presentation to the board requesting the change" (Creation concept, 1981).

The motion to approve the policy was deferred during the next school board meeting as the Board attempted to ensure that it had a broad base of school-based support. Chairman Hambley explained the deferral as being made at the request of the Education Committee "in order to allow input from principals..." (School District, February 12, 1981). Although no record of any such input was found in subsequent Board Meeting minutes, changes were made to the draft and a revised Origin of Life policy was appended to the February 26, 1981 meeting minutes. Although this policy is not identified in the minutes or agenda, subsequent references to the Origin of Life policy refer to February 26, 1981 as the policy's start date. Therefore, it is assumed that this appended revised policy was passed and implemented during this meeting. This revised and official copy reads as follows:

TEACHING OF THE ORIGIN OF LIFE

In view of the fact that neither the Divine creation nor the evolutionary concepts of the origin of life are capable of verification by means of scientific experimentation, and because the teaching of one view of origins to the exclusion of the other view will almost certainly antagonize those parents and/or pupils who hold to the alternative view, all teachers, when discussing and/or teaching the origin of life in the classrooms, are requested to expose students, in as objective a manner as possible, to both Divine creation and the evolutionary concepts of life's origins, with the evidence that is presented in support of each view, and to refrain from any assertions that would set forth either view as absolute.

Further, the Principal of each elementary and secondary school in the district, in cooperation with the librarian of that school, will be responsible for ensuring that a reasonable selection of print and non-print materials on both evolutionary and creation views of life's origins is maintained in the library of each school, appropriate to the age ranges of the pupils in that school. A current list of recommended materials, both print and non-print, setting forth the creationist viewpoint, will be maintained by the District Instructional Resources Centre for teacher inspection and use.(School District, February 26, 1981)

The differences between this adopted policy and its preceding draft deserve our attention. One change, at least, seems simply pragmatic: the superintendent's office is no longer expected to store creationism resources. The remaining changes, however, hold greater pedagogical significance. References to 'Special creation' have been replaced with 'Divine creation': the latter term more clearly indicating a Biblical perspective. Additionally, the original draft's admonition of teachers engaging in "assertions that would purport to scientifically verify or falsify either view" has been repealed. This is a logical deletion since supportive accounts of both creationism and evolutionary theory argue that their thesis is scientifically verifiable. The revised version replaces this admonition with a request that teachers "refrain from [making] any assertions that would set forth either view [of evolutionary theory or creationism] as absolute." The introduction of this phrase deserves our attention since it extends a sense of credibility to the policy as a whole by presenting creationism and evolutionary theory as having comparable credibility and—since prior to the policy only evolutionary theory was taught—by implying that this policy helps teachers to avoid scientific absolutism.

This revised policy and its implementation made the front page of the local paper (New Policy, 1981). Although this front page article does not offer any substantive information in regards to the processes that led to the policy's institution, it clearly reveals the policy to be more than routine or pragmatic. There seems, for example, to

have been some debate among the trustees in regards to the fairness of the policy despite earlier attempts to present the policy as uncontroversial. Specifically, trustee Deane Downey is reported as expressing concern that the revised policy “implied there are only two positions on the subject: evolution and creation” (New Policy, 1981). Since further details are not noted, it is difficult to ascertain whether Downey was attempting to make room for midway positions such as theistic evolution or intelligent design or, instead, attempting to make room for creation myths from a variety of cultures. Regardless, Downey’s concern was downplayed by Chairman Hambley and Trustee Lester Inman who countered that “in the minds of most people there are just the two positions . . .” (New Policy, 1981). Additionally, it is clear that some discussion took place in regards to whether this policy constituted religious indoctrination. Downey’s comments are presented as summing the Board’s position: “It’s [The Origin of Life policy] not a matter of imposing religion . . . but of giving students exposure to information on both points of view with openness, and freedom of inquiry intended” (New Policy, 1981). However, not all stakeholders agreed.⁸ For example, John Fisher, president of Abbotsford District Teachers Association (ADTA) questioned the policy’s legality in relation to the School Act; expressed his opinion that it did not have widespread community support since none had been observed; and, questioned the appropriateness of its support for creationism instruction (New Policy, 1981). Fisher’s latter point, however, differed from Downey’s in that Fisher was clear in inquiring about competing creation myths: “What”, the writer reports Fisher as asking “would be done if Canadian natives, or followers of a number of non-Christian religions, wanted their position on origin of life presented?” (New Policy,

⁸ Although the British Columbia School Trustees Association did not comment upon the Abbotsford School Board’s Origin of Life policy, its position was formalized in 1977 when Association members opposed Mission School Districts motion calling for instruction in Scientific Creationism (BCSTA, 1977).

1981). No response was noted in the article. The policy's inability to provide a basis for a satisfactory response to queries which point to the need to take pluralism seriously and reject Christian hegemony is not surprising given the Board's policy record at this time.

Bibles, Prayers, The Strap And East Indians: An Examination Of The Abbotsford School Board's Policy Disposition Prior To And During 1981

A brief review of the Abbotsford School Board's motions and practices for the five year period ending in 1981 clearly reveals the Board's disposition towards adopting socially conservative and Christianity-favoring policies. It was a disposition that often established the Board as out of step with its more progressive peers.

In the late 1970s, a series of newspaper reports showed that the Ministry of Education's longstanding policies of mandatory Bible reading and recitation of the Lord's Prayer were being ignored by many of the province's schools. For example, in 1976, the Vancouver School Board was identified as refusing to enforce either policy in its schools on the grounds that public schools should not participate in such religious exercises (McMahan, June 15, 1976). It was a critique shared by the British Columbia Teacher's Federation (BCTF) and the British Columbia School Trustee's Association (BCSTA) which had passed a 1973 resolution in this regard (McMahan, June 25, 1975). Whereas the Vancouver School Board supported its schools in their decision to ignore these policies, the reaction to similar revelations of their lax enforcement in Abbotsford's schools was met with an entirely different response.

In October 1977, *The Vancouver Sun* introduced Abbotsford's approach to this news as harsh and atypical: "The Abbotsford school board has gone on a 'disciplinary

crackdown' that includes compulsory Bible readings each morning in every class – a procedure that had been ignored by most schools in the last decade" (Krangle, October 29, 1977). According to Krangle, the 'crackdown' followed the Board's decision to support Neil Muhtadi, then Principal of an Abbotsford high school and future District Assistant Superintendent, who had attempted to enforce a series of unpopular measures in his first year as principal. In addition to reinstating daily Bible readings, Muhtadi now required

all students to carry a note of permission before they . . . walk in the hallway [instead being in class]; pay a \$5 parking fee per semester, while teachers may park for free; report to the general office if they arrive "even a minute" late; [and] spend all spare periods in their home rooms" (Krangle, October 29, 1977).

When three hundred students walked out of school to protest Muhtadi's policies, the Board moved to support him by voting unanimously to enforce "the section of the Public School Act which states that each school day must open with a "passage of scripture" (Krangle, October 28, 1977). A few days later, the Board and Muhtadi publicly noted that they would consider suspensions for students who refused to participate or "who should use 'other avenues of protest' against school religious ceremonies" (Krangle, October 29, 1977). Although no record of actual suspensions was publicly circulated, the Board's willingness to take such a public stand showed it to be much more conservative and oriented towards maintaining evangelizing policies than its peers.⁹

5. Minister of Education, Pat McGeer, initially refused to comment on the issue of Abbotsford's decision to enforce Bible reading and school prayer exercises (Classroom Readings, October 31, 1977). According to the Sun, McGeer decided to await stakeholder feedback before responding. By December, McGeer was ready to take a stand: he concluded "It is a total non-issue, except for the press" (Compulsory Bible, December 8, 1977).

The Board's commitment to socially conservative educational policies and practices became evident again in November 1980 as it lobbied for the reintroduction of corporal punishment to the public school system even though it had been banned since 1973. This lobbying consisted of at least one letter to the Minister of Education (School District, November 29, 1980) and a failed attempt to solicit support for a pro-corporal punishment resolution at the 1981 British Columbia School Trustees Association Annual General Meeting. The Board did not always act in unison however, and two of the seven trustees—Trustees Inman and Teichrob—went on record as opposing the Board's decision to lobby the BCSTA in favor of corporal punishment (School District, February 26, 1981). Although this motion was rejected at the 1981 BCSTA AGM, its wording gives a clear indication of the Board's socially conservative perception of the public educational system as failing to uphold high moral standards:

CORPORAL PUNISHMENT

A phenomenon appearing more and more frequently in elementary schools is that of students who defy authority in the school setting and who are frequently regarded by their parent or parents as beyond their powers to correct or admonish. Such students not only disrupt classrooms, when they attend, but they also require an inordinate amount of time on the part of school personnel who have to deal with them.

Many principals and teachers have expressed regret at the removal of corporal punishment from schools, believing that it was rarely, if ever, abused when applied and served as a strong deterrent to disruptive students. Many parents have also expressed the same point of view. It is believed that the option to use corporal punishment should be available to school districts.

BE IT RESOLVED

That the B.C.S.T.A. recommend to the Minister of Education that corporal punishment be reinstituted as an option to Boards of School Trustees to employ in elementary schools as they may judge appropriate and necessary in the maintenance of order and good discipline. (School District, February 26, 1981)

The Board's status as being out of step with its peers became further apparent when, a few months later, the BCSTA decided to lobby for an "end [to] formal Bible readings and recitation of the Lord's Prayer in the schools" (Trustees seek end, 1981). On May 28, 1981, the Board officially reviewed this BCSTA position and requested "the Chairman write a letter to the Minister of Education stating the Board's opposition to the removal of the provision for Bible Reading and saying of the Lord's Prayer from the School Act" (School District, May 28, 1981). Although no response to the Board is recorded in the meeting minutes, it is clear that the Board took its own position seriously: Ed Wilson, writing for *The Abbotsford News*, reported that the Board had taken subsequent steps to further enforce Bible readings in Abbotsford's schools for the upcoming school year.

The Board's commitment to maintaining and promoting conservative and Christianity-oriented practices that heralded either a bygone era—as in the case of corporal punishment—or one undergoing significant contestation—as in the case of school prayer and Bible reading—was accompanied by what seems to be concern regarding its student demographics. For reasons that are neither explained nor noted, the Board conducted a survey of its schools in an attempt to count how many East Indian students were enrolled in its elementary and secondary schools¹⁰. The survey indicates that there were 368 East Indian children enrolled in Abbotsford's elementary schools and 170 in Abbotsford's secondary schools at the beginning of the 1981 school year (Redekop, 1981; Secondary students, 1981). No other surveys identifying students by characteristics such as race, religion or culture were found. Subsequent surveys

¹⁰ The Board uses the term 'East Indian' in its survey. It is important to note that the term itself is problematic insofar as it was probably used to identify anyone of South Asian origin.

conducted in 1982 identified Abbotsford as having a total of 6512 enrolled elementary students and 3675 enrolled secondary school students (Survey, October 1982). At the least, these two surveys suggest that South Asian students made up a very small proportion of Abbotsford's student population and that, despite their small number, they had attracted the Board's attention.

Searching for a Savior: Religious Dispositions and Perspectives on the Origin of Life Policy in the Local Abbotsford Context

The Board's disposition towards promoting socially conservative and evangelizing policies during this time suggests that a significant portion of its electorate held similar views. Vancouver Sun reporter Nicholas Read's 1981 profile of Abbotsford and interviews with local teachers and students as well as local newspaper editorials and the subsequent letters to the editor concerning the Origin of Life policy support this hypothesis.

Read identifies and examines an increase in church attendance and enrollment at Trinity Western University—a private evangelical liberal arts university located in the adjacent community of Langley—during this period as factors that differentiate Abbotsford from the mainstream. Particular types of Christianity, he argues, are particularly prominent in Abbotsford relative to other British Columbia communities. Reid explains this presence as “the result of an aggressive and increasingly widespread move back to fundamentalist evangelical Christianity, a conservative, back-to-the-Bible trend that is sweeping the rural communities of the Fraser Valley...” (Read, July 4, 1981). Read goes on to further differentiate these churches from mainstream Christian

denominations: “While most mainline denominations, including the Anglican and United Churches, continue to suffer a steady decline in membership, the Pentecostal, Alliance, Mennonite Brethren, evangelical Baptist and non-aligned Gospel churches are showing an astonishing rate of growth . . .” (Read, July 4, 1981). One critic of these growing denominations—an Abbotsford United Church minister—is quoted by Read as arguing that these churches generate wide appeal by engaging in “a kind of biblical literalism. . .” and “offering almost black-and-white answers to what can sometimes be very complex questions” (Read, July 4, 1981).

In his next article, Read turns his attention to the Abbotsford School Board’s newly instituted Origin of Life policy in an attempt to understand how it was being received in Abbotsford’s schools. Specifically, Read interviewed two teachers and three students in the month following the Origin of Life policy’s implementation. Read’s interviews suggest that teachers and students shared opposing views. The teachers were portrayed as feeling comfortable with the new policy: “Both . . . say they cite evidence both for and against Darwinian evolution in class so the students can decide the matter for themselves” (Read, March 19, 1981). One of these teachers was clearly sympathetic to supplementing instruction in evolution with creationism instruction: “if I were to teach in another school, I’d teach it in the same way” (Read, March 19, 1981). Conversely, Read’s interviews with students indicate that they viewed the policy as an ineffective attempt at religious indoctrination. Read notes: “They [the students] said they accept the Darwinian theory as the better option, and would not change their minds if creationism had been given equal emphasis in past classes” (Read, March 19, 1981). One student interviewed by Read explicitly links creationism instruction to mandatory Bible reading

exercises and the recitation of the Lord's Prayer: "No [the policy will not have a significant impact]. In elementary school we had the prayer and the Bible readings and it didn't have any effect on the kids I knew" (Read, March 19, 1981). Reception to the policy among the local media, however, was neither as positive as the teachers' nor as dismissive as the students'.

As indicated above, the Board's decision to pursue an Origin of Life policy did not go unnoticed in the local media. In addition to occasional articles, the policy received first and second page exposure immediately following its passage including a full reproduction of its text as well as a negative appraisal by the paper's editors (New Policy, 1981). In their opinion column, these editors portrayed the policy as being implemented without good reason. There was, they claimed, no widespread call for the policy, though they conceded "trustees may have been approached individually on the question" (New Policy, 1981). Additionally, they suggested that the policy contravened the school act and may be subject to legal challenge as discriminatory because it does not make "available those theories held by the religions of those students who are not of the "Christian" faith" (New Policy, 1981). Interestingly, the editors did not advocate for repealing the policy but, instead, suggested that the Board include other religious perspectives on creation (New Policy, 1981). Surprisingly, the Board's policy generated little reader response in 1981.

After their March 11, 1981 profile of the Origin of Life Policy, *The Abbotsford News* received six related letters over the course of the year. Four of these letters supported the policy by advancing two interrelated arguments: they portrayed Creationism as scientific and revealing of Biblical truth rather than as religiously

motivated (Hiebert, March 18, 1981; Alilunas, 1981) and or they argued that evolution led to a pervasive atheistic or secular humanist perspective designed to “do away with the fact of God” and negatively impact society (Johnson, 1981; Alilunas, 1981). Although both lines of argument are vulnerable to being characterized as what Read’s previously discussed article characterizes as ‘a type of biblical literalism that offers black and white answers to complex questions’ they deserve close analysis. The first argument allows supporters of creationism instruction to sidestep the critique that creationism instruction was equivalent to religious instruction. Although not entirely illegal in 1981—after all, daily recitation of the Lord’s Prayer and the reading of Bible selections were enshrined in the School Act—the act of introducing new modes of religious instruction was, as acknowledged by the editorial board of *The Abbotsford News*, vulnerable to being perceived as discriminatory and therefore possibly subject to legal challenge (Creation Concept, 1981). The logic underpinning this defense of creationism as leading to Christianity but rooted in science is well articulated in Hiebert’s letter:

No educators anywhere have ever advocated teaching the theory of divine creation in public schools: not that this would be unfair. . . . What the board is proposing is to make available to students evidence that conflicts sharply with evolutionary dogma, and therefore gives strong support to the concept of divine creation. (Hiebert, March 18, 1981)

The second line of reasoning that correlates evolutionary theory with atheism and secular humanism and then ties these to society’s ‘decay’ is a good example of offering ‘black-and-white answers to very complex questions.’ What ties both of these arguments together, however, is best articulated in Henry Hiebert’s letter: “[without creationism, he

argues,] our kids are ripped off in their effort to gain vital knowledge needed to form a correct world-life view" (Hiebert, March 18, 1981).¹¹ These letters, then, suggest that at least some portion of the local electorate at this time hoped that creationism instruction would help instill moral values by encouraging students to perceive the Bible as a credible source of information.¹²

Creationism Contested: An Examination of the Provincial Policy and Social Context

Unlike the local media, the provincial media followed the Abbotsford School Board's policy as a subset of larger coverage devoted to the issue of creationism instruction in the provincial context. On or close to March 16, 1981, Education Minister Brian Smith was presented with an approximately 7500 name petition from the Creation Science Association of Canada requesting that public schools institute instruction in creationism.¹³ Specifically, the petition read as follows:

Treatment of Origins in Public Education

As adult residents of B.C., we the undersigned ask that the evolutionary view of the development of life cease to be referred to as fact in our educational institutions, and that whenever the evolutionary view of the development of life is presented, all pertinent, recent, scientific discoveries be presented as well,

¹¹ Hiebert's subsequent letters to the editor are revealing of his general perspective and suggest that he perceives the changing world around him with much disdain. For example, he writes on April 29, 1981 arguing against feminism: "Unfortunately, feminists, who stand for the destruction of all respect for femininity, which they decry as a figment of the imagination, tend to create for women, more problems than they solve" (Hiebert, April 29, 1981).

¹² Conversely, letter writers criticizing the policy found no solace in such a prospect and dismissed creationism as religious and therefore inappropriate in the science classroom (Campbell, 1981; Begle, 1981).

¹³ The newspaper article does not identify the exact date of the petition.

whether in favour of evolution or in favor of creation, thus providing a two-model approach. (Read, March 16, 1981)

The petition drew a favorable reaction from Brian Smith, the 1981 Minister of Education, who responded by “offering his personal opinion that biology students would benefit from studying both versions. . . [and encouraging] teachers to offer both” (Padmore, 1981). Smith’s endorsement quickly generated public attention and brought the evolution versus creationism debate into British Columbia’s public domain.

Proponents of creationism instruction were elated and hopeful. For example, George Pearce—President of the Creation Science Association of Canada—‘applauded’ the Minister’s stand and immediately asked the Ministry to formalize this endorsement by distributing related reference materials to its schools (Read, March 20, 1981).¹⁴ Pearce’s immediate call for a tangible commitment on the Minister’s part seems to have gone unanswered: I found no evidence suggesting that any such materials were ever distributed or even possessed by the Ministry of Education.

Conversely, Smith’s endorsement of creationism instruction also elicited some negative reactions. In *The Vancouver Sun*, for example, Smith’s comments were immediately followed by an editorial and five letters to the editor. Of these, only one letter endorsed the Minister’s position, whereas the others ridiculed Smith’s suggestion (Ewert, 1981). The issue reappeared later in the year when two UBC Zoology students organized “Citizens Against the Undermining of Science Education, a group of scientists and interested lay persons formed to oppose the teaching of creationism in high school science classes” (Read, August 7, 1981). In August 1981, this group was reported to have been organizing a 500+ name petition opposing creationism instruction for submission to

¹⁴ No evidence that the Ministry took such action has been found.

the Minister of Education (Read, August 7, 1981). A few months later, the group was back in the news as it teamed with its philosophical adversary, the Creation Science Association of Canada to cosponsor a debate on creationism and evolutionary theory (Read, October 27, 1981). Despite this seeming emergence of a public creationism / evolution debate, few letters to the editor on the topic were published after the Minister of Education's initial March comment. This general lack of public response, suggests that although the issue was picked up by a few interested parties, creationism instruction was generally perceived as a non-issue.

This is not to say, however, that the provincial government was not approached again in this regard. In addition to the March 1981 petition, the Minister of Education was reported to have received 58 submissions regarding creationism instruction during his 'province-wide tour' (Lauk, May 13, 1981). Still, despite these submissions and the public debates noted above, no Ministry representative publicly commented on the topic of creationism instruction again during this year.

Ostensibly, then, the Abbotsford School Board's decision to implement a creationism instruction policy in 1981 can be understood as the logical end result of previous attempts to introduce creationism resources to the district's teachers and students. The Board itself justified these attempts and the formal policy as an appropriate response to local community sentiments. This explanation, however, is problematic insofar as it treats the Origin of Life policy as an isolated phenomenon and does not explain what motivated it or how it fit into the Board's larger policy agenda or philosophy.

When taking into account the shifting contexts within which this policy was implemented and the Board's disposition towards supporting socially conservative and Christianity-favoring policies, it becomes clear that the Origin of Life policy was rooted in much more than a simple commitment to administrative efficiency or electorate representation. Indeed, the Board's support for mandatory school prayer and Bible readings indicate that the Board reified Christian belief and ritual by constructing them as integral components of how public schools functioned and, in the case of creationism instruction, what these schools taught. Together, the continued existence of bible-reading and school prayer policies in the School Act; the 7500 name creationism-instruction petition; and, subsequently favorable comments by the Minister of Education indicate that this position was not peculiar to Abbotsford but, instead, enjoyed widespread legitimacy. Conversely, the opposition to these policies by the Vancouver School Board, the British Columbia Teacher's Federation and the British Columbia School Trustee's Association show that this conservative status quo was undergoing some contestation at this time.

Thus, the Abbotsford School Board introduced its Origin of Life policy into a public school system and social context that was structured in ways that generally welcomed it. Privileging Christian rituals in public schools was a practice that had only just started to be questioned at the stakeholder level. Still, the lack of public comment generated by the policy itself or the concurrent developments at the provincial level is surprising. Indeed, one would expect that a 7500 name petition supporting creationism instruction would be met by a significant outcry if public sentiment was oriented against it. The Minister of Education's initial endorsement and subsequent silence on the issue is

not easily explained. From a perspective considering political opportunism, this position makes sense because it allows the Minister to acknowledge the vocal proponents of the policy while, at the same time, avoiding extensive negative media coverage. Keeping such coverage to a minimum is important at this time both because the Ministry itself was having significant public relations difficulties at this time (see Killian above) and because the issue clearly had not galvanized public support. Whether this relative silence indicated a general indifference to the issue and or an assumption that the issue was likely to stay on the margins of public debate and policy, it was clear that the issue of creationism was not a high priority for most British Columbians.

The next period of study—1982 to 1994—shows the continued development of opposition to the Origin of Life policy. Although the changes that take place in regards to this policy are minimal during this period, significant change does take place at the provincial level in terms of legislation, political ideology and demographics. These are changes that set the stage for this policy's demise in 1995.

CHAPTER 5: 1982-1993

Although media accounts of the 1995 cessation of creationism instruction in Abbotsford tend to give the impression that not very much happened between the policy's initial institution and that point, the intervening years spanning 1982 to 1993 are significant as this was an active and formative period for both proponents and critics of the Origin of Life policy. On the one hand, the Abbotsford School Board continued to favor policies and practices privileging Christianity and a generally socially conservative perspective. At the same time, however, the Board also demonstrated a greater awareness of the significant shifts that were taking place in the broader social, political and judicial contexts towards ending religious biases in public education. The Board, I argue, responded to these shifts not by reforming its Christianity privileging policies but by reframing this disposition in ways that were more easily defended at the particular time. These framings shifted the way the policy was officially justified rather than the way it was understood at the Board level or applied at the local school level. Not surprisingly, as I show below, these framings shifted over the course of this period.

In order to understand the Board's experience with its Origin of Life policy between 1982 and 1993, a variety of factors require examination. Therefore, I begin by outlining the Board's engagement with its Origin of Life policy throughout this period. Then, I review the Abbotsford School Board's general policy disposition at this time by examining Board policies, documents and school practices that clearly reveal its continued disposition towards favoring conservative and evangelizing perspectives. Next, I examine the local Abbotsford context to show how a vocal component of the electorate

supported such perspectives. I follow by showing how the provincial political context changed over this time as the provincial government's previously tacit support for conservative and evangelically oriented public policies peaked and then quickly waned, leaving the Abbotsford School Board without an active ally in this regard. Finally, I conclude with an examination of the provincial social context to show how the Board's policy disposition continued to make it stand apart from the mainstream.

The More Things Change, The More They Stay The Same: Understanding The Origin Of Life Policy Between 1982 And 1993

At first glance, the Abbotsford School Board's engagement with its Origin of Life policy between 1982 and 1993 appears to be minor. In terms of actual changes to the policy, only two modifications were made: one change occurred in 1983 and the other took place in 1988. The Board's remaining engagement with the policy consists mainly of correspondence with major stakeholders and an ongoing assessment of the policy's implementation. However, as I show below, a closer examination of the 1988 policy revision; the Board's preceding and subsequent correspondence; and, the Board's ongoing policy assessments reveal much about how the Board understood this policy and, also, how it understood and responded to the concerns of its stakeholders.

During this period, the Abbotsford School Board first focused its attention on the Origin of Life policy as a matter of due process in 1983. The Board had adopted a new policy template and the Origin of Life policy needed to be revised accordingly (School District, May 12, 1983). Although this and a series of additional policies were scheduled for revision at the May 26, 1983 Committee of the Whole Meeting, I found no record of

this meeting. However, a revised policy—Policy EC 15.5—was presented and passed on June 9, 1983 (School District, June 9, 1983). The full text is noted below:

ORIGIN OF LIFE

PURPOSE

To provide a guideline for teaching of the Origin of Life concepts.

APPLICATION

In view of the fact that neither the Divine creation nor the evolutionary concepts of the Origin of Life are capable of verification by means of scientific experimentation, and because the teaching of one view of origins to the exclusion of the other view will almost certainly antagonize those parents and/or pupils who hold to the alternative view, all teachers, when discussing and/or teaching the Origin of Life in the classrooms, are requested to expose students, in as objective a manner as possible, to both Divine creation and the evolutionary concepts of life's origins, with the evidence that is presented in support of each view, and to refrain from any assertions that would set forth either view as absolute.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROCEDURES

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for ensuring that the procedures related to this Policy are carried out.

Changes to the procedures related to this policy may be made upon approval of the Secretary-Treasurer and the Superintendent.(School District, June 9, 1983)

There are no substantive differences between policy EC 15.5 and its predecessor policy F6.2. The only textual change that has occurred is the replacement of policy F6.2's detailed accounting of where creationist resources will be kept with a general statement emphasizing the superintendent's responsibility in implementing this policy. More significantly, the first paragraph's outline of and justification for the policy is unchanged.

Almost two years passed before the Board again considered the topic of creationism instruction. On May 16, 1985, Robert Grieves, a concerned member of the community and creationism advocate, made the first of a series of delegations to the

Board. Interestingly, although the meeting agenda listed Grieve's presentation as "Mr. B. Grieves – Creationism Science" (School District, May 16, 1985), the actual meeting minutes avoid any mention of creationism. The full text of this summary is as follows:

Mr. Grieves discussed with the Committee of the Whole, the matter of classroom access by persons wishing to show slides or provide information to students. The Committee viewed the slides presented by Mr. Grieves. Mr. Sharp thanked Mr. Grieves for his presentation and advised him that his request would be considered by the Board. (School District, May 16, 1985)

Given the agenda description, it is reasonable to conclude that Grieves was asking the Board for permission to use a slide presentation to share creationism information with students. It is unclear as to why this detail was not reflected in the Board's meeting minutes. No mention is made of the Board's response in these minutes and there is no indication that any subsequent discussion regarding Grieve's request took place at the Board level. Indeed, no mention of creationism is found in subsequent Board meeting minutes until the following January when Superintendent Sayers received a favorable assessment of the Origin of Life policy from the Ministry of Education.

The assessment from the Ministry of Education was, in fact, a response by Jerry Mussio, the Executive Director of the Ministry's School Programs Division, to an earlier letter by Superintendent Sayers. It is unclear as to what prompted Sayers to contact the Ministry in the first place since a copy of this original letter was not found. It is also unclear as to why Mussio was the respondent to Sayer's query. Regardless, Mussio's response clearly communicates the Ministry of Education's unwillingness to oppose or critique the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy.

