“We teach who we are”:
A Case Study of Individual and Communal Constructions of Teaching Philosophies at a
Global Education School

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Abstract

In *The Courage to Teach* (2007), Parker J. Palmer stresses the importance of teachers exploring their inner life, and the immense effects that inner life has on classroom practice. Professional development and teaching certification programs, such as my graduate program at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto (OISE/UT), reflect Palmer’s (2007) focus on teacher identity under the umbrella of philosophy of education. What do classrooms look like in practice when teachers are driven by an awareness of their philosophy of education? And what does a school look like when all its teachers share a common philosophy of education?

This research paper presents the qualitative case study of one small private school in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA) founded on principles of a specific philosophy of education: global education. All the school’s educators have a common mission, based on their shared commitment to global education as a teaching philosophy. This study reflects the experiences of three of those educators as individuals and within a shared community of practice. I asked the same 13 questions to each participant in a 40 minute tape-recorded interview session, which I then transcribed and coded. My findings discuss the nature of their school community, their classroom practices, their philosophies of teaching, and their vision for the students in relation to the relevant literature on philosophy of education, communities of practice, private schooling, and global education.

**Keywords:** global education, philosophy of education, statement of teaching philosophy, community of practice, private school, leadership, case study
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Chapter One

Introduction

Introduction to the Research Study

The 1990s saw the rise in research on educators’ personal philosophies of education. The researchers were primarily American university faculty members, such as Parker J. Palmer, Naomi Van Note Chism, Gail Goodyear, and Daniel Allchin. These researchers urge their colleagues to be introspective about their teaching practices and provide guidelines for how to make such personal reflection public. F. Michael Connelly and D. Jean Clandinin, also writing in the 1990s, articulate how such personal reflection relates specifically to Kindergarten - Grade 12 (K-12) curriculum delivery. In 2002, Brian P. Coppola — also a university professor — reminded the educational community that statements of philosophy of teaching were still relevant and even necessary. Faculties of education, such as OISE/UT, have responded to these researchers’ call by asking preservice K-12 teachers to reflect on their personal philosophies of education. Usually, preservice teachers develop a product (e.g. a written statement or creative presentation) to showcase their reflections, and they present the product to their peers and professors. The purpose of the philosophy of teaching statement project is for teachers (both inservice and preservice) to mediate on their experiences, values, beliefs, motivations, and goals, and allow these personal reflections to guide teaching practice.

As a preservice teacher completing the assignment, I wondered how this philosophy of teaching theory was applied the classroom. Were there inservice teachers who, amidst lesson planning and grading final papers, were undertaking the same philosophy of teaching reflecting and applying their reflections to their practice? And if so, what did that look like?
I got my answer during my student teaching placement at The Norton School (Norton), a small private school in the Greater Toronto Area (GTA): yes, there are teachers who reflect on their philosophy of teaching and apply it to their practice. In fact, I had stumbled on an entire school of them! Indeed, Norton itself was founded, and continues to operate, based on a specific philosophy of teaching: global education. All Norton’s teachers believe in global education and infuse it in their courses. This paper presents a qualitative case study of Norton as a community of practice joined by a common philosophy of education. Specifically, my research focuses on the experiences of three Norton teachers who shared their stories with me during interviews. In this paper, I contextualize their experiences through the relevant literature on teaching philosophies, global education, communities of practice, and private schools. My research offers both a theoretical and practical perspective on these teachers’ experiences with personal and communal philosophies of teaching.

**Purpose of the Study**

There are various theories in the educational community about having a personal philosophy of teaching, which include guidelines for how to present that philosophy to others. In contrast, there is a dearth of case studies exploring how educators in the field put philosophy of education theory into practice. The few case studies in the literature focus on university or college professors, not K-12 teachers. Consequently, when faculties of education require that preservice teachers study relevant theory and prepare statements of teaching philosophy, they are unable to direct these teachers to case studies showing practical applications for future classroom work. While there may be many K-12 teachers writing and practicing philosophy of educating, there is little research focusing on them.
As such, the purpose of my study is to give an in-depth look at educators who are implementing philosophy of education theory into their classrooms and school every day. My study also highlights global education, the specific philosophy in place at Norton. Overall, my goal is to explore the experiences of Norton’s teachers, as contextualized through theory, to highlight the factors contributing to their successful philosophy-infused practice. Ultimately, I hope my study showcases the meaningful work that Norton’s educators do every day and that it provides support for teachers seeking to take on a similar practice.

Research Questions

I am interested in how Norton was founded on one guiding philosophy — that of global education — and, by extension, how Norton’s educators successfully work both with and toward a shared teaching vision. This study’s central research question is: What are the experiences of educators at a school founded and operated based on one guiding philosophy of education, namely global education? In support of this central question, my sub-questions are:

- What are these educators’ perceptions of their philosophies of education, specifically global education?
- How do these educators infuse global education into their teaching, their interactions with students, and their extracurricular involvement on a daily basis?
- How does Norton create and maintain a community of practice with the shared mission of global education?
- What is the impact on teachers and students of being in a global education school?

Together, these questions form the crux of my case study research.
**Background of the Researcher**

From a young age, I have been interested in exploring inner life: both mine and that of others. While, as a child, I may not have had the vocabulary to talk about it as such, I recognized that I spent much of my free time journaling or reading. The latter, I believe, is indeed an exercise in reflecting upon the inner lives of others — whether those others are fictional characters or not. As I grew older, I continued to read voraciously, journal daily, and extended my writing to short stories and poems. Perhaps not surprisingly, I fell in love with my English class and became a passionate advocate for reading and writing as modes of expression and understanding for young people.

I pursued an undergraduate degree at McGill University in English literature. The study of literature engaged me in thinking, writing, dialoguing, and rethinking about the politics and philosophies of the inner life. But it was not enough for me to read and write and speak about books in a seminar room with my colleagues and professors: indeed, I needed to pursue something action-based to complement my literary studies. I added a major in political science, which allowed me to pursue a both theoretical and real-world practice. While I remained passionate about exploring humanity’s inner landscape, I balanced that inner work with participation in issues outside the walls of my seminar room.

I went on to complete a Master of Arts in Literatures of Modernity at Ryerson University. I selected courses and focused my research on topics that bridged my interests in both literature and political action. I wrote my major research paper on cyborg politics in dystopian science fiction and, harking back to my passion for the inner life, I contextualized my graduate work through personal identity politics and political philosophies of citizenship.
Two years ago, I started the Master of Teaching program at OISE/UT. One of the requirements of the program is to develop and present a personal philosophy of education. I appreciated the requirement because of my continuous interest in how private lives come to bear upon public spaces. Given that I had not actually seen much philosophy of education based practice in the classroom, however, I was uncertain about how the assignment would connect to my classroom practices.

Then, I had a student teaching placement at Norton. In fact, I specifically requested a Norton placement because of what I knew about the school. I knew that it was — it is — a small private school founded in 2000 by a public school teacher and based on principles of global education. I knew that Norton’s teachers shared global education’s mission and values. While it was difficult to believe that a teaching staff could authentically and harmoniously teach from a shared educational philosophy, I hoped it would turn out to be true.

Once at Norton, I did not want to leave. I volunteered there above the requirements of my placement, sat in on teachers’ courses to observe what was happening in other classrooms, and supported after-hours activities (i.e. curriculum night, theatre performance, meet the teacher, student-led-interview, etc) as much as possible. And it was true: the teachers at Norton shared a sense of purpose, future vision, and underlying mission. I knew immediately that I wanted to undertake a case study of the school for my research. I wanted to dig into these educators’ experiences to determine the what, who, how, and why of their successful communal philosophical practice. This research study is an exploration and analysis of those experiences.
Overview

This research paper has five chapters. Chapter 1 includes the introduction and purpose of the study, the major research questions, and my background as a researcher. Chapter 2 contains a review of the relevant literature in the fields of philosophy of education, global education, communities of practice, and private schools. Chapter 3 provides a detailed account of my research methodology. Chapter 4 presents the findings from my three participant interviews, with connections to the literature review. Chapter 5 discusses my research in relation to the broader field and gives recommendations for pedagogical practice and further study. References and appendices follow at the end.
Chapter Two

Literature Review

Defining Philosophy of Education

This literature review opens in the 1990s, a decade that sees a surge in philosophy of education research (Chism, 1998; Goodyear and Allchin, 1998; Palmer, 2007). I explore how this research emphasizes the importance of educators beliefs, values, and lived experiences in the classroom and in the employment search. Then, I use Coppola’s (2002) current work to show how these practices and expectations remain relevant today. As most of the research on philosophy of education relates to the postsecondary level, I close this section with Clandinin and Connelly’s (1988; 1999) research on personal philosophy in the classroom and its relationship to K-12 curriculum.

The 1990s and the rise of philosophy of teaching research.

*Developing a philosophy of teaching statement.* In “Developing a Philosophy of Teaching Statement” (1998), Chism writes that many teachers, “when asked to write a statement on their philosophy of teaching...react in the same way as professionals, athletes, or artists might if asked to articulate their goals and how to achieve them”; that is, they wonder why they should spend time writing it down when they could “just do it” (p. 1). Chism (1998) argues that statements of teaching philosophy are vital for educators because they enhance career portfolios, which are increasingly important to the hiring process. While Chism’s (1998) primary focus throughout her article is the development of a career portfolio, she does suggest that statements of teaching philosophy,
can be used to stimulate reflection on teaching. The act of taking time to consider one’s goals, actions, and vision provides an opportunity for development that can be personally and professionally enriching. Reviewing and revising former statements of teaching philosophy can help teachers to reflect on their growth and renew their dedication to the goals and values they hold. (p.1)

Chism (1998) explains the personal benefits of preparing a statement of teaching philosophy; indeed, she suggests that it is the act of considering one’s goals, actions, and visions itself that brings personal and professional development. While the rest of her article focuses on the written statement, this portion of her article highlights the role of the reflective process as beneficial for educators because it draws their attention inward.

Chism (1998) provides “general format guidelines” for educators writing a statement of teaching philosophy (p.1). She suggests that such statements should be one to two pages in length, should avoid technical terminology or jargon (unless the statement is written for specialists), should be written in the first-person perspective, should be well-organized, and should be reflective and personal (Chism, 1998, p.1). Chism (1998) also writes that a philosophy of teaching statement’s main components are “how the teacher thinks learning occurs, how they think they can intervene in this process, what chief goals they have for students, and what actions they take to implement their intentions” (p.1). She also advises that educators dialogue with colleagues, review old syllabi or resources, and read their past statements (if such statements exist) throughout the process of writing their teaching philosophy.

**Statements of teaching philosophy.** Goodyear and Allchin take a similar approach in their article “Statements of Teaching Philosophy” (1998). They write that,
articulating an individual teaching philosophy provides the foundation by which to clarify goals, to guide behavior, to seed scholarly dialogue on teaching, and to organize evaluation. Statements of teaching philosophy function both personally and publicly. A professor who writes a teaching philosophy wants to document beliefs, values, and approaches. (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, p.103)

Goodyear and Allchin’s (1998) definition thus resembles Chism’s (1998), as both highlight the personal and professional aspects of the philosophy of teaching statement. They also use similar language about goals, behaviors, and reflection. The two articles are also similar in their goals: they urge educators to prepare these statements for the purpose of adding them to career portfolios. Goodyear and Allchin (1998), however, provide more detail about various approaches and motivations for teaching philosophies: in fact, while acknowledging Chism’s (1998) contribution to the field as “valuable,” Goodyear and Allchin (1998) note that it is “brief” (p.104). They also add that, while there was research on career portfolios in 1998 (i.e. the date of their article’s publication), there was “little commentary on statements of teaching philosophy, their role, how to compose them, or how to evaluate them as personal statements” (p.104). “Statements of Teaching Philosophy” (1998) thus makes a valuable contribution to the field as the first in-depth examination of written statements of teaching philosophy.

Through workshops and one-on-one consultations, Goodyear and Allchin (1998) gathered data from professors about the roles of these statements. Their research shows how professors emphasize that “the process helps the teacher clarify the ‘why’ of teaching as a foundation for the ‘what’ and ‘how’ of teaching, by answering the question: ‘why are you teaching?’” (p.106). The professors in their study thus suggest that understanding their motivations for teaching (the
“why”) must come before determining course content (the “what”) and teaching techniques (the “how”).

Goodyear and Allchin (1998) argue that administrators play a key role in encouraging teachers to write teaching philosophy statements. “Mandating statements of teaching philosophy can reflect an institution’s focus on the importance of good teaching,” they argue, because “often, those who write statements of teaching philosophy find themselves moving beyond just trying hard and having good intentions to actively defining themselves as teachers and deliberately pursuing teaching goals” (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, p. 107). They continue, “a faculty that actively discusses its teaching pedagogy, methodologies, and strategies develops values, principles, and practices that are shared and enriched by dialogue” (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, p.107). Here, Goodyear and Allchin (1998) make the leap from personal benefit for the educator writing the statement to a greater public good as a result of the statement. Moreover, they argue that preparing such a philosophy statement, either by choice or as a requirement, improves the staff culture and quality of education.

Goodyear and Allchin (1998) conclude with a detailed account of how educators should approach writing these statements. They suggest that educators ask themselves,

- What motivates me to learn about this subject?
- What are the opportunities and constraints under which I learn and others learn?
- What do I expect to be the outcomes of my teaching?
- What is the student-teacher relationship I strive to achieve?
- How do I know when I have taught successfully?
- What habits, attitudes, or methods mark my most successful teaching achievements?
• What values do I impart to my students?

• What code of ethics guides me?

• What theme(s) pervade(s) my teaching? (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, p.110)

In answering these questions openly and honestly, teachers develop their philosophy of teaching. Goodyear and Allchin’s (1998) questions emphasize the teacher’s inner life and the teacher’s beliefs about students’ inner lives. The questions press teachers to think about their goals, motivations, learning styles, attitude, achievement, ethics, and values. The process, and not just the product, of reflecting is deeply personal; indeed, Goodyear and Allchin (1998) suggest some educators have difficulty composing a teaching philosophy statement because of intimate nature of the process (109-111). In response, they suggest that educators take creative liberty with the statements, which they argue,

may be expressed in a statement of beliefs that reflect a value system, a policy statement, a list of objectives and how they are achieved, an essay, or as an art form...([such as] a poem, a song or a picture with a concept statement). (Goodyear and Allchin, 1998, p. 110-11).

Thus, freedom to choose a mode of expression renders educators more likely to participate in the process, which in turn results in a more authentic product.

