INDIVIDUALISM AND COMMUNITY:
A STUDY OF TEACHERS IN A CANADIAN JEWISH
DAY SCHOOL

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education
Department of Theory and Policy Studies in Education
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the
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A Study of Teachers in a Canadian Jewish Day School  

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Ontario Institute for Studies in Education  
1998  

ABSTRACT

Individualism and community are competing values in the late twentieth century. The dominance of individualism, which cherishes freedom and independence, is antithetical to the bonds and boundaries implicit in healthy community.

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which individualism and community are fostered in elementary classrooms of Jewish studies teachers, and supported by the school philosophy and practice, in one Canadian Jewish day school affiliated with the Conservative movement of Judaism. The assumption of this study is not that this school would or should reflect either individualism or community exclusively.

The study employs ethnographic research methodology in the observation of five classrooms over a four month period. Interviews were conducted with the four participating teachers, all native Israelis, and two school administrators.

Individualism is found at various levels of the school. There is a high level of concern for the self-esteem and well-being of individual students. In academic structures, remedial lessons are provided, and teachers employ differentiated pacing. There is allowance for levels and leeway for creativity and originality, digression and spontaneity. Teachers reinforce effort and achievement at every level. Teachers enjoy autonomy in curriculum
development and classroom methodology. Judaism is presented as a religion with concern for the individual. Diversity in religious practice is not discouraged.

Community is developed through school purpose and practice. Among the primary goals of the school is the socialization of students to the heritage and cultures of Judaism, Israel, and Canada. The school acts in partnership with local synagogues and student families in order to achieve its ideals of commitment to a Conservative Jewish lifestyle. The transmission of moral values is a priority; teachers provide guidelines of appropriate and inappropriate behavior. Authority, order, and discipline are evident. There is some evidence of class pride. Judaism is presented in a very positive fashion and is accessible to students through ritual and celebration.

Tension between individualism and community is evident in the following areas: teacher practice and values—autonomy versus school purpose; religious life—pluralism versus commitment; dual loyalty to Judaism and Canada; and the role of Israeli teachers.
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INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study is to explore the ways in which individualism and community are fostered in the elementary classrooms of several Jewish studies teachers, and supported by the school philosophy and practice, in one Canadian Jewish day school, affiliated with the Conservative movement of Judaism. The school is used as a microcosm for observing and understanding individualism and community, which are two somewhat competing values in the late twentieth century. The milieu of the Jewish day school is particularly appropriate because Jewish culture and tradition embrace both concepts of individualism and community. Conservative Judaism, specifically, reflects the integration and conflict of individualism and community within its ideology.

The study is conducted with the assumption that both individualism and community are considered to be relevant among the various purposes of education and that both are valued, to greater or lesser extents, in all North American schools. The intention of this study is not to disclaim or laud the presence and worth of individualism and community in schools, or in one specific school, but rather to examine how they are manifested, explicitly and implicitly, and to explore the ramifications of their co-existence.

A philosophical and historical perspective of individualism is developed in Chapter One of the thesis. The central themes of individualism within an educational context are: recognizing the uniqueness and dignity of the individual student, caring for the needs of the individual student, cultivating the autonomy and independence of the individual, and developing the students' faculty for rational thought and skeptical inquiry. The values of pluralism, tolerance, and competition are also relevant expressions of individualism.
The study focuses on these elements of individualism in the formal, academic domains as well as in the informal domain of teachers' interactions with students and with one another. Consideration is given to how teachers reinforce or discourage distinctive behavior and aptitude in students, as well as what structures the school provides for individual expression of achievement, effort, or special need. As a religious school sponsored by a movement of Judaism which has a fundamental belief in pluralism, the diversity of religious expression among teachers and students is explored.

A philosophical and historical perspective of community is developed in Chapter Two. The central themes of community within an educational context are: socialization and transmission of culture, moral education, and the inculcation of loyalty and cooperation. These include: developing an appreciation for tradition and continuity; establishing the ultimate authority of absolute values which provide limits for conduct and interaction; and reinforcing the values of group membership and boundaries, participation, and leadership. These aspects of community may be cultivated on the classroom, school-wide, and staff levels.

Community is examined in both the formal and informal domains. Consideration is given to social interaction, cooperative learning, opportunities for class and school spirit, and the structure of discipline as an extension of the authority of the school and its partnership with students and their families. The research also explores how policy, program, and practice affect the formation of the school as a microcosm of a traditional religious and cultural Jewish community.

Chapter Three provides the context for the research, by presenting an overview of the development of private schools and of the Jewish day school in North America in the last
centriry. A private, religious school is by its very nature an appropriate and interesting prism through which to examine individualism and community. Its relatively homogeneous population, focused mission, and selective curriculum create the potential for the private, religious school to be a representative institution of both the ideals and tensions of individualism and community.

In paradigms of both individualism and community, the teacher is a critical participant in the formal and informal learning processes. The goals of individualism call for the teacher to create a learning environment that is conducive to individual development and diversity of opinions. Within the goals of community, the teacher serves as a representative, a partner, and a role model of the specific culture and values which the school is striving to transmit to its students. Chapter Three highlights the role of the teacher in the context of the Jewish day school, with a specific look at teachers of Israeli origin, since all of the teachers who participated in this study are native Israelis, and there is an inherently unique relationship between diaspora Jews and the Jewish State of Israel.

The assumption of the study is not that this school would or should reflect either individualism or community exclusively. Both strands exist, either deliberately and in coordination with, or in conflict with one another. The study examines areas of school policy, program, culture, and teacher philosophy and practice on the basis of their relevance to the development of either individualism or community or both.

**Research Methodology**

The study was conducted from September through December 1993, in one campus of a Conservative Jewish day school in metropolitan Toronto, with a population of
approximately 240 students in grades Junior Kindergarten through Five. Approximately 150 hours were spent in ethnographic observation. The primary focus of the observations were five Jewish studies classrooms of Grades Two, Three, and Five of four different teachers. In addition, informal observations were conducted of General studies and specialty classes, the playground and staff room, and several school-wide events. At the end of the semester, hour-long interviews were held with the four Jewish studies teachers and with two school administrators.

A discussion of the ethnographic research methodology is found in Chapter Four.

Importance of the Study

In modern, western society, individualism has flourished while genuine community has declined. The dominance of individualism, which cherishes freedom and independence, is antithetical to the bonds and boundaries implicit in healthy community. In terms of religion, contemporary reality dictates that both individualism and community must co-exist, and it is likely that the very survival of formal religion—in this case, Judaism—rests on the critical balance of individualism and community among its adherents.

The freedom that an American citizen enjoys to differ from all others in thought and in action, he naturally exercises also in relation to his own ethnic, religious or cultural heritage. Hence, every ethnic, religious and cultural tradition in America faces an unprecedented ominous challenge to its continued existence. We know how serious that threat is to the American Jewish community. We know, moreover, that there is nothing we want or can do to limit the freedom of thought and of action that we enjoy. We are therefore constantly tormented by the question of whether we can maintain not only a meaningful, but any kind of group identity under such conditions (Greenberg 1977, 24).

Recent figures of assimilation and intermarriage which report that one-third to one-half of American Jews marry out of the faith (Goldberg 1992; Wertheimer 1996) suggest that a high
priority for young Jews of this generation is to assert their independence and free choice, of mate and lifestyle, even when that choice implies a rejection of family and tradition. Simultaneously, the flourishing of institutions of Jewish learning for children and higher education (see Chapter Three) and an increase in synagogue affiliation and in the number of trips to Israel (see Chapter Two) suggest a desire among Jews to affiliate with other like-minded Jews and to create cadres of involved Jews, committed to holding on to tradition and to incorporating the practice and knowledge of Judaism into their lifestyle. Thus, both individualism and community are relevant values to Jews in contemporary society.

This study was conducted in a Jewish day school affiliated with the Conservative movement of Judaism. This centrist movement was created in the late 19th century to “conserve” Judaism from the sweeping changes of the left-wing Reform movement, while maintaining a character of modernity distinct from Orthodox Judaism. Its motto “Tradition and Change” expresses the commitment of the Conservative movement to facing the challenges presented by the allure of pluralism and modernity within the stability of tradition and history. Its institutions struggle to reconcile the influences of Western culture and secular expertise with Jewish values and religious knowledge. Recent history has shown that the vision of balancing the two principles of tradition and change is an idealistic one, and that these values are not as compatible as the founders of the movement envisioned. Expressing concern regarding the emphasis placed on change within the Conservative movement, Wertheimer (1994) writes:

We must assert publicly that not everything sanctioned by American society is Jewishly acceptable . . . Changes in Judaism more often than not came gradually and not everything was negotiable . . . Those who embrace American individualism can make a powerful case because the rhetoric, the language, the categories are readily available in the society around us. By contrast, those of us who feel that Judaism can flourish only
if it resists some aspects of American culture must struggle to find the religious vocabulary that will enable us to steer a course in the perennial conflict between tradition and change (25).

The choices represented by fostering individualism or community in Conservative Jewish day schools have both theoretical and practical ramifications for twentieth century Jews.

Beyond its relevance to formal religion and to Judaism, the study of individualism and community is a valuable one in the understanding of the tensions of contemporary society. MacIntyre (1984) writes:

... there are only two alternative modes of social life open to us, one in which the free and arbitrary choices of individuals are sovereign and one in which the bureaucracy is sovereign...Thus the society in which we live is one in which bureaucracy and individualism are partners as well as antagonists (35).

If the school is a microcosm of the larger society, then the lessons imparted and learned in its classrooms are significant to the future adults that today's young students will become. Through their philosophy, policies, and practice, schools select a vision and a path which embraces individualism or community or a synthesis of both. Young Canadian Jews, whose families have selected private religious education (if only to seek the best in a highly competitive society), are exposed to the richness and authority of their heritage in the setting of a country which encourages respect for different cultures, and assumes the value of moral and intellectual autonomy. This inherent tension of individualism and community is not easy to reconcile and it is this attempt at balancing these competing values which is the focus of this study.
CHAPTER ONE

INDIVIDUALISM

Individualism and community, if not antithetical, co-exist with some degree of tension. Community guides and forms the individual. Individualism exalts the solitary human being above any external force. Individualism is relevant and important in many spheres of knowledge, including the philosophical, political, cultural, sociological, moral, and religious, as well as the theory and practice of education. The exploration of individualism in the following chapter is intended to serve as a backdrop to the examination of the development of individualism in the school and classrooms which were observed in this study. Community is explored in the following chapter.

The term individualism in this thesis refers to a specific understanding of the individual and his or her place in the world, including the following:

- Each individual is unique and is naturally endowed with dignity, integrity, and sacredness.
- Free choice and independence are the rights of every individual, both for personal development as well as for self-preservation.
- Moral and intellectual autonomy, talent, and potential must be pursued according to personal standards, aspirations, tastes, and convictions.
- Personal liberty contributes to pluralism which increases tolerance among people.
- The quest for personal development generates competition which decreases the potential for mediocrity in the world.
The legitimacy of individualism is viewed in contrast to traditional sources of authority and truth, which are founded upon societal criteria or divine mandate.


The following sections will serve as an elaboration upon the various aspects of individualism outlined above.

**Individualism as an Alternative to External Authority**

Individualism has flourished in the Western world largely in view of its claim to the authority of the individual, in contrast with political, social, or religious authorities. In traditional societies, these external authorities had the prerogative of authority, with the "common good" as its central justification. Those who renounce this domination by external authorities believe that their claim to authority in the name of virtue, the "common good," or tradition (see Chapter Two for a discussion on the moral authority of community) actually breeds intolerance, conformity, elitism, repression, and abuse of authority, mediocrity, and resistance to change and fosters inequalities that eventually are accepted as the social norm. According to MacIntyre (a contemporary philosopher who is traditional rather than individualistic), even Aristotle's classical view of the virtuous community, which provided direction to all aspects of its citizens' lives, was flawed in its explicit exclusion of "inferior" factions of society (MacIntyre 1984). Individualism offers an alternative to individuals who are dissatisfied with compliance with external authorities beyond their control. "The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized
community, against his will, is to prevent harm to others. His own good, either physical or moral, is not a sufficient warrant" (Mill, 1991 edition, 14).

In nineteenth century Europe, individualism "... is variously traced to the Reformation, the Renaissance, the Enlightenment, the (French) Revolution, to the decline of aristocracy or the Church or traditional religion, to the Industrial Revolution, to the growth of capitalism or democracy" (Lukes 1973, 14). In France, for example, the trend towards individualism was one reaction to "... the municipal and fiscal policies of the French kings in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, which had systematically prevented the growth of spontaneous, organized activities and informal groupings" (Lukes 1973, 15). The response by conservatives (that is, those who oppose rapid change and support tradition) in France at that time was to associate individualism with the radical excesses of the Revolution and to condemn individualism as a dangerous trend, in the fear that it signaled the end of the Commonwealth, and represented "anarchy and social atomization" (Lukes 1973, 8). There was "wide agreement in seeing it as an evil and a threat to social cohesion" (Lukes 1973, 14).

In England, nineteenth century individualism was associated with liberalism (that is, tolerance and an emphasis on individual freedom from tradition, dogma, and convention, and a belief in progress), "non-conformity in religion," and "the absence or minimum of state intervention in the economic or other spheres" (Lukes 1973, 32,39). The ideology was expressed in the writings of John Stuart Mill, particularly in On Liberty (first published in 1859), known as the "bible of nineteenth century liberal individualism" (Watt 1989, 24). Mill wrote that the "... struggle between Liberty and Authority is the most conspicuous feature in the portions of history with which we are earliest familiar" (1991,5). He believed that individuals need protection from what society imposes and that "... he who lets the
world...choose his plan of life for him, has no need of any other faculty than...imitation.
He who chooses his plan for himself, employs all his faculties" (1991, 65).

The above characterization of conservatives who condemn individualism and liberals who support it, perhaps implies an exaggerated stereotype that "all liberals are individualists" and "all conservatives are communitarian." These labels have not proven to be consistent. Holmes writes:

Mill's individualistic liberalism has influenced several twentieth century movements. Laissez-faire capitalism and individualistic materialism, often referred to as neo-Conservatism, owe much to the liberal tradition. Liberalism's progressive wing, both with respect to education and broader political questions, has adopted a much more restrained version of individual freedom with the result that contemporary liberalism is an amalgam of egalitarianism and nineteenth century liberalism, with supporters being divided in their primary allegiance. Similarly, conservatives today are divided between traditional, social conservatives with strong allegiance to community, and economic or neo-conservatives to global economy (M. Holmes, personal correspondence, February 20, 1997, 1).

Throughout this study it will become apparent that neither individualism nor community can be easily categorized into one ideological typology and that there are overlaps within the two value systems and their adherents.

**Dignity of the Individual**

The underpinning of the proposition that the individual's claim to personal freedom rivals the authority of society is the belief in the inherent worth of each human being. This was a major contribution of Christianity, which declared the intrinsic value of each God-given soul and the status of each Christian, regardless of social strata, as an equal child of God (Lukes 1973). Christian thinkers, such as St. Augustine, claimed that the benefit of society is found only in helping man to fulfill his destiny and that God is within each
individual (Taylor 1989). The New Testament expresses the worth and dignity of each
individual, as in the verses: "For the least among you all, he is the greatest" (Luke, 9:48), and
"In as much as you have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, you have done it
unto me" (Matthew, 25:40). This was re-articulated by Luther and Calvin in the time of the
Reformation, when the importance of the intermediary (for example, the church and its
clergy) was decreased, and the religious autonomy of the individual was emphasized. These
Protestants affirmed that each individual could rely on piety and conscience to achieve
salvation through a personal relationship with God.

In the eighteenth century, Kant posited that individuals are ends in themselves and
each can be his own moral judge (Watt 1989). The nineteenth century German philosopher
Schleiermacher asserted the equal value of each individual and the need for universal
concern. This concept of universal natural individual rights entitles individuals to think and
choose for themselves. The Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the General
Assembly of the United Nations in 1948 reads: "... recognition of the inherent dignity and
of the equal and inalienable rights of all members of the human family" (quoted in Lukes
1973, 49).

In the late nineteenth century in the United States, women began to assert themselves
as individuals "entitled to the rights deemed natural and inalienable by men" (Gilligan 1982,
128). During the twentieth century, women have sought more and more control over their
conditions, including health, education, and political rights. Various movements of
"women's liberation" have fought to change the position of individual women in their
homes, work places, and in society; reflecting a basic belief that if women have inherent
worth as individuals, they deserve opportunity and treatment equal to men (Deckard 1975).
In their study on contemporary American culture, Bellah et al. comment: "We believe in the dignity, indeed the sacredness, of the individual. Anything that would violate our rights to think for ourselves, judge for ourselves, make our own decisions, live our lives as we see fit, is not only morally wrong, it is sacrilegious" (1985, 142).

**Autonomy and Independence**

Since the time of the Enlightenment, the paradigm of the freedom and will of each individual has developed to the point of assertion by a contemporary philosopher that "... everyone in our civilization feels the force of this appeal to accord people the freedom to develop in their own way" (Taylor 1989, 12). The western, modern concept of "... universal, natural, or human rights is to connect respect for human life and integrity with the notion of autonomy. It is to conceive people as active cooperators in establishing and ensuring the respect which is due them ... so autonomy has a central place in our understanding of respect" (Taylor 1989, 12).

In individualist thinking, the autonomy to choose social roles and commitments is considered to be yet another form of recognition that individuals have inherent dignity and authority equal to or greater than the authority of tradition or society. Several passages from John Stuart Mill (1991 edition) articulate this position clearly: "Each is the proper guardian of his own health, whether bodily, or mental and spiritual" (17); "Over himself, over his own body and mind, the individual is sovereign" (14); and, that one who chooses his own way has the best way, "... not because it is the best in itself, but because it is in his own mode" (75).
In Western culture, autonomy is demonstrated through independence and self-reliance, which are fostered in both family and society. Leaving the home of one's parents to live alone or with peers is considered a critical milestone of developmental maturity. Modern psychotherapies have exerted a great influence over individuals and society, and their goals are frequently defined in terms of becoming "self-directing" and taking "personal responsibility" for one's own choices and actions (Bellah et al. 1985; Rotenberg 1977; Waterman 1981; Watt 1989). With regard to the autonomy of women, Gilligan (1982) writes that "... changes in women's rights change women's moral judgments, seasoning mercy with justice by enabling women to consider it moral to care not only for others but for themselves" (149). The twentieth century American psychologist, Carl Rogers, asserted that in order to achieve mental health, individuals must learn to live by their own terms, to discover and assert identity, without allowing social norms to inhibit and interfere with their own development (Watt 1989). Almost a century prior to Rogers, Ralph Waldo Emerson lauded the potential for individualism as "... the route to perfection—a spontaneous social order of self-determined, self-reliant and fully developed individuals" (quoted in Lukes 1973, 29).

The growth of autonomy and independence may be linked to both mechanical and social innovation and progress, evolving since the time of the Reformation and stimulated by the industrial age. Holmes writes:

The printing press was a major contributor to individual autonomy as was the Industrial Revolution and the accompanying change of working arrangements and the rapid growth of urban centers. Improved transportation, the railway, and the steamship served to undermine the local community and enhance individualism. Possibly no invention since the printing press has so advanced individualization as the development of the automobile, which has given most people in the affluent democracies opportunities for both privacy and freedom of movement unimaginable in earlier times.
Mechanical inventions have been accompanied by changing social conventions which serve to diminish the bonds of community and enhance individualism. Most important have been the radical change in the role of women and the breakdown in the nature and character of social class, most evident in increasing social mobility (M. Holmes, personal correspondence, February 20, 1997).

**Society Exists to Serve Individuals**

In examining the premises that the individual has dignity and is entitled to autonomy and independence, a question emerges: what then is the role of society? While extreme individualists believe that there is nothing beyond the individual, others believe that society exists only to serve the dignity, value, needs, and interests of individuals. The following is an excerpt from a list of definitions of individualism: "... individuals have prior reality and ultimate value, while social institutions have a secondary derivative status and exist only for the benefits they provide for individuals" (Watt 1989, 1).

This position has been articulated by a variety of philosophers. In seventeenth century England, Hobbes and Locke asserted that "... social relationships were important only insofar as they provided a context for an individual to advance his own interests" (Nash and Griffin 1987, 551), and that the state was created to protect the basic rights of individuals (life, liberty, and property). In the eighteenth century, Rousseau wrote that man is basically good by nature and any negative qualities or inclinations that the individual has derived from the influence of society (Dent 1988). He asserted that "... the natural man is free of the chains of social conventions which make him perceive himself and others through their respective social roles, rather than through their essential human qualities" (Yonah 1993, 234). Rousseau believed that society has no authority and only exists on the basis of willing "social contracts" agreed upon among individuals. As such, individuals can question the
authority of the state when it does not appear to meet their needs and goals. (According to conservatives, this concept would be untenable as they believe that people are born into a family and state and so in reality take no active part in creating a social contract that can be broken at will.) In the nineteenth century, Nietzsche rejected the notion of the "common good" in promoting the view that society exists merely to allow the finest individuals to develop themselves to their fullest (Watt 1989).

According to some proponents of individualism, it is understood that if the individual has authority, dignity, autonomy, independence, and a preeminence over society itself, both the individual and society will benefit through pluralism and tolerance, self-awareness and development, and competition leading to higher standards of production. The following sections are presented in order to explore that premise.

Pluralism and Tolerance

In western democracies, individualism is associated with equal rights and equal opportunity. A society which considers as an ideal the accommodation of each individual's pursuit of tastes and preferences, would encourage a diversity of thought, belief, opinion, and behavior. If individuals believe in their own universal right to reflect and select autonomously, they should tolerate and respect that same right in others.

In the words of J.S. Mill, true freedom "... is that of pursuing our own good in our own way, so long as we do not attempt to deprive others of theirs, or impede their efforts to obtain it" (1991, 17). He believed that this perspective potentially leads to an open exchange of ideas, sharing and learning from others, and willingness to compromise. It also asserts the individual's right of expression. Mill writes: "If all mankind minus one, were of one opinion,
and only one person were of the contrary opinion, mankind would be no more justified in silencing that one person, than he, if he had the power, would be justified in silencing mankind" (Mill 1991, 21).

**Personal Development and Self-Preservation**

Twentieth century psychologists such as Erikson, Maslow, and Rogers have popularized terms such as "self-actualization," "self-direction," and "identity," which reflect the efforts of the mental health fields to facilitate each individual's realization of his or her true potential and exercise of autonomy (Watt 1989). They assert that personal development and awareness of one's own needs, values, interests and talents contribute to the formation of a healthy individual who is free and able to make his or her own choices.

Earlier origins of this facet of individualism can be traced to the European Romantics, who associated self-realization with the creativity and genius of artists. Foundations of Marxism can also be linked to the principle of each individual realizing true potential (Lukes 1973).

Excessive self-examination is blamed by its opponents for much of the loneliness and alienation of modern life, including separation from family, community, and tradition. Its advocates, however, maintain that individuals with developed self-awareness and self-esteem actually have greater potential to achieve intimacy and trust in social relationships (Waterman 1981).
**Competition and a Lowering of Mediocrity**

Proponents of individualism claim that when individuals are striving for their own best interest, they will be highly motivated to work hard and accomplish. In turn, a society which is comprised of individuals making great effort to achieve would be one with high standards of success.

Nietzsche asserted that society exists in order to promote the strongest and finest individuals who have the ability to compete and succeed. His view that there is no such thing as common good lends itself to a proliferation of "egoistic individualism," where individuals achieve for the sake of self alone. Adam Smith, the eighteenth century British economist, is well known for his view that material prosperity gained by individual initiative ought not to be restricted by government or other external authorities. He believed that individuals who have to fend for themselves will work hard and should be entitled to reap the benefits. (Ultimately, this facilitates barter in a society, as different individuals produce diverse goods.) Capitalism and commercial and economic success have been compatible forces to egoistic and utilitarian individualism and have supported the strength of ideologies, such as Social Darwinism's, "Survival of the Fittest," expounded by William Graham Sumner in the early twentieth century (Watt 1989).

Although the utilitarian individualist is not necessarily competing for the sake of others, Friedman (1980) writes: "By pursuing his own interest he frequently promotes that of the society more effectually than when he really intends to promote it. I have never known much good done by those who affected to trade for the public good" (2). While perhaps competition can exist for the sake of using one's own initiative to help others, critics of individualism associate competition with "... the tendency to perceive the most basic
relationship among people as one of competitive self-interest rather than of solidarity and mutual support" (Watt 1989, 2). Champions of individualism, however, view competition as a positive impetus for hard work and achievement.

**Ethical Individualism**

An important application of individualism is its expression of what is considered good and evil, right and wrong, including how that is determined and by whom. In a discussion of virtue or values, individualism is essentially represented by moral relativism. MacIntyre (1984) refers to this as "emotivism," where evaluative and moral judgments "... are *nothing* but expressions of preference, expressions of attitude or feeling" (11-12). The writings of Kant reflect that "... real morality (is) not obedience and conformity, but individual autonomy of the reason and the will" (Watt, 1989,19). He believed that there is no limit to man's "very choice of values ... very criteria of evaluation ... range of our possible value preferences" (Lukes 1973, 101).

Throughout history and in different parts of the world, there have been disparate views of what was considered virtuous behavior and outlook. Homer lauded the warrior and Aristotle acclaimed the gentleman. The *New Testament* espoused the values of faith, hope, love, and humility. More contemporary thinkers set up other models of virtue, for example, Jane Austen, whose fictional characters represent truth, courage, justice, friendship, caring, humility, "constancy" and "amiability," and Benjamin Franklin, who espoused "cleanliness, silence, industry, (and) obedience" (MacIntyre 1984, 183).

Within these variations there is an assumption that collective units of society can share a similar code of ethics or behavior, albeit distinct from remote cultures or other generations. Individualism goes beyond stating that unique value frameworks exist for
different societies or portions of society, to assert that each person can and must determine which moral standards are most relevant and binding for him or her alone. This is "... taking the idea of autonomy seriously and carrying it to its logical conclusion" (Lukes 1973, 101).

Ethical individualism parallels the concepts of autonomy, dignity, and pluralism and applies them directly to issues of values and morality. Whether in defining what is good or meaningful, prioritizing among competing values, selecting a preference, or stating a principle of right and wrong, ethical individualism asserts that "our identity is what allows us to define what is important to us and what is not" (Taylor 1989, 30), and that "... the utterance of any universal principle is in the end an expression of the preferences of an individual will" (Maclntyre 1984, 21).

Supported by historical or sociological claims that values have changed over time and place and that new ideals have reputedly displaced notions of virtue once considered irrefutable, ethical individualists feel confident in proclaiming that there is no exclusive legitimate moral framework and that there are no absolute values. Greenfield (1989) states that "... we may argue about values and assert them or enforce them, but not verify or falsify them, as we do with facts" (8). Beck (1990) maintains that values are "... subjective since they are grounded in what humans basically desire and seek" (3). In other words,"... the self and its feelings become our only moral guide" (Bellah et al. 1985, 76).

**Religious Individualism**

Ethical individualism may be expanded to include "religious individualism," or the belief that each individual is responsible for his or her own spiritual destiny, guided by
conscience and a personal relationship with God. In the thirteenth century, St. Thomas Aquinas broke away from medieval doctrine by asserting that one's conscience could serve as ultimate authority. This was later affirmed by Luther and Calvin, as an alternative to earlier conceptions of Christianity identified by collective belief and authority (Lukes 1973). It may also be linked to a decline or deterioration of any formal religion. A 1978 United States Gallup poll reported that "... eighty per cent of Americans agreed that 'an individual should arrive at his or her own religious beliefs independent of any churches or synagogues" (Bellah et al. 1985, 228). Wertheimer (1994) writes that:

Individualism in the religious sphere has also meant that two cherished American ideals are reshaping religious sensibilities: the principle of egalitarianism and the desire to protect individual rights. In the name of these ideals, activists have sought to level hierarchical distinctions between men and women, adults and children, and groups that are deemed to be socially constructed (21).

Religious individualism was reflected upon by several noted philosophers. Kierkegaard asserted that man makes the ultimate choices, including whether or not to accept what is considered the word of God. Early existentialism considers the "disappearance of religious certainty" (Lukes 1973, 104), and in the words of Sartre, "... everything is indeed permitted if God does not exist" (quoted in Lukes 1973, 105). Nietzsche presents perhaps the most extreme voice in this discussion of the individual as the source and authority of morality, allowing for the possibility of a trend from "... saying that individuals create their own moralities to saying that no moralities are true" (Lukes 1973, 103). Holmes comments: "Nietzsche's pronouncement of the death of God broke the last thread of external authority and opened the way to existentialism and nihilism, both of which make community irrelevant and anachronistic" (M. Holmes, personal correspondence, February 20, 1997, 3).
Individualism and North American Culture

As this study is conducted in a Canadian school, the particular context of North American culture is significant to the exploration of individualism. Geertz (1973) offers several definitions of the term culture, including: "... the total way of life of a people... the social legacy the individual acquires from his group... a way of thinking, feeling, and believing" (4-5). In that context, one might consider culture to be irrelevant in a discussion of an ideology which is impelled by the individual self. However, proponents of culture as the foundation for understanding human potential, would assert that "... our ideas, our values, our acts, even our emotions, are... cultural products—products manufactured, indeed out of tendencies, capacities, and dispositions with which we were born, but manufactured nonetheless" (Geertz 1973, 50). The relationship of individualism to North American culture is particularly germane, as the ideals of individualism are strongly linked to the very ideals upon which the society was founded.

In the United States, personal freedom and liberty were basic ideals of the society since its inception, as expressed in the words of the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness" (quoted in Friedman 1980, 2). Their expression dominated cultural, political, economic, and social life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. In 1841, Ralph Waldo Emerson (who was very influential on the literature and philosophy of 19th century America) wrote that "... society is everywhere in conspiracy against the manhood of everyone of its members" (Bellah et al. 1985, 5-6). The success of one's personal freedom in American culture today is marked by the act of "... separating oneself from the values imposed by
one's past or by conformity to one's social milieu, so that one can discover what one really wants" (Bellah et al. 1985, 23-24).

When Alexis de Tocqueville observed and commented on America in the early nineteenth century, he reportedly saw individualism as the "natural product of democracy" (Lukes 1973, 13). In a society which has fostered the ideals of equal rights and opportunity in the name of justice and battling oppression, and has promoted social mobility and free enterprise in the name of progress and creativity, individualism is indeed an indigenous legacy, and perhaps even "the very core of American culture" (Bellah et al. 1985, 142).

On an economic level, success in America is determined by one's ability to advance within a bureaucratic hierarchy and increase profit. On a psychological level, success is achieved by independence and autonomy from external forms of authority and control, including family, religion, and communal institutions. In both spheres, "... freedom is perhaps the most resonant, deeply held American value. In some ways, it defines the good in both personal and political life" (Bellah et al. 1985, 23).

Canada's policy of multiculturalism, as articulated by Pierre Trudeau in the 1970s, "refused to sacrifice diversity in the name of unity" (Mallea 1978, 273). As a response to the country's policy of "bilingualism and biculturalism" developed in the 1960s, multiculturalism has allowed for the flourishing of many cultures and not merely those of the "two founding races" of the English and French. In the economic boom of 1945-1970, Canada welcomed many foreigners to help meet the growing needs of the country, and in so doing added to the diversity of the country in terms of cultures, religions, and languages. "The ideal of multiculturalism is that all Canadians should come to understand the richness of the Canadian heritage, should respect all members' contributions to this richness, and
should welcome further contributions from a variety of sources” (Ray 1990, 59). In asserting that the country does not aspire to be a "melting pot" which absorbs individual differences, an ideal of multiculturalism is to value the individual who “... must be cherished and protected whatever their religion, or mother tongue, or individual gifts. Complete and genuine respect for diversity and individuality” (Mallea 1978, 274) is an integral factor in Canadian multiculturalism.

(It is relevant to note that in today’s Canadian reality, there is little consistency with regard to the actual rights of individual cultures to which the ideals of multiculturalism aspire. For example, French schools are recognized while other cultural schools are not and in Ontario, Roman Catholic schools are publicly funded, but Jewish schools are not.)

**Individualism in the Jewish Tradition**

As this study is conducted in a Jewish Day School, whose mission of education is integrally tied to Jewish faith, knowledge, and continuity, it is relevant to explore the nature of individualism in the Jewish tradition.

In Judaism, each individual person is considered as valuable as if he or she were equivalent to an entire world. In the Mishna (a Code of Jewish Law, compiled in 200 C.E.), it states that: "Whoever destroys a single human life is as if he had destroyed a whole world, whereas whoever saves a single human life is as if he had saved an entire world" (quoted in Jacobs 1984, 170).

The sacredness of the individual derives from the belief that "... one's soul is created in the image of God and is therefore capable of purity and freedom" (Baeck 1974, p.87). Because of this link to God as the Creator, each Jew feels a personal relationship with God
and can speak to Him directly through prayer. The Biblical book of Psalms, contains many verses which reflect the closeness of God to the individual, including: "As for me, nearness to God is good; I have made the Lord God my refuge" (Psalms, 73:28); "Though my father and mother abandon me, the Lord will take me in" (Psalms, 27:10).

Once the human being is created by God, he or she then becomes an independent being. One of the basic principles of Judaism is known as "free will" (in Hebrew, bechira chofsheet), which offers each individual " . . . freedom and ability to choose between alternative possibilities of action in accordance with the inner motives and ideals. . . In matters of ethical conduct, the choice is left to man; he is capable of choosing between right and wrong and of carrying the desire into action" (Birnbaum 1964, 76-77). Even God who is all-powerful and all-knowing " . . . does not predetermine whether a man shall be righteous or wicked" (Birnbaum 1964, 77).

The prerogative of the individual to choose a lifestyle must be understood within the context of Judaism as a religion which is highly structured by laws and rituals and beliefs, considered to be divine in origin. "The impulse to clarify and codify precisely how God wants the Jews to behave is absolutely intuitive to this religious tradition" (Gillman 1990, 39). The body of Jewish law (in Hebrew, halacha), includes laws about every aspect of daily life, which are derived from the Bible and rabbinic interpretations. The relevance of the framework of halacha to the discussion of individualism is the extent to which latitude for change and diversity of observance exists within normative Judaism. "If modernity has wrought a single, decisive transformation . . . it is the insistence not that we be free from religious obligation, but that we take the authority on ourselves, or more accurately, that we
share the authority with God, for we perceive God as having shared His authority with Israel" (Gillman 1990, 49).

The school that was observed in this study is affiliated with Conservative Judaism, a centrist movement, with Orthodoxy to its ideological right and Reform to its left. In Conservative Judaism, whose motto is "Tradition and Change," evolution of law to fit the changing times is considered to be an important feature of its ideology. "Conservative Judaism had two aims . . . to validate and promote the observance of Jewish law, and to make modification and change possible" (Siegel 1977, xiii). This evolution - not rejection—of law is considered to be in the hands of rabbinic authorities in each generation. As much as God " . . . can be said to be the source of revelation, the content of that revelation is thoroughly shaped by the human community . . . and as the community's perspective on that content changes over time, Torah changes with it" (Gillman 1990, 48).

Within the framework of halacha, there are variations in observance which Conservative Judaism considers to be legitimate, enriching, and responsive to " . . . the needs of individual Jews and congregations. This assures . . a clear sense of identity together with a vibrant, healthy pluralism" (Emet V'Emunah 1988, 25). A major indicator of change as a priority in Conservative Judaism is the increase in gender equality in synagogue life. In a recent survey of Conservative Jews in North America, 84% of respondents agree that women should have the same rights as men in the synagogue, and it is found that in over four out of five Conservative synagogues, " . . . women share the same ritual honors as men" (Wertheimer 1996, 15, 16).
While responsiveness to change exists even in certain branches of Orthodox Judaism, it is the hallmark of Conservative Judaism. Gillman, a contemporary Conservative philosopher, writes that:

Part of us intuitively wants a religious tradition to be grounded in an authority that lies beyond anything human, in a Being that transcends any individual and any cultural setting... But this... impulse is frequently challenged by an equally powerful 'autonomous' impulse, which insists that it is the right and proper task for us...to figure out for ourselves what the world is all about and how to conduct our lives. How to balance these two impulses, what power to give to either of them, will change with the individual, the age, and the culture... But note well. A religious or philosophical position that stresses human autonomy, then, in no way implies the rejection of all law or of a sense of obligation. It does, however, insist that the authority for determining the nature and extent of the obligation lies within the human 'self'...

(1990, 48-49)

Studies have shown (Sklare 1955; Wertheimer 1996) that Jews who affiliate with Conservative Judaism are attracted to the aspects of the religious practice which seem more authentic than Reform Judaism, yet offer the flexibility of choice in practice that Orthodoxy would not allow. In the words of one respondent:

It can be uncomfortable in the middle; but to me, it rings truer in its historical and intellectual honesty about what it is to be Jewish. I look at Reform, and I see them jettisoning for convenience' (sic) sake rituals and observances that are traditional... On the other hand, I look at Orthodoxy... and I see a refusal in them to address the reality that Judaism, like anything else, has been an evolving, growing thing - something that lives... (Wertheimer 1996, 8)

Regarding the level of practice of Judaism, Conservative Jews who participated in a recent North American survey (Wertheimer 1996) responded in the following manner: 76% responded that "(A) Jew can be religious even if he/she isn't particularly observant." And 64% responded that Conservative Judaism "lets you choose parts of Judaism that you find meaningful" (9-10). Wertheimer writes: "Certainly, these responses confirm some of the ongoing tensions between leaders of the Conservative movement and the average synagogue
member, even as they illustrate the kind of flexibility that is appreciated and valued by members of Conservative synagogues" (1996, 10-11). These figures and comments underscore the relevance and importance of pluralism and individualism to Conservative Jews.

The relationship of Jews across the religious spectrum and around the globe to Israel is significant to the expression of Judaism. As the four teachers observed in this study were all native Israelis who emigrated to Canada, it is relevant to explore the manifestation of individualism in Israeli culture, as this may influence these teachers’ practices. As a positive demonstration, there is a great deal of empathy felt and expressed for others’ hardships, and genuine care and concern for each individual who sacrifices his or her life in the struggle for national security. At the same time, individualism is often visible as a negative force in Israel. It is evident in the open resistance to authority, breaking of laws, and manipulation of rules to fit one’s personal needs. Friendships and associations are used to gain individual advantage; “. . . the system in Israel encourages evasion, cheating, and winking at the law” (Meyer 1982, 77). A characteristic Israeli trait is fierce independence, encouraged even in young children. The relevance of Israeli culture to this study will be further explored in Chapter Three.

**Individualism and Education**

**Purposes of Education**

Educational pursuits rooted in individualism reflect the various trends of individualism outlined above, including first and foremost the right of each individual to develop and choose his or her own path. “The task of a liberal society. . . is to protect each individual’s right to choose his or her own values; and the task of education in such a society
is to teach him or her how to do so" (Alexander 1992, 388). Secondly, the focus on the primacy of the individual over the collective and over a traditional body of knowledge or fixed set of outcomes, leads to a concern with "the individual learner, rather than the body of knowledge, upon the 'child' rather than the 'subject'" (Metz 1978, 4). "The central purpose of education is to be found in its impact on the separate individuals who receive it" (Watt 1989, 125). This approach responds to the belief that "... schooling has tended to suppress the individual," and seeks to create an environment that will encourage students to choose priorities and values and in so doing to achieve "self-definition, self-expression, self-realization" (Griffin and Nash 1990, 2). An underlying assumption of this proposition is that the child's interests, needs, and emotions are highly considered, and that "... all students should be active participants in the process of their own education" (Carroll 1975, 14). A third purpose of schooling which emphasizes the individual, is to prepare students for the competition which is a basic part of the adult world. Since differential rewards and ranks are integral to society, the recognition of "purposeful, productive, individual work in school" (Griffin and Nash 1990, 5) is a realistic foundation for living in a world where individuals benefit from their own diligence and initiative, and where "... performance, not birth, religion, or nationality (is) the touchstone" (Friedman 1980, 133).

According to Holmes (1991), the modern school has been influenced by two forces, technocratic and therapeutic. In the former, a utilitarian model, people are "... producers and consumers and should be trained to play their individual roles efficiently, productively, and intelligently." In the latter, people "... are searching for self-fulfillment and self-realization, guided by inner developmental forces which can be positive if only they can be identified and nurtured. ... Both ground their ideas in individualism" and both believe "...
that individuals can and ought to be freed from the constraints and inhibitions of their parents, their traditions, and their culture" (67). Holmes (1995) combines these ideologies into what he terms the “progressive,” “technocratic,” and “individualist.”

In 1902, in his influential work, *The Child and the Curriculum*, John Dewey wrote of an educational approach in which "the child is the starting point, the center, and the end. His development, his growth, is the ideal. It alone furnishes the standard" (1990, 187). The Deweyan version of individualism is most dominant in educational literature, and in Ontario schools (M. Holmes, personal correspondence, February 20, 1997).

Dewey was at the forefront of the battle to abolish the old tradition that the schools which society supports were merely charged with the somewhat static duty of handing on to each new generation a relatively fixed body of subject-matter items. He was anxious to consider the child who was being educated ... his name, therefore, became synonymous with the advocacy of the child-centered school and of the school that gave full emphasis to real interests and to learning through doing (Carmichael 1956, viii).

In 1911, Edward L. Thorndike wrote *Individuality*, emphasizing the importance of considering the uniqueness of individual students (Glaser 1977). As aptitude testing developed, this came to be an acceptable instrument for discerning differences among students. In 1925, educators contributed to *the 24th Yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education*, entitled *Adapting the Schools to Individual Differences*. Among them, Carleton Washburne wrote: "It has become palpably absurd to expect to achieve uniform results from uniform assignments, made to a class of widely differing individuals" (Glaser 1977, 6-7).

In the spirit of liberal or progressive traditions of education, individualistically-oriented schools are considered ideal environments for students to challenge, question, or disagree with prevailing cultural truths. Programs are developed which offer free choice to
students, according to what they consider relevant or interesting (Holmes 1984). Reflecting a society which values independence and competition, students' opinions and beliefs are to be accepted and cultivated, and they are encouraged to strive for individual success and achievement, through methods of self-directed learning and differential rewards (Boud 1981; Griffin and Nash 1990).

Influenced by the movement in the 1960s towards creating programs that foster self-actualization (Metz 1978), these individualistic goals have been developed in recent decades in Ontario schools. Holmes (1991) writes that teachers in Ontario have been trained "...in an atmosphere of therapeutic progressivism. Children's individual needs are to be addressed...programs that promote self-concept and happiness by means of active learning...based on individualized instruction in learning centers" (80). In 1980, the Ontario Ministry of Education stated as its first goal; to help "each student develop a responsiveness to the dynamic process of learning" (Holmes 1984, 39). An excerpt of the goals of Canadian schools reads: to "...foster an appreciation of diversity...teach that the freedom to maintain one's language, values, and customs is an essential and distinguishing feature of Canadian life" (Mallea 1978, 277).

There are voices which call for the cultivation of the individual in a less open-ended manner. Bloom (1987) writes:

Thus there are two kinds of openness, the openness of indifference - promoted with the twin purposes of humbling our intellectual pride and letting us be whatever we want to be, just as long as we don't want to be knowers - and the openness that invites us to the quest for knowledge and certitude, for which history and the various cultures provide a brilliant array of examples for examination. This second kind of openness encourages the desire that animates and makes interesting every serious student - 'I want to know what is good for me, what will make me happy' - while the former stunts that desire (41).
Wynne and Ryan (1993), skeptical of the value of strong individualism, advocate a striving for self-esteem that is not merely offered to students as an end in itself, but rather is coupled with diligence, hard work, and the resulting pride over achievement.

Some advocates of individualism posit that, despite research and theories which have promoted the importance of actively recognizing differences among students, schools consistently lack individualization. There is a record of a correspondence between the educator Ben Wood and John Dewey in the 1930s, in which Wood tells Dewey that schools had not changed since Dewey wrote about placing the child at "the center" (Glaser 1977). Glaser writes that in the 1970s the gap continues to exist between goal and practice, "... and we still seek the educational flexibility that fosters the development of each individual" (1977, 7). A study of over a hundred classrooms suggests no "purposeful, not random, efforts to provide for the learning needs of individuals" (Goodlad and Klein 1974, 56). A study published in 1989 of "at-risk" students in 76 schools in the United States found that "... teachers' lack of information about the students in their classrooms was one of the most important and troublesome issues turned up by the research" (McLaughlin and Talbert 1990, 231).