Heeding Smith's suggestion that texts be analyzed from the perspective of the intended reader (in this case Sayers and the Abbotsford School Board), my reading of Mussio's letter indicates that it serves three distinct functions. First, it passively sanctions the Board's policy by not identifying it as unacceptable or in need of revision. Second, it provides the Board with key ministry guidelines for addressing 'publicly sensitive topics or issues' that could be used to justify the policy. Mussio identifies three such guidelines:

[To] ensure that religious beliefs and moral values of students and their parents are shown respect, and that students are encouraged to develop tolerance for the beliefs and opinions of other individuals with whom they may disagree. Another is to help students develop the ability to think clearly, to reason logically, and to examine all sides of an issue in an effort to reach sound judgments. A third commitment is to ensure that the cultural heritage and disciplinary knowledge upon which our society operates is presented accurately and completely, and in an educationally valid way. (Mussio, February 20, 1986)

Interestingly, each of these points is frequently cited by the Board and many of its supporters in their defense of and justification for the Origin of Life policy in subsequent years.¹⁵ Finally, this letter clearly identifies the Ministry's intent to distance itself from this issue as Mussio notes that creationism-instruction is not part of the Biology curriculum:

In some cases individual teachers may choose to discuss various alternative viewpoints on these matters with their biology classes. However, because these

¹⁵ I am not arguing that the Board or its supporters used Mussio's letter in particular to justify their policy. These arguments are, in fact, commonplace among creationism advocates and, accordingly, they were often put forth by the Board and its advocates throughout this period of study.

viewpoints are not derived from the discipline of biological sciences, they are not a part of the curriculum. (Mussio, February 20, 1986)

Since the Ministry's assigned curriculum is intended to take up a minimum of 80% of possible instruction time, this letter implies that the Board is solely responsible for any decisions regarding creationism instruction. However, the wording of this excerpt from the revised Biology curriculum clearly allows individual teachers to make such allowances.

Thus, through Mussio's letter, the 1986 Ministry of Education permitted the Abbotsford School Board to continue its Origin of Life policy. Given this Ministry's preceding history of making amendments to provincial exams so that students could express their preference for creationism and of identifying teacher led discussions of alternatives to evolution as an appropriate pedagogical—but non-curricular—practice, it is likely that the Board perceived Mussio's letter as an indication of government sanction.

Almost two years after their initial meeting, Bob Grieve returned to address the Board. This time, though, Grieve headed a delegation of approximately twenty parents (School District, February 26, 1987)¹⁶. During this meeting, Grieve reviewed the results from a Creation Science Association of Canada survey of Abbotsford's public school students and their experiences with creationism instruction. Unfortunately, the meeting minutes do not note the number of students surveyed, the way in which the survey was presented or the survey results. The survey itself focused mainly on ascertaining whether creationism was being consistently presented as a viable alternative to evolutionary

¹⁶ The meeting minutes from this date identify only Bob Grieve as "representing a group of parents having children in district schools..." However, in referring to this meeting almost one year later, the Parent Committee on Creation, Evolution and Public Education (of which Grieve is a member) states that Grieve was accompanied by 20 parents whom he represented (School District, April 18, 1988).

theory (School District, February 12, 1987).¹⁷ Grieve used his presentation to argue that the survey demonstrated a need for further creationism-instruction and he urged the Board to ensure that its Origin of Life policy was being properly implemented: "theories supporting both viewpoints of the Origin of Life (creation and evolution) should be given equal and unbiased exposure to students and that the theory of evolution should not be presented as absolute" (School District, February 26, 1987).

Approximately seven months later, the Board requested that Superintendent Harry Sayers follow up with Grieve and appraise him of the District's progress in addressing his previously expressed concerns. Although the meeting minutes go on to note that Sayers agreed to send a letter to this effect (School District, October 5, 1987), no such letter was included in subsequent Board Meeting Minutes. Since the intervening Board meeting minutes do not indicate any engagement with the policy, it is unclear as what this response entailed.

Whereas the Abbotsford School Board's engagements with the Origin of Life policy between 1982 and 1987 focused mainly on its maintenance, 1988 represented a significant shift in focus as the Board took steps to formally evaluate the policy's actual implementation. Early in the year, Superintendent Harry Sayers received two reports regarding the implementation of the Origin of Life policy at the elementary and secondary school levels. Although no record was found as to why these reviews were solicited, their inclusion in the Board's meeting minutes suggests that they were undertaken as part of Sayers' follow up from the previous school year. Their arrival and focus was also timely and appropriate as they were preceded by correspondence from

¹⁷ The Survey was officially received as a piece of correspondence on this date. Griefes signed off on the survey as "Director, Media Relations." In all likelihood, he is referring to his position with the Creation Science Association of Canada.

parents complaining that the Origin of Life policy was being unsatisfactorily implemented (Klassen, December 17, 1987). These reports and both an intervening review of the policy by the Policy Development Committee and a subsequent survey of available creationism instruction resources deserve close examination.

The first report, written by Assistant Superintendent J. A. Dyck, focuses on the way in which the Origin of Life policy was being implemented and perceived in Abbotsford's elementary schools. In this report, Dyck presents the policy as having only minimal relevance at the elementary level. He explains:

Little time is spent on studies in this area at the elementary level, but one chapter in Grade 7 deals with Prehistoric Man. In the main, teachers have been sensitive to the issue and tend to avoid discussion on the subject other than giving indication that two viewpoints exist – e.g., Evolution and Creation. (Dyck, 1988)

Additionally, Dyck portrays the policy as generally problem free and identifies it as eliciting only two negative reactions in the past few years. Both incidents give some indication of the nature of both parent concerns and their District sanctioned responses. The first incident occurred in the 1986/1987 school year when a parent complained that a teacher was planning to undertake “an anthropological study” with students. Dyck does not elaborate on the nature of this study but does note that “the teacher was new to the district at that time and immediately—i.e. the next day—responded to the concern and substituted an alternate unit of study” (Dyck, 1988). This is a telling incident in so much as it suggests that teachers were expected to censor their approaches to the topic of evolution. This response is surprising since it is not in keeping with the Origin of Life policy which ostensibly requires supplemental instruction in creationism not the

censorship of instruction in evolutionary theory. However, the schools did not always so readily accommodate parent complaints. In the 1987/1988 school year, Dyck notes that a parent complained about the presentation of evolution in a new science text. Dyck's solution in this case was not to alter the use of the offending text—he defends it as being “very similar in content to the material presented in the former text”—but to arrange for the teacher to be assisted in securing additional creationism resources (Dyck, 1988).¹⁸

Dyck also uses this report to outline a recommended course of action for improving the implementation of the policy. First, Dyck notes, the materials available to support teachers in teaching about creationism and evolutionary theory need to be properly catalogued. This is a process that he reports as being underway (Dyck, 1988). Likewise, Dyck also notes that these resources need to be supplemented and, in this regard, he states that a number of recently ordered items were undergoing review. Although Dyck makes no mention of the nature of the creationism instruction elementary students were receiving at the time of his report, his listing—without comment—of *Creation, Evolution and Scripture* as an example of recently ordered creationism resources indicates that biblically oriented resources and rationales for Creationism were considered to be valid materials supporting the policy. Additionally, Dyck also notes two additional Elementary Leadership Committee recommendations:

That the Board write the ministry in an effort to have school districts provided with materials that support the Creationist point of view . . . [and] that new teachers be appraised of the policy and that an upcoming in-service session address this point and offer some guidance for Grade 7 teachers. (Dyck, 1988)

¹⁸ In an additional comment regarding creationism resources, Dyck specifically advised against securing the services of local speakers on the grounds that their instructional style did not suit younger students.

Thus, on the one hand, Dyck's assessment portrays the policy as being generally free of controversy. Conversely, Dyck's suggestion of an in-service session for teachers implies that the policy itself contains a subtext that teachers need to be advised of. The subtext, as Dyck's example of the teacher who altered her 'anthropological study' shows, substitutes the policy's official request that teachers supplement instruction in evolution with creationism-instruction with the expectation that they self-censor their treatment of evolutionary theory in general.

The next day, a subcommittee of the Board, the Policy Development Committee¹⁹ met to discuss the Origin of Life policy.

[The committee] requested the superintendent to undertake the following:

- a) Obtain materials from the Alberta education system
- b) Investigate the establishment of a committee of parents and other interested parties to provide input into the selection of materials to be held in schools and at the Instructional Resource Centre
- c) Review the potential of establishing a locally developed course on the issue. (School District, January 22, 1988)

No evidence of any follow up in regards to these three items was found in subsequent meeting minutes. Likewise, no indication was given in any meeting minutes explaining the rationale behind these recommendations. Options B and C are particularly intriguing as they leave a number of questions unanswered. Who, for example, did the policy development committee define as an interested party? Would it include critics of the policy or those not represented by it? Likewise, it is intriguing that the Committee was considering a locally developed course at this time. This recommendation suggests

¹⁹ Gerda Fandrich (Chairperson), Fast, Harris, Hindmarsh and Superintendent Sayers.

that there was at least some discussion at the Board level questioning the appropriateness of incorporating Creationism instruction in regular elementary social studies and secondary biology classes.

Interestingly, although it is likely that Dyck's report was discussed at this meeting, there is no indication from this or subsequent meetings that the inclusion of *Creation, Evolution and Scripture* as a newly purchased resource for the Origin of Life policy was perceived as problematic. In fact, there is no evidence that any discussion took place at the Board level regarding the religious nature of some of its creationism-oriented materials. This lack of comment is surprising since, as discussed below, the relationship between religion and education would undergo significant debate later that year as the Ontario Court of Appeal would rule in a precedent setting ruling against the recitation of Christian prayers in Ontario's public schools (Zylberberg Vs. Sudbury Board, 1988). Conversely, this lack of comment should not be perceived as a new development: purchasing creationism resources that were clearly Biblically oriented was not a new practice for the Abbotsford School Board.

A survey of the creationism resource materials contained within the Abbotsford School District's Instructional Resource Center was circulated during the February 1, 1988 Committee of the Whole Agenda. Despite its title, "Creation / Evolution Materials at the IRC," this document was not generated in accordance with the items catalogued at the IRC. Instead, it is a Creation Science Association of Canada catalogue from which items located at the Instructional Resource Centre were highlighted. This is a telling format since it suggests that the Board had secured relevant resources from no other source. A few of the highlighted items were clearly biblically oriented:

Table 1: *Sample Creationism Instruction Resources*

Title	Catalogue Description
The Beginning of the World	"[This] is a revision and update of material first introduced...as "Science, Scripture and Salvation" series."
The Bible Has the Answer	"...provides logical Bible based answers to 150 questions dealing with the most common and vexing problems of the Bible and the Christian life. On those few questions dealing with doctrinal issues, orientation is pre-millennial and Baptist; on all others it is non-denominational."
The Beginning of the World	"A scientific and Biblically devotional study of the first eleven chapters of Genesis plus the Key New Testament chapter of II Peter 3 . . . well suited for a quarter's study in Sunday School or home Bible classes."

Notes, February 1, 1988

This Committee of the Whole meeting also received what appears to be a companion report to Dyck's earlier review of creationism instruction in Abbotsford's elementary schools. Although entitled "Brief Report on the Teaching of Evolution and Creation in Secondary Schools", the author's name does not appear in the report. The report frames Abbotsford's secondary schools' experiences with creationism instruction as generally positive and summarizes their feedback accordingly: "[the principals] report that creation is consistently emphasized in all presentations to ensure that our students are given balanced data relating to both theories" (Brief Report, 1988). The writer goes on to explain how Abbotsford is unique in this regard:

This [the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy] is our own initiative since the Ministry's Curriculum Guide makes no reference to creation. Such omission is intentional. The Ministry Science Committee decided to avoid the

Origin of Life issue due to its controversial nature and concentrate instead on change.²⁰ (Brief Report, 1988).

In terms of actual implementation, the writer also notes that Biology teachers have found guest speakers be minimally effective or useful as “views presented tended to emphasize the presenter’s perspective or specific group’s point of view rather than creation-evolution in general” (Brief Report, 1988). The writer concludes:

Our secondary school students are appraised of both theories impacting the Origin of Life – Creation and Evolution. They are given opportunities to understand and research both points of view in an objective and balanced manner. Parents, students and staff seem to favor this positive approach to learning. (Brief Report, 1988)

Taken together, the Policy Development Committee’s recommendations regarding the policy; the summary of the materials already in use; and the reports on the status of creationism instruction in Abbotsford’s elementary and secondary schools clearly indicate that, at this point in time, the Board was continuing to promote the perspective that understanding the origin of life involved choosing between evolutionary theory and biblically oriented creationism. Further, the positive praise for the policy as found in the letter from Mussio and the report on secondary schools; the lack of critical comment from the Board’s review of the policy; and the maintenance and addition of resources that advocate both scientific and biblical creationism indicate that both the Board and the Ministry of Education of this time saw this policy as worthy of continuance.

²⁰ No evidence supporting this claim was found in a review of news, school board and ministry archives.

A few months after this review, Bob Grieve resumed his contact with the Board both in correspondence as a member of the Parent Committee on Creation, Evolution, and Public Education and in person. In their letter, the Committee notes that they are aware that "some efforts are being made" in regards to points raised by Grieve during his February 26, 1987 presentation (School District, April 18, 1988). Keen to see further progress, they asked the Board to employ the following suggestions:

1. Whenever the origin and development of life is discussed and/or taught in the classroom:
 - a) evolution be taught as a theory only, not as a fact
 - b) students be given the creation alternative and full opportunity to hear both sides
2. That a "standard package" or "unit" of materials (with suitable textbooks, and/or references and videos) on scientific creationism be assembled for use in each classroom where evolution is taught.
3. That this creation material be taught by teachers or resource people trained to teach it. (School District, April 18, 1988)

The Committee makes no mention of creationism's religious basis and ends its letter by arguing that both evolution and creationism are scientific theories (School District, April 18, 1988). On the same day they received this letter, Board members watched a slide show by Bob Grieve entitled "What do the Fossils Say About Origins" from 7:30 – 8:00 (School District, April 18, 1988). Grieve concluded his presentation by reiterating the requests from the above letter (School District, April 18, 1988). In turn, the Trustees "requested that the Administration research this policy further, particularly with respect

to available curriculum materials, and bring a report to the next committee meeting” (School District, April 18, 1988). No such report was found in subsequent meeting minutes, perhaps because this information had been accumulated and presented just a few months earlier.

A few weeks later, during the regular May 9, 1988 Board Meeting, the Origin of Life policy was revised. Unfortunately, I found no notes indicating the rationale for or process leading to this revision. The revision is interesting in that it serves to de-politicize the policy by removing the portion mentioning parents or pupils objections as a justification for the policy. Whereas the original justification stressed the importance of appeasing parents and students opposing evolutionary theory on ideological grounds, the revised policy is now presented as one ostensibly rooted in the pursuit of scientific knowledge. Thus, from its text alone, the revised policy is not as easily characterized as one that aims to legitimize the religious perspectives of a portion of the electorate. Instead, teaching creationism is presented in a much more defensible manner. It is now simply a rational curricular intervention aimed at providing students with objective facts so that they can choose between two perspectives on life’s origins: evolutionary theory and biblically oriented creationism. This policy is pasted below and the removed portion is included in italics.

PURPOSE

To provide a guideline for teaching of the Origin of Life concepts.

APPLICATION

In view of the fact that neither the Divine creation nor the evolutionary concepts of the Origin of Life are capable of verification by means of scientific experimentation, *and because the teaching of one view of origins to the exclusion of the other view will almost certainly antagonize those parents and/or pupils who*

hold to the alternative view, all teachers, when discussing and/or teaching the Origin of Life in the classrooms, are requested to expose students, in as objective a manner as possible, to both Divine creation and the evolutionary concepts of life's origins, with the evidence that is presented in support of each view, and to refrain from any assertions that would set forth either view as absolute.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROCEDURES

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for ensuring that the procedures related to this Policy are carried out.

Changes to the procedures related to this policy may be made upon approval of the Secretary-Treasurer and the Superintendent. (School District, May 9, 1988)

During the following school year, the Board received four pieces of correspondence regarding the Origin of Life policy. The first was a follow up letter from the Parent Committee on Creation, Evolution and Public Education.²¹ In addition to requesting an update from the Board, the Committee reiterated its previous request for textbook changes or the creation of supplementary units supporting creationism instruction at the Grade Seven level (School District, October 24, 1988). Only one other letter writer wrote to support the policy (and suggest ways that creationism instruction could be bolstered) (Jautzen, October 3, 1988). The remaining letters rejected the Board's defense of creationism instruction as simply providing students with a pedagogically sound alternative or evolutionary theory (e.g., Hudson, December 8, 1988). Thus, Jones argued that Creationism was derived from and aimed to promote Christianity and was therefore inappropriate in a multicultural context and as a religious rather than scientific endeavour (Jones, October 28, 1988). Although Hudson, a University College of the

²¹ Signed Helen Moback (Chairperson), Wayne Lee (Secretary), Gerda Peachey, Fred Loewen, Al Ewert, Brian Gervais, Ingrid Shelton, Bob Grieve "and Friends"

Fraser Valley professor, made similar arguments, his letter deserves special attention because it managed to elicit a formal response from the Superintendent.

In his letter, Hudson complained that his previous letter from March 23, 1988 had not been noted in the subsequent school board meeting minutes or addressed by the then Superintendent (Hudson, December 8, 1988). Hudson attached a copy of the original letter to this submission. Like Jones' submission, Hudson's original letter critiqued the Origin of Life policy as inappropriately introducing religion into the science classroom and suggests that creationism be taken up in a comparative religions course (Hudson, March 23, 1988). Hudson broadened this critique in his December 8 letter by suggesting that the issue had political ramifications: "this issue goes far beyond just the teaching of creationism in a public school system – it deals directly with special interest groups being able to influence and modify the curriculum..." (Hudson, December 8, 1988).²²

The Board, however, was unconvinced by either argument. In his response to Hudson, Superintendent Wentzell defended the Board's policy as one based in concerns with science rather than religion or appeasing particular interest groups. It is a defense that is clearly in line with the 1988 revision of the Origin of Life policy but at odds with the policy's subtext. Wentzell writes:

At no time is there any effort or attempt by the School Board to get into any type of formal discussion on the merits of creationism versus evolution. Merely, it is our intellectual and educational responsibility to indicate those theories exist.

(Wentzell, January 24, 1989)

²² Two notes of interest: 1. Hudson sends a similar letter dated the same day but this time to John Sutherland, then chair of the Board. 2. Although Hudson identifies himself as a concerned parent and PAC member, he does not mention his own political aspirations: Hudson was a candidate in the subsequent school board elections where he lost to Devries (1135 votes to 1092 in favor of Devries) (November 19, 1988 election results).

Interestingly, the Board does not consistently advance this line of argument in the latter half of this period.

Three years passed before the Origin of Life policy was again brought to the Board's attention (School District, February 24, 1992). It was Bob Grieve again, now identifying as a director with the Creation Science Association of Canada, who started the process with a form letter advocating creationism instruction entitled *So You're An Evolutionist*. Grieve's letter targeted school trustees in an attempt to solicit orders for free pamphlets extolling creationism. The letter itself clearly articulates the Creation Science Association's understanding of recent court rulings scrutinizing explicitly religious exercises and or education in public schools. Thus, on the one hand, the letter outlines a religious rationale for creationism instruction. It begins by arguing that society at large is at a point of disarray because it has moved away from the Bible and the Ten Commandments in particular. This shift away from adhering to Christianity is, Grieve argues, a consequence of Darwin's critique of biblical creationism: "By logical extension, since the first chapter of the book [the Bible] which included the ten commandments is fiction, why pay any attention to the rest of the book?" (School District, February 24, 1992). Grieve then makes his rationale for teaching creationism clear:

So, what do we do? Suppose that we can make a strong case that Genesis is factual – then, following the same logic it would appear that the book in question is right after all. We would realize that there is an ultimate authority we must face, and His work relative our conduct should not be ignored. (School District, February 24, 1992)

In the remainder of the letter, Grieve shifts his focus and presents his services as plausible given current legislative and social contexts. First, Gieves suggests that creationism instruction is a legitimate activity sanctioned by Ministers of Education across Canada since each “allows for classroom discussion on evolution” (School District, February 24, 1992). The Association, Grieve notes, “would like to take advantage of this provision [for discussing alternatives to evolutionary theory] by putting on a critique—scientific analysis of evolution...” (School District, February 24, 1992). The pamphlets and accompanying presentation, Grieve promises, “will be entirely scientific, no religious proselytizing. Any such questions which can arise will be dealt with outside the classroom” (School District, February 24, 1992). The Board’s subsequent decision to accept Grieve’s solicitation (Rees, 1995) signified the beginning of (and in some cases is the focus of) a sharp increase in attention paid to the Origin of Life policy by the media, the electorate and the Ministry of Education in the following weeks.

Interestingly, the Board did not describe this decision to accommodate Grieve’s request as being grounded in its concerns for substantive science instruction. Instead, the policy’s subtext of accommodating the beliefs of a portion of the electorate—an acknowledgment that had been deleted during the 1988 revision but, as discussed above, reiterated to teachers since—was publicly used to justify the decision. As Board chair John Smith put it: “a large number of people in the community...have [creationist] views...and those people are parents. All we ask is that teachers are mindful of that” (Rees, 1992). Grieve, on the other hand, characterized the decision as allowing his group to do more than simply represent the views of a portion of the electorate: “If we do a

good job of it we are left with only one alternative – that we are a specific creation . . . Those of us who are in it do believe in God” (Rees, 1992).

Media rebuke of the Board’s position quickly followed. A University of British Columbia Education professor was quoted as criticizing the Board for allowing religious proselytizing in its schools and, similarly, a Vancouver School Board representative went on record noting that creationism instruction “would be unacceptable to us and violates our policy” (Rees, 1992). Seemingly unaware that the Abbotsford School Board had sanctioned creationism-instruction since 1981, *The Province* newspaper published an editorial critiquing the Board’s decision to circulate Grieve’s letter and “[open] its classrooms to the creationist controversy” (March 15, 1992). The editors dismissed creationism as pseudoscience and criticized the Board for participating in a religious exercise:

Creationists seek to "prove" with science a Biblical theory of man's arrival on earth. But using the Bible as a school textbook is close to offending the separation of church and state in the public school system. Is this what the school board intends? (March 15, 1992)

Similarly, Grieve’s request was also noted a few weeks later in *The Abbotsford News* (Toth, 1992). As in his interview with Anne Rees, Trustee John Smith used this opportunity to reiterate his support for the Board’s Origin of Life policy. This time, however, Smith elaborated on the policy in an interesting way. Perhaps cognizant of the way in which the policy was being critiqued for promoting Christian beliefs, Smith depicted it as being multicultural.

I don't feel it's dangerous to expose children to different points of view, and if those are Shintoism, or Buddhism, or Native or Sikh ideas, I think that's great. All the established religions in the world have profound philosophical strengths... (Toth, 1992).

What Smith does not note, however, is that up to that point in time, there was no tangible evidence suggesting that the Board or its employees had actually contemplated or attempted to secure any non-Christian creationism resources or communicated such an understanding of the policy to teachers or others.

Negative media attention surfaced again on March 20, 1992 when Stephen Hume, a Vancouver Sun columnist, derided the Abbotsford School Board as "[welcoming] into science labs the belief that woman was created from Adam's rib" (Hume, March 20, 1992). Hume's critique of the decision as religious and inappropriate in the science classroom generated a series of responses from Vancouver Sun readers. Of the four letters received, only one argued that creationism was a legitimate alternative to evolution (Cummings, 1992; Macdonald, 1992; Moller, 1992; Gagnon, 1992). Similarly, four out of five letters to the editor published by *The Province* at this time also critiqued the Abbotsford School Board as conflating religion and public education (Szakacs, 1992; Eby, 1992; Eyke, 1992, Bowlsby, 1992; Bouchard, 1992).

Local newspapers began to show evidence of some dissatisfaction with the policy as well. On March 23, 1992, the Board received a copy of a letter that Bob Jones sent to the local newspaper ridiculing Grieve's support for creationism instruction (Jones, March 4, 1992). Jones argued that creationism was best understood as evangelical and he dismissed it and chided the Board for taking it seriously: "So much for his [Grieve's]

claptrap “science”, and shame on our school-board for being taken in by such arrant nonsense. Why not biblical biology, or methaphysical math as well? This man. . . is peddling a dangerous, mind-destroying product. . .” (Jones, 1992).

This slew of negative media attention and commentary did not go unnoticed by the Board. On the same date as Jones’ letter to the editor, trustees passed the following motion: “In view of recent correspondence and publications on this subject, the matter [the Origin of Life policy] was referred to an upcoming Committee of the Whole meeting for review.” (School District, March 23, 1992).

Subsequently, the Board received a letter from David Wyatt, a University College of the Fraser Valley Anthropology Professor. Wyatt makes no mention of the Board’s current Origin of Life policy. Instead, he writes specifically in response to Grieve’s offer of free pamphlets. In addition to appending an unpublished article he had written called “Creation Science: Bad Science, No Balance”, Wyatt argues that the Board should oppose creationism instruction on the grounds that “Creation Science is bad science. . . has a hidden agenda [of religious indoctrination]. . .and contributes to intolerance and polarization in our community” (School District, April 13, 1992). Wyatt’s subsequent offer of his services in facilitating a district wide workshop on creationism and evolution went, as far as the records show, unanswered.

Soon afterwards, the Board received correspondence from the 1992 Minister of Education and former school trustee, Anita Hagen. Hagen was the first New Democratic Party Education Minister to comment on the policy or creationism in general. Prior to Hagen’s party’s electoral victory in 1991 and her subsequent appointment as Minister of Education, the Social Credit Party had led multiple successive provincial governments. I

discuss the implications of this shift in political power in greater detail below. Hagen did not write directly to the Board. Instead, her correspondence with the Board consisted of two letters she had written regarding Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy: The first letter was addressed to concerned Abbotsford resident Douglas R. Hudson and the other was addressed to British Columbia Teacher's Federation president Ken Novakowski. Neither response makes reference to the negative media attention received by this policy in preceding months. Both responses deserve our close attention since they reveal the 1992 Ministry of Education's stance to be one that cautiously outlines the limits of the Board's autonomy in establishing local policies while avoiding confrontation. Hagen accomplishes both goals by sending copies of her responses to Hudson and Novakowski to the Board without asking the Board to clarify its Origin of Life policy.

In her reply to Hudson's letter, Hagen minimizes his criticisms of the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy by arguing that the Abbotsford School Board is acting within its mandate. Although no copy of Hudson's original letter was found, Hagen describes it as criticizing the Origin of Life policy on four grounds:

The teaching of creationism in science classes; the allotment of time to the teaching of creationism in relation to time for the instruction of the provincial curriculum; the School District's action in reviewing particular learning resource materials and recommending them for use in classrooms; and the policy and action of the Abbotsford School District as it relates to the School Act. (Hagen, May 19, 1992)

In regards to the place of creationism instruction in science classes, Hagen suggests that it is allowable by quoting the *Biology 11 and 12 Curriculum Guide* as providing "clear

guidance as to how teachers may address concerns raised when the evolutionary perspective of modern Biology conflicts with personal beliefs”:

These individuals have a right to expect that science and the education system will respect their beliefs. Teachers should explain to students that science is only one way of learning about life, and that other explanations have been put forward besides that of biological science. In some cases individual teachers may choose to discuss various alternative viewpoints on these matters with their Biology classes. However, because these viewpoints are not derived from the discipline of biological science, they are not part of the science curriculum. (Hagen, May 19, 1992)

In regards to the allotment of time to such instruction, Hagen notes that the curriculum is designed to take up a minimum of 80% of instructional time. Any remaining time, she notes, is planned at the discretion of the school board. Likewise, in regards to Hudson's assertion that the Origin of the Life policy may constitute a possible violation of the School Act, Hagen notes:

this policy requests teachers to expose children in as objective a manner as possible to both creation and evolutionary concepts of life's origins. A factor to be considered is the actual application of this policy in the classroom. Should you object to this policy, or to the application in the classroom, I would suggest that you take the matter up formally with the Board of School Trustees. (Hagen, May 19, 1992)

Hagen's reply to Novakowski is less dismissive and suggests that she is distinguishing between scientific and biblical creationism. She begins by summing

Novakowski's previous letter as raising two concerns: "the teaching of creationism in science classes; and the teaching of the religious views of a single culture" (Hagen, May 28, 1992). Hagen quotes the same section of the *Biology 11 and 12 Curriculum Guide* as she did to Hudson but, this time, she concludes: "It is clear that this statement precludes the teaching of religious beliefs as scientific theory, as expressed in your letter" (Hagen, May 28, 1992). Additionally, in relation to the second point, Hagen notes:

I agree with your second point as well, that it is inappropriate to promote the beliefs and views of one culture over those of others. In our multicultural society it is important that all children feel that their cultural beliefs are respected and valued. (Hagen, May 28, 1992)

Hagen offers no plan of action but, instead, notes that she is forwarding a copy of her letter to the Board itself (Hagen, May 28, 1992). Although the Board did receive copies of Hagen's letters to Hudson and Novakowski, there is no indication that either letter prompted the Board to review its policy.