Finally, Goodyear and Allchin (1998) remind educators to add realistic goals to their statement. While the statement is generally abstract in its focus on values and beliefs, Goodyear and Allchin (1998) note that it is important for educators to consider the tangible steps they will take to implement their philosophy in the classroom.

Palmer (2007) opens his book by saying,

we teach who we are. Teaching...emerges from one’s inwardness, for better or worse. As I teach, I project the condition of my soul onto my students, my subject, and our way of being together. The entanglements I experience in the classroom are often no more or less than the convolutions of my inner life. Viewed from this angle, teaching holds a mirror to the soul. If I am willing to look in that mirror and not run from what I see, I have a chance to gain self-knowledge — and knowing myself is as crucial to good teaching as knowing my students and my subject. (p. 2-3)

Thus, Palmer (2007) argues that teaching is an outward expression of the teacher’s inner life; that inner life affects everyone and everything in the classroom. As such, teachers seeking to know themselves can look to their teaching — their approaches, attitudes, successes, and challenges — as a mirror reflecting their self back to them. And, Palmer (2007) adds, the teacher must not run from what she finds in that mirror. Indeed, Palmer (2007) states, “we must enter, not evade, the tangles of teaching so we can understand them better and negotiate them with more grace, not only to guard our own spirits but also to serve our students well” (p.2). Palmer’s (2007) claims connect to Chism (1998) and Goodyear and Allchin’s (1998) work; just as the latter write that
reflecting on motivations and values improves classroom practice, so Palmer (2007) argues that good teaching comes from understanding one’s inner life.

Palmer (2007) speaks to questions educators ask themselves — indeed, questions that research, administration, and colleagues often encourage them to ask. According to Palmer (2007, teachers usually ask themselves the same “traditional” questions, such as: “what subjects shall we teach?” and “what methods and techniques are required to teach well?” and, when the conversation goes somewhat deeper, “for what purpose and to what ends do we teach?” (Palmer, 2007, p.4). He argues that educators place too great an emphasis on mastering techniques for classroom management and subject-specific learning when, in fact, “good teaching cannot be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the integrity and identity of the teacher” (Palmer, 2007, p.10). In light of this statement, Palmer (2007) argues that the questions educators must ask themselves are “who is the self that teaches?” and “how does the quality of my selfhood form — or deform — the way I relate to my students, my subject, my colleagues, my world?” (p.4). Moreover, *The Courage to Teach* (2007) implores educators to begin the process of answering the “who” questions. Palmer (2007) contends that teachers “more familiar with [their] inner terrain” become more confident and successful in their classroom practice; essentially, successful classroom management and subject-specific learning follow on the heels of self-awareness (p.6). He writes, “as we learn more about who we are, we can learn techniques that reveal rather than conceal the personhood from which good teaching comes” (Palmer, 2007, p.25). Here, Palmer (2007) digs deeper than Goodyear and Alchin (1998), who themselves provided a more in-depth approach than Chism (1998): where Goodyear and Alchin (1998) argue for teachers to understand “why” before the “what” and the “how,” Palmer presses educators to
first reflect on “who”. They all agree, however, that the “what” and “how” of teaching come after self-awareness on “who” and “why.”

Palmer (2007) dedicates much of his book to exploring the connection between a teacher’s inner life and their life in a professional community. Most academic communities, he argues, lack both depth and connection because of the solitary nature of teaching. Generally, educators plan alone in an office or classroom, teach students behind closed doors with no other adults present, and reflect on their teaching by themselves (if at all). He writes,

though we teach in front of students, we almost always teach solo, out of collegial sight — as contrasted with surgeons or trial lawyers, who work in the presence of others who know their craft well....When we walk into our workplace, the classroom, we close the door on our colleagues. When we emerge, we rarely talk about what happened or what needs to happen next, for we have no shared experience to talk about. Then, instead of calling this the isolationism it is and trying to overcome it, we claim it as a virtue called “academic freedom”: my classroom is my castle, and the sovereigns of other fiefdoms are not welcome here. (Palmer, 2007, p.147)

Palmer (2007) claims that teaching is not just solitary, but isolationist, and that educators — and their surrounding school culture — are the agents of creating this isolation. He argues that reflecting on the inner life cannot be done in the same way; a personal teaching philosophy cannot be kept behind a closed classroom door. Once educators begin the ongoing process of self-reflection, they are “in communion” with themselves, which guides them to “find community with others” because “community is an outward and visible sign of an inward and invisible grace, the flowing of personal identity and integrity into the world of
relationships” (Palmer, 2007, p.92). Palmer (2007) thus extends the purpose discovering one’s teaching philosophy; not only does the process bring self-awareness and good teaching practice, it is both the necessary foundation and catalyst for strong staff communities.

Palmer (2007) argues that educators are at their best when connected to strong professional communities. At their best, he suggests, collegial communities provide multiple viewpoints, productive confusion and challenges, opportunities to correct biases and prejudices, avenues for sharing personal and academic truths, and humility (Palmer, 2007, p. 110-111). These benefits of community are only available to educators who are self-aware — or on a journey of self-awareness — as Palmer (2007) sees that as a requirement for genuine communion with others. Palmer (2007) thus distinguishes himself from Chism (1998) and Goodyear and Allchin (1998), who do not speak to the benefits of teaching philosophies for the larger school community. In fact both Chism (1998) and Goodyear and Allchin (1998) focus on the potential career benefits (e.g. hiring, advancement, etc) that might result from preparing a written philosophy of teaching statement. Moreover, Palmer (2007) is the first to suggest that developing a personal philosophy affects — indeed, defines — the state of one’s professional community.

Palmer (2007) also claims that self-awareness catalyzes the growth of another community: that between students and teachers. “Our conventional pedagogy,” he writes, emerges from a principle that is hardly communal. It centers on a teacher who does little more than deliver conclusions to students. It assumes that the teacher has all the knowledge and students have little or none, that the teacher must give and the students must take, that the teacher sets all the standards and the students must measure up. Teacher and students
gather in the same room at the same time not to experience community but simply to keep the teacher from having to say things more than once. (Palmer, 2007, p.118)

Too often, Palmer (2007) argues, teaching is transactional, not interactive; it rarely emphasizes the communal experience of student - teacher sharing (p.118). He insists that teachers must begin to know their truth and share this truth with their students to open themselves to connection. Educators must also realize that, in a genuinely communal relationship with students, they must “abandon [their] self-protective professional autonomy and make [themselves] dependent on [their] students as they are on [them]” (Palmer, 2007, p.144). Hence, the self-aware student-teacher relationship is mutual and meaningful, and educators must remember to be thankful for their students’ presence and participation: indeed, without their students, their work as teachers could not continue. Again, Palmer (2007) distinguishes himself from Chism (1998) and Goodyear and Allchin (1998). Where they mention students, both articles suggest that self-aware teachers are beneficial for students, because these teachers tend to be more focused and confident in their approach. Palmer (2007) extends his argument further to suggest that teachers must open themselves up to students personally, and become dependent on students for understanding themselves as teacher and as community member.

Finally, Palmer (2007) emphasizes the importance of leadership in educator self-awareness and professional community building. He argues, “if we are to have communities of discourse about teaching and learning — communities that are intentional about the topics to be pursued and the ground rules to be practice — we need leaders who can call people toward that vision” (Palmer, 2007, p.161). Schools need leaders, and those leaders need to be willing and able to call educators out of their isolation. These leaders — vice-principals, principals,
superintendents, etc — must believe in the value of personal teaching philosophies. Palmer (2007) suggests these leaders must model self-exploration: they must ask themselves the difficult “who” questions and openly practice and articulate their teaching philosophy (p.166). Such leader modeling compels teachers to follow the same path toward personal philosophy awareness, thus opening the space for Palmer’s idea of strong professional community.

**Current relevance of philosophy of teaching research.** Coppola’s “Writing a Statement of Teaching Philosophy” (2002) is more recent than Palmer (2007), Chism (1998), and Goodyear and Allchin (1998). His article primarily acts as a literature review of teaching philosophy research and as a guide for writing statements of teaching philosophy. As such, Coppola (2002) does not offer much new knowledge to the field, if any. His important contribution — and the reason I include him here, if only briefly — is his argument that teaching philosophy self-awareness remains relevant today. It is an “important piece” of representing oneself as an educator, perhaps even “increasingly” so, decades after the original research of the 1990s (Coppola, 2002, p.448). Thanks to Coppola (2002), the conversation about philosophy of teaching remains open; he insists that educators continue to engage in the reflection that Palmer (2007), Chism (1998), and Goodyear and Allchin (1998) call upon in their work.

**Personal teacher philosophy and the K-12 curriculum.** So far, the authors in this literature review are university or college faculty writing for an audience of their colleagues. Their research, however, is relevant across various levels of teaching, as evident in the lack of specificity in their writing; indeed, they never suggest teaching philosophies are limited to the postsecondary level. That said, they do not suggest strategies for applying their work to K-12 classrooms. In 2007, however, Palmer republished *The Courage to Teach* with a new foreword in
light of the book’s tenth anniversary. In this foreword, he acknowledges the relevance of his work for K-12 teachers. He concedes that upon its original publication, he was “wrong about the audience for this book”; though he had worked with K-12 teachers before, he thought his readers “would come almost exclusively from higher and adult education” given he had worked in those domains for three decades and had drawn his examples from those levels of schooling (Palmer, 2007, p.xiv). In fact, Palmer (2007) says many K-12 teachers and administrators read his book, and that he has since developed various workshops for them that are designed to introduce and facilitate the process of teacher self-awareness (p.xiv - xv).

While Palmer (2007) does acknowledge K-12 teachers in tenth anniversary foreword, he does not mention them anywhere else in the new edition — they remain excluded from the book’s examples and case studies. That is where Clandinin and Connelly’s (1988; 1999) work comes in, as they connect personal teaching philosophy to elementary and secondary teachers. Specifically, they draw connections between inner reflection and curriculum. In *Teachers as Curriculum Planners* (1988), they define the term curriculum:

> curriculum is often taken to mean a course of study. When we set our imaginations free from the narrow notion that a course of study is a series of textbook or specific outline of topics to be covered and objectives to be attained, broader and more meaningful notions emerge. A curriculum can become one’s life course of action. It can mean the paths we have followed and the paths we intend to follow. (p. 1)

From the outset, Clandinin and Connelly (1988) define curriculum in a broad sense: curriculum is not just academic subject matter but also one’s life experiences. They acknowledge that theirs is not the only, nor the most common, definition: most teachers, administrators, and researchers
understand curriculum as the specific subject content and provincial learning expectations (Good, 1959; Steimer and Westbury, 1971; Bestor, 1995). Some scholars do consider experiences as part of the curriculum, but none of them stress the importance of lived experiences as much as Clandinin and Connelly’s (1988) work (Rugg, 1947; Shores et al., 1957; Foshay, 1969).

In their focus on lived experiences, Clandinin and Connelly (1988) focus on the importance of understanding teachers’ personal “life story” narratives, because such narratives affect how teachers perceive and deliver curriculum in the classroom (p. 24-25). Life story narratives contain a teacher’s “educational history” along with “present thinking style and concepts” and intentions for the future (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988, p. 25). Clandinin and Connelly (1988), like Palmer (2007) argue that the process of thinking through one’s life story is ultimately “rewarding” and “a way of making...meaning” for educators as they consider their classroom practices (p. 25). They specify that teachers should express their introspection through modes like journals, interviews, dialogues, letter writing, and autobiography. Unlike Palmer (2007), Chism (1998), and Goodyear and Allchin (1998), Teachers as Curriculum Planners (1988) does not press educators to make their work reflective product public.

Clandinin and Connelly (1988) encourage teachers to think of education philosophy as originating from school experiences they has as students or teachers. “Personal philosophy...goes beneath the surface of manifestations of values and beliefs to their experiential narrative origins” (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988, p. 66). They limit these narrative origins to the classroom: for Clandinin and Connelly (1988), teaching philosophy is grounded in past experiences in the school setting rather than past experiences in general. Moreover, where Palmer (2007) argues for teachers to understand themselves as people in general, and apply that
understanding to themselves as teachers, Clandinin and Connelly (1988) argue for teachers to understand themselves specifically as teachers.

In *Teachers as Curriculum Planners* (1988), Clandinin and Connelly provide specific examples of the relationship between personal philosophy and the classroom. They write about Bruce, a secondary science teacher, and his approach to note-taking in the classroom. They draw on data from an interview that a PhD student at OISE/UT, Siaka Kroma, conducted with Bruce: these data were recorded in Kroma’s unpublished dissertation, *Personal Practical Knowledge in Teaching: An Ethnographic Study* (1983). Bruce assigns heavy note-taking for his Grade 7 students because he believes, based on his past experiences as a student and teacher, that note-taking is meaningful for them in preparation for the “copious notes” they will have to take in Grades 8 and 9 (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988, p. 69). Because of his own experience being unprepared for high school and watching students move on without preparation, he has come to prioritize student preparedness: he wants them to know what to expect and how to work to meet expectations in following years. As such, he adjusts his planning so that the students do higher-level work, like independent note-taking, earlier and more often in his class. According to Clandinin and Connelly’s (1988) analysis of Kroma’s (1983) interviews with Bruce, the result is that Bruce often tells students not to worry about concepts or skills that do not come up again in future grades; he is committed to preparing them for what is ahead (p. 69). Clandinin and Connelly (1988) argue that this is an example of how Bruce practices a personal philosophy of teaching in the classroom; moreover, his beliefs about the importance of preparation direct his curricular planning and classroom practices.
Defining Global Education

Now that I have summarized the philosophy of education research, I define global education, which is Norton’s philosophy of education. The school was founded on the principles of global education; all educators who choose and are chosen to work there teach from that philosophy. I open this section with Robert Hanvey’s *An Attainable Global Perspective* (1976), as scholars in the field widely credit Hanvey’s as the first definition of global education. Then, I briefly explore Sidney B. Simon and Jay Clark’s values clarification work in *Beginning Values Clarification* (1975). Clark and Simon’s (1975) work comes a year before Hanvey’s and speaks to similar concepts. I also look at the work of Graham Pike and David Selby (1988; 1995; 1999; 2000), whose theoretical and practical approaches are a large part of the field. Finally, I close with Gregg Cunningham’s and Phyllis Schafly’s criticisms of global education.