An important focus of this study is to explore the various trends and the manner in which individualism in one school is consistent in both practice and ideals.

**Individualism in the Classroom and the School**

The integration of individualism in the classroom and the school includes the following elements: recognizing the uniqueness and dignity of the individual student; caring for the needs of the individual student; cultivating the autonomy of the individual;
developing the student's faculty for independent thinking and decision-making, including taking a moral position; fostering, pluralism and tolerance; and encouraging competition. A school may not be entirely oriented in this mode, but can be considered individualistic if it contains elements of individualism, according to the appropriate readiness and ability of its students (Blackburn and Powell 1976; Boud 1981; Charles 1980).

**Uniqueness and Dignity of Each Student**

A basic assumption of individualistically-oriented education is that each child enters the classroom with unique skills, aptitudes, family background, and temperament. Working within this orientation, a primary responsibility of the teacher is to make it a priority to become familiar with each student as a unique learner. Most important for educators is "a respect for the soul . . . of the child, the sense of his innermost essence and his internal resources" (Maritain 1943, 9). This involves a deliberate process of understanding the individual learning style and capacity of each child, considering elements such as; the student's attention span, the student's optimal time period for attentive learning, the student's tolerance for classroom noise, motivating factors for each student, and appropriate types of materials and assignments for each student (Dunn and Dunn 1972). In order for each student to experience the achievement of success in learning, the teacher should make an effort to explore what is meaningful to each student and try to ensure appropriate rewards for effort and for excellence (Carroll 1975; Good and Stipek 1983). Outside of the classroom, students should have opportunities to develop and exhibit their talents in extra-curricular areas.

In an individualistically oriented structure, attending to the dignity of each child and encountering diversity in the classroom are challenges which extend beyond the sphere of
academics or activities. In order to try to address the needs of students, schools are encouraged to develop structures for communication between teachers and students, among students, between teachers and other teachers, and between teachers and parents to share information and insights about students. (Grant 1985; Jackson 1990; Lortie 1975; McLaughlin and Talbert 1990).

**Autonomy and Self-Direction**

Conceiving of children as autonomous learners implies that the process of learning is focused upon enabling the student to be self-directed. In this (Deweyan) model, students would take an active role in their learning wherever possible. This includes developing the abilities to determine their own learning needs, formulate objectives, identify and select from among resources, and evaluate their own progress (Knowles 1981). "All students are capable of working independently, it is not the exclusive province of the most able. Autonomous learning can take place at any level or at any age" (Boud 1981, 27). This does not necessarily imply that each child will work alone at all times; students will have opportunities to work alone or with other students.

Involving the student in setting learning objectives reinforces the ideal that the student is responsible for some aspect of his or her learning and that what one achieves may differ from what others achieve, according to their diverse needs, interests, and capacity. Encouraging competition in school (in academics, extra-curricular activities, or even in display of civic virtue such as sportsmanship or voluntarism) is an alternative way to underscore the diversity among students, and offer incentives for students to work hard in order to achieve and be recognized for their own individual efforts and successes. With the
teacher as a guide, each student can work towards an understanding of his or her strengths and limitations, set goals that are both realistic and challenging, and receive feedback and rewards for progress and success. In the academic context, this process may include choosing the actual content, selecting materials and assignments, voluntarily assuming extra learning responsibilities, determining the amount of work the student will cover or the pace at which the student will complete the work, and participating in self-evaluation. Outside of the classroom, this includes the active process of pursuing activities which will develop and exhibit the individual's talents and interests. (Blackburn and Powell 1976; Boud 1981; Carroll 1975; Charles 1980; Johnson and Johnson 1991; Marcus 1980; Popkewitz 1983; Treffinger et al. 1989; Wynne and Ryan 1993)

**Thinking and Decision-Making**

Respect for the integrity of each individual learner includes regard for his or her opinions, attitudes, and thought processes. Rather than assuming that these will naturally emerge in the course of study, individualistic approaches invite and stimulate thinking by creating a classroom environment, developing materials, and encouraging a teacher-student relationship that will develop the student's reasoning and decision-making. Classroom activities are sought that will actively involve students in analytical and evaluative processes, which are not limited by pre-determined "right" and "wrong" frameworks; freedom of choice being the priority—**how** to choose, but not **what** to choose (Gutmann 1990). Wynne and Ryan (1993) suggest that students may be encouraged to develop and adopt their own set of moral standards, or "motto," which will then be monitored, with rewards for achievement. Students are encouraged to reflect, classify, interpret, analyze, seek similarities and
differences, consider alternatives, choose, compare, predict, and formulate their own impressions and opinions. Students are guided in working through controversy and in clarifying and prioritizing their own values (Beck 1990; Blair 1988; Fenstermacher and Soltis 1986; Raths et al. 1986).

Opportunities to participate in decision-making exist outside of the academic realm as well, for example through student government and other extra-curricular activities.

The Role of the Teacher

The function of the teacher in an individualistic orientation is to create a learning environment which will increase the potential for each student’s unique development. "Attention to the young, knowing what their hungers are and what they can digest, is the essence of the craft. One must spy out and elicit those hungers. For there is no real education that does not respond to felt need" (Bloom 1987, 19). In this setting, the teacher’s relationship with each student necessarily varies according to each student’s needs, and as such the teacher makes every effort to adapt him or herself to the different levels of support, structure, communication, control, and guidance which will be appropriate for each individual student. As students are actively involved in their own learning, the teacher will consider their suggestions and opinions, wherever possible, and not rely solely on the traditional authority of title or position to enforce policy or practice. Although the teacher is not required to have all the answers or a formula for managing every situation, he or she is certainly not extraneous to the individualized learning process. The teacher’s experience, expertise, personal (religious and cultural, in some cases) background are relevant in guiding the student to become an autonomous, motivated, self-confident, and independent thinker.
and learner. "Life will happen to his students. The most he can hope is that what he might
give will inform life" (Bloom 1987, 21). The teacher approaches this challenge as a
facilitator who cares for each student, listens, is flexible, responsive, and accepting, and
guides each one through an individualized plan of reaching his or her own potential (Boud

In a school which espouses the values of individualism, individual teachers are
treated with caring and concern for their professional and personal development and with
respect for their independence and autonomy. Teachers are involved in decision-making,
and are recognized and respected for the unique skills and expertise which they bring to the
school, and are shown appreciation for dedication and effort. Feedback, including praise and
constructive criticism, and a system of rewards and sanctions are critical to individual
teacher development. (McLaughlin and Talbert 1990; Wynne and Ryan 1993)

Conclusion

The focus of individualism in this study is on its explicit and implicit development in
one private Jewish day school and five of its classrooms. The research touches upon the
formal, academic aspects of what is popularly considered in educational literature to be
individualization in the classroom, such as opportunities for self-directed learning,
differentiated assignments, and personalized pacing. Perhaps more germane to the research,
however, is how the school—in both formal and informal contexts—recognizes the individual,
for example: how excellence is encouraged and rewarded; how uniqueness and special need
are acknowledged; and how exceptions to the norm are approached.
A parallel feature of the observation is on the development of individualism on the levels of school structure and administration vis a vis teachers. Areas such as teacher autonomy in curricular development and classroom practice, teacher participation in decision-making, and teacher development are relevant to this tangential area of the study. Issues of pluralism in the school culture serve as a backdrop to the study, especially considering the ideology of the school as an institution of Conservative Judaism, the high proportion of teachers of Israeli origin, and the diversity of religious practice among students and teachers.

The voice of individualism has been heard throughout modern history and has resonated loudly in western culture, striking a distinctive chord in the field of education. Individualism cannot be dismissed as a passing trend or a philosopher’s construct; its influence on theory and practice of politics, religion, the family, and ethics has been significant. It is the immense popularity of individualism which serves as a motivation to look critically at its ripple effects in every area of social life. If there are benefits to autonomy and freedom, what then are the costs? If loosening the bonds of history and tradition is liberating, how then will we be defined and identified? If rejecting external moral authority is more authentic, what then will be its replacement? In Chapter Two, these and other questions will be addressed, in the context of an exploration of community.
CHAPTER TWO
COMMUNITY

The ongoing quest for meaning and purpose in the lives of modern citizens has not been satisfied by individualism alone. The proliferation of fundamentalist religious movements is but one example of a passionate (albeit extreme) clinging to the absolute authority of structure and community. On a more moderate level, one can find even self-sufficient individualists seeking out a network of community through family, collegial relationships, and social organizations. In the following chapter, the subject of community will be explored from a variety of perspectives, including its influence in philosophical, political, cultural, sociological, moral, and religious spheres, and particularly in the theory and practice of education. This exploration of community is intended to serve as a backdrop to the examination of the development of community in the school and classrooms which were observed in this study.

The term community in this thesis refers to a specific understanding of the role of society and social groups, including the following:

- A community may be defined as a group of people who share common history (however short) and traditions.

- There is a moral authority imposed upon (and accepted by) the members of a community through its norms, obligations, sanctions, values, and attitudes.

- People in a community interact and depend on one another with loyalty and concern.
• People in a community may share a physical environment or geographical boundaries, or they may be bound by their lifestyle and beliefs, even when not geographically segregated.

• Members and non-members of a community are clearly distinguishable. (Bellah et al. 1985; Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Dewey 1990b; Grant 1985; Griffin and Nash 1990; Holmes and Wynne 1989; Raywid 1988)

The following sections will elaborate upon the various aspects of community outlined above.

**History and Tradition**

One element that unites people is the sharing of a common history of experiences, memories, and associations (even over a relatively short period of time, such as a summer or an academic year). A shared legacy of adversity or of prosperity will unify individuals as a community. Those who feel a commitment to their historical community and a link to its members believe that their identity can be traced to that community. "The possession of an historical identity and the possession of a social identity coincide" (MacIntyre 1984, 221). Current norms of a community have greater significance and validity when they have been maintained over time.

A shared history is reinforced when the community is also linked by a common way of life, including values, traditions, and "a bond of shared expectations" (Nash and Griffin 1987, 561). These traditions may be cultural in nature, including customs, symbols, patterns of behavior, and language (Geertz 1973). Traditions may also be rooted in religious ideology, which provides "a set of ideas and practices tied to a comprehensive worldview and a conception of what is ultimately important in life" (Beck 1990, 158). As the legendary
Tevye the Milkman proclaimed in *Fiddler on the Roof*: “Because of our tradition, every one of us knows who he is and what God expects him to do.”

**Social Roles and Relationships**

In traditional societies, each individual acquires a social role in relation to his or her membership in a particular group or family. All responsibilities and privileges are clearly defined according to the particular status which the society attributes to that role. An individual's obligations and personal destiny were not randomly or independently pursued, but rather were strictly demarcated by systems of kinship and household. Organized religion or government has also been influential in regulating social roles at different points in history. "To know oneself as such a social person . . . is to find oneself placed at a certain point on a journey with set goals" (MacIntyre 1984, 34).

This depiction lends itself to an understanding of a community whose members are socially interdependent and whose relationships are defined by collectively assumed and accepted expectations and obligations. The society determines its norms, standards, practices, and duties. Its members share these guidelines and are willing to work for the good of the community, which takes precedence over individual achievement (Triandis 1988). To be successful "means achieving the goals set by your family and community" (Bellah et al. 1985, 8).

In his work on conservatism, Scruton (1980) asserts that since individuals are born into a particular family and society (or assigned to a particular classroom, as the case may be) without choice, there is no social contract, but rather a naturally evolving set of social relationships, responding to need and obligation. A community may contractually decide
upon a particular path (for example, to go to war), but basic social relationships are natural and not contractual.

It is important to recognize that communities with shared social roles and boundaries are often not joined by their members voluntarily. Army units, prisons, hospital wards, and classrooms are potential communities whose members do not usually choose to join, yet still share an established set of social relationships and mores. Children's membership of families, schools, and classrooms is nearly always enjoined.

In the ideal, a community which is structured around social relationships includes a framework of philanthropy and benevolence. Members of such a community consider each other's welfare as important as their own. However, skeptics of an all-encompassing community model might point to those who are inevitably left out and isolated; not the self-proclaimed individualists, but rather those who are rejected by community members.

Champions of the social community view it as ultimately benefiting the individual, in addition to organizing the collective in a meaningful and coherent fashion. In the words of several of these proponents: man only realizes his "true nature" when involved in society (Durkheim 1973, 68); "... a self can never be described without reference to those who surround it" (Taylor 1989, 35); "... only in community with others has each individual the means of cultivating his gifts in all directions" (Lukes 1973, 71, on Marx); "... my good as a man is one and the same as the good of others with whom I am bound up in human community" (MacIntyre 1984, 229, on Aristotle).
The Moral Authority of Community

Critical to the viability of a community is that its members consider the forces of history, tradition, ideology, or social structure to be binding upon them. "Only society is beyond the individual. It is therefore from society that all authority emanates" (Durkheim 1973, 91).

One way that a community attains this authority is when its goals are perceived as moral goals. "To act morally is to act in terms of the collective interest . . . the domain of the moral begins where the domain of the social begins" (Durkheim 1973, 59,60). "Perhaps the most urgent and powerful cluster of demands that we recognize as moral concern the respect for the life, integrity, and well-being, even flourishing of others" (Taylor 1989, 4). "Morality and social structure are in fact one and the same" (MacIntyre 1984, 123).

When moral precepts are considered to be immutable and unable to be influenced by sociological, historical, or psychological factors, they achieve a status of the absolute. When a community has control over its individual members and there is consensus that its decisions are morally binding, then a presumption can be made which links the traditional authority of community with moral absolutism.

From an absolutist perspective, virtues and truths can be consistently defined and identified in a manner analogous to empirical facts. This worldview draws from classical traditions, which dictated their fixed notions of morality as rational principles which were binding upon all individuals. In religious contexts, the source of this morality is usually divine (Durkheim 1973; MacIntyre 1984; Taylor 1989).

Critics of this model of moral absolutism would point to the potential for prejudice and "excessive conformity" (Beck 1990, 161) in the name of Truth. To communitarians,
however, the compelling feature of a community which claims absolute moral authority is that its precepts offer a clear framework of beliefs and practices. Each member of the community has the security of knowing where he or she fits into that schema and what are the proper guidelines for behavior and attitude. Since absolute morality is not individually ordained, it does not have to be established for each situation. Its function is "... to determine conduct, to fix it, to eliminate the element of individual arbitrariness" (Durkheim 1973, 27). The individual within this community is secure in the knowledge that the framework will be basically constant in this and the next generation, and that any changes will be made within a context of shared ideals. This outlook is one which defends community in rationalist, consequentialist terms. But the typical member of an all-embracing, enduring community (such as a traditional or religious society) is likely to act on faith as much as reason, simply asserting that the community's beliefs are based on a good, or more specifically, on God.

Community as Opposed to Individualism

Communitarians not only uphold the worthwhile aspects of living in community for its sake alone, but they also speak out vociferously against individualism as an ideology and against its practical implications for society. The very tenets of individualism clash with those of community in several ways.

Individualism Leads to Isolation

"The ambiguity of human life always requires that there be distinctions between good and bad... The great change is that a good man used to be the one who cares for others..."
Now the good man is the one who knows how to care for himself" (Bloom 1987, 178).

Certain trends of individualism lead to isolation which is a negative state of being, implying a lack of affiliation with others and a lack of external structure. "Self-reliance is a virtue that implies being alone" (Bellah et al. 1985,15). Freedom, a crucial component of individualism, can also lead to isolation, because if one forms bonds and relationships of cooperation and attachment, those attachments "would imply obligations that necessarily impinge on one's freedom" (Bellah et al. 1985, 23).

The results of this have certainly been felt in the context of the family, where the quest for individual freedom, autonomy, and choice may be linked to the breakdown of the intact family in today's society. "If current trends continue, less than half of all children born today will live continuously with their own mother and father throughout childhood" (Whitehead 1993, 47). This arouses a basic challenge:

How do we begin to reconcile our long-standing belief in equality and diversity with an impressive body of evidence that suggests that not all family structures produce equal outcomes for children? How can we square traditional notions of public support for dependent women and children with a belief in women's right to pursue autonomy and independence in child-bearing and child-rearing? How do we uphold the freedom of adults to pursue individual happiness in their private relationships and at the same time respond to the needs of children for stability, security, and permanence in their family lives? What do we do when the interests of adults and children conflict? These are the difficult issues at stake in the debate over family structure (Whitehead 1993, 48).

*Individualism is Amoral*

"For liberal individualism a community is simply an arena in which individuals each pursue their own self-chosen conceptions of the good life, and political institutions exist to provide that degree of order which makes such self-determined activity possible" (MacIntyre 1984, 195). Individualism allows no external barometer of truth, justice, or virtue that may
supersede the needs and inclinations of individuals. Individualism offers only "... external success and the intuition of feeling inwardly more or less free, comfortable, and authentic on which to ground our self-approval ... reveal nothing of the shape moral character should take, the limits it should respect, and the community it should serve" (Bellah et al. 1985, 79).

Believers in the legitimacy of community challenge the relativistic nature of individualism, and try to warn society of the dangers of being overtaken by its allure. MacIntyre (1984) observes: "Each moral agent now spoke unconstrained by the externalities of divine law, natural teleology or hierarchical authority, but why should anyone else now listen to him?" (68). Even Taylor (1989), a prominent Canadian liberal philosopher, states: "A total and fully consistent subjectivism would tend towards emptiness; nothing would count as a fulfillment in a world in which literally nothing was important but self-fulfillment" (507). Bloom (1987) questions: "But when there are no shared goals or vision of the public good, is the social contract any longer possible?" (27). (Scruton [1980] would quickly respond that the very concept of a social contract bears the seed of the destruction of community.)

A basic question posed to individualists relates to the basis for ethical choices if there is no external moral structure. Traditionalists query: "If their happiness is the ultimate good, then what happens when my happiness is in conflict with theirs?" (Griffin and Nash 1990, 16). Bowers (1985) asserts that modern educational thought, in accepting individualism and moral relativism, tacitly leads to nihilism.
**Individualism Ignores History and Tradition**

Tocqueville claimed that individualists "owe no man anything and hardly expect anything from anybody... imagine that their whole destiny is in their hands... such people come to forget their ancestors, but also their descendants, as well as isolating themselves from their contemporaries" (Bellah et al. 1985, 37). Individualists perceive of the past as restrictive and oppressive, and they view change and rejection of traditional structures as synonymous with progress and a more enlightened worldview. They fear intolerance and its potential for restricting their right of individual expression, and therefore turn to relativism as an alternative to history and tradition. "The authority of tradition and community simply loses plausibility when the language of process, emancipation, and modernization establishes a new set of conceptual orthodoxies" (Bowers 1985, 471).

**Community and North American Culture**

Communities based on "interaction and mutual dependence... communication... and an ethic of individual concern and sympathy... solidarity and mutual support" (Raywid 1988, 198), were not exclusive to classical or medieval times. Examples of communities bound by social relationships and obligations are found in early rural America, including: the "Biblican and Republican" ideals of citizenship, participation, and national glory; and the puritan ideal of community, which was to "rejoice together, mourn together, labor and suffer together" (Bellah et al. 1985, 28).

When Tocqueville visited the United States in the 1830s, he was reportedly disturbed by the inclination towards individualism, but still found that local communities exhibited concern and communal responsibility. Prior to major industrial trends in North America,
Americans lived in small towns, had small farms or businesses, and generally associated success with healthy family and active civic life. As industry and urban living expanded in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, "trade and exchange would replace traditional ranks and loyalties as the coordinating mechanism of social life" (Bellah et al. 1985, 35-6).

A major change in twentieth century America has been that common local life is traded for vast technical economic life, and the influences of work are separated from home, family, and community. Professional success becomes a high priority, and communities evolve whose lightly bound membership criteria are economic strata and lifestyle. The "... notion that one discovers one's deepest beliefs in, and through, tradition and community is not very congenial to Americans. Most of us imagine an autonomous self existing independently, entirely outside any tradition and community, and then perhaps choosing one" (Bellah et al. 1985, 65).

"As the slivering of America has proceeded, the received wisdom has become that common values are impossible in so diverse a country, and perhaps not a very good idea, in any case" (Klein 1992, 22). This has led to the observation that there are few traditional communities in America today, only simulations or "lifestyle communities," which bind individuals into social groups, based on fleeting interests, either leisure or professional, rather than on ideology, history, or tradition (Bellah et al.1985; Raywid 1988). However, those who have found support in the company of other like-minded individuals, for example in the "consciousness raising" groups of the women's movement (Deckard 1975) or in self-help organizations, such as Alcoholics Anonymous (Triandis 1988), still benefit from some of the features inherent in traditional community. Holmes comments that: "The only genuine residual communities in North America are based on religion, the Amish and
Orthodox Jews, on language, culture, and ethnicity, the Inuit, the Quebecois, and some Hispanic American societies” (M. Holmes, personal correspondence, August 26, 1997, 5).

Burke (1978) comments on Canada’s multiculturalism that “Canadians are struggling to define a unique Canadian identity; the concept is so elusive, it escapes definition . . . (due to the) impersonal urban society, an emerging middle class, the search for a meaningful folklore and folk heroes, and the need for dependable boundaries” (419-20). “Multiculturalism, therefore, challenges Canadians to think through their allegiances, to examine the justifications for them, to make their traditions live in the community and evolve” (Ray 1990, 59).

Community in the Jewish Tradition

A Jew cannot live a truly authentic Jewish life in isolation. There is "no piety without the fellow man" (Baeck 1974, 193). Jews consider that they are linked to other Jews through a common history that traces back to Biblical times. The Torah, or Bible, which is the blueprint for Jewish law and custom, is also the historical document which links Jews to common ancestors and a record of a covenant with God, promising the land of Israel to the Jewish nation. "On the basis of their origins, Jews everywhere have regarded themselves as members of a family" (Donin 1972, 8). Centuries of oppression and exile, climaxing in the Holocaust of World War Two, have caused Jews to cling to one another for security and out of a sense of shared destiny. “As we face the new challenges, let us not forget the first law of Jewish sociology: Jewish continuity has always been predicated on our conviction that we are an am kadosh (holy nation), a people set apart by its distinctive vision and mission” (Wertheimer 1994, 25).
Membership in the Jewish faith has closed boundaries. It is limited to those born of a Jewish mother, or those who undergo a rigorous conversion process, subject to legal conditions. (In many Reform Jewish communities, someone born of a Jewish father is considered Jewish.) Jews feel a responsibility to care for other Jews, as is evidenced in the last decade by the absorption of oppressed Soviet and Ethiopian Jews into Israel. A familiar Jewish expression is: *Kol Yisrael Arevim Zeh lazeh.* “All Jews are responsible one for the other.” (*Talmud, Baba Kama 92a*) Jews have traditionally separated themselves from other nations by marrying only within the faith, by dressing in prescribed modest fashion, by eating only kosher foods, and by maintaining the separate language of Hebrew, considered a holy tongue. “We remain Jews because we are part of the community of Israel, which has agreed to live its life as a separate community, for all time, in obedience to God” (Seymour Siegel, quoted in Donin 1972, 31).

Authority in Judaism is derived from the *halacha*, or legal code, which directs every aspect of a Jew’s life. The Jew “... who accepts the package takes upon himself the entire system of *mitzvot* (commandments) for one reason alone: because they represent the will of God for the Jewish people” (Gillman 1990, 47). (Reform, Reconstructionist, and secular Jews would not necessarily consider themselves bound by this code.)

In Judaism ... the authority of the Torah affects how we behave much more than what we believe ... the hallmark of religious authenticity in Judaism has always been adherence to God’s laws ... Judaism has been prepared to tolerate wide variations in the formulation of its belief content, but its behavioral obligations have been analyzed and codified with all of the rigor that characterizes any code of Law (Gillman, 1990, 39).

This acceptance of authority offers a unifying thread to Jews that transcends history and geography.
The Jewish tradition abounds with laws and ethical precepts regarding the relationships among members of a community. There are Biblical and Rabbinic injunctions regarding concern for the stranger, the orphan, and the widow, charity to the poor, visiting the sick, comforting the mourner, caring for the bride, returning lost possessions, guarding against gossip or embarrassment, and so on. "Love your neighbor as yourself" and other commandments "... which implement the love of man are no less imperative than those commandments which symbolize the love of God" (Donin 1972, 49). These precepts are not exclusively designed for other Jews, but rather for any human being in need. "If your enemy is hungry, give him bread to eat; if he is thirsty, give him water to drink" (Proverbs, 25:21).

Normative Judaism is inspired by the Biblical concepts "It is not good for man to be alone" (Genesis, 2:18) and "Two are better off than one... For should they fall, one can raise the other" (Ecclesiastes, 4:9-10). For example, one's obligation to pray is best fulfilled in a quorum with other worshippers. A traditional prayerbook is more or less uniform for all Jewish communities around the world. Most prayers in the Jewish prayerbook are written in the plural, asking for peace, good health, or forgiveness for the entire nation. Every Jewish community has a central meeting location, which serves as a house of prayer, gathering, and study. Relationships of marriage and family are very important to the fulfillment of many Jewish commandments. The tractate of Avot in the Mishna exhorts: "Do not separate yourself from the community" (4:6), implying that it is in the best interest of the Jew to be involved in community with other Jews. (In the United States, according to the 1990 National Jewish Population Survey, 41 per cent of adult Jews in entirely Jewish families are reported to be members of synagogues [Wertheimer 1996, 7].)
While Conservative Judaism has embraced its motto of "Tradition and Change," some would posit that the ideal of change has superseded that of tradition. (This is less the case in Canada where Conservative congregations “tend to retain more traditional liturgical forms and some of the more formal practices that characterized Conservative synagogues of an earlier time” [Wertheimer 1996, 19].) Although 62% of respondents in a recent survey of Conservative Jewry said that “Conservative Jews are obligated to obey halacha” (Wertheimer 1996, 10), only 24% of affiliated Conservative Jews reportedly keep the laws of kashruth (a significant example of basic Jewish practice, unifying Jews and separating them from non-Jews) (Wertheimer, 1996, 35). Wertheimer (1994) writes:

The time has come for the Conservative movement to clarify to itself where it is fundamentalist, where it will not bend, where it does draw the line . . . Many Conservative Jews may not agree with or even understand all of those religious principles, let alone observe the bulk of mitzvot (commandments), but they want to know that Judaism is a normative religious system with a set of obligations, not merely a “pick and choose” religion that helps Jews feel good. If we wish to compete for these Jews, we must clarify our understanding of the obligations of Judaism, not just the rights of Jews (24).

Of the estimated 1.8 million Conservative Jews in the United States, approximately half affiliate with synagogues (Wertheimer 1996, 32), and intermarriage (“often understood as a measure of assimilation”), is estimated at 6% for synagogue members and 36% for non-affiliated Conservative Jews (Wertheimer, 1996, 35). However, a recent survey suggests that the youth and young adult generations of Conservative Jews are increasingly seeking more intensive formal Jewish education and higher education1 and informal educational experiences, such as trips to Israel, participation in youth movements, summer camps, and

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1In 1996-97, there were a total of 615 students enrolled at the Conservative movement’s Jewish Theological Seminary. This number included: 90 students in the Davidson Graduate School of Education, and in the entering
university campus activities, (Wertheimer 1996, 24-5). This suggests a growing desire for affiliation and sense of belonging within the Conservative community.

As the school in this study is representative of the tensions facing contemporary Judaism with regard to community and individualism, its Israeli teachers are, to some extent, representative of the tensions within Israel of the individual and the collective. Because of the collective struggle to build the small country of Israel into a viable and peaceful state, there is a strong sense of community in Israel as exhibited by the closeness and informality of relationships and the familiarity even with state leaders and officials. The entire country of Israel mourns the loss of any one individual who is lost in battle or tragedy, as if each was a member of one extended family. Israel’s history has contributed to the veneration of the collective, as seen, for example, in the development of the kibbutz. Zionism has offered an important identity to individuals and encouraged the sharing of resources in order to succeed. Army training, which most Israelis experience, emphasizes collective responsibility for one another. Israeli heroes are those who have contributed to the society, and successful political parties are those which accentuate the collective. The negative side of this close community is felt in the lack of privacy and anonymity, the many personal sacrifices made for the sake of the state, and the greater intensity of everyday life (Meyer 1982).

Community and Education

Purposes of Education

"Every educational system has a moral goal that it tries to attain and that informs its curriculum. It wants to produce a certain kind of human being" (Bloom 1987, 26). The classes, 44 in Rabbinical school, 10 in Cantorial school, and 48 in the Freshman undergraduate class (Rabbinical
purposes of education that parallel the goals and tenets of the community ideology are: socialization and transmission of culture, moral development, and the inculcation of loyalty and cooperation. The school is considered to be a partner with the family and religious institutions for conveying cultural priorities and has authority in shaping the moral judgment of the next generation.

**Socialization and Transmission of Culture**

School is an excellent instrument for linking children to their society, their religion, and their community by exposing them to the most important and valuable aspects of their culture and by developing an appreciation for their traditions. According to the community perspective, schools should not only transmit culture as an objective, historical artifact, but should assert its timeless relevance, should motivate students to want to learn and adopt its ideals, and should offer the opportunity and skills to participate in developing and furthering the culture. The importance of continuity should be emphasized, as well as the benefits of learning from history and tradition. Maritain (1943) writes that the aims of education are "to guide man in the evolving dynamism through which he shapes himself as a human person . . . while at the same time conveying to him the spiritual heritage of the nation and the civilization in which he is involved, and preserving in this way the century-old achievements of generations" (10). This presents a particular challenge to Canadian schools, whose ideal of multiculturalism mandates that schools reflect and legitimate a variety of cultures (Mallea 1978).
To become fully participating members of their community, students should learn that they are "capable of participating in collectively shaping their society" (Gutmann 1990, 12). Students should not only develop an appreciation for the roots of their culture, but understand why it is worthwhile to sustain many of its traditions, while striving to improve others. The school itself also develops its own culture, with history and traditions, which may serve as a microcosm of the larger society, offering exposure and experience to students on how to function and succeed within their culture (Adler 1982; Beck 1990; Bloom 1987; Dewey 1990b; Maritain 1943; Metz 1978; Peters 1965; Woocher 1988).

*Moral Development*

Schools which are committed to developing community, concern themselves with the moral development of students which involves an awareness of and a commitment to truth, justice, responsibility, cooperation, respect, and self-control, among other absolute values. In the context of Judaeo-Christian schools in the western cultural tradition, virtue "is not, for traditionalists, a commodity that happens to be useful to schools in the maintenance of order and discipline. . . . Virtue . . . is both the means and goal of education" (Holmes 1984, 34).

Education "implies the intentional bringing about of a desirable state of mind" (Peters 1965, 91). The school fulfills this responsibility by representing moral values in its philosophy and standards, policies and procedures, through the accessibility of appropriate role models, and a deliberate approach to conflict and responsibility to school-mates.

A communitarian school not only represents these values in its operation, but actively strives to "shape the character and lives of those who experience it" (Greenfield 1989, 8).
"For the main point is surely to be a good man, rather than to be a learned man" (Maritain 1943, 20). School has "a fundamental responsibility to help students arrive at true . . . beliefs" (Beck 1990, 74).

Durkheim (1973) asserts that a critical component of the moral process is the learning and internalization of living within limits and boundaries. The " . . . capacity for self-control is itself one of the chief powers that education should develop" (45). While tolerance is a value to be cultivated, there are behaviors and lifestyles which are intolerable. A traditional, communitarian school has as a priority the necessity to have authority to determine what this framework is for its own students (Holmes 1982). Peshkin (1986) quotes an educational leader in a fundamentalist Christian school; "Public institutions tolerate everything . . . I don't know anything that's restricted anymore" (7). This comment reflects a view that the current educational reality (one of personal freedom and autonomy) is antithetical to the goals of moral development in education.

Loyalty and Cooperation

School is an ideal atmosphere for fostering the social values of the adult world, where participation in family, work, and community all require interaction and cooperation with others. Clearly stated in the works of Dewey (1938, 1990b), school has the potential and the responsibility to simulate community life, including division of labor, accountability, cooperation, loyalty, a sense of belonging, and service to others. Dewey was concerned that in the age of the industrial revolution, children no longer had the opportunity to take responsibility and experience mutual concern in an extended family, neighborhood, or community. Dewey's answer to this perceived social deficiency was that " . . . school itself
shall be made a genuine form of active community life, instead of a place set apart in which to learn lessons" (1990b, 14).

A generation later, educators express concern that in a modern society of high mobility and unstable family structures, leaders of educational institutions cannot assume that students experience community through family, neighborhood, civic, or religious affiliations (Raywid 1988; Whitehead 1993). Young people today may not necessarily be exposed to "... heroes who stand for the worth of tradition, social morality, personal virtues, a work ethic, a stable family, and enduring personal relationships" (Griffin and Nash 1990, 16). They may not experience the satisfaction and security of membership in a group with any sense of permanence or longevity. School may be the ideal and natural place to develop skills for collective co-existence and to provide experiences that engender loyalty and concern for others (Gutmann 1990; Maritain 1943; Johnson and Johnson 1991; Lickona 1987; Wolfson 1981).

Community in the Classroom and the School

The advancement of community in the classroom and the school can be understood as a manifestation of the purposes of education outlined above. These include: maintaining history and tradition, including socialization and transmission of culture; moral development, including limits, standards of behavior, and self-control; the promotion of social roles and responsibilities, including cooperation with and service to others, interdependence and mutual concern, and the experience of membership in and loyalty to a community.
**History and Tradition**

The school as a community is legitimated by its historical past and by the knowledge that its traditions, values, and norms evolved over time out of the concerned deliberations of generations of educators, parents, and students. It also represents traditions of the broader culture and community. Because of these established roots, the current practices of the school are not viewed as transient or temporary norms and values, which can be easily discarded. This is especially relevant in a school where there is a low turnover of staff and where students attend for several consecutive years, so that they have an opportunity to internalize the school's values. Since a classroom community (in North America) usually builds and lasts only over the course of one year, students experience history and tradition within the broader context of the school (Meltzoff 1990).

School traditions include participation in and support of extra-curricular activities, such as athletic teams, dramatic and musical productions, commemoration of the completion of units of study, school newspaper, yearbook, and graduation ceremonies. These activities inspire loyalty to the school and contribute to school spirit and sense of belonging (Holmes and Wynne 1989; Wynne and Ryan 1993).

A school can reinforce the significance of its history and traditions by honoring important people who contributed to the development of the school and by recognizing the past achievements of students and graduates, through school rituals and ceremonial events, and through the display of physical memorabilia.

Students can be encouraged to appreciate that their present school tenure will be the legacy of the next generation, and in this light, to care for the school and its traditions. Some
schools may instrumentalize this ideal of linking the generations by inviting physical class
donations which have a permanent place in the school (Wynne and Ryan 1993).

When a school represents a particular cultural or religious ideology, the traditions and
norms of the school are directly related to the traditions of that ideology. Special events in
the school calendar parallel the religious or cultural cycle of ritual or celebration. Students
are inspired to feel that they are creating their own community as a microcosm of their
ideological communities over history and around the world (Wolfson 1981). This will be
further developed in Chapter Three, with regard to the Jewish Day School.

*Moral Development*

As a school interprets its own boundaries, goals, norms, and values that define it as a
community, it is preparing children to function in other social settings and communities.
The moral development of children in school does not merely orient them to a particular set
of permissible and forbidden behaviors (such as a dress code), but to a general perspective,
which includes: an understanding of the concept of limits; an acceptance of authority figures
who define those limits for the whole community and its individual members; and an ability
to distinguish between right and wrong, and to exert self-control. The creation of a moral
community requires consensus among its leaders and constituents as to the ideals of right
and wrong. In a school bound by a religious or cultural ideology, this framework is provided
by the tenets of the ideology. The need for an articulated mission statement or behavioral
code may actually be an indicator of the breakdown of community, as it implies that there is
not a mutual understanding of the community's ideals.
"Children should not be invited to reinvent the moral world" (Wynne and Ryan 1993, 123), however, they can be given specific skills to develop their moral judgment and moral reasoning. In the classroom, teachers use everyday events and academic lessons as vehicles to model, to discuss, and to establish standards of behavior and thinking. Opportunities are created for: respecting others and learning to take their perspective; appreciating and displaying honesty, kindness, and fairness; utilizing moral criteria in situations of conflict or dilemma; and formalizing cooperation with and service to others as a framework of behavior and relationships (Lickona 1987; Meltzoff 1990; Wolfson 1981).

The establishment of rules and discipline in a school or classroom is a critical component of moral development. "The fundamental element of morality is the spirit of discipline" (Durkheim 1973, 31). Obedience is not merely a mechanism of maintaining order, but is part of the moral imperative of understanding limits and accepting authority and consequences. "Rules . . . structure how we see the world and our place in it . . . rules define reality . . . as students embrace rules, they take part not only in short-term behaviors but also in far-reaching ways of thinking about themselves and the world" (Boostrom 1991, 195,198).

Adherence to rules and moral behavior can be reinforced in the classroom or school by structuring recognition and reward which is valued by the students. Rather than singling out individuals for reward, communitarian schools may offer incentives for collective achievement (Bronfenbrenner 1970).

Social Roles and Responsibility

In traditional cooperative settings, children did not have to be deliberately trained to adopt social roles or to work cooperatively with others, as the sharing of resources and
interaction with other people to achieve common goals were considered normative elements of membership in community life. However, in modern Western society, children are not generally required to assume multiple roles, and many activities are motivated by individual reward or success (Graves and Graves 1985). As stated earlier, school is an appropriate vehicle to offer children the experience of membership in a community and the obligations accompanying that experience.

Many of those experiences of membership occur on the level of the classroom, which, by establishing its own set of boundaries, goals, symbols, and traditions represents the larger school community. In some countries (Israel and Japan, for example), it is common for classes to remain together with the same teacher for a number of years, in order to foster student development within a consistent, ongoing structure of relationships. In some schools (where students change classes frequently according to subject and level), the “homeroom” provides students with continuity of peers and teachers and has the potential to serve as a “microcommunity” (Wynne and Ryan 1993, 177). Additional opportunities for membership exist through involvement in extra-curricular organizations such as athletic teams, the school newspaper, or student government, which also have requirements for belonging, clearly articulated standards, traditions, and symbols (such as, uniforms, colors, a mascot, or an anthem). Strong support of these organizations by all school members (for example, wearing school colors or attending events) would be characteristic of a strong school community.

A more liberal interpretation of community suggests that it is developed through cooperative experiences such as academic learning groups. Proponents of this form of learning claim that it raises levels of academic achievement, while raising motivation (Slavin
1985; Johnson and Johnson 1991). Different forms of cooperative learning have in common the use of small groups of mixed ability, gender, and ethnicity to work together on common goals. In some cases, individual group members have separate tasks which contribute to the common purpose of the group. Students involved in cooperative learning would ideally benefit from the opportunity to work together with a variety of peers. Wynne and Ryan (1993), comment, however, that the frequent shifting and re-grouping of students which occurs in classrooms and schools which are engaged in cooperative learning may actually have a negative effect on the desired goal of overall classroom and school community as students may develop more superficial relationships and experience a lack of continuity.

Some educators posit that the guiding social framework of a classroom or school community is one of cooperation with and service to others. Students can learn through practical tasks, division of labor, participatory decision-making, and collective academic assignments that the optimal way of functioning is by looking out for the interests of others and trying to achieve a common language of understanding. This would include creating an atmosphere conducive to communicating feelings and opinions, where there is active listening to and respect for the opinions of others, compromising, solving of conflicts openly and collectively, taking turns, and caring about others as members of the group. Teachers and students together participate in establishing the decision-making process for the class, which clarifies norms and rules, and involves a rotation of roles (for example, teaching, assisting other students, and doing administrative chores). It is believed that involving students in this process and exposing them to different classroom functions, will broaden their experience and increase their empathy to teachers and other students. This model can extend itself to
participation in school-wide decision-making, activities, or leadership (Graves and Graves 1985; Lickona 1987; Meltzoff 1990; Wolfson 1981).

There is a fine line between this liberal model of community and ideals of individualism. Schools with a more conservative notion of community may emphasize respect for traditional authority figures and commitment to established norms and values to a greater extent than they would promote or facilitate leadership or decision-making roles for students.

Role of the Teacher

In the community perspective, the teacher should serve as a representative, a partner, and a role-model of the culture which the school is striving to transmit to students (Byram 1990; Bronfenbrenner 1970; Wynne and Ryan 1993). Teachers do not only impart intellectual knowledge, but also reflect standards of conduct (Dewey 1938). "Teachers are constantly transmitting values both through their behaviour and through what they teach" (Beck 1990, 149). In a community perspective, teachers are deliberately and actively involved in modeling values and guiding students towards socialization and development of moral character within the framework of interdependence and service to others.

Teachers are expected to set high standards and serve as an example of diligence and self-improvement. Teachers should model appropriate concern for all students and members of the school community. Teachers should not be reluctant to assert authority and take a stand in advancing moral principles (Wynne and Ryan 1993).

Teachers who originate from a different culture or religious orientation than the host culture of the school may encounter conflicts between their own priorities and those of the
school. In a community perspective, transmitting the goals of the school is a higher priority than expressing the teacher's own personal or cultural priorities. Some schools will only hire teachers who represent the goals of the school in their personal practice and background.

In a school which espouses the values of community, the relationship of the school leadership to teachers and the collegial relationship of teachers with their peers is relevant to the creation of community in the school as a whole. Teachers often feel cut-off from their colleagues, as each classroom functions as its own separate unit, however by encouraging teacher communication, for example through group meetings and involvement of teachers in discussions of policy and practice, and by facilitating faculty social events and encouraging teachers to attend extra-curricular events, there may be a stronger sense of teacher loyalty, commitment, and feelings of belonging to the school community (McLaughlin and Talbert 1990; Wynne and Ryan 1993).

Conclusion

This study focuses on the development of community in a Jewish day school, with the assumption that features of individualism will be present as well. The areas of research which reflect community in the school and its classrooms include the formal, academic use of groups for learning, as well as the more informal development of friendship and loyalty. Also observed is the sense of belonging that students express to the school, for example by membership in school organizations and participation in school-wide events. Areas of discipline and authority are explored, with a focus on (individual and) collective mechanisms of sanction and reward. Particular consideration is given to the formation of the school as a microcosm of a religious and cultural Jewish community, primarily through ritual and
celebration, and to the tensions inherent in being an institution of the Conservative movement of Judaism, with a Jewish studies staff comprised primarily of native Israelis. A parallel feature of the observation is on the development of community among teachers, including collective participation in the development of policy and practice, communication, and collegiality.

Community has been presented as the more traditional of the two values explored in this study, with the assertion that community established itself as the norm, and that individualism developed in order to refute its legitimacy. In modern times, both community and individualism as ideologies vie for a claim on truth and authority. Proponents of both individualism and community call for allegiance to and acceptance of the tenets of their value. This can lead to competition between the different schools of thought, as well as conflict within individual people, movements, and organizations which try to reflect both individualism and community. For example, in a school which demands unquestioning acceptance of principal and teacher authority, individual teachers may encourage diversity of opinion in the classroom, suggesting the development of both individualism and community in one setting.

As stated earlier, the entering assumption of this study was not that either individualism or community is exclusively represented in schools. For a variety of factors, it seemed likely that both individualism and community would continuously present themselves at each level of inquiry. In Chapter Three, these factors will be explored in the context of an examination of private schooling and the Jewish day school.
CHAPTER THREE
PRIVATE SCHOOLS AND THE JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Individualism and community are only two among many values which underlie the stated purposes of education. Schools are not autonomous institutions, but rather they are representatives of the aspirations and objectives of a society, a government, a culture, a religion, a community, a cluster of families, or some combination of these groups. Different approaches to schooling reflect diverse ways of viewing children, as well as varied perspectives on what skills and qualities ought to be acquired by the next generation of adults and how best to cultivate these. While it may be commonly agreed that school is a place of learning, there is no consensus on which particular learning endeavors must take precedence, and evaluating the success of schooling necessarily involves looking at the school in the context of its aims and intentions.

