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Through the Eyes of Students: A Learner-Centred Approach to Educational History¹

Robert M. Stamp

The Normal School Tradition: Maisie Emery and the Class of 1906

In mid-August of 1906, 17-year-old Maisie Emery left her farm home in the Conjuring Creek region of central Alberta, rode by buggy into the town of Leduc, and boarded a south-bound Canadian Pacific Railway passenger train. Maisie was headed for Calgary and a four-month, teacher-training course at the new Alberta Normal School. Young in years but brimming with confidence, she was determined to earn a provincial teaching certificate and land a job “keeping” a one-room, country school.

Maisie held certain advantages over many of her normal school classmates. She had already lived away from home while attending high school in Strathcona, Alberta. She had listened to her older sister Myrtle’s hilarious (and, at times, frightening) tales of the joys and travails of teaching school in a pioneer environment.² Yet in other ways, Maisie Emery was a typical Alberta normal student (or “normalite”) of the early twentieth century—a young woman, in her late teens or early twenties, from a farm or small-town community, lower-middle or middle-class family background, somewhat unsophisticated. Beyond the boundaries of Alberta in that late summer and early autumn of 1906, tens of thousands of young women joined Maisie at normal schools across North America, seeking teaching certificates, low-paying jobs, escape from the family home, and perhaps a small measure of personal and professional independence.

At the Alberta Normal School in Calgary, Maisie Emery’s class included fifty-six other young women and just nineteen men—a ratio of female-to-male students that varied little over the school’s 40-year life. Each enrollee needed a high school diploma at Standard VII or VIII level (Grade 11 or 12), plus a guarantee of upstanding moral character from a clergyman or other “respectable” person.³

School dress was simple for Maisie and her friends at the Alberta Normal School. Group photographs show the boys in standard uniform of suit-jacket, white shirt and tie. Their shirts are stiff and heavily starched, with collars and cuffs either separate or attached. Girls wear white, shirtwaist blouses with high, closed collars; and plain wool skirts, straight and tight or bell-shaped. Sleeves are long, cuffs stiff, and held together with links donated by doting parents or male admirers. Pinch waists and padded hips are the vogue. In bad weather, Maisie and her girlfriends will don heavy, fleece-lined woollen leggings. Rouge and lipstick are frowned upon, although more imaginative girls dampened roses and other red flowers to rub colour on their lips.

Maisie began classes August 23. The first half of her four-month program featured lectures in history and philosophy of education, psychology, class management, and school law, plus the various subjects of the elementary-school curriculum. This program was influenced by an amalgam of learning theories derived from

two nineteenth-century European philosophies: Johann Pestalozzi's "object" method and Johann Herbart's five formal steps to lesson planning: presentation, association, organization, application and correlation. More radical educators like Friedrich Froebel and John Dewey were certainly not recommended to Maisie and her classmates.

Yet theory took second place to covering the multitude of subjects on the Alberta elementary school curriculum—an "awe-inspiring curriculum" in Maisie's words.⁴ "While it is impossible to deal with these subjects at great length," admitted Principal George Bryan, "still we endeavour to create a certain attitude towards method and subject-matter." The daily grind of normal schools everywhere emphasized the basic program of studies. "Each subject of the public school curriculum was thoroughly examined and methods of instruction were presented and practised in ways that would be utilized by the teacher."⁵

Maisie Emery spent the final two months of her program observing and teaching "practice" lessons in regular classrooms at Central School in downtown Calgary. Here, she and her classmates were critiqued by experienced classroom teachers and fearsome normal-school masters. Most normalites found practice teaching a "traumatic experience," writes K.A. Hollihan in his study of Alberta normal schools, filling them with fear and self-doubt. The resultant anxiety undoubtedly created in many normalites a desire to please their critics." Thus, concludes Hollihan, practice teaching was extremely effective in reproducing teaching techniques.⁶