An attainable global perspective. Hanvey (1976) outlines the five interdisciplinary dimensions of global education:

1) perspective consciousness: an awareness of and appreciation for other images of the world;
2) state of the planet awareness: an in-depth understanding of global issues and events;
3) cross-cultural awareness: a general understanding of the defining characteristics of world cultures, with an emphasis on understanding similarities and differences;
4) systemic awareness: a familiarity with the nature of systems and an introduction to the complex international system in which state and non-state actors are linked in patterns of interdependence and dependence in a variety of issue areas;
options for participation: a review of strategies for participating in issue areas in local, national, and international settings (Hanvey, 1976; Lamy, 1990)

Hanvey’s (1976) definition focuses on awareness; moreover, global education encourages students to mediate upon their understanding of the world and of others, where “others” includes not just people but the environment, cultures, and local / national / international actors. As the word “global” suggests, Hanvey (1976) argues global education breaks down boundaries: those of the self, by becoming aware of the perspectives of others, and those of the local or even the national, by becoming aware of global and cultural interdependence. As Steven L. Lamy (1990) argues, Hanvey’s (1976) five points emphasize both awareness and action: once students become aware of themselves and the world outside themselves, global education facilitates “students’ capacity to act or participate” in that world (Lamy, 1990, p. 55).

**Values clarification.** Clark and Simon’s (1975) *Beginning Values Clarification*, which focuses on values in school settings, emerges almost simultaneously with Hanvey’s (1976) work. I include Clark and Simon (1975) in this literature review because I perceive a connection between global education’s focus on becoming aware of individual perspective and taking action that reflects that perspective, and values clarification’s focus on the process of clarifying one’s beliefs and acting in tandem with those beliefs. Clark and Simon (1975) write,

> values clarification is a way of examining our lives and trying to find out more clearly what we want and don’t want. It’s not a set of morals and ethics. It’s not a set of values which people memorize like a catechism, then say back for approval. Values clarification is a *process*, and when people learn the process...they will be able to negotiate the future [original emphasis]. (1975, p. 22).
Values clarification thus parallels global education’s focus on self-examination in determining a set of values. In this excerpt, Clark and Simon (1975) also establish the importance of process over product, just as Hanvey (1976) does in global education principles. Clark and Simon (1975) also refer to the future: they suggest that the process of students clarifying their values in the present helps them determine future action. As I move into Pike and Selby’s (1988) work, I show how global education is similarly concerned with the connectedness of time past, present, and future, and how Pike and Selby (1988) emphasize the value of thinking about present perspectives in future context. Finally, Clark and Simon (1975) write that the “zenith of values clarification is acting on values” (p. 34). As Hanvey (1976) suggests in his fifth principle, and as I explore through Pike and Selby’s work (1988; 1995; 1999; 2000), global education also necessitates that students and educators participate in society in ways that reflect their perspectives.

**Global teacher, global learner.** Pike and Selby’s work builds directly on Hanvey’s (1976) principles of global education and builds upon them to create a more comprehensive framework. In *Global Teacher, Global Learner* (1988), Pike and Selby outline global education’s goals as systemic consciousness, perspective consciousness, health of planet awareness, involvement consciousness and preparedness, and process mindedness. Pike and Selby (1988) define these goals as per Hanvey’s (1976) five principles — indeed, some even share the same names (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 34-35). Like Hanvey (1976), Pike and Selby (1988) focus on student awareness of their own perspective, the perspectives of others, and the health of the planet. In Pike and Selby’s (1988) focus on perspective, they also echo Clark and Simon’s (1975) values clarification framework, which emphasizes individual awareness of one’s own values system in
context of the values of others. Also like Hanvey (1976), they promote the necessity of acting upon that awareness through democratic participation.

**The five dimensions of global education.** In addition, they credit Hanvey (1975) with the five fundamental dimensions that must be in place for global education to exist in schools:

- spatial interdependence,
- temporal globality,
- issues-based education,
- systemic/holistic paradigm,
- and human potential.

They suggest, though, that their work is more comprehensive and more “forceful”: where Hanvey suggests a global perspective is attainable, Pike and Selby (1988) claim that their global perspective is irreducible (p. 37). It is irreducible, they contend, because they require all five dimensions be present in schools that lay claim “to offering a global perspective” and, if the five dimensions are not present, they argue that the school is “not preparing its students adequately” for the global world (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 37). They make no exceptions; these five dimensions must be the foundation of global education in schools.

**Spatial.** The spatial dimension is about global geographical interdependence, including physical space, ecological concerns, and peoples: subtopics are settlement, colonization, exploration, migration, trade, global warming, deforestation, etc. Pike and Selby (1988) define global spatial interdependence as the “network of links, interactions and relationships that encircle the planet like a giant and intricate spider’s web so that the wider world is a pervasive and ubiquitous element in routines in everyday life” (p. 3). They continue, “to touch any part of the spider’s web is to trigger vibrations in many — sometimes all — other parts” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 6). Of course, they concede, global spatial interdependence itself is not a contemporary phenomenon; environmental interdependence “pre-dates human society at all levels, local to global,” they write, and “the age of Western European exploration...[is but one]
early manifestation of the impact of the trend towards globalisation” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 3). What sets contemporary global interdependence apart, they argue, “is its degree of frequency, its depth and its scope [original emphasis]” (p. 3). In essence, Pike and Selby (1988) contend that, while global interdependence of lands, peoples, and ecosystems have long existed, global education responds to the growing reality that these are now, more than ever, “affected in some part at least by the interdependent nature of the world” (p. 3). Nothing, they contend, “can be fully understood in isolation but must be seen as part of a dynamic, multi-layered system” in which “relationship is everything” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 6).

Pike and Selby (1988) provide supporting spatial interdependence activities for the classroom. They suggest students can create “dependency webs”: maps that represent ways “different people in the locality are dependent on each other” and the “nature of the dependency” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 8). During this activity, students should discuss questions like, “do the people you list in any way depend upon you?” and “are there different degrees / kinds of dependency?”. Ultimately, the goal is for students to create their own dependency webs that map how they, as individuals, are dependent upon their local community’s space and people (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 8). Another example of a spatial interdependence activity is “world in the pantry”: at home, students “make a list of the food items in their home pantry...and note the place of origin of each item” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 9). At school, the students prepare individual or collective maps with arrows from the exporting countries to their home countries; moreover, the purpose is for students to discover the spatial interdependence of the food industry. This activity can also be done with items in student bathrooms (towels, soaps, toothpaste, cosmetics, etc) (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 9).
Temporal. The next dimension of globality is temporality. For Pike and Selby (1988), the present time must be understood in the context of the past and the future. They understand time as connected to all things, including space: time is “seamless and interactive” with all other parts of life (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 12). For Pike and Selby (1988), global education means not limiting teaching to the vacuum of the present day. Though Pike and Selby (1988) mention both the past and future, their primary focus is the future (p. 13). Schools must spend more time considering the future because it allows people to contextualize present values, priorities, choice, participation, and action (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 13). Moreover, when thinking about the future, students think about possibilities, consequences, and connections that make learning relevant beyond the immediate scope of their schooling. Humans, they write, “individually and collectively, can consciously strive to both anticipate and influence a future that is not predetermined” and, as such, should reflect upon and revise their “present patterns of behaviour” (Pike and Selby, 1988 p. 14). The concept of revising and reflecting present patterns based on future possibilities echoes Clark and Simon’s (1975) contention that students must discern their values in the present so to act appropriately in the future and that they must think about future consequences and possibilities when acting in the present.

As with spatial interdependence, Pike and Selby (1988) offer examples of classroom activities that highlight temporal globality. Their “visit” and “model city” activities engage students in thinking about the future of their local world by inviting a city planner to visit the school to talk about “how the department sets about planning the local environment of the future” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 20). Afterward, students work in groups to design a future “model city” where all basic services (education, health, water, power, waste disposal, recreation,
transport, police, etc) are provided realistically (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 20). Through this activity, students think about the realities, constraints, and possibilities of a future model city in context of their present understandings and predictions of municipal life.

Issues. Pike and Selby (1988) define a global issue as “a contemporary phenomenon affecting the lives of people and / or the health of the planet in a harmful or potentially harmful way, such as environmental pollution, racism and the threat of nuclear war” (p. 22). Global issues have micro and macro impacts “across many, if not all, parts of the world” and, though they must be contemporary, they must also “be seen as process with a past, present and future” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 22). Students should engage in thinking about possible solutions for these issues and ways they can contribute to those solutions (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 22). They argue that the spatial interdependence and temporal globality of our contemporary world mean that issues are relevant across time and space as well; educators and students cannot compartmentalize issues or tackle them in isolation (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 22). Some people may argue that global warming, for example, is an issue of the future or of elsewhere; global education would encourage schools to tackle the issue regardless, because there is no issue that exists “elsewhere” or in “the future” that does not connect to “here” and “now”. Indeed, global education claims that “the problems and crises we face [today] are inextricably interlocked”; as such, schools have a responsibility to face those issues and, where possible, act toward their resolution (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 22). Pike and Selby (1988) do not elaborate on specific activities for issues-based education in this text, though they do in their later publications Reconnecting: From National to Global Curriculum (1995), In the Global Classroom 1 (1999), and In the Global Classroom 2 (2000).
**Systemic / holistic paradigm.** The fourth dimension of global education is the systemic, or holistic, paradigm. The systemic paradigm responds to the mechanistic paradigm, which reflects principles of the seventeenth and eighteenth century scientific enlightenment (p. 24). Specifically, the mechanistic paradigm advocates that rational thinking is superior to emotion, that humans are separate from the natural world and in control of that world, that knowledge is divided into distinct disciplines and experiences, that the observer is separate from the observed making complete objectivity possible, and that all problems are linear cause-effect situations with clear resolutions (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 29). For global education to flourish, schools cannot support a paradigm of fragmentation, separation, and hierarchy; instead, global education requires a holistic paradigm. The latter promotes interconnection and interaction: all phenomena and events are dynamically interconnected across time and space, the observer and the observed participate in a reciprocal relationship where only relative objectivity is possible, the rational must be complementary to the emotional, problems exist within a complex network and have no simple solution, knowledge is interdisciplinary and thus not clearly divisible into disciplines, and human life is embedded with nature (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 29). As with the issues-based dimension, Pike and Selby (1988) do not provide a list of suggested activities for the holistic paradigm dimension in this book.

**Human potential.** The human potential dimension is “grounded in the belief that the character and well-being of the individual and the character and well-being of global society are interdependent” (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 31). As students engage in the other dimensions — considering time, space, whole systems, and issues — they inevitably engage with and learn about themselves. As such, “the outward journey” into the world of other perspectives is really
“the inward journey” into the world of the student’s perspective (Pike and Selby, 1988, p. 31). The human potential dimension therefore focuses on the individual’s journey, including their willingness to take that journey, through introspection and awareness. Similarly to the issues-based dimension and the holistic paradigm, human potential is somewhat abstract, and as such, Pike and Selby (1988) do not outline any related activities in this text.

**Criticism of Global Education**

**Blowing the whistle on global education.** Cunningham (1986) is one of the most outspoken critics of global education: as Lamy (1990) points out, Cunningham’s article, “Blowing the Whistle on Global Education,” has been widely “promoted and distributed by a variety of ultraconservative organizations” (Lamy, 1990, p. 51). Cunningham (1986) argues that global education is biased toward “naive world-order values such as peace, social justice, and economic equity” (in Lamy, p. 51). Cunningham (1986) supports a conservative teaching approach, and suggests that global education is on par with globalism, liberalism, and utopianism. He argues that these are inherently bad values to impart to students. Cunningham (1986) levels the claim that global educators align who social scientists who,

define politics as the process by which societies decide who gets what, when, where, how, and in what amounts. By that definition, every issues raised by any program of global education is a political issue — and often a political issue of the most controversial sort. This fact creates the possibility of academic abuse through undisclosed philosophical bias. Some globalists have, at least in a general sense, been quite candid in conceding the value-laden nature of their objectives. (p. 2)
Cunningham (1986) suggests that global educators render everything, especially controversial issues, political and that they deliver their program through an undisclosed philosophical bias — though some, he writes, concede that they teach for specific (liberal) values. Cunningham’s statement implies that he believes education can be neutral, unbiased, and unpolitical — that schooling and curriculum can exist in a vacuum of objectivity.

Cunningham (1986) also takes aim at global educators for de-prioritizing domestic politics, traditions, and religious beliefs. As Lamy (1990) explains, Cunningham and his supporters represent an ultraconservative movement that believes the United States should educate the world — and its own citizens — about American values. Cunningham (1986) rejects the concept of the world as a global web, and thus rejects global education’s principle that students should learn about values and issues relevant across the world (p. 52). For Cunningham (1986), the issues, people, and land relevant for education are those that are relevant for the United States: as Lamy (1990) interprets it, Cunningham (1986) claims that “the American system is the best system and we [Americans] have a mission to bring our ideals to the rest of the world” (Lamy, 1990, p. 52). Moreover, Cunningham’s ultraconservative education movement believes that global educators are wrong — and unpatriotic — for teaching critical thinking, the systemic paradigm, and global interdependence.

**What is wrong with global education.** Phyllis Schafly (1986), in “What is Wrong With Global Education” supports Cunningham’s (1986) argument. She claims that global education indoctrinates students “with the falsehood that other nations, governments, legal systems, cultures, and economic systems are essentially equivalent to us and entitled to equal respect” (Schafly, 1986). Ultimately, Schafly (1986) contends, global education is a naive and
idealistic enterprise that undermines American sovereignty and power. As Lamy (1990) suggests, Schafly (1986), Cunningham (1986), and their fellow anti-global education supporters are unlikely to change their mind, regardless of any reasonable argument in favour of global education (p. 52). These naysayers’ often allow their nationalism and patriotism to “descend to chauvinism and dogmatism” and “their beliefs drive them to fanaticism and absolutes”; Lamy (1990) argues, “no purpose is served by trying to reason with dogmatists or to urge them to consider other viewpoints. They are enemies of pluralism and...will never be convinced that global education is of any value” (p. 52-53). While Lamy may be correct that global education critics cannot be made to change their minds, it is my hope that this research study provides a positive example of how global education is a meaningful, enriching educational philosophy for educators and students alike.

School as Community

Taking a cue from Palmer’s (2007) emphasis on authentic school communities as the byproduct of self-awareness, I explore the concept of community as it relates to this study. Specifically, I start this section with Etienne Wenger’s theory of communities of practice and explaining how schools can be contextualized through Wenger’s work (1998; 2006). I conclude this section of the literature review by exploring private schools as communities, given that Norton is a private school. I outline Terry Moe and John Chubb’s (1989) research on the positive aspects of private school communities and what public schools, with an open mind, can learn from them.