Despite all of the attention the Board's Origin of Life policy received during this latter period, no evidence was found in either the 1991/1992 or the 1992/1993 school year to suggest that the Board followed up on its March 23, 1992 suggestion that the policy be reviewed at a subsequent Committee of the Whole meeting. In fact, with the exception of a single piece of correspondence from Bob Grieve, there is no mention of creationism instruction in the School Board meeting minutes at all during the 1992/1993 school year. Grieve's letter at this time differed from his previous submissions in that his focus shifted from complaining about a lack of creationism resources to asserting that many teachers were ignoring the Origin of Life policy entirely. As proof, Grieve cited the

fact that few teachers had availed themselves of his or his associate Fred Kanwischer's services as speakers and, also, that few materials had been checked out from the District's resource centre. Grieve concluded by requesting that the Board either revise the Origin of Life policy in order to formally mandate that teachers follow the policy or stimulate teacher participation by reminding teachers that speakers were available and, also, by agreeing to host a public debate on creationism and evolution (Grieve, February 15, 1993).²³ No evidence of any such action was found in the school board records for this school year. This lack of action makes sense since the previous reports to the superintendent outlining the implementation of the Origin of Life policy had advised against using the available public speakers (see above).

Thus, the Origin of Life policy in place at the end of the 1992/1993 school year was, from the perspective of its actual implementation, the same as the one first instituted in 1981. Biblically oriented creationism and evolutionary theory were presented as two binaries. Over the course of this period, the Board adopted a variety of stances aimed at making the policy seem more appropriate. Thus, as of 1988, the official policy document formally framed this policy as one concerned with critical thinking and the search for scientific truths. On a more informal level, however, the policy continued to be explained as an attempt to address the concerns of parents and community members ideologically opposed to evolutionary theory. Although there was at least one attempt by a member of the Board to present the policy as being concerned with exposing students to multiple religious and philosophical perspectives on life's origins, no evidence to suggest that this took place at all was found. The development and maintenance of this policy and

²³ Additionally, Grieve attached his earlier February 1, 1992 letter for the trustee's perusal.

its clear bias towards presenting Christian religious beliefs as deserving special curricular representation makes sense given the Board's general policy disposition during this time.

Defenders Of The Status Quo: An Examination Of The Abbotsford School Board's Policy Disposition Between 1982 And 1993

The Abbotsford School Board's continued support for biblically oriented creationism-instruction between 1982 and 1993 fits in well with the Board's general policy disposition during this time. In this section, I use the Board's experiences with school prayer, Gideon Bible distribution and two youth-focused evangelizing Christian organizations—Youth For Christ and Athletes in Action—to demonstrate its disposition towards favoring evangelizing policies and practices. Additionally, I examine a series of policy and meeting documents that show how this policy disposition coincided with a marked increase in the Board's unease and difficulties with shifting community demographics.

Favoring socially conservative and evangelizing school policies

As noted previously, during the late 1970s and early 1980s, the BCTF, BCSTA and some school boards protested the then School Act's requirement that schools engage their students in the recitation of Christian prayers and Bible readings. In addition to advocating for the continuance of these religious practices at these times of debate, the Abbotsford School Board continued to implement them until a 1989 British Columbia Supreme Court ruling rendered them illegal (*Russow vs. British Columbia*, 1989).²⁴

²⁴ The court upheld a similar ruling in the previous year by the Ontario Supreme Court in *Zylberberg Vs. Sudbury Board of Education*.

On the one hand, the Board's reaction to this decision can be characterized as swift and cooperative. On January 30, 1989, the Board—as with all school boards around the province—received a memo from J.R. Fleming, Assistant Deputy Minister, stating that they should “consider their practices in light of this ruling” (Fleming, 1989). The Ministry's previous unwillingness to clearly direct boards to stop reciting the Lord's Prayer and engaging in Bible readings had led some to report that both religious exercises would continue in Abbotsford's schools (Todd, 26 Jan, 1989; Mennonite students, 1989; Prayers won't end, 1989). The Board, however, reacted to Fleming's memo immediately by recommending that a motion reflecting its willingness to obey the court's ruling be adopted at the subsequent board meeting and by directing the Superintendent to follow up in the mean time with District staff (School District, January 30, 1989; Akins, February 1, 1989). Motion 89-133, “THAT the Board of School Trustees adhere to the recent decision of the Supreme Court of British Columbia with regard to reading of scriptures and reading the Lord's Prayer in schools,” was passed shortly thereafter (School District, February 13, 1989; Wilson, February 15, 1989).

Interestingly, the Russow decision did not prompt the Board to evaluate the legality or appropriateness of Creationism-instruction. This lack of formal consideration is surprising since, as demonstrated earlier, the policy clearly advocated a Christian perspective on the origin of life and had, as discussed earlier, received much criticism in this regard. This lack of formal reevaluation of other policies is also surprising given the fact that at least one other board—the Vancouver School Board—publicly undertook such a process (see below for details). In fact, far from undertaking a review of whether additional policies and practices required reassessment in light of Russow vs. British

Columbia, the Abbotsford School Board took steps suggesting that it was more concerned with ensuring that space remained for Christianity in the public school system.

Thus, on the same day that they acknowledged the Russow decision and its implications for school prayer and Bible reading, the Board received comments from "Trustee Sutherland [who] circulated and discussed a newspaper article entitled "Bible study essential in schools" (School District, February 13, 1989). The article, written by Province columnist Crawford Killian, argues that the Bible and other religious works should be studied in schools as cultural artifacts that have played significant roles in world history. The Board then received and passed motion 89-155 noting "THAT the Abbotsford School District consider ways in which it might include in curriculum the significance of our Judeo-Christian heritage, while also giving due regard to the contribution made to the Canadian cultural mosaic by other religious groups" (School District, February 13, 1989). In light of Killian's article alone, this motion might be perceived as relatively progressive in so far as it makes room for discussion of religions other than Christianity and does not explicitly advocate religious proselytizing. However, with the exception of the continued approval for a locally developed religious studies course, I found no evidence suggesting that the Board took any substantive steps towards achieving this goal of examining the historical and cultural significance of various religious beliefs. Conversely, there is much evidence indicating that the Board continued favoring policies and practices advocating Christian beliefs. The Board's policy concerning Gideon Bibles and their relationships with Youth for Christ and Athletes in Action exemplify this tendency well.

The practice of distributing Gideon Bibles via British Columbia's public schools has been a source of debate both before and after the 1989 Supreme Court ruling against mandatory school prayer and Bible readings. Facilitating such distribution is problematic because it conflates religion and public schooling insofar as participating school boards are sanctioning these Christian missionaries' attempts to propagate their religion. Although school boards may deny this complicity and refer to Gideon Bible distribution as simply a longstanding tradition, the Gideons themselves are explicit in their aim:

The Gideons International serves as an extended missionary arm of the church:
Our sole purpose is to win men, women, boys and girls to a saving knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ through association for service, personal testimony, and distributing the Bible in the human traffic lanes and streams of everyday life.
(Gideons, 2004)

A search of the British Columbia School Trustee Association's on-line policy database suggests that very few school districts had a formal policy regarding Gideon Bible distribution between 1982 and 1993.²⁵ Media accounts suggest that two school boards took steps to explicitly reject this practice during this period. On September 18, 1989, the Vancouver School Board voted to ban Gideon Bible distribution in its schools (Bulla, 1989). The Vancouver School Board's decision was made in consideration of "the new School Act, which says schools must be conducted on strictly 'secular and non-sectarian principles'" (Bulla, 1989). Specifically, the article notes, the decision was made after...

²⁵ Only two school districts were found to have such policies in place: School District 47, Powell River, passed such a policy on November 14, 1984.; and, possibly, School District #23, Kelowna. The Kelowna entry does not have a date recorded so it is unclear as when this policy was officially established. It is important to note that not all British Columbia school boards are associated with the BCSTA.

[b]oth the education minister and the board's lawyers said the board could be violating the Charter of Rights and Freedoms by allowing teachers to pass out order cards to students for the Bibles. (Bulla, 1989)

Similarly, a few years later, the Coquitlam School Board also refused to approve a request by Gideon Bible representatives to solicit local schools. The decision was based upon maintaining “their current policy, which prevents any religious literature from being handed out in schools” (Fraser, 1991).

The Abbotsford School Board, on the other hand, responded very differently to the practice of Gideon Bible distribution. In the month following the Vancouver School Board’s very public decision to stop Bible distribution in their schools in consideration of the new School Act, a *Superintendent’s Report* to the Abbotsford School Board confirmed—in response a Board query—that “the process of distributing materials to students by the Gideon Bible Society is working well in this district” (School District, October 16, 1989). Later in the next school year, the Board undertook the process of establishing a formal policy in this regard.

Reception to the proposed formalization of the Gideon Bible distribution was met with mixed sentiment. The responses of stakeholders to a February 19, 1991 draft of the policy are telling in this regard. Speaking out against the policy, Vicki Robinson, the Abbotsford District Teachers Association president, advised against this policy’s adoption and criticized it as conflating religion and public education (Robinson, March 12, 1991). Likewise, G. J. Ivansko, principal at North Poplar Elementary School stated, “it may be contrary to the Charter to single out one agency – What about other agencies wishing to distribute Bibles, holy texts of their religion” (Ivanskio, February 20, 1991).

On the other hand, representatives from Matsqui Elementary School and Terry Fox Elementary wrote back approving the policy in principle (Buchanan, March 12, 1991; Doerksen, March 12, 1991). According to later comments by school trustee John Sutherland, there was some dispute regarding the policy's appropriateness at the Board level as well. Sutherland identifies trustees DeJong, Harris and DeVries as arguing the policy violated the intent of the 1989 ruling against school prayer and Bible readings (Sutherland, May 10, 1993; Sutherland, January 24, 1994). In reflecting upon such objections, Sutherland asserts that they are indicative of a general misunderstanding that people have in regards to the 1989 British Columbia Supreme Court ruling (Sutherland, January 24, 1994 letter). His argument clearly held some sway as the policy was subsequently passed.

In a fashion similar to its original non-official relationship with Gideon Bible distribution, there is evidence to suggest that the Abbotsford School Board also condoned the evangelizing activities of Youth for Christ and Athletes in Action in their schools during this period. Meeting minutes suggest that the Abbotsford School Board's first contact with Youth for Christ occurred on November 27, 1980. At this time, the Board received a delegation from a group calling itself Campus Life and identifying itself as "part of the international Youth for Christ organization" (School District, November 27, 1980). The delegation requested the Board allow it to function as a club in the district's schools, noting that it aimed to help youth to achieve a 'balanced life'. Balance, according to the delegation, meant addressing "four main areas: mental, social, physical and spiritual" (School District, November 27, 1980). Although these meeting minutes do not detail Campus Life's religious prerogative, a review of their website suggests that

Campus Life's goal since inception has been to propagate Christianity among youth aged ten to twenty four (Youth for Christ, 2004). The Board's decision regarding this groups request was not recorded in these or subsequent meeting minutes and it seems that no official policy was adopted in this regard.

However, letters from parents in 1992 and 1993 reveal that this organization was engaging in evangelizing activities in Abbotsford's schools a decade later. The first letter came from Rosanne Donnelly on October 13, 1992. Donnelly wrote to the Board complaining that Campus Life – Youth for Christ had been holding assemblies at Clearbrook Junior Secondary since at least September 1991 when her daughter first started at the school. In her letter, Donnelly notes the following as activities that had taken place since that time: “[Campus Life – Youth for Christ] has given out pamphlets, have [provided] speakers, put up posters in girl's washrooms . . . [and shown] films” (Donnelly, 1992). Donnelly identifies these activities as potential School Act violations. Additionally, Donnelly also notes her frustration with the school administration's claim that Campus Life is not religious. In order to bolster her critique, Donnelly attached to her letter a Campus Life brochure clearly identifying the organization's evangelizing purpose. Interestingly, no response from the Board is noted in subsequent meeting minutes.

Later in the same school year, the Board received another letter arguing a similar point. The writer, Percy Austin, complains that Athletes in Action, an evangelizing branch of Campus Crusade for Christ, was brought in to demonstrate their athletic skills and solicit student enrollment for their athletic programs during gym periods at two Abbotsford elementary schools. Austin complains specifically that the group did not

reveal their religious mission but only hinted at it after the demonstrations when they circulated pamphlets identifying them as being associated with Campus Crusade for Christ. Austin makes three specific criticisms:

that Principals allow and encourage a group such as AIA with its avowed proselytizing intent to have access to students during school time. . . Secondly, the pamphlet given does not indicate the hidden agenda of the camp is to 'have them make a decision for Christ'. . . finally, that the prestige and popularity of school PE teachers is being used to legitimize and normalize AIA's presence in school... (Austin, May 26, 1993).

As with Donnelly's letter, no response to Austin's concerns is noted in subsequent Abbotsford School Board meeting minutes or correspondence. Given their support for creationism instruction and Gideon Bible distribution during this period as well as their past support for maintaining school prayers and Bible readings, the Board's silence in regards to these complaints suggests that they approve of these activities and either felt the complaints were not compelling enough to warrant a reply or, perhaps, wished to minimize their impact.

Shifting demographics

School Board meeting minutes show that, at the same time they were condoning policies and practices advocating Christian beliefs, the Abbotsford School Board was engaging in a discourse suggesting it was concerned with Abbotsford's increased diversity. In order to show that this was the case, I use the Board commissioned 1987 superintendent job description; 1990 comments from Superintendent Dyck's on

impending religious and cultural conflicts; and, John Sutherland's 1994 reflections on the place of religion in public education to show that increases in religious diversity were seen as posing problems for the maintenance of Christian beliefs and traditions. Likewise, I use a series of letters from members of the electorate to suggest that the Board was perceived at this time as having a negative disposition to non Christians.

After Superintendent Harry Sayers' retirement, the Abbotsford School Board chose Deane Downey, a former School Board trustee and chair as well as a Professor at evangelical Trinity Western University, to head the search for a replacement. As part of this process, Downey submitted a report to the Board in December 1987 outlining a preferred list of superintendent attributes he had identified after consulting various stakeholders (Downey, 1987). Two of these characteristics deserve our attention.

4. MUST BE A PERSON OF HIGH ETHICAL STANDARDS AND EXEMPLARY MORAL CONDUCT

The superintendent must unhesitatingly accept his/her responsibility as a role model in the community, being sensitive to and respectful of the strong moral and religious values of the majority of this school district's residents. Should the candidate be married, his/her family situation should be stable and wholesome. . .

12. MUST BE AN ENTHUSIASTIC ADVOCATE FOR PUBLIC EDUCATION

In this school district, this support of public education will also require the candidate to refrain from being defensive about the many supporters of private schools here, but rather, to be determined to make the public school alternative as attractive as possible.

The superintendent must also recognize the important role this public school system plays in the acculturation process for other languages and ethnic groups, especially for children of East Indian ethnic background."

In light of the demographic information noted earlier, item four's reference to the Superintendent's need to be "sensitive to the strong moral and religious values of the majority of this school district's residents" clearly refers to those moral and religious values espoused in the community's many Christian churches. Accordingly, given that the vast majority of Abbotsford's private schools during this period were Christian, it seems that adopting a socially conservative and or Christian policy disposition would be one way in which the Superintendent (and Board) could meet item twelve's goal of making "the public school alternative as attractive as possible." The subsequent emphasis upon recognizing the Board's role in the acculturation of what the Board refers to as East Indian children is vague and raises many questions. What does this acculturation entail? Does the Board's emphasis upon making the Abbotsford's schools appeal to parents who might consider sending their children to private Christian schools imply that the Board views policies favoring socially conservative perspectives and religious Christian rituals and beliefs as facilitating or impeding this acculturation? Is it, in other words, the Board's unspoken position that students need to 'acculturate' towards recognizing Christian belief and ritual as tied to Canadian identity or, conversely, does the Board see Canadian identity as separate from such a belief system? The absence of any comments concerning the need to acculturate Christian students suggests that the former is a more accurate description of the Board's position. Subsequent discussion at the Board level by Superintendent Dyck and School Board Trustee and Chair John Sutherland lend further support to this hypothesis.

In a 1990 memo that would conclude with notions of an impending struggle between Eastern and Western civilizations and a non-Christian Them versus a Christian

Us, Dyck begins by discussing recent parent complaints that a Language Arts reading series offended their Christian beliefs. Such concerns, Dyck suggests, are best understood as a consequence of recent legislative and demographic trends.²⁶ On the one hand, he argues, “parents embracing Christianity have been concerned with the removal of various practices from schools” (Dyck, 1990). In response, Dyck notes, “churches are advising their people to become more involved in having religious observances restored to the school system” (Dyck, 1990). Likewise, Dyck notes, North America’s demographics are shifting significantly:

[historically North America] has generally been populated by Europeans with Judeo Christian values and beliefs. In recent decades, [however] immigrants to North America have come from many parts of the world, including significant numbers from Asia and the Indian subcontinent. (Dyck, 1990)

Dyck suggests that this demographic change is problematic because it has led to “North America...experiencing a collision of western and eastern religious ideologies” (Dyck, 1990). That Dyck is clearly forwarding a ‘clash of the civilizations’ thesis is clear as he sums up his understanding of the difference between what he has fallaciously constructed as two homogenous religious ideologies: “My knowledge of eastern religions is rather limited, but I do know that these two ideologies are antithetical, creating considerable concern throughout the community’s churches” (Dyck, November 28, 1990). A similar characterization of Christianity under attack is implicit in John Sutherland’s January 14, 1994 letter to the Board discussed earlier in regards to Gideon Bible distribution.

²⁶ In this memo, Dyck noted that eight to ten parents had complained that the Language Arts series Impressions offended their Christian beliefs in the ways that it addressed the topics such as magic and death. A subsequent memo of the same date notes that district representatives met with these parents and addressed their concerns. Specifics are not provided in regards to what, if any, compromise on the issue was reached but it is clear that the series as a whole was not banned.

In this letter, Sutherland argues that the British Columbia Supreme Court rulings regarding daily prayer and Bible readings are often misunderstood. The mistake, he claims, is "the assumption of many teachers. . . is that no more mention of our Judeo-Christian heritage is permissible. . . In addition, pluralism and multi-culturalism tend to be interpreted as "anything but the Judeo-Christian heritage" (Sutherland, January 14, 1994). This is a mistake, Sutherland asserts, because "To ignore our heritage is . . . anti-intellectual and censorious" (Sutherland, January 14, 1994). Sutherland's posits the following as a solution:

What educators must learn is the difference between education and indoctrination . . . teachers and administrators are confused as to where the line is between legitimate exposure of their students to religious life and taking advantage of a "captive audience" to recommend a particular religious point of view."

(Sutherland, January 14, 1994)

As discussed in the next chapter, Sutherland reiterated these points in a subsequent letter to the Board during the next year and both letters clearly served as a basis for the Board's subsequent justification of its decision to encourage schools to engage in explicitly religious Christmas celebrations during the 1994/1995 school year (School District, November 14, 1994).

Although it is not possible to draw a definitive link between this Board-level discourse of and policy disposition towards safeguarding Christian hegemony in the public school system and the Board's actual relations with non-Christian students, correspondence and delegations from this time period suggest that the Board was perceived by some to have problems in this regard.

During the same year that Deane Downey concluded that Abbotsford's future Superintendent needed to be particularly concerned with the acculturation of East Indian students, representatives for Punjabi parents and students approached the Board asking it to be more understanding. Specifically, the Board was contacted twice in this regard. On May 15, 1987, the Board officially received a letter from Dalip Singh Gill, Principal of Dashmesh Punjabi Educational Association, outlining the agenda for the upcoming meeting on May 21, 1987.²⁷ The agenda was articulated as follows:

1. The IndoCanadian Community feels concern regarding racial incidents in some schools. We hope the School Board will adopt some positive approach for maintaining inter-cultural and inter-racial harmony among the students.
2. The employment of more staff from the visible minority groups will go a long way in improving the cultural climate.
3. The School Board should take some positive steps to arrange the teaching of Punjabi as an optional or additional subject in elementary and secondary schools of Abbotsford. (Gill, 1987)

On May 21, 1987, Mr. H.S. Kandola spoke on behalf of the Dashmesh Punjabi Educational Association and reiterated the concerns outlined in the May 15, 1987 letter. Additionally, he suggested additional training for teachers from speakers familiar with different cultures. The Board's response was vague:

Chairman Smith informed the Association that the Board appreciated the opportunity to meet and that he felt this initial meeting was most important in

²⁷ It is interesting that the Dashmesh Punjabi Educational Association addressed the board as a parent representative. At the time of the presentation, the association ran Abbotsford's only private Sikh school.

understanding concerns of both parties. Trustees indicated that the Association should again approach the Board in the fall concerning another meeting. (School District, May 21, 1987)

Although the concerns of the delegation are clear, the meeting minutes do not identify the Board's concerns regarding Punjabi students (School District, May 21, 1987). Though, as noted above, Downey's report from the following school year suggests that these concerns likely centered on the topic of acculturation.

Five years later, members of Abbotsford's Punjabi community again approached the Board, though this time it was individuals who had come forward to express their concerns. Their focus was not the general district climate within which Punjabi children found themselves but, instead, the registration and enrollment practices in Abbotsford's South Poplar Elementary School for the 1992/1993 school year. In the week following the start of this school year, multiple delegations of parents approached the Board to express their frustration with South Poplar Elementary's race-based segregation of its two kindergarten classes: one class had all South Asian students and the other all white students (School District, September 14, 1992). A subsequent report from a Board appointed 'Board of Inquiry' consisting of both parent and district representatives highlighted a number of procedural remedies that would safeguard against white/non-white segregation in the future. However, the Board of Inquiry was inconclusive in its attempts to explain how or why the incident occurred (October 14, 1992). An interesting use of semantics allowed the Board of Inquiry to dismiss charges of racism. The Inquiry's chair, Trustee Michael de Jong explained it in the following way:

When you stereotype on the basis of ethnicity, it's racism...But in the definition we agreed to use, the people perpetuating the actions also have to have some feelings of superiority. On that basis, we determined that this incident was not racist...Nonetheless, it was a racial incident in the sense that students were divided on the basis of ethnicity. (Balcom, 1992)

Two years later, on September 2, 1994 the Board received a letter from a group calling itself Voice Against Racism. The letter noted that on August 31, 1994 approximately 50 students and 10 adults "all agreed that racism is a problem in Abbotsford." The writers listed a number of suggestions for the Board including the adoption of an affirmative action policy and curricular oriented changes such as 'more cultural education' and the employment of monthly multicultural themes in the district's schools (Voice Against Racism, 1994).

Thus, throughout this period, the Abbotsford School Board continued with its disposition towards privileging Christian beliefs through a series of policies and practices that moved beyond its Origin of Life policy. These included a willingness to facilitate the presence of Gideon's International and Campus Crusade for Christ in its schools and an expressed commitment to recognizing Canada's Judeo-Christian roots. In doing so, the Board managed to facilitate a climate at the district administration level—as evidenced not only by its policies but also by its conversations lamenting the end of school prayer and its 1990 superintendent's comments regarding Christian vs. Non-Christian beliefs—and individual school levels—as evidenced by schools' willingness to allow evangelical organizations like Campus Crusade for Christ in its schools—that established Christianity

as in need of defense. Together, the Board's concomitant concern with shifting demographics—as evidenced by its early interest in counting its total number of 'East Indian' students and its later assertion that the future superintendent facilitate the acculturation of these students—combined with its difficulties with addressing these changes—as evidenced by its various meetings with Punjabi Sikh parents—suggest that the Board's concerns with maintaining the primacy of Christianity in its schools was related to its concerns about changing community demographics.

The Dominant Role of Religion in Abbotsford's Local Social Context

The Abbotsford School Board's disposition towards engaging in policies and practices that so clearly favored Christian beliefs should not be understood as being peculiar to its membership. As an elected body, the Board was operating under a mandate afforded to it by the electorate. Indeed, as was the case in 1981 and 1982, a significant portion of the electorate during this period clearly supported this policy direction. Showing that this is the case involves reviewing a number of sources. Media profiles of Abbotsford's religious demographics; school administrated opinion surveys and letters to the editor of Abbotsford's principal community newspaper combine to lend support to this claim.

The generally religious character of Abbotsford as a community is revealed in two 1989 Vancouver Sun articles. The first article, written by Vancouver Sun Religion and Ethics reporter Douglass Todd, is based upon a recent PhD dissertation which argues that "Nowhere in Canada, except the Maritimes, has evangelical Christianity built a stronger concentration than in the Fraser Valley" (Todd, February 17, 1989). Todd extends this

assertion by arguing that "Church and state intertwine here [in Abbotsford] in a convoluted knot. Traditionalist Christianity infiltrates conservative politics and affects hospitals, schools and commerce" (Todd, February 17, 1989). Likewise, an article the next day offers further proof supporting the idea that Abbotsford is particularly and uniquely religious. For example, it reports that findings from Fred Herfst, head of the B.C. Federation of Independent Schools show that "Abbotsford parents send four times as many children to evangelical Christian schools as the B.C. average. . . that amounts to about 1,700 students, or 12 per cent of the total 14, 500 school-age population" (Mennonite students, February 18, 1989). Additionally, the article notes that the city and its surrounding communities host a number of private Christian post secondary institutions including: "evangelical Trinity Western University and at least six Bible colleges [and] 26 evangelical independent schools..." (Mennonite students, February 18, 1989). Local sources reveal a similar pattern.

In 1983, the Abbotsford School Board surveyed teachers, students and community members in regards to a variety of school related issues (Survey, 1983).²⁸ Community respondents' results suggest that socially conservative and evangelizing perspectives enjoyed significant support at this time. For example, in 1983, 62% of community respondents agreed that corporal punishment should be returned to schools (compared to 55% of teachers and 12% of students); 68% of community respondents agreed with the maintenance of daily Bible reading and recitation of the Lords prayer (compared to 42% of teachers and 44 % of students); and 72% of community members supported teaching

²⁸ Although this survey's response rates were recorded, other factors of the survey's methodology—such as how these respondents were initially chosen—are unclear. Thus, the survey is less of an indicator of the community itself as it is of the community as perceived (and represented?) by the Board itself. The response rates were documented as follows: 259 of 940 community members responded; 387 of 570 teachers responded; and 356 of 650 students responded.

both creationism and evolutionary theories in class (as did 70% of teachers and 62% of students) (Survey, 1983). As well, public school's role in facilitating acculturation received significant support from community respondents as well: 84% of community members supported the statement that "ESL should continue as long as students need it" (compared to 82% of teachers and 85% of students) but, when asked if "multicultural education should receive more stress" only 42% of community members agreed (compared to 75% of teachers and 49% of students) (Survey, 1983). A follow up survey in 1986 omitted all of these questions except for the last regarding multicultural education (Survey, 1986).²⁹ In this regard, 54% of community respondents responded that it 'should be emphasized more' (compared to 72% of surveyed teachers) (Survey, 1986).

A review of the letters to the editor in the local newspaper, *The Abbotsford News*, indicates that the topic of creationism instruction was intermittently debated throughout this period. However, it is difficult to know how representative the writers' opinions were of the general Abbotsford population since the debate throughout the twelve year period was restricted to approximately nine writers and twenty submissions. Thirteen of these letters were written clearly supporting creationism instruction. A closer examination of these letters reveals both the presence of unifying themes as well as variety in the specific form of their argument.