Maisie ended her four-month normal experience with an examination week. Successful students—the overwhelming majority—received first- or second-class interim Alberta teaching certificates, while marginal students were awarded third-class certificates as consolation prizes. "Our intellects have been broadened, and our fund of knowledge has been materially augmented on both academic and practical sides," claimed the 1909 graduates. "New side-lights have been thrown on the grandest of professions and new ambitions have been aroused within us." Two years later, the class of 1911 was equally optimistic about the future: "We have pinned our faith upon Sunny Alberta and this land of promise will not fail us."⁷

Maisie finished her examinations in Calgary on December 22, 1906, enjoyed a brief Christmas vacation at home, then began teaching in a nearby one-room school east of Pigeon Lake early in January. She was still just seventeen years old. The "schoolhouse was small," she recalled years later, "in a rural district of mixed nationalities, mostly English-speaking, with seventeen pupils enrolled." Her annual salary was \$600, just under the provincial average. After a year, Maisie transferred to another rural school adjacent to the district where her sister, Myrtle, taught; then the two moved together into town schools and ultimately into marriages and child-raising.⁸

Sixty years later—after careers as teacher and farm wife, after children and grandchildren—Maisie Emery Cook remembered most vividly the social side of her four months at the Alberta Normal School. "Church groups, entertained us. We had basketball for the girls and football for the boys, the occasional dance, also skating on the Bow River." There were yearbooks, pennants, crests, and rings to buy, all in the school colours of azure, navy and scarlet (ANS for Alberta Normal School). Best of all, "some of us had our first automobile rides."⁹

This look at Maisie Emery and her 1906 classmates helps us place the Alberta Normal School in the long tradition of European and North American teacher education. Educators and politicians believed that normal school gave students a sense of mission, a spirit of professionalism, and a concept of service through a career in teaching. Academic achievement, age, and character traits were set down as admission requirements. Provincial and state authorities proscribed the curriculum, determined conditions for practice teaching, established examination regulations, and awarded certificates to successful normalites. Extra-curricular activities and even students' living arrangements were carefully monitored. The moral impulse remained prominent, concludes Hollihan. "The knowledge on which practices of teacher training existed rested on a clearly defined relationship of obedience between instructor and student."¹⁰

At a practical level, Alberta educators viewed the normal school's purpose as turning young men and women like Maisie Emery into educational technicians in rapid time, and preparing them for their first teaching positions. District inspectors, however, reported that many normal graduates could not manage classrooms. Defects included faulty questioning, unrestrained calling out, too much teaching, too little seat work, lack of method in teaching the more rigorous subjects like spelling and arithmetic, and inappropriate classification of pupils. Yet inspectors admitted that most graduates showed a willingness to work hard and an ability to organize and handle classes. The best of them knew the school curriculum, came prepared to teach, set high standards, and roused interest among their pupils.

A closer examination of Maisie Emery's experience reveals additional critical aspects of the Alberta Normal School experience. Religious and cultural pluralism, for example, were noticeably absent. With its atmosphere of YMCA wholesomeness and an unstated though underlying devotion to mainstream Protestantism, the normal school barely acknowledged the existence of a Roman Catholic constituency among its students and among the province's school population. Bad enough that Catholic lay persons wishing to become teachers had to attend the "Protestant" Calgary Normal School; much worse for members of religious orders, who constituted the majority of Catholic school personnel in the new province. We can picture these sisters, as Maisie must have pictured them, small clutches of black-gowned women, faithfully attending to their classes and their lessons, keeping apart from the majority of students, shunning extra-curricular activities, graduating with above-average grades and going out to the Catholic schools of Alberta largely unsullied by the "hostile" environment of the normal school.