Communities of practice. In “Communities of Practice: A Brief Introduction” (2006), Wenger writes, “the term ‘community of practice’ is of relatively recent coinage, even though the
phenomenon it refers to is age-old” (p. 1). He coined the term with anthropologist Jean Lave while studying apprenticeship learning models (Wenger, 2006, p.3). Wenger defines a community of practice as a community “formed by people who engage in a process of collective learning in a shared domain of human endeavor”; a group of people “who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 2006, p. 1). He continues, “note that this definition allows for, but does not assume, intentionality: learning can be the reason the community comes together or an incidental outcome of member’s [sic] interactions” (Wenger, 2006, p. 1). As such, not all communities are communities of practice; a neighbourhood, for example, is not a community of practice because the group of people involved do not purposefully unite over a shared concern or passion from which they learn and grow (Wenger, 2006, p. 1).

**The three characteristics of communities of practice.** Wenger specifies three characteristics of communities of practice: domain, community, and practice. For the purposes of this research, I explain how each characteristic can apply to a school staff community.

**Domain.** A community of practice must have “an identity defined by a shared domain of interest. Membership therefore implies a commitment to the domain and therefore a shared competence that distinguishes members from other people” (Wenger, 2006, p. 2). For educators, the shared domain of interest and competence is teaching and learning; although, as Wenger (2006) argues, a group of educators only make up a community of practice if they are all wholeheartedly committed to education.

**Community.** Wenger (2006) writes, “in pursuing their interest in the domain, members engage in joint activities and discussions, help each other, and share information. They build
relationships that enable them to learn from each other” (p. 2). Arguably, not all schools meet Wenger’s (2006) second characteristic, as he emphasizes that members — in this case, educators — must engage and share with each other. Indeed, they must learn from each other. The community characteristic is thus reminiscent of Palmer (2007), who argues that educators do not form *a priori* communities simply on the basis that they are all educators. Rather, Palmer (2007) argues, only self-aware educators create authentic community, as their self-awareness allows them to participate in an exchange of sharing and learning. Similarly, Wenger (2006) attests that members must be open to learning from each other to be a community of practice.

**Practice.** Wenger (2006) writes, “a community of practice is not merely a community of interest — people who like certain kinds of movies, for instance” (p. 2). As the name suggests, “members of a community of practice are practitioners. They develop a shared repertoire of resources: experiences, stories, tools, ways of addressing recurring problems — in short a shared practice. This takes time and sustained interaction” (Wenger, 2006, p. 2). A school’s teaching staff meets the first part of this criteria by its very existence, as all teachers are indeed trained practitioners and, if they work in the same school, they inevitably participate in some shared practice. In some schools, though, teachers do not openly share their tools and experiences, and some teachers even avoid sustained interaction with their colleagues. As such, as with domain and community, the practice characteristic applies to some schools but may not apply to others.

**Variables.** Finally, Wenger (2006) suggests that communities of practice exist across a variety of domains, such as government, educational bodies, grassroots organizations, and international development groups. Indeed, he argues, so long as these three characteristics exist,
communities of practice may vary in other ways: they can be small or large, local or global, novice or expert, formal or informal (Wenger, 2006, p. 3).

**Effective private school communities.** Chubb and Moe’s “Effective Schools and Equal Opportunity” (1989) is a study of private schools motivated by the authors’ desire to make public schools more effective, especially for disadvantaged groups. Chubb and Moe (1989) argue that their informal observations led them to believe that private schools are more effective than public schools, so they undertook a comprehensive comparative study of private and public schools to determine whether private schools are indeed more effective and, if so, in what ways. Chubb and Moe (1989) compare private and public schools on the basis of five areas: external authority, staffing, principals, goals and policies, and teachers and training.

**External authority.** Chubb and Moe (1989) state that public schools are always subordinate to school boards and provincial or state authority. With the exception of private Catholic schools, which they suggest are often controlled by external administration, private schools are subject to fewer outside authorities, and even those authorities are “less demanding” in areas such as curriculum, instruction, hiring, and firing (Cubb and Moe, 1989, p. 167). Overall, they contend, private schools “have more control over their own destinies” (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 167).

**Staffing.** Chubb and Moe (1989) suggest that external bodies such as school boards and unions determine school staffing policies, and thus “restrict a school’s freedom to exercise perhaps its most significant form of control: its ability to recruit the kinds of teachers it wants and to get rid of those who do not live up to its standards” (p. 167). In contrast, private schools, almost without exception, are not unionized and do not offer tenure; where they do offer tenure,
that tenure is only available to a very small portion of teachers (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 167).

In private schools, staffing is both the right and responsibility of the principal, whereas public school principals surveyed suggest they are essentially unable to dismiss or hire teachers according to what they believe is right for their school; their hands are tied by the restrictions of board and state or provincial legislature (p. 168).

**Principals.** Chubb and Moe (1989) find that excellent principals promote excellent education. Excellent principals are those with high expectations, clear goals, strong leadership, and makes effective use of resources (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 168). Private school principals tend to meet the excellence criteria more often than their public school counterparts. Chubb and Moe (1989) suggest one reason for this is that public school principals tend to view their post as a stepping stone to a higher administrative role, perhaps at the board level, whereas private school principals view their role as the ultimate point in their educational career (p. 169). As such, private school principals have different motivations: they want to be leaders of their school because of a love for the school itself and want to contribute to its betterment (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 169).

**Goals and policies.** Public schools tend to emphasize literacy, numeracy, good work habits, and occupational skills, whereas private schools emphasize academic excellence, personal growth and fulfillment, and social skills (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 170). Of course, private schools also teach literacy and numeracy skills as well as good work habits, but they focus on more stringent and meaningful goals than public schools (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 170). Chubb and Moe (1989) also report that private school teachers “uniformly say that school goals are

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clearer and more clearly communicated by the principal,” whereas public school teachers report the opposite (p.170).

**Teachers and teacher training.** Given that there is a complicated bureaucratic hierarchy in most school boards, public school teachers generally perceive their principal as having little to no control over teacher staffing in their school. (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 170). As a result, those teachers often “reject the principal’s leadership, dissent from school goals and policies, get along poorly with their colleagues, or fail to perform acceptably in the classroom” — all the while, they must continue to work with their principal and colleagues (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 170). Private school principals, because they have more, if not total, control over hiring, are free “to recruit the kinds of teachers [they want] and weed out those [they do] not” (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 171). Consequently, private school staffs usually share common goals, values, and attitudes, and teachers have a strong incentive to maintain excellence in their classrooms. Indeed, private school principals consistently claim that their teachers are excellent and that they are confident in their abilities, and private school teachers are more likely to consider their principal supportive, encouraging, and welcoming of their contribution to the school (Chubb and Moe, 1989, p. 171).

Based on these findings, Chubb and Moe (1989) state that “it should come as no surprise” that private school staffs “are much more satisfied with their jobs, have better attendance records, and tend to work for less money. Private schools do look more like teams” (p. 171). Most importantly, they suggest that staff satisfaction, teamwork, and independence allows them to teach their students more effectively.
Conclusion

In this literature review, I explained how philosophy of education researchers writing in the 1990s agree on the importance — necessity, even — of teachers reflecting on their inner lives, but differ in their approach and goals. Where some researchers focus on the relevance of a written statement specifically (Chism, 1998; Goodyear and Allchin, 1998), some write about process of self-reflection as it affects curriculum delivery (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988; 1995), and others emphasize the reflection process itself (Palmer, 2007). Of these researchers, only one, Palmer (2007), fleshes out the relationship between self-awareness and participation in communities, both with colleagues and students.

Next, I explored how Hanvey (1976) and Pike and Selby (1988; 1995; 1999; 2000) suggest that global education emphasizes a process of going inward; much of global education is about values clarification (Simon and Clark, 1975) and perspective consciousness. But more of it is outward-focused: global education frames one’s inner life in a larger web of stewardship, citizenship, awareness, multiculturalism, holism, and participation.

Finally, I summarized relevant research on the nature of community. I drew from Wenger’s (1998; 2006) work on communities of practice, which outlines three necessary characteristics of such communities: domain, community, and practice. I also synthesized Chubb and Moe’s (1989) research on private school communities, which focuses on the team aspect of private school staffs.

With these researchers in mind, I investigate and analyze my participants’ self-perceptions of their teaching philosophies, their thoughts on a shared global education vision, and their integration within their private school’s community of practice. Going forward, I use the above
research to contextualize and understand Norton's teachers’ experiences as part of a larger framework of philosophy of education and community. Ultimately, I also use my interview findings to problematize some of the existing literature by pointing out gaps in research, and thus offer implications and recommendations for further study based on Norton’s teachers’ narratives.
Chapter Three

Research Methodology

Procedure

This research study on the experiences of educators at a global education school is qualitative in nature. I followed a two-step procedure to collect data and arrive at my findings: first, I undertook a literature review of fundamental and relevant research in my field of study, and second, I conducted standardized open-ended interviews with three educators currently teaching at the school in question.

In the literature review process, I examined theorists and educators who have been instrumental in building the fields of philosophy of education, global education, and schools as communities of practice. Subsequently, I developed a series of interview questions that reflected my literature review data (see Appendix A for interview questions). Having completed a practice teaching block and numerous volunteer hours at my case study school, I also relied on my own observations and experiences to develop relevant interview questions. I then recruited three educators within the school based primarily on how long they had been teaching at the school and on their roles and responsibilities within the school. I completed 40 minute consensual face-to-face interviews with each participant, which I recorded via iPhone software (see Appendix B for consent letter). Afterward, I transcribed and coded each interview and compared participant responses to produce a set of thematically-categorized findings. In these interviews, I also collected information on Norton’s founding and background. I then contextualized through the lens of the literature review in order to discuss overarching conclusions and implications of this study.
Instruments of Data Collection

To gather the most representative and relevant data for my study, I conducted three 15-question 40-minute face-to-face standardized open-ended interviews, as per Daniel W. Turner, III’s model in “Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators” (2010). According to Turner’s definition, the standardized open-ended interview is “extremely structured in terms of the wording of the questions. Participants are always asked identical questions, but the questions are worded so that responses are open-ended” (Turner, 2010, p. 756). Turner (2010) explains that the juxtaposition of structured-yet-open-ended questions “allows the participants to contribute as much detailed information as they desire” (p. 756). Thus, I chose the standardized open-ended interview format to gather the richest and most authentic narrative responses from my participants. As I have a small sample size (three participants), I gathered as much depth and breadth of data from each participant as possible.

I also selected this interview format because it ensured that I highlighted my participants’ voices during the interviews via the pre-determined question structure. I was especially sensitive to this aspect of the data collection because I know all three participants both personally and professionally from my time as a student teacher and a volunteer at their school. As Terry Wellington describes in “Dealing with Quantitative Data” (2000), researchers often bring a certain level of a priori expectation to the research process; he explains that, though we, as researchers, do not like to admit it, it is difficult for us to approach research as a blank slate. While Wellington (2000) speaks specifically to the coding and analysis stages of research, I took his words to heart during the interview phase as well; I felt especially vulnerable to bringing a priori expectations to my research and, while I acknowledge that it is impossible for me as a
researcher to eliminate all bias from my research, I felt it important to plan my interviews so that they would showcase my participants’ voices as opposed to my own.

**Participants**

Note that I use pseudonyms throughout this paper to refer to the participants, the principal and founder of the school, other school staff, and for the school itself.

I selected the three participants, Marianne, Hilda, and Edna, based on the principles John W. Creswell outlines in *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design: Choosing Among the Five Traditions* (2012). According to Creswell (2012), when a researcher studies lived experiences of individuals in relation to a specific concept or phenomenon, all participants in the study need to have experienced the concept in question, thus forming a “common understanding” for the research (p. 62). Creswell (2012) adds, however, that while these participants should all have experience with the concept in question, they should represent a “purposeful...sampling” of people with “different perspectives on the problem, process or event” being studied (p. 75).

Given that my research focuses on the experiences of educators at one particular school, all possible participants met Creswell’s (2012) criteria of having experienced the concept of study — in this case, the concept is the experience of working at Norton, a global education school. To ensure that the participants could speak knowledgeably and in detail to that shared experience, I selected the three educators who have been teaching at Norton the longest: Edna and Hilda each have over five years’ teaching experience at the school, and Marianne has been there since its founding in 2000.
To meet Creswell’s (2012) criteria that participants represent different perspectives, I also considered factors such as responsibilities within the school, subjects taught, grades taught, and life experiences.

- Responsibilities: my participants represent a variety of levels of responsibility within the school. Hilda is both a teacher and the vice-principal of the school. Marianne acts as support to Hilda, especially when the school is in need of extra administrative help, such as during Gertrude’s sabbatical. Marianne is also Lead Teacher of the Intermediate School. Edna is Lead Teacher of the Junior School.

- Subjects taught: my participants teach a variety of subjects at Norton. Currently, Hilda teaches philosophy and English, Marianne teaches history, theatre, and visual art, and Edna teaches English, math, science, and social studies.

- Grades taught: my participants currently teach at different grade levels in the school. Because she is the sole theatre teacher at Norton, Marianne teaches all students from grades 3 - 8. Edna teaches Grades 3, 4, 6, 7, and Hilda teaches Grade 8.

- Life experiences: each of my participants came to teaching in a different way. Hilda holds a PhD and worked as a researcher before getting her teaching certification and working at Norton. Marianne has no teaching certification, but was trained in the performing arts. She runs her own theatre company, through which she delivered workshops to public schools. She met Gertrude through one of these workshops and has been teaching at Norton since then. Edna followed the most traditional path to teaching: she always knew she wanted to be a teacher, so she completed her teaching certification immediately after her undergraduate degree and has been teaching ever since.
Prior to approaching the participants to request their involvement in this study, I met with Hilda and Gertrude, vice-principal and principal respectively, to receive their permission to go forward with the case study. With their blessing, and given my involvement with Norton, I was able to use my prior knowledge of the staff to determine which teachers would be best suited as participants. I then asked each of the three participants in person and, upon their agreement, provided them with a copy of the interview questions and with an informational consent letter for them to read and sign. They were informed that the interviews would be approximately 40 minutes in length and would be recorded with iPhone software. Each interview took place at Norton outside of classroom time (i.e. during prep periods, before or after school, etc).

I also asked Gertrude, the principal and founder of the school, to participate in my study. Unfortunately, we were unable to find a mutually convenient time for the interview given the simultaneous demands of her work as principal and as a PhD student. She was also on sabbatical during crucial portions of this research study, rendering her unavailable for participation. I address the implications of her absence from this study later in this chapter.