On the whole, letter writers supporting creationism instruction tended to either explicitly or implicitly emphasize Christianity as the base for their reasoning. Only a few of these letter writers restricted themselves to citing only their beliefs in Christianity as

²⁹ No notes on methodology were made. Response rates are as follows: 33/100 Business respondents (33%), 1034 of 2000 General respondents (52%), 433 of 600 teacher respondents (72%), and 343 of 540 student respondents (64%) (Survey, 1986).

reason enough for the maintenance of the Origin of Life policy (e.g., Ratzlaff, September 21, 1988). More often, these letters mixed rationales. Sometimes, these letters explicitly outlined these rationales. For example, in his 1983 defense of the Origin of Life policy, Bob Grieve begins by critiquing evolution on scientific grounds but then concludes by arguing that rejecting creationism could have dire religious and social consequences: "Without Adam, without the original sin, Jesus Christ is reduced to a man with a mission, on the wrong planet" (Grieve, 1983). More often, pro-creationism letter writers acknowledged the religious basis for their arguments more implicitly. For example, in two of eight letters that she wrote during this period, Agatha Ratzlaff argues that evolutionary theory is a part of what she terms 'the religion of humanism' that is responsible for widespread social decay (e.g., October 4, 1989, December 26, 1990). This is not to say, however, that letter writers never avoided citing their Christian beliefs in their arguments. For example, in another letter, Ratzlaff avoids alluding to her religious beliefs altogether and argues that creationism instruction allows students "to apply the skills of unbiased analysis..." (e.g., Ratzlaff, December 5, 1990).

Arguments against creationism instruction were slightly less varied. Although these writers generally shared an underlying perspective that saw creationism as religious and not scientific, the form of their argument varied as they tended to write in response to creationism advocates. Thus, some letters debated the authenticity and relevance of what some creationism advocates presented as biblical proofs (e.g., Jones, September 14, 1988; Jones, September 28, 1988). Conversely, others did not engage in the specifics of the claims advanced by creationism advocates but, instead, argued that these advocates were forwarding a 'right wing' political agenda (e.g., Kirichenko's March 25, 1992).

The following table lists the Letter to the Editor submitted to *The Abbotsford News* during this period:

Table 2: *Abbotsford News Letters To The Editor Regarding Creationism, 1982 - 1993*

Position	Year											
	1982	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992	1993
For	1	2	0	0	0	0	3	1	2	2	2	0
Against	1	2	0	0	0	0	2	0	2	0	1	0
Total	2	4	0	0	0	0	5	0	4	2	3	0

As noted earlier, this is a small sample of community sentiments and cannot be understood to be representative of the community as a whole. Coincidentally, however, the proportion of letters favoring creationism instruction during this period is similar to the proportion found in a 1993 telephone survey of 110 people by Abbotsford's local surveying firm, CV Marketing. Trudy Beyak, an Abbotsford News reporter, reported that this survey had found that 67% of Abbotsford's surveyed Christians rejected the theory of scientific evolution (Beyak, 1993).

Still, despite the vociferous debate found within these letters, twenty letters to the editor over a twelve year period does not constitute a substantial response. Instead, this response suggests that the policy was clearly favored by a particularly vocal but perhaps not numerous component of the local electorate and disputed by an even smaller proportion. It is surprising that the discrepancy between the Board's support of this policy and the local newspaper's editorial stance did not generate a greater response from the paper's readers. This generally minimal response suggests that, for the electorate in

general, the question of creationism instruction was deemed to be either appropriate and matter of fact or as simply inconsequential. Response from the electorate to the policy's cessation in 1995 lends support to the former assertion (see next chapter).

Changing Winds: The Shifting Relationship Between Christianity And Secularism In British Columbia's Provincial Policy Context

Although it is clear that the Abbotsford School Board's disposition towards socially conservative and evangelizing policies found favor in a significant portion of their local electorate, this pattern of policy making also needs to be understood in relation to the provincial government since it is the Ministry of Education that ultimately sanctions school curriculum and activities. As I show below, the Ministry of Education's public approach to the issue of creationism instruction in general and Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy in particular varied during this period between accommodation and tolerance. At no time, I argue, did the Ministry of Education clearly indicate that this policy was problematic despite the reservations of some Ministry staff. Additionally, I show how during the first half of this period, the Provincial government exhibited a policy disposition that implied that Christianity-privileging policies were welcome.

Early in this period of study, the Ministry of Education's relationship with creationism was brought to Vancouver Sun readers' attention by columnist Vaughn Palmer (October 10, 1984, A4). Writing in response to a series of media profiles that had critiqued creationism, Palmer characterized the Ministry of Education as having made an inconsequential accommodation for creationism advocates. According to Palmer, this accommodation involved allowing students to state their preference for creationism on

the Biology final exam. Such students, he points out, were still required to demonstrate an understanding of evolution and received no mark for their creationism beliefs. It was an accommodation, he argued, that was in accordance with the Biology 11/12 curriculum guide which implied that the discussion of creationism in the classroom is not problematic:

It must be recognized that certain aspects of the theory, particularly that dealing with the Origin of Life, are contrary to the fundamental beliefs of many people.

For that reason teachers are encouraged to discuss with their students all theories of the Origin of Life. (Palmer, October 10, 1984)

A year later, *The Vancouver Sun* again reported accommodations the Ministry had made regarding creationism. However, as with its predecessor, this article minimized the significance of such accommodations. It was a decision, the article explains, that was best understood as a token gesture aimed at appeasing creationism advocates. Specifically, the writer, Kaellis, notes:

THE DECISION by Education Minister Jack Heinrich that evolution will be taught as a "theory" rather than a "fact" will not, according to Dick Melville, his information officer, affect text-books, curriculum, or how exams are designed and graded. It is only a slight accommodation for those who believe in special creation. (Kaellis, 1985)

This attempt to appease is in line with Kaellis' further reporting of a letter Heinrich had written a creationism advocate: "In a letter to a woman in Dawson Creek, Education Minister Heinrich wrote that "education should not contribute to the deterioration of belief systems"" (Kaellis, January 5, 1985). In order to emphasize his assertion that the

Ministry intended to make no substantive accommodations in this regard, Kaellis reports the comments of another Ministry of Education official as suggesting that "creationism should never be included in a science curriculum" (Kaellis, January 5, 1985).

It seems, then, that in 1984 and 1985, the Social Credit government's education ministry viewed the issue of creationism instruction as one for which minor accommodations could be made. This pattern was extended in 1986, as the Ministry moved from making explicit but minor accommodations towards acknowledging and not criticizing the Abbotsford School Board's policy for mandatory creationism instruction (see above regarding Mussio, 1986).

Although the Ministry of Education did not publicly address the issue of creationism instruction again until Minister Hagen's letters in 1992, the intervening years are significant in that they reveal the provincial government's policy disposition as favoring policies conflating Christianity and public policy. In 1987, the Social Credit party was reelected to govern British Columbia under its new leader William Vander Zalm. Vander Zalm quickly garnered a reputation for citing his religious beliefs as influencing his public policy decisions.

Vancouver Sun reporter Douglas Todd's profile of Vander Zalm's government two years after its election is revealing. After first establishing—through a brief survey and conversation with Vander Zalm—that "the Social Credit government has more evangelical Christians than any government in B.C. history—some lured by the leader....," Todd summarizes the indicators that Vander Zalm and his cabinet colleagues have adopted a policy disposition guided by their religious beliefs:

Recent religious controversies have centred on one of the toughest anti-abortion stances in the country; a short-lived prayer room in the legislature that turned into a battleground between evangelicals and New-Age followers; Vander Zalm's statements that the poor would be happier if they turned to Christ; a videotaped message in which Vander Zalm said Jesus would have been as low in the polls as the Social Credit government; and the cabinet's declaration of a Judeo-Christian day of prayer, which offended proponents of a multi-faith society. (Todd, May 6, 1989)

As his tenure continued, Vander Zalm and his party were increasingly characterized by the media as socially conservative evangelicals biased against non-whites and non-Christians. In October and November of 1989, for example, Vander Zalm attracted much media attention as he and one of his cabinet ministers made racist jokes at a Social Credit Party breakfast. Although these jokes prompted at least one other member of his cabinet to leave the breakfast in protest and voice her opposition to the media, Vander Zalm initially refused to apologize (Baldrey, Ward & Hunter, October 30, 1989). Likewise, the Socreds were under scrutiny again a few months later after "former [Socred] candidate Michael Levy, who is Jewish, was booed by delegates as he attempted to force a debate on the clause [in the Socred's constitution identifying Christian principles as a guiding focus for party members]" (Rollow, November 9, 1989). The ensuing debate received much media attention. For example, Socred MLA Nick Loenen went on record as noting "The whole world knows that Bill Vander Zalm, like Margaret Thatcher, wants to base his politics on Christian morality. This proposed change is like pulling the rug from under him" (Rollow, November 9, 1989). Similar arguments were

reportedly supported by the Premier as well who was said to have “extolled the superiority of Christian values and denounced the vagueness and flexibility of humanistic ethics” the previous year (Vaugh Palmer, May 10, 1989). The clause was removed a year later after much public debate between party members and the Premier (e.g., Todd, September 19, 1989; Todd, October 13, 1990; Todd, October 19, 1990).

Midway through 1991, the Social Credit Party was defeated in its bid for reelection and the New Democratic Party (NDP) was elected in its place. Unlike its predecessor, the NDP did not have a reputation for conflating religion and public policy. The Ministry of Education’s subsequent dealings with the topic of creationism were related to the Abbotsford School Board’s Origin of Life policy. According to government documents, the Ministry of Education

sought a legal opinion and advice in January of 1991 regarding the Abbotsford policy. The advice from the Attorney General’s ministry at that time was to monitor the situation [and] if it is clear that children are being taught genesis as scientific fact...the Ministry should look at the surrounding facts and if there appears to be a breach of section 95 some action (legal or administrative) should be commenced. (Williams, 1992).

In 1992, an Issue Paper outlining the teaching of creationism in Abbotsford was prepared by David J.R. Williams, the Director of the Program Support Services Branch. It is unclear as to whether this paper was authored prior to Hagen’s engagement with the policy.³⁰ It is therefore, also difficult to identify the factors that prompted its writing although the 1992 media coverage of the Board’s Origin of Life policy (see above) and or

³⁰ The paper is undated. Clues within the letter indicate that it was written in 1992. The month or specific date of authorship or distribution is unknown.

Minister Hagen's subsequent involvement are likely possibilities. The issue, as identified by Williams, is that "Concern has been expressed that this policy [Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy] generally violates the principle of the separation of church and state and specifically violates section 95 (1), (2) of *The School Act*." After reviewing the background to the policy, Williams makes two recommendations. First, he suggests that the Ministry take steps to ascertain "what is actually occurring in Abbotsford classrooms with respect to this issue" (Williams, 1992). Second, Williams suggests that the Ministry "encourage an appropriate placement [of Biblical creationism] within the curriculum or instructional scheme as part of an inclusive examination of myths, folklore, and theories regarding the origin of life and related topics" (Williams, 1992). Williams is clear in his recommended opposition to teaching creationism in science classes: "State clearly that inclusion of the topic in a science curriculum is inappropriate (as would be its inclusion in an auto mechanics curriculum)" (Williams, 1992). As discussed earlier, 1992 Education Minister Anita Hagen's correspondence with the Board in regards to this topic clearly did not follow either recommendation and, instead, limited the Ministry's involvement to simply alerting the Board to the Ministry's awareness of the issue.³¹

Thus, throughout this period, the Abbotsford School Board received clear signals that its Origin of Life policy, although clearly out of synch with its peers' policy dispositions, was not seen as problematic by the provincial government or the Ministry of Education. To the contrary, as evidenced by Education Minister Brian Smith's 1981 and 1982 comments; the subsequent modifications to the provincial secondary school Biology

³¹ Since the specific date of Williams' paper is unknown, it is unclear as to whether Hagen's alternative engagement with the Board was made in consideration of his points.

exams; and the 1986 assessment of the policy by bureaucrat Jerry Mussio, the Ministry of Education during the first half of this period was comfortable with the idea of supplementary instruction in creationism. Likewise, although the Ministry did not—from the Abbotsford School Board’s perspective—engage with the Origin of Life policy between 1986 and 1991, this period was marked by a provincial policy climate clearly favoring the conflation of Christian religious beliefs and public policy. At the least, this policy climate implied that Origin of Life policy would avoid criticism from the provincial government. Although the subsequent correspondence from NDP Education Minister Anita Hagen clearly identifies religiously oriented instruction as inappropriate, it also implied that the Ministry would avoid publicly or directly confronting the Board over its policy. These early indicators of support for the policy or its like and later indicators of muted criticism, however, were not shared by the general provincial electorate during this period.

Unwelcome Bedfellows: Shifting Perceptions of Religion and State in the Provincial Social Context

Although the Abbotsford School Board’s policy disposition made sense in regards to its local context and the provincial policy context, it clearly fell out of step with the provincial electorate’s disposition over the course of this period. Indeed, the provincial electorate as a whole shifted during this time and became increasingly critical of public policies espousing social conservatism and Christian evangelism. In order to demonstrate this shift, I examine both survey results addressing the 1988 provincial electorate’s stand on abortion and, also, the portrayal of and the public’s subsequent response to the topic of

creationism instruction in British Columbia's two largest newspapers: *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*.

As discussed earlier, British Columbians reelected the Social Credit Party in 1986, though, this time, it was headed by William Vander Zalm. Premier Vander Zalm's disposition towards merging his religious beliefs with his public policy decisions revealed a shifting public sentiment. Whereas such conflations may have been acceptable in the past, it became increasingly clear over the course of Vander Zalm's term in office that this was no longer the case for a significant portion of the provincial electorate in the late 1980s. Vander Zalm's policy decision to oppose abortion made this divide clear.

Upon his election, Vander Zalm declared that the provincial Medicare system would fund abortions only "when a woman's life is in danger" (Boei, March 5, 1988). Two subsequent surveys revealed—in detail—the positions of British Columbia's electorate. *The Vancouver Sun* summarized the surveys as showing that Vander Zalm's opposition to abortion was opposed by at least two thirds of British Columbians (Boei, March 5, 1988). Additionally, "two-thirds [of the electorate] said they think Vander Zalm's stand is based on his religious beliefs, and 79 per cent said that is inappropriate." (Boei, March 5, 1988). The Sun's comments sum up the disconnect between the provincial government and the electorate well: "Provincially, they [the pollsters] found sharp conflict: British Columbians, whose government has taken the toughest anti-abortion stand in Canada, share the firmest pro-choice views in the nation with Quebecers" (Boei, March 5, 1988).

As with the coverage in 1981, responses to and public sentiments presented within the provincial media's portrayals of creationism instruction were sporadic over the

course of this period of study. As discussed below, this sporadic media coverage was met with little reader response. As with the previous period, a lack of public engagement suggests this issue was seen as mainly a non-issue by the general public.

Creationism came to the media's attention early in this period as the provincial print media search for local reaction to the 1981 Arkansas court decision to strike down that state's statute for equal time creationism instruction as inappropriately religious. According to *The Vancouver Sun*, this decision was dismissed by local creationism advocates:

B.C. creationists say a decision by an Arkansas court to overturn a law requiring the theory of biblical creation to be taught alongside evolution in public schools will have no effect on their own efforts to introduce creationism into B.C. science classrooms. "We expected the decision," said Earl Hallonquist, national director of the Creation Science Association of Canada. "The Arkansas attorney-general's department who handled the case was against creationism to begin with. It was a farce."

(B.C. Creationists. January 7, 1982)

Critics however, expressed hope that the decision would have an effect in BC. For example, a student founder of Citizens Against the Undermining of Science Education was quoted as saying: "I hope [Education Minister] (Smith) pays attention to it [the ruling] and is influenced by it" (BC Creationists, January 7, 1982). This news article was accompanied by an editorial column denouncing creation science as quackery (A fraud, January 7, 1982). The references to Brian Smith are related to his widely reported suggestion from the previous year "that students might benefit from studying both

creationism and evolution” (e.g., Read, January 8, 1982; please see previous chapter for further details).

Subsequent media attention over the next two years suggested a lack of reader engagement with the topic as no significant reader response was elicited. This was despite the fact that three public debates and a series of public anti-creationism lectures were undertaken during this time and profiled in the media (e.g., Read, January 23, 1982; B.C. gets to hear, February 4, 1984).

The latter half of 1984 was characterized by a slight increase in reader engagement with the topic of creationism instruction. In July 1984, it was reported that the “Creation Science Association of Canada has launched a campaign aimed at convincing the provincial government “to deal fairly and constitutionally with the Origin of Life...[by working to] remove all biased evolutionary questions from all provincial examinations, or at least add alternative questions regarding theories on the Origin of Life” (Creationists petition, July 28, 1984). Later in the year, the government decided to allow students to state their preference for creationism in provincial exams. In *The Vancouver Sun*, this decision and a positive profile of creationism by Vancouver Sun columnist Vaughn Palmer elicited mainly negative reader response. Most wrote in to either critique creationism in general or, more specifically, critique the government for allowing non-scientific perspectives into science (e.g., Morris Carley, October 2, 1984, p.A5; Warburton, October 2, 1984; Magnal, October 11, 1985). Warburton’s letter stands out as it extends this general critique by claiming that the Creation Science Association “poses a serious threat to... children’s education” with an internationally funded agenda that “[aims to] put the pseudoscience of creationism in the classroom in the place of the

theory of evolution" (Warburton, October 2, 1984, Vancouver Sun, p. A5). Warburton cites no proof for his claims and Creation Science Association director, Earl Hallonquist, wrote back to refute them soon afterwards (October 11, 1984). Incidentally, Hallonquist's reply to Warburton is one of only a few pro-creationism letters received during this year (i.e: Hallonquist, October 11, 1984; Brokington, October 11, 1984).

The topic of creationism in British Columbia's schools did not arise again until 1992 at which time it was restricted to reporting of the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy (please see above for details). The general topic of creationism instruction and or creationism, on the other hand, was raised and critiqued only two other times during this period: once in 1989 (Suzuki, 1989) and once in 1990 (Lautens, 1990). Whereas Suzuki's criticism of creationism did not elicit reader response, Lauten's assessment elicited a pattern that differed from earlier Letters to the Editor as three of the five responding letters argued in favor of creationism (see Bain, September 7, 1990; Klein, September 7, 1990; Stapleton, September 13, 1990).

Thus, throughout this period, the Abbotsford School Board clearly took specific actions that diverged with the mainstream policy shift towards separating church/state relations. In fact, the Board went further. Had it simply maintained its creationism instruction policy over this time, the Board could have been characterized as hesitating in adapting to this new mainstream policy direction. However, the Board's decision to modify the policy in ways that could counter charges that it catered to particular Christian perspectives indicates that the Board was, during this period, actively working to protect Christian hegemony in its public schools. The Board's additional decisions to allow and,

in some cases, facilitate evangelizing activities and, as explained earlier, cultivate a climate that suggested that Christianity in general was under attack and its presence in schools in need of defense, clearly support this observation. What remains unclear, however, is why the Board would adhere to such a disposition. Clearly, there are indications that, for at least a portion of the Board, notions of Christianity and Canadian identity were conflated. This is a hypothesis that is even more clearly substantiated in the next period of study. This next period of study—1994 to 1995—also signifies the end of Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy.

CHAPTER 6: 1994 - 1995

During the period 1994 to 1995, the Abbotsford School Board relegated itself to the margins of Canadian educational policy debates by actively defending its Origin of Life policy and the idea that creationism instruction is appropriate in public science classrooms. This was a marginalized stance insofar as the Board was not able to elicit substantive support from either the general public or any other public school board for its position. Indeed, the Board's advocacy for creationism instruction during this period captured only the very vocal support of mainly Abbotsford-based religious constituencies and individuals. On the other hand, the Board's position attracted significant criticism from a wide range of stakeholders and commentators. Most significantly, the Board's policy captured the ire of the Ministry of Education; the criticism of public policy stakeholders such as the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association; and, the general ridicule of local and provincial print media which often characterized the Origin of Life policy as a peculiar consequence of Abbotsford's religious demographics. Not surprisingly, this increased attention brought with it increased scrutiny.

The Board responded to these greater levels of 'outsider' scrutiny with increasing sophistication. On the one hand, as this chapter shows, the Board continued to engage in its previously established practice of privileging Christian rituals and beliefs in its schools. However, whereas the Board had typically left the rationale for its own Christianity-privileging policies unstated in the past, it adopted the strategy of explicitly defending this policy direction during this period. For example, as discussed in greater

detail below, the Board defended its support for schools engaging in explicitly Christian Christmas activities as opposed to secular winter celebrations by arguing that previous Canadian court rulings regarding the relationship between religion and public schooling had been widely misunderstood. Likewise, in the following year, the Board extended this practice by citing multiple rationales in an attempt to sustain its Origin of Life policy. These rationales included claiming that such practices were conducive to effective instruction; and in line with both the Board's electoral mandate and with the generally accepted principles of multiculturalism. Ultimately, such arguments would have little effect.

Defending Genesis Without Naming It: An Examination of the Abbotsford School Board's Engagement with the Origin of Life Policy in 1994 and 1995

Between 1994 and 1995, the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy underwent four revisions. I use these revisions to structure an examination of how the Origin of Life policy and its relationship to key stakeholders evolved over this time. In order to accomplish the latter, I examine the themes that emerge from and among these stakeholders. The resulting outline reveals the factors that came into play as the Abbotsford School Board unsuccessfully advocated for creationism instruction in its science classrooms.

Version 1 – Creationism unabashed: 1988 - June 5, 1995

For the Abbotsford School Board, 1994 was, by and large, an uneventful year in regards to the question of creationism instruction. The Board did not receive any

correspondence or delegations related to this topic until mid December. At this time, the Board was prompted to turn its attention to the Origin of Life policy after receiving a critical letter from Scott Goodman, a creationism-instruction critic from a neighboring community (School District, November 29, 1994). This letter itself is particularly significant insofar as it marks the beginning of a new and sustained series of challenges to the policy that would ultimately culminate with its dissolution the following year.

Goodman, a science teacher, 'Canadian liaison for the National Center for Science Education (NCSE)' (Goodman, January 27, 1995) and the editor of the OASIS Newsletter, uses this letter to communicate his intent to critique the Board's policy as a delegate at the February 6, 1995 Board meeting (Goodman, November 29, 1994).³² Goodman's letter details his concerns from the outset: the Origin of Life policy, he charges, is "educationally unsound"; "restrictive and abusive of the religious rights of those who are not believers..."; and, in violation of the school act insofar as "it amounts to sectarian religious advocacy using the public schools as a vehicle" (Goodman, November 29, 1994). Although I found no documentation showing the Board's initial reaction to Goodman's letter or intention to appear, Goodman's own subsequent note that his presentation time was limited to five minutes suggests that the Board was, from the outset, intent on minimizing the effects of this critique (Goodman, January 27, 1995). Media reports outlining the Board's reception to Goodman's subsequent presentation lend support to this hypothesis.

³² The NCSE is a United States based organization organized to oppose creationism instruction in public schools (National Centre, 2004). OASIS is an acronym for Organization of Advocates in Support of Integrity in Science Education (Goodman, November 29, 1994). According to one news report, the OASIS newsletter was established 1988 and had approximately 150 subscribers in 1995 (Corbett, July 12, 1995, A7). Goodman himself identifies its purpose as being to oppose creationism instruction in public schools (Goodman, January 27, 1995).

On February 12, 1995, Goodman arrived as a delegate to the Board. According to the outline appended to the School Board Meeting Minutes, Goodman used this presentation to reiterate his previously stated critiques of the Board's policy (please see above). Additionally, Goodman bolstered his argument that the Origin of Life policy favored an evangelizing Christian perspective by pointing out that all except two of the creationism resource materials available to teachers through the district's Instructional Resource Centre were authored by the evangelical Institute of Creationism Research (ICR) (Goodman, January 27, 1995). As noted earlier, the Institute is explicit in its purpose: it views scientific creationism as a way to turn people towards accepting a specific literalist interpretation of the Bible with the assumption that doing so will ultimately convince more people to reaffirm or profess their faith in Christianity.

Again, as in past years, the Board did not use this opportunity to directly address the question of what criteria were being used to choose or acquire resources for the Origin of Life policy. The Board's continued silence and continued privileging of materials that were either explicitly or implicitly biblically oriented suggests that the Board viewed these materials as appropriate and their evangelizing purpose as unproblematic.

Notes from and media coverage of the meeting suggest that most trustees were dismissive of Goodman's presentation. Only one of the seven trustees, Trustee Lynn Harris, suggested that Goodman's presentation merited a formal policy review. Trustee Harris' motion to this effect was defeated and, according to a newspaper report, followed by "a tirade from Trustee Paul Chamberlain who argued that it was a 'misnomer to suggest that we teach religion when we teach creationism'" (School District, February 12,

1995, p.2; Potter, February 15, 1995). Chamberlain's comments were directed at Scott Goodman and characterized as hostile by ADTA President Vicki Robinson who described them as "disgusting...No delegation that makes a presentation to the school board has a right to be treated like that" (Potter, February 15, 1995).³³ The Board subsequently passed a motion referring the policy to the Committee of the Whole for review (School District, February 12, 1995, p.2).³⁴ The decision to pass this latter motion rather than the former was later justified by Trustee John Smith who argued that the issues being raised were 'philosophical' and deserved to be addressed publicly but did not warrant the attention of a formal committee (Rake, February 22, 1995).

According to his later reflections, Goodman had anticipated the Board's reaction: "I knew from discussions with people in the community that we could expect a 'tooth and nail' defense of their Divine Creation policy" (Goodman, 1997, p.19). Goodman claims to have planned ahead by alerting not only the Ministry of Education, the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association and media outlets of his plans to challenge the Board's policy (Goodman, 1997, p.19). He later explains this preliminary awareness-raising as key to ensuring the subsequent involvement of these parties.³⁵

On February 20, 1995, the Committee of the Whole met to discuss and review the Origin of Life policy. The policy was reaffirmed at this meeting as the trustees

³³ This was not the only perspective on the meeting or Chamberlain's comments. A subsequent letter to the editor defended Chamberlain's comments as appropriate and measured (Schultz, February 18, 1995).

³⁴ Unlike the Policy Development Committee which has only three members, the Committee of the Whole meeting is a public meeting that consists of the entire board. The Policy Development Committee for 1995 consisted of Don Szostak (Chair), Paul Chamberlain and Lynne Harris. Both Szostak and Chamberlain would go on to be outspoken defendants of the Origin of Life policy. This distinction was not noted in subsequent media reports which suggested that Goodman had succeeded in prompting a formal review of the policy (Creationism Policy, February 15, 1995).

³⁵ Although Goodman's presentation does precede the involvement of the Ministry of Education and British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, it is not possible—given this present study's emphasis upon textual analysis rather than interviews with stakeholders—to know if this involvement can be directly attributed to his attempts to at 'conscientious raising'. Certainly, this connection has not been acknowledged or implied in writing elsewhere.

“concluded that it followed the School Act and the curriculum guide provided by the Ministry of Education” (Public Committee, February 20, 1995). A subsequent media summary of the meeting reveals a more detailed account of this discussion. Trustee Lynne Harris was again clearly out of step with her peers as she advocated for the policy to be formally reviewed: she is quoted as asking “why aren’t we sending this through official policy review?” (Rake, February 22, 1995). Trustee Smith responded to Harris by arguing that the issue was philosophically oriented (see above) and then elaborated upon this point in his further comments regarding Goodman. In these comments, Smith establishes himself and the Board as stewards of a particular philosophy and, in turn, identifies Goodman as an adversary: “someone from another part of the world is threatening us...and if he wants to go to litigation, then so be it” (Rake, February 22, 1995).³⁶ Although neither Smith nor his counterparts elaborate on what philosophical counterpoints are being staked out here, the Board’s partiality towards facilitating Christian hegemony in its school suggests that Smith is implicitly referring to a Christian versus secular duality here. This is a hypothesis that is more fully evaluated later in this chapter. In addition to reaffirming the policy at this time, the Board also acknowledged Paul Chamberlain’s subsequent suggestion that the resource materials for the Origin of Life policy be reviewed (Rake, February 22, 1995). Neither the criteria for nor the intent of this proposed review were recorded.