Calgary Normal also gave little consideration to the increasing number of non-English-speaking, European-immigrant children attending Alberta schools. The normal school was expected to train teachers who were well versed in both British and Canadian history and geography, and who were willing to go out into the foreign settlements and endeavour to win the newcomers to the language, culture and citizenship of Canada.¹¹ Given the background of Maisie Emery and other normal-school applicants, that was no small order. Nor were teachers-in-training equipped with special skills associated with second language instruction, or imbued with attitudes which encouraged them to enter immigrant communities. "The tendency of some of the teachers of Anglo-Saxon origin to consider pupils of [another] origin as not being on the same level as themselves in many instances prevented the best work from being done," said one inspector.¹²

Gender inequality was an additional shortcoming. Throughout Calgary Normal's forty-year history, women constituted the overwhelming majority of students—varying from 70 to 80 percent—yet they were definitely viewed as inferior. They were taught primarily by male instructors. Student presidents, year-book editors and valedictorians were invariably male. And women were invariably to be found preparing for second as opposed to first-class certificates. Nancy Sheehan, historian and former associate dean of the University of Calgary's Faculty of Education, has branded the normal school a "female ghetto run by male administrators."¹³

In the socio-political environment of early twentieth-century Alberta, however, issues of religion, ethnicity, and gender paled before the major acknowledged shortcoming of the Calgary Normal School: it did not address the educational needs of the province's rural population. "The work of the inexperienced teacher in a rural school would be made much more efficient," argued one provincial school inspector, "if teachers in training at the normal schools could obtain more practical knowledge of conditions similar to those which they actually face in their first schools."¹⁴ In effect country schools were being exploited as an extension of the normal course for the benefit of urban schools. Since the majority of novice teachers went, like Maisie Emery, first to rural schools before moving to larger centres, they shared their inexperience and lack of competence with rural populations while urban students benefited from whatever improvement came with experience.¹⁵

From the perspective of our own day, a final deficiency of the old Calgary Normal School may have been its lack of academic stimulation. The intellectual excitement that might have permeated teacher education

within a university setting was significantly absent. Separate training facilities were part of the long tradition in teacher education, and Alberta proved no exception. With the achievement of provincehood in 1905, the new government decided early in its mandate to locate the provincial university in Edmonton and the provincial normal school in Calgary. Geographic separation was reinforced when no provision was made for transfer, cross-fertilization, or contact of any sort. That would be the rule for the next forty years.

“It Was a Shotgun Wedding:” Ethel King and the Class of 1945-46

Education student Ethel King retained lifelong memories of the school year 1945-46 at the Calgary campus of the University of Alberta (UofA). “With the new branch of the university, it was convenient to go here for a year,” Ethel remembered as she recalled her work towards a Bachelor of Education degree. “We knew when we enrolled that it would be only one year of the program, and then we would go to Edmonton to finish the degree.” But what a year it was—beginning with the annual September picnic at St. George’s Island, where each class performed a humorous or ironic skit. Ethel’s class acted out “The Marriage of the Normal School and the University,” with the Calgary Normal School as bride and the UofA Faculty of Education as groom. “I happened to play the part of the minister of education with a shotgun,” she laughed, “as it was a shotgun wedding.”¹⁶

The sixteen students in Ethel’s class, together with another forty-one at the Edmonton campus, were part of a bold move on the part of the provincial government. In September 1945, Alberta transferred all responsibility for teacher education to its provincial university. While the old Edmonton Normal School was folded into the UofA’s Faculty of Education, the Calgary Normal School retained a measure of separate identity as the Calgary Branch of the UofA, the nucleus of what twenty-one years later would become the University of Calgary.

Ethel King and twelve classmates from the fifty-seven students in the initial Bachelor of Education class completed the full program four years later, receiving their degrees from the University of Alberta and interim teacher certificates from the provincial government. Other members of the freshman class of 1945 shared Ethel King’s excitement. Although Jean Hunter registered in the traditional one-year certification program rather than the B.Ed. route, she too was aware of being part of a grand change. “We started in September with the Calgary Normal School,” Jean recalled, but “before December the name was changed to the University of Alberta.”¹⁷

