THE EFFECT OF A UNIT OF STUDY ON THE
POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION OF A SELECTED
SAMPLE OF GRADE FIVE SCHOOL CHILDREN
IN WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND

STEPHEN BRUCE PENNEY, B.A., B.A.(Ed)

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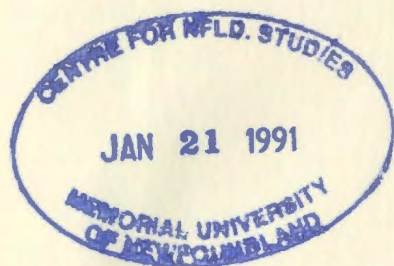SAMPLE OF GRADE FIVE SCHOOL CHILDREN IN

WESTERN NEWFOUNDLAND

BY

STEPHEN BRUCE PENNEY, B.A., B.A.(Ed)

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>, taken from <u>Politics and You</u>, by Botting et al. (1985), on Grade Five school children in Western Newfoundland, using as criteria various indices of political socialization and taking into consideration selected mediating factors. The specific indices of political socialization that this study investigated were as follows: political efficacy, general attitude toward politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, political participation, and political conflict. The mediating factors used were <u>sex</u> of the student and <u>intelligence quotient levels</u>.

The study involved four Grade Five classes within the Bay of Islands-St. George's School Board. All the students were administered an intelligence quotient test; scores were computed and each student for the purpose of statistical analysis was assigned to one of the three I.Q. groupings: below average, average, and above average.

The two classes which comprised the Experimental Group participated in the Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>. No specific program of study was administered to the two classes which made up the Control Group.

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The measuring instrument for this study was a questionnaire designed to assess relevant political attitudes. The questionnaire included 46 Liekert Format items with four response choices. A pretest and posttest were administered to both groups.

Analysis of Variance with a significance level of 0.05 was used to evaluate the data. The results of the study indicate that the Unit of Study had a significant effect on the responses of students on Political Efficacy and Political Participation scales. These effects, however, were all expressed in a negative direction and were significantly greater for males and for the below-average group. With regard to political cynicism, general attitude toward politicians, view of citizenship, and political conflict, no significant effect was noted.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Traditionally, political education or Civics, as it might more accurately be called, concentrated heavily on factual descriptions of political institutions. Students learned to define <u>bicameral</u>, <u>prorogation</u>, <u>Speech from the Throne</u>, and many other similar terms. They learned who could vote and who could not and who was eligible for election to office. In doing all of this, however, the students learned little or nothing about the realities, the processes, and the dynamics of politics. The students learned that after three readings of a Bill in the House of Commons and the Senate, and with Royal assent, the Bill becomes Law. Little, however, was said about lobbies, pressure groups, decision-making and all the factors that influence the evolution and the ultimate shape of any particular law.

This approach to teaching Civics was probably uninspiring for both teachers and students. The programmes, while most conveniently structured, did little to convey to students the dynamic realities of government.

The aims of teaching political education have remained quite similar over the years. What have changed in the schools of some Canadian provinces, to varying degrees, are the approaches to teaching and the materials being used to explain the concept of government. Such approaches to political education emphasize issues and use case studies in an attempt to provide a thoroughly human perspective. The aims of the newer approaches are to genuinely arouse students' interests, to inject a sense of reality into programmes, and to provide the skills and insights which are necessary for active participation. The students should see political education as involving far more than government setting up the whole framework of rules and authority, which implies power, enforcement, and obedience. Political education has a more expansive territory. It can be seen both within and outside the classroom, in the family, in the community, and in encounters among people. Hodgetts and Gallagher (1979), for example, encouraged this new approach. They urged us . . .

> to capitalize on the everyday situations
> encountered by the children themselves which
> involve their own group decisions and
> choices. At home they encounter rules about

their own conduct and at least sometimes
share in the decision made; at school and in
the neighborhood they encounter other rules
determined in different ways . . . The
informal analysis of such political
situations are child related opportunities to
develop understandings and senses of group
responsibility and social obligation, of far
more benefit than memorization of legalistic
descriptions of government practices or
abstract political concepts. (p. 32).

This new approach, has been described as the
politics of everyday life. It incorporates sound
pedagogical strategies in introducing a high degree of
realism in providing students with opportunities to
make choices that are relevant.