Data Analysis

With my interviews completed, I transferred the recorded files from my iPhone to my laptop. I listened to and transcribed each interview using Transcriptions, a free transcription software available for download online that allowed me to increase voice volume, decrease rate of speech, and pause / replay the recording based on timestamps. Transcriptions allowed me to type into a word processor while simultaneously having control of the voice recording. Once I finished transcribing, I listened to the interviews again while proofreading the transcriptions.
I then coded my data as per Turner’s “Qualitative interview design: A practical guide for novice investigators” (2010). Turner (2010) writes,

the researcher must make ‘sense’ out of what was just uncovered and compile the data into sections or groups of information, also known as themes or codes. These themes or codes are consistent phrases, expressions, or ideas that were common among research participants. (p. 759)

Turner (2010) states that all researchers formulate themes and codes differently based on their preferences. I coded my interview data descriptively within my word processor by using different colours to mark code in each interview. I applied the same colour-coding across interviews. I then collated the data by compiling matching codes under broader categories and those categories into general themes. I started a new word processing document for each theme and copied / pasted the data from each interview relevant to the categories and codes under that theme’s umbrella. Finally, I reviewed the data from each theme in relation to the literature I had reviewed so to prepare my study’s findings and analyses.

**Ethical Review Procedures**

This study followed the Ethical Review Procedures of the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto. As such, each participant was given a consent form and introductory letter that contained all the ethical information relevant to their participation in my study. I read through both the letter and the form with each participant prior to their signing it, and gave each participant the opportunity to ask questions about the interview process or the research study as a whole. They had no such questions. Prior to signing the form, I also requested
a verbal confirmation from each participant that they understood both the topic of study and their role in my research.

Prior to the interview, I assured all participants that no one will be privy to their personal information besides myself, my research supervisor, and one of my professors who supervised my research course. I have protected their anonymity in this study through the use of pseudonyms and by changing the name of any project, student, school, or colleague that they mentioned during their interview. I also stressed that their participation in my study was completely voluntary, and that they were welcome to opt-out of individual questions or the entire study itself without consequence. I also reminded them that they were welcome to ask questions, including clarification of my interview questions, at any time throughout the process.

The interviews themselves took place with each individual participant one-by-one and face-to-face at both a location and time of their choosing. All participants met at Norton at a time when they were not teaching and out of earshot of other staff and students. I tape-recorded all interviews for later transcription and reminded them of such prior to turning on the recording software. I ensured the participants that the recordings and their transcriptions would be kept under password protection at all times.

Limitations

This study has limited generalizability. The opinions, experiences, and narratives in my study are reflective only of a small sample size of three at one specific school and thus do not necessarily reflect the diversity of opinions, experiences, and narratives present within the educational community. I do not use this study to make claims about pedagogical practice in other schools, cities, or nations, or to make claims about pedagogical practice writ large.
This study is also limited in perspective. I have interviewed two teachers and one teacher-administrator but was not able to interview the principal and founder of the school, nor did I interview parents, students, new teachers at the school, ex-teachers of the school, or student teachers with experience at the school. My research thus does not reflect the various insights that those groups might bring.
Chapter Four

Findings

I open my findings section with a brief description of Norton, as told by my participants, including current details (e.g. student population, grades taught) and the story of its founding. Next, the primary focus of this section will be my findings. I separate my exploration and analysis of these findings into four sections: first, “On Knowing Yourself and Building a Community of Practice,” for data about the role of the participants, students, and colleagues at Norton; second, “On Articulating a Global Education Philosophy” for information specifically relating to philosophy of teaching and global education; third, “On Practicing What You Preach” for details of ways the participants infuse their philosophy in their classrooms and extracurricular responsibilities; and fourth, “On Envisioning the Future” which reviews participants’ visions for their students once the latter graduate and move on from Norton. Throughout this section, I contextualize my findings through connections to the literature as appropriate.

Background of The Norton School

Norton was founded in 2000 by Gertrude, a public school teacher in Toronto at the time. Marianne, who has been teaching at Norton since its founding, tells of how Norton came to be. At the time, Marianne was working in Toronto schools through a theatre program she built. She said, “I built a curriculum and I went around from school to school basically pitching to them about how I could teach a program that would...give professional development for the teachers” in drama. Gertrude was one of the teachers taking Marianne’s professional development training. Of her first interaction with Gertrude, Marianne said:
I was in the staff room and no one was really talking to me...so I was like, okay, I’m the new kid on the block, no big deal. And she comes running in and she’s like, “I’ve got a list of things, these things I’d like to cover in our class — I’d like to write a play. What do you think about that?”...And she was the first [teacher] that seemed to be interested in creation, not just making sure we were meeting the expectations [but going] beyond them and [creating].

Once they started working together in Gertrude’s class, Marianne noted that Gertrude’s teaching was different than that of others: “she allowed them to have the freedom to express [themselves],” she said, and “in comparison to the other teachers, I was like, wow, she is really impressive.” But Marianne noticed that the other teachers on staff at the school were unhappy “because [Gertrude] could really connect to these kids.” Gertrude also realized that the other teachers were unhappy, which left her feeling constrained by her work environment. Soon after meeting Marianne, Gertrude approached her in the library and asked her to start a school with her. Marianne recalled Gertrude saying to her,

I’m starting up this school...I’m going to try a leave of absence and give it a whirl. I’m gonna do it because if I don’t do it, then am I going to be here forever?...I need to create and use my philosophy of education and put it into practice.

Marianne added, “it’s not that she couldn’t there, it’s just that there were limitations to that because not everyone was teaching in that way.” Finally, Marianne concluded, “I was 25 or 26, I was up for a startup, I was good for that...So I went on board.” The following September, Marianne and Gertrude opened Norton in the basement of an old church building in a Toronto neighbourhood. Gertrude had been teaching Grade 6, so Norton’s first class was made up of 14
students who had graduated from her Grade 6 class and were moving into Grade 7. The school added Grade 8 the following year and operated as an intermediate school for a few years before expanding to include junior grades.

Today, the school offers Grade 1-8 and has approximately 100 students. Grade 1-3 students have a primary generalist teacher for core subjects and specialists for French, theatre, and physical education. Grade 4-8 students are on a rotary schedule and see specialists for all subjects.

**Key Findings**

**On knowing yourself and building a community of practice.** This section focuses on what the participants say about the people at Norton: their fellow teachers, the principal, and their students. I also include their reflections on how and why they first started teaching at Norton.

**Participants.** My participants all reflected on how they became teachers in general, and at Norton specifically. Their reflections model a practice of self-searching and awareness that Palmer (2007), Chism (1998), and Goodyear and Allchin (1998) all call for in determining a philosophy of teaching. As I wrote in the previous section, “Background of The Norton School,” Marianne came to teaching through her professional development workshops on theatre for public school teachers. After finishing her undergraduate degree in English and theatre studies, she started a theatre company and taught workshops across the GTA. She met Gertrude through one such workshop and joined her as she opened Norton in 2000. That first year, Marianne said, she “started off teaching global studies, a bit of creative writing, art, and theatre.” As the school grew over the years, she also taught debate and community circle, and started teaching “the
younger grades” (i.e. Grades 3-6 on top of the Grade 7-8 she was already teaching). Finally, “within the past...5 years,” she said, “I’ve been able to teach my real passion...my passions for teaching: theatre and art and history. So it’s quite nice that I get to specialize in what I love so much.”

For Marianne to comment that she is happy to teach her “real passions” (i.e. theatre, art, and history), she must have reflected on her interests to know what it is she is passionate about. Her answer addressed some of Goodyear and Allchin’s (1998) process of self-reflection, which includes thinking about what subjects one values as an educator and why one values them. Indeed, she went a step further: as Marianne reflected on herself as a teacher, her language mentioned her passions and loves in the classroom. As she stated, she [looks] into [herself] as a teacher, as a person, as a friend, as everything.” To borrow Palmer’s (2007) language, Marianne thinks about the “who”, or the self, that teaches, not just why or what she teaches. Her knowledge of what she loves and is passionate about ultimately leads to her increased happiness in the classroom, as she has been able to focus her attention on those things over time.

Edna’s comments on becoming a teacher also demonstrate a process of turning inward to reflect on her experiences and beliefs. On becoming a teacher, she said:

I have wanted to be a teacher since I was 4. My junior kindergarten teacher read *The Very Hungry Caterpillar* and I just have this vivid memory of looking up at her reading it and thinking, I want to be you when I grow up. The fire lit within me and...I’ve never wanted to be anything else.
Immediately, Edna addressed the same important questions as Marianne: those of who she is and why she teaches. In fact, Edna pointed to a specific moment that propelled her into education — a moment she holds dear decades after the fact.

Edna continued by sharing the details of her arrival at Norton. In 2001, while completing her concurrent education program in Ontario, she had her first student teaching placement at Norton. At the time, the school had approximately 30 students, and Marianne and Gertrude were her mentor teachers. Edna described, “I instantly felt that I was at home” at Norton. She adds, [Norton] mirrors at an intrinsic level what I feel education should be, what feel it always should’ve been, and it exists, it doesn’t have to be a theoretical concept anymore — it’s actually modeled...[and] executed. That was baffling for me when I first came in, and at the time I was still in teachers college so...I was just learning the language to articulate it. But I know that I felt inside, “okay, why does this make total sense?”

Edna explained that what made sense to her was “the sense of accountability and integrity” Norton fosters in its students, along with the “community centered” approach where both teachers and students “feel like [they’re in] a second home where they can grow.”

While Edna acknowledged that she may not have known the correct language to articulate what she first experienced at Norton, she did know immediately that it was the right place for her because it mirrored her own focus on accountability, integrity, and community. She thus spoke to her values and beliefs, which Chism (1998) and Goodyear and Allchin (1998) argue are key to understanding oneself as an educator. During her student teaching placement at Norton, she was aware of her personal vision for education and she was able to identify the practical model of that vision at Norton. As a result, she felt at home — and, she argued, so do Norton’s students.
Gertrude offered Edna a job as soon as she finished teachers college in 2006, in large part because of their shared values. Today, Edna is one of the school’s primary generalist core teachers as well as the Grade 6-7 English teacher.

Finally, there is Hilda, who “came to teaching late in life,” though she admitted she “always wanted to be a teacher.” She described how she was discouraged by the people in her life to follow a different path: to become a professor, lawyer, doctor, or journalist. “So I shelved it,” she said of teaching, “and I thought, oh, I would be bored, I would be frustrated in this job. I didn’t really know what I wanted to do, so I did a PhD in history.” Hilda spent a long time in academia, as she “kept getting pulled back into that world” — that is, until she had a daughter, at which point she left her research job. Eventually, she started volunteering at her daughter’s alternative school:

I was just there so much and I enjoyed it so much....And my husband said to me, ‘if you could do anything every day what you do?’ and I said ‘I would teach’...so I went back and I did [my Master of Teaching] and I just loved it.

Similar to Edna, Hilda first came to Norton as a student teacher, and Marianne was her mentor at that time. After that, Hilda recalled, she did all three of her remaining placements at Norton and was offered a job at the end of her final year at OISE/UT. Today, Hilda is Norton’s vice-principal and Grade 8 English and philosophy teacher.

Like Edna and Marianne, Hilda’s comments on becoming a teacher illustrate her process of self-reflection. In fact, Hilda said she denied her inner truth for a long time due to the negative interference of others in her life; while she always wanted to be a teacher, she did not pursue her goal immediately. At last, when her husband asked her what she would do every day if she could
do anything, she admitted that she desired to teach. And she has loved it ever since. Hilda’s path
to teaching — and her reflection on that path — speaks to Palmer’s (2007) argument that one is
happiest and most fulfilled when pursuing one’s most authentic goals and visions.

Hilda also said that she kept coming back to Norton, and ultimately started working there,
because “it felt like home.” She described,

I felt here that I could really spread my wings. I felt that in other environments that I'd been
in...I had to dumb myself down...so that I didn't intimidate people. Here I didn't have to do
that, I really just let loose with the full force of my personality and my intellect and all my
life experience and they loved it, you know, rather than being put off by it...I didn't have to
edit myself here...I felt that this was...one of the first places ever in my life...where I could
actually be myself and be rewarded for that rather than offending people or putting them
off.

Hilda knows who she is and feels that Norton accepts her; her colleagues embrace her
personality, her intellect, and her life experiences. In essence, Hilda knows herself, shares herself
with “full force” to her colleagues, and is ultimately rewarded for who she is. Hilda connects
respecting her desire to become a teacher, knowing herself, sharing herself with her colleagues,
and being rewarded with acceptance and community. Her experience thus supports Parker’s
(2007) claim that self-exploration — and acting upon that exploration — leads educators to a
community of acceptance and sharing.

**Staff.** As Hilda, Marianne, and Edna illustrate, their educational practice is one of self-
awareness and reflection. They explained that they stay at Norton because it feels like home;
they see in the school a reflection of their visions and values. Hilda credited much of that feeling
of being home with the relationship she has with her colleagues, who embrace her and generally share her values and vision.

Marianne also spoke about Norton’s staff, especially in comparison to other staffs. She said, “it’s very different than other schools that I’ve worked in” where “nobody really talked to each other in the staff room” and there was “such a disconnect” between teachers. She observed that teaching in other schools was like being “on an island” and “fending for yourself.” Hilda described a similar experience of other schools. She said, “I really had the impression in other schools I’ve been in that the teachers didn’t really like each other very much. There was factionalism, this person didn’t speak to this person, this person was disgruntled about this.” Edna echoed their sentiments, stating that other teachers in her life complain about “the high school nature, almost drama, of being on a staff.”

The participants’ descriptions of other teaching communities they’ve experienced highlights what Parker (2007) suggests happens when educators do not undertake processes of self-exploration: teachers remain isolated within the four walls of their classroom — their castle — and do not share resources, tools, stories, successes, and challenges with their colleagues because they do not share their personal selves. Similarly, Goodyear and Allchin (1988) describe that meaningful team goal clarification and scholarly dialogue only occurs after educators understand their teaching philosophy, share it with others, and understand that of their colleagues.

In contrast, the self-aware educators at Norton are able to overcome the isolation of the classroom and successfully open their doors (and hearts and minds) to one another. Marianne described,
[at Norton] we all have our subjects, our classrooms, we run our curriculum and our programs, but we also have the mindset that we’re all working together at the same time. So decisions are all made together...We work as a community....If someone is sick, people cover classes....We help each other out. It’s just a real sense of camaraderie, a real sense of family.

She added that part of what makes Norton’s staff harmonious is that they acknowledge and share their strengths and challenges with each other. Marianne said, “everybody knows what each person has a gift for and they applaud it and they support it and they honour it.” Similarly, Edna said that Norton’s teachers all have gifts and suggested that this helps her be her best self. She stated that she is “working with some of the best teachers” and that she is “constantly challenged and fueled...by the community of teachers that I work with, and I think that’s so important.”