Jean and her friends no longer talked about “Going to Normal”; now they proudly said “Going to University.” While they took the same courses in educational theory and methodology as their normalite predecessors, those courses now bore university numbers, and their instructors were transformed into university professors. During the year, students symbolically exchanged the azure, navy, and scarlet colours of the old Calgary Normal School for the University of Alberta’s green and gold. Jean Hunter recalls that she proudly left in the spring with her UofA ring and her school yearbook, *Evergreen and Gold ‘46*, “though Calgary has only nine of 330 pages in the book.”¹⁸

Alberta’s transfer of all responsibility for teacher education to its provincial university represented the first major structural reform, and the first halting steps towards modernism, in a century of teacher education in Canada. Under the title “A Streamlined Plan of Teacher Education,” Deputy Minister of Education G. Fred McNally heralded “a modern programme for the preparation of teachers.” Streamlining and modernism meant university-level education (and ultimately a university degree) for all prospective teachers. “This is one of the most significant developments in educational policy adopted anywhere in Canada,” boasted McNally. And it would have practical benefits. “The ultimate effect of this policy will raise the status of every teacher in Alberta schools.”¹⁹ Unfortunately, nothing was said about higher salaries or better working conditions for those teachers!

Alternate models of teacher education were being debated throughout North America during the 1930s and 1940s. In 1938, H.C. Newland, Alberta's supervisor of schools, initially suggested transforming the Calgary and Edmonton normal schools into autonomous, degree-granting institutions similar to American teachers' colleges.²⁰ By that time, most American training schools had converted into four-year, degree-granting teachers' colleges, and some were well along the road to state colleges and universities. They promised a broad general education enabling students to master subject matter and gain an understanding of educational principles and practices. Yet a 1946 report of the American Council on Education favoured training in an established university rather than a teachers' college, with more attention to liberal arts or general education, to scholarly competence and subject-matter preparation, and to child development and the expressive arts.²¹ It was this university route that Alberta adopted.

The University of Alberta was not a complete stranger to teacher preparation. In 1929, its School of Education launched a one-year teacher-certification program for holders of approved undergraduate degrees who wished to teach in Alberta high schools. By 1939, the School became a College of Education, and three years later was elevated to a Faculty of Education, with full jurisdiction over a four-year undergraduate B.Ed. degree in addition to after-degree certification. Full university responsibility for all teacher preparation in the province was the next logical step.²²

The move was "received with mixed feelings," recalled a future UofA president. Many academics "feared that it might submerge the high traditions of liberal education and the Faculty of Arts under a tide of courses in pedagogical method." Deputy Minister McNally, was concerned about the integration of normal school staff members into the university faculty.²³ Many parents (and teachers themselves) questioned the value of a university education for teaching the primary grades. Yet educators were united in believing the move would raise the prestige of teachers. "In five years the profession of teaching in this province will attain a status never dreamed possible under the plan formerly in use," boasted McNally. The UofA had good practical reasons for being in full sympathy with that motive. "Enhanced prestige would make for a better quality of teacher," argued a philosophy professor. "Better teachers would produce better material for the University to work with."²⁴

Although Ethel King's marriage skit and Jean Erickson's UofA yearbook both symbolized the pivotal 1945-46 academic year, Calgary's transformation from normal school to university branch campus occurred at an alarmingly slow pace. Executive leadership of the Calgary branch effectively rested in Edmonton, tightly held by Milton LaZerte, dean of the Faculty of Education at University of Alberta. "LaZerte was a centralist," recalled one provincial official. "He thought of the Calgary operation as being an integral part of his faculty with no separate existence despite its distance from Edmonton."²⁵ There were no departments or divisions; all members of the staff reported directly to LaZerte, whether in Edmonton or Calgary. "Both schools must use the same textbooks, follow the same courses, and write the same examinations," he argued. The accepted procedure was to take the Calgary vote and add it to the Edmonton vote to determine the outcome on specific Faculty Council motions. Calgary had no veto power, nor was a double majority needed, just a simple majority from the total faculty. Since Edmonton was larger, it dominated.²⁶