It is probably too ambitious and perhaps
unrealistic to assume that any programme of political
education should or will produce a generation of
political activists, but it can aim at teaching the
skills, knowledge, and values that will make it
possible for people to participate in the political
system should they choose to do so. The aim is to lay
the foundation for intelligent participation in public
matters.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of this research is to investigate the effect of a Unit of Study, The Green Slime Affair taken from Politics and You by Botting et al., on the political socialization of school children in Grade Five. The specific indices of political socialization that this study investigated are: political efficacy, general attitude toward politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, political participation and political conflict. Kirk (1968), claimed that student's attitudes are somewhat shaped by and manifested in their social environment. Since demographic changes and mediating factors are viewed as both cause and effect of the social environment, this study has investigated the relationship of mediating factors - specifically sex and intelligence levels - to the indices of political socialization.

In general the question addressed in this study is whether a Unit of Study will change the attitudes of Grade Five students in a direction consistent with the goal of an increased inclination toward political participation.

STATEMENT OF THE HYPOTHESES

In order to attempt to answer the research question stated above, the following hypotheses will be investigated:

HYPOTHESIS 1. In relation to political efficacy the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Groups on the basis of intelligence levels and sex.

HYPOTHESIS 2. In relation to general attitude towards politicians, the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Groups on the basis of intelligence levels and sex.

HYPOTHESIS 3. In relation to political cynicism, the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Groups on the basis of intelligence levels and sex.

HYPOTHESIS 4. In relation to view of citizenship, the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Groups on the basis of intelligence levels and sex.

HYPOTHESIS 5. In relation to political participation, the Unit of Study will have no

significant effect on the responses of students in the
Experimental Groups on the basis of intelligence
levels and sex.

HYPOTHESIS 6. In relation to political conflict,
the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on
the responses of students in the Experimental Groups on
the basis of intelligence levels and sex.

LIMITATIONS

The first limitation of the study is that only two
specific variables - namely intelligence quotients
levels and sex are investigated. Variables such as
socio-economic status, home environment, religion, peer
influence, and the media would certainly be important
in the process of socialization, however, no attempt is
made to control for them.

Another limitation of the study is that it is
limited to a selected sample of Grade Five students
taken from two centers in Western Newfoundland. The
findings cannot be generalized to school children
outside these two centers.

A final limitation of the study concerns the self-
completed questionnaire method of data gathering. The
care with which the students answered the questions and

their interpretations of the questions are factors that
are uncontrollable.

DEFINITION OF THE TERMS

Political Socialization. Massialas (1969)
indicates how the concept of political socialization
has developed from the interest in "citizenship" which
dates back to the writings of Plato. He defines the
concept thus:

> The process by which a person internalizes
> the norms and values of the political system,
> or, to give a slightly different definition,
> it is the process through which political and
> social values are transmitted from one
> generation to the next. (p. 19).

> Greenstein (1965) further expands this concept:
> Viewed this way political socialization
> would encompass all political learning,
> formal and informal, deliberate and
> unplanned, at every stage of the life cycle,
> including not only explicitly political
> learning but also nominally non-political
> learning of politically relevant social
> attitudes and the acquisition of politically
> relevant personality characteristics.
> (p. 551).

Political socialization is the process through which individuals acquire a degree of political consciousness. It is concerned with the way people obtain knowledge and develop attitudes and values about political aspects of their world. The characteristics referred to by Greenstein include political efficacy, attitude toward politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, political participation and political conflict.

Political Efficacy. Political Efficacy as used in this study will be invested with the same general meaning intended by its originator, Campbell (1954). He stated the meaning for the concept in this way:

the degree of confidence an individual feels regarding his potential to influence the political process, i.e., that it is worthwhile to perform one's civic duties. It is the feeling that political and social change is possible, and that the individual citizen can play a part in bringing about the change. (p. 187).

General Attitude Toward Politicians. Stacey (1978) in a study directed at attitudes toward

politicians and the political process in general states:

>The persistence of any political system will depend upon its maintaining a minimal level of support from individuals in society. This level of support could be measured in terms of positive or negative feelings. (p. 12).

If one is to be politically active, it can be assumed that a modicum of trust in at least some politicians and a general acceptance of the potential fairness of the political process are necessary.