A private, religious school is by its very nature an appropriate and interesting prism through which to examine individualism and community. The selective quality of both student and faculty populations, the relatively small size of the student body, and the selective focus of its curriculum, renders the private, religious school to be a potential representative institution of individualism. Because of these factors, the potential exists for a private, religious school to offer an alternative to the common public school, representing an individual choice within the mass culture, offering individualized attention, diversity of learning methods and materials, encouraging pluralism and independent thinking, and inculcating the values of dignity and autonomy on both student and faculty levels. By the
same token, the relatively homogeneous population of both students and faculty and the shared principles and values of a private, religious school also allow for it be a potentially effective representative institution of a community ideology. The private, religious school is dedicated fundamentally to the transmission of culture and tradition, to moral development, and to the inculcation of loyalty and social responsibility, specifically within one's own faith and community. By focusing its mission and representing a clear vision of purpose and authority, the private, religious school can simulate a world which is a microcosmic representation of a larger community ideal.

The following chapter offers an overview of the development of private schools and the Jewish day school in North America in the last century. This section is intended to provide a context for the particular research site in this study, as well as to highlight the existence and overlap of individualism and community in this specific area of education.

Private Schools

The growth and development of private schools in North America may be seen in contrast to the existence of the public or common school. The latest statistics indicate that in Canada approximately 5.2% of the total student population (3.6% in Ontario) are enrolled in private schools. The highest student enrollment in private schools is found in the provinces of Quebec, British Columbia, and Manitoba (in descending order) (Education in Canada 1996). To some extent, those numbers reflect the level of government funding, with Quebec providing substantial funding to mainly Roman Catholic private schools, as well as maintaining a nominally Roman Catholic public system (Bergen 1990). “Nevertheless, the proportional growth of private school attendance in Ontario during the 1970s and 1980s
exceeded that in all other provinces in spite of the fact that no public funding was made available" (Bergen 1990, 21), suggesting that the consideration to enroll children in private schools is not solely a financial one.

In the late 19th to early 20th centuries, the American "... public school was seen as the virtuous source of democratic character, (whereas the private school was...a breeder of class privilege and of an antidemocratic spirit)" (Grant 1985, 128). Public schools in the United States were considered "an instrument of society and the common culture" (Coleman and Hoffer 1987, 23), offering a venue for creating a common knowledge base, a common culture, common moral experiences, and equal opportunity. However, when a society cannot reach a consensus on what the common features of socialization and inculcation of virtue ought to be, when the society is divided along the lines of language, religion, economics, and intellectual ideals, then "... the idea of a common school ... becomes an improbable paradox" (Holmes 1990, 230). On the other hand, a "... private school has the advantage of being able to present a particular philosophy of education which parents by choice are able to support, whereas the diversity of parental expectations in public schools prevents the satisfaction of all parents in a pluralistic community" (Bergen 1990, 21). While public schools set out "to prepare children to live in a pluralistic society" (Peshkin 1986, 259), and to offer an opportunity for constructive "social debate" (Talbert 1988, 186), they increasingly lacked "a consensual sense of the virtues with which to imbue the nation's young" (Holmes 1990, 255).

Some of the features which, it is claimed, distinguish private schools from public schools include: smaller student population, higher teacher-student ratio, greater selectivity and discrimination in teacher hiring and student admissions, more parental involvement and
input, higher academic standards, more attention to individual needs of students and recognition of success, clearer articulation and enforcement of disciplinary standards, clearer sense of school mission and purpose, stronger teacher development and commitment, and higher student morale (Coleman and Hoffer 1987; Grant 1985; Talbert 1988). Where private schools are successful, their success is attributed to a combination of these features, plus a more homogeneous population of students and parents who share the attitudes, beliefs, goals, values, and ideals of the school. These schools seek out and attract teachers who represent a "character ideal" (Grant 1985, 133), and who dedicate time and energy into making that ideal accessible and relevant to students, within the context of what the school's community has agreed to be important. A private school may be an outgrowth of a “functional community,” whose members are bound by geography as well as by shared values. Alternatively, students in a private school and their families may through the school create a “values community,” which brings together individuals from different locations and backgrounds who share a specific common set of values. The combination of a selective, voluntary community (not one designed by chance or geography), plus carefully conceived and articulated ideals, and strict measures of conduct which will allow those ideals to be fostered in what is considered an appropriate environment, all play a role in the success of the private school.

Private schools frequently represent both individualism and community as they seek to foster specific ideals which will appeal to a certain sector of society and to create a community of their population, united by common values. It is likely that an academic private school is more oriented to individualism and that a religious private school is more concerned with community.
Private schools that are organized on the basis of religious doctrine and are supported and administered by religious institutions and leaders, have even more specific mandates in the development of goals and policies well as recognized authority in their enforcement. In the ideal, students "endure little or none of the ambiguity and tension that can develop when teachers, peers, parents, and neighbors reinforce different values . . . The shared doctrine . . . also joins them as brethren, responsible for and to each other" (Peshkin 1986, 281). The Jewish day school is one example of a private school which is run under religious auspices and attracts a self-selected student population, whose parents are seeking a very specific learning and social environment for their children.

The Jewish Day School

A “day school” is a private, Jewish religious school which students attend on a full time basis, in contrast to a “supplementary school,” which is a less intensive educational framework, usually housed at a synagogue on weekends or during after-school hours. In the day school, both Jewish and general studies are taught each day, the latter being consistent with local board of education curricular standards. Day schools may be sponsored by individual philanthropists, or by local religious institutions. In North America, student tuitions account for forty to fifty per cent of Jewish day school funding, with the remainder coming from fundraising, private philanthropy, or government (Bergen 1990; Rauch 1984; Schiff 1983). A particular day school may belong to a network of local, national, or international schools, and is either affiliated with one of the three major movements of Judaism (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox) or is considered to be a non-sectarian
"community school." Jewish day schools are governed by lay boards, comprised of parents, alumni, and educational or spiritual leaders.

There are Jewish day schools in thirty-six states and five Canadian provinces. Ninety per cent of these schools represent the Orthodox movement. Sixty per cent of the day school population are elementary students. Over 100,000 children attend Jewish day schools, which represents approximately one-third of the total Jewish school enrollment in North America (Rauch 1984; Schiff 1983). In metropolitan Toronto, which was the region of the research site in this study, the 1993 day school enrollment figures were approximately 9,600 (with an additional 6,100 students enrolled in supplementary schools) (Rose 1994). It is estimated that fifty per cent of Jewish youngsters in North America receive some sort of Jewish education (Rauch 1984; Rose 1994).

**History of the Jewish Day School**

Although there is evidence that some small Jewish schools existed in America in the eighteenth through mid-nineteenth centuries, these schools did not survive the expansion of the public school in the 1840 to 1850s. The first major wave of American Jewish day schools came during the period of 1880 to 1920 when approximately two million Jews emigrated from Eastern Europe. These Jews were not prepared to give up their Judaism, and among them were renowned Talmud scholars, to whom "... knowledge and study were not only means to religious and ethical behavior, but were in themselves a mode of worship" (Rauch 1984, 136). However, these immigrants felt increasing pressure, from American Jews and non-Jews, to acculturate quickly. Secular education seemed like a key to
Americanize them and offer opportunities for greater financial success. They were attracted by the notion that public schools were free of charge and available to them, as they were not in Europe. As it became increasingly difficult to support their own Jewish schools, more Jewish immigrants chose to send their children to public schools. Since they still maintained traditional Jewish homes and close-knit communities, they relied on these informal networks for the religious education of their children.

Around the period of World War One, there was a great deal of ethnic hatred and discrimination in America, so Jews found that it was wiser to emphasize their religious differences, rather than cultural ones. In the period of 1917-1939, twenty eight Jewish day schools opened. The biggest growth period, however, began after 1940. Between 1940 and 1980, the student population grew from 770 to over 100,000. The end of World War Two brought another wave of European Jewish immigrants, many of whom were Jews who wanted to remain distinct and avoid secularism. They felt safe enough in America to be able to assert their own religious and cultural identity. The flourishing of Jewish day schools was one display of this security (Rauch 1984).

Dissatisfaction with public schooling and with religious supplementary schools and with the deterioration of Jewish scholarship, and the increased wealth in the Jewish community were contributing factors to the post 1940 day school boom. However, the two historical events most closely linked to this growth are the Holocaust and the birth of the State of Israel in 1948. The destruction of European Jewry during the Holocaust presented a practical problem to Jews, as sources of scholarship and religious leadership were lost. Rebuilding a new Jewish community in North America would have to include the re-
vitalization of scholarship and knowledge of Jewish sources and traditions. The generation of Jews which survived the Holocaust felt a fiercer commitment to Jewish survival, a drive for re-birth and for creating a strong Jewish community with a clear Jewish identity which would be impervious to future anti-Semitic threats. The Jewish day school as an intense and focused learning environment which offered the study of traditional texts and encouraged cultural and ritual observance, was a constructive tool which could meet these challenges directly. The creation of the State of Israel united Jews in a renewed pride in identifying with Judaism and a desire to be closer to Israel and to promote its growth. The day school with its emphasis on Hebrew language as a uniting cultural force for Jews helped to establish this link (Adar 1977; Rauch 1984).

The factors relating to the rise of Jewish day schools in North America were not merely demographic. They reflected a very deep ambivalence felt by North American Jews regarding how much of their Judaism they wanted to or ought to maintain versus how much secular Americanism they desired or felt compelled to adopt. This is yet another aspect of the complex relationship between individualism and community. Asserting their Jewishness would represent an individualist rejection of the common American culture, and would also contribute to the re-building of the Jewish community as a separate and united entity. Assimilation would compromise the unity of the Jewish community, yet would assert the right of individual Jews to participate in the American society in whatever way they chose.

Most immigrants who came to the United States and Canada did so to avoid persecution and anti-Semitism. North America represented freedom and modernity, and social and economic security. Immigrant Jews had to determine how much, if any, of their
Jewish identity and way of life was essential in their quest to establish themselves in North America. Whereas, traditional Judaism offered both national and religious identity, the significant role of modern American Judaism was as a religion. Many Jews resolved their conflict by claiming their nationality as American or Canadian, with Judaism as their religion (Adar 1977; Rauch 1984).

The choices of education were a vivid expression of this ambivalence. Public schools were considered to be an ideal of North American democracy, offering equal opportunity, a common knowledge base, and socialization for a common, shared culture. The purpose of the creation of the Jewish day school was “to contribute to the continued existence of the Jews as an identifiable group . . . not only an attempt at creating an ideal environment for the education of Jewish children, but it is also a deliberate instrument of separation from the rest of the community of schools” (Rauch 1984, 133). Thus, a choice of schooling represented assimilation versus separation, (or in other words, individualism versus community.)

Many Jews resolved their dilemma by sending their children to public school and then to a supplementary religious school, generally synagogue-sponsored, in the afternoon and weekend hours. However, in recent decades supplementary schools have come under attack for providing an insufficient and superficial Jewish education that is not taken seriously enough by parents, students, and teachers (Adar 1977; Himmelfarb 1984; Schiff 1977, 1983). In contrast, the day school has been called “the most viable construct of formal Jewish schooling” (Schiff 1977, 20).
Goals of Jewish Education

The purposes of Jewish education mirror some of those of traditional general education, including: transmission of culture, history, and tradition; moral development and character formation; loyalty and social responsibility; and intellectual development. Jewish education is a significant medium for sustaining the relevance of history and the place of each Jew in a historical chain with his or her ancestors and descendants. “Education is a force for continuity and unity” (Schiff 1977, 21). Jewish education responds to fears of Jewish disintegration, either through assimilation or anti-Semitism. Educating Jews to be literate about their own traditions and to be able to participate knowledgeably and comfortably in a distinctly Jewish home and community is of crucial importance. This not only offers identity to the individual Jew, but a sense of meaning and purpose, and an automatic entree to belonging in a Jewish community.

Jewish day schools in North America which affiliate with Orthodox Judaism are designed to attract students from homes and communities that maintain a traditional Jewish lifestyle, holding Biblical precepts and Rabbinic law as authoritative and binding. These schools and their constituent families share a common purpose in educating and socializing their children to be knowledgeable, committed, and observant Jews.

In non-Orthodox day schools, which also emphasize traditional Jewish lifestyle and commitment, (and even in some Orthodox schools), it is not necessarily evident that the school and its families share common goals, particularly in the area of lifestyle and personal observance. In a study conducted in 1990 in two campuses of the day school in this study, 37 out of 232 students reported that their families maintained strong observance, with regard
to kashruth, Sabbath, synagogue attendance, and personal prayer (Markose 1990). Non-Orthodox Jews choose to send their children to Jewish day schools for a variety of reasons, including the perception of a higher quality of education, more individualized learning, smaller classes, and avoidance of public school and its ethnically mixed population. A study of three hundred families in seven non-Orthodox day schools in Los Angeles suggests that these motives are more crucial to parents than are Jewish knowledge and practice (Kelman 1984).

"The typical American child does not encounter a truly religious way of life either at home or in the community, although he is educated in a Jewish school for religious faith and the observance of mitzvot" (Adar 1977, 163). The "... typical student has had no primary childhood or adolescent contact with a Jewish home - its characteristic smells, artifacts and books, rhythms and commitments. He has not experienced a Jewish street, nor has he a sense of having been part of an integrated ... organic Jewish community" (Arzt 1983, 142). In this light, it is the purpose of the day school to "serve as a replacement for the vital Jewish environment which characterized Eastern European Jewish life ... a Jewish community, on a child level" (Kronish 1983, 176,177). The "... educational system must become the site for a set of Jewish experiences of the sort that might be available in 'real' life were the family and the community not so weak as they have become" (Fein 1972,46). In his study, Inside the Jewish School (1983), Heilman writes:

If there were nothing also positive emerging from the Jewish school experience than a residual feeling of comfort when one is with other Jews, that might be sufficient reason to perpetuate the institution. It is quite conceivable ... that youngsters who feel at home in the Jewish school will as adults feel more bonded to the Jewish people ... This homey quality of the school has consequences for learning. When students feel at home in the school, their acquisition of knowledge becomes an expression of this feeling (312).
Rauch (1984) offers an outline of the purposes of the Jewish day school with which he believes both mainstream Orthodox and non-Orthodox schools would basically agree. These are to provide or foster or develop:

- knowledge of classical Jewish texts and a commitment to study;
- knowledge of traditions and some form of observance;
- facility and familiarity with Hebrew language and literature;
- historical awareness and identity with the Jewish people;
- appreciation of Israel's importance and commitment to its welfare;
- participation in the democratic American society as an expression of Jewish values;
- faith and trust in God (133).

This may be compared with the Statement of Purpose and Philosophy of the school which was studied in this research (see Appendix A).

This study was conducted in a Jewish day school affiliated with the Conservative movement. The Conservative day school movement, affiliated with the Jewish Theological Seminary of America, the United Synagogue of America, and with local Conservative synagogues, known as the Solomon Schechter Day School (SSDS) movement, now numbers sixty-eight schools in the United States and Canada. In 1996, over 17,000 children attended Conservative Jewish day schools in North America, as compared to 110,000 students in attendance at congregational religious schools (United Synagogue of Conservative Judaism 1997).
The first SSDS opened in New York in 1956, and in 1965 at the first Conference of the SSDS, an Association was structured (Schindler 1970). The goals of the SSDS are to offer children an integration of secular and Jewish studies, the latter reflecting Conservative ideology. (For an elaboration on the ideology of Conservative Judaism, see Chapter One.) “The Conservative approach to study combines traditional exegesis with modern historical methods . . . in which tradition and modernity inform and reshape each other” (Shapiro 1988).

The Teacher in the Jewish Day School

Even with well-articulated goals and procedures, a school could not transmit its objectives without the medium of teachers. “It is what teachers think, what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get” (Hargreaves 1991, vi). Significant responsibility and authority have been attributed to teachers. For example: they improve “the well being of the pupils” (Jackson 1990, 103); they create and sustain “a world” (Grant 1985, 135); they are “bridge builders who put theory into practice” (Johnson and Johnson 1987, 162); “paid agents of cultural diffusion” (Bronfenbrenner 1970, 40); “representatives of an educational tradition” (Byram 1990, 31); “constantly transmitting values” (Beck 1990, 149); they “influence the students’ thought and behavior” (Bowers 1987, 145); and they are “the ultimate key to educational change and school improvement” (Hargreaves 1991, vi). Thus, teachers are critical partners with schools in any discussion of educational values and purposes, whether academic, moral, cultural, individualistic or communal.
In religious schools, teachers are usually selected on the basis of their commitment to the ideals of the school and its community and to the students as individuals. They are expected to represent these ideals as professionals, and sometimes in their personal lives as well (Grant 1985; Peshkin 1986). In a Jewish day school, students are taught and influenced by separate teachers for General Studies and for Jewish Studies. These teachers vary in their training, background, and frequently in their personal commitment to the school’s religious ideals. Even among the Jewish Studies teachers in non-Orthodox schools, there are variations in religious affiliation, belief, and observance. Grimmitt (1981) distinguishes between the “religious educator” and the “religious nurturer.” The former is primarily committed to education and imparts the study of religion as an academic method or discipline. The latter is a religious adherent who “assumes the validity and necessity of religious faith” and wants to impart the truth of his system of beliefs to others (Grimmitt 1981, 43). A volume on *A Curriculum for the Jewish Day School* states that: “Not everyone is suited to teach in a Conservative Day School . . . One who accepts a position and a salary in an institution has a responsibility to respect and project the philosophy or ideology of that movement” (Wachs 1989, 4). In non-Orthodox Jewish schools, there is a dearth of teachers who represent the values and practices of the movement (Dorph 1984; Frost 1983). To fill the gap, either Orthodox or secular teachers are hired; frequently native Israelis, who tend to fall into one of these religious extremes.

The four teachers observed in this study are all native Israelis, who immigrated to Canada in the 1970s-80s. With the exception of the Grade Four, all of the Jewish Studies classes from Grades One through Five in this school are taught by native Israelis. It is estimated that Israelis fill up to two-thirds of the Judaic studies teaching positions in Jewish
schools in North America (Stern 1988; Samuels 1992; Toronto Board of Education data 1993). In a summary of research, Stern (1988) suggests that this high proportion is due more to necessity than to choice, as the challenge of finding qualified teachers with Hebrew fluency and familiarity with Jewish tradition is increasingly difficult. Samuels (1992) agrees that the literature “on Jewish education gives the impression that Israeli teachers are necessary but undesirable” (4). Although these teachers represent a significant proportion of the teaching staffs of North American Jewish schools, little research has been conducted about them and the available research has largely focused on teachers who are “emissaries” (Hebrew, *shlichim*), sent by the Israeli government for two or three-year stints, as opposed to immigrants, who are the focus of this study.

The teachers in this study are among an estimated 300,000 Israelis who have left Israel since 1948 (Sobel 1986). In Hebrew, these emigrants are referred to as *yordim*, literally “those who descend,” a term which starkly expresses the negative connotation of this act. Sobel (1986) attributes the major motivation for leaving Israel as economic, but also includes other frustrations about life in Israel as factors (high taxes and army duty, for example). Many Jews, Israeli and non-Israeli alike, criticize those Israelis who emigrate from Israel to other countries, claiming that the act is a blatant rejection of the collective idealism of building and sustaining the State of Israel, in exchange for personal and professional opportunities and a more comfortable lifestyle (Cohen 1989; Fish 1984; Meyer 1982; Sobel 1986). These emigrants comprise the majority of Jewish studies teachers in North America, and by their very status they present a paradox to Jewish educational institutions who enlist them to represent Jewish and Israeli tradition.
It is relevant to question whether the religion shared by Israeli and North American Jews unites them more than their different countries of origin separate them. Liebman and Cohen (1990) assert that the similarities of these Jews—including history, ritual, and family ties—are more striking than are their differences. Nonetheless, even in the observance of Judaism and the definition of Jewish identity, there are contrasts. For example, to Israeli Jews, their religion is the majority culture, while American Jews are a minority, and as such believe they must fight for civil rights as part of the expression of being Jewish. American Jews are accustomed to pluralism in their religious, communal, and educational affiliations, while most Israeli Jews are either “religious” (that is, Orthodox) or “secular.” (That point is particularly relevant to this study which is situated in a Conservative Jewish school, which is neither Orthodox nor secular). Israeli Jews are said to be linked more strongly to the land of Israel and to national and public expressions of their religion, while American Jews turn to Judaism more for its personal and spiritual relevance (Liebman and Don Yehiya 1984).

Two studies relating to Israeli emigrants were conducted by Fish (1984) and Samuels (1992). Fish interviewed thirty-three Israelis who moved to the United States, including the following questions: their reasons for immigration, their feelings about leaving Israel, the perceptions of emigration, their view on where it is best for Jews to live and raise children. He categorized the respondents into what he termed “temporary residents,” “sojourners,” and “settlers” (64). The last group immigrated to the United States for improved economic and professional opportunities, and expressed little conflict over their decision to leave Israel. The first two groups left Israel for specific reasons (for example, a sabbatical), with intentions to return to Israel, and expressed guilt and ambivalence throughout their stay in the United States (even when it had already been twenty years). Fish comments that the Israelis
who immigrate to the United States have little active involvement in the organized Jewish community, and that American Jews are uncertain of whether or not to try and integrate the Israelis into American society, which might make them comfortable enough to stay, and not return to Israel as they "should".

Samuels (1992) interviewed twenty Israeli teachers in eight Jewish day schools in the New York area. Her open-ended questions focused on the experiences of the teachers in a Jewish school, including their relationships with parents of students, and asked them to provide generalizations about Israeli teachers whom they know. Some of Samuels' findings reveal a self-perception of lower professional status, a discomfort in the relationship of Israeli teachers and American parents, and disorientation with the American school culture. For example, the Israeli teachers are unaccustomed to the high level of parent involvement which exists in Jewish private schools, and at the same time, the indirect nature of this contact, where parents direct feedback to the principal first, without coming to the teacher herself. In comparison to their experience in Israel, teachers commented that in the United States, "...the teacher is asked to be more lenient, softer, more open to individual students' needs, and less zealous about teaching the subject matter" (89). Teachers find little teamwork and interaction among teachers, relative to Israeli schools, yet express very positive feelings about their day schools, with several references made to a "home away from home." Samuels' findings suggest a high level of commitment to Judaism on the part of Israeli teachers and a strong sense of responsibility to young diaspora Jews, especially with regard to inspiring a love for Israel. For some, their role as Jewish educators helps to alleviate their guilt and ambivalence over leaving Israel, and some are changed in their attitudes to Judaism by their experience in American Jewish day schools.
The observation of four native Israeli teachers in this study is not intended to lead to sweeping cultural generalizations about the values of Israeli emigrants with regard to individualism and community. However, as according to Geertz (1973), "... there is no such thing as a human nature independent of culture" (49), there is some exploration done within the study as to the relevance of their Israeli background to their educational philosophy and practice. In general, the teachers are the critical focus of this study, because whether as cultural representatives or individuals, "... teacher neutrality in values is impossible to attain. Teachers are constantly transmitting values both through their behaviour and through what they teach" (Beck 1990, 149).

Conclusion

The study of individualism and community is relevant to an understanding of the priorities of our generation. (The strength of community within the Jewish school is an indicator of the future of Judaism in North America, where a large proportion of the Jewish people are effectively assimilated into the secular world.) An examination of how these values are expressed in an educational framework is crucial, as this is where seeds are being planted for the next generation. The particular venue of a private, religious school affiliated with an ideological movement of Judaism offers its own internal vision to the development of individualism and community. And, to a great extent, the teachers in this setting contribute to the depth of the study in how they selectively choose to represent their school, as well as their own personal values and cultural backgrounds.
CHAPTER FOUR

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is approached as a cultural analysis, conducted in the context of an ethnographic methodology. This type of research involves an immersion in the environment to be studied, collecting detailed description of what is observed which can be analyzed and interpreted. A "good cultural analysis must go beyond the perception of its culture which any individual within it may have" (Varenne 1976, 236). Ethnographic research in education has its roots in cultural anthropology, looking at schools and classrooms as an anthropologist would look at unfamiliar or exotic cultures. Alexander (1992) writes:

"It would appear that normative analysis requires its own unique form of inquiry, and it was once thought that these sorts of questions were the province of philosophers. The analytic revolution in educational philosophy challenged that view, however, arguing that there is a sense in which all educational questions are ultimately concerned with how we ought to transmit culture across generations (453)."

Ethnography sets out to tackle broad subjects and matters of significance from "the direction of exceedingly extended acquaintances with extremely small matters" (Geertz 1973, 21), and "usually implies an intensive, ongoing involvement with individuals functioning in their everyday settings" (Schofield 1990, 214). In his noted work, The Interpretation of Cultures (1973), Geertz writes that: "Doing ethnography is like trying to read . . . a manuscript - foreign, faded, full of ellipses, incoherencies, suspicious emendations, and tendentious commentaries, but written not in conventionalized graphs of sound but in transient examples of shaped behavior" (10). In order to attempt any sort of interpretation based on the researcher's own impressions and analysis, the key is description, "thick description" in Geertz's terms (6), which can be looked at again and again. The ethnographer tries not to
take anything for granted, as Jackson writes in his landmark study, *Life in Classrooms* (1990 edition) "... the familiar and the ordinary were like barriers to be penetrated ... Behind the ordinary lies the extraordinary" (xiv, xix).

According to Merriam's (1988) synthesis of definitions, this study is appropriately classified as a "case study." The "... case study is an examination of a specific phenomenon such as a program, an event, a person, a process, an institution, or a social group" (9). A case study is "particularistic, descriptive, heuristic, and inductive" (11). Through precise and detailed analysis, the case study offers new insights, "relationships, concepts, and understanding" that emerge from "data grounded in the context itself" (13). Case studies allow for a very close look and an almost vicarious experience of seeing the setting through the researcher's eye and perspective (Donmoyer 1990).

Beyond the descriptive element of ethnographic case study is the realm of interpretation, the quest for why events occur and people interact as they do. Radcliffe-Brown (1952) writes that the social anthropologist starts with "concrete, observable, phenomenal reality" (3), but that this "reality" is "not any sort of entity but a process, the process of social life" (4). He emphasizes the importance of looking closely at what is static and continuous, and where there is change, believing that each change affects another. Willard Waller, whose *Sociology of Teaching* (1932) provided the first real look at "schools as organizations in social contexts" (Everhart 1989, 54), was a "professional yet responsible cynic" (Everhart 1989, 61), intent on looking beneath what could be seen at face value. Waller believed that research is an art; creative, yet not without form or convention. "Waller's methods ... are much more prone to making mistakes than verifying the obvious. They are methods that assume that the task of the social scientist is a literary task which, at
the same time, is also a scientific task” (Everhart 1989, 60). These “mistakes” which Waller himself feared, include concern over the potential pitfalls inherent in interpretive ethnography; for example, whether other researchers with the same data would draw the same conclusions (“external reliability”) and whether the actual subjects of the study would find the same meaning in what is described about them as does the researcher (“internal validity”) (Everhart 1989, 67-68).

The role of the researcher in a qualitative, ethnographic case study is central to the collection of data and its interpretation. This type of study offers a glimpse of a piece of the world through the researcher’s eyes; he or she does not necessarily reflect a personal view, but potentially that of a certain discipline or perspective (Donmoyer 1990, 195). Delamont and Hamilton (1976) write that we must acknowledge the “premises, suppositions, and interests held by the researcher” (15) when examining the findings of the research.

This methodology may resist the type of generalization which a broader study might yield, yet Geertz (1973) commends the value of the ethnographic study which is very detailed and specific: "... our knowledge of culture ... grows: in spurts ... studies do build on other studies ... better informed and better conceptualized, they plunge more deeply into the same things ... A study is an advance if it is more incisive ... than those which preceded it" (25). While large samples may offer a better probability for generalization, and can make the researchers "more informed gamblers," even quantitative studies of vast populations may not "accurately represent the population" (Donmoyer 1990, 181). The case study may not offer predictions that fit other times and places, but it does offer depth and particularity to its one setting and perhaps most significantly, generates questions and hypotheses which may be applied to other settings. "Case study research might be used to expand and enrich the
repertoire of social constructions available to practitioners and others; it may help ... in the forming of questions rather than in the finding of answers" (Donmoyer 1990, 182). In Geertz's reflections on research in cultural anthropology, he wrote that it "... is a science whose progress is marked less by a perfection of consensus than by a refinement of debate" (29). This type of study may stimulate subsequent pieces of research and may in its "thick" description present similarities and parallels to related settings, but its inherent value is in a reliable and deep understanding of the case itself, "not to discover general laws of human behavior" (Schofield 1990, 202). However, in classroom research, it has been noted that: "Despite their diversity, individual classrooms share many characteristics. Through the detailed study of one particular context, it is still possible to clarify relationships, pinpoint critical processes and identify common phenomena" (Delamont and Hamilton 1976, 13).

The researcher in an ethnographic case study is attempting to explore, unearth, and examine particles of truth in one place and time that are relevant and interesting, perhaps novel and surprising, but will not necessarily be established as truth beyond the scope of that case. The qualities which make this type of research ripe with potential for unconventional findings, including a more open-ended search for hidden connections and new insights, also opens possibilities for mistaken conclusions and misguided interpretations. The dangers of this method's reliance on the perceptions and intuitions of the researcher (however deeply grounded in theory) cannot be overlooked.

Classroom research is also conducted by means of systematic observation. This methodology uses "an observational system to reduce the stream of classroom behavior to small-scale units suitable for tabulation and computation ... lists of pre-specified categories ... checklist of events to watch for" (Delamont and Hamilton 1976, 5-6). This method has
been primarily effective in the study of large numbers of classrooms, to generate substantial amounts of statistical data for analysis and comparison, and as a teacher training tool. Systematic observation has been a useful method for following up in settings where innovations were implemented, offering precision in testing hypotheses about teaching and learning, and to establish patterns in the classroom. The systematic observer believes that there is an "objective reality" to the classroom that is accessible and worthy of examination by means of "exploring and testing the generalizability of concepts and relationships through the quantification of aspects of classroom activity" (McIntyre 1979, 119).

Critics of systematic observation assert that the information is gathered in short periods (minutes and lessons, not hours or days), and is only concerned with "overt, observable behavior" and not with context or intentions—of the observer or the observed (Delamont and Hamilton 1976, 8). A research method that is used to study a large number of classroom may lose sight of the unusual or atypical phenomena, because the main priority is to be able to generalize. Pre-specified coding schemes do not allow for new categories to emerge or for the use of descriptive language, or for spontaneous contact between the researcher and those being observed (McIntyre 1979). Delamont and Hamilton (1984) write that "... the kinds of generalizations produced from good ethnography are just as useful to both researchers and practitioners as those available from systematic observation" (19).

The purpose of this study is not to provide a detailed picture of teachers' or students' movements, but rather to gain a sense of the range of interactions, verbal and non-verbal, and to explore the meaning and values underlying them. The observation in and out of the classrooms and the formal and informal interviewing of teachers and administrators focuses
on areas of school life which lend themselves to the development or discouragement of individualism and community.

**Overview of the Research**

This study was conducted from September through December 1993. There were fifteen weeks in the semester, including sixty-four school days. Each school day was divided in half, for General and Jewish studies. I visited the school for forty-four half-days (8:45 to 11:45 A.M. or 12:30 to 3:30 P.M.). The visits included thirty-eight half-days (approximately 132 hours) in five Jewish studies classes—two Grade Two, two Grade Three, and one Grade Five—of four different teachers (one teacher taught both Grades Two and Five). Each class was visited on an average of once a week for the full three-hour session, including any specialties which might have been offered during that time (for example, art, French, gym, computers, library, or an assembly). The Staff Room and playground were also included in the observations. Five half-days were spent observing each English class corresponding to the five Hebrew classes. At the end of the semester, hour-long interviews were conducted with each of the four teachers and with two school administrators (the Director of Education and the Campus Principal), and a written survey was administered to Grade Five students (see Appendix B). Additional events observed during the semester were: Curriculum Night for parents in September, the two *Chumash* ceremonies of the Grade Two in November, a school-wide pre-Sabbath prayer service, and two tribute events for the retiring Director of Education.

The particular areas to be examined in the study, as expressions of individualism and community in the school and its classrooms were: authority and discipline (leadership,
decision making, rules, rewards and sanctions); interactions and relationships (teachers with individual students, students with one another, communication, group building, conflict resolution); learning and evaluation (accommodation of learning styles, variation in assignments, opportunities for the development of opinions, values, and creativity, formal and informal recognition of excellence and effort); miscellaneous classroom features (routine, chores, physical set-up, use of space, scheduling); special occasions; class and school spirit; and relationships among teachers.

Access

My initial access to the school as a research site was provided by the Director of Education. I had developed a collegial relationship with him through participation in meetings of the local chapter of the Jewish Educators' Assembly over several years, and through my work as director of a Jewish residential summer camp affiliated with the Conservative Movement, which looked to his school as a partner and as a resource for campers. I was also a parent of two children in the school at the time of the research.

Dr. Joseph Waldman (pseudonyms are employed for all participants in the study) gave his permission to conduct my research, and at my request offered names of all the teachers who fitted the original criteria of the study; native Israelis who had been trained as teachers in Israel. There were eleven teachers across the three campuses who fitted into this category. After discussing my project at a principal's meeting, he made the request that I avoid conducting my research at the campus where my own children were students. This narrowed the list to six teachers. I quickly learned that there were "multiple points of entry" (Shaffir and Stebbins 1991, 28; Burgess 1991) to the school and that I would have to
negotiate my way into the classrooms with much more than the green light from the Director of Education. After written correspondence (see letter and outline of the study in Appendix C) and phone conversations with several teachers, the decision to narrow the scope of the study to one campus was made, as well as to change the criteria for participation in the study and not to limit it to teachers who were trained in Israel. It was at this point that the idea of conducting the research as a case study of one campus crystallized. The principal of the campus (also a colleague) was very open and forthcoming and she was willing to facilitate access to the teachers. Two teachers (Devora and Sara) agreed to participate by June of 1993, and I approached Nava and Batya in September, after the school year began. I was not acquainted with Devora, Sara, or Nava prior to meeting them at this time, however I had some hesitation in including Batya as we had worked together in another setting. However, her response to my request was so enthusiastic that I believed that her participation would be valuable. (A formal “introduction” of the four teachers will be provided in Chapter Five.)

The issue of access proved to be a "continuing process of negotiation . . . a continuous effort to establish, maintain, and cement relations" (Shaffir and Stebbins 1991, 29). Even once I began the research, there was continuous discussion of when and when not to enter the classes, good and bad days, canceled visits, and so on. I also had occasion to present myself to other teachers and staff members throughout the semester and as such was constantly establishing and re-establishing my presence in the school. Devora was resistant to my presence throughout the period; she asked me to give her a break from visiting for several weeks, and showed obvious relief when she learned that the research was ending. The three other teachers, the principal, the English teachers, specialty teachers, and office staff were all friendly and helpful. Even Sara, who was very welcoming, asked that I only
visit one of her classes a week (I observed her in Grades Two and Five), as it was a strain on her to have a visitor more frequently than that. Hargreaves (1967) writes that it is critical for the researcher to acknowledge just how difficult it is for the teacher to relinquish some of his or her classroom autonomy when being observed. Each classroom has its own established norms of interaction, which are necessarily altered when an outsider enters, creating a "role conflict" (195), between the role the teacher plays vis a vis the students and the role (conscious or unconscious) which he or she plays for the observer.

**Introduction to Each Class**

In each class, I asked the teacher to introduce me and to allow me to say a few words. In both Sara's Grade Five and Grade Two, she introduced me to the class as a new guest, and then I presented myself to the students saying that I was a student like them, and that I was there to learn about the school. I introduced myself by my first name, and spoke to them in Hebrew, also thanking them for having me in their class. In Devora's class, she introduced me to the class by reviewing the Hebrew word for guest, and said that I would come in now and then, and write some things down because I am taking some courses and learning. In her words: "it's not nice to say 'ignore her', but that's what we're supposed to do, not in a not nice way—but just to do what we usually do." Nava introduced me by saying that I would be visiting the class and that I have children who go to SSDS. It was not entirely clear why I was there, as evidenced by one student asking me: "But why are you here?" In Batya's class, although I asked repeatedly to be introduced, she did not do so until my third visit. By then several students had approached and asked me why I was in the class. When I was finally invited to the front to introduce myself, and I presented myself as I had in Sara's class,
Daniel asked: "So the principal sent you to find out what we're doing." Later that day, Batya said: "It's a good thing that we explained why you are here, because Michal was afraid. She told me that she thought you might be here to see her."

The variations in response by teachers and students to the seemingly straightforward task of introducing me to the class, suggest the different levels of their clarity and understanding of my role, as well as their comfort or discomfort with my presence in their class. The responses of the students (particularly in Batya's class), highlight the importance of clarifying the role of the observer, so as not to create false impressions, and even fear, on the part of those being observed.

The Observation

I collected detailed description in writing on what transpired in the classes during my visits. I sat in a fixed spot in the back of the room and I began each day by drawing a rough sketch of the classroom, filling in names of students on their desks, and adding any physical changes to the room since my last visit, including new art work, or new arrangement of furniture. I transcribed as much and as literally as possible the words of the teachers, responses of the students, interactions between teachers and students, interactions among students, and between teacher or students and me, the actual flow of the lesson, the assignments given (including what was written on the board and sheets that were distributed), reactions of students to the teacher, movement of teacher and students, and interactions with guests who entered the classrooms. I noted the time every few minutes in order to keep track of the duration of the different segments of the class. I wrote in note form, in English, translating on the spot from the Hebrew language in which most classroom
interactions took place. I also jotted down my thoughts and impressions, using two colors of pen to distinguish what I observed from my own reflections. I transcribed my notes onto the computer each night after that day's observation. Several days later, I would re-read the notes and add my additional insights in writing in the margins. My notes in the specialty classes and English classes were much less detailed and more impressionistic. I also kept written record of informal discussions with each teacher, including spontaneous corridor or playground interactions with teachers.

In addition to observing the five classes, I casually observed the Teachers' Room and playground. This was done to a limited extent, as I decided early on in the research that my time during recess was better spent talking to the teachers, wherever they happened to spend their recess break. I also observed several events during the semester, as mentioned earlier, and took notes when it was appropriate to do so inconspicuously.

I collected whatever written material was available, including Handbooks, newsletters, calendars, curriculum outlines, bulletin board notices, duty rotations, memos, and notices from the Parents' Association.

My Role

During my visits, I was incorporated into the life of the classroom to varying extents. The two most extreme examples were Devora's and Sara's classes. Devora barely looked at me, never referred to me, and never addressed any comments to me during class. In Sara's Grade Two, she referred to me as one of the teachers and occasionally asked me to help distribute materials or assist students doing individual work. One day, she told me that she had specifically chosen that lesson because I would be there. Once when she divided the
class into three groups, Sara asked me to facilitate the discussion in one of the groups. Another time she invited me in advance on a day that I did not usually visit the Grade Two, to help with a major art project, again by facilitating a group. In Sara’s Grade Five, she occasionally involved me as a natural member of the class, directed comments to me, for example, asking me for a translation or catching me up on what was being taught that day. Batya rarely spoke to me during class, but did not overtly ignore me. She was clearly aware of my presence, as several times she asked me after class if what I had seen was relevant to my study, and one day she commented: “Oh, you should have seen what we did yesterday. It would have been great for your research.” Nava directed occasional comments to me during class, and once asked me to stay in the classroom until all of the students left when she had to do playground duty at the end of the day.

My interactions with students also varied from class to class. Sara once mentioned that in her Grade Five, the students put on rowdier behavior to get my attention. One day when the principal observed that class, I noticed that the students seemed to be on their “best behavior,” suggesting to me that I had become “invisible” or that I was not considered a guest that needed to be impressed, as the principal was. In Sara’s Grade Two, students who sat near my seat in the back would show me their work and ask me questions. When I joined them for a special art project, Sara said: “They missed you. They were happy to hear you were coming back.” In Nava’s Grade Three, students would approach me informally before class, for example asking me about what I was writing and why I used different colored pens. Several students also asked me to participate in a food survey that they were doing for their English class. In Batya’s Grade Three, I had only one or two informal interactions with students, and in Devora’s Grade Two, the students basically ignored me.
Perhaps the degree to which the teachers involved me in their classes offers some indication of their inclination towards individualism and community. To exclude an outsider emphasizes the status of membership in the class, only open to insiders. To include the outsider underscores the importance of the individual, any individual, as a meaningful value.

In addition to our formal interview, I had several informal conversations with the principal. Once or twice I experienced a conflict between my role as researcher and my professional concerns as a Jewish educator, as our conversations would lead to some evaluative analysis of classroom events, for example, the occurrences of teachers who did not pray with their students. It evolved that Ms. Miller viewed me as a source of insight into what was happening in the classrooms, and she and I discussed the fact that it was not always clear to us what the boundaries of our discussions should be, given my relationship to the teachers, which implicitly assumed that what I observed in the classroom was confidential. At that point, we restricted our exchanges to the more technical elements of the observation.

Towards the end of the semester, I wrote the following in my field notes:

I have noticed this whole week that I am feeling sad and emotional at the prospect of leaving the school next month. While I am here, I feel that I am a part of something exciting, vibrant, something new happening every day. I enjoy seeing the kids involved enthusiastically in Jewish study. Also, my communication with the teachers has come to feel sort of like we are working together. When I observe great teaching technique and creative ideas, it gives me a real charge. I feel a longing to be part of this enterprise, and, again, a sadness to be leaving my special position as observer-participant.

Formal and Informal Interviews

At the end of the semester, hour-long interviews were conducted with each of the four teachers (taped, in Hebrew, and later translated into English and transcribed in writing)
and with two school administrators (the Director of Education and the Campus Principal). The questions for the interviews were distributed in advance (see Appendix D) and the interviews were all scheduled during school hours, at the convenience of the teachers. By the time of the interviews, I had good rapport with the teachers, and so it was comfortable to meet with them.

In addition, during almost each classroom visit, I spent several minutes in relevant conversation with the teachers, either right before class, during recess, or immediately following class. These conversations were usually sparked by my asking a question, asking for an update on something that came up during my last visit, or offering a comment on something that had gone on in class that day. Some of the topics discussed during those informal talks were: Hebrew levels, individual students, the room set-up, pros and cons of different teaching styles and assignments, and the curriculum. Sometimes the conversations were initiated by the teachers, for example, sharing their thoughts as they were preparing for class on their mood or state of mind, about a particular student, or about last minute preparations for that day’s lesson. These few moments added a personal element to my relationship with the teachers, and also offered additional insights into their teaching styles and motivations. I tried to offer support if something difficult had occurred that day, and also tried to present myself as a non-threatening advocate, emphasizing that I had a lot to gain from observing them. For example, once when Batya was observed by the principal, after class I commented to her that I could tell that she was an experienced teacher by the way she was able to conduct her class as usual, even with two guests present. Once I said to Nava at the end of the day: “It’s so much fun in your class, you have so much energy, and you make me laugh.” When Sara told me once that this was a particularly difficult day for
her, with no breaks, I responded: “If this is bad, you’re in great shape, because you never seem to stop smiling.” One day I told Devora: “Thanks, I learn a lot from you.” On rare occasions, the teachers turned to me for advice or assistance, either during these informal conversations or during class time, particularly when students were taking tests or doing quiet work.

**Organization of the Data**

When it came time to organize the data, I was faced with approximately four hundred pages of typed notes. I created forty-four categories into which to organize the notes (see Appendix E). Since I had not pre-coded the notes in order to allow flexibility for the topics to emerge from the observation, this was a time-consuming process of photocopying the notes several times, and cutting the pages into paragraphs, sentences, and phrases, and gluing each small segment onto pages, into at least two different categories. Once the notes were organized, they could be analyzed class by class, or category by category across the five classes. The interviews, specialty classes, English classes, and special events were treated separately. At this point, I had to look critically at the material, "to recognize the difference between what we have actually observed and what we think it means, what we hope it means, or what we insist it ought to mean" (Wolcott 1981, 261).

The data are presented in the next chapter.
CHAPTER FIVE

INDIVIDUALISM AND COMMUNITY
IN THE CLASSROOMS OF SSDS:
PRESENTATION OF THE DATA

The data will be presented with descriptions of the school and the participants in the study, then with an exploration of themes and issues which are relevant to the entire school, and then with a more focused description of each classroom.