Not surprisingly, the Calgary Branch failed to prosper. During Ethel King's 1945-46 year, enrolment in both degree and non-degree programs totalled just 155, slightly less than 25 percent of Edmonton's total, a ratio LaZerte believed was "not likely to change greatly during the next few years."²⁷ The following year, Calgary numbers sank to their lowest level in two decades. Was teaching no longer a desired occupation? Were southern Alberta students flocking to Edmonton where a four-year program was guaranteed? Was LaZerte discriminating against the Calgary institution? The deputy minister Swift cautioned LaZerte that the "opinion prevails in certain Calgary quarters that last year's Faculty calendar was discriminatory against the Calgary Branch." He curtly suggested the "desirability of putting Calgary in the best possible light in the calendar."²⁸

Throughout the immediate postwar years, an informal but powerful Calgary University Committee kept pressuring Edmonton officialdom for expanded faculties at the North Hill site (now the Southern Alberta Institute of Technology). By the spring of 1947, momentum for a more extensive program at the Calgary Branch could not be deflected by either the University of Alberta or the provincial government. “The Premier asked and I assured him that everything possible would be done to make the quality and variety of work in the first two years at Calgary approximate as nearly as possible to the work in Edmonton,” President Newton informed Dean LaZerte. Achieving such equality might mean denying students their right to choose between the two campuses, for there was discussion “as to whether all students south of a line drawn through Ponoka or a line drawn through Red Deer should be required to enrol at Calgary.”²⁹

Once the government added \$50,000 to the UofA budget to upgrade the Calgary branch—salaries for new appointees, outfitting of science labs, additions to the library collection—there was no turning back. The grand announcement came from President Newton’s office in a 2 May 1947 press release:

The University’s branch of the Faculty of Education at Calgary will offer immediately the full two-year course in teacher training ... a complete unit of teacher training leading to permanent certification. The Board intends that the Calgary branch shall be staffed and equipped as a first-class institution carrying teachers-in-training to the end of this stage ... Immediate steps are being taken to strengthen the Calgary staff by the addition of several well-qualified experienced instructors, especially in the arts and science subjects ... The aim throughout will be to insure that opportunities and facilities at Calgary, so far as they go, will be no whit inferior to those at Edmonton.³⁰

Andrew Doucette was appointed director of the Calgary Branch. Over the next few years, the North Hill campus witnessed the addition of courses and programs in arts and science, engineering, and commerce, its development into the University of Alberta at Calgary, and its move from cramped quarters at Southern Alberta Institute of Technology (SAIT) to the present campus in the fall of 1960. Soon, Education was but one unit in a multi-faculty university, all competing for funding, attention, and academic respectability.

Present during these transitional years was one member of the 1945-46 inaugural class. Ethel King returned to the Calgary campus as a faculty member in the mid-fifties, specializing in reading and early childhood education. Over the next several years, Ethel recorded a number of University of Calgary firsts: first advisor to women students, first female staff member to earn full professorship, first woman elected to General Faculties Council, and following her 1985 retirement, first woman president of the Emeritus Association. “Few people have seen the University of Calgary change, or participated in that change, as much as Ethel King-Shaw,” read the official citation when she was awarded the Order of the University of Calgary at the Spring 2000 Convocation.³¹

A Faculty on Trial: Jane Doe and the Class of 1974-75

Jane Doe was a typical fourth-year undergraduate student in the University of Calgary’s Faculty of Education in September 1974. Jane was one of 1,820 full-time undergraduate students in the Faculty, where she and her girlfriends outnumbered male students by more than a 2-1 ratio. Jane had always loved children and decided on a teaching career early in her own school days. She was 22 years old and a graduate of the Calgary public school system. She lived at home with her parents and commuted to campus five days a week. She was now in her final year of the Bachelor of Education program, registered in the Elementary Route.³²

Jane had spent her first three years completing academic requirements in Education, Fine Arts, Physical Education, Arts and Science, compiling a 2.63 grade point average. Like many Education students, she

delayed her practicum until fourth year. Now, in the autumn of 1974 Jane experienced a concentrated dose of professional-year courses—“methods” work in the various subjects of the elementary-school curriculum, plus educational psychology and educational administration—all before her November round of student teaching in a Calgary elementary school. She could look forward to another concentrated on-campus session in January and February, followed by more student teaching in March and April. Jane hoped to graduate with her Bachelor of Education degree in spring 1975, and get a job with the Calgary Board of Education, teaching at the Grade 3 or 4 level.