Soon afterwards, the Board received letters and delegations expressing support for its Origin of Life policy. Whereas some unconditionally supported the current policy (e.g., Finlay, February 15, 1995), others suggested it be reevaluated in order to ensure

³⁶ Goodman himself later notes that he approached the Board on behalf of a concerned Abbotsford resident who had contacted the NCSE (Goodman, 1995).

that it was being properly implemented and supported (e.g., Bartleman, February 27, 1995).³⁷ Meanwhile, the superintendent was taking steps to address such concerns.

Two weeks after Goodman's presentation to the Board and a week after the Board reaffirmed its Origin of Life policy, Superintendent Robin Arden received summaries of the policy's implementation from each secondary school science department head (Des, 1995, pp. 70-71). Each of the five secondary schools surveyed confirmed identifying divine creation as an alternative to evolutionary theory. Students, each noted, were given an opportunity to choose either model for any origin of life oriented projects with the proviso that their research was supported (Des, 1995). The junior secondary reported a similar process but noted that "the origin of life is an optional part of the junior science curriculum and as such is often not covered due to time constraints" (Des, 1995, p.71). The validity of these reports was later challenged by ADTA President Vicki Robinson who claimed that not all Science teachers had been consulted. In practice, she argued, "the policy generally is not followed in this district for several reasons, one of which is that few teacher[s] want to get into the politics of the creation vs. evolution matter" (Robinson, May 23, 1995b).³⁸ Robinson's official involvement with the policy started much earlier.

Robinson's involvement with this policy first began a few weeks after Goodman's February 1995 presentation to the Board. Writing on behalf of the ADTA Executive Committee, Robinson formally requested the Board to undertake a review of the Origin of Life policy "with a view to deleting it" (Robinson, March 8, 1995). Robinson's

³⁷ Incidentally, Finley writes not from Abbotsford but from Williams Lake.

³⁸ Robinson repeatedly characterized the Origin of Life policy as one that intimidated teachers and that was often either reluctantly implemented or avoided altogether along with evolution instruction (e.g., Todd, March 17, 1995; Robinson, May 23, 1995b). It was a charge advanced by Scott Goodman as well (e.g., Corbett, July 12, 1995, A7).

subsequent choice of words, however, suggests that she anticipated opposition from the Board: "surely [she writes] it is not the Board's intention to stifle input on this policy from the stakeholders" (Robinson, March 8, 1995).

Shortly thereafter, both proponents and critics of the policy started to publicly elaborate on their personal perspectives. A profile of the issue by Vancouver Sun Religion and Ethics reporter Douglass Todd exemplifies this process well by identifying positions that would become common over the course of this debate (Todd, March 17, 1995). For example, Todd presents Trustee Gerda Fandrich and Board Chair John Sutherland as offering two distinct arguments favoring creationism instruction. Fandrich is characterized as defending creationism instruction on the basis that the creationist perspective of life's origins is scientifically valid (Todd, March 17, 1995). This is a position inline with the 1988 revision of the Origin of Life policy. Sutherland, on the other hand, refers to the subtext of the policy that was, as discussed earlier, maintained even after the 1988 revision by citing the local electorate's expectations as an appropriate justification for such instruction (Todd, March 17, 1995). In this article, Todd also gives voice to Scott Goodman, the main critic of the policy at the time, who characterizes the debate as North American in scope and creationism as an indoctrinating exercise (Todd, March 17, 1995).

A month later, the Board received three additional pieces of correspondence supporting their Origin of Life policy. These letters are noteworthy because they give a further indication of the breadth of arguments employed by the policy's advocates. Each argument recurs throughout much of the subsequent correspondence received by the Board. Interestingly, despite their distinct approaches, each letter explicitly or implicitly

cautions the Board against identifying the Origin of Life policy as religious in its intent although each letter certainly understands that to be the case. Thus, in the first letter, E. Martin advocates a scientific creationist perspective and explicitly argues that the Board must avoid religion when justifying their Origin of Life policy and focus any such discussions on creationism as having a scientific basis (Martin, n.d.). As noted earlier, the underlying purpose of emphasizing science when debating Creationism is to lead people to see a Christian creationist perspective as viable. Although this strategy was occasionally advocated by a few Board members, the debate was rarely framed in the media as one concerning the scientific claims of creationism. In their letter, Gerda and Richard Peachey, on the other hand, advance the argument that creationism instruction is appropriate because most people do not believe in the theory of evolution (Peachey and Peachey, March 28, 1995). It is an interesting argument insofar as it attempts to shift the debate away from the merits of creationism as science or religious exercise towards simply reflecting widely held beliefs. Subsequent Board justifications along these lines tended to argue that the policy was appropriate because creationism found favor in a significant portion of the local population (e.g., Rees, 1992). This defense of group rights is, in some ways, similar to the rights discourse that had come in to prevalence in the previous period though, in this case, it was being used to safeguard the waning Christian influence in the school system. The third submission is reminiscent of Bob Grieve's 1992 correspondence concerning the *So You're An Evolutionist* pamphlets. In this third submission, Henry Goertson recognizes the policy as exalting Christianity with the aim of indoctrinating students but demonstrates a clear awareness of the need to avoid this acknowledgment when publicly defending the policy. Goertson demonstrates this

argument via the two letters—one addressed to the Board and the other a copy of one he had written to a newspaper—that make up his submission to the Board. Thus, in the letter addressed to the Board, Goertson clearly supports the Origin of Life policy as evangelizing in its intent and ends his letter accordingly: “If I may contribute anything further to your laudable efforts in raising this generation in reverence for and obedience to God, our Creator, do not hesitate to ask. I am [space] Yours in Christ Jesus [signature] (Goertson, April 10, 1995). Conversely, in his attached letter to the editor, Goertson attempts to communicate a sense of objectivity. On the one hand, he continues to defend creationism instruction on the basis of his literal interpretation of the Bible. However, in this letter, Goertson avoids suggesting that the policy may have an evangelizing intent or effect (Goertson, April 3, 1995). Goertson’s choice of words clearly suggests that he perceived the Board to be allied stewards of the Christian faith. Although the Board did not adopt this strategy of justifying creationism instruction as faith affirming or indoctrinating for some audiences and biblically justified for others, such understandings of the policy would go on to dominate media portrayals in subsequent months and, also, come to be widely cited by many of the policy’s supporters and critics.

Three months after the Board’s decision to reaffirm their Origin of Life policy, the Board received a letter from Minister of Education Art Charbonneau (School District, May 8, 1995). Charbonneau’s letter is direct: After noting that he has received complaints regarding the Board’s Origin of Life policy, Charbonneau asks the Board for an assurance that they are adhering to the provincial curriculum.³⁹ Additionally, he

³⁹ Later, Charbonneau goes on to identify Abbotsford’s teachers as the source of these complaints (e.g., Fundamental, May 10, 1995 and Todd, May 12, 1995). According to Goodman, however, the Ministry’s involvement followed his own complaints to the Ministry (which he notes were dismissed), subsequent complaints to the BC Ombudsman’s office (regarding the Ministry’s dismissal of his concerns) and, as

specifically notes that creationism instruction is not considered to be a part of this curriculum because it is based upon a religious as opposed to scientific perspective. As if to ensure that his point is made, Charbonneau goes on to note that section 95 of the School Act and recent court rulings make it clear that religious instruction is not acceptable in public schools (Charbonneau, April 10, 1995).

Although the Board's reaction to Charbonneau's letter is not noted in the Board meeting minutes, some indication of it is found in media reports. On May 10, 1995, for example, *The Province* newspaper characterized John Sutherland as 'upset' with Charbonneau's position. According to the report, Sutherland argued that "pushing creationism out of the classroom amounts to veiled bigotry" (Fundamental, May 10, 1995). Sutherland elaborated upon this point in a local newspaper where he explained Charbonneau's letter as "disguised bigotry...parading itself as pluralism" (Rake, May 10, 1995). Thus, whereas Trustee John Smith had characterized criticisms of the Origin of Life policy as being examples of opposing philosophies, Sutherland extended this idea to argue that the philosophy protected by the Board through this policy was now under attack.

Meanwhile, ADTA President Vicki Robinson adopted the same reasoning in her opposition to the Board's defense of the policy. Rejecting the characterization of the issue as one of opposing but unnamed philosophies, Robinson outlined it as a conflict between those who advocate religious indoctrination and those who do not. According to Robinson, the Abbotsford School Board was "dominated by Christian fundamentalists ... trying to push their religious views on to students who come from a range of faiths"

described earlier, his attempts to involve the BCLA and elicit media coverage (Goodman, 1994). Goodman claims, in other words, to have initiated the process of 'pushing' the Origin of Life policy onto the Ministry's agenda.

(Clark, May 11, 1995, p. A2). Later in the same article, Robinson elaborated upon this argument by referring specifically to John Sutherland and Paul Chamberlain: "Trinity Western [University] has a hold on the chairmanship and vice-chairmanship" (Clark, May 11, 1995, p.A2). At the time, both Sutherland and Chamberlain were employed as professors at Trinity Western University, a private Evangelical Christian University. This idea that the Abbotsford School Board was dominated by Christian fundamentalists pursuing their own agenda was commonly propagated by the media throughout 1995 (e.g., Todd, March 17, 1995; School balancing act, March 18, 1995; Todd, May 25, 1995; Crawley, June 26, 1995, etc.).

Education Minister Art Charbonneau wrote to the Abbotsford School Board again on May 17, 1995. In this letter, the Minister makes direct reference to his previously sent April 10, 1995 letter but does not mention any reply from the Board itself.⁴⁰ Instead, Charbonneau reiterates his previously stated concerns though, this time, he is even more direct. For example, Charbonneau had previously characterized creationism instruction as inappropriate because it was religiously rather than scientifically oriented but had not explicitly directed the Board to apply this criticism to its own Origin of Life policy. In this subsequent letter, however, Charbonneau explicitly identifies the Board's Origin of Life policy itself as problematic: "the application of the board's policy respecting the teaching of 'creationism' in Biology 11 classes in the Abbotsford School District is unacceptable from the stand point of the provincial curriculum and the provisions of section 95 of the School Act" (Charbonneau, May 17, 1995). No longer inviting the Board's assurance that they are following provincial policies, Charbonneau ends his letter

⁴⁰ Although I found no record of it, ADTA president Vicki Robinson reported that the Board did reply to Charbonneau's previous letter on May 15, 1995 (Robinson, May 23, 1995 a).

by instructing the Board to provide him with a revised Origin of Life policy by June 16, 1995 and, also, by appending a sample of an acceptable revision (Charbonneau, May 17, 1995). The Minister's draft policy reads as follows:

PURPOSE

To provide a guideline for the teaching of the topic "Adaptation and Evolution" set out in the Biology 11/12 Curriculum Guide.

APPLICATION

In view of the fact that concerns may be expressed by some students and parents respecting the teaching of the topic "Adaptation and Evolution" in the Biology 11/12 Curriculum Guide; and, that the evolutionary perspective of modern biology may conflict with personal beliefs, teachers, when teaching this topic in the classroom, should explain to students that science is only one way of learning about life, and that other explanations have been put forth besides that of biological science. As Divine creation and other viewpoints are not derived from the discipline of biological science and are not part of the curriculum, teachers will refrain from providing instruction in Divine creation, in any single belief system or viewpoint, or adding any other topics or units not already set out in the Biology 11/12 Curriculum Guide. In all cases, teachers are encouraged to be aware of, and to respect, the personal beliefs of their students without providing instruction in any one belief system.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR POLICY

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for ensuring that this policy is carried out.

Just as this draft policy clarified the Minister's opposition to the Board's Origin of Life policy, representatives for parents and teachers also took steps to clarify their positions at about this time. For example, initial news reports suggested that The Province's parent lobby—the British Columbia Association of Parent Advisory Councils—had passed a resolution advocating creationism instruction (Parents, May 21, 1995; Roberts, May 25, 1995). Although Ray Kollin, the BCAPAC representative to Abbotsford made similar claims in his later correspondence with the Board and Minister of Education (Kollin, June 4, 1995), subsequent responses from the BCAPAC President

and its Board Secretary clearly identify the resolution as being misinterpreted by the media. In their respective press releases, both the President and Board Secretary clearly restate the Association's position as not advocating creationism-instruction (Rempel, May 23, 1995; Parker, May 24, 1995). Likewise, the ADTA continued in its opposition to the Origin of Life policy during this time by reiterating its request that the Board refer the policy to the Policy Review Committee (Robinson, May 23, 1995a) and formally lobbying Minister Charbonneau to take steps to end the policy.

Like these stakeholders, the Board also continued to clarify its position during this time. For example, John Sutherland responded to Charbonneau's letter through the media. Initially, Sutherland defiantly hinted that the Board would oppose Charbonneau's request since the Origin of Life policy had been approved by both the 1991 Ministry of Education (McIntyer, May 25, 1995) and the Board's present legal counsel (Todd, May 25, 1995). Conversely, Sutherland also started to cite rationales in addition to those he had already forwarded in previous months in an attempt to rally support for the Board and its policy. Thus, Sutherland started to publicly justify the policy as one that facilitated critical thinking and encompassed the democratic value of freedom of choice by providing students with differing perspectives on life's origins.

Version Two – Creationism Masked: June 5, 1995 – June 26, 1995

Despite Abbotsford School Board Chair John Sutherland's dismissal of Minister Charbonneau's request for a revised Origin of Life policy as 'veiled bigotry' with little legal merit, the Board did take steps to revise this policy soon afterwards. On June 5, 1995, the Board circulated a revised policy for public input. Although this draft policy

differed from the sample forwarded by the Minister it had been vetted by the Board's legal counsel as meeting the Ministry of Education's curriculum guidelines (Public, June 5, 1995). The draft policy read as follows:

PURPOSE

To provide guidance for the teaching of the origins of our universe and life on our planet, within the context of the Biology 11/12 Curriculum Guide, specifically the unit entitled "Adaptation and Evolution".

APPLICATION

Teachers may find that the evolutionary perspective of modern biology conflicts with the personal beliefs of some students; therefore, when teaching this topic in the classroom, teachers should explain to students that science is only one way of learning about life, and that other explanations have been put forth besides that of biological science. Other viewpoints not derived from biological science are not part of the Biology 11/12 curriculum issued by the Ministry of Education.

In order to promote critical thinking skills, students shall be encouraged to discuss the scientific pros and cons of the alternative theories without being criticized for their opinions. Where other viewpoints are presented or discussed, teachers are encouraged to be aware of and to respect the personal beliefs of their students without promoting, through instruction, any one belief system. This discussion would include the evidence/information both for and against the theories of the origins of our universe and life on our planet.

RESPONSIBILITY FOR PROCEDURES

The Superintendent of Schools is responsible for ensuring that the procedures related to this policy are carried out.

Changes to the procedures related to this policy may be made upon approval of the Secretary-Treasurer and the Superintendent of Schools. (Public, June 5, 1995, p. 33)

This draft policy clearly reads as more neutral and objective than its predecessor. Whereas the 1988 policy explicitly referred to Divine Creation, this policy talks much more generally about 'alternative theories.' Thus, this draft leaves room for creationism instruction but does not explicitly or exclusively mandate it in the same way as the 1988 policy. This draft, then, seems to have been written in an attempt to appease critics who

charged the original Origin of Life policy with pandering to a particular religious perspective while, at the same time, leaving room for precisely such a practice. This policy was put forward at the June 5, 1995 Committee of the Whole Meeting.

Immediate reception to the draft policy at this Committee of the Whole Meeting seems to have been largely favorable. This favorable reception is not surprising since, on this date, only one out of the five delegates speaking to the topic of creationism instruction spoke against it. This lone critic was Dale Beyerstein, a representative of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association, who urged the Board to end the Origin of Life policy outright. Three of the remaining four delegations appeared in front of the Board in order to urge the Board to maintain space for creationism instruction in Abbotsford's schools (Peachey, June 5, 1995; Keeran, June 5, 1995 and Dirks, June 5, 1995). The remaining delegation supported the Board as well in a more roundabout way as the delegate—Ray Kollin, the Parent Advisory council liaison for Abbotsford—suggested that the Minister had not properly consulted parents before criticizing Abbotsford's Origin of Life policy (Kollin, June 5, 1995).

The debate over creationism instruction in Abbotsford's schools was again framed in several ways over the course of this meeting. From the trustees, it was repeatedly implied that the issue at hand was one of trustee autonomy. From delegates supporting the policy, it was one of critical thinking (Dirks), parent input (Kollin), and opposition to what might be termed as scientific dogmatism (Peachey).

In what could be understood as an attempt to exercise School Board autonomy, John Sutherland subsequently wrote a letter on June 6, 1995 advising Minister Art Charbonneau that the Board would not meet his ultimatum of June 16, 1995 (Sutherland,

June 6, 1995)⁴¹. Explaining that the Board had drafted a revised policy and committed to a series of public consultations, Sutherland informed the Minister that the Board would aim to pass the policy on June 26th instead. This would, he explained, allow the “community . . . to present their views at either the June 12th or June 19th public meetings of the Board” (Sutherland, June 6, 1995). Each Board member’s position on this revised policy was recorded the next day in the local newspaper “*The Abbotsford News*.” Each was identified as favoring the revision and agreeing that it was inevitable due to the changes at the federal level (e.g., Charter of Rights and Freedoms) (Rake, June 7, 1995). However, Trustee Cathy Goodfellow differed from her colleagues by being the only trustee to note that she did not “find the minister’s move ‘heavy handed’ . . .” (Rake, June 7, 1995). Goodfellow goes on to explain that she had “wanted a legal opinion when the issue first came up months ago” (Rake, June 7, 1995).

The Board’s revised policy was generally met with criticism by ‘outsiders’ and some ‘insiders’. Minister Art Charbonneau cautiously received the draft policy by suggesting that it required further elaboration (McIntyre and Hauka, June 8, 1995). Charbonneau’s call for additional details implies that he read the draft as leaving room for creationism-instruction. This same point was raised by the policy’s more vocal critics who dismissed the revision as a ruse. For example, a spokesperson for the BCCLA dismissed the revision outright as “simply a more subtle effort to allow religion to pose as science or ‘critical thinking’” (Creationism and critical thinking, 1995). Likewise, Scott Goodman argued that the draft was unacceptable and dismissed the talk of ‘alternative theories’ as a common strategy used by creationism-instruction proponents to avoid the

⁴¹ In this letter, Sutherland also refers to a June 2, 1995 meeting between Ministry and Board representatives. I found no other record of or reference to this meeting.

criticism that they simply advocating a literalist understanding of the Bible (School board set, 1995).⁴² Perhaps more surprisingly, the Board also received critiques from some of its own administrators. One, a high school principal, was quoted in a newspaper article as suggesting that the revised policy succeeded only in “deviating from what Charbonneau and his crew are telling us” (Creationism and critical thinking, June 11, 1995) while another, this time an elementary school principal, wrote directly to the superintendent arguing that creationism instruction was inappropriate in a science classroom (Hill, June 19, 1995). Likewise, the parent advisory council for one of Abbotsford’s elementary schools also wrote to the Board to register their opposition to creationism instruction (Mohle, June 14, 1995).

On June 12, 1995, the first of the two official opportunities for community input, the Board received twenty eight related letters and five related delegations. Of these twenty eight letters, only one critiqued the Board’s decision to maintain space for creationism instruction in its schools (Wyatt, 1995). In his letter, Wyatt reiterated his previously stated argument that creationism instruction was inappropriate because it promoted a particular religious perspective in science classrooms. Wyatt also identified Paul Chamberlain and John Sutherland as the Origin of Life policy’s two primary proponents. The remaining letters are particularly significant insofar as they provide us with a sense of who the Board was able to garner support from. Surprisingly, fourteen of the twenty seven supportive letters originated outside of Abbotsford: three of these letters came from neighboring communities; two came from other provinces (Manitoba and

⁴² Goodman made the same argument a month earlier (Todd, May 12, 1995). Likewise, when making the same argument, Herb Fears, of the British Columbia Humanist Association, identified the Creation Research Institute as an example of an American creationist-lobby that employed this strategy (Fears, June 11, 1995).

Ontario); and the remaining letters came from communities across British Columbia including Richmond, Clearwater, Kelowna, Prince George, Dawson creek, Burnaby, Vancouver, and Quesnel (Correspondence, June 12, 1995). As with previously supportive correspondence and delegations, these letters employed a series of recurrent themes in their support for the Board's decision to continue teaching creationism in its schools. Thus, some writers cited their Christian beliefs as proof that biblical creationism was factual; others critiqued the provincial government for being autocratic by not allowing local communities to establish creationism-oriented educational policies; others identified creationism instruction as key to providing students with an opportunity to critically evaluate the theory of evolution; and, finally, a few wrote simply to state their support for the Board without citing any specific rationale. Together, these letters put forth a sense of victimization as writers argue that the Origin of Life policy was being unfairly criticized.

One of these supportive letters deserves particular mention. In her letter to the Board, Ursula Bond, a concerned Clearwater resident, claims to have previously secured Minister Art Charbonneau's assurance that he would consider creationism-instruction "if there was a grassroots movement to have Creationism examined" (Bond, May 15, 1995). No other mention of any such meeting or assurance was found in subsequent letters, media coverage or Board meeting minutes.

Of the five delegations received on this date, three supported the Board in its attempt to maintain a creationism-instruction policy. Whereas two of these delegations arrived to express their support for the Board's stance, one delegation—Richard Peachey—stood out both in its intent and its later impact. Instead of simply professing his

support for the Board, Peachey came to the meeting with specific suggestions regarding the June 5 draft Origin of Life policy which he characterized as too vague. As a substitute, Peachey suggested a series of revisions. These revisions and the accompanying original text from the Board's draft policy are listed below:

Table 3: *Proposed Revisions By Richard Peachey*

1	Original Text	Teachers may find that the evolutionary perspective of modern biology conflicts with the personal beliefs of some students;
	New Text	Teachers may find that the evolutionary perspectives of modern biology conflict with the personal beliefs of some students;
2	Original Text	...when teaching this topic in the classroom, teachers should explain to students that science is only one way of learning about life, and that other explanations have been put forth besides that of biological science.
	New Text	...when teaching this topic in the classroom, teachers should explain to students that science is only one way of learning about life, and that other explanations have been put forth besides those of evolutionary biologists.
3	Original Text	In order to promote critical thinking skills, students shall be encouraged to discuss the scientific pros and cons of the alternative theories without being criticized for their opinions.
	New Text	In order to promote critical thinking skills, students shall be encouraged to discuss the scientific pros and cons of evolutionary theories and the alternative theories without being criticized for their opinions.
4	Original Text	This discussion would include the evidence/information both for and against the theories of the origins of our universe and life on our planet.
	New Text	This discussion would include the evidence/information both for and against the theories of the origins of our universe and the diversity of life on our planet.

Peachey explained these changes as shifting the Policy's focus towards providing students with opportunities to scrutinize and debate mainstream evolutionary theory (School District, June 26, p.14). In some ways, Peachey's justification for the changes understates their effect. Whereas the Board's proposed draft clearly posits evolutionary theory as the mainstream perspective, Peachey's version presents it as being much more contingent. Thus, whereas the proposed draft gives readers a sense of some scientific

consensus, Peachey's proposed changes suggest that evolutionary theory does not enjoy widespread consensus but, instead, enjoys the support of only a specific subset of biologists. Additionally, Peachey's changes place an even clearer emphasis upon making space for creationism instruction while still avoiding explicit references to divine or special creation. As indicated below, Peachey's presentation would go on to have great significance for this debate.

Opposition on this date came from two delegations: Douglas Hudson, speaking this time as a concerned parent and, more significantly, Dale Beyerstein, speaking on behalf of the British Columbia Civil Liberties Association (BCCLA) which had been contacted by concerned Abbotsford teachers (Akins, June 17, 1995). Both delegations opposed the Board's decision to revise their original Origin of Life policy asking, instead, that creationism instruction end all together (School District, June 12, 1995, pp. 2-3). The Board, however, was clearly not prepared to entertain such a suggestion and the latter presentation was dismissed by Trustee John Smith as indicative of a "fascist view" (Akins, June 14, 1995).

The second opportunity for official public consultation came during the June 19, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting. Of the four related delegations received on this date, two opposed the Board's policy (Ross; Wyatt), one delegation opposed the teaching of both creationism and evolution in any class other than philosophy (Talbot) and one delegation spoke out in support of creationism instruction (Peachey) (School District, June 26, 1995, pp 14-15).

Version Three – Creationism expounded: June 26, 1995 – September 14, 1995

"It's the ultimate in intellectual honesty as it stands" (Paul Chamberlain quoted by Corbett, July 1, 1995).

"They're trying to bring their religious views into the school system and they will not succeed" (Art Charbonneau quoted by Corbett, July 1, 1995).

After the two scheduled opportunities for public input on June 12 and June 19, the Board met again on June 26, 1995 with the intention of passing a new Origin of Life policy that would appease the Minister of Education while allowing the Board to maintain space for creationism instruction. Although attendance figures are not available for previous Board meetings, media coverage of the day suggests that the attendance significantly exceeded the norm as almost 200 people—most of them supportive of the Board—chose to attend this meeting (Corbett, June 28, 1995). Likewise the Board also received twenty related letters on this date as well as three concerned delegations.

As with previous correspondence, almost half of the letters received by the Board came from other communities. Eleven of these letters—of which five originated from communities outside of Abbotsford including an eleven name petition from Quesnel—supported the continuation of creationism instruction in Abbotsford's public schools. The vast majority of these letter writers cited their religious convictions to support creationism-instruction. An underlying theme among most of these letters was the idea that Christianity was no longer afforded the respect it once received and that the Board was taking a stand in its defense. For example, the Quesnel based petition states: "We also commend you [the Abbotsford School Board] for being considerate of those Canadians who have reverence for the Bible as the source of truth" (Several Quesnel

residents, 1995). Of the nine letters opposing creationism instruction, four originated outside of Abbotsford. The underlying argument among these letters was the same: creationism-instruction was criticized as being religious and indoctrinating in its intent.

Four official delegations regarding the Board's Origin of Life policy were received on June 28, 1995. Two of these delegations—one led by Scott Goodman and the other by Vicki Robinson—critiqued the policy. Both called for the rejection of the proposed policy draft and the dissolution of creationism instruction in Abbotsford's public schools altogether. Of the two supporting delegations, one stands out as it consisted of a newly formed organization—the Abbotsford Community Impact Coalition—that would go on lobby the Board from a socially conservative perspective in the coming years.⁴³ Through its representative, Evelyn Budzinski, the Coalition advanced two arguments. First, Budzinski characterized the issue as one concerning community standards and autonomy: “A pattern [she argued] has developed for interests outside our community to exercise control over local institutions” (School District, June 25, 1995). In this regard, she assured the Board that the Coalition would work hard to “support this school Board which has worked so diligently to retain its autonomy to make policy” (School District, June 26, 1995). Second, Budzinski argued that the Minister of Education's perspective was problematic because it over-emphasized secularism in the public sphere (School District, June 26, 1995). Speaking from a perspective that clearly sees Christianity as underpinning Canadian society, Budzinski cited the historical relationship between Christianity and the Canadian state as proof that creationism instruction was appropriate. For example, Budzinski states: “it is an indignity to both the

⁴³ For example, on February 19, 1996 the Coalition published a newsletter—which it sent to the Board—urging readers to oppose equal rights legislation for gay and lesbian couples (School District, February 19, 1996).

Constitution and the Charter to disallow a theory of origins of the express reason that it is based on the supremacy of God—which is the cultural base for the founding peoples of this nation and this community” (Budzinski, June 26, 1995). That Budzinski ended her presentation with everyone participating in the singing of the national anthem further reinforces this conflation of Christianity and Canadian identity. According to a local news reporter, Budzinski and her associate Grant Kick “led singing of O Canada, with all four verses, and in which there are four references to God” (Corbett, June 28, 1995).