Marianne and Edna described how Norton’s educators are a family, or community, of passionate, gifted people working harmoniously toward the goal of teaching Norton’s students. The teachers honour and support each other, which allows them to teach harmoniously across their various subjects and classrooms. They state that Norton is a community of practice where other schools, in their experience, are not. In fact, Marianne and Edna’s statements suggest their community exceeds the fundamentals Wenger (2006) outlines. Not only are they competent practitioners of the same domain, they are excellent, challenging, impassioned ones. They do not just share tools and resources, but major decisions and a family-like support system as well.

Hilda suggested that one of the primary reasons that Norton’s teachers are not “[pitted] against each other” is Gertrude, the principal and founder. Of Gertrude, Hilda said,
[she] rewards extraordinary effort and extraordinary skill and ability and doesn't see it as a threat...She manages to set up an environment where you're not [pitted] against each other, and I don't know how that is, I don't know it's possible that everyone can be a star here, but somehow you can be a star, and that doesn't necessarily diminish anyone else's light.

She added that she was not certain about why or how that is, but she was certain that “for the most part...we're all for one another as well for ourselves,” and that Gertrude has much to do with that. Marianne agreed about Gertrude’s influence, and said that Gertrude is always there to help support the teachers in their development as educators and as a community. If ever Marianne has a problem, she knows she can go to Gertrude, and “Gertrude will say, ‘what do you need to do to fix it?’ or ‘what support do you need from me?’” thus encouraging Marianne to analyze the situation and to find ways that both she and Gertrude can help solve the issue.

Hilda and Marianne’s comments about Gertrude echo Palmer (2007), Wenger (2006), and Chubb and Moe’s (1989) assertions on the nature of leadership in successful communities. Palmer (2007) argues that leaders must believe in the value of an educator’s inner life and must model the practice of self-exploration to their staff members. Indeed, Gertrude asks her teachers to write a statement of teaching philosophy when they start teaching at Norton: the teachers write one paragraph about their philosophy, share it with her, and keep a hard copy for themselves. Gertrude encourages her teachers to revisit that philosophy every 10 years — to reflect on it, to expand it, and to learn from it. The participants’ comments support Palmer’s (2007) belief that principals play an important role in helping teachers express who they are within meaningful communities and Wenger’s (2006) assertion that communities of practice must have a strong, competent, open leader at their helm. Finally, Gertrude’s encouragement of and belief in her
staff’s excellence, and Hilda and Marianne’s admiration of Gertrude for this, supports Chubb and Moe’s (1989) claim that private school principals tend to be strong and confident leaders who inspire excellence and confidence in their teachers.

Chubb and Moe (1989) also argue that private school teachers have a meaningful say in school governance and decision-making, in part due to a principal’s trust in her chosen staff members. Marianne’s description of Norton’s leadership model supports Chubb and Moe’s (1989) argument. According to Marianne, Norton’s teachers take a “collective approach” to discipline and school policies such as dress code, late arrival, and homework completion. She said,

we try and come from the same level so that we’re speaking the same language to our students, so they know in this school you can’t skirt the issue, you can’t go fall into the cracks and just get by. All the teachers are going to be meeting you with the same story, with the same way of doing things.

Hence, Norton’s strong community of practice results in a shared approach to school policies, which Marianne suggested leads to consistency for the students. In fact, she claimed that their collective approach means that students cannot fall through the cracks; if the teachers share an approach to policies and students, they also share knowledge of what is going on with those students. Thankfully, as per Chubb and Moe (1989), Gertrude as a principal encourages — indeed, expects — a collective approach to school policy and discipline, and, Marianne adds, to leadership in general. She explained,

we have a shared leadership model...where everyone takes on different roles to run the school, so the administration and the teaching staff are working together very closely so
everyone feels like they have a part of the running of the school, the teaching of the children, and the connection to parents.

Because Gertrude runs a private school, she has the freedom from external authority and pre-determined hierarchical administration models to allow for a shared leadership approach. Certainly, Gertrude’s position as principal and Hilda’s position as vice-principal give them authority and responsibilities that the teachers do not share — a necessary component of the community of practice, Wenger argues (2006). Moreover, Norton seems to strike a balance between the necessity of having a clear leader of the community and the freedom to bring teachers into leadership roles and the decision-making process. Ultimately, the participants credited Gertrude with much of Norton’s success in doing so.

Of course, their strong self-awareness, community of practice, and shared trust and leadership does not shield them from conflict. Hilda explained that she and Gertrude sometimes disagree:

Gertrude and I don’t always have the easiest relationship. We’re both very opinionated and we’ve had a couple of really knockdown, drag-out fights about different aspects of life and the school. But at the same time, I think the freedom to have those arguments and also the capacity to care so passionately about it all is...a gift. It’s a huge privilege.

While there may be conflict, Hilda stated that it is productive: indeed, it is a gift and a privilege to be able to speak her mind openly, even when it leads to arguments about the school. Hilda indicated that Gertrude is open to hearing conflicting opinions and engaging in arguments where necessary. Gertrude is a leader who accepts and encourages dissenting opinions, because she sincerely wants what is best for Norton; in fact, it is sometimes through such disagreements that
the staff realizes and decides what is best. Hilda’s comments support Chubb and Moe’s (1989) conclusions that private school principals are open to engaging in conversations and conflict about their school; moreover, private school principals tend to be open because they take leadership positions with the good of the school, and not of their careers, in mind.

Marianne agreed that with a sense of family comes a sense of openness to speak one’s mind. She described how conflicts sometimes arise amongst staff members:

some days you have to call someone out on things that may not be working and sometimes it’s really difficult because you really genuinely care for the people you’re working with...We’re all human, right? Sometimes you run into things where you might feel that you’re not supported on something.

Thankfully, she concluded, the great thing about Norton’s community is how it handles those conflicts. Marianne said that the openness and connectedness of their staff means that teachers can “talk about it and work through it” when such conflicts arise.

Edna made a similar comment about Norton’s approach to conflict, stating:

We’re all different, we all have different personalities. There's times when we don't agree with each other....We're always supportive of each other. Even if we don't agree at all times, there's a respect there — there's a respect that we're all bringing something to the table. We listen to each other, we try and be honest with each other, and that honesty, that integrity, the fact that everybody here is so authentic allows for...”

Edna let her sentence hang for a moment. She came back,

You know what it is? There's no ego. Because it's about the kids. There is no ego in education, or there shouldn't be. And there is in other places, unfortunately. Not
everywhere, but there are places. I think that's what works so well here is that there is none, it's about the kids....There's going to be times when things are different or there are disagreements, but at the centre, we all have the same philosophy, the same core, we all have the same motive — which is to be there for the kids — we all have the same love and passion for teaching, and that unifies us. And that unification is stronger than any sort of disagreement or anything.

Like Hilda, Marianne and Edna suggested that Norton’s environment encourages openness and honesty required in articulating their feelings — even if that articulation causes conflict. Edna’s extended comment about Norton connects back to the philosophy of education movement’s (Palmer, 2007; Chism, 1998; Goodyear and Allchin; 1998) focus on values and goals. Norton’s teachers know and share their “centre” — a core philosophy — that focuses and drives them toward a shared goal: “to be there for the kids.” As a result, she claimed, Norton’s teachers are able to put their selfishness aside to pursue the larger community’s goal, which is to serve the students. Hilda also said that being a teacher at Norton has taught her to put her ego aside in order to prioritize the needs of the community, especially the students. Marianne similarly states that Norton has taught her “to be less selfish”; their community of practice has both a shared domain and a shared valuation of their students, which has taught her to stop saying “look at me! look at me!” and realize the importance of saying “look at us! look at what we can do, together....in teaching these children!” Overall, Norton’s staff is successful in overcoming conflict both because Gertrude opens the door for various opinions and conversations, and because the teachers are unified in their self and shared awareness of their passion and love for their students.
**Students.** In speaking of their community of practice, the participants suggested that they are unified by their shared focus on their students. Hilda also suggested that, in building a strong community of practice, she hoped the students would have a model to do the same amongst themselves. “I think that’s what we do for the kids,” she stated, referring to her comment that everyone can be a star without diminishing others’ light. She also described the students as “refugees from the public system”:

French Immersion is a big [category] [because we have] kids who’ve been labeled as learning disabled because they can’t function in a second language in math; kids who have been bullied; a couple of kids who’ve already identified as gay and who were treated very horribly in other situations. Kids who have a real light, they’re really looking for that place where they can be themselves and can’t do it in a regular classroom.

In this statement, Hilda’s language echoed her comments about what she feels at Norton; it is a school where students, just as teachers, come to be themselves. She also specified that Norton’s students typically seek refuge from the public system, which is harsh for them in some way; some come to Norton from French Immersion labeled as learning disabled even though their learning challenge is the language itself, some are openly gay, and many of them are survivors of bullying. Hilda’s comment supports the philosophy of education movement’s claim that self-aware teachers and, by extension, self-aware teacher communities are beneficial and rewarding for students (Palmer, 2007; Chism, 1998; Goodyear and Allchin, 1998). In addition, she claims that Norton’s open teacher community is a model for an open student community; not only do the students benefit from good teaching that comes from reflective teachers, but they also benefit by building an open and accepting community of their own.
Marianne also likened the experience of being a student at Norton to that of being a teacher there. Just as the teachers must be self-aware and embrace multiple perspectives, so too must the students. “The school is about figuring out who you are as a learner and how you’re learning for life,” which includes exposure to “different types of learning styles...different ways of analyzing and understanding, gathering information” — and the students must be open to these differences to thrive within the community.

As such, Marianne supports Hilda’s claim that the students engage in a supportive and varied community, similarly to their teachers. In fact, Marianne said that the teachers’ journey of self-reflection and knowledge is mirrored in their students, who must also undertake the metacognitive process of inner reflection to determine their learning style, preferences, passions, and challenges. Ultimately, Norton’s teachers seek to mirror their community of practice within their students, so that their students work within a common domain of both the classroom and extracurriculars; they share with, discuss with, and help each other; and they build a common repertoire of tools, experiences, and strategies to approach the classroom and extracurriculars. While Wenger’s (2006) model does address education, it focuses on the possibilities of a teaching community of practice; what Norton shows is that such a can exist amongst students as well. Ultimately, it is both the teacher and the student community of practice together that allow for Norton’s success in maintaining a common global education philosophy.

**On articulating a global education philosophy.** The participants all explained Norton’s global education philosophy in their own words, and their language often echoed Hanvey (1976), Pike and Selby (1988; 1995; 1999; 2000), and Clark and Simon (1975). They agree that they
personally believed in the tenets of global education before arriving at Norton. They also spoke to the evolution of global education at Norton over time.

**Personal meets communal.** Hilda stated that, first and foremost, global education is a philosophy that was inside her personally before she discovered it professional. On first reading about global education upon coming to Norton as a student teacher, she said, “I didn’t even know that there was a philosophy of education that I agreed with...And Gertrude always says that it speaks through you”; moreover, teachers who feel at home in Norton’s global education community are those whose teaching philosophy aligns with global education, whether they are aware of it or not. Similarly, Marianne suggested that she feels she “intuitively” connects to the global education philosophy: that it is the only way she knows how to teach. Edna agreed, “global ed lives through you, it’s part of you, you come in with it as part of your own philosophy, even if you can’t put words to it at the time.” The participants’ experiences are what make Norton such a meaningful case study: they all suggest that they not only hold personal teaching philosophies, as per Palmer (2007), Chism (1988), and Goodyear and Allchin (1998), but a communal teaching philosophy as well. That communal philosophy, global education, speaks to the same principles they already had before teaching at Norton, though perhaps they were unaware of the connection beforehand.

**Definition.** Edna provided a comprehensive definition of global education. She explained it as,

the idea of perspective-driven lessons where you're looking at all the different views within the world, but also looking at your own perspectives, looking at your own values, and clarifying what those values are — especially as a child when your identity's growing. It’s
being able to bounce those ideas back and forth between you and the world, to see connections....There is a sense of accountability with our role in our families, with our role with our friends, with our role in the world, with our role as a part of the global community. That sense of accountability and integrity, if it can be harnessed and supported at such an early age, because children are so passionate, then that passion leads into adulthood. I love the sense of the social responsibility that we look at things that kids feel passionate about or that kids feel bothered by, that we're not afraid to look at controversy, and to have students navigate through that controversy on their own because they see it in such a different way. We help guide them towards being accountable — what does accountability mean? what does integrity mean? how do you act respectfully?...Then they take those skills with them...I call it the life toolbox...and go out into the world, and they're game changers, because people who act with integrity as leaders of corporations, people who act with compassion — that changes everything... We look at the past, present, and future...we consider where we've come from, and where other people come from, and how that impacts our decisions now and how that's impacting what will happen to the world.

Edna thus touched upon Hanvey’s (1976) principles, as she focused on student perspective, awareness, and participation. Her terms, such as accountability, integrity, respect, and compassion, reflect Pike and Selby’s (1988) focus on the development of social skill through global education; as both Edna and Pike and Selby (1988) define it, global education should help students become people who are both kind and aware of the world around them. Finally, Edna also mentioned some of Pike and Selby’s (1988) five necessary dimensions of global education: she spoke about bringing up topics the students feel passionate about, even if controversial,
which covers the issues dimension; she also concluded with the temporal perspective of past, present, and future; and her focus on participation echoes their human potential dimension.

Hilda stated that global education is,

holistic, so it's the whole child, and...from our perspective the whole child is intellectual, physical, social, and more. We have to address all of those aspects and I think we do, and I think that that's what the word "global" really means to us - it's all the parts of the human being plus the interconnectedness with the world. So you can't judge your actions solely on the basis of how it affects you, you have to look at yourself as part of a larger web of existence. So I think that the global education part of our school is about that global self and then also the vision of the self as part of the global web at the same time.

Hilda emphasized the systemic paradigmatic aspect of global education (Pike and Selby, 1998). She spoke mostly to the importance of holism and interconnectedness and provided the image of the world as web, just as Pike and Selby do in *Global Teacher, Global Learner* (1998). She also mentioned students learning to judge their actions based on the range of effects those actions may have on a variety of people, places, and things, and thus highlighted the human potential dimension of global education (Pike and Selby, 1988).

Similarly to both Hilda and Edna, Marianne said the purpose of global education is, definitely to teach children how to look critically at the world, at issues, and see how they are, how everything is connected to those issues, and ultimately see how they, if connected to them, can find a way to evoke some kind of change or awareness. Global education is really about taking the fundamentals or foundations of learning in math, English, science,
and... extending upon it and allowing them to feel like they're personally attached to it, so there's a feeling of attachment to the learning, a feeling that they are a part of the learning. Like Hilda, Marianne’s focus on connection is reminiscent of Pike and Selby’s (1988) emphasis on holism; through global education, students learn that they are interdependent beings in a larger system of the world. Like Edna, Marianne also referenced the issues-based learning of global education, which Marianne suggested can be infused throughout different subject material. Ultimately, Marianne’s goal is for her students to look critically at the world in hopes that they can participate in that world, as per Hanvey (1976) and Pike and Selby’s (1988) focus on participation and action.