But in September 1974, Jane Doe was not a happy student. She complained about the quality of instruction in the Faculty of Education. She sensed that her individual courses did not fit together in a coherent program. She wondered how these courses and the program would help her when she got into the elementary-school classroom. Many of Jane’s friends shared her unease. In mid-September, Jane and her fellow students signed a petition urging the University of Calgary (UofC) Senate to investigate the “quality of instruction in the Faculty of Education” and for a “student-professor committee to begin a course evaluation of this faculty.” At noon on September 26, Jane and 466 other Education students voted in favour of such action at an emergency general meeting of the Education Undergraduate Society.

Students were not alone in criticizing the Faculty of Education and demanding action. On 19 February 1975, trustees of the Calgary Roman Catholic Separate School Board urged the UofC Senate “to form a task force to investigate the quality of Education programs and the quality of instruction in those programs.” The Alberta Teachers Association and local school administrators criticized the Faculty’s delay in introducing a government-mandated extended practicum. Finally, admitted President William A. Cochrane, “concern [was] expressed within the University community by academic members questioning the quality of the academic challenge to students in the Faculty.”³³

On 24 February 1975, Cochrane established a Presidential Task Force to Assess and Evaluate the Faculty of Education. The five-member group, chaired by physics professor Harvey Buckmaster, was asked to “review and provide recommendations regarding the objectives, academic program, financial support, organization, and management of the Faculty.” Its report, released on 31 March 31 1976, was the most devastating blow ever delivered to the Faculty of Education at the University of Calgary. The *Report of the Presidential Task Force* (known familiarly as the Buckmaster Report) identified a host of problems within Education: failure to articulate objectives, lax entrance and continuation standards, internal disunity across and among the four departments, low intellectual rigour of courses, poor relationship between practicum and associated methods courses, failure to establish appropriate goals for the practicum, problems with departmentally-based graduate programs, and unsatisfactory relations with other faculties and other sectors of the provincial educational system.³⁴

The Task Force recommended that the Faculty articulate its long-term goals, institute higher admission standards and more stringent screening procedures for prospective students, develop clear objectives for the practicum, increase the academic content of the four-year Bachelor of Education program, improve the supervision and quality of graduate programs, develop an effective and meaningful mechanism for handling student grievances and complaints, establish better communications with other parts of the University, and decrease departmental autonomy by reorganizing the Faculty along program lines—with two associate deans responsible for coordinating the undergraduate and graduate programs respectively.³⁵

Calgary newspapers enjoyed a field day with the report. *The Albertan* highlighted “low morale, incompetent professors and general chaos” in the Faculty of Education. “UofC Produces Unfit Teachers,” screamed a Calgary *Herald* headline over a story emphasizing the report’s allegations of students being intimidated and harassed, professors who did not know their subjects, teaching that was boring and irrelevant, and graduates who risked perpetuating their own ignorance among children in the school system.³⁶

While faculty members might agree with specific criticisms of the Buckmaster Report, and might support individual recommendations for change, any objective discussion was lost in the Faculty’s hostile reaction to

the report's inflammatory language and its failure to support serious allegations with substantive evidence. Instructors were appalled to read that their Faculty was rife with "mutual distrust, malicious gossip, lack of respect of confidentiality, lack of respect for majority decisions, lack of respect for minority views, misrepresentation of majority and minority views"; that it was characterized by "ineffective groping to formulate goals and objectives"; that it "preferred short-term band-aid solutions to taking the long-term approach"; that its teaching was "too frequently ineffective because it is boring and irrelevant"; that faculty members used their courses "as opportunities to disseminate their prejudices," and were unable "to recognize and appreciate the role that intellectual development plays in the learning process."³⁷