After receiving these delegations, the Board debated four motions in an attempt to pass a substitute policy for the 1988 Origin of Life policy. First, the previously circulated draft was put forward as a substitute for the 1988 policy via Motion 94-470. Instead of voting on this motion, a second motion—Motion 94-471—was advanced proposing the adoption of an amended version of the previously circulated draft. This amended version incorporated each of the modifications previously put forth by Richard Peachey (Peachey, June 12, 1995).⁴⁴ This motion clearly elicited debate as it is reported that “Chairman Sutherland . . . requested that the penultimate amendment be considered separately as it introduces a significant change to the policy” (p.2). This was, however, clearly more than a request as the next motion—motion 95-472—asked “That the Chairman’s ruling to consider the penultimate amendment to the policy separately be challenged” (School District, June 26, 1995). This motion was passed and, subsequently, Motion 95-471 was again posed and this time carried. The meeting minutes indicate that “a lengthy debate ensued...” after which it was motioned—via Motion 94-473—that Motion 94-470 “be tabled, subject to a legal opinion of the amendment being received”

⁴⁴ Although Peachey’s authorship of these amendments was not officially acknowledged by the Board, Peachey himself did acknowledge his contribution a few weeks later (Peachey, July 12, 1995; Corbett, Life Policy, July 15, 1995).

(School District, June 26, 1995). This motion was defeated and the votes recorded as follows: Trustees Sutherland, Harris and Goodfellow supported the motion and Trustees Smith, Fandrich, Chamberlain and Szostak opposed it⁴⁵. At this point, the notes indicate that "Chairman Sutherland vacated the chair in order to speak to the motion" (School District, June 26, 1995). It is unclear as to why Sutherland did this or what he said. Finally, the Board voted to "obtain a legal opinion on [the] new Policy EC 15.5 "Origin of Life" (95-474) (School District, June 26, 1995). Interestingly, despite the Board's clear acknowledgment that the policy needed to be evaluated in light of relevant school law, it seems that at least one member of the Board—Paul Chamberlain—was still arguing that the Board's difficulties with this policy and these revisions were attributable not to its own legal shortcomings but because of the new Education Minister, Art Charbonneau (Corbett, June 28, 1995). Chamberlain cites the Ministry's awareness of the policy in 1991 as proof that it was a shift in power rather than legislation or legality that had caused these difficulties (Corbett, June 28, 1995).

Additionally, Motion 95-481 was passed on this day approving the Superintendent's plan to convene a committee in September 1995 to review the district's creationism resources. The committee, it was noted, would "be comprised of one trustee and representative stakeholders" (School District, June 26, 1995, p.5). Who these stakeholders are is not noted. On a related note, the Board did receive a report on this date outlining how often reference materials concerning evolution/creation had been borrowed from the Instruction Resource Centre since September 1994. A review of the list indicates that thirteen different items were taken out a total of twenty eight times. Of

⁴⁵ Goodfellow went on record the same day as wanting to "make a decision that quiets the controversy" and is clearly legal (Crawley, June 26, 1995). Her decision to vote for this newly amended policy, however, achieved the opposite.

these items, only two had titles which suggest that they may be about creationism (School District, June 26, 1995, pp. 56-57). No subsequent references to this committee or the process of reevaluating the District's creationism-instruction resources were found.

Charbonneau's rejection of the Abbotsford School Board's revised Origin of Life policy was publicly recorded two days later (Hauka, June 28, 1995; Creationism 'is not on'—Minister, June 28, 1995; Todd, June 28, 1995). In one article, Charbonneau was presented as comparing the Board's policy to those advocated by the American religious right (Corbett, July 1, 1995). The Minister made this rejection formal on July 10, 1995 in a letter to the Board. Specifically, in this letter, Charbonneau states:

Having read your new policy, I find it vague and open to various meanings. It may be interpreted as permitting the teaching of religious beliefs and non-scientific theories on the origin and development of life under the guise of science.

Charboneau ended this letter by noting that he would distribute specific guidelines / instructions addressing these concerns to each of British Columbia's school boards in the subsequent August.

A week later *The Abbotsford News* reported that the Board had received legal advice in regards to the new policy which stated that it did not adhere to the School Act (Corbett, July 15, 1995). School Board Chair John Sutherland, on the other hand, characterized Charbonneau's objections as misinformed: "The minister doesn't like the way it's worded because it fits with his fundamentalist plot theory" (Sutherland quoted in Corbett, July 15, 1995).

On September 5, 1995, Charbonneau again wrote to the Board. This time, he noted that changes had been made to the Biology 11/12 curriculum guide as well as three ministerial orders in order to "bring the school law and Biology curriculum in line with section 95 of the School Act and section 2 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms" (Charbonneau, September 5, 1995). The specific changes are as follows. The curriculum guide was altered to include a passage identifying creationism and intelligent design as religiously based perspectives that can not be characterized as science or taught in biology classes. Ministerial order 465 simply revised the curriculum guide's title so that it clearly noted that it had been revised in 1995; ministerial order 466 clearly stated that all curricular outcomes must be taught for grade 11 and 12 subjects in order to qualify for graduation; and ministerial order 467 noted that all curricular outcomes for grade 11 and 12 subjects must be taught (Charbonneau, September 5, 1995).

Of the seven Board members, only Board Chair John Sutherland informally responded to Charbonneau's letter. Sutherland portrayed the Board's position as one that simply aimed to facilitate questioning and critical thinking within a scientific framework (Austin, September 8, 1995). A day later, Sutherland elaborated upon this defense by stating that the Board was also being responsive to local demographics: "[creationism] reflects the beliefs of many area parents, some of whom are evangelical Christians" (Balcom, September 9, 1995, A7). At the same time, Sutherland explicitly refuted the charge that the board was advancing a religious agenda: "the majority of the board are quite comfortable with the evolutionary view. There's not some fundamentalist agenda going on" (Sutherland quoted in Balcom, September 9, 1995, A7).

On September 11, 1995, the Board again received a significant amount of correspondence regarding the Origin of Life policy. Of the twenty one letters received, only two opposed creationism instruction in Abbotsford. Of the letters supporting creationism instruction at least four originated in communities outside of Abbotsford including one from Ontario. There were two themes that arose among these letters. Some of the letter writers accused the Minister of Education of being ignorant to the facts of creationism and undemocratic in his decision to force the Board to abandon its creationism instruction policy (e.g., Macphail, August 3, 1995). Others continued to cite their religious beliefs as the reason for their support for a creationism instruction policy (e.g., Unrau, June 22, 1995).

On this date, the Board also formally received the Minister's July 10 rejection of their previously passed origin of life policy. Media coverage of the meeting indicates that at least one of the trustees—Trustee Szostak—was angered by Charbonneau's decision. Trustee Szostak was presented as adamantly claiming that he would not "pass a policy which doesn't allow students to question the evolutionary theory, even on the orders of the education minister" (Corbett, September 13, 1995). It is interesting that, like Sutherland a few days earlier, Szostak articulated his defense for creationism instruction as being based in his concern for student rights rather than in his understanding of creationism itself. According to Corbett, Szostak extended this defense by claiming that following Charbonneau's instructions was akin "to the Nazi war criminal defense, 'we were ordered to do it'" (Corbett, September 13, 1995). Although no other Trustee's comments were recorded, Motion 95-530—a motion to rescind the June 26th policy—was

postponed (via Motion 95-531) to an Extraordinary Meeting of the Board schedule for Thursday, September 14, 1995 (School District, September 11, 1995, p.2).

Version Four – Creationism no more: September 14, 1995

On September 14, 1995, the Board dealt with the new development as it considered two competing motions. The first motion, Motion 95-590, called for the Board to replace the rejected Origin of Life policy with a newly revised version that addressed Charbonneau's recent school act and curriculum guide revisions. The second motion, Motion 95-591, was put forward by Trustee Lynne Harris and incorporated Motion 95-590 but added the proviso that the new policy be adopted "in principle, subject to its acceptance by the Minister of Education" (School District, September 14, 1995). This latter motion was rejected by the Board and met with a series of critical comments. Trustee Don Szostak, for example, dismissed Harris' suggestion as "the worst sort of bootlicking I can imagine" (Corbett, September 16, 1995). Likewise, Trustee John Smith suggested that passing such a motion would constitute "abdicating our rights and responsibility as trustees..." (Corbett, September 16, 1995). Subsequently, Motion 95-590 was heard again and this time carried (School District, September 14, 1995).

The policy reads as follows:

PURPOSE

To provide guidance for the teaching of the origins of our universe and life on our planet, within the context of the Biology 1/12 Curriculum Guide (Revised 1995), specifically the unit entitled "Adaptation and Evolution."

The principles in this policy shall also apply where the origins of our universe and life on our planet are discussed elsewhere in the curriculum.

APPLICATION

Teachers may find that the evolutionary perspectives of modern biology conflict

with the personal beliefs of some of their students; therefore, when teaching this topic in the classroom, teachers should explain to students who have misgivings, that science is only one of the ways of learning about life. Other explanations have been put forth besides those of biological science. However, other viewpoints which are not derived from biological science are not part of the Biology 11/12 curriculum. Biology teachers will instruct only in the Ministry of Education curriculum.

In the interest of critical thinking, however, it is vital that the teacher assure all students that they are entitled to have their views respected. Respect is best shown by allowing for an airing of those views, provided that any discussion or research is consistent with the content and objectives of the Biology 11/12 curriculum; i.e., that they deal only with scientific evidence.

PROCEDURES

1. No part of the Biology 11/12 Curriculum is discretionary; i.e., teachers must teach all units of the course, including the unit entitled "Adaptation and Evolution.:
2. Biology 11/12 teachers are required to teach only those topics included in the provincial curriculum.
3. It is inconsistent with the provincial policy of a pluralistic public school system to take advantage of a captive audience of students to propagate a particular religious view.
4. There are many philosophical, ethical and religious issues in which science plays a role, and a teacher may decide, when these issues are raised by a student, that some discussion or research would be appropriate. However, given the nature of these topics, such discussions should deal only with the dimensions applicable to the curriculum. If appropriate, courses dealing with philosophical issues in which science plays a role may be developed within a school's course offerings (locally developed courses).
5. The generally accepted theories of evolution have been challenged by scientists as new evidence is discovered. Good science requires an ongoing critique of its hypotheses and student initiated discussions are an important component of learning. Thus, students must be assured that their questions, comments and critiques will be treated with respect, and dealt with in class in an appropriate educational manner, provided that their questions, etc. are consistent with the objectives and content of the course. There is no requirement that teachers go beyond the curriculum itself. (School District, September 16, 1995).

Media accounts of the meeting show that most members of the board voted reluctantly in favor of this new policy. It is clear, however, that they were offended by the position they found themselves in. Thus, Board members also took this opportunity to critique the Minister. For example, Trustee Szostak accused Charbonneau of 'indoctrinating in his

particular religion” and Chairman Sutherland joked that the Minister’s representatives were “waiting by the FAX [for the new policy]...Perhaps munching on a banana” (Corbett, September 16, 1995).

At the next Board meeting, the Board received eight pieces of correspondence from concerned citizens in relation to this policy. All supported the Board’s original policy promoting creationism instruction. Two of these letters originated outside of Abbotsford (Surrey, British Columbia and Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario).

On October 25, 1995, the Board officially received the Ministry’s September 19, 1995 response to their newly adopted policy (School District, October 25, 1995, p. 76). Additionally, the Board received an additional eight letters of which seven criticized the ministry. One of these letters—from Donna Young a writer from Dawson Creek—implied that legal action was being considered to challenge the Ministry of Education. I found no subsequent reference to this plan of action. Although the Board’s reaction to the Minister’s acceptance of their revised policy was not noted in the meeting minutes, newspaper coverage from this day portrays the Board as being displeased with the Ministry. Trustee John Smith, for example, is quoted as portraying the government as unreasonably forcing the Board to abandon creationism-instruction: “It’s like putting a gun to someone’s head and asking for a ransom. When they send the money, you write them a letter congratulating them” (Austin, October 25, 1995). Smith concludes by accusing the government of being fascist (Austin, October 25, 1995). Likewise Trustee Don Szostak was quoted as claiming that the “letter makes me gag...[Charboneau] is a pathetic excuse for a minister” (Letter fails, October 25, 1995). Trustee John Sutherland, on the other hand, made more measured comments that framed the entire debate as one in

which Charbonneau was unreasonable. Sutherland, was, “dismayed Charbonneau would not allow alternative views to be discussed in classes on evolution. Creation myths are held by all cultures around the world...” (Clark, G. September 17, 1995. Province. Victoria expels Adam, Eve. A21). A news report discussing the issue presents Sutherland as elaborating upon this point and actually shifting the board’s position to an argument not previously advanced: “the board wants the theory of an intelligent cause creating the universe—as is believed by practicing Sikhs, Jews and those of many other faiths—to be presented alongside the theory of evolution” (Corbett, October 4, 1995).

Although the Board continued to receive correspondence concerning creationism instruction in the following months, there is no evidence to suggest that any actual creationism instruction took place again in Abbotsford’s schools. Examples of such correspondence include a letter dated January 25, 1996 in which Bob Grieves noted that he had provided a video critique of evolution to Trustee Fandrich a few months earlier and that he would like to arrange to show it at non-instructional times such as the lunch hour or after school (School District, February 19, 1996, p.116). A subsequent letter from Grieve suggests that his previous correspondence was largely ignored (Grieve, April 5, 1996).

The Board’s attempt to maintain its creationism instruction policy during this period by disputing critics’ charges that the policy amounted to little more than the forwarding of a fundamentalist Christian agenda is not supported by its additional policy actions during this period.

A Convoluted Knot: Religion and Education in Abbotsford and its Schools, 1994-1995

During the period 1994 – 1995, the Abbotsford School Board dealt with two additional policy issues which, together with the Board's struggle to maintain creationism instruction in its district, indicate that the Board was continuing to pursue its previous agenda of privileging Christianity in its schools. The difference in this period, however, is in the Board's emphasis upon Christianity as a marker of a core or authentic Canadian identity. It is a difference well articulated in the Board's attempt to reform the presentation of Christmas in its schools and in its Race Relations policy.

In the months prior to the advent of the Origin of Life debate, the Board took steps to reintroduce an explicitly religious Christian element to Christmas activities in Abbotsford's schools. The process began on October 28, 1994 as the Education Committee reviewed a letter from John Sutherland arguing that schools were unnecessarily and unwisely avoiding religiously oriented Christmas celebrations (according to Minutes, November 14, 1994).⁴⁶ According to Sutherland, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and the subsequent court rulings on religion and public education had been misunderstood by educators and Christmas celebrations had been unfairly censored as a result. The Education Committee agreed with Sutherland's assessment of the situation and subsequently asked the Superintendent to prepare a letter that could be used to advise teachers and administrators of this issue. This letter was reviewed on November 14, 1994 and subsequently sent to all principals (School District, November 14, 1994). The letter itself clearly encouraged school administrators to undertake Christmas celebrations that are religiously oriented. For example, the letter notes that

⁴⁶ At the time of writing, Sutherland was not listed as a school trustee. He was identified as trustee-elect in the subsequent board meeting on November 28, 1994.

parents critiquing secularized or alternative celebrations at this time of year argue that "Canadian culture includes the traditional Christmas message and that children will benefit from participating in such celebrations" (Superintendent, November 9, 1994). The Superintendent does not attribute this reasoning to the Board but clearly states the Board's position as one supportive of such activities: "...the Board is communicating its support for staff wishing to incorporate the traditional Christmas program and message into their schedule of activities" (Superintendent, November 9, 1994). In reflecting upon the waning influence of Christianity in public schools, Trustee Szostak cites this promotion of religious Christmas celebrations (and other decisions) to support his thesis that "Christians should do what they can to influence public schools" (Szostak, 1999). Thus, it is clear that the Board was intent, at even the beginning of this period, to take steps to reaffirm a Christian presence in its schools with Christmas being a logical place to start.

A few months later in February 1995, the Board revised its Race Relations Policy by adding a line stating that the District would promote an awareness of 'traditional Canadian culture'. The change caught the attention of the ADTA Program Against Racism Chair Joanne Thompson who sent a letter to the Board on April 24, 1995 requesting "an explanation of [what the Board meant by] 'traditional Canadian culture'" (Thompson, April 24, 1995).⁴⁷ Formal clarification of this wording was not made for almost three years. At that point, the Race Relations Policy and Multiculturalism Policy were revised and the mention of 'the Board's commitment to traditional Canadian

⁴⁷ The same question was asked in 1997 though, this time, by a concerned Abbotsford resident who complained of the detrimental effects of biculturalism and multiculturalism and reminisced about a time "before the first World War [when] 'Canadian culture' was known and appreciated" (Langdon-Davies, August 6, 1997).

culture' was moved to the Multiculturalism Policy where it was defined as "recognizing and observing traditional Canadian holidays such a Christmas, Easter and Thanksgiving" (School District, December 14, 1998). Thus, for the Board, it is clear that ideas of authentic Canadian identity were indeed conflated with Christian ritual and belief. This was an orientation that continued to be generally in line with the dominant perspectives evident among Abbotsford's electorate.

Abbotsford's social context during the period 1994 to 1995 continued to attract significant media attention. On the one hand, Abbotsford's demographics garnered attention as the community was profiled in relation to both its response to racial diversity as well as its unique religious demographics. Related to this latter point, a series of media reports also suggested that creationism instruction enjoyed widespread community support outside of what could be otherwise ascertained through letters to the editor or letters to the Board.

In terms of demographics, Abbotsford's attention focused on its racial and ethnic diversity on April 26, 1995 as *The Abbotsford News* front page declared "It's official: We're an anti-racist community." The headline referred to the Abbotsford City Council's decision to declare Abbotsford anti-racist in response to "attempts by white supremacist organizations to establish roots in Abbotsford" (It's official, April 26, 1995). No further details were given but it was noted that similar steps had been taken earlier in the neighboring community of Chilliwack.

Reminiscent of media coverage in previous years, the religious makeup of Abbotsford was again commented upon in September 1995. This time, however, the writer was Ron Dart, an Abbotsford News columnist (Dart, September 27, 1995). In his

article, Dart argued that the unique conglomeration of Abbotsford's Christian communities and churches was atypical—he called it an 'abberation' (Dart, September 27, 1995). Dart argued that whereas Christianity in most of Canada and BC can be characterized as belonging to what he calls mainline churches, Christian churches in Abbotsford are better understood as belonging to the 'free church tradition'. Dart's analysis is particularly relevant to the creationism instruction controversy insofar as he identifies the Free Church tradition as particularly sympathetic to biblical creationism. According to Dart, in the Free Church tradition "the Bible is usually viewed as inerrant, inspired and infallible, and it is usually interpreted in a literal way" (Dart, September 27, 1995).

Two surveys by CV Marketing Research—an Abbotsford based polling company—indicate that creationism and creationism-instruction enjoyed significant levels of support just prior to and during this period. Results from a 1993 survey showed that "67 per cent of Abbotsford residents [rejected] scientific evolution" and fifty five per cent believed that "the Bible should be 'taken literally word for word'" (Todd, May 12, 1995). Likewise, results from a 1995 survey which involved surveying two thousand residents on behalf of a local radio station showed that fifty two percent of respondents answered yes when asked "Should the Christian Theory of Creation be taught in the Abbotsford School District's science classes?" (Corbett, October 4, 1995). Thirty nine percent answered no to this question and nine percent stated that they were undecided (Corbett, October 4, 1995).

The Board's final decision to effectively rescind its creationism-instruction policy despite the fact that it was able to elicit a significant amount of support from its general

electorate for its Christianity-favoring policy disposition clearly points to the important roles played by the provincial social and policy contexts.

(The Lack of) Religion in the Provincial Social and Policy Context

Relative to the preceding periods of study, the Abbotsford School Board was not able to elicit significant support within or approval from the broader provincial context during this time. Both the provincial government and the provincial electorate as a whole were generally disposed at this time towards opposing explicit attempts to privilege Christian rituals and beliefs.

Unlike the preceding Social Credit Party provincial governments, the New Democratic government did not have a record of or reputation for conflating religion and public policy. In this way, then, there was little in the way of the provincial policy context that relates to or illuminates the Ministry of Education's engagement with the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy outside of the information directly relating to this debate (as detailed above). The Ministry of Education's only other significant engagement with the Board occurred approximately one month prior to Charbonneau's initial letter questioning the Board's Origin of Life policy. At this time, the Ministry of Education was identified as being displeased with the Abbotsford School District (Potter, March 15, 1995). Concerns cited did not include creationism but, instead, included "cost overruns in building projects, the recent special education audit and now the 'blatant' promotion of the Liberal education policy [by deputy superintendent and Liberal candidate, Neil Muhtadi]" (Potter, March 15, 1995). I found no evidence suggesting that the two issues are significantly related.

A review of Vancouver Sun and Province newspaper headlines confirms that province wide support for the Abbotsford School Board was limited throughout this time. For example, in *The Province* newspaper the debate was addressed in eight editorial columns over this period. Seven of these columns clearly sided with the Minister of Education in charging that the Board should rescind its creationism instruction policy (e.g., No more, September 13, 1995; More monkey business, June 12, 1995, p.A16, Province). Letters to the editor reveal a slightly different pattern: of sixteen letters published during this period, nine clearly favored the Board (e.g., Archibald, May 28, 1995).

Clear patterns emerge among these letters just as they did in the letters addressed to the Board itself. For example, among the letters criticizing the provincial government, the Ministry of Education was often identified as violating democracy (e.g., Crommelin, September 15, 1995). Likewise, for some, the creationism debate was framed not on the merits of creationism itself but upon the idea that parents have a right to influence local school policies (e.g., Schratz, June 19, 1995; Tupper, June 25, 1995). Critics, on the other hand, were generally consistent in their characterization of creationism instruction as religious and therefore inappropriate in a public school science classroom (e.g., Felton, May 9, 1995).

This is a clear change from past periods where some combination of the provincial government and the general provincial electorate favored (or at least did not actively oppose) such practices (see Chapters Four and Five).

Thus, throughout this period, the Abbotsford School Board found itself to be increasingly marginalized in its attempts to maintain creationism instruction in its science classrooms. This marginalization is not surprising. As discussed above, the Board was clearly engaged in an attempt to reify Christian beliefs and rituals. Both the resulting support and criticism elicited by the Board clearly indicate that this purpose was well known.

Support for the Board's position came mainly from locally based individuals and churches which tended to identify their commitment to the Christian faith as their primary rationale for supporting creationism instruction. The provincial government and media, on the other hand, joined with individual critics of the policy to characterize the issue as peculiar to Abbotsford and creationism instruction as inappropriate in any of *The Province's* public science classrooms. Each of the Board's attempts to broaden its support base by arguing that the issue was not related to religion but, instead, to issues like protecting parent rights, local community rights, board autonomy, good science and critical thinking failed to garner sympathy or support from those who had not already professed it earlier.

During this period, the Board also clearly pursued its previously expressed commitment to examining ways in its schools could examine 'Canada's Judeo-Christian heritage'. Together, John Sutherland's critique of what he sees as an overreaction in favor of secularizing the public school system; the Board's subsequent decision to articulate its support for reestablishing explicitly religious Christian Christmas celebrations in its schools; and, the Board's decision to reify Christian holidays as indicative of 'traditional Canadian culture' indicate that the Board had adopted the stance of encouraging

reverence for Christianity in its schools. By doing so and by engaging in each of these policies, the Board clearly attempted to conflate notions of Christianity and authentic Canadian identity.

In the next chapter, I examine the evidence and findings presented in this chapter as well as Chapters Four and Five in an attempt to formulate a clearer understanding of this policy's intentions and functions during the period 1981 to 1995. Likewise, the question of this research's significance is explored further.

CHAPTER SEVEN: NATION BUILDING IN ABBOTSFORD

The intention of this chapter is to answer the principle question posed at the beginning of this study: What factors allowed and led the Abbotsford School Board to implement a policy advocating instruction in creationism, maintain it for fifteen years, and then bring it to an abrupt end? Although media reports from this period have implied otherwise, I have demonstrated in the previous chapters that there is no one to one correspondence between the Board's intentions (whether stated or otherwise) and actions. Instead, understanding how this policy moved from inside to outside the realm of possibilities entails understanding the relevance of the shifts in how it was perceived and responded to by the Board itself, the Ministry of Education, the local and provincial electorate and the media.

Thus, in this chapter, I begin by summarizing the findings from the study in relation to each of the above policy actors and constituencies. Then, I examine the significance of these findings both in relation to creationism-instruction as well as policy analysis in general.

Let Your Light Shine Before Men . . . And Glorify Your Father Which Is In Heaven⁴⁸:

The Abbotsford School Board As Christian Steward

Many Christians recognize the degeneration that has occurred in society.

They can see the rejection of Christian ethics and the increase in these

⁴⁸ (Matthew 5:16)

anti-God philosophies. However, they are at a loss to know why this is occurring. The reason they are in such a dilemma is that they don't understand the foundational nature of the battle. Creation versus evolution is the bottom line. When people reject the God of creation, this necessarily affects how they view themselves, others, the world in which they live, and therefore how they should act in this world. (Impact No. 163, January 1987).

Of course, neither this preceding tract nor its equivalent can be directly attributed to the 1981-1995 Abbotsford School Board.⁴⁹ Indeed, articulating such an extreme Christian-centric position was simply not an option for the Board during this period of study. As indicated in previous chapters, even at the onset of this period, such an explicit stance would have clearly exposed the Board to widespread criticism and, due to the 1982 institution of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, likely legal sanction. By 1988, such conflations of public policy and religious belief had been well established as indefensible due to the Zylberberg decision against mandatory school prayer and Bible readings. This tract was, in fact, authored and distributed by the Institute for Creationism Research, the Abbotsford School Board's principal supplier of creationism instruction materials throughout this period of study. The Board itself, however, can not be absolved of the sentiments expressed in this tract since, as I remind readers below, the Board's

⁴⁹ Is it fair to speak of the Abbotsford School Board as if it was a constant entity over the course of this period? Unlike the provincial government during this time, the Abbotsford School Board underwent relatively minor changes. Some trustees were replaced over time but the Board as a whole generally maintained a consistent policy disposition in favor of conservative and Christianity oriented policies. Indeed a review of the Board's policy documents from throughout this period and the Board's meeting minutes indicate no significant shifts in political disposition.

links to these sentiments extend beyond their dependence upon the Institute for Creationism Research as a curricular resource.

This general idea of instituting creationism instruction in an attempt to reify literalist Christian beliefs so that society at large could be 'saved' from uncivilized behavior was commonly articulated by supporters of the Board's Origin of Life policy. It was an idea first presented in this period by Henry Hiebert, a concerned citizen who argued that creationism instruction was needed so that Abbotsford's students would develop the 'right' life perspective. Although the Board responded by instituting the Origin of Life policy, it refrained from making a similar argument at the time. This lack of comment makes sense since, as noted earlier, the Board could not frame its support for creationism instruction as being rooted in a wish to reify Christian belief and attract students to the religion. However, the Board was not always successful in distancing itself from such rationales. For example, the 1992 Board's decision to accede to Bob Grieve's request to meet with students and distribute the Creationism Association of Canada's pamphlet *So You're an Evolutionist* clearly implicated the Board as supporting these sentiments (see Chapter Five for a detailed account of this pamphlet's content). Of course, Bob Grieve was not the only proselytizer of Christian beliefs to be welcomed into Abbotsford's public schools.⁵⁰

These pro-Christian sentiments were also evident in the Board's policies. For example, this disposition towards proselytizing clearly guided the efforts of Christian missionaries whose work the Board, unlike many of its peers, facilitated. The Board's decision to institute a formal policy facilitating Gideon Bible distribution and its

⁵⁰ Each, of course, promised to save religious discussions for after or out of school.

willingness to allow Campus Crusade for Christ recruitment activities in its schools are two examples (see Chapter Five for details). Additionally, such sentiments are in line with the Board's own disposition towards advocating for or adopting perspectives and policies that clearly reify Christian beliefs and rituals. It was a disposition rooted in the defense of Christian hegemony. Examples of this disposition extend past the obvious connection to the Board's Origin of Life policy in which literalist Christian beliefs were presented as the sole Board sanctioned alternatives to evolutionary theory. Additional examples include the 1981 Board's decision to advocate for mandatory school prayer and Bible reading while it was being opposed by the majority of its peers; the 1990 Superintendent's articulation of a clash of civilizations thesis that pitted Christianity against all Eastern religions that were finding their way to North America via immigration; the Board's 1995 decision to encourage its schools to engage in explicitly religious Christmas celebrations; and, the Board's subsequent decision to define 'traditional Canadian culture' as synonymous with religious Christian holidays.