Evolution over time. The participants explained that Norton’s interpretation and understanding of global education has shifted, and will continue to shift, over time. They argued that much of that has to do with the human variable; as educators refine their personal philosophy of education with experience and time, so the community’s philosophy grows and changes as well. Hilda credited the students and teachers with her development and values clarification process, stating that having discussions with them in class over her last 5 years at Norton “has really refined my own values. I’ve done a huge amount of values clarification working here, and through teaching the kids philosophy, and also through my relationships with the teachers.” Through the process of values clarification (Clark and Simon, 1975), Hilda claimed she has come to prioritize the importance of the perspectival aspect of global education, and currently focuses on facilitating values clarification in her students more often. “It’s...as much about what’s in here,” she said, referring to the inner self, as it is “about what’s out there,” meaning other cultures, the environment, and the world. Not that these things are secondary;
rather, Hilda suggested that Norton’s interpretation of global education has come to focus on developing students’ (and staff’s) perspectives on and relationships with those cultures, that environment, and that world through debates, decision-making, philosophy, and discussion.

Marianne argued that Norton’s approach evolves as new members join their staff. She said that Norton’s global education philosophy is, “enriched and bigger and stronger and more beautiful because of all the people coming in” who add to the existing staff’s understanding and interpretation of the philosophy. Marianne’s view reflects Palmer’s (2007) argument that philosophies of education are inherently personal and thus evolve as people do. Edna agreed: “we all evolve, the world around us evolves, the issues evolve, we evolve as teachers, the students evolve.” By extension, then, as global education is Norton’s communal teaching philosophy, it makes sense for that communal philosophy to change as the people in the community do as well. Edna was careful to specify, however, that while their foci or approaches may evolve, their “core purpose” never changes.

Finally, Edna suggested the evolution of global education at Norton is especially apparent in classroom practice. “I think what’s evolved is our ability to infuse it,” she said, “we get better and better at infusing it in our program” every year. Edna thus emphasized that Norton’s philosophy affects curriculum and program delivery (Clandinin and Connelly, 1988; 1999).

**On practicing what you preach.** Both Marianne and Edna spoke at length about concrete applications of global education philosophy at Norton, though both admitted that it was difficult to explain because applications happens naturally all the time. Edna gave an example from her Grade 3/4 core class. While they were studying habitats and communities, they were talking about food,
and [about] eating meat and going into a discussion about the philosophy of eating meat...like how does it feel to be eating an animal? If you’re not directly killing the animal, does that mean that you’re a part of it? And then linking that to, for example, if you’re standing with a friend and not standing up for them, are you part of the situation?...We got into discussions of halal meat and kosher meat, and the fact that Hindus’ relationship with cows is sacred and why they don’t eat beef.

Edna did not plan to bring up these issues specifically, nor did she guide the students toward specific moral judgments during the lesson. Indeed, she said, the students themselves brought up these issues as a topic they felt passionate about, so why deny them the avenue to discuss, with Edna there to facilitate? The Grade 3/4 conversation is a practical example of how students engage in cross-cultural awareness, values clarification, perspective consciousness, state of the planet awareness, and issues-based learning (Hanvey, 1976; Pike and Selby, 1988). While it may be scary at times to let lessons go into controversial or unplanned territory, Edna argued that “it’s that willingness to allow for those teachable moments, allow for the perspectives to be shared” that opens the space for students to connect to each other, to themselves, and to the material. Edna added, “I never put in my opinion and I think that’s one of the great things...if I keep me out of it, then they’re not trying to please me...they’re just trying to talk about it.” For her, that allows students to work out their perspectives themselves.

Edna also provided an example from her Grade 7 English class’ novel study on John Steinbeck’s *The Pearl*. Edna explained,

when we look at a particular character in the text, we're constantly looking at all aspects of that character. [I’m] constantly asking the kids what and how they feel about the character's
actions, how they feel about how the author has depicted their actions. Just in looking at
the character, we've also been looking at the historical impact upon the book, so there's
issues of the original colonization of Mexico when the Spanish came in. And you’re
thinking, okay, Grade 7, Steinbeck...are they going to be able to handle it? But they
absolutely can. And they have so many opinions and then you can connect it
(unfortunately) to stuff that's going on today, connect it to the idea...of discrimination, of
thinking that you're better than somebody else, and how does that impact a person’s
feelings. That goes back to values clarification — how does the character feel? They
connect with the text in a way that allows them to infer and to argue with it and to feel.

Edna’s novel study brings spatial interdependence and cross-cultural awareness to her classroom
in connecting students in the GTA to Mexico, to Spain, and, by extension, to conversations about
colonization and discrimination around the world. The novel study also emphasizes how students
feel about events and characters in the novel, as well as how students infer characters might feel
about events and other characters. Thus, her novel study also focuses on perspective
consciousness and the human dimension of global education. Finally, Edna’s activity recalls and
expands upon Clandinin and Connelly’s (1988; 1999) work, as she brings not only her own
philosophy of education into the classroom but also her students’ personal narratives.

Marianne, as theatre teacher, directs Norton’s annual drama performance. She bases the
performance program on George Luskum’s concept of collective creation, wherein
a group of artists come together with a central theme. They bring their ideas and they start
off with just...an idea, then they build the structure. Then, through the collaborative
process, they create scenes, they refine them, and then refine them even more....It becomes
very meaningful to [the actors] because they've been a part of the creation. And not only is it the improvisation, but it's taking found text, and pictures, and music, and... taking things that are totally unconnected and connecting them. So that is like the model of what global ed is: it's showing how everything is connected.

Each year, Marianne uses the same principle of collective creation, which she points out mirrors global education’s principle of connectedness. The collective creation also requires interdependence amongst students because everyone works together, learns from each other, and relies on each other. “Someone in Grade 8 needs someone in Grade 3...they’re part of the story and just as important,” Marianne said, “and the Grade 3s need the Grade 8s because they look up to them...They need each other in order to make it work.” Moreover, the structure of Marianne’s theatre program inherently embodies the interdependence of global education.

Each year’s performance is also issues-based, and that issue usually relates to perspective consciousness, cultural awareness, or state of the planet awareness. Marianne stated that, at Norton, theatre is a medium,

to find a voice, to tell others about an issue that you want to educate and inform other people about. And so each year we choose something, and usually it's based on our yearly theme at our school, and this year our theme is integrity. So we use theatre as this means of sending a message. And we use the model of theatre to really help reinforce and emphasize the concept of what global education is about, and it's about empowering individuals to think critically about the world, and to try and make change [in the world].
As such, Norton’s theatre performance embodies the participatory and human potential aspect of global education; through the performance, students understand and speak out about a specific issue in hopes of creating real and lasting change in the world.

Norton does not use only the theatre performance to do so, though. Other teachers in the school simultaneously infuse the performance’s issue into their classrooms. This year, the theme is deforestation. Concurrently with the performance, other teachers at the school have supported the students in creating a petition, which they have asked parents, friends, and community members to sign. They posted it online to make it available for people outside the school community. They spent time in global studies class analyzing regional bylaws on deforestation and learning about commercial clear cutting. They also learned about the environmental and biological consequences of deforestation. Moreover, while creating the theatre performance, students are supported learning about and solving the issue. Edna said both teachers and students are driven by the question, “what kind of world do we want our children and grandchildren to live in?” because they know it is up to them to determine what that world will be like. Indeed, the entire Norton community takes responsibility for the theatre performance’s issue, and infuses it in their own projects with students as best they can. The result is a wholly interconnected and interdependent school experience for the students.

On envisioning students’ futures. The philosophy of education literature suggests that self-aware teachers carry with them a vision for what they want for their students (Chism, 1998; Palmer, 2007; Goodyear and Allchin, 1998). Indeed, not only do Norton’s educators have a vision for their students in the classroom, they also have a vision for their students once they leave Norton.
Hilda’s hope for students going forward stems from her own personal experiences in the classroom. She said, “as a kid and as a teenager...I didn’t engage and I was pegged as a problematic kid.” She continued,

it was chronic underachievement. But I didn’t know what to do because nobody taught me what to do. I don’t know, I just felt like nobody ever explained to me how it was all supposed to work. And I didn’t engage. I spent a lot of my life standing to one side making fun of everyone, mocking. A good joke was of greater value to me than anything that I could actually learn in school.

Hilda added that it was only upon starting university that she experienced what it was like to admire a teacher and to aspire to be better because of that admiration. Her experience as a late bloomer with engagement drives her vision for her students; moreover, she wants them to look at Norton’s teachers and have a model of an adult they respect and admire. Hilda wants her students to carry that model with them as they leave Norton, “so that they don’t go out into the world standing to one side mocking everything, but that they’re able to engage with the world and take it seriously and take themselves seriously.” Not only does Hilda’s philosophy contain a vision for her students, but that vision is based on Hilda’s awareness and understanding of her own student experience. As per Palmer (2007), Hilda’s self-reflection drives her to hope for better for her students; that they are more engaged and more serious about their learning than she was as a child.

Marianne hopes her students go forward knowing “how to advocate for themselves...how to solve problems, speak up for things that they feel are unjust in the world, speak for people that don’t have a voice.” She also wants them “to be able to go out and take a risk and not be afraid of
what people think.” Marianne also explained she hopes her students go forward remembering one thing she “always” says to them: “don’t be afraid to be good at what you’re doing.” She added, “because some people always put themselves down, like, ‘oh no, I’m not that good,” so she tells them, “don’t be afraid to be great! Be it! Be your great, whatever that great is!” Moreover, Marianne’s vision for her students is for them to take away the same attitude the teachers have with each other and with students: that they can — and should — all be stars without diminishing the light of others. In Pike and Selby’s (1988) terms, Marianne’s vision is for the students to embrace their human potential as agents of change in the world.

Finally, Edna’s vision is much like Marianne’s. Edna hopes her students leave feeling “passionate about something, about anything...in the world. I think passion drives us...it keeps us motivated...[not] stagnant.” She added, “if you don’t agree with something that’s going on with [the world], then [you] can do whatever [you] can in our own little ways to make change.” Her vision is thus on their human potential as well; Edna wants her students to lead issues-based lives wherein they feel passionate enough to participate in making change. Edna stated, though, that she wants them to make change in ways that are compassionate, authentic, and full of integrity. Edna’s suggestion is a familiar one: she hopes that students go out into the world and do as Palmer (2007) suggests teachers do, as Norton’s teachers clearly have done and continue to undertake. Ultimately, she wants her students to reflect on their own their inner landscape so that they come to know their own “authentic self” so that they may show that self to world.
Chapter Five

Discussion

In Chapter Four, I presented my findings and contextualized them into four themes through the lens of my literature review: “On Knowing Yourself and Building a Community of Practice,” “On Articulating a Global Education Philosophy,” “On Practicing What You Preach,” and “On Envisioning Students’ Futures.” In the first three sections of Chapter Five, “The Global Education School: Responding to the Critics,” “Seeking Refuge From the Public System,” and “Individual and Communal Constructions of Philosophies of Education,” I read across the literature and interview data to forge connections, draw conclusions, complicate some of the current research, and make recommendations for further study. In the third section, I also make recommendations for classroom practice related to teaching philosophies. Finally, I close this research paper with some concluding thoughts on what we can learn from Hilda, Marianne, and Edna.

The Global Education School: Responding to the Critics

Critics of global education, such as Schafly (1986) and Cunningham (1986), argue that global education too strongly emphasizes peace, social justice, and global political issues. They suggest that global education de-prioritizes the domestic; as Americans, they argue this is a great loss for American children, whose learning should emphasize domestic politics, religion, and traditions (Schafly, 1986). My participants’ understanding of global education suggests that these critics are both right and wrong. Undoubtedly, Hilda, Edna, and Marianne believe that global education is about peace, justice, and the political, but they certainly do not see such claims as criticism. As Edna explained, her classes are full of students wanting to bring up issues of justice...
or politics that are meaningful to them; they leave her classes with greater perspective, the
clarification (and, sometimes, complication) of their own values, and, hopefully, they leave with
the desire to take action. Similarly to my participants, the literature (Hanvey, 1976; Pike and
Selby, 1988; 1995; 1999; 2000) uses the same terms as the critics — peace, justice, politics — to
define global education, along with terms like perspective, consciousness, awareness, state of the
planet, holism, participation, and democracy. Again, these terms are positive, and communicate
the fundamental principles of the global education philosophy. The literature and the findings
thus agree with the critics’ first claim, though they understand these aspects as part of the
positive work of global education.

As for critics’ claim that global education de-prioritizes the domestic, both my participants
and the literature suggest that this is incorrect. Global education is about both the local and the
global. Marianne provided an example of how this year’s theatre performance and surrounding
cross-curricular work across the school focuses on regional deforestation. In looking at
deforestation as a local issue, Norton contextualizes that issue on a larger scale by looking at
provincial, national, and global impacts of deforestation. Norton also approaches local
deforestation by exploring cross-cultural and cross-religious relationships between humans and
nature; moreover, students become aware of what is happening in their own backyard, so to
speak, and how to approach the local deforestation problem by seeing it through a global lens. It
is not, then, that the domestic is completely removed from the curriculum; rather, global
education sees the domestic as part of a larger web of interaction and interdependence, and
contextualizes it as such (Pike and Selby, 1988). The critics are right that global education does
hierarchize domestic issues or politics as better or more important than others; but, as with the
critics’ claim that global education is about peace and social justice, my participants comments and the literature (Hanvey, 1976; Pike and Selby, 1988; 1995; 1999; 2000) suggest that contextualizing the local within a global framework is actually beneficial and, ultimately, crucial to the work of global education.

**Further study.** Because my teachers work at the same school, I cannot claim that their understanding and implementation of global education speaks for all global educators and, by extension, that all global educators press back against critics in the same way. As global education theory itself provides answers to criticism of the framework, I do think that schools following Hanvey’s (1976) as well as Pike and Selby’s (1988) dimensions necessarily reject these criticisms, though perhaps they do so in different ways. At this juncture, I wonder how different global educators perceive terms like peace, social justice, and politics, and global education more broadly. Do they press back against their critics in similar or distinct ways? If their ways are different, what are they? Case studies across global educators are necessary to create a full picture of of the global education landscape.