The Setting of the Study

The study was conducted in the Springfield campus of the SSDS, a Conservative Jewish day school in metropolitan Toronto which had three campuses and a total population of approximately 1300 students (and approximately 140 staff members) in grades Junior Kindergarten through Eight. The Springfield campus was in its seventh year and in its fourth year in a new building. It housed approximately 240 students in Grades Junior Kindergarten through Five, and had added one grade each year since its inception. During the semester of this study, there was an unresolved debate among parents, the administration, and the Board of the school as to whether there would be a Grade Six the following year in Springfield or whether those fourteen students currently in Grade Five would join one of the other larger campuses.

SSDS was founded in 1961, with one campus of 114 students in grades Kindergarten through Four (as cited in the tribute book from Dr. Waldman's retirement dinner). The school
was sponsored by the Conservative synagogues of Toronto and as it expanded, each campus was housed in the school wing of a Conservative synagogue. In his interview, the Director of Education, Dr. Waldman, commented on the creation of the Springfield campus:

It was created, because at the time, Beth El (a new Conservative synagogue in the Springfield neighborhood) took off like a comet. That was the area of Jewish expansion and all young people aspiring to be yuppies . . . went there. So, of course we went there . . . they invited us, we both worked together. We needed a place, because it seemed that there were people who wanted a Conservative day school. They wanted us because it would sort of help the shul (synagogue) attract people. It works both ways. So this partnership evolved . . . I don't know what the future is going to be there, because they tell me the Jewish people are not moving in . . . they're moving out . . . It's unique because this was going to be our campus for the next generation . . . Fascinating—it was definitely a new population. Definitely people who are less committed to day school. We see that by the retention—'if I don't get what I want, then, well—goodbye' . . . It's a great school because it's a great administration and they care, the teachers are great, and there's a chevra (group, camaraderie), and it's small enough, that's the way a school should be.

In their interviews, the teachers were asked to comment about the uniqueness of the Springfield campus. The following are two responses:

Sara: I can tell you that the parents are very warm, and there's a good connection between the house and the school . . . generally it's very pleasant. Here's unity here . . . The whole structure is presented in a pleasant way—the parents, the administration. The principals are very pleasant—very, very nice. I personally enjoy it here.

Batya: Very calm, very pleasant, quiet. There's an orderliness here that I really like. It starts from the principal. The teachers, all the staff here, have a sense of rules that I really believe in . . . There's no everyone doing what he wants, it's really orderly.

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2 During the 1993-94 school year, the following was the synagogue affiliation of families of students in the Springfield campus: 102 belonged to Conservative synagogues, 45 belonged to synagogues of other denominations, and 92 were non-affiliated. (Figures were provided by the Director of Education.)
The Participants in the Study

The observation in this study focused primarily on the five classrooms of four Jewish studies teachers. In addition, interviews were conducted with the Springfield campus principal and the Director of Education of SSDS. The following are brief descriptions of those main participants, using pseudonyms:

Dr. Joseph Waldman, the Director of Education, joined the school in 1961 when it was founded and followed the school from its creation through its growth and subsequent openings of second and third campuses. He retired in January 1994. During his career, he was very active in organizations of Jewish educators in North America, taught on the university level, and wrote and lectured extensively on issues of Jewish education. In the words of his biography in the book prepared for his retirement tribute, he was possessed with the "single minded commitment . . . to provide best Jewish education possible, whilst remaining sensitive to the individual needs of the children." In his manner, Dr. Waldman displayed a combination of gentleness and patience with what appeared to be absent-mindedness and a quick, sarcastic wit. In his official words at public occasions, he carefully blended Judaic content, enthusiasm, and warmth for the students. In the forum of private conversations, and to some extent in public, he was forthright about what he perceived to be his own and the school's shortcomings, particularly in the area of the lack of religious commitment of students.
Ms. Elizabeth Miller, had been at the school for thirteen years, in the capacities of teacher and Hebrew principal, before taking over as acting principal of the Springfield campus when the principal resigned abruptly in the summer of 1993. She had two young children who were students in one of the other branches of the school, a fact that she mentioned with pride—that the school she was committed to as a Jewish educator also met her needs as a Jewish parent. Ms. Miller was youthful and slight in appearance, and her language, dress, and demeanor were consistently professional in style. She was soft-spoken and gentle, particularly in interactions with students. Ms. Miller was frequently seen in the hallways in conversation with students. When she entered a classroom to converse with a teacher, she always made a point of circulating among the students in a very natural manner. In informal conversation, she revealed that she was conscious of her newness in the position, particularly when it came to potential conflicts with veteran teachers. She regretted the fact that the administrative tasks of the principal position took her away from more personal interactions with students.

Devora was a teacher of Grade Two and also was teaching Grade One this year for the first time, which added to her anxiety at the beginning of the school year. She had taught junior high school for years and had been at the first school campus for over ten years before being transferred to the new Springfield campus. Devora was trained in Israel and had taught there for six years prior to moving to Canada in the early 1970s, where her second son was born. Her sons had been students at SSDS. Devora made frequent references to her strong personal connection to Israel, both in class and in casual conversation. Devora was a
dynamic, straightforward person with a direct and deliberate manner and a bit of a sharp edge. Her dress was casual, stylish and always well-coordinated.

Sara was a teacher of Grades Two and Five. This was her second year at this school, but her first year in Grade Five, which added to her anxiety in the opening weeks of school. Sara was trained in Israel and had taught there for four years. She came to Canada in the early 1980s and taught in another Jewish day school for nine years before coming to SSDS. She had three children, ranging in ages from six to sixteen and her oldest was spending the school year in Israel, studying and living with family. Sara was slim and attractive, warm and vivacious, with a firm but gentle manner with students. She expressed her comfort with the traditional, yet open, setting of the school, particularly in contrast with the religious extremes of Israel, where she was raised in an Orthodox home, and had experienced what she perceived as religious coercion or complete indifference.

Nava was a teacher of Grades One and Three. This was her third year as a classroom teacher, and her sixth year in the school, where she had also taught gym and art, and worked as the school secretary. Nava came to Canada in the early 1980s, and received her teacher training in Toronto. She was the mother of a daughter who was a student in Grade Two in another campus of the school, and of a son who marked his Bar Mitzvah celebration during this fall semester. Nava was a casual dresser and had a friendly and spontaneous manner. She was the youngest of ten children, and had lived some years on kibbutz. She indicated that she was something of a non-conformist in her past, and that no one would have predicted
that she would become a teacher. Her upbringing was not religious, but she had a strong feeling for tradition at this stage in her life.

Batya was a teacher of Grade Three. She had previously taught at an Orthodox day school and at another branch of SSDS, and had moved from teaching junior high school to the lower grades. She came to Canada in the late 1980s, and was trained as a teacher in Israel. Her background was religious, and she dressed in a modest fashion, always wearing long skirts. She was a mother of two children, and spoke fondly of her attachment to Israel. Batya expressed an obvious commitment to Jewish values and practice in her manner of speaking and teaching, and felt it an important element of her teaching to transmit that to her students. Her manner was friendly and outgoing.

The Structure of the School

When looking at the issues of individualism and community, it is critical to examine the various layers that comprise the school. The articulation of purpose, philosophy, and policy is one aspect which provides the backdrop to the practices of the school. The main focus of this study is on teachers in their classrooms and how each classroom unit functions to foster individual development and the creation of and sensitivity towards community. However, the classroom exists in a context. A part of that context is the overall set of policies and philosophies which guide the practice of the school administrators in running the school.
The school distributes two handbooks, to parents and teachers, outlining its policies and rules. In clear language, issues such as the following are addressed: Jewish dietary laws in and out of school, dress code, care for supplies, adherence to the school calendar and schedule, guidelines for birthday celebrations, gifts to staff, parental involvement in the school, guidelines of appropriate toys and equipment to bring to school, communication between teachers and parents, teachers' planning and evaluation, extras outside the curriculum, professional development, maintenance and decoration of the classroom.

Most policies (as well as the basic curriculum) were established for all three campuses, with some leeway for variation. The policies of the school were very deliberately conceived and articulated and in their practice allowed for latitude and variation on the part of individual teachers. This was clear not only in observing the classroom practice of teachers, but also in their words, as well as those of the administrators interviewed.

Included in Appendix A are excerpts from various documents which offer an overview of the philosophy of the school. These are: a Statement of Purpose and Philosophy, “Do’s and Don’ts” for teachers, the Code of Behaviour for SSDS Students, and “Some Helpful Points” for parents. It is critical to have these as a basis for any discussion of what actually transpires in the classrooms.

Some of the concepts reflected by the policies are the following:

- The school represents cultural traditions of Canada and of Judaism, specifically reflecting the philosophy and outlook of Conservative Judaism.
• Tradition and culture are reflected through the study of sacred and historical texts, the medium of Hebrew, the observance of rituals (such as prayer, kashrut, Shabbat, and holidays), and the link to Israel.

• The authority of religious leaders is binding, and respect for teachers is a Jewish value.

• Jewish life is considered to be all encompassing, and is reflective of the Jew’s relationship with God. Spirituality, morality, and the quest for holiness are primary values to be imparted and modeled to students. Students’ behavior and appearance reflect these values.

• Diversity and pluralism are considered with regard to gender equality in ritual.

• The school considers itself to be an extension of the home and strives to supplement and complement. The school seeks a partnership with parents who are requested to reinforce school values by valuing Jewish tradition, caring for the well-being of individual children, creating a home environment which is conducive to learning, and supporting school rules.

• Caring and concern for fellow Jews is a priority, whether in context of the needy and oppressed or one’s school-mates. Students must respect school rules, property, as well as all members of the school community.

• The school has specific standards of conduct, which are consistent with the school’s philosophy. There are consequences for the violation of these standards.

• Teachers should exhibit concern for the individual student, in matters of discipline and special needs, and should consider all of the children in the school as their own students.

• Teachers should model and encourage appropriate disciplinary and interpersonal behavior, and should also model the school’s religious values.

• Teachers should be professional and consistent and should invest time and effort beyond actual class hours for the welfare of the school and the students.

The policies to a great extent reflect the purposes of a community ideology for schools and present the picture of a school which is very uniform in purpose. In actual practice, there appears to be latitude for diversity, whether in the classrooms of individual teachers or among individual families who do not conform to the stated philosophy. That
diversity typifies the existence of in the school, in that although teachers, students, and families are asked to function within a prescribed framework, there is tacitly accepted variation in actual practice. A good example of this is with regard to religious observance, in the classrooms and in the homes.

**Religious Diversity**

Dr. Waldman wrote the following in a retrospective document, which was sent to parents at the time of his retirement:

> What we are trying to do at the United Synagogue Day School, is to give our pupils both the emotional baggage of Judaism and the intellectual curiosity of a thinking Jewish person . . . we stack the school day and the school year with emotional experiences . . . While we cannot expect our graduates to remember each and every verse or all stories or texts that they have been exposed to, they are likely to remember the exciting experiences of Jewish living . . . At the same time, we are trying to give our pupils the intellectual capabilities . . . with the partnership of a good Jewish home we have every expectation that the resulting personality will be a committed Jew and an intellectual and caring human being.

In his interview, Dr. Waldman reflected:

If I had to do it again, I'd have to fight to say let's have a smaller school where we can do more with the kids . . . We try. From the moment they walk in to the moment they walk out, it's really Conservative Judaism, there's no question. You can't fault us with anything. We do the tefillot (prayers) and the kashrut, and we teach them the holidays. And it's done in a nice way, and it's not done in a fundamental manner—it's OK . . . I tried with the union to put in the same thing the Seminary used to do when you came into Rabbinical school. They have you sign something—I'm an observant Jew, etc. I tried to get that put in—I was shot down immediately. And that's wrong, because a Catholic school is allowed and should have Catholic committed people, and a Jewish school should be able to have that. We've never had it . . . So we were raking them in twenty years ago, and now we're left with non-committed masses . . . But this school is successful—cognitively it's successful. Jewish peoplehood it's successful. The other thing—you know we push, and we don't get too much . . . but we do the best we can—we hold the fort. The kids know what they have to and don't have to do, but by the time
they get to Grade Four - they know, the school wants it, and you do what you want at home.

In her interview, Ms. Miller expanded upon her impressions of the religious diversity of the school population:

I think we're sort of in a pyramid; there are a few observant families . . . there are more than a few knowledgeable Jewish families . . . there are many families who are neither observant nor learned. Somewhere in that group, there are people who are emotionally committed and that's a positive driving force. Somewhere in that wide base are people who are—not anti, but 'keep my children and educate them, but please don't make them too observant'. I guess we run the range . . . The implications are, that we have to either insulate ourselves and function as a close community in a bubble . . . and know that our influence ends at the front and back doors of the school. Or we have to do a little more outreach than we're doing, we're starting to do a little bit. I sort of prefer the outreach . . . we're trying to foster the sense of community . . . not just a social community, but religious community, by bringing siblings together for synagogue-related things and bringing the parents together . . . melding the observance and the social feeling and the connectedness of the families to each other and . . . to Jewish life . . . I think that's the best way to that larger group is to really motivate them the same way we like to motivate students. People learn things best when there's an appeal to the senses, an appeal to emotion . . . so what are the implications of the diversity? They can work against us, because really the home speaks the loudest . . . if we want that diversity to work for us, we can't stop at educating our students, we sort of have to picture the families as our alternate goal . . . If we leave the families out of it . . . nine out of ten times, the children's future will imitate that of their family of origin.

Devora commented in her interview:

Look what I teach is 'that's how it's done'—in your family it may be different . . . In the last few years, the parents that send their kids to day school, it's turned into an issue of status, more than because of religion or Judaism, or because of Hebrew . . . because it's a private school and they know they'll get a good education . . . Some feel that they just want their kids to know—'I don't care what he does, as long as he knows' . . . and some feel 'why do I need to learn this, when will I ever use it in my life?'

Nava commented in her interview:

The truth is, that most of the children come from a background that is quite secular. Some of them are affiliated with the Conservative Movement, but almost no one actively observes mitzvot (commandments). But, still for almost every holiday, I make a distinction between laws and customs. And many times, I'll say: most Jews do it this
way. I would never want—God forbid—for one of them to be offended and feel that because I'm not, I'm less. But it creates a difficulty, because when we speak about kashrut—suddenly it becomes clear to them that almost no one here keeps kosher . . . Look it's a lot easier—it's the Conservative Movement—but still there's a problem when there are those who don't keep mitzvot—but we try to overcome the differences, without saying: this is the only way to do things . . . But still our role is, not to be afraid to say that this is what the Torah and rabbis have told us to do.

As part of the natural integration of the Jewish routine into the daily classroom routine, teachers would ask students how they spent the Sabbath or holiday. This was a recurring example of where the gap between school values and home practice became very evident. Students regularly reported about all sorts of activities which would be considered in violation of the Sabbath as well as about visits to unkosher restaurants. Students were clearly not apologetic or ashamed, they were merely sharing their weekend activities, as asked to do. Teachers generally let the comments pass without remark, except in the following example where Devora's students were talking about their plans for Halloween and she responded: "Now listen children, Halloween is not a Jewish holiday. What you do at home, if your parents want you to dress up, it's OK at home, but here we don't speak about Halloween. At Purim we'll talk about costumes...it's a waste of time to talk about Halloween in Hebrew class." Sara told me that she occasionally heard students talking about Halloween, and that she did not feel it was her place to address it. In her words, "Actually, if it's part of the culture we must respect it, as we expect to be respected by others." Both teachers said that if a student brought in unkosher food—specifically meat—they would speak privately to that student about it.
The diversity of belief and practice highlights the school’s acceptance of pluralism in the religious realm. The many ways in which Judaism is consciously integrated into the daily life of the school underscores the school’s commitment to the values and tradition of Judaism in a more absolute sense.

Integration of Jewish Concepts and Practice

The integration of Judaism into the school structure and routine is approached in a very clear and deliberate manner. In the Handbook, parents are instructed to dress children in clothes appropriate for prayer and Torah study, to send kosher food for snacks and lunches, and to avoid making birthday parties on the Sabbath or in non-kosher establishments. School is dismissed early on Fridays in order to allow time to prepare for the Sabbath, and teachers are instructed not to assign homework which would be due right after a holiday in order not to spoil the spirit of the holiday. Teachers are also instructed to collect money for charity in their classrooms and to pray alongside their students.

Jewish practices are obvious in the routine and appearance of the school. It is particularly evident that the cycle of each day, week, and month is closely linked to a traditional Jewish calendar. The bulletin boards of hallways and classrooms are always festively decorated for each coming holiday. Teachers write the Hebrew date (according to the lunar calendar) and weekly Torah portion on the board each day. Prayer (tefilla) is held in each class daily, and special prayer sessions are held in assembly on Fridays and on the first day of each new month on the Hebrew calendar. Morning Public Address announcements are made partially in Hebrew, also announcing the Hebrew date and Torah
portion. As a Jewish holiday approaches, the Jewish studies classes devote themselves to learning texts, rituals, customs, stories, prayers, and songs for that holiday, as well as doing relevant art projects and written work.

Jewish values are also woven into the lessons and the school environment in a very natural fashion, as can be seen by the following examples:

When students were squabbling in Sara's Grade Two class, she stopped them by making a point about how the Torah teaches about showing respect to others.

Ms. Miller consulted with me one day on the translation of a known Hebrew expression which says "Courtesy and Torah study go hand in hand," as she wanted to post a sign with those words in the office to attract the attention of rude students and parents.

In teaching her students about how Jews love and value the Torah, Devora posted a picture of a smiling boy holding a book entitled *Torah*. On a more concrete level of respect, she also told her students: "On the place where you put a *siddur* (prayer book) and *chumash* (Bible), you don't sit. That's why in winter, when you change into your boots, you put your shoes on the chair, not the table."

In Sara's Grade Five class, a student found a mistake in a workbook. Sara said: "It can happen, it wasn't written by God." The student asked whether there could be a mistake in the Torah. Sara responded: "You won't find a mistake in the *chumash* . . . the tradition is that Moses wrote the Torah by divine inspiration from God." Although this was not stated with a particularly religious overture or an embracing of that belief by Sara, it was apparently intended as a statement of fact.
One Thursday, a student in the Grade Five said, "I'm tired" and Sara responded, "Me too, but tomorrow is Friday, and then Shabbat and on Shabbat we rest... God gave us Shabbat to rest."

One day in Nava's class when two teachers from another school were scheduled to visit, she prepared the students to observe the mitzvah (commandment) of welcoming guests. She linked this with their Bible study and the story of Abraham welcoming the angels to his tent. Special chairs were set up for the guests and Nava set the tone, welcoming them warmly when they arrived.

On that same day, one of the students went home early because he was sick. Nava told him as he was leaving that she would phone him that evening. She then turned to the class and said: "We learned about welcoming guests, but visiting the sick is also a very important mitzvah."

In Batya's class, during the school drive to collect money and distribute poppies for Canadian Remembrance Day, Batya took a few moments to discuss the background of this custom. Ahuva asked: "Why do I have to bring money? I already have a poppy." Batya responded: "I have one too, but it's OK—every year you get a new one." She told the class that it was an important mitzvah to give money to charity, even as small an amount as five cents. The cause for the collection, which was not a specifically Jewish one, linked the students to their larger Canadian society.
Daily Prayer

One area where both the school’s commitment to tradition and spirituality as well as the diversity in religious expression is displayed, is that of daily prayer. As articulated in the Statement of Purpose and Philosophy (Appendix A):

Judaism is a religion in which commandments and worship are primary determinants of the quality of Jewish life. Therefore, the school is committed to teaching the ways in which Jews are expected to respond to man and to God, with particular emphasis placed on regular prayer and the observance of mitzvot (commandments) such as Shabbat and Kasherut (dietary laws).

Goals for prayer in a Jewish day school include: the development of Jewish literacy with regard to familiarity with the traditional prayer book and melodies; setting aside time in one’s daily routine for spiritual reflection, specifically to offer thanks and make requests of God, both as individuals and as a collective group of Jews; and creating a link to Jews around the world who also observe the ritual of prayer. The goals of prayer parallel some of the goals of individualism and community, including: commitment to uphold tradition, the personal relationship of the individual Jew with God, maintaining an ideological link with other members of the religion, and exhibiting concern (through prayer on their behalf) for their welfare.

While the Teacher Manual and Handbook does not elaborate on a rationale for prayer, it instructs that:

Each class is to start in the morning, regardless of whether it is Hebrew or General studies, with prayers. In the General studies classes, recite Modeh Ani, the Shma... In the Hebrew studies classes, some form of the shacharit (morning) prayers is to be recited.

It was understood that when a Hebrew class was held in the afternoon, they recited mincha, the traditional afternoon prayer.
Sara's Grade Five met in the mornings, and she always saved prayers for the last fifteen to twenty minutes of the lesson. Sara said that she could not switch this time, because there were students scheduled to meet with the remedial teacher at that time, and otherwise they would miss part of the lesson instead of missing *tefilla* (the implication being that those students regularly missed prayers). The routine of *tefilla* in this class was that two students sat in the front and served as leaders. The leaders on most occasions were loud, boisterous, and out of tune and rhythm, making them difficult to follow. On two occasions, Sara stopped them and had them begin again. Once she reprimanded: "Remember what I said; *tefilla* that's not nice will be done over and over and you'll lose lunch time." Another time, Sara stopped them to say: "Remember I said your reading was weak—how can we improve it? By participating in *tefilla*, all reading aloud, not just a solo by the *chazzan* (leader)." The students sped through most of the prayers, with the exception of the *Amida*, the Silent Devotion, which they recited to themselves with quiet composure. During the prayers, on at least three occasions which I observed, Sara did desk work, fixed up the closet, hung papers on the bulletin board, and spoke to me. Other times, she walked around the room or sang quietly. She did not assume a central leadership role. On one occasion, she had the class skip a prayer which they did regularly because they ran out of time. In general, prayers in the Grade Five were rushed and somewhat wild, with no introductory or summative words. It was not presented as a significant portion of the lesson or as a spiritual interlude from study. The teacher did not model personal commitment to prayer or to creating an appropriate atmosphere for prayer.
In Sara's Grade Two, she also saved prayers for the end of the day, and she sometimes deleted prayers because of time. In this class, the decorum was appropriate and the singing was spirited, but again there was no religious or spiritual overtone. Sara complimented those who sang and had their finger in the siddur.

In Devora's class, tefilla was conducted in a deliberate and orderly fashion. Each time, she reviewed with the class her principles of prayer; loud voices, eyes in the siddur, finger in the siddur, feet together for the Amida, no going out to the washroom. Devora used prayers to practice reading Hebrew and reviewing vocabulary, and told the students that "... every letter and vowel must be perfect, because we're praying to God." During the prayers, Devora walked around the room and sang loudly. The three students who were monitors that day also served as leaders for prayers. In this class, the priorities of the prayer session were decorum and skill. There was not a spiritual overtone, but the time set aside was clearly valuable to the teacher as another learning vehicle.

Nava's Grade Three met in the afternoon, so their prayer was mincha, the afternoon service. It was generally recited as the first part of the program each day. Nava was always actively involved during tefillah—walking around, or sitting among the students at an empty student desk, and singing loudly. One student served as chazzan, and led certain parts of the service. A sense of decorum could be felt, and the students were generally respectful and serious, and they read and sang actively. One day, Nava told them: "I'm very proud at how many of you stood with your feet together and put your finger in the book. It's hard to keep
the place, even I lose my place . . . I see people in the synagogue following with their finger, even those who pray there three times a day.

Nava once commented to me that she did not like having the Modeh Ani on the P.A. in the morning (when she taught Grade One). "It's a prayer and it should be part of the service . . . You have to get kids in the mood for tefillah." Yet in her Grade Three class, I never saw her do anything to set the mood for tefillah; she just announced it and began. The class did much of the service by reading aloud, and in late November, Nava commented to me: "Until now I was only worried about getting the tefillah right, in reading and knowing what belongs to the morning service and the afternoon service, now we can get to other things . . . like special prayers, for example, for Zeev's mother when she was in the hospital."

Nava gave me the impression that she was not comfortable with singing, but she led the students loudly in song during tefillah. One day Nava asked the class about the Rosh Chodesh (festival of the new month) breakfast that was held that morning with several other classes. Riva said: "We didn't know the tunes, but we tried to sing." Nava: "You tried, that's important . . . I was in synagogue on Shabbat and they sang all different tunes than the ones I know, but I knew the content of the prayers, and it was nice to hear different tunes."

The message of tefillah in Nava's class was that it was to be taken seriously and with respect and that over time they would be comfortable with the reading and understanding of the prayers, but that meanwhile the singing was for their enjoyment.

Batya's Grade Three met in the afternoon, so their prayer was also meant to be the mincha service. More often than not, however, Batya included prayers from the morning
service, with no explanation. *Tefillah* was usually done as the second thing in the day’s routine, generally after the *chumash* (Bible) lesson. There was no preamble to beginning the prayers. Each day there was a leader who announced the page and led some of the prayers. Batya praised those who were ready, with their finger in the place. She encouraged the students to sing loudly, stand without moving, and bow appropriately. During part of the prayers, each student read a line out loud and Batya corrected their reading mistakes. This was somewhat tedious as some of the readers were slow and students would talk during the reading. When they read or sang aloud as a class, they seemed out of sync and sang at different paces. Batya commented to me that it was a priority for her to work on their singing in rhythm, in preparation for the special Grade Three service later in the year.

Batya did not use a *siddur* until mid-November. Until then, during prayers, she would do other things while the students prayed silently, for example, writing on or erasing the board, doing work at her desk, or arranging the closet.

Once during *tefillah*, Yosefa wanted to ask Batya a question. Batya asked: "Is it about the *tefillah*?" Yosefa asked: "When are we going upstairs?" Batya gave her a stern look and continued with the service. Afterwards, Batya said: "Yosefa, do you know why I didn’t answer your question? If it’s about the *tefillah* I can talk . . . Otherwise if I talk it’s a sin - because we’re before the King." Batya’s serious tone about the importance of *tefillah* was not consistent with her decorum or behavior during the service. *Tefillah* in this class was neither effective as a learning device, nor as a spiritual experience.
These examples illustrate a lack of clarity and consistency in the focus of the school and its teachers towards daily prayer. Was it meant to be a Hebrew lesson? An exercise in discipline and order? Preparation for prayer in other settings? Was prayer a priority or an afterthought? In terms of community and individualism, both of which could potentially be addressed in a meaningful way by prayer, it seems that neither was fully realized.

There was one moving example during the semester where a teacher incorporated prayer and the individual needs of a child. In Devora's class, Avi shared his concern about his grandfather who was having heart surgery. Devora responded: "The doctors are very good and he'll be healthy and today in our tefillot we'll think in our hearts about Avi's grandfather." During the tefilla, when they reached the paragraph asking God to heal the sick, Devora stopped and explained, "In this tefilla, God is the doctor of all the sick. Today we'll say this and think about Avi's grandfather." And then she asked Avi to read the paragraph aloud. This was a positive example of using the tradition to have personal relevance and also showing genuine concern for an individual by involving the classroom community in his time of need.

In contrast to the classroom prayers, the weekly Friday assembly, held in the sanctuary of the synagogue and led by Ms. Miller had a different tone. Students and teachers dressed a bit more festively for the Sabbath and there was pleasant singing. Ms. Miller taught a song and the principal of General Studies read a story, yet these additions to the prayer did not take away from an atmosphere which seemed like a real community in prayer as opposed to a simulated academic experience.
On a related topic, the school's policies required the daily morning singing of *O Canada* and *Hatikva* (Israel's national anthem). This was the first year that these songs were piped in to each classroom simultaneously over the P.A. system. In consistent fashion, both Devora and Sara did not sing *O Canada* and sang *Hatikva*, albeit in quiet voices. Devora told her class that she did not know the words to *O Canada*. As with *tefilla*, she actively instructed the students as to the proper decorum for standing at attention for the anthems. Both teachers modeled decorum, but not active participation. I once asked Sara whether she felt like a traitor as an Israeli singing *O Canada*. She responded; "No, definitely not, I just don't feel it so much." I only had one opportunity to see Nava in the morning, and she stood at attention and sang both anthems. I asked her what she thought about the anthems and whether an Israeli could sing *O Canada*. She responded: "I just think about Israel when I sing 'our home and native land'. I don't know, we do what we're supposed to do." The one time I observed Batya in the morning, she did not sing either anthem.

The daily incorporation of the anthems reflected the school's commitment to tradition and the linkage of the students to their dual cultures. The weak modeling of this value by teachers potentially served to undermine this goal.

**Hebrew**

An area of unifying coherence in the Jewish studies classes was that of the almost total integration of the Hebrew language. The school's *Statement of Purpose and Philosophy* (Appendix A) reads:
Hebrew is the national language of the Jewish people; and the medium through which Jewish culture and values is most intimately expressed; and the language in which the major portion of textual material was written. Hebrew is, therefore, an important medium of instruction in the school.

There are two basic ideologies regarding the teaching of Hebrew: the familiarity with the holy language of Judaism’s sacred texts, primarily in order to study and participate in ritual (more of a diaspora priority); and the immersion in the living, spoken language of the Jewish people as a full expression of Judaism, Zionism, and participation in the modern Jewish state. Samuels (1992) finds in her study that Israeli teachers “stress the teaching of spoken Hebrew, rather than Leshon Kodesh (the holy tongue)” (147). In cultural research, language and cultural identity are strongly linked (Byram 1990; Donmoyer 1990; Feuerverger 1989) even to the point that "language constitutes the single most characteristic feature of a separate ethnic identity" (Devos 1975, 16).

At SSDS, Hebrew was not an incidental feature of the Jewish studies classes. Students used their Hebrew names, which for most was the only place that these names (given at birth, in Jewish tradition often to honor a deceased relative) were used. This in itself made this a unique community, as Hebrew names are a link to tradition and history and frequently to a Biblical origin (in contrast with the homogeneous Jasons and Jennifers that the 1980s produced). Teachers were called by their first Hebrew names, and not as Ms. or Mrs. This is actually an Israeli norm, not usual to all Jewish studies classes in North America or even in other branches of SSDS. The fact that teachers were committed to teaching completely in Hebrew meant that they spent more time in lengthy explanations of words and
concepts and allowed for digressions and conversations that might be considered irrelevant in other classes, but were acceptable as practice in speaking Hebrew. Interactions with students who were children of Israeli parents seemed to be more easygoing and natural, perhaps because of the comfortable flow of the language.

Devora’s integration of Hebrew into every lesson was deliberate and consistent. She believed that talking and hearing the spoken language was the best way to learn. It was impossible to ignore that she was conducting a class of native English speakers, entirely in Hebrew. She encouraged any kind of talk or digression, if she could use it as a vehicle for teaching Hebrew. She introduced me to the class only after a review of the male and female words for ‘guest’. She picked up on the students’ interest in sports, by offering them a vocabulary for the different games, and she used Hebrew to talk about what foods they brought for snack and lunch. If a student had a special request, he or she had to express it in Hebrew. Devorah never translated a word from English to Hebrew, instead she went into a lengthy explanation in Hebrew to be certain the concept was clear. She always corrected their Hebrew gently and with encouragement, never saying they were “wrong”. She told me that she knew how hard it was for them, because of how difficult it was for her to speak English.

Sara also conducted her classes entirely in Hebrew. By this insistence, there were frequently fuller explanations for simple concepts, in order to be sure that the points were clear. In every lesson, there was discussion about routine, for example, the weather or how people were feeling, in an effort to reinforce this vocabulary. All compliments and
reprimands were in Hebrew. It was very natural for Sara as an Israeli teacher to be speaking Hebrew. There was no sense of pretending or simulating. Sara distinguished between good responses to her questions, which properly addressed the content in English, and those which were better because they were in Hebrew.

In the Grade Five class, the Hebrew flowed more naturally, and there was no sense that the level of the material was compromised because of the language. Even when Sara broke the students into groups for projects, part of the requirement was that they work in Hebrew; they did so to a limited extent when Sara was not standing nearby. The students enjoyed their language lesson and felt pride when they had an improved grasp of vocabulary and grammar. They had more sophisticated assignments in Hebrew, for example, writing and oral presentation.

In Nava's Grade Three, there was a great deal of conversation incorporated into the lesson—entirely in Hebrew. Whether it was regarding students' personal experiences or an analytical look at a text, all discussion was in Hebrew and all students were encouraged to participate actively. Nava frequently broke into Hebrew song as a phrase in the lesson would remind her of a particular song, or as a segue from one subject to the next. Often the students sang along enthusiastically. If a student came in from another class to make an administrative announcement, Nava would take the time to have him or her make the announcement in Hebrew. When the students asked Nava to fill out a food survey that they needed for their English class, she had them translate it into Hebrew. Nava incorporated
Hebrew expressions into her conversations and brought everyday examples in modern Hebrew to help the class understand concepts in Biblical Hebrew.

Batya's class was the only one in which I heard a teacher translate words into English, albeit on an infrequent basis. It was a priority for her to build the students' vocabulary, and Batya encouraged the use of a Hebrew-English dictionary, and it was not uncommon for students to get up and check their dictionary in the middle of a lesson. In this class, there was very little digression from the lesson into discussion of a more informal nature, so the focus of Hebrew for conversation was minimal. Batya told me that she was determined not to talk down to the students in Hebrew, as she felt their greatest learning would come from listening to her and imitating her. Batya utilized the medium of interactive games quite a bit in her lessons, and through these games reinforced Hebrew.

The factor of Hebrew as the primary language in the Jewish studies classes suggests several relevant questions: Were assignments limited because they were not permitted to be in the students' native language? Were students working to their developmental aptitude since they were limited by language? Did teachers avoid subjects and depth because of the limitations of language? Could the students be creative in a foreign language? Did weak or timid students refrain from expressing themselves because of the language? Could communication and the relationship between teacher and student be as fully developed or was there an automatic barrier, even greater than the usual distance between student and teacher?

Hebrew was not utilized in creating a total environment of cultural immersion in the school (as evidenced, for example, by the fact that not all teachers spoke Hebrew and the
Israeli teachers always were careful to speak in English when a native English speaker was in the room. To some extent, Hebrew was a visible presence in the school, for example, in signs and decorations, P.A. announcements, ceremonies, and integration in the music and art programs. However, Hebrew was a primary feature in the Jewish studies classes, and was an important mechanism in setting those classes apart from the General studies.

Israel and Israeli Teachers

As stated in the Statement of Purpose and Philosophy (Appendix A), the school "strives to teach the reality and significance of Israel, stressing both the settlement on the land as a major Jewish responsibility, and the need to expand the connections between Israel and the Diaspora." A major feature in promoting this philosophy is the placement of native Israeli teachers in the role of Jewish Studies teachers. The presence of Israeli teachers does serve to "expand the connections between Israel and the Diaspora," offering opportunities for integrating authentic Israeli culture and language, and hearing first-hand reports which help bring history and current events to life. However, there is an inherent tension in "stressing the settlement on the land as a major Jewish responsibility," by employing as models native Israelis who chose to settle in Canada.

The following are responses from the interviews relating to what distinctive contributions Israeli teachers offered to the school:

Dr. Waldman: Distinctive is that they bring in a spirit of Israel, of course ... that's the plus. There's definitely a facet of Hebrew studies brought by these teachers, and that's basically plus. I find, over the years, that I used to have to cool them down, you know. And I used to say something which they hated. I'd say: 'This is not Israel, this is
America. You know they'd say 'What—classes on Yom Ha'atzmaut (Israel Independence Day),[' But, on the overall, it's been positive.

Ms. Miller: Different Israeli teachers bring their childhood songs from Israel . . . and that adds a particular, sort of authentic flavor . . . They bring a certain Israeli culture to aspects of the holidays and celebrations . . . I see it in decorations, flowers, I hear it in certain songs, the cadence of the language. They definitely open up our eyes about Israel and that's so important . . . There's a concern for decor in the classrooms and in the hall when they have a celebration. If you think about it in isolation, it's paper, but it contributes to the atmosphere, and there's a huge difference. Those are the kinds of things that are unique.

Sara: First of all, the strong Hebrew . . . You're teaching them Israeli culture if you want . . . The message of the holidays in Israel . . . of growing up in Israel. I think it's different coming from someone who experienced it in contrast to someone who didn't experience it.

Devora: I bring them the love of Israel . . . Also, the geography, the foods, the customs . . . I think I bring them a lot of love and a lot of knowledge about Israel. Plus expressions, customs . . . it's important. Also, in every class there are one or two children of Israelis . . . the child of Israelis who grows up here deserves a tiny bit more special attention.

Nava: To teach them about Israel, there is a geographical and emotional gap . . . I feel that many times when I tell them things from a personal perspective, and bring thing from my house and from Israel, and when I tell them how it was there, it's a bit different when they hear this. And I also try to fill in for them things happening in Israel . . . I try and not have them feel that that the fact that I am from Israel that I'm not familiar—God forbid—with hockey or baseball . . . But along with that, I bring them things that are connected, for example, an article about archaeology in Israel . . . Look, our goal is Jewish identity, but if what's important is Jewish identity and Zionism, it's important for them to see a living person. Although it's not exactly Zionist for me to be living here . . . I try and speak to them always in Hebrew—in the class and out of the class, whenever there's an opportunity.

Batya: The language—I speak a correct language . . . The child hears me speak correctly . . . the kids begin to speak like me, they imitate me . . . I often put on music of Israel . . . Also, we talk about experiences from Israel. The fact that I am seventh generation of Jerusalem . . . so whenever anything comes up about Jerusalem . . . I tell them my experiences of growing up . . . I told them about Chanukah, how we celebrated it in Israel . . . And I encourage them, that even now they should start to work on their parents to travel to Israel to celebrate their Bar or Bat Mitzvah . . . I encourage them to read books in Hebrew . . . through Israeli books, they'll also pick up the atmosphere of Israel.
The presence of Israel varied from class to class. In both of Sara's classes, she made infrequent mention of Israel—either in reference to herself or something related to the lesson. In all of my observations, I have one recorded reference which Sara made, regarding differences in the observances of the festival of Sukkot in Israel and in Canada. In private conversations, she mentioned Israel in the following contexts: her training in second language learning, sending her son to Israel for the year so that he could be with family, her love of Israeli culture—and how when she visits Israel she goes to see several shows, and her dislike of the religious-secular dichotomy in Israeli schools and culture. One day after Moshe told her that Melech was chewing gum in class, she burst out to me on the side:

Such tattle tales! In Israel, they'd never do that. One kid would never tell the teacher about another, or the kids would say 'tattle-tale'. It's more likely that the kids would band together against the teacher, not go to the teacher against another kid. I was shocked at this when I came here . . . I grew up there—I know—it's a cultural trait.

Sara seemed to have a more easygoing relationship with Eitan, a son of Israeli parents, partly because he was an outgoing student, but also because he was clearly more comfortable in Hebrew.

Devora seized every opportunity to mention Israel in class, both formally and informally. The following were some examples:

When students talked about sports, Devora would translate the words into Hebrew and tell them about which of the same sports also exist in Israel, for example, bowling, soccer, basketball, tennis, and ping pong.

When translating students' re-telling about what they did at home, Devora would elaborate on which of those same things also exist in Israeli homes. For example, she told
them that there are clothes dryers, but that more often Israeli families hang their laundry outside to dry.

In the context of wishes for peace in the New Year, Devora taught the students about the signing of the peace treaty between Yitzchak Rabin and Yasir Arafat.

Devora spoke about the differences in observing the holiday of Sukkot in Israel and Canada, and how she still could not get used to the different wording of expressions and songs on Chanuka, especially when Canadian Jews say "a great miracle happened there," in contrast with Israeli Jews who say "a great miracle happened here."

Devora reacted passively when a student gave her a gift for Chanuka. On the side, she remarked to me: "I want to get it into their heads that Chanuka is not gifts... It's the influence of Christmas—even the Israelis are dragged in!"

Devora did not appear to be deliberately integrating Israel for the sake of the lesson, it was perfectly natural for her to reflect upon similarities to or differences from Israel with such frequency. From conversations with her, it was clear that her frequent references to Israel were an expression of her ambivalence over her choice to have settled and raised her children in Canada, while still feeling emotionally tied to Israel.

Nava made reference to Israel almost once in every session. When Tamir's grandmother came from Israel, Nava said: "I'm jealous, I wish my mother would come too. Enjoy her and tell her Nava says hi." She put up a map of Israel so that everyone could see where Tamir's grandmother lived. She showed them where she was born and described the different parts of the country briefly.
During another class, in the context of a conversation of pious Jews, Yardena asked: "It's so hot in Israel, why do they dress like that?" Nava responded: "They're used to it, that's their way," and then went on to tell the class about the Bedouin in the desert and their way of dress.

When the students had Nava fill out their food survey for their English class, they asked her which candy she liked best. She said: "Elite," and told them that in Israel Elite candy and the place it is made are well-known, as Hershey would be here.

When the students were making "stained glass" pictures for the classroom windows, Nava told them about the famous Chagall windows in Jerusalem, that people from around the world come to see.

Nava's references to Israel were casual and parenthetical to class discussions. They were informational and not ideological in nature.

There are no recorded references to Israel during my observations of Batya's class.

The teachers' anecdotal integration of Israel into their lessons was natural and was not apologetic or contrived. (Those who tended to share more about themselves in general—Devora and Nava—also spoke more about Israel.) They transmitted to the students that Israel is a tangible place, not just a Biblical landmark, where real people speak Hebrew and lead modern lives. And when something happens in Israel, Jews around the world, even in Canada, are affected.
Individualism and Community Among the Teachers

Individualism and community are also developed at the level of interaction between the administration and the teachers, and amongst the teachers themselves. Individualism is fostered in the forms of autonomy, respect and recognition, help and support, feedback and evaluation. Community is developed through partnership, teamwork, camaraderie, collegiality, and loyalty to the school.

The following are the responses to the interview question regarding individual teacher discretion with regard to classroom rules, curriculum, and materials:

Dr. Waldman: We're pretty open with the discretion of individual teachers . . . I have pushed for leeway in these things. I've been the true Conservative Jew that's been able to live with ambiguity. And I think that the person with any kind of brain must live with ambiguity . . . there's got to be an openness . . . I've always said to the teachers; we're lucky that we're an elementary school, there's no standard exams after Grade Eight . . . we can do whatever we want . . . You can't cover everything anyway. You never cover everything anyway. It's impossible. The world has exploded—there's no more such thing. In Judaica, we do want them to learn a block. Before you get to Grade Four, you should finish Beresheet (Genesis). Well, they do that. I don't care if one does more Rashi (a commentator) and one does less Rashi, one does more of archaeology and one does less of archaeology—it evens out. Let the teacher teach what they feel like teaching. You never cover it all anyway . . .

Ms. Miller: Kids get a collage of teachers over the years and the collage is a positive thing . . . the good news is that children are exposed to this collage view, and they piece together as they go through the system . . . There are certain basics, but each teacher maneuvers quite differently . . . If I had my druthers, there would be joint planning, even if it were just to say I'm doing this unit and another one says I don't like it so I'm doing this . . . It's something you can't really force . . . I think the ideal for children is to live with a consistent set of rules in the instrumental issues—in how it is one leaves the room to attend to one's physical needs, how to get the attention of others. I think that ideally there should be one set of rules. But you can't—I can't—rule other human beings, and the fact of the matter is, children are very resilient. Sometimes even within one home, there are slight interpretations and variations of certain standing house rules, and the children survive. If the two sets of operation are too disparate, I think it takes its toll. It's too stressful, and not desirable stress. But if
there are two different rules that aren't totally disparate or diametrically opposed in their thrust then the children can . . . it's OK.

Devora: There's a lot of freedom . . . In chumash I can choose whatever topics I want . . . In the early years, we didn't have all these materials—xerox, etc.—so we had to do everything with our own two hands. So they said I could do whatever I wanted, and I picked what I wanted, what I liked . . . Everyone thinks their way is best . . . someone said; the kids learn, despite the teacher . . . I get kids from different teachers—it ends up not mattering . . . it balances out . . . take black and white and it becomes grey—and a strong charismatic teacher can put it all together (except for study habits, because it's hard to correct mistakes). . . . so it really doesn't matter because we work within a framework . . . so it's OK, if they get the tools—what's really the point? To give them the tools to study.