Four weeks after the report's release, Faculty of Education Council met in Room 1314 of the Education Tower at 2 o'clock in the afternoon of 28 April 1976. More than eighty bodies jammed a room that comfortably held barely half that number. No one left over the next two-and-one-half hours. President Cochrane began by referring to issues raised by "petitions, unsolicited telephone calls from faculty, students, politicians and members of the community." Professor Buckmaster defended the "peer group assessment" approach of the committee, admitted that "hearsay evidence" was used, but argued that comments concerning harassment and professional behaviour were "cited with enough frequency to be of concern."³⁸

Counter-attacks came from all parts of the Faculty as individual professors questioned the research methodology used by the Task Force, blasted the insensitivity of the report's language, demanded the Task Force retract its personally-damaging comments, and alluded to "an unnecessary and certainly not productive sense of vindictiveness" emanating from the Buckmaster Report. Cochrane's closing remarks were brutal. As President, he had "the responsibility to ensure that all units maintain certain minimum standards," and if that were not so, he would be "compelled to recommend that they take more action in this area." If the Faculty failed to take action "others would begin to make decisions and judgments which would remove the privileges the Faculty now had as individuals to make its own decisions."³⁹

"The Faculty are so incensed at the language, methodology, and manner of release," the dean wrote the president, "that I have no confidence of positive action, In fact, there is a real danger that extremely negative action could be concluded." While the president demanded action, the dean continued his efforts. "I have tried to work behind the scenes, attempting to foster a reasonable and constructive attitude on the part of faculty towards action on the recommendations." At the same time, however, "there was a need for individual faculty members to vent some of their aggression, justifiable and otherwise."⁴⁰

Yet change was already underway. The extended practicum was finally introduced in September 1977, increasing students' school time from seven to thirteen weeks, providing experience in two different schools across two age-grade divisions, and moving from simple, concrete tasks with individuals or small groups of learners to complex tasks involving entire classes in a variety of activities. Evaluation studies revealed that the extended practicum provided "a more realistic teaching experience."⁴¹

While new program initiatives were applauded, the president's office grew increasingly impatient over the Faculty's lack of structural change. The Buckmaster Report had called for at least a diminishing of departmental control, ideally replacing departments with faculty-wide divisions for undergraduate and post-graduate studies. Not until June 1980, did the Faculty accept modest structural reorganization. A new Department of Teacher Education and Supervision took responsibility for all mandatory courses leading to teacher certification and the B.Ed. degree. Educational Administration and Educational Foundations were joined in a new Department of Educational Policy and Administrative Studies. Still, a departmental structure remained, despite the Buckmaster Report's urging a radically different undergraduate/post-graduate arrangement.

By that time, several years had elapsed since Jane Doe and her fellow students signed their petition demanding an investigation into the quality of the teacher-preparation program in the Faculty of Education. To a certain extent, both the extended practicum of 1977 and faculty re-organization of 1981 were responses to Jane's pleas for improvement. Unfortunately, Jane and her fellow students gained no direct

benefit from these moves since they had long graduated from the University of Calgary. Whether Jane was even teaching is problematic, given the high drop-out rate of beginning teachers then as now. And given the weak relationship between the Faculty and its alumni in those days, one wonders if Jane was even informed of change. Or if she was, whether she cared.

Conclusion

Perhaps our dilemma over what happened to Jane Doe reveals some of the weaknesses of relying too heavily on solely a student-centred approach to educational history. Certainly we can use Maisie Emery's 1906 experiences to examine such aspects of the normal school experience as admission requirements, program requirements, and her memories of both the academic and social sides of school life. But it proved somewhat problematic to go from Maisie's experiences to a detailed examination of the political reasons for normal schools or the intellectual currents that determined their approaches to teaching. In addition, we have no scientific basis to judge how well or how poorly Maisie's normal training prepared her for the challenges of teaching in a one-room country schoolhouse in early twentieth century Alberta. Likewise with the experiences of Ethel King and Jean Hunter in 1945-46: How do we really know whether the transition from Calgary Normal School to Calgary Branch of the University of Alberta improved teacher education in this province at mid-century?