Thus, throughout this period of study, the Abbotsford School Board adopted a policy disposition—of which creationism instruction was only one manifestation—favoring Christian religious beliefs and rituals. Before I examine the roles of additional factors in the implementation, maintenance and dissolution of this policy, a prevalent critique of the Board's religious disposition as being caused by the faith commitments of individual Board members deserves our attention.

Personal Predispositions Do Not Have To Lead To Policy Impositions

Religious inclinations of individual school trustees were often cited by 1995 critics of the Origin of Life policy as a defining factor in the Board's position (e.g., Todd, March 17, 1995; Clark, May 11, 1995).⁵¹ It is difficult to ascertain how much each Board member's private religious beliefs effected the Board's decision to implement, maintain or defend the Origin of Life policy. This is difficult, in part, because the specific religious orientations of the Board's various members over these periods are not known. According to 1995 Chair John Sutherland's published comments, the 1995 Board consisted of Christian members who were more oriented towards notions of intelligent design than scientific creationism (Sutherland, 1996).⁵² Likewise, Sutherland also suggested that trustees serving in 1981 were more likely to have subscribed to literalist readings of the Bible (Sutherland, 1996). Such observations do little more than give a general sense of the members of the Abbotsford School Board as being typically Christian. However, John Sutherland's own religious disposition and that of his 1995 vice-chair, Paul Chamberlain, are much clearer and they deserve our attention because they were commonly cited as being the most vociferous proponents of the Origin of Life policy (Clark, May 11, 1995, p.A2; Wyatt, 1995).⁵³

Throughout their tenures as school trustees, both Sutherland and Chamberlain were employed as professors at Trinity Western University (TWU), a private Christian

⁵¹ This general critique of school trustees using their positions of power to further their own religious agendas is not uncommon. For example, in relation to the American context, Galst (1994) argues that religious conservatives purposely run for school board elections in an attempt to influence public school policies. These conservatives strategically target municipal politics, Galst claims, because they are more easily won than their state or federal counterparts (Galst, 1994).

⁵² Maclean's reporter Chris Wood also claimed that four of the trustees were "strongly identified with the religious right" (Wood, 1995).

⁵³ Former trustee and 1987 superintendent search committee chair Dean Downey was also, at the time of the latter appointment and perhaps before, a faculty member at Trinity Western University.

evangelical university based in the neighboring community of Langley. Trinity Western University's Six Core Values, a document authored in part by 1995 vice-chair Paul Chamberlain, outlines the commitments and beliefs that TWU students, faculty and administration are expected to adhere to (Trinity, 2004).⁵⁴ These documents clearly indicate that Sutherland and Chamberlain were likely to hold an evangelical perspective that viewed expanding the Christian faith as a legitimate and necessary activity (Trinity, 2004). Indeed, references in Trinity Western's publications in regards to the need to lead non-believers along the path to accepting Christ as savior by first extending one's hand in friendship and assistance with the hope that they would eventually want to understand the source of this compassion is inline with the strategies used by organizations such as Campus Crusade for Christ and reminiscent of the strategies proposed by creationism advocates including those based in Abbotsford (e.g., Grieve, 1992). This is a disposition also made clear in Chamberlain's 1996 text *Can We Be Good Without God?* in which the protagonist convinces—by engaging in thoughtful and friendly debate—a series of characters who are identified as representing 'atheism', 'secular humanism', 'moral relativism', and 'evolutionism' of the superiority of a 'Christian' life-perspective (Chamberlain, 1996).

Still, suggesting that these personal dispositions are responsible for the maintenance and or development of the Origin of Life policy is problematic because it overestimates the role of individual members of the Board. This would be the case even if the majority of the Board subscribed to the myth that non-Christians require 'saving'. This is not to say that Board members' personal dispositions did not influence the

⁵⁴ Chamberlain is credited with co-authoring the value "Having a transformational impact on culture"

Board's policy disposition but, instead, it is to recognize that this disposition did not and could not be enacted in a vacuum.

You (Generally) Can't Have One Without The Other: Electorate Dispositions That Facilitated The Work Of The Board

The consistency in the Abbotsford School Board's disposition towards maintaining Christianity – reifying policies throughout this period of study reflects the disposition of a significant portion of the electorate. On the one hand, this finding makes sense logically: if a significant proportion of the electorate had disapproved of policies that conflated religion and public education, they would not have repeatedly elected school trustees that pursued such a policy mandate. There are, of course, additional indicators that support this hypothesis. Letters to the Board and letters to the editor of *The Abbotsford News*, Abbotsford's primary local newspaper, indicate that a small but vocal group of citizens actively supported the Origin of Life policy between 1981 and 1994. This number increased significantly after the policy was challenged by the 1995 Ministry of Education. For example, whereas *The Abbotsford News* published thirteen letters supporting creationism instruction between 1982 and 1993, approximately sixty three supportive letters were published in 1995.

As indicated earlier, this general level of support makes sense from a demographics perspective. However, it is also important to note that the policy also elicited significant amounts of criticism in the 1995 school year. For example, whereas *The Abbotsford News* published eleven letters criticizing creationism instruction between 1982 and 1993, it published twenty three critical letters in 1995. One portion of

Abbotsford's population that grew significantly over the course of this period of study but avoided the creationism-instruction debate altogether was Abbotsford's Punjabi Sikh community. Their silence deserves our attention partly because it was misconstrued as support by Trustee John Sutherland on at least one occasion (Sutherland, 1996).

When Silence Speaks Volumes: Understanding The Punjabi Sikh Response To The Board's Origin Of Life Policy

In my review of the Abbotsford School Board's meeting minutes; articles in and letters to the editors of *The Abbotsford News*, *The Vancouver Sun* and *The Province*; and articles in the Lower Mainland's English-language and Punjabi-language South Asian newspapers, *The Indo-Canadian Times* and *The Link*, I have found no evidence to suggest that any members of Abbotsford's South Asian community commented upon or engaged with the Board's creationism instruction policy between 1981 and 1995.⁵⁵ An assessment of the context and community members interactions with the Board over this period suggest that this lack of engagement is best understood as evidence of strategic engagement and should not be mistaken for tacit approval.

Between 1981 and 1995, parents of Abbotsford's public school Punjabi Sikh students were required to send their children to schools that clearly favored Christian beliefs and rituals. As I have shown earlier, the Abbotsford School Board engaged in a series of Christianity-privileging policies and practices throughout this period of study. During these years, as news media profiles and demographic statistics have shown, the city of Abbotsford was predominately evangelical Christian and, according to Sutherland,

⁵⁵ The South Asian community in Abbotsford did not have its own community newspaper. Instead, concerns from across the Fraser Valley and the Lower Mainland were expressed in two papers: *The Indo-Canadian Times* and *The Voice*.

recognized as having among the highest rates of church attendance in the province (Sutherland, 1996). In describing the effects of the Board's policy disposition and the support it received from these favorable demographics, some have argued that the resulting school and community climate made many people reluctant to criticize the public schools' Christianity-oriented dispositions because they feared social rebuke (Goodman, 1995; Robinson, May 23, 1995b). It is likely that, in this context, parents of Punjabi Sikh students took for granted the idea that Abbotsford's schools favored Christian beliefs and rituals. This does not mean that they thought this was a good idea – it means, simply, that they saw this bias as the status quo. In such a situation, it makes sense that parents would focus their efforts on encouraging their children to extract as much social capital as they could from their schooling experience while focusing their own advocacy efforts on issues that more directly impeded their children's access to these opportunities.⁵⁶

This hypothesis of strategic engagement is supported by a review of the Punjabi Sikh community's other engagements with the Board throughout this period. For example, as noted earlier, community representatives approached the Board in order to advocate for a less racist and more welcoming school environment for their children in 1987.⁵⁷ In 1992, South Asian parents confronted the Board in regards to the South Poplar Elementary intake procedure for that year that left students segregated by the criteria of White versus non-White. And, in the midst of the 1995 creationism instruction debate, the Board was approached by a local multicultural education teacher, Ranjit Gill, who

⁵⁶ As a member of Lower Mainland's Punjabi Sikh community, this idea of strategic engagement is one that I am familiar with. It is, also, an idea that has been both observed and hypothesized by others. See, for example, Gibson's (1988) ethnographic study of a Punjabi Sikh community in a semi-rural part of California.

⁵⁷ By racist, I mean attempts by schools and the Board to treat Punjabi Sikh students inequitably.

presented a 710 name petition on behalf of the local Punjabi Sikh community requesting that the Board implement Punjabi language classes in its classrooms in accordance with the then recent decision by the Ministry of Education to expand heritage language instruction to include Punjabi (School District, September 11, 1995).⁵⁸ Thus, it is clear that the Punjabi Sikh community did engage with the Board in regards to specific issues throughout this period of concern. Their silence in regards to creationism was, not surprisingly, cited by some as evidence of support.

On at least two occasions, Trustee John Sutherland capitalized on this silence by suggesting that the policy was deemed problematic 'more by atheists and lapsed Christians who veiled their critiques with apparent concern for multiculturalism' than Abbotsford's local Sikh community (Sutherland, 1996). In one instance, Sutherland implied that Sikhs did not find creationism instruction problematic because they too believed in a notion of divine creation (Corbett, October 4, 1995; Sutherland, 1996). Sutherland did not note that neither religious Sikh notions of divine creation—nor those of any other religious perspective other than literalist Christian—had been taught as a part of the Origin of Life policy. In another interview, Sutherland extended this claim by arguing that Abbotsford's Punjabi Sikh community recognized Canada as having an explicitly Christian underpinning and wanted their children to learn about it (Sutherland, 1996). The problem with this latter argument, however, is that Sutherland did not base his conclusions on the comments of public school Punjabi Sikh students or their families. Instead, he cites his understanding of the administrative practices at Abbotsford's only

⁵⁸ This petition was date June 28, 1995 but was not officially received (likely due to the summer break) until September 11, 1995. It is interesting to note that the petitioners, who had hoped to set up Punjabi classes for September 1996, then sent a follow up letter the following June (June 18, 1996) complaining that they had received no response from the Board. This time, they requested a written response.

privately run Punjabi Sikh school during this period, the Dashmesh Punjabi School as proof of this assertion. This is problematic insofar as it makes sense that this school would subscribe to and propagate the idea that the larger community conflates Christianity with Canadian identity and that any such conflation is a legitimate and uncontested outcome of history. This is a perspective that is clearly aids this school in establishing itself as a refuge for parents wanting to educate their children in ways that more readily affirm / conflate their own faith.

Thus, the idea that the Punjabi Sikh community remained silent in regards to the creationism instruction debates because it took Christian biases for granted is correct though, contrary to Sutherland's claims, this silence is better understood as proof of strategic engagement rather than as approval of such conflations.

Of course, the local electorate's support for and, as in the case of Abbotsford's Punjabi Sikh community, silence in regards to the Board's religious disposition was not enough to maintain the Origin of Life policy through its 1995 challenge by the Ministry of Education.

That Was Then, This Is Now: An Examination Of The Related, Shifting and Sometimes

Contradictory Nature Of The Provincial Social and Policy Contexts

The larger provincial social context shifted significantly during this period of study. In the early 1980s, a significant portion of the provincial electorate seemed oriented towards socially conservative policies and accepting the then well established conflation of Christianity with public school policies and procedures (see Chapter Four for details). To be sure, there were indications of discontent with such conflations on the

part of particular school boards and professional bodies (see Chapter Four). However, these protests had not garnered widespread popular support at the time. Thus, with the exception of a few individuals, there was no significant public outcry at this time criticizing mandatory school prayer, school based Bible readings or the then newly established accommodations for parents concerned with creationism instruction.

Not surprisingly, the provincial government during the early 1980s was also clearly satisfied with maintaining the status quo conflation of religion and education. However, it is important to note that the Ministry avoided taking actions that would result in any confrontations regarding this conflation. Thus, although the 1981 Minister of Education did publicly state that creationism instruction was a good idea, the Ministry did not take any steps beyond allowing students to state their preference for creationism on the provincial exams (see Chapter One). It was a status-quo preserving pattern that had been well established. For example, a few years earlier, the Ministry of Education had avoided confronting the Vancouver School Board's decision to stop enforcing mandatory school prayers and Bible readings by publicly maintaining that it was a non-issue (Compulsory Bible, December 8, 1977).

A shift in public sentiment clearly took place during the late 1980s as the provincial electorate clearly grew disillusioned with successive terms of Social Credit government in general and Bill Vander Zalm's 1986-1991 Social Credit party in particular. One factor contributing to this disillusionment included growing disapproval of this party's tendency to cite personal beliefs in Christianity as solutions or rationales for public policy issues and decisions (see Todd, May 6, 1989). This discrepancy between the electorate's and provincial government's perspectives was well illustrated by 1988

provincial polls which showed that while this party implemented the strictest controls for abortion in Canada, the British Columbian electorate was among the most liberal in regards to women's rights and abortion in the country (Boei, March 5, 1988).

Interestingly, it was during this period of clearly socially conservative and fundamentally Christian oriented policy making that the Ministry of Education removed its school act statutes requiring mandatory school prayer and Bible reading. The Ministry, it should be noted, was reacting to the British Columbia Supreme Court's decision to adopt the reasoning and findings of an Ontario case from the previous year (*Zylberberg Vs. Sudbury Board*, 1988). It was, thus, a shift beyond the control of both the Abbotsford School Board and the provincial Ministry of Education.

This shift in public sentiment found expression in subsequent political terms as the liberally oriented New Democratic Party was elected in 1991. Lacking substantive ties to evangelical Christianity, the Party was clearly more oriented towards separating church state relations and advancing individual and group rights. It was a position that was clearly addressed in the Ministry of Education's 1995 dealing with the Abbotsford School Board in regards to creationism instruction. Of course, supporters of the policy would disagree. Some for instance, accused this Ministry of exercising 'totalitarian secular fundamentalism'.

Such accusations of the Ministry as overly interventionist and disrespectful of school board and local community rights, deserve our attention partly because they were so frequently employed throughout 1995. These criticisms can be understood as appeals to democratic localism (see Chapter One; Katz, 1973). Thus, in their meeting following Charbonneau's initial letter concerning the Origin of Life policy, Board trustees

frequently invoked the idea that their autonomy to act as local representatives was being threatened (School District, June 5, 1995). Likewise the Board's subsequent decision to refuse to meet Charbonneau's June 16, 1995 deadline is also a claim for local autonomy: by setting their own deadline and process of consultation with their local electorate, the Board clearly attempted to assert itself and the local community as principle arbiters of its policies (Sutherland, June 6, 1995). This general argument would go on punctuate the Origin of Life debate in subsequent interviews and submissions by trustees and supporters alike (e.g., Rees, 1995, Budzinski, 1995; Schratz, June 19, 1995; Tupper, June 35, 1995). Although especially evident in 1995, this notion of the Abbotsford School Board and its local electorate as having dominion over local educational policies is also apparent in the Board's initial justification of its Origin of Life policy as a response to local community concerns (Creation concept, 1981) and in its later identification of the policy as a unique and bold Abbotsford-specific initiative (Brief Report, 1988). Clearly, then, the Abbotsford School Board and a portion of its electorate felt that the Board and local community had a right to develop their own policies of their own accord. This was only partially true.

As Fleming and Hutton (1997) remind us, British Columbia school boards, like school boards throughout North America, have very little real autonomy. They have historically operated, instead, under an "illusion of [local] control", insofar as school board rights and responsibilities are defined at the discretion of the provincial or state ministry of education (Fleming & Hutton, 1997). In this case, centralized control, although deplored by advocates of democratic localism, is useful since, as Katz warns us: "at its worst, democratic localism was the expression of tyrannical local majorities

whose ambition was control and the dominance of their own narrow sectarianism or political bias in the schoolroom" (Katz, 1973, p. 41). The role of ministries of education in perpetuating this illusion of control is worth noting. In the case of Abbotsford, the Ministry of Education's passive sanctioning of the Origin of Life policy in 1986 and 1992 can be understood as times during which the Ministry facilitated this 'illusion' by allowing the Board the autonomy to pursue a problematic policy. Despite this complicity between the Board and Ministry during these years, this illusion could not last for long.

The Wrong Policy In The Right Place At The Wrong Time

In simplest terms, the Abbotsford School Board's experiences with creationism instruction are best understood as attempts by a school board to maintain a problematic policy that became quickly outdated and, ultimately, ill suited to the broader social, political and legislative contexts in which it was based. Policies, as I have argued earlier, can not exist in vacuums and the Abbotsford School Board's experiences with creationism instruction make this readily apparent.

Thus, in the early 1980s, the Abbotsford School Board was able to easily institute its Origin of Life policy. Creationism instruction did not hold a particularly negative stigma since the Board, the local community, the provincial Ministry of Education and the general provincial electorate generally took for granted a hegemonic context where notions of Christianity, schooling and national identity were conflated. As in all situations, there was some evidence of discontent but, at this time, it had not reached a critical mass in any one of these constituencies.

By the late 1980s and early 1990s, however, it was clear that the Abbotsford School Board's pool of supportive or tolerant constituencies was waning. On the one hand, both the Abbotsford School Board and its local electorate continued to support the conflation of Christianity and public school policy and practice. Conversely, in 1988 and 1989, the legislative context shifted radically as the Charter of Rights and Freedoms was interpreted in a way that seriously challenged Christian hegemony in the public school system. The resulting revisions to British Columbia's School Act brought mandatory school prayer and Bible readings to a swift end. Likewise, the provincial electorate was also shifting in a more liberal direction, as is evidenced by the then popular notion that William Vander Zalm's Social Credit inappropriately conflated Christianity with public policy. By 1990, the Board had lost this provincial ally as the New Democratic Party came into power.

The Abbotsford School Board was clearly aware of these shifts towards secularism in British Columbia's public schools and took clear steps towards safeguarding Christianity affirming practices in its schools wherever possible. It was a practice that the Board had engaged in since the beginning of this period. Thus, despite various criticisms of and challenges to mandatory school prayer and Bible readings, the Board maintained both practices until they were deemed illegal in 1989. Likewise, the Board engaged in a district-wide discourse concerning the need to temper this secularization of British Columbia's schools by lending legitimacy to the work of Christian missionaries (see previous notes regarding Gideon's International and Campus Crusade for Christ), encouraging religious Christmas celebrations and repeatedly revising

the Origin of Life policy so that it could withstand criticisms that it inappropriately introduced Christian theological beliefs into the science classroom.

Despite these attempts to safeguard and promote Christian hegemony, the Board was essentially struggling against its inevitable decline. This was especially the case for the Origin of Life policy since creationism instruction had, by this time, a well established history of being deemed religious (see Chapter 2 notes regarding the Arkansas decision). In this way, the intervening years between 1988 (the Zylberberg decision) and 1995 were essentially borrowed time in that the Board's Origin of Life policy was clearly and legitimately vulnerable to revision by the Ministry. Thus, in 1995, the only supportive constituency that stood firm with the Abbotsford School Board was a minority group of vocal fundamentalist Christians engaged in a struggle to maintain Christian hegemony—and therefore their own privilege—in Abbotsford's public schools. In many ways, the Board had fought a battle that had been lost seven years earlier.

A question that deserves asking is why a policy so clearly outdated and vulnerable to critique and revision lasted for as long as it did. Ultimately, the lack of enforcement and regulation which characterized the Ministry of Education's engagement with the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy between 1986 and 1994 can be attributed to its lack of saliency within the Ministry of Education's policy agenda. Whereas the policy did attract negative media attention prior to 1995 (see notes regarding 1992 in Chapter Five), the attention it received from both the media, concerned citizens and stakeholders in 1995 was unprecedented. As I have argued above, it was this combination of factors along with a sympathetic Ministry of Education that ultimately brought this policy to an end. Thus, in some ways, the experiences of the Abbotsford

School Board point to the value of a democratic process that responds to issues that are brought to the forefront (pushed onto the policy agenda). While this finding fits in well with analyses of policy that argue that public policies are a site of contestation, this is also a sobering finding insofar as it reveals that issues of social citizenship were not, by and of themselves, considered a high priority for the Ministry of Education.

Significance

This study has clearly demonstrated how important it is to recognize and track the shifts that take place among policy actors, constituencies and the broader social and policy contexts: their confluence allowed the Abbotsford School to implement its policy for creationism instruction in 1981 and it was their divergence that led to its dissolution in 1995. In doing so, this study clearly confirms work by policy analysts who argue against de-contextualized assessments of policy.

On an immediate level, this study shows how the Abbotsford School Board's initial institution of its Origin of Life policy can not be dismissed as simply peculiar or aberrant. Canada as a whole and British Columbia in particular has a long history of privileging Christianity in its schools.

This study refutes the occasionally forwarded claim that the Abbotsford School Board's creationism instruction policy was designed in the interests of rigorous science. This policy, I have shown, is better understood as one of a series of policies enacted throughout this period of study extolling Christian belief and ritual in Abbotsford's public schools. By privileging such perspectives, the Abbotsford School Board was

clearly engaging in a process of nation building that identified belief in Christianity as a part of being authentically Canadian.

This latter finding is useful for two reasons in particular. First, it is useful insofar as it refutes the notion forwarded by supporters of creationism instruction that the British Columbia Ministry of Education acted autocratically in the service of 'secular fundamentalism' when it forced the Board to end creationism instruction. This is a perspective that continues to gain exposure: it was, for example, recently forwarded in an Abbotsford News profile of a science teacher who was available to provide out-of-school instruction in creationism (Jorgensen, 2003). Second, this finding is useful because it demonstrates that this process of inculcating such a problematic cultural literacy is not a simple straightforward process easily controlled by one set of ever-powerful actors. Instead, it is shown to be a process wrought with complications and open to contestation since it is contingent upon the confluence of various factors. These factors include, as demonstrated earlier, a sympathetic legislative and policy context, policy actors that are willing to recognize it as a possibility and take steps to enact it; and, finally, the support of or at least a relative lack of opposition from concerned and affected constituencies so that the policy is perceived as palatable / plausible.

Likewise, this study also confirms the need to understand policy development as much more than a rational exercise committed to the public interest. It is, instead, a process rooted in a myriad of political compromises for reasons that are not always explicitly expressed. From a practical standpoint, this finding points to the need—in the British Columbia and related contexts—to keep local school board autonomy in check. Although it makes sense that local school boards should have the ability to create

policies that reflect their electorate's needs and wishes, heeding Katz's (1973) warnings regarding the excesses of democratic localism, central ministries of education must ensure that mechanisms are in place to ensure that any such policies are tempered with considerations of the public interest. Examples of such mechanisms might include strict legislative controls and the expectation that school boards employ regular policy reviews. Of course, as this study shows, the existence of such mechanisms is not enough.

Thus, at its core, this study points to the need for vigilance on the part of all stakeholders in ensuring that concerns with issues of social citizenship occupy a prominent place in the broader policy agenda.

Further Research

This examination of the Abbotsford School Board's Origin of Life policy is necessarily limited. As a first attempt to document the Board's experience with this policy, this study has endeavored to establish a basis for future research by outlining the clearly problematic policy dispositions of the Abbotsford School Board between 1981 and 1995. Future researchers would be well advised to move past this starting point.

Shifts in methodology may help to provide further insights regarding this policy. Specifically, future research that incorporates interviews with stakeholders (including those directly affected: children, parents, teachers and administrators) and policy actors would help to both evaluate the explanatory value of this thesis as well as to answer questions raised but not answered by this study. These questions range from very specific to general. For example, how did the 1992 Ministry of Education justify its passive sanction of the Abbotsford School Board Origin of Life policy? How did the

trustees themselves see their role in developing this and similar policies? On a more general level, it would be useful to interrogate the actual implementation and effects of this and related policies in an attempt to understand the consequences of this school board's attempts to create a pro-Christianity climate in its schools.

REFERENCES

- Adler v. Ontario*. (1996). 3 S.C.R. 609, 1996 CanLII 148 (S.C.C.) Retrieved, March 25, 2005, from <http://www.canlii.org/ca/cas/scc/1996/1996scc108.html>
- Akins, R. (1989, February 1). Teachers 'cautioned' on prayers. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.
- Akins, R. (1995, June 14). Smith says stance smacks of fascism. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A9.
- Akins, R. (1995, June 17). Trustee's fascism quip dismissed as rhetoric. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A7.
- Alilunas, J. (1981, March 18). Objective policy. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Alters, B. J. & Alters, S. M. (2001). Creationists Declare War. In *Defending Evolution in the Classroom: A guide to the creation/evolution controversy* (pp.13-36). Toronto: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Alters, B. J. & Alters, S. M. (2001). Creationist Students' Culture and Nature of Science. In *Defending Evolution in the Classroom: A guide to the creation/evolution controversy* (pp.37-62). Toronto: Jones and Bartlett Publishers.
- Apple, M. (1996). *Cultural Politics and Education*. New York: Teachers College Press.
- Apple, M. (2001). Bringing the World to God: Education and the Politics of Authoritarian Religious Populism. *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, 22(2), 149-172.
- Archibald, B. (1995, May 28). Face it Folks: Evolution a Fact [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A28.

- Austin, P. (1993, May 26). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1993, June 14), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (pp. 94-95). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Austin, I. (1995, September 8). Separate religion, biology, school board told. *The Province*, p. A4.
- Austin I. (1995, October 25). Charbonneau's letter too thankful for board, *The Province*, p. A17.
- Bain, C. (1990, September 7). Belief in God is more rational [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p.A7.
- Balcom, S. (1992, October 16). School's segregation not racism, board rules. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B4.
- Balcom, S. (1995, September 8). Teaching of creationism prohibited except in religion courses. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Balcom, S. (1995, September 9). Abbotsford trustees risk firing. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A7.
- Baldrey, K., Ward, D. & Hunter, J. (1989, October 30). Jokes okay, premier say: Vander Zalm, Vant defend racial 'stories' at Socred meet. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.
- Barman, J. (1995). Deprivatizing Private Education: The British Columbia Experience. In J. Barman, N. Sutherland & J.D. Wilson (Eds.), *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (pp. 393-410). Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.

- Barman, J. (2003). Separate and Unequal: Indian and White Girls at All Hallows School, 1884–1920. In J. Barman & M. Gleason (Eds.), *Children, Teachers, and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (2nd ed., pp. 283-302). Calgary: Detselig Press.
- Barman, J. & Gleason, M. (Eds.). (2003). Introduction. *Children, Teachers, and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (2nd ed., pp. 9-12). Calgary: Detselig Press.
- Bartleman, S. (1995, February 27). [Delegation]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 8). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- BC Creationists undaunted. (1982, January 7). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A11.
- B.C. gets to hear anti-creationist side of the story. (1984, February 4). *Vancouver Sun*, p. B6.
- Begle, D. (1981, May 27). [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p.A5.
- Beyak, T. (1993, July 28). Creation or evolution. *The Abbotsford News*, p. B3.
- Beyerstein, D. (1995, June 5). [Delegation to the June 5, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Bocking, M. (1995, September 16). Board retreats on creationism: School trustees adopt new policy after minister threatens dismissals. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A6.
- Boei, W. (1988, March 5). Two-thirds oppose Vander Zalm's position on abortion. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.

- Bond, U. (1995, May 15). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 43).
(Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Bouchard, C. (1992, March 23). Fear of flaws [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A29.
- Bowlsby, J. (1992, March 23). Paranoid delusion [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A29.
- Brief report on the teaching of evolution and creation in secondary schools. (1988). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, February 1), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- British Columbia Civil Liberties Association. (1995). *Comments on the "Creation Science" movement in British Columbia*. Retrieved July 18, 2003, from <http://www.bccla.org/positions/freespeech/84creation.html>
- British Columbia School Trustees Association (1977). Motions of the 73rd Annual General Meeting, April 29 – May 2, 1977, (p. 33 – 34).
- British Columbia School Trustees Association. (2003). *School District #75 (Mission): Theories of Creation (1976)*. Retrieved July 19, 2003, from <http://www.bcsta.org/policy/polindex.htm>
- Brokington, H. (1984, October 11). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Budzinski, E. (1995, June 26). [Delegation]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*.