Sara: Personally, I think I have a lot of freedom and I think that I bring in a lot of my personality and my values. Yes, there is a specific framework . . . but I decide which chapters to emphasize, which to shorten, and which to expand upon. No one gets involved in this—it's up to the teachers . . . Personally, I believe that a school should have a framework and a program . . . sometimes too much freedom is not healthy. Every person and structure needs a framework . . . Personally it doesn't bother me, (that rules differ from class to class) because I think the kids understand what they can and can't do . . . I don't emphasize that in my class it's one way and in her class another way.

Nava: At the end of every year we reflect to see what we've done, where it's worthwhile to make changes. But we have a curriculum that is quite defined . . . If, for example, I'm teaching a particular value and our textbook doesn't get to it, so I'll try to bring from a variety of themes—to fit to my program . . . So I personally may concentrate on (one thing) more than another teacher would . . . It's our choice when to do it during the year . . . it's my third year . . . so I'm already trying more to experiment, rather than go with the regular program.

Batya: At the beginning of the year we get a curriculum, the books. The principal says if you want to add your own stories, etc. that you find, that's great. But the framework exists . . . We (the two Grade Three teachers) will teach the same things by the end of the year . . . we will work together . . . because I know that in Grade Four the kids will come together from two separate classes, I said it's not fair to the kids. Even if I don't like it so much, or it's not appropriate for my class, I have to think of the kids . . . There's orderliness here that I really like. It starts from the principal. The teachers, all the staff here, have a sense of rules . . . There's no everyone doing what he wants.

The following are the responses to the interview question regarding cooperation and collaboration among teachers:
Dr. Waldman: There's meetings, they get together, they talk . . . Basically, there's a good relationship between administration and staff. You have that in Springfield, particularly—you have it all over . . . I would hope that the most important thing is that they (co-teachers or partner teachers) should talk to each other, sit with each other, relate to each other and say I'm doing this, you're doing this—let's do it together, let's do it separately—I'll take your math for one day—something, some interaction between them.

Ms. Miller: I'm not satisfied with what's going on here, in terms of collaboration and cooperation altogether. And I'm not fully plugged in in knowing how hard to assert myself in this area—this is my newness showing here . . . I handed out a guideline for evaluation and under interpersonal, there are some headings about collaboration with your classroom partner, that is, Hebrew-General and grade level partners, and other series of interpersonals—you and your supervisor, you and people outside your class. . . I guess the presence of it in that document showed that it's something to be valued.

Devora: One of the questions I won't answer you, about the social relationships among the teachers . . . you can decide what you want. You know what, let's say it's OK. My situation today is that I'm so busy with the two classes that I don't have time for anything.

Sara: For me, personally, it disturbs me a great deal. I came from a framework where the connections were not only sociable, but within the school were very warm and supportive among the Hebrew staff . . . Here it's the opposite situation. The English staff are very nice, I have very good relationships with each one of them. In the Hebrew staff are many many tensions and it only takes one or two in a staff to cause this kind of situation. It's a small staff. There are things which really disturb me, and I think it's our problem to solve these problems . . . And it seems that the administration doesn't bring up these things . . . you have you bring up these things because everything is not OK here. I personally am not built this way, the way I am is that: if there's a problem, let's go and solve it. The problem is difficult, and conflict between people is not something pleasant, but sometimes you have to do it. It's also an example for the children. And that really bothers me, that we're an example for the children and we do things—like a teacher who stands in the hall and yells at another teacher who's taught for twenty years, and the kids hear.

Nava: We have a lot of meetings and informal exchange of information . . . all sorts of opportunities, about students, about the program. Many times we try to have the programs fit together (i.e. Hebrew and English), so that there will be integration . . . In Grade Three I always related to what the English teacher has done and how important it is. I don't have social relationships with most of them. I personally have a very good relationship with my partner (i.e. English teacher in Grade One) . . . I don't feel a specific connection to Hebrew teachers, English teachers . . . I try not to go into Hebrew
in their presence ... I relate to them as professionals, that's how I see them personally and that's how they accept it.

Batya: I'm a type who gives a lot, I don't argue over trivialities ... So, I say: you want it that way, it doesn't bother me. Is it good for the child? OK, let's go on ... We speak on the telephone, we're on duty together, so we talk. There's a connection—in staff meetings, in Professional Development days, we're always together ... In a small campus, it's like a little hothouse.

The issues of the individual autonomy of teachers and the level of collaboration appeared to go hand in hand, for example in the case of the working relationship of Sara and Devora, both Hebrew teachers of the Grade Two. The two teachers had very little to do with each other, and in certain areas, went out of their way not to work together. For example, both teachers used original workbooks for the holidays. I asked each of them if she used the same workbook as the other Grade Two. Devora responded: "No, we work individually—that's OK, everyone has their own style." Sara commented: "When I first came (last year), I put my 'Hello Grade Two' workbook in her box, offering it to her. She sent it back to me and wrote a note no thanks, but she doesn't use workbooks. So, I don't know what she does, but I respect it—that's OK." There was apparently no intervention from the administration in this curricular design or style of collegial interaction. (Perhaps the low level of grade-wide collaboration in the Grade Two contributed to a higher intensity of class community in each of the two classrooms.)

As teachers of two Grade Three classes, Nava and Batya both acknowledged that they communicated with one another, but that each had her own priorities. Nava implied that as a third year teacher, compared to Batya as a first year teacher, she preferred more
experimentation with the curriculum. Batya said that Nava did things differently, but that she was willing to work together.

The major project of the Grade Two in all SSDS branches was a presentation which celebrated the study of Torah. The unit of study which was reflected through song, dance, narration, and art was the beginning of the book of Genesis, the Biblical story of the creation of the world. Traditionally, in the three campuses of the school, all classes of the Grade Two would work together and present an elaborate ceremony to a large audience of parents. After a number of experiences of teachers having difficulty coordinating and orchestrating a grade-wide event, the school's lay and professional Education Committee decided that if teachers preferred, each class could prepare its own ceremony. In the words of the school's Hebrew principal: "It's not worth all the conflict and strife of the teachers to keep them together."

This statement was made with some ambivalence, reflecting that the ideal of the Director of Education and of the school had always been for the ceremonies to be a cooperative effort, and that this concession to teacher conflict was taking a step away from the original goals of ceremonies.

Ms. Miller commented on this subject:

I tried to force something last year, and that wasn't necessarily the way to go. We had two teachers in a grade that needed to do a ceremony . . . I strongly encouraged, and ultimately insisted that for the first year it be done together . . . there was a new staff member . . . and I thought that if for the first year they did it together, that's how the new staff member would see how it's been done here, the new staff member could add some ideas, there'd be some give and take, and then would be free to refine next year . . . it turned out to be a minor disaster.
Each Hebrew teacher was also partnered with a General Studies teacher for the same class of students. The structure of the schedule allowed for little opportunity for interaction between those two teachers during school hours, as one teacher taught in morning and one in afternoon hours. Sara reported that her relationship with her General Studies partner was a good one, and that they helped each other and communicated, especially regarding contact with parents. Devora also reported that she had contact with her General Studies partner, but commented that, "It's hard for me, it's a different style, she has them move around a lot."

When there was a specialty class during Hebrew studies (French, art, gym, or computers), the Hebrew teachers never stayed with the students. They did not use this as an opportunity to observe their students in other settings. The school apparently did not see this as a priority, as the Teacher Manual and Handbook instructed teachers: "Please take your class to and pick your class up from the specialty area. Use this time as preparation time."

There were examples of collaboration or coordination between different subject teachers, for example, when the art teacher constructed a project for Sara's Grade Two relating to the Biblical creation story. Teachers appeared to be cordial as they passed each other going in and out of their classrooms, wishing a good day, Happy New Year, and so on. There were several pairs that seemed to be close in their working relationship, for example; the two Grade Two General Studies teachers, Devora and Nava (in their roles as the two Grade One Hebrew teachers), and Sara and the student teacher in her Grade Two class.

The staff had their own room which was basically a kitchen, equipped with a refrigerator, sink, provisions for hot drinks, and a round table that could seat five or six
adults. A bulletin board was full of professional notices for seminars, meetings, or program ideas. Teachers popped in and out on their breaks, mostly to eat or drink. The atmosphere was friendly and informal, and the principals, secretary, and specialty teachers also used the room. Staff were encouraged to bring their own coffee mugs (for environmental conservation of paper cups), and there was a rotation of responsibility posted on the refrigerator for bringing in staples such as milk. The staff also had their own small washroom (just one, as there were only women on the staff). On the wall was a big piece of paper, entitled "Graffitti Sweetie" which had one entry on it throughout the fall months. Gali, the student teacher in Sara's Grade Two, commented that she hardly ever saw anyone in the staff room and that there was little talk about teachers' life outside of school, in her words, about, "what they're cooking at home."

One morning during the holiday of Sukkot, Ms. Miller sent around invitations to all of the teachers to spend their recess break in the sukka (a festival hut) in the playground. There she provided coffee and cookies and teachers sang a bit, and were generally friendly to one another, and to me. This little gathering was visible to students who were playing in the playground, and served as a model of celebrating the holiday in a festive and collegial manner.

Special Events

An important element of creating community in a school is through the collective celebration of holidays, rites of passage, and special occasions. These events serve to keep
tradition alive and thereby to link students to their national and religious cultures and to reinforce collaborative activities and school spirit. In each grade of SSDS, there was a ceremony celebrating the study of a different aspect of Jewish text and tradition. In Grade One there was a *siddur* ceremony, marking the introduction of the students to formal prayer, along with receipt of their own prayerbooks. In Grade Two, the *chumash* ceremony was linked to the beginning of formal Torah study.

The following is an excerpt from the *Parent Handbook* on celebrations and assemblies:

Periodically the school schedules holiday celebration programmes to which parents are invited. Also each grade schedules a special celebration such as the Siddur Ceremony, the Chumash Ceremony, and others. Every attempt is made to instill in the children a sense of decorum and proper behaviour for such gatherings.

Children and teachers put a great deal of energy into preparations for these programs. It would be appreciated if you would put every effort into making alternate arrangements for babies and toddlers, because they can disturb and distract. A brief cry can muffle the one line that a child has rehearsed, and spoil the event for that child.

We also ask that you not take siblings out of class to watch the ceremonies. Having some children leave class can be disruptive to the teaching and learning that is taking place, and the message that class work is secondary is not one we want to give our children. If there are plays, dances, or presentations included in the preparations that are valid for other children to see, then those classes will be invited to a dress rehearsal.

In addition to the holiday celebrations there are regularly scheduled special assemblies in honour of the Sabbath and the festivals. As a rule, parents are not invited but may attend if they wish to see their children's participation. (p.8)

Although the ceremonies were considered to be very special occasions, which took up hours and days of class time for preparation and rehearsal, the tone of the Handbook emphasizes order and decorum rather than content. The ceremonies themselves were not intended to develop or showcase the skills or talents of individual students, and parts were distributed very equally. In the words of Dr. Waldman: "No youngster sings out at a *chagiga* by himself—this is not going to be the channel for your operatic career."
In the *Teachers' Manual and Handbook* it was stated: "It is expected that both Hebrew and General Studies teachers will prepare the students and be present at special events that are part of the regular curriculum, e.g. Chanukah celebrations, Siddur Ceremony, etc. since both sets of teachers share the class."

During the fall months of this research, both Devora and Sara prepared their classes for the Grade Two *chumash* ceremony. As mentioned earlier, each class presented a completely separate ceremony. The impression that I got was that this model created lost opportunities for collaboration in the Grade Two. The two classes (who knew each other since the previous year they were also two classes but in different combinations) did not have the chance to come together to work and create something as one grade. Although there was greater potential for class unity, and for strengthening of the class community, this was not a stated goal of the class model, rather the inability of the teachers to collaborate was the implicit reason for the shift. For the rest of the school, the ceremony did not serve as a school-wide event, as they did not view the dress rehearsal as a school, as was customary in the past, but each half of the school saw one of the classes' performance. For the parent audience, it was a more modest event as a class presentation than that of an entire grade. Again, there was a greater intensity to the class element of this *chumash* ceremony (which is perhaps a more realistic investment in terms of community), but less of the school-wide and grade-wide elements.

I was involved in the preparatory weeks to a very limited extent. In Sara's class, those were the weeks that I was primarily visiting her Grade Five. And in Devora's class, she asked
me to give her some "freedom" during the weeks prior to the ceremony, because, in her words, "we're not really learning."

The two ceremonies were held on a Friday in November, in the synagogue sanctuary. Each class had made murals which decorated the room. The children were dressed in white; the uniformity suggested that it was not intended for one child to distinguish him or herself from another in appearance. The ceremony consisted of English and Hebrew narrations related to the Biblical creation story, Hebrew songs, and Israeli folk dances. The musical accompanist was the primary music teacher of all three branches of the school. The audience represented different elements of the school; the parents, the General Studies teachers, the principals, the overall Director of Education and Hebrew Principal. At the end, a representative of the Parents' Association presented a gift of books to the school library to honor the teachers and students. Each student was given two gifts; a small pin of the Ten Commandments, and a tiny container of honey, to signify the sweetness of learning Torah. Ms. Miller and Dr. Waldman delivered brief words of thanks and congratulations, as well as messages about the importance of Torah study and the impressive accomplishments of the children. The performances were very polished and the students were obviously well-prepared as they went from song to dance to spoken parts with ease. Since the ceremony was done by class, there was certainly more opportunity for more participation and all of the students were constantly visible. However, the emphasis was still on group rather than individual participation. There was unquestionably a great deal of pride and good will felt by students, teachers, and parents.
The other significant occasion which was commemorated during the fall semester was the retirement of Dr. Waldman. I was present at two events, an evening tribute dinner and a school assembly. The dinner was a very festive and classy event at which the food, the decor, the tribute book, and a video presentation were all done very professionally and tastefully. Many community leaders and representatives were present, as were parents and alumni of the school. The speeches and tributes to Dr. Waldman were effusive and also served as a boost to everyone there about the success of the school, its growth, and its importance both to the Toronto Jewish community and to the students and alumni who experienced and grew from the influence of SSDS.

A few points stood out from the words of Dr. Waldman: first, his emphasis on his own family, and how he derived pride from their continuing in the Jewish path; second, his mention of the teachers as among the most important elements in the success of the school; third, his hope for the future, which would include more of an emphasis on quality than quantity, and more hope to extend Jewish practice into the homes of students.

In mid-December (during Chanuka), there was a school assembly at the Springfiel campus to honor Dr. Waldman. The entire school was well-prepared, having rehearsed where to sit and in what order to perform, and were seated in formation in the gym/social hall. The wall was decorated with a large chanukiya (festival candelabrum). Dr. Waldman, Ms. Miller, and two other principals sat in seats of honor, facing the students.
One of the senior teachers and campus librarian opened with a nice welcome and thanks to Dr. Waldman. She said that this was a once in a lifetime occasion, since without Dr. Waldman there would not be a school; he is a teacher of children and teachers.

Each class participated in the program, which consisted of Israeli dances, a history of SSDS in "rap", several songs, and a skit. Between acts, the MC teacher gave warm thanks and praise to each act, and the music teacher led Chanuka songs on the accordion. There was visible collaboration between Devora and Nava with their Grade One Hebrew classes, and between the two Grade Two English teachers. A presentation was made to Dr. Waldman of a wall hanging (already hung in the foyer) and a plaque.

Dr. Waldman spoke, and was sincerely thankful and complimentary. He told the students that they were lucky to be in a school with such a nice atmosphere, with nice relationships to teachers and principals, and he marvelled at the continuity of some of their parents who were students here. He commented that the first SSDS Chanukah party was thirty two years ago, with very small numbers.

The students filed out to the strains of the song "Lo Alecha Ha'mlacha Ligmor," which means: "It is not up to you to complete all of the work"—an appropriate message to the retiring Dr. Waldman. The event had been a very warm one, with a great deal of community spirit, school spirit, and holiday spirit.

Another special event which I observed during the semester was the opening meeting for parents in September, which was intended to introduce parents to the administration and teachers, as well as to curriculum and some of the school's procedural guidelines. The
meeting was held in the evening, in the sanctuary of the synagogue, and about two hundred parents attended. The general population of parents appeared to be in their thirties, and fashionably trendy in their dress. Most men did not wear yarmulkes, as is traditional in a synagogue. Many parents seemed to know one another, and there was a buzz of friendly conversation in the room before the program began.

Dr. Waldman opened the program and in his words made references to the holiday period, to the other campuses of SSDS, to the Yom Kippur war which was twenty years ago in Israel, and to the recent historical handshake of Yitzchak Rabin and Yasir Arafat. Thus, he linked the audience together as Jews, with a relationship to tradition, to community, to history, and to Israel. He spoke with pride of the fact that the Springfield building was now owned by SSDS, and that now that the school had advanced to Grade Five it was a full elementary school. He said that the "main aspect of this evening is to get to know the curriculum, meet the teachers, and get to know them as individuals and as conveyors of curriculum."

The lay President of the school spoke and touched upon the permanent home of the Springfield campus, the retirement of Dr. Waldman, and re-registration. He introduced the new campus administrators, referring to the transition of leadership as a smooth one. He called upon parents to work together, "spread the word," and help the school to grow. He said that parents would be consulted in the important decision regarding the Grade Six for the following year. He also encouraged any unaffiliated parents to join the synagogue of this campus, so that Springfield would be a school and synagogue like the other campuses.
The parents were welcomed by other representatives of the Board and the Parents' Association, who spoke about parking procedures and about fundraising for all three campuses (for special events to benefit the students, playgrounds, resource center, video camera).

Ms. Miller then addressed the parents and spoke about the role of the school in preparing students for 21st century North America, particularly with regard to independence and problem-solving. She touched upon the importance of critical study, as well as the goal of having each child feel part of a community, which includes adherence to rules (for parents too) and to the school's *Code of Behaviour* (Appendix A). She emphasized that tonight's program was not intended as a conference about individual students, and that parents should use proper channels of communication (starting with the teacher) if they have any concerns.

Several clear messages of the evening were that: the school is a very successful and thriving organization, affiliated with the larger Jewish community; the importance of joint cooperation of parents with the school, including adherence to school goals and policies; and the value of high level academics, as Jews and citizens of a modern country. There was no mention made of students and their individual needs. The main program was followed by presentations by teachers in each of their classrooms.

The special events described above highlight the development of community in the school. This was balanced by a definite philosophy and approach towards the development of the individual student.
Accommodating Individual Differences Among Students

The following quotations reflect the views of the school administrators who participated in the study with regard to accommodating individual differences in children, and will serve as a backdrop to the next sections which describe actual classroom practice:

Dr. Waldman: We mix and we mix them all over the place, because we say that there's no such thing as a youngster being excellent in everything. That's number one and mainly it's the self-image . . . what we do is extra help by teachers who come in, take groups out, take individuals out . . . I must tell you, this is wrong maybe, but I've never paid that much attention to them (the brightest students) . . . first of all, I believe that youngsters are overprogrammed anyway . . . And the other thing is that, even if he is the brightest, he's still challenged by two programs . . . and then luckily the Bible Contest came along and that's been taking up officially and in certain ways this whole question . . . because it's a channel and it's recognized . . . There's certain things that I did put an imprint—this is the only school today that doesn't have a valedictorian and a salutatorian at graduation . . . No youngster sings out at a ceremony by himself . . . There's no Dean's List. There's no kids posted, good students and bad students. At the graduation there are no prizes. Everybody graduates . . . I don't go for that.

Ms. Miller: I think the teachers try and address this by trying to make any individual's special needs, whether social, emotional or otherwise, accepted and welcomed into the group picture . . . We've come a long way over the years in . . . not underscoring ways that people stick out. There's been a lot of talk about self-esteem that comes out just in conversations teachers have with me about students . . . In terms of academics, there's tailoring for different academic needs. Sometimes in written work, sometimes in group work. There are some teachers who deliberately make use of studying in pairs or in cooperative groups (which is a very Jewish way of doing things), so that people of differing strengths can contribute in different ways . . . SSDS doesn't stream, their classes are deliberately heterogeneous. And even though there is an acknowledgment that different children perform at different academic levels, there is a strong commitment to the fact that children of differing academic levels can pray together, eat together, learn social studies together . . . and where we hit certain "meat and potato" subjects which require tailoring for student needs, then we don't mind having them taken out of the classroom or worked with in small groups in the classroom to meet those needs . . . I think that children are the first to acknowledge that differences exist—physically, in their garb and all the rest—and I don't think it's unrealistic for them to realize that there are sometimes academic differences . . . We have some of those "shining stars" (the brightest students) who really bring themselves to the forefront in terms of the way they think, their synthesis. And there's a really good outlet for that in terms of Bible study . . . they're encouraged to raise lots and lots of questions and sound
each other out on a whole range of possibilities ... the teachers learn from them where to offer more depth ... There's a writers' club that's going to be taking place ... designed to take in children who could use extra assistance ... who are talented or gifted (whatever that word means) and ... others who have expressed interest ... I think the same way that we work with students who need extra help privately, we acknowledge the thinking and achievements of the stars, privately.

It is interesting to note the emphasis, and even pride, in the school's philosophy not to recognize individual student achievement in a public fashion. Perhaps the intent is to underscore community rather than to emphasize individualism. However, it may be noted that strong community does not necessarily imply homogeneity. Traditional communities have hierarchies, and certainly the contributions of leaders and role models are valued.

The following units will develop the presence of individualism and community in the classrooms of the four teachers. The focus of these units is upon the teachers' approach to and relationship with individual students in formal academic and informal contexts, the role of discipline and order in the classroom, the use of groups in the classroom, and the nature of assignments.
Sara's Grade Five

Beginning on October 12th, in order to allow Sara the time she requested to get used to her new grade, I visited Sara's Grade Five seven times, with an eighth visit to the English (and computers) class. It was the oldest grade in the school and there was only one class of Grade Five, consisting of fourteen students—ten girls and four boys. During the months of my research, it had not yet been determined whether the Springfield campus would have a Grade Six the following year or whether these students would join one of the school's other campuses. There was a certain pride in being the oldest grade in the school, as expressed by several of the students in a written questionnaire which they completed (see Appendix B). In their words, "I do (feel proud) because we are the oldest grade and we've been at school for a long time." "Yes, because we show an example to younger kids. We're the oldest in the school, we get to help teachers." In the words of Sara, she also felt proud that she had been given an honor to teach the Grade Five: "The fact that I'm teaching Grade Five and it's the first Grade Five—you feel something special. I really enjoy it." Because of this built-in status, this class already had attained certain key elements of community, in that it was unique, well-bounded and had a character about it about which no other class could boast. Also the small size of the class affected its potential for unity.
Sara’s Use of Groups for Academic Work

One of the formal ways of developing community in the classroom, as well as providing opportunities for individuals to express themselves and achieve in a smaller group setting, is through the use of cooperative groups for academic work. Sara was quite clear that this was a priority for her, and she established groups at the very beginning of the term, which rotated at each Hebrew month. In her words: "Because in group work, if you're an exceptional student, positive or negative... I can find myself. If I'm a good student, if I shine, I can head the group or direct the group to the right question or to what are the expectations of the teacher. And if I am a weak child, I can contribute in my areas without the pressure of finishing the work."

During her observation of the class on a day when the students broke into groups, the principal confirmed to me that she knew that Sara found group work to be a priority. Ms. Miller commented that in a newsletter to parents, Sara wrote about group work, while others emphasized the content they had completed.

To Sara, group work was a learning *process*, whose lessons far outweighed the actual material covered. Nonetheless, she designed very structured group assignments which did not compromise the actual lesson at hand. She believed that if she invested the time in the early months of the year in teaching students how to work in groups, it would pay off in later months, as students would easily fall into the flow of group work and collectively achieve the intended purposes of the lesson.
The following are some examples of group work sessions:

In the first lesson that I observed, the assignment was a review of the study of several Jewish holidays. The students broke into three groups, of four or five in a group, and brought their chairs to sit around groupings of desks in three spots in the classroom. Each group received a sheet with a selection of prayers and customs listed. They were to fill in the appropriate prayers and customs under each of four holidays. Sara explained the task, with the following guidelines: each group receives one sheet on which the names of the group leader and members should be listed; everyone in the group must participate, it is not enough for one person to do all the work; when they are finished, each group leader will report to the rest of the class. The students began to work and they discussed the possible responses among themselves. Sara went around from group to group to check on their progress, reminding them to speak in Hebrew. The students attempted to conduct themselves in Hebrew while she was near, but lapsed into English when Sara walked away. In one group, they playfully spoke in English with an Israeli accent. Group B took out their holiday workbook to check an answer, and Sara praised them aloud for this initiative. Her response suggested that the purpose of this assignment was not merely to know the answers by heart, but also to think and develop the use of resources. Eitan clowned: "We don't need our booklets, we have our brains." Group A divided the tasks among themselves, so that one student checked in the booklet, while the others continued with the sheet. Group C called Sara over to check whether a particular memorial prayer is recited on Rosh Hashana or Yom Kippur. Sara took a poll among the
group members to see what each one thought, reinforcing that within the group each person's opinion was relevant. The activity culminated with presentations by each group leader and class discussion when there were dissenting responses. It might have been more expedient to complete this assignment as individual work. It was a summary and review lesson of the holiday studies and did not involve the learning of new material or any creative element. However, the cooperative format provided an opportunity for learning how to work in groups and an investment on Sara's part in that process, which was so important to her. The values inherent even in this brief and straightforward group work assignment were that: every individual has a role and an opinion, the leader has the distinct role of organizing and presenting the work of the group to the class, and that communicating in Hebrew ought to be a natural part of classroom interaction, even in an informal structure.

During my next visit to the class, their group assignment was during the *chumash* (Bible) lesson. The beginning of the lesson centered on how the commentaries on the Torah illuminate the simple meaning of the text and its underlying messages, by analyzing the words and the problems in the text. Sara offered one example to the whole class and then asked them to divide into the groups of that month, giving each group a sheet with another example of a text, a commentary, and questions. The students sat in groups in three corners of the room. Sara offered no guidelines on how to work in groups. Group B drew lots to decide who would be the group leader. Members of Group C read aloud from the sheet. Groups B and C were loud and disruptive, Group A worked
quietly. Sara walked over to check on them, then announced: "This group has already solved the problem. They're working quietly together—I'm proud of them." Sara went over to help Group B analyze the commentary. Group C was playing around with pencils, erasers, and rulers. Group A called out: "We finished!" Sara said to the class: "The time of working in groups is for learning together. If I have to, I'll give marks." She went over to Group A, checked their work, and said: "Kol Hakavod, I'm proud of you." The students in Group A said: "You can give us A." Sara replied: "I'll give you 100!" Sara then turned to the rest of the class and said; "The other groups have two minutes to finish." The two minutes passed and members of Group C were fighting among themselves. Group A called out: "We're bored. The two minutes are over." Sara threatened: "You have three minutes to finish, and I'll give you a mark." Several minutes later, Sara ended the work in groups and said: "Today was the first time you had group work that you couldn't accomplish the task. I saw that one group could do it by working together. I also saw that these groups can work together, as you did in history. The next time I will give a mark for work and for cooperation—meaning that every member of the group must participate." The three group leaders then went to the front of the class to read their answers. Group B and C had only gotten as far as the first question, and the Group A leader had responses for all three questions. Sara said to the class:

Work in groups is cooperation—not just the leader. (Tamar, I don't like to say this, but your group had problems last time too.) The goal is to work together, and for everyone to think. I don't want to give marks for group work, but I will if I have to. . . but I won't give marks on the product, because what's most important is how to work together, especially in our small class. The honor to the group that did well is that only your work will be hung on the board—that's your honor.
Sara’s message was very clear: She did not approve of their learning process, which she considered to be the priority of group work. In this discussion, marks represented an external, objective measure of success which Sara implied was a negative element which might affect what she considered a pure group work process. However, Sara acknowledged that the students might require an incentive to maintain the decorum and thoughtfulness which are necessary for the group process to succeed. My impression of this assignment was that it was a difficult one, with obscure Hebrew language; perhaps it was merely too frustrating to the students. They did not yet know how to use each other to peer-coach, teach, and support one another in order to alleviate this frustration. Perhaps, it was just not worth it to them without the incentive of grades. This example suggests that the assignment for small group work must be carefully selected. If it involves learning new material, perhaps the groups must be constructed deliberately, and if the lesson is one of problem-solving or analysis, the message of just "cooperate" and "work together" is insufficient. This particular assignment might have been better accomplished in pairs. In the end, the task was not completed in two of the three groups, nor was the spirit of group work fulfilled.

During each of the next five times I visited the class, there was at least one segment of work in groups or pairs. Each time, Sara emphasized her guidelines of group work, including:

- Everyone in the group must participate, everyone should have a role.
If you have a mistake, you cannot blame one person in the group; if you thought someone was wrong, you could have tried to convince him or her of your position while you were working.

The roles of the group leader include helping others to participate and verifying that the answers are correct.

In pair work, each member should try to prove to the other why he thinks his or her answer is correct.

Each time, at least one group was unable to complete the task, or the work was divided unevenly, or one group was disruptive to other groups. They continued to do very straightforward assignments, for example, after reading a short story, putting a list of sentences in sequence order of the story, answering questions about a section of a text, or pairing a list of words into two-word phrases. None of the group assignments was creative, that is, requiring new or original thought. However, they were still challenging for them to accomplish collectively. What does this suggest? Perhaps that students who are not accustomed to work in groups cannot just assume the roles, since they have adapted to completing work on their own, and associate interaction without the teacher's direct involvement as social and fun, and not work-oriented. Another explanation for the students' difficulty of accomplishing tasks in groups might be that there was little incentive offered, for example in the way of marks. In most schools, students are accustomed to working individually for credit. Working in groups where only the process counts (and not even for a mark) will only be rewarding or valuable to the
students if they want to belong to the group, or perhaps where the shared values of cooperation are completely inbred in the culture.

During my sixth visit, on November 25th, the group assignment went very smoothly. I said to Sara: "I see now that your investment worked—now they go easily into groups." Sara responded: "Many teachers are nervous to do groups—I had specific training in this method—they don't see that once you get past this point, it's fun . . . I don't do anything." While Sara never truly made herself irrelevant to the process, she clearly became a less central figure to the group work as the weeks passed.

In the sixth and seventh visits, students clamored to work in pairs when Sara assigned individual seat work. The tone of their request implied that they viewed pair work as a treat. Sara and I agreed that pair work seemed easier to the students than group work. It also involved collaboration, cooperation, and mutual respect, but perhaps it was easier and less frustrating for them to accomplish the tasks on a smaller scale. Work in pairs can be an acknowledgment of the desire of students to talk to one another, it lends credibility to thinking aloud and consulting with a friend while working, and offers a more informal and congenial air to the class. Sara commented to me: "When they come in and see the order for the day on the board, they ask if they're doing group work—they like it!" Sara let the students know that there were ramifications to doing work in pairs in that it took them longer and "steals our time." However, she was willing to let them work in pairs, even if she did not plan the lesson in that way.
During the sixth visit, there was one pair of boys that was obviously not working well together. Eitan was intolerant of David and zipped along, filling in the answers quickly on his own, insulting David, and refusing to accept his suggestions. Although they were sitting together as a pair, they were working as two individuals, and Sara did not intervene. An important lesson that could have been underscored here is that working together frequently involves learning to work with people of different skills and levels.

**Encouraging Respect and Concern**

The tone and quality of the assignments that Sara executed in groups carried over to the other aspects of the life of this class. Sara expressed to me that it was very important to her that the students see that all Jews are responsible for one another. She wanted them to work together, but more importantly, she wanted them to care about each other and look out for each other. She told me that this group had had problems in past years, for example, that Melech was left out and insulted by his peers. Now that he had proven himself to be a good thinker, other students wanted to be in a group with him. Sara praised Keren to me for helping Yafa catch up on the work she missed when she was out at her remedial lesson. Sara appreciated this far more than she did a student like Eitan who seemed only interested in getting his own work done. The following are examples of how this priority of Sara's exhibited itself in her style of teaching and interaction:
The students were given an assignment to write and present a five-minute speech in Hebrew. One day during Ester's speech, the students were restless and not listening. Sara stopped the speech and said to the class: "When your friend is up there, think how you would feel if you were there," emphasizing the value of empathy.

Another day, there was a sudden stench in the room, as one of the students obviously had expelled gas. Many of the students started to moan and groan—calling out "you're sick" and "that's gross," etc. Sara calmly went and opened the windows, and without raising her voice, she admonished the class: "We must respect each other." She did not reprimand them for stopping the lesson or yelling out, rather for showing disrespect and embarrassing a fellow class-mate. To Sara, having students care for each other and creating an atmosphere of concern were priorities. (Also, she had the nerve not just to ignore it.)

Sara expressed to me that she was shocked when students informed on each other to the teacher. One day Moshe called out to her: "Sara, Melech is chewing gum!" Sara's response was: "I'm sure that Melech knows what to do with gum," as he made his way to the garbage. On another occasion, Melech finished his reading quickly. Eitan said to him: "You're a cheater." Sara interjected: "It's not your business to know whether he's done or not." Another time, Ora went out to the washroom, came back and told Sara: "Moshe is standing in the hall looking out the window." Sara did not respond. It seemed to me that Sara placed a higher premium on students' loyalty to each other, and was disturbed by a student reporting that her peer did something wrong. However, she did not take this
opportunity to discuss with her students the moral dilemma of loyalty to one’s classmates versus taking personal responsibility in telling the teacher when a peer does something morally wrong.

Sara’s Relationship with Individual Students

Sara's emphasis on respect and the building of a general atmosphere of concern for one another, and her interest in developing the skills of group cooperation and collaboration was complemented by a concern for the uniqueness of the individual student. She did not develop a group culture that melded the students one into the other without allowing for individual expression. While she felt that she did not have time for drawing the students out in a daily conversation, as she did in her Grade Two class, she told me with pride that individual students came to her with personal stories during recess and at other times. She was available to the students in the moments of set-up before class started, and during lunch-time she was approachable as well. Her manner was direct, straightforward, and friendly, though not particularly revealing or personal. Only one time did I hear her make reference to her family with her students, when Eitan was making popping noises with his thumb and mouth, Sara said: "You made me laugh, because my six-year-old daughter does that when she comes in to me in the morning." She allowed herself to smile or laugh at humor, and was good-natured, but did not initiate humor actively. Her relationship with Eitan—a child of Israeli parents—was somewhat more fluid and spontaneous than with others, in part because of his frank and
easygoing nature, and partly because the common language flowed more smoothly between them.

Sara was careful to acknowledge achievement and effort. Almost every participation by a student merited an encouraging response by Sara, such as, "You're right—I'm proud of you," or "Thank you, you worked nicely, and put thought into your work," or even quoting Pirkay Avot, an ethical text, with the passage "From my students, I learn the most," when she was corrected by Keren on a grammatical phrase. Sara told the students that she made an effort to mark their tests quickly because she knew that they were anxious to see their results, although according to school policy, she had one to two weeks to return them.

Sara's congenial style did not extend itself identically to all students at all times. It was clear that she set standards of performance and achievement, and students merited different responses, based on those standards. In a Chumash lesson, Sara told Yosefa: "You're reading to us, I'd like you to tell us," and acknowledged effort by saying, "Very nice, you tried nicely to understand." When the students wrote original poems and stories relating to one of the stories in their reader, Sara told Melech that his was so good that it could be sent to a magazine. She was not as effusive about the other poems and stories, but encouraged each one to read aloud and found something positive to say about all of them. For example, "Tamar established Rabbi Yonah's characteristics" and "Eitan's story has good form". David asked Sara to read his aloud for him. She responded: "You are modest, very quiet, but you do very good work." Sara praised full answers and
particularly praised students who carried over a lesson learned in one subject and related it to something in another subject; she reinforced both lateral thinking and initiative. Although it was frequent and natural, her praise was not token or perfunctory, particularly when Sara used the expression: "I'm proud of you." She had a great deal of patience for students who seemed to be really making an effort to understand (Sara knelt by Raizel's desk to fill her in on the part of the story that she missed when she was sick), but showed consistent annoyance with one or two whose questions indicated that they were not listening or trying. She said: "Shani, it's the second time you didn't do the work. How will you take the test if you didn't do the work? You were sick and I sent it to your mother. You'll do it at recess." She also showed little tolerance for questions such as, "Are we being marked on this?" "Do we get a bonus?" "Is it on the test?" "Does it count?" Samples of her responses, delivered in an exasperated tone, were: "Don't worry about yourself all the time, Tamar," and, "You always worry about a test—no, there won't be," and "It's not a test, it's individual work for me to see how you understand on your own." Sara praised Keren for looking up a word in another source and said: "That's the idea, I'm not trying to make you fail, just to give you a chance sometimes to work alone with the book. Not for a mark—God forbid—or for the report card—just to work on your own to understand it." This intolerance is perhaps indicative of a cultural difference between Sara and her students, or at the least a lack of insight into the kinds of incentives which motivate many students to learn.
The following is an example of Sara's style when returning a test. She acknowledged that they were anxious for their results and that everyone wanted some sort of feedback. She also judged each case on its own merit. As she was walking around the room, distributing the tests, she was saying: "One girl got 100—Ester. David, when you try hard, you do well. Eitan, I don't know why you were afraid. Melech, I expect more from you and I want your mother's signature. Ora, good for you—you tried hard. I'll return the tests face down and you can tell your mark if you want to." A few of the students said their marks out loud. Yosefa came up to Sara for an explanation. Reizel said to Sara: "I studied hard." Sara responded: "I know—numbers are difficult." Yafa came up to Sara and Sara told her that she just did some of it backwards and if she wanted another chance, she could do it again.

Class Structure and Rules

There was a pleasant and friendly atmosphere in Sara's class, and it was also very structured. The subjects to be covered that day were listed on the board each morning and Sara ensured a swift flow from subject to subject, allowing only the most relevant digressions. She was very well-prepared and told me that, "My nightmare—no, not nightmare, fear—with teaching older kids, is that I won't know the answer." (This comment suggests a more traditional orientation to the role of the teacher, as the one who "knows all the answers.")
Sara was very concerned with time, as evidenced by an almost daily reference to the expression, "Hazman katzar v'hamlacha meruba", literally "The time is short and the work is plentiful." During one of my visits, Sara made seven references to being rushed or out of time: 1. On the board with the list of subjects for the day, under one subject was written ("if there's time"). 2. "I don't want this to take too long," referring to a group assignment. 3."We have a few minutes for Hebrew language." 4. (To me:) "We have no time, there's such a heavy course load. I haven't even introduced two of the subjects yet." 5. Sara told the students that they must hurry, even though they didn't finish because it's almost recess and Sara was on duty. 6. "Hazman katzar v'hamlacha meruba." 7. Sara: "Finish up in a couple of minutes, we have to go to tefillah. Whoever doesn't finish, will have it as homework. Tomorrow, we'll check it—we must get to tefillah."

One morning when I came in, Sara said that she almost called me to say that she was not feeling well and was not coming in, but she decided to come in so that I would not come for nothing and because for her to miss a day would add to the pressure of all the work she has to get to. This time-consciousness did not make the Grade Five a tense or hectic environment, but perhaps it colored Sara's ability to stop and digress and share and talk with students. (In Grade Two and other classes, there was a feeling that digression was integral, here it was critical to cover the subjects.)
Sara offered the students structure and also a great deal of latitude in her disciplinary approach. There were few rules and the students respected them enough, so that it was not something on which Sara spent a great deal of time. In her words:

I come in with very specific rules that I present on the first day. Then I remind them during the first two weeks what are my expectations. I have material in English, that I usually don't get to, but if there's a serious situation, they have to read what my expectations are, what they have to do, and what happens to them if they don't. They have to learn it and be tested on it. I haven't gotten to that this year with anyone, and they usually don't like it. After three times, usually they stay in with me for recess, and then they'd have to do that—but this year I haven't gotten to that.

Some of the clearly evident classroom rules were the following: Students were required to take all of the books and notebooks for the day out of their cubbies before the bell rang and were not permitted to return to the cubby during the lesson. Students could go out to the washroom without asking, but just one at a time. There was no gum chewing permitted in class. If there was too much noise, Sara would turn out the light for quiet. Tests had to be signed by their parents. A punishment was losing recess time. There didn't appear to be penalties for lateness, other than a comment by the teacher. Students in Grade Five did not abuse the rules. They were respectful to the teacher, took their work seriously, and did not intentionally turn the focus of the class off the subject. When asked in the questionnaire (Appendix B), "In your opinion, what is the most important rule in your class?" six students responded "respect and compromise," and five responded "not to call out." (The small size of the class may also be a relevant factor in the orderly and congenial tone which existed.)
If Sara did not like or approve of a comment or tone, she said so directly. For example: Sara said: "It's time now for Navi." Eitan wisecracked: "Give me a break." Sara responded: "Eitan, I don't like your style today, come to me in recess, and I'll tell you personally." And on another occasion, Sara repeated the P.A. announcement that there would be no baseball because of the rain. Tamar called out: "We should really have baseball— it's not even raining." Sara did not attempt to review the rationale for the rule, and responded sharply: "Don't argue with me, it was the announcement, there's a principal in this school and she decides—not you or I."

Sara's Grade Five presented a hard-working atmosphere, with high expectations set by the teacher and frequently achieved by the students. The authority of the teacher was clear, as was her concern for the students as individuals, and a mutual respect was felt between Sara and her students.
Sara's Grade Two

My observation of Sara's Grade Two began on the third day of school, as she expressed no difficulty with having a visitor in the class even that early in the term. She was experienced in teaching this grade level, and also half of the students had been in her class for Grade One the previous year. Sara's Grade Two was one of two classes in this grade, and there were twenty-one students in the class. I visited the class seven times, including the French and Art specialties which occurred during the lesson, with one additional visit to the corresponding English class. During this first part of the semester, there was a student teacher, Gali, who was assigned permanently to Sara's class. She held a prominent position in the class, in that she sat up in front, next to Sara's desk. Sara included Gali frequently in teaching and by reference and was clearly comfortable with her presence. Gali made intermittent contributions to the class, either by her comments, helping individual students, or by preparation of materials as samples, specifically for art projects. Gali's presence and role in Sara's Grade Two class were certainly a relevant backdrop to Sara's comfort with my presence in the class and her transmission of that comfort to the students, who came to accept me and include me, even though I only visited once a week.

Sara's Relationship with Individual Students

Sara maintained eye contact with her students, smiled a great deal, and used physical touch, such as pats on the back or a squeeze of the cheek. She frequently
complimented students, or called them by diminutives, such as "chamud'a" or "sweetie". She was pleasant and soft-spoken, although firm when necessary. In this class, Sara reached out to individual students, without being particularly revealing or personal about herself, and actively fostered an ethic of respect and concern for one another. This concern for the individual both underscored the importance and dignity of each student and also created an atmosphere of caring, and a class culture of looking out for one another. In Sara's words: "I see my role, not just as a teacher, but as an educator. I'm not just a teacher of a certain subject, who teaches that subject and then leaves the class."

The following are some examples of how Sara fostered respect and concern:

- Sara introduced a yellow poster hung on the blackboard with magnets, which had on it pictures and symbols of Rosh Hashana (the Jewish New Year). Sara gave credit to Gali for making the poster. She asked the students to name the symbols. One student thought the pomegranate was a tomato. Another student laughed at him. Sara said: "We never laugh at friends—you're allowed to make mistakes." Sara let students know that the right answer was less important than relating to one another with respect.

- Sara heard a murmur during the lesson and asked: "Who's talking?" Reuven said: "Shimon is." Sara responded: "Only the one who is talking says 'I am'—we don't say it about somebody else." Sara made the point that they would not win her favor by compromising someone else's position in the classroom. (This is similar to issues of peer loyalty evident in the Grade Five.)
- The students were sitting on the floor by the blackboard, ready to begin their *sicha*, (discussion). This was a very congenial part of the informal learning (held regularly, but not daily in Sara's class), where students had an opportunity to speak about themselves—always in Hebrew—and share personal thoughts and experiences. Sara announced: "Adina wants to know if anyone found her pencil sharpener. It has her English name, Ashley, on it. She's sad that she lost it and wants to be happy, and I want her to be happy, so please return it if you find it, so she'll be happy." This was not just an administrative announcement, but it involved everyone in the concerns of an individual, promoted empathy, described a relatively small loss in terms of feelings and let Adina know that her problem and sad feelings were important enough to Sara to take time out to show her concern. (Sara did not use this opportunity to place this issue in the larger context of the Jewish commandment to return lost objects.)