Historians must utilize all resources, must examine questions from all possible points of view, must avoid too-strong a reliance on any one methodology. Specifically, for any historical study of an educational institution, be it an elementary or secondary school, college, or university, historians must not abandon the students once they graduate. Difficult though it may be, we must find follow-up studies on Maisie Emery and Jean Hunter and Jane Doe.

As a beginning step in this direction, we might consider as historical evidence, students' exiting behaviours as they leave programs. Our new Master of Teaching Program at Calgary, with its requirement for an exit presentation, opens up this possibility. Let me conclude by quoting from the exit presentation of one of our 1998 graduates, a student in the so-called Prototype Group. Given my interest in poetry, and the happy coincidence that today is World Poetry Day, you will find it not surprising that I have chosen to end tonight's presentation with a poetic excerpt from that particular student's exit presentation in April 1998.

Au revoir

*She exits with book in one hand
flowers in the other
into the vibrant sunrise.
It is with mixed emotions
that I finish;
happy to have been here;
eager to teach;
grateful that you were part of it.⁴²*

Endnotes

1. Annual Distinguished Lecture, Faculty of Education, University of Calgary, 21 March 2002.
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3. Alberta Department of Education, *Annual Report, 1912*, 14.
4. Cook, *Memories of a Pioneer Schoolteacher*, 5.
5. *Annual Report, 1906*, 37; Robert S. Patterson, "A History of Teacher Education in Alberta," in David C. Jones, Nancy M. Sheehan, and Robert M. Stamp, eds., *Shaping the Schools of the Canadian West* (Calgary: 1979), 202-03.
6. Kelvin Anthony Hollihan, "Deconstructive Reconstruction: An Institutional Critique of the Alberta Normal School" (University of Alberta, Ph.D. thesis, 1995), 386-96. See also K.A. Hollihan, "Willing to Listen Humbly: Practice Teaching in Alberta Normal Schools, 1906-44," *Historical Studies in Education*, 9, 2 (Fall 1997), 237-50.
7. *Alberta Normal School, Yearbook, 1909*, n.p.; *Yearbook, 1911*, 7.
8. Cook, *Memories of a Pioneer Schoolteacher*, 6.
9. *Ibid.*
10. Hollihan, "Deconstructive Reconstruction," 103.
11. Patterson, "History of Teacher Education in Alberta," 199.
12. *Annual Report, 1933*, 36.
13. Nancy M. Sheehan, "Women and Education in Alberta: The Rhetoric and the Reality," in Nick Kach and Kas Mazurek, eds., *Exploring Our Educational Past: Schooling in the North-West Territories and Alberta* (Calgary: 1992), 119-22; Patrick J. Harrigan, "The Development of a Corps of Public School Teachers in Canada, 1870-1980," *History of Education Quarterly*, 32, 4 (1992), 503.
14. *Annual Report, 1914*, 77.
15. Patterson, "History of Teacher Education in Alberta," 201.
16. Ethel Marguerite King-Shaw, *Transcript of Oral Interview, 29 September 1997*, University of Calgary Archives (UCA), 1, 15.
17. Jean Hunter Erickson, "Higher Education," *Calgary Herald*, 14 December, 1996.
18. *Ibid.*
19. *Annual Report, 1943*, 9.
20. *Ibid.*, 1938, 27.
21. Commission on Teacher Education, *The Improvement of Teacher Education* (Washington: 1946). See also Merle Borrowman, *The Liberal and Technical in Teacher Education: A Historical Survey of American Thought* (New York: 1956), 185-227.
22. *Annual Report, 1944*, 20.
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