**Seeking Refuge From the Public System**

All three participants spoke to the nature of professional community in other schools. They agreed unanimously that their staff experiences, other than Norton’s, have been negative because of factionalism, gossip, competition, isolationism, or bureaucracy. All the schools they mentioned are public schools.

As a private school professional community, Norton is a supporting example of Chubb and Moe’s (1989) research on private schools. My participants commented on what Marianne called the “family” feel of Norton’s staff: they care for each other, they respect each other, and they
challenge each other. They also share in responsibilities and decision-making, and feel trusted and engaged throughout that process. Marianne, Edna, and Hilda agreed that disagreements sometimes arise, but the conflict resolution process is in itself productive because all Norton’s educators have the school’s interests at heart — and that, above their own interests. Finally, Marianne and Hilda emphasize Gertrude’s role as a good leader: she models what she expects, she challenges both herself and her staff to be their best, she includes them in the decision-making process, and she supports them through successes and hardships. Norton’s community thus supports Chubb and Moe’s (1989) research on private schools, which argues that private schools benefit from more cohesive staffing, better principal leadership, confidence in and inclusion of teachers across decision-making processes, and shared goals.

Just as Hilda suggested her students are refugees from the public system, it seems that Norton’s teachers are as well. Where in public school staffs, these teachers felt they had to hide, or compete, or gossip / be gossiped about, at Norton they do not experience any such negativity. The participants’ repeated references to Norton as family, as home, as a place where they can all shine without diminishing each other’s light, showcase their sense of belonging and of love in Norton’s community. Clearly, for Hilda, Marianne, and Edna, Norton is a refuge from the negativity and, at times, shaming or bullying of the public system as they experienced it.

**Further study.** As my research explores the perspectives of teachers at one particular school, I cannot argue that their experiences reflect the realities of private and public school staffs in general. I do, however, think that Hilda, Edna, and Marianne’s experiences lend additional credence to Chubb and Moe’s (1989) work; their stories, within the context of the literature on private school communities, suggest that such discrepancies between private and
public staffs still exist and are felt by teachers. At this juncture, I also wonder: how much of their well-being is attributable to working within a global education school specifically? How much is it attributable to working in a private school more generally? To what extent does it remain true today, 25 years after Chubb and Moe’s (1989) research, that private school teachers are happier in their jobs mainly because of their community? I suggest further study across various public and private schools, including the perspectives of teachers who have worked in both environments, is necessary before drawing general conclusions.

I also suggest further study is required to gain student perspectives on the experience of being at Norton. All the participants speak to the positive student community at Norton. In my experience as a student teacher and volunteer there, I can attest that I observed student well-being to be higher than at other schools where I have been a student or teacher. As I close this study, I wonder: how much do students’ experiences reflect that of their teachers? To what extent, if at all, is students’ well-being affected by Norton’s community, and how much of that, if any, can be attributed to the fact that it is a private school? Or to the fact that it is a global education school? It would be necessary to speak with students themselves — current and alumni — to understand the student experience at Norton through students’ perspectives.

Finally, it is important for me to acknowledge the question of economic access to Norton, as it is a private school. Though there is diversity across genders, sexualities, religions, cultures, and, to some extent, race, my participants acknowledge that Norton is generally not economically diverse (i.e. it is not wholly reflective of all economic classes) because students must pay tuition to attend. Many students, however, do receive confidential bursaries — confidential even to the teachers — that help cover a percentage of the tuition payment. Indeed,
according to my participants, the school aspires to be in a position to offer a bursary to any student who needs it, essentially opening access to all students wanting to learn in a global education environment. As it stands, Norton is not yet open access to any and all students who may want to attend, as the cost of tuition — even with bursary support — is still prohibitive for some of them. Going forward, I recommend further study into the question of how a general lack of economic diversity among Norton’s students does or does not affect the student community at Norton. By extension, I ask myself: who can afford to seek refuge at Norton? How can we, as educators, make our hopes of open access to such a community a tangible reality; a right for all and not a privilege based on socioeconomic status? How can we reform our public schools, which are already openly accessible regardless of economic class, to reflect and infuse Norton’s community model?

**Individual and Communal Constructions of Philosophies of Education**

Personal teaching philosophy research focuses on just that: the personal, or individual. Chism (1998), Goodyear and Allchin (1998), and Clandinin and Connelly (1988) are especially individual-focused; their aim is to help teachers explore their inner lives, create written statements articulating that exploration, and, hopefully, become better teachers in their classrooms in the process. But their emphasis remains within the classroom’s walls. Coppola’s (2002) later work echoes this individual focus, providing educators with guidelines for how to produce personal philosophy statements.

Palmer (2007) draws explicit connections between personal philosophies and communities. He argues that school community, both amongst colleagues and between educators and students, ultimately relies on the participation of reflective, self-aware teachers. When teachers know the
condition of their inner life, Palmer (2007) claims, they can be authentic participants in strong communities that are vital for good educational practice. But where Palmer (2007) sees inner life affecting community, he does not draw explicit connections from community back to inner life. His focus remains on how the teacher’s personal approach to education affects and benefits the world around her, including herself.

My participants, in contrast, spoke at length about the community at Norton as a driving force in their understanding of themselves and of their philosophies of teaching. All three participants emphasized their shift away from selfishness, or ego, and toward the communal. They commented on the importance of the common good, that of the students and Norton as a unified whole. Yes, they came to Norton with personal philosophies of education; in fact, Hilda and Edna specifically suggested feeling at home at Norton and in global education immediately. They both recognized something at Norton — the philosophy or core — that mirrored their principles and values. Once they stayed on at Norton, however, and over time, Hilda, Edna, and Marianne said they have been changed by Norton’s community. They all spoke to the evolution of their approaches to global education over time due to the changing issues in the world, the changing staff, the changing students, and their changing selves.

Moreover, Edna, Hilda, and Marianne’s experiences of global education as their philosophy of teaching at Norton complicates philosophy of education research. Norton’s communal approach draws in teachers who already personally hold global education’s values, but it also affects those teachers’ ongoing development and understanding of their philosophies. The participants’ teaching philosophies are always simultaneously theirs, as individuals, and theirs, as a community. Their self-awareness is also a communal awareness. The literature
presses teachers to ask themselves “why do I teach?” and “who am I, as a person and teacher?” Norton’s teachers ask themselves those questions, but continue with “how is my identity affected by those I teach alongside?” and “why do we, as a community, teach and learn?” and “who is the community that teaches?”

The participants also underscored the importance of the role of their students in the process of developing and understanding their teaching philosophies; moreover, the students must be included when teachers ask themselves these questions about community. At Norton, global education is not something that happens to the students — it happens with the students. The students drive the issues to discuss, the approach to extracurriculars such as the theatre performance, the perspectives in the community, and the actions taken to address injustice. The students thus largely influence the teachers’ common philosophy of global education; perhaps it could more accurately be called the school’s common philosophy, as the students participate so actively as agents in its development and embodiment. The literature does not address student contributions to teaching philosophy; where Chism (1998), Goodyear and Allchin (1998), Palmer (2007), Clandinin and Connelly (1988) and Coppola (2002) mention students, it is usually to describe the benefits for students of having self-aware teachers delivering course content. The research does not suggest that students participate in the formation of teaching philosophies. Similarly, Wenger (2006), in addressing educational communities of practice, focuses on teachers as practitioners. Norton’s teachers argue that their students are practitioners of a sort in their community of practice insomuch as they are central agents in the practice, sharing, and experience of global education at Norton.
Further study. These complications of the literature raise questions that are outside the scope of my research. Specifically, I wonder about the relationship between global education specifically and the communal aspect of philosophy of education at Norton. How much of Norton’s teachers’ communal co-construction of their philosophies of educations is due to the interdependent, communal aspect of global education itself? In orienting themselves simultaneously outward and inward, are they in fact practicing the perspective consciousness of global education? Or, is communal co-construction of teaching philosophies a phenomenon that occurs across various schools, regardless of whether those schools practice global education? I suggest that we, as educational researchers, need more case studies that focus on these questions before drawing definitive, generalizable conclusions about the nature of communally constructed and reconstructed teaching philosophies.

Recommendations for teaching philosophy practice. As a preservice teacher, I prepared a statement of teaching philosophy as per my program requirements. Looking back through the context of my research study, I would have benefitted from Norton’s approach to philosophies of education. I suggest that faculties of education provide models from leaders or mentors before asking students for their assignments; as we see with Gertrude, a great principal engages her teachers in thinking about their principles and beliefs largely by modeling her own practice of reflection. While OISE/UT provided student exemplars, I suggest they should also, and perhaps more importantly, provide examples from professors and administrators who work directly with preservice teachers, to model and inspire preservice teachers to think about their philosophies as Gertrude does with her inservice teachers. I also think faculties of education should focus on the communal and experiential aspect of teaching philosophies; as Norton shows, much of what
teachers believe evolves through interactions with students, colleagues, and leaders. I suggest that teaching philosophy assignments, or the process of thinking through teaching philosophy in general, should be ongoing throughout teacher training, and emphasize community-based learnings. For example, preservice teachers could write a personal teaching statement upon beginning their program, and edit that statement as they meet fellow preservice teachers, as they go through teaching placements, and as they learn from professors and mentors. Following the same model, they could also write cohort, class, or group based teaching philosophy statements.

The same communal learning applies to inservice teachers. As Norton’s example shows, teachers benefit from developing and redeveloping their philosophies through interactions with longterm staff, the principal, new staff, students, etc. I suggest that educators not already thinking about their teaching philosophies can begin by answering for themselves Goodyear and Allchin’s (1998) and Palmer’s (2007) questions about the who and why of teaching. They should, however, expand that questioning process outward to think about how their school community affects their philosophies. As Norton also demonstrates, principals should both ask their teachers to engage in this reflection process and engage in reflection themselves. Finally, Norton’s common global education philosophy is successful because it is practiced as much as it is theorized; moreover, my participants not only reflect on their values, but they teach from and with those values in mind every day. I suggest teachers take real steps to enact their philosophies in their classroom and their school.

Conclusion

Much research investigates the nature of teaching philosophies (Chism, 1998; Goodyear and Allchin, 1998; Palmer, 2007; Clandinin and Connelly, 1988; 1995), communities of practice
(Wenger, 1998; 2006), and global education (Hanvey, 1976; Pike and Selby, 1988; 1995; 1999; 2000). Throughout this case study of Norton, a private school in the GTA, I have aimed to bridge these diverse fields by exploring the reflections and practices of three teachers. In sharing their stories, this case study highlights the simultaneously individual and communal nature of reflecting upon and articulating philosophies of education. It also shows how students are integral agents in their global education community of practice. Finally, it illustrates where private schools go right and how the public school system might learn from their approach to community. The limited breadth and perspective of my research, however, inhibits me from making general claims about communities, private schools, philosophies of education, or global education.

I can claim with confidence that, through my research, I learned about and from a school community that inspires its teachers and students to be stars while accepting the light of others. It is a school that prioritizes not only how individuals influence the world around them, but also how individuals can engage with the world, understand their relationship with the world, and, hopefully, challenges others to do the same. Regardless of where we, as educators, stand on individual or communal teaching philosophies, private or public schools, global educators or otherwise, we can learn much from Norton’s community, which, as Hilda, Marianne, and Edna wholeheartedly, unabashedly confess, is a place of acceptance, of sharing, of authenticity, of belonging, and of home.


Appendices

Appendix A: Interview Questions

Background Information
1. Tell me about your teaching background.
   a. How did you come to this profession?
   b. How long have you been teaching?
   c. What subjects have you taught / do you teach?
2. Tell me about how you came to be at VIS.
   a. Why did you (and do you continue) to choose to work here, as opposed to other schools?
3. Tell me about the staff at VIS. What is the working community like?
4. Tell me about the students at VIS. What is the student community like?

Philosophies of Education
5. What is the VIS philosophy?
   a. What is your understanding/definition of global ed?
   b. Has the VIS philosophy evolved over time? If so, how?
6. What is your personal philosophy of education?
   a. Has your personal philosophy been influenced by the VIS philosophy? If so, how?
7. How do you infuse global ed into your classroom every day?
   a. What does it look like? (Examples of approaches, activities, etc)
8. How do you infuse global ed into the school every day (outside of your direct teaching)?
   a. Consider examples of extracurriculars, administrative duties, coaching, etc.
9. How are you supported in infusing global ed into your classroom and the school?
   a. Consider administration, staff, parents, students, etc.

Lasting Impacts
10. What is your vision for students who attend VIS?
11. Are you in touch with any VIS alumni? If so, can you share some of their thoughts and reflections about their time at VIS?
12. What is your vision for VIS going forward?
13. How has VIS impacted you, both in your teaching practice and as an individual?
Appendix B: Informational Letter of Consent

Date: November 2013

Dear interview participant,

I am a graduate student at the Ontario Institute for Studies in Education at the University of Toronto and am currently enrolled as a Master of Teaching candidate. One of my program requirements is to complete a major paper that seeks to contribute research to the education field. For this project, I am undertaking a case study of how VIS; specifically, I am interested in how VIS administration and teachers define and practice a global education philosophy. I am especially interested in understanding how the VIS team infuses this philosophy of education into their classrooms and the school on a daily basis. Considering your knowledge about and experience at VIS, I believe that you can provide me with insights into this topic.

My course instructor who is providing support for the research process this year is Dr. Arlo Kempf. My research supervisor is Dr. Rob Simon. To meet the requirements of the major paper, my data collection will consist of a 30-40 minute interview with you that will be tape-recorded. I would be grateful if you would allow me to interview you, at both a place and time that are convenient for you. I can conduct the interview at your office or workplace, in a public place, or anywhere else that you might prefer.

The contents of this interview will be used for my assignment, which will include a final paper, as well as informal presentations to my classmates and/or potentially at a conference or publication. Your personal information will remain confidential. The only people who will have access to my assignment work (other than both me and you) will be my research supervisor and my course instructor. Please note that you are free to change your mind at any time and to withdraw from my study even once you have consented to participate. You may also decline to answer any specific questions. I will share with you a copy of my notes to ensure accuracy. There are no known risks or benefits to you for assisting in the project.

If you agree to be interviewed, please sign the following form. The first copy is for me and the second copy is for your records. Thank you very much for your help.

Yours sincerely,

Amanda Merpaw

Consent Form
I acknowledge that the topic of this interview has been explained to me and that any questions that I have asked have been answered to my satisfaction. I understand that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.

I have read the letter provided to me by Amanda Merpaw and agree to participate in an interview for the purposes described.

Name (printed): ________________________________
Signature: ________________________________
Date: ________________________________