- During quiet seat work, Shmuel started to cry. Sara went over to him and asked quietly if he would rather do the work at home. He said that he would and Sara drew a small house around the page number in the book, to symbolize home work. She explained the assignment to Shmuel, and very gently patted him, comforted him, and called him a "good boy." A few minutes later, Yohana, the girl sitting next to Shmuel explained the assignment to him and he stopped crying and began working. Sara not only offered attention and comfort to Shmuel, but she presented a model to Yohana of how to help someone who is troubled. Sara continued to walk around the room and when she passed me, said in a concerned tone: "He is afraid he won't be able to do the work, so he
says he doesn't feel well." By this comment, she let me know that she had insight into the behaviors and motivations of individual students.

- One day, Sara offered maternal concern to Yitzhak who started to go out to recess without a coat. She remembered that he was sick last week and now should be careful to wear a coat outside.

- Sara used the daily routine as a vehicle for interaction with individual students. For example, when she took attendance, Sara looked at each child and encouraged each one to add an expanded comment to their "I'm here." Students offered comments like "I'm here and I like Mora (teacher) Sara." "I'm here and I have a cold." Sara responded appropriately, with concern or humor or affection, to each comment. She made an effort to say "Shalom, L'hitraot" (Goodbye, see you tomorrow) to each student as they left for the day.

Sara’s Standards of Success and Achievement

Sara singled out and interacted with individual students with concern, but also not without standards. She offered ongoing feedback which demonstrated her criteria of success and to what degree they had achieved success in Sara's classroom, as in the following examples:

- Hasia raised her hand to have her work checked. Sara came over to her desk, checked her work, and complimented her for waiting patiently. Sara let her know that
not only was her work acceptable, but that her behavior and demeanor also merited a specific comment.

- The students spent several minutes in quiet reading from their Hebrew reader. Sara wanted to check how they were progressing. She asked for a show of hands: "Who understood the story? Who understood a bit? Who didn't understand at all?" A few students raised their hands after each question. Sara let them know by this that she respected individual differences, that they were not alone in whatever level of comprehension, that those who understood nothing were not reprimanded, but that there were levels of comprehension to attain and that some students did attain the highest level of full comprehension. The request for self-evaluation promoted individual reflection, as well as trust and honesty. Sharing this self-evaluation with the whole class fostered an atmosphere where the individual progress of students was not a secret, and everyone could potentially look out for the progress of one another.

- Sara asked the class: Why do we eat pomegranate on Rosh Hashana? Mihal answered in English: "It has lots of seeds, like lots of mitzvot (commandments)." Sara told Mihal that her answer was correct and then asked for a volunteer to repeat it in Hebrew. Here success was measured not only in context, but in language, and a complete response would be in Hebrew.

- Sara told Esther: "You're doing very well, and do you know why? Because you're listening to the teacher this year, and when you listen to the teacher you do well." Sara reinforced their ongoing relationship (she was Esther's teacher in Grade One), and
emphasized her growth over the two years, offering a means to success which Esther had attained, but anyone in the class could strive for.

- Sara rewarded attentiveness by offering priority at getting ready to go home. She chose students to pack up their books in this way: "I'll choose those who always listen to the teacher to start to pack up." She called several names and those students began to pack up. She continued, "The next group is those who try to listen to the teacher." Again, she called several names, and those students packed up. And, finally, "The next group is those students who will try tomorrow to listen to the teacher." Sara let the class know that she would reward those who listen to the teacher. She also acknowledged that there are several steps on the way to full attention, and that some students did not exhibit any attention today, however they were not reprimanded and Sara had full confidence that they would try to improve themselves tomorrow.

**Discipline and Rules**

Another way of establishing a unified guideline for behavior and criteria of success in the classroom is through discipline and rules. Sara established limits, which provided the class with a common foundation and offered a way for individuals to determine how to function successfully in this classroom. Sometimes, however, Sara's execution of her policies was inconsistent as in the following example of guidelines for permission to leave the class.
There were repeated references to the class policy of leaving the room in the early sessions of the year. Hanging on the board in the front of the room were two medallions, with boy and girl stick figures. One side of each was red and the other was green. When a student wanted to go out to the washroom, he or she went up to the board and turned the appropriate gender medallion over to the red side and then left, with no necessity to say anything to the teacher. No one else could go out until the person returned to the class and turned the medallion to the green side. This policy encouraged both trust and independence, as it assumed that the students would only leave the room when they had to and thus did not have to ask the teacher, and that everyone would maintain the rule of one person (of each sex) out at a time, without the teacher monitoring it. This policy and its variations were reiterated (and also varied and expanded upon) repeatedly by Sara, as in the following examples during the first three lessons I observed:

- Sara was asking questions about a story. Dov asked to go out and Sara reminded him of the system, and that he need not ask, just turn over the pass.

- During the reading of the story, Sara stopped a boy from going out. She told the class that there was no going out during the story. The lesson continued and several students went out of the class. Sara again announced that there was no going out during the story. (When did the rule change?)

- Leah got up to go out and Sara reminded her that she had been out already and that she can only go out once. (When was that rule stated?)

- Esther tried to go out, and Sara did not allow her.
- During French class, the teacher said that no one could go out. She did not seem to be aware of the system with the passes.

- Sara reviewed the washroom system and said that it was the same in French class. She said that they could go to the washroom and drink, but only one at a time.

- Sara reminded them again about the washroom system, and said that they could go out once prior to recess, at recess, and once again after recess.

- Several minutes later: Sara said: "There is no going out now."

- Two girls were not in class for attendance because they were in the washroom. Sara reviewed again that two girls could not go out at once.

Sara worked hard at getting her point across about this system, which was designed to foster trust and independence. However, there was a lack of clarity which impeded the reinforcement of this rule. Sara changed the policy around different parts of the lesson without offering guidelines, therefore in effect, she still controlled and monitored who went out, which defeated part of the purpose. Also, other teachers of the same class did not have the same policy.

With regard to the rule of talking in class, Sara allowed students to talk while working, unless it disturbed others, with the confidence that she could bring them back to task when needed. The following are some examples of Sara’s reinforcement of this rule:

- Sara said to Liba and Leah: "You two talk all the time. I know you’re good friends and want to sit together, but I'll move your seat if you keep talking. Listen to the
Sara did not yell, but she was firm and offered consequences. She acknowledged the importance of their friendship, but set limits. Later in that same day, she said: "Liba and Leah, I'll change your seats today if you talk again."

- Sara never yelled or said "sh" to get quiet. Usually she just turned out the lights, which got the students' attention, and then she went on with the lesson.

- Twice during class, Sara reprimanded someone for talking with the words, "You are disturbing me." There was a clear message that there was a reason for the student to stop talking, although it may be noted that Sara's rationale was that it was a personal affront to her and not a communal breach of conduct.

- Sara said to Esther: "No talking—you won't finish your work." The message was that talking is acceptable if it did not get in the way of working.

- Sara said: "Ora and Hasia, you're talking a lot today, you usually don't. Do you have something to tell the class?" The girls shook their heads. Sara's tone was not demeaning, and she offered them the benefit of the doubt.

**Sara's Use of Groups**

Sara enjoyed using small groups in teaching and in classroom organization. Sara noted in the interview that for her groups were an opportunity to highlight individual differences:

In Grade Two, because it's a second language, it's much harder to create group work as I do in Grade Five, which is more for learning. Group work in Grade Two is more for creative work. And there, to the contrary, it really expresses itself. Because many times a weak child is very creative and you might not see it as a
teacher if you're just occupied with the learning, so it's an opportunity to reach children like these.

The frequent switching of group composition may have compromised the development of class community, but the lessons imparted within the cooperative groups were relevant to the values of community. My first observation day was on the third day of school, and already the students were divided into six groups, with which they were familiar. The groups were utilized in the following ways and situations:

- The students were sent to get their books, to pack up, to get snacks, to get their *siddur,* and to put their things away by group. In other words, every routine change was made by calling a group, not necessarily in order of one to six, and not necessarily in the original groups, as for example, groups could be called by shirt color, or by who brought the same food for snack (which also required the same blessing).

- Sara picked groups who were quietest to go first. She let them know by this procedure (which was sometimes more tedious than if she had merely sent individuals to complete the routine) that if an entire group was ready, an individual could benefit, and that each individual had a role in making the group ready by his or her behavior.

- Sara distributed materials by giving them to one member of each group to give out to this rest of the group.

- Sara divided the class into four groups, according to seating areas, to read a story aloud. Each group read a part of a character or narrator.
- Sara called up a group of students according to those who were sitting nicely and had them play a game in pairs. Each person received an object or flash card and had to find their partner.

- The class was divided into three groups for an activity, facilitated by Sara, Gali, and me. There were two columns corresponding to the two holidays of *Rosh Hashana* and *Yom Kippur*, and cards with customs from the two holidays that had to be hung on the wall in the appropriate column. Sara did not offer any guidelines of how to work in groups, nor did she ask the other teachers to offer specific guidelines. Although it was a class that was accustomed to functioning organizationally in groups, it was apparent that they were not used to working in groups, and students were not listening to each other, wandered around when it was not their turn, and teased each other. Sara told me afterwards that she was not sure that they would be ready for this assignment until tomorrow, but she did it because I was here today. I asked her if the students knew how to work in groups. She responded that those who were in her class last year knew better, but that this was the first time this year that she had divided them into groups to do an assignment.

- A highlight of the group experience in this class occurred at a later point in the semester, when I was no longer visiting this class regularly, because I had switched to Sara's Grade Five class. Sara invited me to the class to help out with an art project, led by an outside expert, which would involve the entire class in preparing scenery for the *chumash* ceremony. An entire afternoon was to be devoted to this project, and four
teachers were on hand to assist; Sara, Gali, the art specialist, and I, in addition to the help of the remedial teacher for a portion of the time. The students were divided according to their six performance groups for the ceremony, corresponding with the Biblical six days of creation of the world. I was assigned three students to work with on the day of light and darkness. We were given sketchy direction and the three students set about cutting and pasting and creating a collage of gold and yellow shapes on a black background. My three students seemed pleased to be doing the project and that they were making an important contribution. All around the room students were participating actively. In different corners, they were cutting, pasting, and drawing. Some were making flowers, trees, birds, animals, fish, stars, suns, and moons to be pasted on the different murals. The atmosphere was warm and cooperative. There was sharing of materials and ideas. Teachers and students helped each other, both within the small groups and around the room. After recess, they continued working and Sara put on a tape of their music teacher singing songs from the ceremony. The students sang along as they worked. This added to the festiveness and fun of the atmosphere. As they finished the original day they were given, students went into different configurations and helped in other places around the room. Some worked on sweeping and clean up. Sara and Gali called up individuals to cut this or draw that, for example, more trees or flowers. It was a very long activity, but the students handled it well. There was space here for thinkers and workers, helpers and leaders, even for those who were not artistically inclined. There was a lot of freedom, but no one abused it. In addition to creating an atmosphere of warmth, fun and cooperation
as a class, they created a physical product which they would later point to with pride at the chumash ceremony and say "We did it!" In Sara's words: "When we did that group work for the decorations for the ceremony, suddenly we revealed students who are very weak and generally don't blossom in their work—here they blossomed. And I really enjoyed that. Here their help was needed, they were called from group to group, and I think that we gave them a chance."

Some questions which arose in my mind during that day were the following: Could this only be accomplished in a class where the teacher is invested in groups and relationships and where cooperation and helpfulness override "excellence" in an objective sense? Did Sara's more casual discipline allow for the freedom of this sort of day, where chatting and noise were integral to the bubbly atmosphere, which then motivated students to want to participate. Could the other Grade Two, more invested in order and discipline, also accomplish this task, precisely because the children were able to work in an orderly fashion? Or would they accomplish, but just not in the same atmosphere?

The Nature of Academic Assignments

The nature of assignments is an important feature of this study, not merely for the examination of the frequency and quality of cooperative and independent work, but also to explore the extent to which assignments encouraged students to think and inquire on their own or in groups. Another relevant focus is whether the work allowed for
variations in the responses of students, thereby leading to the possibility of different kinds of success, depending on the thinking pattern and learning style of the individuals.

The following are examples of assignments in Sara’s Grade Two:

- The students were given a project to make Jewish New Year’s cards. Sara wrote on the board ideas of who to send them to (for example, their parents), and asked the students for their ideas, then added to the list grandparents, teacher, cousin, brother, and sister. The basic format for the card was on a ditto to be colored in, and the message had to be written in Hebrew. Students could select their choice of colored paper on which to stick the ditto and they could glue it wherever they wanted on the paper. The students worked with a low hum of chatting. They helped each other with glue and scissors. Sara put on a tape, and told the students to listen for Rosh Hashana songs. Gali cut shapes of shofars (a ram’s horn, traditionally sounded on the Jewish New Year) and offered them to students to glue on their cards. Sara went around with glitter for those who wanted some. Students brought their cards up to show Sara, who had words of praise for each one. This project incorporated good intention, free choice, and structure. It offered structure to those who required it, although offering the choice to begin on a blank piece of paper would have provided more open-ended creativity to those who might choose not to color on a ditto. To some extent, it provided for different talents and levels in Hebrew, art, and imagination. By offering students an opportunity to bring personal New Year’s messages, the project facilitated a connection between school, family and other Jews. The whole class worked together on the same project with the
same materials, but there was some room for individuality in color, design, message, and to whom the card was sent.

- In the Sukkot workbook was a page with four pictures of the different stages of sukkah (a holiday hut) building. On top of the page were four Hebrew sentences. The students were to match each sentence with a picture and write the sentence under the picture. This required skills of comprehension of the written word, ability to match words with an illustrated version of the same concept, and writing (copying) in Hebrew. This was not an open-ended assignment, as they could only use the sentences on the page. Considering their limitations of working in a foreign language and the age of the students, perhaps this was the best that could be expected. An alternative or variation on the assignment could have been to write one of the sentences provided or their own sentence to match the picture, or to draw a different picture for the sentence.

- Sara introduced a project, for every student to make their own sukkah. She held up the picture of a sukkah which Gali made as a sample and propped it on the blackboard. Sara, Gali, and I distributed materials. Every student received construction paper and fabric in their choice of colors, popsicle sticks, and green tissue paper for the roof. The students worked and the teachers went around to help. Sara encouraged the students to share markers and glue. As they finished, Sara hung up the pictures on the back wall of the classroom. The final products were almost identical with one another and with Gali's sample which was displayed in front during the whole lesson. It is likely that because everyone was given the same materials, they used them as Gali did. Nothing was said by
the teachers which would encourage students to use originality in their work; for example, "Everyone add something which you would find in a sukka that was in your own back yard."

I discussed this project informally with Sara and Gali after class that day and asked them about the pros and cons of offering a sample for an art project. Sara said it would depend on the goal, for example a sukka has a certain structure and guidelines, so it must be done in a certain way. (As an aside, these were used to decorate the class for the Parents' Night, and perhaps for that reason, they had to be "perfect." ) In Gali's opinion, it was age-related, and she added that the pictures of her Grade Four class had more variety. Sara said: "It's also an issue of time, we're always rushed - first the holidays and then it continues on all year." Sara showed me her next holiday project which was Simchat Torah flags, to be colored from a ditto. Sara claimed that the ditto was preferable, as opposed to original flags, because of lack of time, and because if the children take them to the synagogue as is traditional, they must be presentable, not like in Israel, where flags may come from different sources or can be varied.

Were individuality and creativity sacrificed because of lack of time or external pressure from parents? This project was ripe with potential for individual input (choices of materials, medium, conception, and so on) and instead was executed in a uniform manner, still meeting other learning goals.

- It was important to Sara that her students employ study habits which met her standards of organization and structure. She once commented: "I don't want to brag, but I
see that the kids I had last year have good habits." In one example of individual work students had to select words from a column. Sara told them that after they used a word, they should not put a line through it, but instead should put a check by it. Ora circled her sentence instead of putting a check, and Yitzhak said: "You're supposed to put a checkmark," suggesting that she had made a mistake. Was Sara's message too rigid—could she not have offered several alternatives to crossing out, including circling—or was this a constructive way of developing community? Another time Sara "bragged" to me that Hasia checked off each word as she used it, pleased that she was one of her students from last year.

- Sara had very strong views on the issue of remedial lessons, and preferred not to send students out with the special teacher, and instead arranged for the teacher to come into the classroom and sit beside a student and help quietly. In her words, "Why should they have the stigma of being weak?" and "I don't want the girl to feel bad, the last time she saw her, she said 'Oh, again'. It depends on the work, if it was drilling Hebrew reading, that would be different." Perhaps in this case Sara's sensitivity to her students was misappropriated, and in actuality offering clear support to those with special academic needs might override the issue of stigma. According to the remedial teacher, students actually enjoyed going out of class, receiving special attention, stickers, and so on. Would Sara have suggested that the students could or should be shielded from the fact of different levels of achievement? Evidently the school did not share her concern,
as the system of students going out of class with the remedial teacher was well established at all grade levels.

- When students had quiet individual work, they could finish at their own pace; it was acceptable for each student to work at his or her own speed. If students finished work more quickly than the rest of the class, they could play Hebrew games or read books in the back of the room, or if they were working in a holiday workbook, they could continue with different pages. Although there was provision made for different pacing of work, there was no obvious accounting for different learning styles in terms of offering choices of types of assignment. All students always had the same assignment. The teachers offered help to individuals, but within the structure of the same work for everyone.

- Sara's classroom was set up to facilitate cooperative learning. Every student desk had at least one or two other desks attached to it. Much of the time, the atmosphere fostered helpfulness and shared learning. Occasionally, Sara gave students a conflicting message, as in the following examples: She said to Maya: "I don't want you to tell her the answer. If she doesn't know, she can ask the teacher, that's why there's a teacher here." And to Aryeh: "You work alone, alone—he works alone, and you work alone."

The culture of Sara's Grade Two was reflective of her congeniality, her open and pleasant relationship with Gali, and her successful balance of being casual and structured. When students were working, Sara permitted a level of noise in the room, as long as it was not disturbing or preventing people from working. The teachers walked
around and checked in with individuals. Students could also walk around, for example to get their books. Administrative tasks were made fun by calling upon students in different groupings, and songs and taped music were frequently a pleasant background to work.
Devora's Grade Two

Devora permitted me to visit her class beginning on September 20th, and then asked me to take a break from October 27th through December 1st, when she would be devoting much of class time to rehearsing for the Chumash ceremony. I visited her class eight times, including the gym specialty, and in addition visited the corresponding English class once.

Devora was an extremely deliberate teacher, who used every opportunity to maximize her educational goals. In the way she interacted with students, in her use of a loud and enthusiastic style, in her establishing and executing policies of discipline and order in the classroom, in her taking advantage of digressions, in her choice of topics and materials, and in her sharing personal anecdotes, it seemed that Devora left nothing to chance or coincidence. Devora was very personable and personal, about herself, her family, and especially about Israel. Hers was not a stressful or pressured classroom environment, but it was an extremely orderly one, where every minute counted and every comment by teacher or student had a potential for relevance and value in the lesson.

Discipline and Rules

Devora's control of the class was achieved through the establishment of rules which were maintained in a clear and consistent manner. The following are some examples:
- Before beginning class, students were asked to straighten the rows of desks and pick up any garbage from the floor. If they did this with too much noise, they were asked to go out and come back in again more quietly. Devora frequently made the point that even if the standards were different in other classes, they had to abide by her standards in this class, reinforcing boundaries of membership.

- Before class, students were required to set up their folders, notebooks, books, and snacks in their desks (using the list on the board as a guide for what they would need on that day) and were not permitted to go to their cubbies to get things during the lesson.

- During daily prayers, students had to have their eyes in the prayerbook and finger in the place. Students were required to stand at attention for the anthems.

- Students were not allowed to leave during class, as Devora said "It's impossible to have kids going in and out during a lesson." She also commented to me: "You see they don't ask to go to the bathroom. I'm a mother, and I was a student for many years too. I know what it's like, but they can do OK, and I can tell if a child needs to go."

- During a game that involved hand-clapping, Devora told one student that she did not like the way he clapped and told others not to clap with their elbows banging on the desks.

- Students were required to raise their hands if they had something to say (but not while others were talking), and were reprimanded or lost time at recess for calling out.

- No one was allowed to walk over to the teacher or walk around the room during class. In Devora's words: "The classroom is not a plaza."
- Each day three monitors were sent out; one to take the attendance to the office and two to lift any coats that had fallen off the hooks in the hallway.

- During snack and lunch time, students could talk a bit, but were not permitted to stand up or walk around.

- When they left the classroom (to go to gym or an assembly), the students did so in a straight line and in a specific order. They were required to walk quietly through the halls on tiptoe.

- Devorah frequently asked students to sit up properly and not to turn around or play with their clothes, hair, or neighbor.

Devora believed that she could not function properly if the class did not meet her standards of order. In her words: "Without discipline, there is no learning." Sometimes Devora just stated the rules and repeated them at relevant opportunities, without rationale. For example: "Whoever plays with his sleeves loses five minutes of recess." More frequently, however, she offered rationale to the students for her rules, explaining the consequences for breaking them and offering positive reinforcement to those who kept them. For example:

- During a tidying up session, Devora sang a song about how nice it is to clean up, and then told the students how important it is to clean the classroom and house in order to have fun. She evidently associated cleanliness and order as the way to lay the foundation for a productive and enjoyable learning experience.
- Moti was holding a toy in his hand, Devora looked at him and he put it away immediately. She congratulated him for responding so quickly, and said to the class: "I just looked at him and he put it away."

- Another time, Moti walked in late. He said: "It stinks." Devora responded in an even tone: "Moti, you've been so good this week. I'd like it to continue and I'll send another note home to your mother." Here she chose to reinforce his positive behavior, without focusing on his disruptive comment.

- Devora explained to the students: "When you come in the room, you lock your mouth (she pretended to lock her mouth with a key) and get ready. A little talking is OK, but not a lot. It's just too bad to waste the time, we have a lot to do."

- After a tefilla with very good decorum and loud singing, Devora said: "I would have thought I was in Grade Three, I'm very proud of you." She then reviewed the Hebrew term for proud.

- During tefilla, Devorah reminded them repeatedly to keep their finger in the prayerbook. She asked, rhetorically: "Children, do you think that I know the tefilla?" They said "yes." Devorah continued: "Well, for one minute I looked away to see a boy who wasn't looking in his book, and I lost my place—that's why we must keep our finger in the book."

- On two occasions, several students missed recess as a punishment. Devora sat with them in the room to be sure that they understood why they were not going out. After several minutes, she allowed them to go out.
- One day, there was some noise in the hallway. Devora asked the class: "Do you hear the noise in the hall? Some classes make noise and it disturbs. That's why I tell you to be silent." Binyamin called out: "And we're the best class in the world!" The student's comment suggested that good discipline can build class spirit, and in Devora's class, where discipline was so important, it was established as a point of pride and unity.

Devora was unusual in the school in her relentless attention to discipline. It was very relevant to the character of this class (especially in contrast to their English class), and to the creation of community. I frequently asked myself if Devora's attention to discipline compromised the nature of the relationship between Devora and her students, or whether it served as the foundation of the relationships. Her demeanor was not of a "mean" teacher, but perhaps her concern for discipline obstructed her view of other dynamics in the classroom.

Devora's Standards of Success and Achievement

Can a child express his or her uniqueness in this type of setting? Devora set high standards which most students reached most of the time, but with little latitude to digress or be different, perhaps there were children who did not perform well within this approach.

Devora was more than willing to praise students and reinforce behavior and attitudes which she felt were positive. Devora would make comments such as: "You think nicely" or, "You're very smart, you're all very smart" or after a prayer session, "You
all—every one of you—did beautifully, read nicely, stopped for air. I don't know what your Grade Three teacher will do with you, maybe you'll skip Grade Three and go right into Grade Four. I'm very proud of you." The following are examples of behaviors which merited praise in Devora's classroom: saying thank you; reading quietly; trying hard or making any effort; speaking in Hebrew, and particularly answering in full sentences; remembering to put snack in the desk; asking good questions or offering thoughtful answers; praying loudly and with decorum, to which Devora commented: "I am proud of you, you're like adults in the synagogue. You know how to give respect to the siddur."

Devora's praise seemed to be worth working for, and did not seem to be empty or meaningless to the students. Much of the praise reflected work that everyone was doing, or reinforcing an individual for doing something in a uniform way. There was little praise for an individual who performed in a way that was not in Devora's prescribed style.

Devora's Relationship with Individual Students

One opportunity which was especially designed for students to express themselves as individuals was the daily sicha (conversation). Devora set aside time for the sicha during each class session. This was an opportunity for more informal conversation among teachers and students. The sichot were conducted with the students sitting on the floor by the blackboard, and were entirely in Hebrew. Devora usually began the sicha with one or two pointed questions and she controlled the flow of the
discussion. The students directed most of their comments to Devora and not to each other. The following are examples of *sichot*:

Devora opened the *sicha* by asking students to tell her about *Rosh Hashana* and what they had done in the many days since they were at school last (this was a Monday and they had been out of school since the previous Wednesday). Zahava said that she went bowling. Devora listened and then told the class that in Israel there is bowling, only it is pronounced "bow-ling" (she said this in almost a comical way). Devora asked Zahava when she went bowling and as it became clear that she went on *Shabbat*, Devora seemed to try to sidetrack Zahava from saying this and ended up by saying, "Oh, you went on *Motzei Shabbat*" (Saturday night), and turned to the next student. Beni said that his Grandpa came and also that he played Nintendo. Devora commented that she did not like Nintendo very much. Shulamit said that she went to a birthday party. Yehoshua said that on *Rosh Hashana* his grandparents came from Germany. Devora told the class the Hebrew word for plane and sang a song about flying on a plane, improvising words, using the students' names. Amir said that he wanted to go on a plane. Devora asked: “Where to?” Amir said: “Israel.” Devora said: "Me too—give me a big five," and he did. Shaia said that he went to the Sizzler. Devora reviewed the Hebrew word for restaurant. Berl said that he got a picture and a trophy from soccer on *Shabbat* (there is no other Hebrew word for Saturday). Devora drew a picture of a trophy on the board, while telling them that she is not such a good artist. She taught them the Hebrew word for trophy and sang a song with the word in it.
This *sicha* offered individual students an opportunity to talk about themselves. Devora listened carefully, she was attentive with eyes and body language, and probed when it was appropriate to do so. She also expressed her own opinions freely. All the children spoke in Hebrew and Devora interjected Hebrew vocabulary and songs. This may have limited spontaneous expression. The *sicha* was not interactive among the students. It served the purpose of allowing individuals to feel that their activities were important to the teacher, in and out of school, but it did not reinforce students' relationships with one another. For Devora, it was not really a break from her deliberate teaching style, as she maintained control of the *sicha* and insisted that students sit properly, even though they were on the floor, which was potentially more informal.

On the next occasion, Devora opened the *sicha* with the question: "Who wants to say something for the *sicha"?" The students were eager to participate. Tali began: "Tomorrow I'm going to my grandmother's and she's taking my sister to Amazing Kids." Avi reported: "Yesterday I played baseball." Tova said: "Yesterday my parents came here" (referring to the Parents' Night at the school). Devora responded: "And I met them, and they introduced themselves and I said 'Naim meod, It's a pleasure to meet you'." Devora sang a song using the words "It's a pleasure to meet you." Berl said: "Yesterday I had hockey (Devora interrupted to review the Hebrew pronunciation of hockey), and my team (Devora interrupted with the Hebrew word for team)Amir is on my team." Devora said enthusiastically: "Amir is on your team? One day when you've played a while, tell me and I'll come and watch you play. I like to watch kids play hockey." (Devora told
Moti several times throughout to sit properly.) Tamar said: "I go to gymnastics." Devora offered the Hebrew term for gymnastics. Heli said: "Yesterday, my sister and I went to the doctor (Devora translated doctor) and my sister got a shot" (Devora translated shot). Amir said: "All year, I only got one goal." Devora said sympathetically: "That's no problem." She wrote the Hebrew word for goal on the board, and drew a picture of the goal. Devora then stopped the discussion and said that they were out of time.

In this *sicha*, it seemed as if Devora was more interested in its value as a Hebrew lesson than as a dialogue. Again, students were not encouraged to interact and each contribution stood on its own without follow-through or reaction. Devora asked all of the questions and made the responses. No students could raise hands while others were talking, and lying down on the floor was not permitted. The students appeared to be very eager to talk and were willing to struggle to get out their thoughts in Hebrew.

There were occasions that Devora used to take time out for individual students which were not in the context of the *sicha* or a disciplinary intervention. In her words in our interview, "I say that first of all, I'm a mother, then a teacher . . . I believe that we're not just teachers, we're educators. We're teaching a language and we teach it through all sorts of vehicles." The following are some examples:

- Devora took time to prepare homework for a girl who was out sick, since the girl's mother asked her to do so.

- Zahava came to school in a skirt on a gym day and wanted to call home so that her mother would bring pants for her to change into. Devora sent her to the office, but
minutes later she came back, crying because she was not allowed by the office to call home. Devora stopped her lesson and told Zahava compassionately not to cry, because either she could participate in gym in tights or she would help Devora with her work in the classroom during gym time. She turned to the class: "Anyway, it's good to make a mistake once—why?" David called out: "Because you'll never make it again." This seemed to be a review of something they had discussed previously. Devora turned the incident into a lesson for the class, without minimizing Zahava's distress.

- Devora called on Berl to talk and asked him if he played hockey this week, as last week he had spoken about hockey. She was very patient and after a few minutes of encouragement, praise, and support, she got him to say in Hebrew, "I played hockey and I like it." It was a very moving example of Devora's patience and attention to drawing out one timid student.

- Zahava made an unsolicited comment: "On Sunday, I went with my other Grandma to the store and she bought me this jacket." Devora said: "Speak loudly so even Moti will hear . . . Very nice, you have beautiful clothes, you dress like a dugmanit. What's a dugmanit?" Rivka answered: "A model." Devora complimented Zahava to the class: "She always has nice clothes that match."

- Devora announced that Binyamin's mother was expecting a baby and that today she was going into the hospital to give birth. She directed several comments and questions to him about the baby and the bris (circumcision). One day, after the baby was born, he reported: "I lay in my Mom's bed." Devora asked: "With the baby?" Binyamin
said: "No." Devora said: "Just you? What fun for you." By her words and her tone, Devora was sensitive to his needs for special attention now that there was a new baby in his family.

**Encouraging Creativity and Thinking**

A part of Devora's very deliberate planning of the flow of the lessons included encouraging students to think for themselves. In her words: "In Grade One, there's a lot of pressure to finish certain levels, in Grade Two, not so much pressure . . . *chumash*, stories, all go together, and if I don't get to one it's not so important—the key is that they learn how to approach the story, and have a vocabulary." In her interview, Devora said: "Actually I've changed my methods, because I've reached the conclusion that from writing and mechanical work sheets you don't learn language—need a lot of talking . . . but it's hard, it's hard to keep them occupied when they're not writing . . . I do give them some information questions, some writing—it's necessary, to develop them. But a lot of creativity.” The following are some examples:

- Propped on the board was a transparent house, with several Hebrew words on cards, visible through the wall. There were six windows that could be opened to reveal the words. Each person went up, opened a window, and had to make a sentence with that word. Then s/he picked the next student to come up and take a turn, in boy-girl-boy-girl order. Meanwhile, Devora sang: "A boy picks a girl, a girl picks a boy . . ." The students were involved and enjoyed the game. The sixth window had no word. They asked why.
Devora asked them to guess. Students called out: "Because you had no word? no time?"

Devora said that she had words, but left it empty in case they had a word. She asked for a word and someone offered one. (She did not actually write it in.)

- One day, instead of writing the day, date, and subjects on the board, as she usually did, Devora left some blanks and spent a few minutes having students fill them in.

- On my third visit, I arrived early and Devora was setting up. She saw me looking around at the work on the bulletin board. She pointed to the back left area, which was the work of the afternoon supplementary religious school which shared this classroom. The pictures were colored-in dittoes of the holiday. Devora told me that she did not do that kind of work, because there was no learning in it. (In Grade One she did, because she was teaching them how to color.) She said that when she introduced the topic of the holiday of Sukkot, she gave the students a blank sheet of paper to draw or fill in as they liked.

- On two other occasions, Devora told me that she hated pre-drawn work like dittoes and that she did not even like showing pictures to the students before they draw, in case it would limit their imagination.

- Devora's view of art was expressed in her interview:

Even in art, for example, you won't see one oil pitcher (referring to Chanuka projects hung on the the back wall of the classroom) exactly like the other. Because I emphasize that it's impossible to find out of ceramics two things which are exactly the same, and even on our bodies we don't have two identical limbs . . . I say it's excellent, because it's not from heaven, and even from heaven, it's not so wonderful . . . There are things in art which are really ugly, but it's nice, and it goes
up on the wall . . . a boy who thinks he's not good in art—how does he know that he can't draw? Somewhere somebody made a face, even if they didn't say anything, they read it in our eyes—it's too bad—they can do such nice things.

- Before Chanuka, there was a poster on the board with ingredients for potato pancakes (latkes), a traditional holiday food. The poster was very creatively made, with different colored writing, an oil slick for oil, and a flour label for flour. Devora said that every mother makes latkes differently; some put in this or that ingredient, and some mothers go to the store to buy latkes. For homework, they had to ask their mother, grandmother, or aunt how they make latkes and write it down on a sheet of paper. This lesson integrated home and school, and indicated that although there was one model, there was also room for variety.

- One day when I came in to Devora's class, she was moving desks around to a messy, maze-like set-up. She said to me: "Today, we're doing something crazy." The students came in and were obviously confused about the change in desks. Devora instructed them to sit wherever they wanted, and said that they could put the desks back for English class. The students looked perplexed, as if they did not know what to make of it, but they liked the idea of sitting wherever they wanted. Devora placed Yehoshua and Moti in specific places, the others could choose their own seats. Devora was very cheery, and was not giving her usual morning instructions about setting up. The routine continued, and about a half an hour into the class, Devora asked: "Children, do you want to know what's in the chumash?" They called out "Yes!" Devora continued: "We'll do something fun—it may be a little noisy." She took out a tambourine, and said: "I'll tell
you to do something and you do it until I hit the tambourine, then you stop. . . Children, sit on the floor—anywhere." They did. Then Devora gave a series of instructions: "All children stand on a chair . . . stand on desks . . . jump to the floor . . . make lots of noise." The children did all of these things and were enjoying it, without being too wild. During the noise part, Devora turned the lights off and on and kept asking for more noise. Then she called everyone to the floor in front, and proceeded to explain: "Today in class, there was no order (she held up flash cards with the words 'no order' in Biblical Hebrew and in modern Hebrew), in the world there was no order, and everything was upside down, opposite—like our class today. Everything was noisy, there was light and dark—did you see how I turned the light on and off—no sky, no earth, no trees, no animals, no people, everything was dark. . ." She continued with vocabulary. Later in the lesson, Devora held up a picture with a collage of shapes, which represented light, fire, and clouds. She quoted: "And God said: I don't want tohu vavohu (no order), I want order." Devora showed the class pictures of the different days of creation. She explained that God took all the light and put it in one place and the dark in one place, put the sky and water in place, and then created trees, land, sun, birds, and fish. After recess, they reviewed the concept of 'no order' and discussed what was missing in the world before creation. Different students came up with ideas and Devora wrote on the board: no dinosaurs, people, cars, houses, schools, stars, sun, world, television, tanks, trees, and flowers. Devora asked: "What was there? Tohu vavohu." Devora distributed blank sheets of paper and said: "We're going to write a story—what will it be called?" The students called out
ideas. Devora continued: "Whoever likes can write the name of the story is tohu vavohu, or whatever you will call it. The words you need are on the board, and for others you can raise your hand and ask me . . . How long is a story? Think." Yehoshua answered: "Many sentences." Devora said: "It does not have to be long to be good. I will not measure it with a ruler (she held up a ruler). Short stories are good and long stories are good, like there are long and short books." She asked different students how much they would write, and coached them to answer, "As much as I know."

Later, Devora said to me: "This kind of day is hard for kids, without usual order, it's harder to hold on." It was a very successful lesson, which really made its point dramatically, and got students to think by experiencing, if only because of the contrast to the usual style of this class. It is unlikely that this simulation would have been as striking in a class that was customarily less orderly.

**Group Work**

In my visits to Devora's class, I observed only one example of the use of small groups. This was in a game of tossing a ball at a picture and stating the name of picture in Hebrew. The class was divided into three teams and each student played to earn points for his or her team. The teams were divided according to the three aisles of desks and no specific instructions were given regarding team interaction or spirit.
Devora’s Grade Two was a smooth functioning class, reflective of the teacher’s commitment to order and deliberate use of time and structure. Devora encouraged individual participation of students and reinforced successful achievement, according to specific standards. The high level of order and discipline contributed to the development of class community, with clear boundaries of behavior and of membership.
Nava’s Grade Three

Between October 12th and December 13th, I visited Nava’s class nine times, including eight afternoon and one morning session. Two French, one gym, and one library sessions were included in the nine sessions, plus one visit to their English class. There were sixteen students in the class, including eight girls and eight boys. Their desks were set up to form one big rectangle.

Nava’s Relationship with the Students

The most special and unique element about Nava’s class was her warm relationship with her students. In every aspect of classroom life, be it an element of routine, a formal lesson, or an informal discussion, Nava exuded an aura of genuine caring and fondness for her students as individual learners and as people. The students in Nava’s class seemed to feel comfortable to share and talk, and the atmosphere which was generated by the teacher and reciprocated by the students felt safe and warm. Nava shared anecdotes and made comments about herself and her family. Her pride and joy in her son was especially evident during the week of his Bar Mitzva celebration, which she spoke about extensively to the class. In her interview, Nava expressed the following:

I definitely believe that before there can be any learning, there has to be an atmosphere that will lend itself to learning . . . One of the most important roles for me as a teacher is to create an atmosphere where one respects the other in the class . . . where each one feels that his opinion is definitely legitimate, and that there’s a place to hear his opinion. And I want there to be an atmosphere in which everyone can interact freely with each other. If there’s a problem that stands as a barrier, then I will definitely deal with it, before anything else. Because, parallel to what I want to give them from an academic standpoint, I want to give them values—of the culture, Jewish values, or
universal values. And it's not less important, maybe it's even more important, the social issue. I want everyone to feel that others listen to me, they like me, that I matter to people.

Nava took time out in class when students had a fight at recess, offering suggestions as to how to get along well, and showing that she considered that what happened at recess was an extension of the classroom. As she once said to the class: "I was on duty today in the playground, and I saw some who were playing in a rough and wild way. You know, some kids don't like to be played with that way . . . you know what's a right way to play and what's not. The way you are in class is the way you should be at recess."

In her interactions with students, Nava frequently called them *chamudi*, ("my sweetie"). Her approach was both caring and lightly humorous. For example, when Zeev's throat hurt, Nava suggested that he have his mother buy him Hall's cough drops. Zeev said that he preferred Vicks. Nava said that she did too and that he should bring her one when he gets them. One day, David said that he did not feel well. Nava said: "I could tell you're not yourself." She went to feel his head and said to the class: "Should I check for his fever the way I do for my children?" She put her head next to his in a maternal way. The students giggled and Nava said: "Oh, no, really, I can tell." She sent him to the office and commented aloud that her husband was called at work today because her daughter did not feel well at school.

One day in December, the remedial teacher came in to take out her students and did not appear to recognize Ze'ev, although she had worked with him previously. Nava quickly
remarked: "Oh, you didn't recognize him because he got a haircut," salvaging a potentially embarrassing moment for both teacher and student.

One day, Ze'ev was trying to take off his sweat shirt and the t-shirt underneath was coming off at the same time. It was comical and since he sat in the front row, he could not avoid being seen. The students laughed good-naturedly, as did Nava and I. Nava stopped the lesson to help him, by holding his bottom shirt. She did this naturally, without breaking stride, and as such acknowledged that individual students have human needs and other students have natural responses and that both can be acknowledged without reprimand or waste of time. Nava still managed to maintain good classroom spirit and care for the individual, and avoided making him the focus of ridicule.

In her interview, Nava said:

One time that you show a child and concentrate on something good that he did and bring it as an example, it's clearer to him what your expectations are of him. First of all, you give him a model from your perspective. So when you listen to them, you give them the same respect and seriousness for the simplest thing, then they know it's also expected of them. When they speak with me, I listen to them, and give them all the time to finish the conversation, they know that I also expect the same relationship from them. So first of all, my personal model... I show them that I also forget sometimes... that sometimes I'm also not happy on a certain day... or I'm very tired, but that's what we planned for today, so that's what we do. And from their side, they see what's expected of them as students.

There was a *sicha* (discussion) as an opening to almost every day in Nava's class. On Mondays, when I visited, they were especially long as there was an entire weekend on which to report. During the *sicha*, Nava allowed it to flow, and each student had ample opportunity to share and not only was Nava engaged and animated and involved in the discussion, but she reinforced listening among the students, so that it was not merely a dialogue between one
student and the teacher. In her words: "We must listen to each other, because everyone is waiting their turn and I want to hear what you have to say." The students also asked Nava what she did out of school, which she shared with them. The following are some excerpts from the sichot:

- Yonatan said: "I saw the movie Cool Running. (Nava: "Me too!") three times - with Yaakov and Shmuel." Nava asked: "Is it a sad or happy or funny movie?" Yonatan said that it was funny and told the class about a funny part. Nava said: "That was funny to me too."

- Talia said: "It was my parents' anniversary." Nava asked: "How many years?" Talia answered: "Eleven years." Nava continued: "Did you do something special?" Talia elaborated: "We went to my grandparents, to the Science Centre, and to see Beverly Hillbillies." She told the class a bit about the movie. Nava said: "Nice, congratulations to your mom and dad."

- Yonatan said: "My hockey team didn't win . . . I was goalie and the puck flew into the post." Nava asked jokingly: "Did you have a glove?" Yonatan: "Yes." Nava said: "I didn't know there were gloves in hockey." Yonatan said: "And I want to be a superstar." Nava responded: "Maybe you will be and when you are, you'll say I was your teacher." Yonatan: "But I was sad not to have you in Grade One." Nava concluded: "Now we're together."

Another example which showed the students' obvious affection for Nava was in a discussion about story writing. Nava said: "I always thought it would be fun to write a book." Shmuel said: "What if you wrote stories and weren't a teacher." Other students called out:
"Oh, no, oy!" Nava said: "Mrs. Goldberg did both" (referring to a teacher in the school who recently had a book published). Shmuel said: "But you're such a good teacher."

One day, Nava had the students pick names of classmates out of a box, and write a description of the person they picked. Yonah happened to pick Nava's name out of the box, and had to describe her to the class. She did so and ended with: "I want to be her friend." Nava was touched and she and Yona hugged, showing the mutual affection felt by Nava and her students.

When Nava took attendance, she would stop and say hello to each student. She encouraged them to respond to her as she greeted each one differently. For example, good afternoon, good day, welcome, or specific questions, such as, "How was dancing today?" One day she stopped for two students who had their heads down. One said that he was tired. Nava went to the window and said: "When I'm tired, I take a deep breath." She opened the window and had everyone in the class take a deep breath.

As students set up at the beginning of the lesson, Nava would talk to individuals, for example complimenting a sweater, or asking if he felt better. Once Mihal told Nava that she was tired because her baby was up at night. Nava responded that she did not sleep well either last night. At the end of the day, Nava said good bye to each student with an individual comment, for example, thanks, it was fun, see you tomorrow, and so on.
Discipline and Rules

Nava's warm relationship with her students did not diminish the sense of order in the class. Nava was able to create an informal and enjoyable atmosphere and still keep the students on task and functioning within her acceptable framework of behavior, largely because of her strong relationship with the students. Nava could allow a digression, for comments or even for singing, and then had the control necessary to bring the class back to the original topic. Nava rarely made comments about rules, and never shushed or yelled or turned out the light for quiet. Students could leave the room, with no special request or system in place. Nava’s reminders about what was acceptable and unacceptable in the classroom were offered gently and in the context of discussion. For example:

- During the *sicha*, David said: "I went to Detroit and saw my uncle. He gave me this watch." Nava interrupted him and had him show the class and explain what the watch could do, including making shooting noises. Nava asked: "Are you allowed to do in class what this watch does?" David answered: "No." Nava said: "Just at recess."