- (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Budzinski, E. (1995, September 20). Evolution: Chance to fill void [Letter to the editor].
The Abbotsford News, p. A5.
- Buchanan, B. (1991, March 12). Feedback on Draft Policy Procedures. In School District
No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, March 18), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole
Meeting*, (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims
Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Bula, F. (1989, September 19). School board bans distribution of Gideon Bibles. *The
Vancouver Sun*, p. A2.
- Campbell. (1981, April 1). [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Chamberlain, P. (1996). *Can we be good without God? A conversation about truth,
morality, culture and a few other things that matter*. Illinois: Intervarsity Press
- Charbonneau, A. (1995, April 10) [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford),
(1995, May 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*,
(p. 43). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Charbonneau, A. (1995, May 17). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995,
June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 78).
(Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Charbonneau, A. (1995, September 5). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford),
(1995, September 14), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School*

- Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Clark, G. (1995, May 11). School order creates stir: Teachers won't give 'equal credence' to creationism. *The Province*, p. A2.
- Clark, G. (1995, September 17). Victoria expels Adam, Eve. *The Province*, p. A21.
- Classroom Readings. (1977, October 31). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. C1.
- Compulsory Bible readings not an issue, McGeer says. (1977, December 8). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A20.
- Cooper, D. (1997). 'At the Expense of Christianity': Backlash Discourse and Moral Panic. In L.G. Roman & L. Eyre (Eds.), *Dangerous Territories: Struggles for Difference and Equality in Education* (pp. 643-662). New York: Routledge.
- Corbett, N. (1995, June 28). Origins of Life policy created. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A7.
- Corbett, N. (1995, July 1). Charbonneau, board at odds: Minister won't accept new school policy. *The Abbotsford News*.
- Corbett, N. (1995, July 12). OASIS: All shades of political, religious beliefs. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A7.
- Corbett, N. (1995, July 15). Life policy controversy continues. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A3.
- Corbett, N. (1995, July 15). Trustees seeking to end debate. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A3.
- Corbett, N. (1995, September 13). Creation shackles 'pathetic'. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A9.
- Corbett, N. (1995, September 16). Trustees bow to Charbonneau: Held their noses, but not their tongues Thursday. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.

- Corbett, N. (1995, October 4). Half want biblical creation in class: School board chairman says he doesn't like wording of poll question. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A12.
- Correspondence Item 10 (g). (1995, June 12). [Letters]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Crawley, M. (1995, June 26). Origin of life returns to board agenda. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B2.
- Creationism and critical thinking. (1995, June 11). *The Province*, p. A15.
- Creationism and Darwinism not in conflict. (1981, March 24). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Creation concept a sticky decision. (1981, March 11). *The Abbotsford News*, p. A4.
- Creation Evangelism: A Powerful Tool In Today's World. (1987, January). *Impact No. 163*. Retrieved July 3, 2004, from <http://www.icr.org/pubs/imp/imp-163.htm>
- Creationists petition. (1984, July 28). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A15.
- Creationism policy. (1995, February 15). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B3.
- Crommelin, M.R. (1995, September 15). [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A45.
- Cummings, S. (1992, March 30). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A15.
- Currie-Johnson, G. (1983, April 6). Nothing scientific about it [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. C9.
- Dart, R. (1995, September 27). Abbotsford Christianity: An aberration of sorts? *The Abbotsford News*, p. B12.

- Des. (1995, February 27). [Memorandum]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, April 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 70-71). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Dirks, K. (1995, June 5). [Delegation to the June 5, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1987, May 21), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 Abbotsford). 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Doerkson, H. (1991, March 12). Policy Analysis Report. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, March 18), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Donnelly, R. (1992, October 13). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1992, October 19), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Downey, D. (1987, December 19). Weighting of Selection Criteria – Superintendent Search. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, January 4), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Downey, M. (1992, May 9). Evolution controversy rests on philosophy. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.

- Draft Multiculturalism Policy. (1988, November 5). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, December 14), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Duckworth, S. (1992, May 6). Views too shallow? [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Dyck, J.A. (1988, January 21). Memorandum: Origins of Life. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, February 1), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Dyck, J.A. (1990, November 28). Memorandum: Impression Series. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, January 7), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Ewert, H. (1981, March 24). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Eby, R. (1992, March 23). [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A29.
- Evolution 'critique' comes to Abbotsford. (1995, September 9). *The Abbotsford News*, p. A3.
- Eyke, S. (1992, March 23). [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A29.
- Fears, H. (1995, June 11, 1995). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- Felton, G. (1995, May 9). Creationist 'drivel' surely no science [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A19.
- Finlay, G. (1995, June 11, 1995). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, February 27), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 60-61). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Flat-earthers next? (1992, March 15). *The Province*, p. A36.
- Fleming, J.R. (1989, January 30). [Memorandum]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1989, January 30), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Fleming, T., & Hutton, B. (1997). School Boards, District Consolidation, and Educational Governance in British Columbia, 1972-1995. *Canadian Journal of Educational Administration and Policy*, 10. Retrieved March 25, 2005, from <http://www.umanitoba.ca/publications/cjeap/articles/fleming10.htm>
- Forrest, B. (2000). The Wedge at Work: How Intelligent Design Creationism is Wedging Its Way Into the Cultural and Academic Mainstream. In R.T. Pennock (Ed.), *Intelligent Design Creationism and Its Critics: Philosophical, Theological and Scientific Perspectives* (pp.5-53). Cambridge, Massachusetts: MIT Press.
- Fraser, K. (1991, June 27). Board says no to Bibles. *The Province*, p. 36.
- A fraud by God! (1982, January 7). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Fundamental Rift Over Creation Edict. (1995, May 10). *The Province*, p. A24.
- Gagnon, R. (1992, March 30). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A15.

- Gale, T. (2001). Critical Policy Sociology: Historiography, archaeology and genealogy as methods of policy analysis. *Journal of Education Policy*, 16(5), 379-393.
- Gallaher, B. (1982, November 10). Evolutionist speaks out. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Galst, L. (March / April 1994). The Right Fight. *Mother Jones*, 19(2), 58-59. Retrieved March 20, 2005 from Academic Search Premier database.
- Gibson, M. A. (1988). *Accommodation without assimilation: Sikh immigrants in an American high school*. Ithaca : Cornell University Press, 1988.
- Gideons International. (2000). Retrieved October 2, 2004, from <http://www.gideons.org>
- Gill, D. S. (1987, May 15). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1987, May 21), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Giroux, H & McLaren, P. (1989). Introduction. Schooling, Cultural Politics, and the Struggle for Democracy. In H. Giroux & P. McLaren (Eds.), *Critical Pedagogy, the State, and Cultural Struggle*, (pp. xi – xxxv). Albany: State University of New York Press.
- Goertson, H. (1995, April 3). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, April 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 99-100). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Goertson, H. (1995, April 10). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, April 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp.

- 98). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Goodman, S. (1994, November 29). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1994, December 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 98). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Goodman, S. (1995). Creationists in Canada: Creationism Hits the Fan in Abbotsford, British Columbia. NSCE Reports, 15(1), 10-11, 18.
- Goodman, S. (1995, January 27). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, February 13), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 7-10). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Goodman, S. (1997). Creationism Defeated in British Columbia. NSCE Reports, 17(4), 18-22.
- Grieve, R. W. (1982, November 3). Creationist views on evolution. *The Abbotsford News*, p. C9.
- Grieve, R. W. (1983, April 13). Creationist disagrees. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A4.
- Grieve, R. (1992, February 1). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1992, February 24), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 47-48). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Grieve, R. W. (n.d.). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada
V2T 4M7)

Grieve, R. W. (1996, April 5). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1996, June 17), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*.
(Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Hagen, A. (1992, May 19). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1992, June 22), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Hagen, A. (1992, May 28). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1992, June 22), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Hallonquist, E. (1984, October 11). New information casts doubt on Darwin's theory
[Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.

Hallonquist, E. (1984, October 23). Earth's age not crucial to creation advocates [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.

Hauka, D. & Ivens, A. (1995, June 28). Creationism is not on - Minister. *The Province*, p. A24.

Hiebert, H. (1980, November 12). Election Issue [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, pp. A4, A6.

- Hiebert, H. (1981, March 18). Creationist support [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A4.
- Hiebert, H. (1981, April 29). [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Hiebert, H. (1980, June 26). [Delegation]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1980, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Hill, R. T. (1995, June 19). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Hogwood, B. W., & Gunn, L. A. (1984). *Policy Analysis for the Real World*. Toronto: Oxford University Press.
- Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2003 a). Retrieved June 10, 2003, from, <http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/Content/Timeline/1840s/1940.htm>
- Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2003 b). *An Act Respecting Schools*. Retrieved June 10, 2003, from <http://www.mala.bc.ca/history/Homeroom/Content/Topics/Statutes/1872act.htm>
- Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2003 c). *Common Schools Act*. Retrieved June 10, 2003, from <http://www.mala.bc.ca/history/Homeroom/Content/Topics/Statutes/65act.htm>

Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2005a). *Common School Ordinance*. Retrieved March 25, 2005, from

<http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/content/Topics/Statutes/1869ord.htm>

Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2005b). *Common School Amendment Ordinance*. Retrieved March 25, 2005, from [http://](http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/content/topics/statutes/1870amnd.htm)

www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/content/topics/statutes/1870amnd.htm

Homeroom: British Columbia's History of Education Website (2005c). *Rules and Regulations for the Management of Common Schools*. Retrieved March 25, 2005, from <http://www.mala.bc.ca/homeroom/content/Topics/Statutes/rules70.htm>

Hudson, D. (1988, December 8). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1989, January 9), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 37). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Hughes, M. (1981, March 12). In the beginning was the frog . . . and Zeus and the Raven and the worm . . . so why teach only evolution and Genesis? *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.

Individual photos rejected, creationism material moved? (1981, February 11). *The Abbotsford News*, p. A2.

Institute of Creationism Research. (2003). ICR Tenets of Creationism. Retrieved March 2004 from <http://www.icr.org/abouticr/tenets.htm>

It's official: We're an anti-racist community. (1995, April 26). *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.

- Ivenskio, G.J. (1991, February 20). Policy Analysis Report. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1992, March 18), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*, (p. 2). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Jautzen, W. (1988, October 28). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, November 14), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 2). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Jenkins, K. (1991). *Re-Thinking History*. New York: Routledge
- Johnson, M. (1981, April 29). Get back to Bible [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A4.
- Johnson, H.F. (1964). The Foundations. In *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (pp.15-24). Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Johnson, H.F. (1964). Colonial Beginnings. In *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (pp.15-24). Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Johnson, H.F. (1964). The Struggle for Free Non-Sectarian Schools. In *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (pp.25-39). Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Johnson, H.F. (1964). Minority Problems. In *A History of Public Education in British Columbia* (pp.133-147). Vancouver: University of British Columbia.
- Jones, R. (1988, September 14). Why wait for spring? [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.

- Jones, R. (1988, September 28). It's all in the interpretation [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Jones, R. (1990, December 12). Leave decision to the students [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Jorgensen, L. (2003, February 14). Science teacher finds balance in creation-evolution debate. *Abbotsford Times*, p. 19.
- Kaellis, E. (1985, January 5). The rigidity of 'answers' to the ancient puzzle. *The Province*, p. 6.
- Katz, M.B. (1973). From Voluntarism to Bureaucracy in American Education. In M.B. Katz (Ed.), *Education in American History: Readings on the Social Issues* (pp. 38-50). New York: Prager Publishers.
- Keeran, J. (1995, June 5). [Delegation to the June 5, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Killian, C. (1985). *School Wars: The Assault on B.C. Education*. Vancouver: Star Books.
- Kirichenko, D. (1990, December 19). Bible 'proves' evolution? [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A11.
- Kirichenko, D. (1992, March 25). Readers being misled? [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A8.
- Klassen, F & Klassen, L. (1987, December 17). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1988, January 18), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting* (p.

- 38). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Klein, K. (1990, September 7) Evolution-backers use terms loosely [Letter to the editor]. *Vancouver Sun*, p. A7.
- Kollin, R. (1995, June 5). [Delegation to the June 5, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*, (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Kollin, R. (1995, June 4). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Krangle, K. (1977, October 29). Students Walk Out: Bible reading forced. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.
- Krangle, K. (1977, November 1). Bible avoiders face suspension. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A14.
- Lampert, A. (2003, May 5). Biology teachers fear paring knife. We don't know much about biology and may learn less. *The Gazette*, p. A1.
- Langdon-Davies, W. (1997, August 6). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1997, September 8), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- Lauk, G. V. (1981, May 13). [Remarks]. *Debates of the Legislative Assembly*. 32nd Parliament, 3rd Session p.5590.
- Lautens, T. (1990, August 23). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A17.
- Letter fails to impress. (1995, October 25). *The Abbotsford News*. p. A1.
- Lupul, M. R. (1969). Religion and Education in Canada: A Call for an End to Hypocrisy. *The Journal of Educational Thought*, 3(3), 141-150.
- Macdonald, R. D. (1992, March 30). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A15.
- Macphail, H. (1995, August 3). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, September 11), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Magnal, P. (1985, October 11). [Letter to the Editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Martin, E. (n.d.). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, April 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 89-92). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Marx, R. & Grieve, T. (1988). The Learners of British Columbia. Commissioned Papers: Volume 2. British Columbia Royal Commission on Education. Victoria: Province of British Columbia
- McGill University. (2003). *Evolution Education Research Center*. Retrieved August 12, 2003, from <http://www.mcgill.ca/researchoffice/units/#EVOLUTION>
- McIntyre, G. (1995, May 25). Biology class no Eden: Abbotsford ordered to cut creationism. *The Province*, p. A2.

- McIntyre, G. & Hauka, D. (1995, June 8). Board 'creates' new policy. *The Province*. p. A2.
- McMahan, L. (1976, June 25). City schools violate law by not holding religious services. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. 9.
- Mennonite students thrive under strict rule. (1989, February 18). *Vancouver Sun*, p. H5.
- Mohle, R. (1995, June 14). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Moller, L. (1992, March 30). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A15.
- More monkey business. (1995, June 12). *The Province*, p. A16.
- Morris, C. (1984, October 2). Minister should reject pseudoscientific folly [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Mussio, J. (1986, February 20). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1986, March 13), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 23-24). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- NCSE (2003). *Press Background*. Retrieved June 9, 2003, from www.natcensci.org
- New Policy on 'origin of life' (1981, March 11). *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.
- NMSR (2003). *Icons of Anti-Evolution: The Authors*. Retrieved August 3, 2003, from <http://www.nmsr.org/authors.htm>.
- No more monkey business. (1995, September 13). *The Province*, p. A28.

- Padmore, T. (1982, March 19). Creationists' theory not scientific. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B7.
- Palmer, V. (1984, October 10). Contrary to the fundamentalist beliefs of many people. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A4.
- Palmer, V. (1989, May 10). Religion rattles the Sacred peace again. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A12.
- Parents: Teach creationism. (1995, May 21). *The Province*, p. A18.
- Parker, H. (1995, May 24). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Peachey, G & Peachey, R. (1995, March 28). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, April 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 93). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Peachey, R. (1995, June 5). [Delegation to the June 5, 1995 Public Committee of the Whole Meeting of the Board of School Trustees] In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Peachey, R. (1995, June 12). Summary of Submission by Richard Peachey to the Abbotsford School Board meeting of June 12, 1995. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of*

- School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Peachey, R. (1995, July 12). Defending last-minute amendments [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Peachey, R. (1995, September 27). Evolution critique: Give, take of ideas [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A6.
- Pinar, W. (1993). Notes on understanding curriculum as a racial text. In C. McCarthy & W. Crichtlow (Eds.), *Race, identity and representation in education* (pp. 60-69). New York: Routledge.
- Potter, K. (1995, February 15). Battle over creationism in schools. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A11.
- Potter, K. (1995, March 15). Investigation may be launched here: education ministry is not amused with district. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.
- Prayers won't end at Abbotsford school. (1989, January). p. A1.
- Public Committee of the Whole Meeting Notes. (1995, February 20). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p.12). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Public Committee of the Whole Meeting Notes. (1995, June 5). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p.31). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- Rake, R. (1995, February 22). Trustees stick to proven policy: Data states 67 per cent don't believe in scientific evolution. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A8.
- Rake, R. (1995, May 10). Creationism letter 'disguised bigotry'. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.
- Rake, R. (1995, June 7). Life's down to a science in policy: Trustee states that education minister's move is 'heavy-handed, scary'. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1988, September 21). Answer not in science [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1988, October 12). Faithful to his purpose [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1989, October 4). Belief does not restrict exploration [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1990, December 5). Consider them both [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A7.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1990, December 26). Pondering Evolution [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1991, January 16). Philosophy vs. science [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1991, February 6). It's all in the genes [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Ratzlaff, A. (1992, April 1). Editorial was excellent [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Read, N. (1981, March 16). 'Creationists' want a say. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A13.

- Read, N. (1981, March 19). Science teacher 'felt threatened.' *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B7.
- Read, N. (1981, March 20). Teaching of Creation: Suggestion lauded. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A10.
- Read, N. (1981, July 4). Back-to-Bible chorus resounds in Fraser Valley. *The Vancouver Sun*, pp. A1, A10.
- Read, N. (1981, August 7). 'Not a science' – 2 UBC zoology grads oppose creationists. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. G8.
- Read, N. (1981, October 27). 'Bible biology' bashed by UBC zoology prof. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. D7.
- Read, N. (1982, January 23). Creationism 'quack science' principal says. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A3.
- Redekop, P.W. (1981, November 18). No. Of East Indian Children By Grade. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1981, November 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 2). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Rees, A. (1992, March 12). Fundamental views Ok'd for schools. *The Province*, p. A.11.
- Reitsma, R. (1988, September 21). Is the Bible contradictory? *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Rempel, J. (1995, May 23). [New release]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- Reule, D. A. (2003). The new face of creationism: The establishment clause and the latest efforts to suppress evolution in public schools. *Vanderbilt Law Review* 54(6), 2555- 2601.
- Roberts, M. (1995, May 25). Evil evolution, evil sex. *The Province*, p. A6.
- Robinson, V. (1991, March 12). Policy Analysis Report. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, March 18), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 24). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Robinson, V. (1995, March 8). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, March 18). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 53). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Robinson, V. (1995, May 23 a). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, May 23). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 102). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Robinson, V. (1995, May 23 b). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1991, May 23). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 103-105). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Rollo, A. (1989, November 9). Sacred panel to weigh Christianity clause. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B7.

Rosza, L. (1992, March, 25). A look at the new irrationalism. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A6.

Ruse, M. (1982). Creationism Expounded. In *Darwinism defended: A guide to the evolution controversies* (pp. 283-302). Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, Advanced Book Program/World Science Division.

Ruse, M. (1982). Creationism Considered. In *Darwinism defended: A guide to the evolution controversies* (pp. 303-329). Reading, Mass.: Addison-Wesley, Advanced Book Program/World Science Division.

Ruse, M. (1984). The Arkansas Creation Trial 1981: Is There a Message for Us All? *History and Social Science Teacher*, 18(1), 23-28.

Russow and Lambert v. A.G.B.C. (1989). 62 D.L.R. (4th) 98 (B.C.S.C.)

Ruttan, S. (1999, June 26). Exclusion in public education just wrong. *Edmonton Journal*, p. H2.

Ryder, R. (2000, October 25). Province won't change courses over evolution, creationism issue: Home and School Federation wants equal billing or neither taught. *Guardian*, p. A3.

Ryerson, E. (1973). The Necessity for a Central Educational Authority. In D. Lawr & R. D. Gidney (Eds.), *Educating Canadians: A Documentary History of Public Education* (pp. 52-54). Toronto: Van Nostrand Reinhold.

Sawatzky, V. (1983, April 30). No real conflict. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A4.

Schick, C. (1995). Learning to be White in Canada: Nationalism and the Construction of White Identity. *Conference Proceedings: Race, Gender and the Construction of Canada*, 2, October 19-22.

School balancing act defies science. (1995, March 18). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A22.

School board set to drop creation policy. (1995, June 7). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1977, June 9). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1977, June 23). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1980, June 26). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1980, November 27). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1981, January 22). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1981, February 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1981, February 26). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1981, May 28). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1983, May 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1983, June 9). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1985, May 16). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1987, February 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1987, February 26). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1987, October 5). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, January 22). *Policy Development Committee.*

(Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, February 1). *Notes of a Committee of the*

Whole Meeting. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims
Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, April 18). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole*

Meeting. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street,
Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, May 9). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of*

the Board of School Trustees. (Available from School District No. 34
(Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, October 24). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting*

of the Board of School Trustees. (Available from School District No. 34
(Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1988, December 14). *Notes of a Committee of the*

Whole Meeting. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims
Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1989, February 13). *Minutes of the Regular*

Meeting of the Board of School Trustees. (Available from School District No. 34
(Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1989, October 16). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1992, February 24). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1992, April 13). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1992, September 14). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1992, October 14). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1994, September 2). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1994, November 14). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1994, November 29). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, February 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, May 8). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, June 5). *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, June 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, June 26). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, September 11). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, September 14). *Minutes of an Extraordinary Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1995, October 25). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- School District No. 34 (Abbotsford). (1996, February 19). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Schratz, P. (1995, June 19). Much ado about creationism, but why? *The Province*. p. A16.
- Schultz, J. (1995, February 18). Trustee handled issue with dignity, control [Letter to the editor]. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A5.
- Secondary Students Of East Indian Origin. (1981, November 25). [Survey]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1981, November 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 2). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Several Quesnel Residents. (n.d.). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 26), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Sissons, C. B. (1959). British Columbia. In *Church and State in Canadian Education* (pp. 369-398). Toronto: The Ryerson Press.

- Smith, D. E. (1990). The Active Text: A Textual Analysis of the Social Relations of Public Textual Discourse. In, *Texts, Facts and Femininity. Exploring the Relations of Ruling* (p. 121). New York: Routledge.
- Smith, D. E. (1997). Report and Repression: Textual Hazards for Feminists in the Academy. In L. G. Roman and L. Eyre (Eds.), *Dangerous Territories: Struggles for Difference and Equality in Education* (pp. 161-178). New York: Routledge.
- Spinner-Halev, J. (2000). Extending Diversity: Religion in Public and Private Education. In W. Kymlicka & W. Norman (Eds.), *Citizenship in Diverse Societies* (pp. 68-95). New York: Oxford University Press.
- Stanley, T. J. (1995). White Supremacy and the Rhetoric of Educational Indoctrination: A Canadian Case Study. In J. Barman, N. Sutherland & J. D. Wilson (Eds.), *Children, Teachers and Schools in the History of British Columbia* (pp. 39-56). Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Ltd.
- Stapleton, J. (1990, September 13). 'March of progress' idea is outdated. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.
- Sullivan, B. M. (1988). Legacy for learners. The Report of the Royal Commission on Education. Victoria: Province of British Columbia.
- Superintendent. (1994, November 9). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1994, November 14), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (p. 2). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Survey (1982). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1982, October 28). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School

- District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Survey. (1983). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1983, September 8), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Survey questions – June 1986 (1986, June). In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (February 26, 1987). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Sussel, T. A. (1995). The Charter, Religious Values, and the Public School Curriculum. In *Canada's Revolution: Public Education, the Charter, and Human Rights* (pp. 135 -162). Toronto: Emond Montgomery Publications Limited.
- Sutherland, J. (1993, May 10). When is it censorship and when is it discretion? In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1993, May 10), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 56-57). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Sutherland, J. (1994, January 14). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1993, January 24), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 60). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Sutherland, J. (1995, June 6). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp.

- 80). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Sutherland, J. (1996). [Interview transcripts]. Received from L. Sweet [personal communication].
- Suzuki, D. (1989, December 16). *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B6.
- Sweet, L. (1997). *God in the Classroom: The Controversial Issue of Religion in Canada's Schools*. Toronto : McClelland & Stewart.
- Szakacs, D. (1992, March 23). [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A29.
- Szostak, D. (1999, November 19). Students are salt and light. *Mennonite Brethren Herald*, 38(22). Retrieved March 20, 2005, from <http://old.mbherald.com/38-22/letters.html>
- Taylor, S., Rizvi, F., Lingard, B. & Henry, M. (1997). *Educational Policy And The Politics of Change*. New York: Routledge.
- Teachers are told to expose students to both concepts. (1981, February 11). *The Abbotsford News*, pp. A1, A2.
- Thompson, J. (1995, April 24). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12). *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 101), (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)
- Todd, D. (1989, February 17). God's Own Country. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Todd, D. (1989, May 6). God has many faces in Victoria. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B3.
- Todd, D. (1989, September 19). Ignorance of faiths alleged. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. D10.
- Todd, D. (1990, October 13). Christian clause scars Socreds. *The Vancouver Sun*. p. A1.

- Todd, D. (1990, October 19). Christian Socreds revolt: Members feel rejected after convention action. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A1.
- Todd, D. (1995, March 17). Creationism evolving into chaotic class subject; Creation: Christian bias alleged. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Todd, D. (1995, May 12). Abbotsford teachers want Genesis out of Biology 11 class: Creationism stays, school chair insists. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Todd, D. (1995, May 25). Board gets ultimatum on teaching creationism. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B3.
- Todd, D. (1995, June 28). Keep religious dogma out of classes, school board told: Education minister rejects creationist policy. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A3.
- Todd, D. (1996, November 29). Poll finds B.C. least religious. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. B1.
- Torres, C.A. (1995 – 1996). State and Education Revisited: Why Educational Researchers Should Think Politically about Education. *Review of Research in Education*, 21, pp. 255-331. Retrieved March 25, 2005, from JSTOR database.
- Toth, C. (1992, March 18). Board open to choices: Creationist information available at media centre. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A3.
- Trinity Western University (2004). Our commitment to six core values. Retrieved November 20, 2004 from <http://www.twu.ca/about/values/>
- Trustees seek end to school Bible readings. (1981, May 20). *The Abbotsford News*, p. D10.
- Tupper, M. June 25, 1995. Refreshing View [Letter to the editor]. *The Province*, p. A28
- Ungerleider, C. S. (1986). Inequality and Education: The Ideological Context of Educational Change in British Columbia. *Journal of Educational Administration*

and Foundations, 1(2), 17-27.

Ungerleider, C. (2003). *Failing Our Kids. How We Are Ruining Our Public Schools.*

Unrau, P. (1995, June 22). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, September 11), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees.* (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Voice Against Racism. (1994, August 31). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1994, August 31), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees* (pp. 89-92). (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Warburton, A. (1984, October 2). [Letter to the editor]. *The Vancouver Sun*, p. A5.

Warren, P. J. (1988). Church and State in Canadian Education. In W. A. McKim (Ed.), *The Vexed Question: Denominational Education in a Secular Age* (pp.102-125). St. John's, Nfld: Breakwater.

Webb, S. H. (2000). Religion Lost and Found in Public Education. In *Taking Religion to School: Christian Theology and Secular Education*, (pp.59-94). Grand Rapids, Michigan: Brazos Press.

Wentzell, C. (1989, January 24). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1989, January 30), *Notes of a Committee of the Whole Meeting.* (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Williams, D. (1992) Issue Paper [on the behalf of the British Columbia Ministry of Education Program Support Services Branch concerning creationism instruction in Abbotsford].

Wilson, E. (1989, February 15). Board sticks to court ruling. *The Abbotsford News*, p. A1.

Wilson, J. D. & Jones, D. C. (1980). Introduction: The Historiography of British Columbia Education History. *Schooling and Society in Twentieth Century British Columbia* (pp.7-21). Calgary: Detselig Enterprises Limited.

Wood, C. (1995, June 12). Big Bang Versus A Big Being. *Maclean's*, 108(25), 14-15.
Retrieved October 7, 2004, from Proquest database.

Wyatt, D. (1995). [Letter]. In School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), (1995, June 12), *Minutes of the Regular Meeting of the Board of School Trustees*. (Available from School District No. 34 (Abbotsford), 2790 Tims Street, Abbotsford, B.C. Canada V2T 4M7)

Youth for Christ. (2004). *Our Mission*. Retrieved November 20, 2004 from <http://www.yfccanada.com/AboutUs/OurMission/>

Zylberberg et al. v. Sudbury Board of Education (1988), 52 D.L.R. (4th) 577 (Ont. C.A.).