- A few students were giggling and Nava said: "I also like to laugh in class, but as soon as the lesson starts, we must know when to stop, then I know you're ready."

In one sense, order seemed to be important to Nava, as she complimented students for going to their cubbies and setting up properly in the morning. She told me that she invested time with one individual student and his parents to help him organize himself. They set up a system where he had a separate folder for each subject, instead of keeping all of his papers in one folder which had been confusing for him.
In another sense, spontaneity seemed to be more a priority for Nava than did order. When it came to setting up who would be class monitors, Nava established a system to go by her attendance list, but at another time changed that to let those who really wanted to do so serve as monitors. Nava was willing to change her order of topics or go off topic completely if it was relevant to the flow of the discussion.

**Individualization in Assignments**

Nava's individualized attention to students was evident in the academic realm. She allowed for students to express themselves at a variety of levels. She did not wish to squelch the more outspoken students, but also clearly encouraged the quieter ones to participate. The following are some examples:

- Nava said that whoever was ready with the final copy of their *chumash* story and picture should bring it up to the front of the class. Talia brought hers and Nava held it up and commented that it was nicely written, with proper margins, and that the picture was great. Nava said to the class: "Is this not Abraham? It's just what he should look like!" Talia asked: "Is it good?" Nava said: "It's excellent—'good' is not enough," and she hugged Talia.

- Yehudit showed her picture and all of the students admired it. Nava said that they would use Yehudit's picture for the lesson instead of hers. Yardena's picture was very sophisticated and she said that her mother helped her to make it. Nava complimented her.

- Yonatan made two pictures which looked almost identical, but one was on yellow paper and one on white. Nava said: "It's good that you made two—the yellow one reminds us
of the hot sun, and on the white one I can see all the details." David asked: "Why are there two the same?" Nava responded: "Are they exactly the same? Everyone draws their picture in their own way, as they see it, and as they imagine it."

- Nava returned tests one day, with the following comment: "I'm very happy that you did the best you could, even if you didn't get it all right. If you had mistakes and you want to correct them, I'll look at them again. You can go over the test and if you have something to say about it, come to me." She transmitted to them that effort, and not objective achievement, was her priority.

- During one lesson, Ze'ev was very eager to participate. He called out to a question: "I know!" Nava confirmed "I know you know, and that's good."

- When students were reading aloud a description that they had written in Hebrew, Nava reacted to Tamir's written mistakes: "Oy, what will we do with you?! Your description was very good, it's a good thing you read it aloud." Nava focused on the good in Tamir's oral work, while lightly acknowledging that his written work was lacking.

In her interview, Nava said:

Usually in my written work, there are several levels. I have everyone do the first level, and if there is written work that is geared for children who are more talented, it's optional. So a child who can't, won't feel: Oh, I can't do this, I'm not capable. Another child will feel: I can do it. But as I present my expectations, they are the same for everyone: You all have ability and I do expect . . . what I'll do is, to set up for the child as a goal one thing that's hard for him, and I will try to see when he does it well, and then I'll compliment him, and tell him he did it well, now let's see what's at the next stage . . . The children who are capable know that from me too, they see from how I treat them. I confer with them, I give them a variety of choices . . . of enrichment materials . . . give everyone the feeling that you are successful and capable of a lot . . . I know that there are teachers who use all kinds of points—I can't. I try to accommodate my program to the kids and not the opposite. So, I have certain expectations that everyone knows . . . I prefer to do it between me and the student . . . I will bring
examples of work they did, for example in art or writing, that were good, better. And at least there's a forum here for them to show their work and explain what they did.

The projects in Nava’s class were not always assigned with the expectation that all the students would complete them, or at least not in an identical fashion. The following are examples of projects which were voluntary, and offered opportunities for different levels of participation:

- For Chanukah, Nava asked the students to make their own games and bring them in to the class. Yonah and Talia made original board games, and showed them to the class and explained how to play.

- Another example was the class newspaper, entitled News from the Past. The idea of the paper was to present a modern account of Biblical stories that they were learning. It was designed as a class-wide project, with different roles; some students wrote articles (for example, one about a camel race), others drew pictures, and some were editors.

- One day, three students worked on an autumn mural of leaves out in the hallway, while the rest of the class was doing individual seat work. The students who worked on the mural had to do that work for homework that night.

- Some students worked on transcribing a poem that the class had written about fall.

At another time, only some students wrote a play for chumash.

Encouraging Thinking and Creativity

The lessons in Nava’s class were designed to engage and involve the students, encouraging them to use insight and empathy and to examine the material with depth, often
applying lessons to practical daily examples or tying in different subjects with one another. There was ample opportunity for spontaneity and creativity, and Nava herself would frequently digress or change the focus or direction of a lesson as the students' comments or questions would lead it from a starting point. (For example, she stopped the lesson to put on the tape of a song about chocolate when David said that Ze'ev likes chocolate.) Nava told me that she wanted to offer the students the challenge of studying allegories and their applications, as she felt that they were ready for it from a developmental standpoint, and therefore should be able to incorporate it even in Hebrew.

In a chumash lesson about Abraham and Sarah and the fact that Sarah was barren, Nava asked: "How do you think she feels?" Riva said: "Lonely." Talia said: "She sees that Abraham isn't happy and that makes her unhappy." Nava complimented: "Nice, Riva and Talia." Ze'ev said: "She has no children." Yonah said: "Her friends with children come and maybe she thinks it's not fair that she has none." Nava asked: "How does she feel? What's the word? Even in English." Yonah said: "Jealous." Nava said: "Remember that." The study of the Bible was always done in a critical, thoughtful manner. Whenever possible, Nava emphasized the human dimension, encouraged empathy, and brought out points to underscore the relevance to today.

In a chumash lesson about God's promise to Abraham that his progeny will be like the sand of the earth, Nava paused to whisper something to Shmuel and then sent him out of the room. The other students said that it is not polite to whisper. Nava said that she knows, but that this is a surprise for them. Shmuel stuck his head back in to the room and asked: "How
much?" Nava said: "That's why I whispered it to you, so that it would be a surprise. A small amount, even in a cup." The class was bursting with curiosity as the suspense built and Nava asked them: "What can you put in a cup?" They guessed drinks, candy, salt, etc. Shmuel came back and handed Nava a paper cup. She hid it under her sweater and walked to the front, really working at keeping up the suspense. She took it out and spilled sand out of the cup all over a front desk. She said: "This is afar--sand, dirt--now think--what does it mean that the children of Abraham will be like sand? I like to see you thinking." The students made suggestions, for example that they will be all over the land. Nava called David up to count the sand. He tried and obviously could not. Nava asked, rhetorically: "Can you? The children of Abraham will be many. You won't be able to count them." The lesson was visually very strong, Nava was quite animated, and the students were very involved.

The next week during chumash, Nava read from the text that God told Abraham that his progeny will be like the stars in the sky. Nava encouraged the students to figure out what that could mean. The first time God said they would be like sand, and now like stars. Nava asked: "Which example is nicer--sand or stars? Think, and then raise your hands. I like to hear the why most of all." Tamir said: "Stars are nicer than sand. Sand is dirty." Talia said: "Because stars give light and we want Jews to give light." Nava said: "Now I'm happy. You know the Torah doesn't say much, it gives very few details, and for each word some wise person thought up a legend. So if the children of Abraham are good, it will be like light." This lesson had a strong build-up and Nava's tone and demeanor were animated.
Before reading a story entitled *The Giant and his Garden*, Nava asked the students to list what words they would expect to hear in a story with this title. Nava wrote their suggestions on the board, not rejecting any, even if they were not exactly on track. She then told the students to listen for their words when she read the story, which was about a giant who would not allow children in his garden and then changed his mind. Nava asked: "Why did I choose this story?" Talia quickly responded: "We already learned (in chumash) about Abraham and how he brought in guests, and this giant is not that way." Nava tied the story in with their *chumash* lesson and the discussion of the *mitzvah* (commandment) of welcoming guests.

When Yardena asked a question about the use of words in the *chumash* text, Nava responded: "The fact that you noticed this is great. That's how we should learn *chumash* - ask why. I'm happy that you asked, because I might not have spoken about it."

During a Hebrew literature lesson, Nava gave out a poem about rain. She read it aloud expressively and asked the students just to listen to the words and not to look at the paper yet. Then she picked out key words, such as water or rain, and asked the class to say them aloud in a variety of voices and expressions. Then Nava gave out parts and had them look at the page and some read aloud. After the reading, Nava asked: "Who likes rain and why?" Yonah said: "The worms come out." David said: "We do art in our house sometimes." Yonatan said: "We sit and watch the rain and in the winter we sit by the fire and see pictures in the fire." Riva said: "I like to stay in the house and sleep. We roast marshmallows and have hot chocolate." Nava said: "I'll come to your house." At that point,
Nava switched to another topic, but she had succeeded in building a mood of sharing, which complemented the images of the lesson.

At the end of a literature lesson about the story of a donkey and a horse, Nava reviewed the exercise in the book, which was one of matching pairs of words. Yonatan read the word 'donkey' and said "stupid." Nava stopped and said: "That reminds me, we do give different characteristics to different animals. For homework, see if you can think of any. It's even OK to ask your parents." Here she took a student's joking comment and turned it into an opportunity for another discussion.

Nava gave out a sheet with a list of characteristics in Hebrew and began the discussion by describing her styrofoam cup and then went into attributes of people. Nava asked the class to distinguish between internal and external characteristics and attributes. Shmuel said that "stupid" was external. Nava responded by asking: "How can you tell that from the outside? When would you know?" Some students called out: "When he speaks." Nava said: "Yes, only when he speaks." The students offered suggestions for internal attributes such as good-hearted and sensitive. They got off on a tangent of whether the characteristics of a pious person (a tzaddik) are internal or external, and some said that they could tell a tzaddik when they see him going to the synagogue or wearing a black hat. Nava said that what makes a pious person is what is inside, in the heart, whether they are good to others, and not those who dress a certain way, and not even necessarily Jewish. Nava allowed the discussion to unfold and used the vocabulary words for a message beyond the superficial.
During one lesson, each student received a small piece of paper on which they were asked to write their own name. The papers were then put into a box. The students asked Nava to include her name, and she did. Nava asked each student to pick out a name, but not to reveal to the class in any way which name they had chosen, not even to look at that person. Then each student was asked to describe the person whose name they had picked, using their adjective sheet, and writing down that person's characteristics. Nava asked them, for example, to describe how the student looked, and what he or she likes to do, using words they know and making it an interesting description, not merely a list. Nava also said: "Think of how you would like to be described," offering a qualitative boundary to the descriptions. When everyone finished writing, they sat on the floor in the front and took turns reading their descriptions aloud, and having the rest of the class guess about whom they had written. The descriptions included elements such as eye and hair color, number of siblings, subjects they like, and comments like, "He likes the teacher." The different Hebrew levels were evident here as were the variations in amount or depth of detail. The exercise applied lessons they had learned, both in vocabulary and the subject of attributes. It also involved the students in the learning process, helped them to get to know each other better, and to consider others' feelings.

A similar game was played on another day, when the class was divided into pairs and each pair had to speak in Hebrew for a couple of minutes about what they like and do not like. When they came back to the group, each member of the pair had to introduce his or her
partner to the rest of the class. Again, this exercise utilized Hebrew vocabulary, and also encouraged interaction, listening skills, and helped build the unity of the class.

During a *chumash* lesson, Nava introduced the game of *Teacher and Student*. She distributed paper and instructed every student to make up one question and answer, on anything that they have learned so far in *chumash* since the beginning of the year. As the students were working, Nava went over to Adam to explain to him quietly what to do and to offer an idea for a question. When the students were ready, they set up for the game. Seven students who were to be "teachers" brought chairs and set them up in a circle in the middle of the room, facing outwards with their backs to one another. The other students sat on the floor, each facing one of the "teachers" in chairs. Nava rang a bell to begin and told the "teachers" to sit up straight, and then gave the following instructions:

Each teacher is to ask their student a question, and if the student doesn't know the answer, the teacher should offer hints. If the student gets the answer right, the teacher should say 'good' or something like that. When the bell rings again, the outside circle of students will rotate around. If you didn't have time to get the answer, the teacher can quietly tell it to the student, and then you'll move on to the next spot.

Nava told Yonah that she could accept an answer that was not exactly in her own words.

The students played the game in an animated way, with some lapses of fooling around. Other than a review of material, there were several implicit lessons in this game, including: learning how to compose a question, how a teacher should sit and act, how to ask questions clearly, helping those who do not know, and reinforcing those who do. This was the model of teaching that Nava herself maintained consistently.
Another time, Nava reviewed the material by having one student sit at the front and the rest of the class took turns asking her questions. When she successfully answered five questions, Nava had the class applaud.

The entire class was really utilized as one whole group in Nava’s class. Students were encouraged to listen to and care for one another as classmates. Sub-groups were not utilized for organization or competition, although they were used to divide the students, as in some of the exercises mentioned above.

Nava’s Grade Three was characterized by the teacher’s warm relationship with her students and by an atmosphere of openness and spontaneity. Nava facilitated a high level of interaction among the students and encouraged thinking and creativity.
Batya's Grade Three

Between October 19th and December 14th, I visited Batya's class eight times, including seven afternoon and one morning classes. One gym class, and one visit to the English class were also included in the observation. There were sixteen students in the class, eight boys and eight girls. Their desks were set up in square groups of four or in pairs of two.

Batya conducted her class at a high energy level. She was very animated and enthusiastic in her presentation and kept the class moving at a fast pace, where frequently the students were whipped up into a frenzy to answer questions and participate. Students in Batya's class received positive feedback for thinking and responding quickly. I once commented to Batya: "The class has a kind of tension—not in a negative way. The kids are on the edge of their seats." Batya responded: "I want it that way. Otherwise they'll be sleeping. I started out the year in a calmer way, and they were just dead." I said: "You must be tired at the end of a day." Batya answered: "No, that's the way I teach. That's the way I taught in Israel too. The students get it in their morning class too... a lot of group work, competition, movement. The parents told me the kids come home happy."

The Use of Games in the Lesson

To maintain the energy in the class, Batya frequently incorporated games into the lesson. She told me that Tuesday (which was the day of my visits) was a particularly challenging day to her, as there were no specialty classes, so that she had to keep the class
moving with a lot of variety. (Batya also seemed concerned with providing me with what she perceived as appropriate material for my observation.) Batya invested time into adapting games (often from television shows) to fit the material and she prepared multiple copies of game boards, score-keeping devices, colorful spinning wheels, tokens, and so on. Batya utilized games to teach new material, but more frequently for reviewing material, which she said she preferred to testing. The following are examples:

- For a *chumash* lesson, Batya prepared a Tic-Tac-Toe game to review learned material. Each group of four students received a spinning wheel with Hebrew letters, a sheet with lettered questions on one side and answers on the other side, and a Tic-Tac-Toe board with tokens in two colors. The four students played against each other in two pairs. One would spin the wheel and when it fell on a letter, the other team would ask them the question of that letter, and if they knew the answer, they could put a token on the Tic-Tac-Toe board. Batya told me that she included one question which was new material, not yet taught. She said that the game had three goals: "For the weak students to learn the material, for the strong students to review, and for everyone to learn one new thing." The students played the game with enthusiasm. Some looked up the answers in the *chumash* or peeked at the answer sheet, which Batya said was OK. The noise level in the room was loud and it was difficult to tell how much material was being absorbed, as some students merely read aloud the answer directly from the sheet without clear comprehension. In one group, Hana said: "You should know what the questions mean to ask them." Adam responded: "I don't have to, I can just read them."
- During more than one *chumash* lesson, when Batya wanted the class to guess a particular word in Hebrew, she diverted the lesson to do a quick *Wheel of Fortune* game on the board. The students were very excited and actively called out letters. After they guessed the word, the lesson resumed.

- On several occasions, Batya took out a basketball and used it in a review game. For example, one student had to say a Hebrew word in singular, and then pass the ball to another student who had to say the word in plural. Batya instructed the class to pass the ball to students who were sitting nicely. The students were very eager to get the ball, but were slow at thinking up words. After a few minutes, Batya changed the task to finding words and their opposites. Another time, Batya took out the basketball during a *chumash* lesson and threw it to a student and then asked him a question.

- One day, Batya asked the class: "Who knows the game from TV, *Acting Crazy*?" Most of the students recognized the game. She divided the class into two groups and named the groups 'winter' and 'summer' (in Hebrew). Batya explained that each team would receive a sentence in Hebrew and a member of the team would act out the sentence and the other team had to guess and say it in Hebrew. During the game, accusations were made that Yaakov was cheating by looking at the sentence. Batya gave voluntary homework at the end to think of more sentences for the game and told them that in the future they would be timed and would play for points. The next week they played the same game, timing how long it took each team to guess. The students were very competitive, enthusiastic, and anxious to guess quickly.
- As Batya was completing one topic and going into another, she sometimes used games, for example playing a quick game of *Simon Says* in Hebrew. It was used as a transition into the next lesson as her final instruction was: "Simon says: listen to the teacher."

- During one class, Batya played three different games in a row. The first was *Simon Says*. This game moved quickly when Batya was "Simon," but when students took turns at being "Simon," it moved very slowly and there was slack time between instructions. After about ten minutes, Batya started another game, in which she would speak and when she made a grammatical error, students had to stand up and correct her. A few minutes later, Batya divided the class into two teams. Batya said a word and gave each team the opportunity to say its opposite. Then the teams thought of words to give each other, with Batya's suggestions (for example, words with certain letters). The students were somewhat wild and it was difficult for Batya to get them settled and keep them quiet. She gave out points and students were quick to jump and say, "That's not fair."

- The one time that I visited the class in the morning they played a lengthy game of *Jeopardy*, with questions and answers about a story which they had read in their Hebrew book. The students set themselves up noisily into four groups of four desks. Batya assigned a color name to each group, and these names were written on the board above a corresponding colored piece of construction paper. Batya reviewed the denominations of play money in Hebrew. They were asked to have their Hebrew reader on their desks. Batya asked each group to select a leader and a banker. The Red team took several minutes to choose their group leader, finally deciding to do it by picking numbers. Tali was upset that
she was not chosen to be the leader and Daniel said that she was crying. Batya praised the group to the class that they found a way to solve their problems by picking numbers (although in truth they did not actually succeed in picking a leader). In the Yellow team, no one wanted to be the banker, so Batya suggested that the money could stay in the middle. The Green team also could not decide who should be the banker, but the two boys felt that it had to be a boy since the team leader was a girl. It took fifteen minutes to complete the setting-up phase before the game could begin. Batya gave points for the two teams who assigned the two roles with greater ease. Batya told everyone to look at the clock, and gave them four minutes to compose answers to questions about the story and to write them down on special strips of paper. Batya gave out points for groups who worked well together. The Blue team went up first and showed their answer. The other teams had to write the question and then decide how much money they were willing to risk on that question. They played for about half an hour. The questions were superficial and only a few went into the story in some depth. At the end, the teams counted their money, but Batya did not announce or record the amounts. Batya encouraged the students to watch Jeopardy on television and said that later in the year they would play it with different themes.

- During one class, during the week of Chanukah, they played five different games. Each one was used as a different medium for learning and reviewing aspects of the holiday. One game involved spinning dreidels (tops) and teams asking each other questions about Chanukah. The next involved putting flash cards in the proper order on the blackboard. The most elaborate was a Memory Game, in which there was a poster hung on the board, with
pockets. On each pocket was a Hebrew letter and inside each pocket was a card with a Chanukah question or answer or part of a phrase. Each pocket had a match on the board and students took turns going up, taking cards, and trying to remember where the match was so they could make pairs. The game moved quickly and was challenging, and it reviewed the terms over and over. Batya was an enthusiastic facilitator who kept the game moving.

The recurrent use of games in Batya’s class was intended by her to be a fun way of reviewing material and a vehicle for different levels of students to find their niche, and a constructive way to encourage the students to work together. Batya offered little guidance to the class in terms of how to work well together, group composition was changed frequently, and there was little apparent bonding in the teams. In play, the students frequently looked to blame one another, rather than to give the benefit of the doubt. Batya told me that in her opinion: "All of this is an investment and the rest of the year will be fun." She pointed out that students who were generally quiet in the traditional class setting could be valuable assets to their team in a game, and thereby be more appreciated by their peers. In her words: "I want them eventually to pick their own teams, and for it to be hard to decide, because so many will be strong."

**The Nature of Learning in Batya’s Class**

The frequent use of games affected both the way the material was taught and the general atmosphere in the class. The games did not lend themselves to more than superficial interaction between Batya and her students. For material to be taught (or even reviewed) by
way of a fast-paced game necessarily meant that it was material which could be reduced to short answers, which taught the students to think in quick spurts of information. For example, in the *chumash* lessons which I observed, Batya taught the text at the basic level of understanding plot and characters, with little analysis of intentions, motives, or feelings, as in the following excerpt from a lesson:

Batya asked: "What did God establish with Abraham? . . . A *brit* . . . In one word . . . a promise. What did God promise? What are we to Abraham? His children." Yosefa said: "Because we are Jewish." Batya turned to different students and asked: "Are you his children? Who isn't one of Abraham's children? Non-Jews are not." This was a lesson which potentially linked their small group of children to the larger Jewish world, and linked the present to the past, but these points were not elaborated upon during this lesson.

A contrast to this was in some individual assignments which were more open-ended and allowed for greater individual thought and input. For example, an assignment to draw a picture based upon "What does God show Abraham when He says 'whatever you see is yours'?" Another assignment was to write about a favorite season, and later read the composition to the class.

**Discipline and Order**

The frequent use of games in Batya’s class allowed an atmosphere in which there was a great deal of movement, talking, and calling out. Although that was usually acceptable during the game itself, it was not acceptable to Batya at other times, and perhaps it was
difficult for the students to make the transition from one mood to another. The set-up of the desks was changed several times during the semester, from groups of four, to pairs, and then to lines. In all models, space was cramped, and the students were close to one another which was conducive to talking. Batya employed different methods to maintain order, for example, turning out the lights, clapping in rhythm, erasing checks from the Shaar Hakavod, and sometimes shushing. She did not allow students to come up to her desk, to speak without raising hands, or to speak when someone else was speaking. Batya reprimanded students for having messy notebooks and for speaking in English. At times, the class was fast-paced and students had to be on their toes, and at other times, routine matters would be conducted slowly and create an atmosphere conducive to talking and disturbing, which Batya would attempt to turn around with a reprimanding tone.

Batya's Approach to Individual Students.

Batya commented on her approach to individualizing of work:

. . . if I give work and I see that a certain child is having difficulty, I say if you don't want to do a certain question, skip it, don't do it, do what you'd like to do . . . then I show that maybe he did understand it, but just didn't know a word or two . . . I want to give them first of all the self confidence—don't say you don't know, try. You tried and didn't get it, it's not terrible, go on—I'm here and we'll go forward . . . Whenever I see that the climax of a lesson is starting to go down, I try to wake up the good ones, so they'll stand out.

In informal conversation, Batya repeatedly made use of distinguishing labels (strong, weak, good) in discussing the students, and in her interview she said:
I see each child as an individual. Each child is a person in his own right . . . I try to integrate every child so that he feels good about himself and good in the group . . . (then) it will also be good for him with me . . . I start with them at the beginning of the year as if they are all on the same level. Then when I see that a certain child has difficulties, I look for his strength—could be in singing, making the class laugh . . . in recess in how they play. But all are the same to me. There's not one who's smart or stupid . . . I encourage them, I talk to them after class: 'today, you were great'—even if they weren't one hundred per cent, but went a few steps forward.

There was one noteworthy example of the students' helping one another in the class. When they were doing individual work, several students completed their work and Batya said that whoever was finished could help other students who needed help. Five students went around and offered help to five other students. In Batya's words:

What's happening . . . is that kids who are average are trying to achieve the level of the good ones, and are trying to finish the work quickly and are jumping beside the good ones to help the others. And they help the others . . . And the ones in the middle are striving to be like the good ones. And it's very nice.

Batya had an Honor Roll (Hebrew, Shaar Hakavod) on the board each day, with every student's name listed. Whenever a student did something that he or she was asked to do (giving in homework, sitting quietly), he or she would receive a check on the board. Most of the time, everyone received the same number of checks, underscoring uniformity, rather than individualism. When asked about this, Batya responded:

For me . . . everyone is equal in the first term. Everyone has the chance to reach the top . . . later it will be that to get into the Shaar Hakavod, you really have to try, it won't just happen easily . . . Next term, I'll also use the Shaar Hakavod, for example, at the end of the day for students who really tried hard and showed a desire to learn . . . I'll emphasize that to get into Shaar Hakavod is an honor, and to get an honor, you have to try hard.
Students' Interactions with One Another

It was important to Batya for the students to get along with one another, and for them to "feel good at school." The students' interactions, in and out of the classroom, were relevant to her, and Batya said that she especially watched them at recess, because in her mind, "Recess is everything."

In her interview, Batya said:

I teach them the expression Derech Eretz Kadma LaTorah (respect precedes the study of Torah), and that this respect is to friends, teachers, parents, to all people. If you respect your friend he will you in return . . . I always give them the feeling: I respect you as a student and it doesn't matter that you're younger than I am. You are a person, God created us equal . . . And if you want me to respect you, you should also respect me . . . when someone is talking, put your hand down, because it makes the one that's talking feel pressured . . . I talk about honoring parents . . . Then we get to the idea of respecting people—if they're of a different color, more religious than you—it doesn't matter.

One day, Aliza started to talk about what Daniel did at recess, and Batya interrupted her to say that we do not talk about someone who is not in the room. Aliza and others wanted to talk, but Batya was firm and said that she was willing to talk about it in class, but only if Daniel was there. Batya gave the message that the topic was appropriate, but within guidelines.

Batya’s Interactions with Students

Batya was friendly and approachable, with a clear stance of teacher to student. Batya did not have a regular sicha in her class. She told me that on Mondays they would speak about their weekends, but that otherwise there was no time. When students mentioned their
various extra-curricular activities (for example, as a rationale for not doing homework) Batya did not usually use the opportunity to ask them to elaborate on their activities. The following are examples of Batya's interactions with students:

- On three different occasions, students told Batya that they lost teeth, and she gave them an enthusiastic congratulations.

- When Aliza told Batya that she did not feel well, Batya said: "Eat, drink, and get some air." When Gidon's head hurt, Batya sent him to wash his face and get a drink. When he came back and still did not feel well, Batya opened the window and had him stand there to breathe the fresh air.

- When Haim brought in postcards of Spain, Batya was very enthusiastic, and took a minute to look at the postcards, and showed some to the class.

- Yosefa said: "I'm leading the Ashrei (a prayer) at my sister's Bat Mitzvah." Batya responded: "That's great, when we do tefilla, I'll give you a chance. Where is your sister?" Yosefa said: "In Grade Five." Adam said: "So is mine."

Batya looked out for her students as individuals with regard to work. When they were doing individual work, Batya would walk around and offer encouragement to students. There were two students in the class, Daniel and Mihal, to whom Batya directed extra attention. She mentioned them to me several times and the fact that in both cases, they had difficult family situations, and that she wanted them to grow, gain confidence, and succeed in her classroom. Batya directed more disciplinary attention to Daniel, and Mihal was encouraged to participate and express herself in class, and was called upon whenever she
raised her hand. Batya told me that each year she found a particular student who was her personal challenge, and reminisced about how she was teased as a child for being a redhead and would never forget the experience, as well as the teachers who did not come to her aid.

One day, Batya said to the class:

Do you know, even I learn from you. When you say things I didn't think of . . . A teacher can learn from students—or you can correct my mistakes on the board . . . if you tell me I did something wrong, I'm not sad, because I'm human and make mistakes. I say thank you. So, I don't want you to be afraid to say answers. If it's wrong, so what? That's OK—take the risk.

Then when Yaakov went to the board, Batya said to him: "Don't be afraid, in our class, we're not afraid." The students were noisy, buzzing with conversation. Batya said: "Don't disturb him." Yaakov wrote on the board and made a mistake. Batya said: "What do we say if someone makes a mistake? We say shalom and we correct it."

On another occasion, students were reading their stories aloud to the class and Batya called on Talia to read. Talia did not want to read and went up to speak quietly to Batya. Batya offered to read and correct it and asked if then Talia would read it to the class. Talia agreed and Batya said: "Very nice."

One day Yaakov refused to do his work. Batya said: "You can't sit anymore, can you?" She told him to stand up and jump high five times, which he did. Batya went on: "Sit down now, your brain has a lot in it, because you jumped so high and shook things up. Now you should be able to work."
Batya’s Grade Three was conducted on a high energy level, with frequent use of the medium of interactive games. Perhaps as a result of the freer atmosphere of the games, discipline and order were loosely maintained in this class. Individual progress and self-esteem of students were priorities to Batya.
Conclusion

The picture that has just been portrayed is of a relatively new and small school campus, buffeted by an established parent school. SSDS develops community by being strong in purpose and tradition, as evidenced by its various published statements of philosophy and behavioral standards, and by its articulate and ideological leaders. Dr. Waldman states that an important goal is for students “to remember the exciting experiences of Jewish living.” The school is committed to representing the values of Canada and of Judaism, including civic responsibility, morality, and observance of ritual. The daily chanting of the two national anthems underscores the dual loyalty of Canadian Jews to their two cultures. The link to Israel is strongly modeled by native Israeli teachers who make the Jewish homeland alive and tangible, underscoring that what happens in Israel affects all Jews. The consistent use of Hebrew reinforces the school’s link to Jewish tradition and to Israel, and creates a unique and common bond among students. Religious leaders and teachers are endowed with authority and parents are asked to be partners in the school’s endeavor to create a microcosmic Conservative Jewish community within contemporary society.

Several ways in which individualism is expressed, include the high level of diversity displayed in the reported religious observance of the student population and in the varied level of teacher involvement in promoting religious commitment. Additionally, teachers view themselves as educators in the broadest sense, with potential for tremendous personal influence upon their individual students. There is much latitude and autonomy offered to teachers with regard to classroom methods and curricular innovation, and collegial collaboration is supported but not mandated by the school administration.
Classes are heterogeneous by design, students are rewarded for effort, and a mechanism is in place to help those with special academic need. In most cases, process seems to outweigh product. Unusual talent is not manifested in terms of specialized learning tracks. On the school level, excellence is not publicly recognized, although the principal says that it is privately recognized. At the Grade Two chumash ceremony, gifts are distributed to every student, which reflect love of learning Torah rather than individual achievement.

Community in the school is visible through Jewish holidays and special school events, which are emphasized in classroom learning and celebrated collectively, with infrequent parent integration. There are few examples of school spirit; there are no athletic teams or extra-curricular projects in the arts. Grade-wide celebrations, such as the Grade Two chumash celebration, are utilized as opportunities to reinforce satisfaction in learning, as well as pride in accomplishment and presentation, sharing that pride with parents and school leaders. The Parents’ Meeting and commemorations of the Director of Education’s retirement serve as opportunities for inspiring school loyalty and commitment among the families of the students, as well as a link to the larger Jewish community.

Each of the four teachers in the study develops individualism and community in her classroom in different ways and to varying extents.

In Sara’s Grade Five, primarily through the medium of cooperative learning, opportunities are consistently made available for students at every level to take an active role in the learning process. Thus, two relevant elements of individualism are expressed; that of the importance of each individual, regardless of specific aptitude, and that of the personal responsibility which an individual must assume in order to contribute to the success of his or her group. This value of individualism overlaps with the value of community, in which
group membership inspires loyalty and constructive effort toward the betterment of the collective. Sara emphasizes repeatedly that each member of the sub-groups is important and that strong students will assume leadership roles while weaker students will contribute without feeling the pressure to complete the tasks on their own. Sara does not take advantage of opportunities to teach the students how to work out differences and how to work with people of differing skills, levels, and habits; instead she seems to play down and to try and smooth out differences. An important value in community functioning is living with heterogeneity. In “real life,” individuals are faced with moral dilemmas of conflicting loyalties, for example to peers and to an authority figure. Sara is offended by students who place authority before peer loyalty, but does not explore the moral dilemma with her students. Sara states that she wants the students to feel and appreciate the value of “Every Jew is responsible for the other.” She models empathy and concern for her students, and there are indications that her students assume similar behaviors in showing concern for one another. As a class and grade community, the Grade Five is unique in having only one class in the grade, and students express pride in being the oldest grade in the school.

In Sara’s Grade Two, there is again the sense of the importance and dignity of each individual child, regardless of academic level or pace of work. Sara emphasizes and models respect and concern, implying that correct answers are secondary to respect for one’s fellow classmate. (“We never laugh at friends—you’re allowed to make mistakes.”) Sara is particularly sensitive to the feelings of the students requiring remedial assistance. Groups are utilized for work and projects, in order to provide a vehicle for the weaker child to be creative. Groups used for administrative purposes emphasize the responsibility of the individual to the collective (for example, no dismissal of the group unless every member is
quiet and ready). Sara develops a sense of community on the class level through the *chumash* ceremony, and particularly through the collective preparation of the scenery for the ceremony. There is a true sense of accomplishment achieved through joint effort and cooperation. Through holiday projects, such as New Year’s cards, Sara creates a link between school and family, and to the larger Jewish community.

In Devora’s Grade Two, there is a high level of class community, developed largely through consistent, shared expectations of behavior. It is noted repeatedly that Devora’s class is distinct from other classes in the school, who display less concern for order. In Devora’s words, “Without discipline, there is no learning.” Devora not only manages to achieve closed boundaries in setting her class off from the rest of the school, but she also engenders pride in her students. One of the students called out spontaneously “We’re the best class in the world!”, in response to a comment by Devora regarding noisy students in the hall. Devora’s high level of discipline does not strike one as a moral code of behavior, as much as a functional one. Even in prayer, Devora is strict on standards, seemingly more for the sake of order than religion. There is some emphasis on individualism in Devora’s class; individual students are praised and encouraged, usually for doing things according to Devora’s particular specification. Devora states that, “First of all I’m a mother, then a teacher.” In that vein, she exhibits sensitivity to individual students as people deserving of respect and attention (for example, the boy with a sick grandfather, the boy with a new baby at home). In the academic sphere, Devora encourages thinking and creativity, especially in art projects.

In Nava’s Grade Three, both individualism and community are developed to a great extent. Nava herself serves as a personal model of caring and respect for every individual
student. She strives for each to feel that he or she can express opinions and creates an atmosphere in which all views are legitimate. Nava encourages students to express their talent, while being careful not to allow weaker or more insecure students to be ridiculed. In study, Nava pushes her students to think and question. The distinctive feature that transforms all of this caring for individuals into a class community is that Nava does not merely develop relationships between herself and her students. She is deliberate in working at creating bonds between members of the class, including herself as a central figure, but emphasizing that students should listen to one another and look out for each other. There are many moral lessons naturally imbedded in Nava’s course of study, and she states that it is a priority for her to impart both Jewish and universal values. Nava teaches about visiting the sick and welcoming guests, applying these to both Biblical and everyday situations. She encourages empathy for Biblical characters, making the stories come alive and have contemporary relevance. In her discussion on characteristics, Nava discourages stereotyping and encourages the students to think about what makes people behave as they do. In her dramatic representation of the Biblical promise to the Jewish nation to multiply as the sand and the stars, she creates a memorable link to history and tradition.

In Batya’s Grade Three, the structure of learning is largely focused upon finding ways for individual students to accomplish. A primary goal of Batya’s is for every student to feel good about him or herself. She encourages students to take risks and not to worry about making mistakes in front of others. Batya says that each year she adopts certain students as her “personal challenge,” and strives for them to grow and gain confidence. According to Batya, her frequent use of games is not solely for the high energy level which they produce, but also for students who are not usually considered strong to have an opportunity to
contribute and thus to be seen by others in a different light. Batya's frequent use of small
groups for games does not, however, develop a high level of class (or sub-class) community.
Groups are changed frequently, thereby not allowing for much bonding at the group level.
As students play the games, there is obvious difficulty with problem-solving and group
functioning. Students accuse each other of cheating and modify rules on their own. Batya
does not use these opportunities to reinforce moral lessons to guide their interactions. Batya
does take advantage of the sale of poppies on Canadian Remembrance Day to underscore the
value of charity.

Clearly, teachers think of a great many other things besides individualism and
community. It should be evident from the account that different people will have different
interpretations of the quality and probable effectiveness of these four teachers, qualities that
are not necessarily closely related to either the emphasis of community or that of
individualism. In the case of community, one may argue that it should not be thought about
or calculated. It either develops naturally because it is felt or it does not. Whatever the
reasons, certain kinds of individualism receive stronger expression than does community.
These issues will be further discussed in Chapter Six, where the overlap and conflict caused
by these two important competing values will be analyzed.
CHAPTER SIX
SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary of the Study

This study set out to explore the development of individualism and community in one campus of a Conservative Jewish day school in metropolitan Toronto. Five elementary Jewish studies classes of four native Israeli teachers were observed over the course of fifteen weeks of a fall semester.

A review of the related literature offers the following elements in an understanding of the terms individualism and community.

Individualism refers to the dignity and uniqueness of each person, rendering him or her worthy of respect, capable of independence, and entitled to autonomy and the free pursuit of his or her own will and talent. Individualism suggests that personal advancement is a priority and therefore competition is both possible and healthy in order to allow each individual to achieve to his or her maximum potential. In a society where individualism flourishes, there will necessarily be pluralism and diversity, and an accompanying tolerance for the proliferation of others’ free will and desire for advancement. External authorities (including God and government) are considered secondary to the will of the individual and therefore traditional moral absolutes retreat in favor of relative, dynamic, individual measures of right and wrong. North American culture has put democracy, freedom, progress, and creativity—all products of individualism—at the center of its ideals. Its institutions of education have to a great extent embraced these ideals, translating them into basic purposes of schooling, such as: the right of each student to develop according to his or her own
interests and talents, accorded to the individual child because of his or her inherent uniqueness; encouraging competition and the striving of each to his or her own potential; and the primacy of the individual over the collective. Teachers in schools which are committed to promoting individualism create a learning environment which will facilitate each child's process of self-development, and is responsive to the needs and learning style of each student. In Judaism, individualism is expressed through the value placed on each Jewish soul and the accepted premise of free will. In Conservative Judaism, change and pluralism are central concepts (as displayed, for example, in high levels of assimilation and egalitarianism) which may be linked to individualism.

Community refers to the social grouping of people based on shared history and common traditions, which bind them through time and beyond geographical limitations. Members of a community are bound to one another through the collective acceptance of external authorities, human or divine, who dictate absolute truths, adhered to by the community. Membership in a community is not random. It involves acceptance—by choice or heredity—of specific standards, norms, and lifestyle. In a genuine community, there are fixed values and demarcated social roles. Members are interdependent, concerned for the welfare of others, and are loyal to the community. The industrialization and modernization of North America in the last century has contributed to the breakdown of traditional community, as families have split and spread apart, and self-interest and self-fulfillment have become dominant cultural values. Education in North America, although highly influenced by individualism, has maintained strands of community in some of the stated purposes of schooling. These include: transmission of culture, history, and tradition; moral development, and discipline based on external authorities; loyalty; social roles; responsibility; and service
to others. In Judaism, the values of community are very evident as it is a religion of closed boundaries, whose adherents believe themselves to be "chosen" by God. In Judaism, "Two are better than one," ritual and prayer are frequently collective, and, "Every Jew is responsible one for the other." The tensions of the modern movement of Conservative Judaism reflect the challenges of sustaining commitment to tradition and the absolute values of a prescribed lifestyle, in the face of the many alternatives which modernity has offered.

The study takes place in a private religious school which is an appropriate venue for exploring both individualism and community, because of the following elements: a relatively small, homogeneous, and self-selected population; a clear articulation of philosophy and policy; a commitment to the development of the individual child; an emphasis on school spirit and loyalty; the transmission of religious values; an incorporation of custom and ritual; a selection of leaders and teachers who will model the values of the religious school; and a partnership with home and family. These ideal features, which exist to greater or lesser extents in different schools, lend themselves to the development of individualism and community.

Some of the specific areas which are explored in the study as possible "addresses" for individualism and community at this particular school are: school structure and purpose; integration of Jewish concepts and practice; religious diversity; Hebrew, Israel and Israeli teachers; special events; cooperative work; independent work; discipline and rules; standards of success and achievement; relationship of teachers to students; encouragement of respect and concern; encouragement of creativity and thinking; interaction of students with one another; teacher autonomy; teacher collaboration; school loyalty and school spirit.
The research has generated several questions regarding the existence, integration, and conflict of individualism and community in the school, and the implications for Jewish schools, Conservative Judaism, education, and contemporary western society. These issues were explored to some extent throughout the body of the thesis and will be more fully analyzed in this chapter.

Limitations of the Study

The study sets out to explore two very broad value concepts within a very specific scope. An attempt is made to define the terms *individualism* and *community* and to establish their relevance to western culture, education, and religion. One specific Jewish school is utilized to derive insights about individualism and community in order to generate larger implications, or at least questions, for future research. There are several limitations implicit in the design and focus of this study, including the following.

The selection of one single campus of one school which represents one particular movement of Judaism is a basic limitation of the research. Any conclusions which are to be drawn for "private schools" or "religious schools," "Jewish day schools," or even "Conservative Jewish day schools," must be done with the awareness that findings of this research may be contextual, even idiosyncratic, to this one particular school. In the same vein, the study of an elementary school may lend itself to findings which are primarily factors of age and not of the larger themes of the research. More specifically, the entrance of the observer to each classroom on the same day each week may have limited the scope of observations to those which were related to schedule or subject matter.
Similarly, a study of four teachers is not a representative sample of "all Jewish studies teachers in Jewish day schools" or "all native Israeli teachers." A larger sample of teachers, either with greater homogeneity or heterogeneity of background and characteristics might yield more reliable data about teachers' development of individualism and community. (On the other hand, for a "thicker" case study, the number of teachers could be limited to only one or two.) In terms of exploring the specific cultural distinctiveness of Israeli teachers, a larger sample of teachers would be essential, with more attention paid to commonalities and differences with regard to upbringing, teacher training, and teaching experience in both Israel and North America. And if comparisons of native Israeli and North American teachers with regard to transmission of specific values were deemed relevant, the sample would have to be sufficiently broad and representative.

The original intention of the researcher was to broaden the study of the school to include parents and students, as well as teachers and administrators. Students were included to a limited extent, through the Grade Five questionnaire. However, more student interviewing might have provided additional relevant insights. The inclusion of parents was discontinued partially due to a lack of confidence in the relevance to the study and partially because the campus principal implied that she had reservations about involving parents. Again, the insights of parents (and more background information on the status of families, their religious observance and attitudes) might have added depth and breadth to the study.

In terms of future implications—even for this one school—it is interesting to note that in a sense the school year 1993-94 was the "end of an era" for this SSDS. With the retirement of the founding Director of Education, who had been the single, consistent educational leader of the school for over thirty years, it is likely that some of the direction of
the school would be changing and perhaps in terms of identity this was a year of flux, as teachers and administrators waited unconsciously for what new leadership would bring.

Perhaps the most significant limitation to this research is the selection in advance of the primary constructs to be observed, and the (forced) demarcation of the various areas of educational practice into either individualism or community. Thus, the spectacles of the observer were always constrained by the twin frames of individualism and community, and perhaps other more relevant values were missed or masked by these external constructs.

There is inherent danger in this design; in attributing everything observed to either individualism or community, or conversely, to focusing on the lack of overt references to individualism or community, and missing other relevant values or issues of educational practice.

The Nature of Individualism in the School

Individualism is found at various levels of SSDS. In terms of the categories outlined in Chapter One, the following are some expressions of individualism. There is a high level of concern for the self-esteem and well-being of individual students which emanates from the administrators and through the teachers. Several students in Grade Five respond that "respect" and "compromise" are the most important rules in their class and school (see Appendix B). Students are considered to be worthwhile as individuals, with dignity, and deserving of respect. Personal problems are dealt with openly and with concern (as in the cases of the girl who lost her pencil, the boy whose mother had a new baby, the girl who left her gym outfit at home, the boy with the sick grandfather, students who do not feel well, and so on). Teachers have insights into individual students and make it a priority to respond to
the more introverted and to work constructively with the more challenging disciplinary cases. The *sicha* is occasionally used to draw out students, as are basic routines like attendance. Sara and Devora especially look out for the Israeli students in their classes. While all of the teachers stress the value of consideration for others and not embarrassing a fellow classmate, the most overt example of concern for the individual is in Nava’s class, where she exhibits and articulates that this is a fundamental priority to her, above rules or academic achievement.

In academic structures, special needs are cared for through remedial lessons, and teachers employ differentiated pacing and to some extent different assignments. In most cases, assignments are uniform, and are not based on different student learning styles and capacities. There is some allowance for levels and some leeway for creativity or originality. Students are encouraged to think, question, and express opinions, specifically in Nava’s and Sara’s classes, where the material is taken advantage of to derive larger lessons. There are allowances made for digression and spontaneity in all classes, and the high priority of speaking in Hebrew encourages flexibility, since conversation in Hebrew is important, even if it involves a significant digression from subject matter. (This is less the case in Sara’s Grade Five, where covering material is more important to the teacher than spontaneous conversation.) It must also be considered, however, that genuine individual expression may be limited by the use of Hebrew, if students who are uncomfortable in this second language do not express their true feelings, or at least not at their actual developmental level.

It is interesting to note that Sara and Batya, who most frequently utilize collaborative learning structures (commonly thought of a vehicles for group-building), say that a main
priority of group work is to provide opportunities for weak students to shine and for leaders to emerge, in other words, to foster individualism.

Students do not appear to be embarrassed by lower achievement, as teachers reinforce effort and achievement at every level, and offer encouraging feedback to individual students. There is little competition found in the classrooms; there are no auditions for roles or points given for success. There are few obvious “stars” in the classes, with the exception of Nava’s class and Sara’s Grade Five to an extent. There are no visible extra-curricular teams or clubs. In fact, competition appears to be downplayed (as in the examples of Batya’s Honor Roll, where every student ultimately receives the same number of checks, Sara’s dismissal of grades as irrelevant to success, and Dr. Waldman’s insistence that individuals will not be showcased in class ceremonies or rewarded at graduation). It seems that the school expects and hopes that rewards will be intrinsic, rather than extrinsic.

There is little evidence of student involvement in decision-making, even on the classroom level. There is little evidence of self-monitoring or self-evaluation. There is little opportunity for students to have autonomy and independence. Expressions of independence include the structure of rules in Nava’s class and in Sara’s Grade Five, and are attempted in Sara’s Grade Two. Both of these teachers try to encourage students to use their judgment, for example, regarding leaving the class during a lesson. There are few opportunities for students to assume personal responsibility.

The only individual to be singled out is Dr. Waldman, because of his retirement. The honoring of Dr. Waldman at the community dinner and the student assembly is an example of how one individual role model can serve to inspire others. This honoring not only showed
respect to a leader (also a value of community), but served as a boost for everyone involved with the school of its success and a model to both students and educators to strive for.

Teachers enjoy a great deal of autonomy in curriculum development, classroom methodology, and choice of materials. Within an established framework of study, teachers have the flexibility to prioritize. Teacher collaboration is recommended, but not mandated, so that teachers who prefer greater independence are accommodated. Individual teachers are observed and evaluated privately; there are no public indicators of teacher achievement which were observed. (However, at another campus of SSDS, a plaque is posted with names of teachers with longevity of teaching in the school.)

Judaism is offered in a very accessible manner to students, no matter what their background. Individual students of all ages take turns at leading prayer services. Judaism is imparted by teachers as a religion with concern for the individual (as in prayer for the sick and welcoming of guests). Diversity in individual practice is not discouraged; teachers seem to want their students to "feel good" about being Jewish. Judaism is presented as pleasant and worthwhile, yet optional, with no repercussions for going against tradition (it is acceptable to talk about violating shabbat and kashrut and going out for Halloween). Dr. Waldman and Ms. Miller speak of wanting to appeal to the emotional aspect of religion, which implies a very subjective understanding of religious expression. In practice, this presents somewhat of a conflict when carried out by teachers who are not personally religious and are more academic in their approach to Judaism than spiritual (as evidenced, for example, by daily prayer services which are at best a strong vehicle for practicing Hebrew and gaining familiarity with the prayers). Most expressions of Judaism are communal, with little discussion on the obligation of the individual. This may be linked to the fact that with
students under the age of Bar or Bat Mitzvah (age 12 for girls, 13 for boys) actual commandment in Judaism for them to assume any obligations.

The Nature of Community in the School

Community is developed throughout the halls and classrooms of SSDS to greater or lesser extents, in relation to the categories outlined in Chapter Two. In the mission statements, it is clear that the primary goals of SSDS are to socialize students within a very specific framework, that is, the link to Judaism, Israel, and Canada. This is not a school dedicated to each individual to "find himself" in a vacuum, but rather to place him or herself on a historical line, linked to the heritage of the past and in preparation for assuming responsibility in the future. The school was created in partnership with local synagogues and continues to seek partnership with the student families (as evidenced by the various written statements and the words spoken by school leaders at the Parents' Meeting), in order to achieve its ideals of shared values and commitment to a Conservative Jewish lifestyle, which necessarily requires more than the six hours of the school day. In her interview, Ms. Miller suggests that she views it as a priority to involve student families in education and ritual celebration and not to accept that "our influence ends at the front and back doors of the school." The principal and two of the teachers send their own children to SSDS, suggesting a genuine partnership of commitment and ideals.

One indicator of community is the transmission of moral values, that is, an absolute message of what is right and wrong, acceptable and unacceptable, for example, with regard to interpersonal relationships. The teachers of SSDS provide students with guidelines as to how to treat other people, how to respond to sickness, guests, and peers who are different.
Teachers discourage behavior which would embarrass others, and praise helpfulness, cleanliness, diligence, attention to authority, loyalty, respect, compromise, listening to others, and empathy. There is little evidence of social service or collective unity for common moral causes.

There is a sense of authority in the school and its leaders which is evidenced through policy statements, as well as in the procedural management of each classroom. Along a continuum of intensity, each teacher establishes a structure of behavior which is generally accepted by students. In Nava's class, order is based on loyalty to the teacher, and in Batya's class it is tenuously linked to the maintenance of a high energy level. Devora's Grade Two is the clearest example of a class whose structure and identity are linked to discipline, which also provides class solidarity and good spirit. Appropriate behavior is reinforced verbally by teachers (with no other obvious rewards) and sanctions are employed (for example, missing recess) for breaking rules. Students are not involved in establishing codes of conduct or structures of consequences. Students do take roles in maintaining order, such as the daily monitors who have a variety of jobs, for example, taking the attendance roster to the office, picking up coats in the halls, or leading services.

There is no evidence of teams or extra-curricular activities which might inspire membership and loyalty (again, this may be related to the age of the students). When questioned (see Appendix B), Grade Five students express loyalty to their class and to the school. Student interaction is promoted to some extent in each class, through cooperative work, group projects, and students enlisted to help their peers. There are few indications of loyalty to classmates or the class. The Grade Two chumash ceremonies succeed in developing class pride, achieved through hard work, and share that success with parents and
the rest of the school. Devora builds a sense of class pride through achievement of discipline (but not loyalty to one another) and Nava’s students express loyalty to the teacher. Batya’s primary teaching vehicle employs groups, imposing cooperation as a model of functioning. The Chanuka assembly, celebrating the Jewish festival and honoring the retiring Dr. Waldman, inspired joy in Jewish expression, pride in the school, and loyalty to its leader.

The commitment to Judaism and loyalty to Israel and to other Jews is evident in the formal curriculum and the informal lessons of the teachers. Loyalty to Canada is less evident, other than in the daily singing of the national anthem and the isolated reference to Memorial Day. This task was probably taken up more actively in the General studies classes, as evidenced by the amount of classroom decorations in English related to Canadian culture and geography, and to some extent by the observations in General studies classes.

The school succeeds at many levels at making the traditions of Judaism appealing and relevant to students. Learning about Judaism is approached in a very positive, upbeat fashion. Holidays are festive, Fridays leading into Shabbat are special, assemblies for the new month mark a passage of time that is ordinarily ignored in the contemporary, urban routine. The relationship of the diaspora Jew to Israel is developed actively through the role modeling and personal interaction of Israeli teachers, who present Israel as a positive and personal legacy for every Jew. Hebrew, as the national and sacred language of Jews, is incorporated in a natural and relatively un-burdensome fashion. Daily prayer is a regular part of the routine, albeit under-utilized as a medium for religious, spiritual expression (something which may just be impossible to achieve in an academic setting).
The co-existence of individualism and community in SSDS is generally a harmonious one. However, in certain areas the relationship is one of tension rather than even balance. The following section explores several of those conflicts.

Conflicts of Individualism and Community

Teacher Practice and Values

The teachers in SSDS are granted some latitude with regard to practice and prioritization in the classroom. Yet the school purpose and values are quite specific and uniform. How does the school administration monitor whose values are being transmitted? There is variety with regard to the order of material covered, the focus of the lessons, the importance of rules and structure, the moral lessons incorporated into academics, group work, art work, oral and written expression, and so on. Dr. Waldman comments: "I think the person with any kind of brain must live with ambiguity . . . there's got to be an openness . . . let the teacher teach what they feel like teaching."

Where are the trade-offs of that autonomy? One area is that of teacher collaboration. The principal and at least two of the teachers comment that collaboration is at a low level and that the school suffers from a lack of collegiality on personal and professional levels. One could expect to find strong teacher support over any number of layers, for example grade-wide, English-Hebrew partners, all Hebrew teachers, all English teachers, or even across the entire staff in such a small campus. There are a few examples of strong collegiality within these categories, and the school atmosphere is congenial, but congeniality and good morale are not to be confused with community, based on true loyalty, cooperation, and shared goals.
Another place that teacher autonomy is evident is where there is differing practice and one approach is stronger than another. An example of this is the Bible lessons of the two Grade Three classes. Studying Bible in a school such as SSDS is intended to be a critical means of linkage to tradition and maintaining its relevance. In one class, the Bible and its characters are approached at a deep level with analysis and application. In the other class, names, events, and facts are presented at a superficial level. Because of the school philosophy of teacher autonomy, both classes will not achieve the same goals. This is also seen clearly with regard to tefillah, where it is used as reading practice, time filler, or singing lesson (rarely as spiritual expression), but with little uniformity or intervention. This is also seen with regard to rules from grade to grade and class to class within one grade. The spirit of discipline is consistent throughout the school, but the methods vary, and leave a great deal to teacher discretion.

The school is not a clear example of an autonomous or an authoritarian institution. SSDS seems to be trying to balance both in good faith, but perhaps it is a precarious balance. In practice, autonomy appears to be the more dominant of the two values.

Israeli Teachers

It has been suggested earlier in this thesis that there is an inherent conflict of individualism and community employing as role models native Israelis who left behind the collective struggle of maintaining a Jewish state in favor of the individualistic pursuit of a better life in Canada. Israeli teachers may not be the optimal Jewish role models in a Canadian Conservative day school, as students cannot truly strive to emulate them. They are not representatives of modern, democratic Canada, or of the traditional yet pluralistic
American-born movement of Conservative Judaism. They carry with them their own legacy of the history of modern Israel, whose ideals are held up as a beacon to every Jew around the world, but whose day-to-day struggles and tensions are culturally different and basically foreign to diaspora Jews. However, in practice this conflict does not play itself out in SSDS. The four native Israelis in this study are representative of the larger community of Judaism, where Jews in the diaspora and Israel are linked, by individuals who live around the globe, yet share the values and traditions of Judaism. Their individualism is expressed in why they left Israel, but that does not ever really come into play in the interactions with students.

One question to ask, though is, whose values are the Israeli teachers representing? Those of the school, Israel, Judaism, Canada, their own, or some combination of all of the above? Is Nava so strongly individual-oriented because she received her teacher training in Canada (the only one of the four who did)? Do the teachers allow for so much religious diversity as an expression of their own reaction to the religious-secular dichotomy in Israel, or are they merely reflecting their own understanding of SSDS policy?

Future research on Israeli teachers is certainly relevant to Jewish education in North America. Some of the issues which could be explored include the effects of Israeli teacher training and methodology and the personal value structure of Israeli teachers.

*Loyalty to Judaism and to Canada*

The school's *Statement of Purpose and Philosophy* (Appendix A) states the following:
Canada is an ethnic mosaic, sensitive to the human rights of its individual religious and cultural groups. Each is a piece of the mosaic that together forms the whole pattern of the country. As Canadians, the children at SSDS learn to take their place within that pattern, while maintaining their integrity as Jewish individuals.

The Jewish human being is fully a member of both the Jewish people and modern society. These are not mutually exclusive categories, but rather conditions making for the vitality of Jewish life.

Is it really possible to inculcate both ideologies of Canada and Judaism? Can one be equally loyal to two cultures or is that too overwhelming a challenge or a conflict for young people? Judaism is rooted in history and tradition and derives its authority from God and selected religious leaders and scholars. Canada is a modern state, whose ideals are that of a secular, liberal democracy, and whose leaders are political figures. Is it not those very ideals, individualistic in nature, which offer the greatest challenge to organized religion? Conceivably the most valuable lesson that a school such as SSDS can impart is to help students with the most relevant contemporary question, which is: How can I maintain my identity as Jew while becoming acculturated as a Canadian? It is interesting that the Statement calls for children to "maintain their integrity as Jewish individuals," maybe because it is less likely that they can maintain it as a community while taking their place in the pattern of the Canadian mosaic. In recent times, the communities which have remained most distinctive are those which separate themselves from secular society. In observing SSDS in practice, student families reflect the dominance of Canadian culture in terms of how they spend their recreational time (restaurants, movies, vacations, sports), yet values, holidays, and customs are all expressly Jewish. It might be interesting to explore whether students (and their parents) consider themselves "Jewish Canadians" or "Canadian Jews."
Perhaps, given the challenge of being fully participating members of two cultures, it is individualism which will triumph, as each individual takes the liberty to choose which culture to more actively support. This triumph of individualism, however, will necessarily imply the weakening of community, as the two values have proven themselves in contemporary culture more antithetical than compatible. While individualism claims to represent pluralism and diversity across the spectrum of ideology, it has in practice embraced primarily those ideologies which support individualism itself. In popular, western culture, individual rights, freedom, and secularism have replaced tradition and religion as absolutes, becoming equally—or perhaps even more—persuasive than the authorities which individualism originally proposed to replace.

Religious Life

Dr. Waldman expresses pride in what the school has given to students over the years in terms of “both the emotional baggage of Judaism and the intellectual curiosity of a thinking Jewish person,” yet still has misgivings that “we were raking them in twenty years ago, and now we’re left with non-committed masses.” This concern shared by the two administrators and to some extent by the teachers, is an acknowledgment that the authority and commitment aspects of community have given way to diversity with regard to religious observance. Through SSDS’ statements of policy, the school articulates that authority emanates from the school and religious leadership, and that loyalty to Judaism, to Israel, and to Canada is paramount. However, in practice, there is a great deal of diversity which is tacitly accepted by the school. Students share openly with teachers that they are not religiously observant in their families. Some teachers seem to ignore the spirit of the school
ideology by not participating in Jewish prayer and by not singing the national anthem. School administrators bemoan the lack of consistency in what is taught in the classrooms, modeled by teachers, and observed in the homes. Little is done to close that gap, although Ms. Miller suggests that this is becoming more of a priority of the school, through involving parents in learning and celebration. Can a school create genuine community when, according to student reporting, outside of its walls, the families undermine some of the basic, fundamental principles of religious life upon which the school is based? In the school’s mission statement it reads: “The home is the natural context within which a child’s personality develops and in which one’s basic religious orientation is cast. Ideally, a school will supplement and extend the education a child is receiving at home.” Can young people be expected to make sense of the differences between home and school? If community implies a link to tradition and a maintenance of a lifestyle which reflects history, a disregard for that lifestyle implies a disregard for history and external authority. And when the two important elements of a child’s life—school and home—conflict in such an important area, does a child not feel more confusion than coherent sense of what values are important and what role he or she is to play?

It has been mentioned several times throughout the thesis that an important factor of community is criteria for membership, that there are insiders and outsiders. Perhaps that is a missing feature at SSDS; anybody who is Jewish and financially comfortable can send their child to the school, there are neither academic nor religious requirements for acceptance or for staying in the school, implying loose boundaries. (On the other hand, tighter boundaries would create a lost opportunity to reach out to influencing young Jews.) This is suggested also in the detailed articulation of school policy, dictating even life outside of school. If
every family observed Shabbat and kashrut, would it be necessary to articulate a policy for
birthday parties?

How much of the creation of community comes from teachers and the school and
how much from the students and their families? (In this case, both are influenced by the
progressive contemporary culture and are embraced by the pluralistic Conservative
movement.) Would a more absolutist teacher population be as tolerant of the diversity
within the student population? These teachers do not show signs of being judgmental of
students’ religious background; in fact, they seem quite accepting. This very acceptance
perhaps draws them closer to the students and encourages individualism, yet farther from
school goals. In Devora’s words, many parents send their children “because it’s a private
school and they know they’ll get a good education,” but not necessarily out of religious
conviction or commitment. Nava appears to avoid the issue by relying on the phrase: “Most
Jews do it this way.” Is that a basis for creating community in a school? Still, what are the
alternatives for a non-fundamentalist, private, religious school, whose very principles are
linked to diversity in practice and openness to alternatives within a framework? What then
when the framework is stretched beyond what is tolerable? Who will determine those limits?

Beck (1990) writes:

The paradox of pluralism is that, in order for a society to be pluralistic and yet still
hold together and prosper, its differences must be matched by considerable
commonalities in values, goals, and procedures, most notably, there must be shared
commitment to those very values such as tolerance, kindness, understanding and
dialogue which makes a pluralistic society possible (59).

Religious schools affiliated with non-orthodox movements must consider these issues
carefully in the formation of policy and practice. Future research might look more closely at
the relationship of school and home, and at the long-term costs and benefits of religious pluralism and diversity at the elementary school level.

Conclusion

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?
If I am only for myself, what am I?
And if not now, when?  
(Mishna Avot, 1:14)

These words, written in a more traditional age than our own, reflect the tensions within Judaism, and all of society, of the balance of individualism and community. Anyone who lives in the contemporary western world, who is not a member of an entirely closed community, cannot avoid hearing the attractive call of individualism, impelling the thinking modern to follow his or her own tastes and inclinations and to live according to his or her own values or standards, with whatever level of autonomy he or she chooses. Yet, still there are many who do not heed the call at full volume, who do not want the choice of individualism to imply the loss of shared destiny, commonly held values, collective standards, loyalty, and cooperation. In choosing the means of educating our young, it is rarely the case that leaders of an educational institution will deliberately decide to obliterate either individualism or community, yet it is likely that they will have to decide which will be primary. The two values, individualism and community, can co-exist, but the force of one necessarily pushes the other (however gently) to define itself ever more clearly if it wants genuine expression.
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Appendix A

Statement of Purpose and Philosophy

SSDS is a member of the Solomon Schechter Day School Association, an educational arm of the Conservative Movement in Judaism. Our philosophy reflects the approach to Jewish tradition and the outlook on contemporary Jewish life maintained by the Conservative Movement.

Canada is an ethnic mosaic, sensitive to the human rights of its individual religious and cultural groups. Each is a piece of the mosaic that together forms the whole pattern of the country. As Canadians, the children at SSDS learn to take their place within that pattern, while maintaining their integrity as Jewish individuals.

Judaism is a religious culture based on the Jewish people and the revelation begun at Sinai. While remaining unchanged in its fundamental tenets, Judaism is always in the process of development. The sources of Judaism in its origin and development are the classical, medieval, and modern texts which have been accepted as normative by successive generations of Jews. Through the study of these texts and the historical contexts in which they were written, we came to understand our responsibilities as human beings and as members of the Jewish people. A commitment to the regular study of Torah and the ability to study original texts with intelligence are thus primary goals of SSDS.

Hebrew is the national language of the Jewish people; the medium through which Jewish culture and values is most intimately expressed; and the language in which the major portion of textual material was written. Hebrew is, therefore, an important medium of instruction in the school.

Judaism is a religion in which commandments and worship are primary determinants of the quality of Jewish life. Therefore, the school is committed to teaching the ways in which Jews are expected to respond to man and to God, with particular emphasis placed on regular prayer and the observance of mitzvot such as Shabbat and Kashrut.

It is understood that these ways are not determined by the individual Jew but by the considered judgment of leaders who are responsive to both the present needs of the people and to their own understanding of the demands of past generations.

SSDS is committed to providing equal educational opportunities for all children regardless of their gender. While recognizing Halachah as the governing framework for Jewish life. As a Conservative Jewish day school, SSDS teaches about the wide spectrum of opinion within Conservative Judaism with regard to the role and rights of women in Jewish religious life.

The Jewish human being is fully a member of both the Jewish people and modern society. These are not mutually exclusive categories, but rather conditions making for the vitality of Jewish life. Further, we see the Jewish personality in modern society as integrated; that is, one whose entire life is framed by actions and understandings which are Jewish. With these considerations in mind, the school will integrate its program in such a way that Jewish studies and general studies overlap in content and methods.

The home is the natural context within which a child's personality develops and in which one's basic religious orientation is cast. Ideally, a school will supplement and extend the education a child is receiving at home.

It is our hope that the Jewish life style we advocate is a vibrant quality of home life, and that home and school are together striving to give greater meaning to Jewish experience.

The strength of the Jewish people is in the constant interest, concern and activity of one Jew for another: kol yisrael arevim ze baze. There is a responsibility to care for and to work on behalf of the needy Jew of Toronto and the embattled Jew of Jerusalem or Moscow. This individual and communal responsibility must respect the wide diversity of identification, commitment and affiliation which is the Jewish community. Therefore, the values, of zedakah, ahavat yisrael, gemilut chasadim are central to our program and our attempt is to make these values personal ones. Through his or her career at school the child will be exposed to the ways in which the community organizes itself to help its own members and those members in Jewish communities around the world.

The State of Israel has created new possibilities for living an active Jewish life. SSDS strives to teach the reality and significance of Israel, stressing both settlement on the land as a major Jewish responsibility, and the need to expand the connections between Israel and the Diaspora. The revitalization of the Jewish people will only take place through the growth of both communities.

Finally, the essence of a Jewish way of life is kedusha - holiness. This means the hallowing of human activity by relating it to higher spiritual and moral purposes. A constant reaffirmation of the wonder of life and a resulting attitude of thankfulness to the Creator underlies this dimension of kedusha. To transfer this view of life to our children is the primary function of SSDS.
from the *Teacher’s Manual and Handbook - DO’s and DON’T’s*

DO praise in public, criticize in private.
DON’T use sarcasm, put downs, jokes at the expense of the student’s ego.

DO encourage self-discipline, responsibility and respect on the part of all students (even if you don’t teach them this year).
DON’T put a child “in charge” if you have to leave the class for a few minutes. Your erstwhile “sub” is then in the difficult position of having to “tell” on his peers—and they’ll tell him/her—and you! (Ask the teacher next door to check). While you are gone, you are still responsible for the class.

DO pray alongside your students during prayer services.
DON’T use prayer time for administrative chores or other unrelated activities.

DO teach new and meaningful material even when a significant number of students have left on vacation.
DON’T allow any pupil(s) to remain in a classroom without supervision. If you want someone to complete work during recess, please remain with him/her.
DON’T send children to sit outside the office to complete any work or as punishment. Please remain with the student in your class.

DO be on time for all duties, meetings, etc.
DON’T compare duties and spaces as scheduling is as equitable and fair as possible!

DO actively supervise all children when on yard duty, at assemblies and in the halls, not just your pupils.
DON’T send children to the Library as a punishment or to complete work.

DO plan and carry out class celebrations with your co-teacher, even if it occasionally involves you beyond your class time.
DON’T begrudge your time. The “dividends” in terms of satisfaction and a job well done, generally exceed the “investment”.

DO keep the classroom, your desk, cupboards and materials neat and attractive. Update your bulletin boards regularly. Before students leave at the end of the day, do a cleanliness check.
DON’T eat or drink coffee in class. Smoking is not permitted. Please note that the school is a “smoke free” environment.

DO make certain your classroom door is locked when you are not in it.
DON’T send a child out of the building on errands.

DO consult with the pertinent personnel re: problems in your classroom.
DON’T discuss individual children classroom problems with “outsiders”, particularly parents other than their own.

DO help students catch up with work missed because of illness, even if it goes beyond class time.
DON’T discuss individual children in the staff room in the hearing of others.

DO keep in touch with any private tutor working with one of your students.
DON’T agree to tutor one of your own students on a fee basis.

DO take any complaints or concerns to someone who can deal with them.
DON’T gossip about the school, the staff, the kids.

DO take a professional attitude to your work and responsibilities.
DON’T stop your lesson for a visitor. Ask him/her to speak to you later.

DO put Hebrew date and portion of the week on the board before commencement of class.
DON’T use class time to fill in reports, etc.
Code of Behaviour for SSDS Students

SSDS is a learning community dedicated to the intellectual, emotional and social growth of its students. Through their experience at SSDS, students will come to understand their responsibilities to themselves, to other members of the SSDS family and to the larger community, both Jewish and secular, in which they live.

Acceptable behaviour facilitates this process, but from time to time behaviour inconsistent with the goals of the school may occur. The purpose of this code is to outline some of the expectations held for students, and to provide for remedial consequences when expectations are not met. Some of these expectations are dictated by the Jewish character of the school, some arise from the school's place in the community, many are simple common sense, a few are legal in nature. The consequences of misbehaviour will be designed to be realistic, appropriate, effective and readily enforceable.

Parents play a vital role in imparting and exemplifying the values reflected in this code and are partners with the teachers and administration in its successful implementation.

Students have a right to learn in an environment which is supportive and personally non-threatening.
As members of a school community, students must be mindful of how their behaviour affects others:

While on the playground, entering or leaving the school, on the stairs, in the hallways and in the classrooms, the well-being of fellow students must be respected. Students must not behave in a way which endangers their own safety or the safety of others.

When conflict arises, it must be resolved in a constructive way. Teachers can help students learn ways in which this can be done. Verbal abuse and physical harassment is never acceptable.

Students should respect the property of other students and treat their own belongings with care.

Students have a responsibility to play an active role in ensuring that their academic experience is as successful as possible.
Students are expected to attend all classes. When they are absent due to illness, they are responsible for completing the work they missed.

Students must arrive at class on time, equipped with all necessary materials and with assigned work prepared.

Family trips and extracurricular activities should not be scheduled to conflict with school. Even if parents and students are prepared to keep up with school work during a family trip, it is unreasonable to ask a teacher to prepare materials in advance for this purpose.

Homework and projects must reflect the student's own effort. Conscientious parents will take an interest in their child's assignments while recognizing that it is the student's work, not the parents', being evaluated.

No use of illegal drugs or alcohol by SSDS students will be tolerated. SSDS students are not permitted to smoke on school property at any time.

Students at SSDS have a right to learn in an atmosphere reflecting Jewish values.
Teachers occupy a position of special honour in Jewish tradition. Teachers at SSDS are to be treated at all times with respect and courtesy.

Students must refrain from using profanity in the classroom and on the playground.

Our school is housed in Conservative synagogues. Only kosher food may be sent to school for lunches and snacks, and the prohibition against mixing meat and dairy products must be observed. Students must be mindful of this prohibition of sharing food with others.

Out of respect for Jewish law and the beliefs and practices of other members of the school community, parties should not be scheduled on Shabbat or Yom Tov and only kosher food should be served.
Because the SSDS curriculum is an integrated Hebrew Studies, General Studies program, boys are expected to wear kippot during all classes. Girls who wish to wear kippot will be made to feel comfortable in doing so.
Students are expected to dress appropriately for the school activity of the day. A dress code for the preschool, junior elementary and senior elementary divisions will be shared with each family.

Students and parents share responsibility with the professional staff to assist the school in functioning smoothly. Students must show respect for school and synagogue property.

At dismissal, the older children should be met on the playground, not at their classrooms. Parents taking their children out of school prior to dismissal must check with the school office.

Within the school building or on the playground, on school trips or on public transit to and from school, each student is a representative of SSDS and should behave in a way that reflects credit on the school. Breaches of this code will for the most part be resolved by the teacher and the student. The solution to more difficult problems will involve the administration, parents and outside specialists. The range of consequences for misbehaviour includes detentions, specific assignments, counselling, interviews with the principal, restitution of damages, withdrawal of privileges, suspension from class or school, and expulsion.

from the Parent Handbook - "Some Helpful Points"

We want to share with you some suggestions which will help your child adjust more easily to school and develop a good and healthy outlook on schooling:

* Look over the paper or the notebooks which your child brings home. Encourage him to explain his work to you. Praise him for work well done.

* Do not discourage curiosity. When he asks questions, try to answer him in terms he can understand, or better yet, help him to find the answer.

* Give your child opportunities to practice in real-life situations what he learns in school (in the Hebrew studies and general studies departments).

* Encourage family games in which your child can use information and skill he learns at home.

* You may, and you should set high standards for your child's achievement. Make certain that you are not aiming too high or beyond his capabilities.

* Help your child to find diverse and stimulating out-of-school activities suited to his needs and aptitudes.

* Through the example which you set for him, as well as the home environment which you provide, encourage your child to develop a love of reading. Experts believe that parents reading to children is essential for developing an interest and love of reading. This will include the habit of using the Public Library and reading a broad variety of books, beyond those required for schoolwork.

* Make it clear you regard learning as a lifelong activity, something important in itself and not just as a means of getting good marks.

* Try to interest your child in general and Jewish events and in the varied cultural activities of the world about him.

* Set aside a period of time each day to spend with your child, alone, during which you will not be disturbed by anyone or anything.

from the Teachers' Handbook - "You and the SSDS Philosophy"

All of us, whether in the administrative area, teachers or specialists are not only employed USDS but are committed and dedicated to the SSDS philosophy of Judaism and education. We expect that everyone will, at all times, but especially on school premises, and at school activities, reflect this philosophy.
Appendix B

Please answer each question honestly and as fully as you can.

In your opinion, what is the most important rule in your class?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

In your opinion, what is the most important rule in the school?
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please describe how teachers let you know if your work is really excellent.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Please describe how teachers let you know if your work is below average.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

Have you ever had a chance to make a decision or a choice about how things are done in your class or in the school? If you have, please describe one situation.
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
What do you enjoy most about the Jewish parts of the school?

Please describe any of the Jewish parts of the school which make you uncomfortable.

Please give one or two examples of times that you have shared your own opinions, feelings, or experiences during a class discussion.

Do you feel proud to be a member of your class? Why or why not?

Do you feel proud to be a member of the school? Why or why not?

Thank you.
Grade 5 Questionnaire, (administered by J. Markose as part of doctoral research), Dec. 2, 1993 - 11/14 students present

(All questions are transcribed here in the exact language of the students, with spelling and punctuation intact. The response "no answer" is my language, meaning the question was left blank.)

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE IN YOUR CLASS?

1. In my opinion the most important rule in my class is respect.
2. In my opinion it is not to talk across the room and do not run around in class.
3. The most important rule in my class in my opinion is no call out.
4. Don't go in other peoples things, don't make fun of people, no fighting.
5. Do not talk while the teacher is talking.
6. In avodah bkvutzot (written in Hebrew) I think we should learn to compromise and learn to work with everyone.
7. To be quit when the teacher is talking.
8. I think that the most important rule in my class is to get along and compromise.
9. To be friends with one another and have respect to your classmates and teachers.
10. Keeping your hand up, not talking out, respecting your teacher.
11. The most important rule in my class is not to call out.

IN YOUR OPINION, WHAT IS THE MOST IMPORTANT RULE IN THE SCHOOL?

1. The most important rule in the school is the rule to not touch anyone if they do not give you permission.
2. No fighting in the school yard.
3. The most important rule in the school in my opinion is no fighting.
4. No fighting.
5. Don't hit people.
6. Do not fight at recess and anywhere else.
7. No fighting outside or anywhere else.
8. I think the most important rule in school is that there should be no vilets and everyone should be friends.
9. Not to fight in the school yards and not to tease or hurt someone's feelings.
10. No fighting, swearing, hurting other people's feelings.
11. The most important rule in my school is no fighting.
PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW TEACHERS LET YOU KNOW IF YOUR WORK IS REALLY EXCELLENT.

1. the teachers write a good coment at the top of the paper.
2. They normaly write a coment
3. The teachers let me know if your work is really excellent she will smile
4. sometimes they say it, they put it in our report cards
5. They right comments and marks
6. if in english they say good or excellent or they call you to their desk and tell us you worked really good and in hebrew they would say metzuyan! (written in Hebrew)
7. They admire you
8. I think they smile at you or tell you that your doing very well in school.
9. When I ask them my grade they usually smile.
10. they give you a chek mark, they say good work, they tell you to come up to the class and say a questions
11. Teachers let you know if your work is really excellent is when we get our report cards

PLEASE DESCRIBE HOW TEACHERS LET YOU KNOW IF YOUR WORK IS BELOW AVERAGE.

1. Teachers ask you if they can see you at recess in private
2. They tell you privately
3. The teacher let you know if your work is below average she will tell me
4. They say it, they say try working harder and it goes on report cards
5. They right comments and marks, and sometimes tell you.
6. in inglish we would have to do the work again in hebrew bracha would tell us to do better next time
7. They scream at you
8. I think they would come and tell you that your work is below average.
9. My teachers don´t usually tell me I know what I had difficulties. Or they take me aside and ask me if I could use some help.
10. they tell you that there is going to be a phoncall home, or it’s going to be in your reporcard, or they keep you in for reces
11. Teachers let you know if your work is below average is that she talks to you at an awkward time.
HAVE YOU EVER HAD A CHANCE TO MAKE A DECISION OR A CHOICE ABOUT HOW THINGS ARE DONE IN YOUR CLASS OR IN THE SCHOOL? IF YOU HAVE, PLEASE DESCRIBE ONE SITUATION.

1. no answer
2. no answer
3. no answer
4. no answer
5. no answer
6. no answer
7. yes I have I have made rules for math from 1-4
8. no answer
9. We ussually discuss outside bussiness with our teacher and we come up with new rules to help.
10. yes we get to choos how is going to be presitent of the groop
11. One of the situations were when we had to vote for the student-counsel

PLEASE GIVE ONE OR TWO EXAMPLES OF TIMES THAT YOU HAVE SHARED YOUR OWN OPINIONS, FEELINGS, OR EXPERIENCES DURING A CLASS DISCUSSION.

1. no answer
2. never
3. no answer
4. no answer
5. When we had to make a speech about anything for 5 minutes.
6. I am in student council so I give Ideas about the school how we can improve it and recycling was like recycling boxes
7. well in grade four in math I had a feeling that a question was not right so I went to teacher and told here and I was right I outsmarted a book
8. no answer
9. a lot of times
10. well wen we go up to the fround of the class and give a presintation of our self
11. One of the examples were at homework partners wich (we did in hebrew). The other is when we had a talk about things that happened to us (we did in English).
WHAT DO YOU ENJOY MOST ABOUT THE JEWISH PARTS OF THE SCHOOL?

1. no answer
2. it fun learning the chumash, navi, and lashon (written in Heb)
3. I enjoy learning the books and praying
4. I enjoy the synagoge
5. I enjoy most the learning about jewish holiday and learning the torah.
6. I like lerning mishna and chumash and navi (written in Hebrew) and I like to lern the historia (Heb) of the Jewish history.
7. The study of torah
8. I enjoy that we pray every day and lern about the Jewish holidays it relly great.
9. The friends, the fact that I’m getting a well ballanced edjucation.
10. you get more holidays, you learn about history, you pray to god.
11. I enjoy most about the Jewish parts of school is that when we get older we remember these things we learned.

PLEASE DESCRIBE ANY OF THE JEWISH PARTS OF THE SCHOOL WHICH MAKE YOU UNCOMFORTABLE.

1. no answer
2. nothing
3. no answer
4. no answer
5. Nothing.
6. when in any subject someone is having war or having a baby!
7. there is none
8. nothing
9. That I´m not exactly The most religuos person. But I try to overcome that.
10. non of them I like all of them
11. no answer
DO YOU FEEL PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF YOUR CLASS? WHY OR WHY NOT?

1. Yes, because everyone has respect for me.
2. Yes because I like it.
3. Yes I do because we were in the class together for 4 years.
4. Yes! Because I learn a lot and there are nice people in my class and sometimes no because sometimes if I don't get the answer to a question and I get picked I feel embarrassed. Because I feel put on the spot and I don't no the answer.
5. Yes I feel proud because I learn and then I know about things that happened.
6. Yes! I do because we are the oldest in the school and grade five is important.
7. Yes for I enjoy to be studying the hebrew language.
8. I feel very proud to be a member of my class because I think we were a great class and have nothing to be ashamed of.
9. I do feel very proud to be a member of my class 1) we are the oldest and most mature. 2) everyone is like a family.
10. Yes because I'm the oldest in the school we have good friends, and an excellent teacher.
11. I guess I feel proud because there's only 14 kids in the class and I'm one of them.

DO YOU FEEL PROUD TO BE A MEMBER OF THE SCHOOL? WHY OR WHY NOT?

1. Yes, because I think it is a very good school.
2. Yes because I like the school.
3. Yes because we are the oldest in the school and we no more about the school then grad JK, SK, 1,2,3,4.
4. Yes because it is a lot of fun.
5. Yes I feel proud to be a member of this school because it is a hebrew school.
6. Yes! because it's a small school and a nice one where you could share feelings and stuff about the school.
7. Yes I can leave the school next year with my head up high for I have learned a lot.
8. Yes I feel proud to be a member of this school I think its a great school.
9. I do because it means a lot to me to go to this school with all the people who care about me.
10. Yes because we show an example to younger kids. We're the oldest in the school we get to help teachers.
11. I do because we are the oldest grades and we've been at school for a long time.
Appendix C

Dear,

I am a doctoral student at The Ontario Institute for Studies in Education (OISE), and I am planning to conduct the research for my thesis at during the months of September through December 1993.

I am looking for several teachers to participate in the study. This would involve allowing me to observe your class/es for approximately one day a week, and also participating in an interview. The attached outline will give you an idea of the objectives of the research.

Please be assured that everything which I observe in the school or hear in an interview will be completely confidential, and will not be used to judge or evaluate individuals. Pseudonyms will be used in the thesis. You may withdraw from the study at any time and for any reason.

I would be happy to discuss my project with you and answer any questions that you may have. If you are interested in participating, please let me know, and then we can arrange a time to meet or speak on the telephone. You may also contact me directly if you prefer, at 881-2421.

Thank you for your time and interest.

Sincerely,

Judy Markose
The following is an outline of a research study to be conducted at , to fulfill the requirements of a doctoral thesis:

INDIVIDUALISM AND COMMUNITY:
A STUDY OF TEACHERS IN A CANADIAN JEWISH DAY SCHOOL

Judith O. Markose
Ontario Institute for Studies in Education

The teacher is a critical influence on the quality of a student's education. Each individual teacher selects and presents material, expresses values, and interacts with students in a unique way. This study plans to explore some of the ways in which teachers have an impact upon the experiences of students in a Jewish Day School. The specific areas which will be explored are the development of individualism and community.

"Individualism" emphasizes that: each individual is unique and has dignity; each individual has the rights of free choice and independence; and each individual should try to reach his or her potential, according to personal criteria. In schools, this is represented by concentrating upon the individual child and by encouraging children to express opinions, think for themselves, and develop their own potential.

"Community" may be defined as a group of people who: share common traditions, norms, obligations, values, and attitudes; and who interact and depend on each other with loyalty and concern. Schools can prepare students to participate in adult communities by encouraging respect, responsibility, cooperation, and service to others.
Individualism and community in a school may be found in a number of areas, such as: authority, discipline, relationships, learning, evaluation, classroom routine, school and class spirit. These areas will be studied in the classrooms of several teachers, through observation over a three-month period and through interviews with these teachers. It is the hope of the researcher that these teachers will be partners in the research process, and will feel free to offer their insights and opinions. Other teachers, administrators, students, and parents will also be interviewed in order to offer a broader picture of how individualism and community are expressed throughout the school.

Jewish Day Schools in Canada employ a significant number of Israeli teachers. The fact that they were raised in Israel and that their native language is Hebrew suggests that these teachers have a different cultural orientation from that of their Canadian students, even though they share a common religion. This study will primarily focus on the development of individualism and community in the classrooms of Israeli teachers.

"If I am not for myself, who will be for me? And if I am only for myself, what am I?" This famous Rabbinic saying simply expresses the importance of balancing individualism and community, for the very survival of Judaism. Schools and teachers are valuable partners in helping children to develop a strong sense of self within the context of responsibility to others. A Conservative Jewish Day School has the additional challenge of reconciling pluralism and change (individualism) with tradition and history (community). Teachers from Israel play an important role in influencing students and are significant figures in this educational process.
Appendix D

Dear [Principal],

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to my research with a personal interview. I appreciate your willingness to share your valuable thoughts and opinions with me.

My study of individualism and community in the Jewish studies classrooms of the campus of focuses on the following areas:

- how teachers accommodate individual differences among students, both formally and informally
- how teachers build a sense of responsibility, empathy, and loyalty among students
- how teachers balance professional autonomy with their relationships to other teachers.

These areas are viewed in the context of:

* a school that is small in population
* a curriculum with religious and philosophical guidelines
* a majority of teachers of Israeli origin.

I would like to discuss the following questions at our interview:

How does the Jewish Studies program at USDS accommodate individual differences in children?

What are the implications for the school of the diversity in religious practice among student families and among teachers?

How much discretion do individual teachers have regarding classroom rules, curriculum and materials, and contact with parents?

What role does the administration play in facilitating collaboration and cooperation among teachers?

In your opinion, what are some of the distinctive contributions of Israeli teachers at [campus]?

Why was the campus created? In what ways is it unique?

Judy Markose
Dear [Teacher],

Thank you for taking the time to contribute to my research with a personal interview. I have learned a great deal from observing your classes, and from speaking with you informally over the past few months. I appreciate your willingness to share your valuable thoughts and opinions with me.

My study of individualism and community in the Jewish studies classrooms of this school focuses on the following areas:

- how teachers accommodate individual differences among students
- how teachers develop responsibility, concern, and loyalty among students
- how teachers balance professional independence with their relationships to other teachers.

These areas are viewed in the context of:
* a school that is small in population
* a curriculum with religious and philosophical guidelines
* a majority of teachers of Israeli origin.

I would like to discuss the following questions at our interview:

Please describe your approach to exceptional (positive and negative) students in your class.

How do you determine how much time and attention to give to personal and social matters in the classroom?

In your opinion, is your class affected by the differences in religious practice among student families?

How do you determine what to select and emphasize in the areas of classroom rules, curriculum, and materials?

What are your impressions of the relationships among teachers in the school?

What special contributions do you bring to your work as an Israeli teacher?

In your opinion, how is the campus unique?

Judy Markose
Appendix E

Categories for Organization of Data

A. Teacher’s style
B. Teacher’s interaction with students
C. Feedback to students/ criteria of success
D. Discipline, authority, rules and responsibilities
E. Encouraging students to think and be creative
F. Encouraging respect, concern, cooperation
G. Self-organization, self-evaluation of students
H. Individual students, involving them in process and routine
I. Interaction among students
J. Composition of class, levels
K. Individual work
L. Group work, groups
M. Materials, curriculum, nature of assignments
N. Remedial
O. Routine
P. Time constraints, schedule
Q. Recess
R. Lunch, snack
S. Anthems
T. Description of room
U. Displaying students’ work
V. Issues relating to beginning of year, calendar
W. Rotation duty
X. Extra activities, school spirit
Y. Ceremonies
Z. Hebrew
aa. Integration of Jewish concepts
bb. Tefillah and blessings
cc. References to Israel
dd. Staff room, teachers, relationships among teachers
ee. School goals, policies, culture
ff. Classroom practice vs. school goals
gg. Outside culture, conflicts with religious practice
hh. Parents, link to home and community
ii. Principal
jj. My role, contacts with students
kk. My conversations with teachers
ll. My impressions
mm. Class culture
nn. Other classes; French, gym, etc.
oo. Sicha (discussion) slot
pp. Teacher as role model