Political Cynicism. Political cynicism is defined by Schwartz (1975, p. 189), as the perception that political authorities and/or the regime generally and regularly violate prescriptive standards for their behavior. In other words, the political system or aspects of it are perceived to be illegitimate. Agger et al. (1961, p. 477-506), defined political cynicism as the extent to which people hold Politicians and Politics in disrepute; the extent to which these words accentuate the negative rather than the positive.

View of Citizenship. Alternative labels for this concept might be "sense of political responsibility" or "sense of civic obligation." Campbell (1954) gave

this definition: "It is the feeling that oneself and others ought to participate in the political process regardless of whether such political activity is seen as worthwhile or efficacious" (p. 194).

Political Participation. This term attempts to measure the individual's characteristic degree of interest and involvement in political affairs. The conceptualization and measurement of political participation have expanded from the early empirical work of Gosnell (1937), which focused entirely on voting turnout, to Campbell et al. (1954), which focused on campaign participation, to Almond and Verba (1965) with emphasis on political discussion, which eventually expanded to the influential study of Verba and Nice (1975), which defined political participation as:

> those activities by private citizens that are more or less directly aimed at influencing the selection of government personnel and/or the actions they take (p. 2).

Political Conflict. Politics often seems to be one long process of argument and, when people see this, they often become unhappy. They wonder why politicians cannot ever agree and simply get the job done.

Politics, however, is inevitably about disagreement and conflict. It involves making choices. Boulding (1962) suggests:

> political conflict is defined as a situation
> of competition in which the parties are aware
> of the incompatibility of potential future
> positions and in which each party <u>wishes</u> to
> occupy a position that is incompatible with
> the wishes of the other. (p. 1).

Hodgetts and Gallagher (1978) expands this concept:

> Politics is the process used when attempting
> to promote an interest or resolve conflict. .
> . . in other words, politics is often about
> disagreements and controversy; where there is
> general agreement there need be no real
> political activity. (p. 10).

<u>Unit of Study</u>. This term refers to a Unit of Study entitled <u>The Green Slime Affair</u> taken from the book, <u>Politics and You</u> by Botting et al. (1985). This Unit of Study will be the treatment for a sample of grade five students. (Appendix D).

<u>Intelligence Quotient Levels</u>. The Canadian Multi-levels Edition of the Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence

Test, Level D, Form 1, was administered to obtain the different levels of I.Q. The I.Q. levels will be categorized as A.A. (I.Q. is 108 or higher), A. (I.Q. range between 92-108) and B.A. (I.Q. is 92 or lower).

Significance of the Study

There is obviously nothing new about political education. Citizenship is a widely accepted educational goal. Yet acceptance of this philosophy has been neither sweeping nor systematic. The need to reform teaching objectives and teaching techniques has been recognized by many educators in the past decade. However, it seems that to teach civics or government is safe, but to teach politics is not. (Osborne, 1985). As the following studies suggest there is increasing evidence that to teach civics or government is simply not enough:

1. A ten-nation survey in 1954 reported that civic education generally has failed: . . ."nowhere has the system proved capable of producing the ideal goal of a well-informed citizenry, with democratic attitudes and values, supportive of government policies and interested in civic affairs." (Torney et al. 1954, p. 21).

2. Research into political socialization suggests that civics, government, and social studies are

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achieving nothing at the secondary level. (Langton, 1969, p. 115).

3. The general level of political participation, in anything more active than voting, is extremely low and is also dominated by middle and upper-middle class groups. (VanLoon & Whittington, 1976, p. 112).

4. Politics and politicians are generally held in very low esteem: General comments on politics were 33% positive and 52% negative. The general comments on politicians were a staggering 78% negative in tone. (Clarke et al., 1979, p. 22).

According to Hodgetts (1980) courses in civics and government are boring for teachers and students, concentrating as they do on factual, institutional information and nice, neat little Acts of Parliament.

Perhaps the clinching argument is that, although we have been teaching civics and government for generations, we need to evaluate our programs. The above studies reflect an urgent need to undertake political education in the schools as something more than traditional civics and government courses.

In particular, we need to teach students about the real world of politics, that is, political issues processes, and systems. According to Hodgetts this

should begin in the elementary grades and not be left until in high school.

Any approach to political education, Botting et al., (1985), if it is to be effective, must meet the following criteria. It must be appealing to students so that it arouses and holds their interest. Students must be able to understand it and, therefore, it must be pitched at an appropriate level, especially for younger students who are still largely thinking in concrete terms. The criteria must introduce students to, and draw its material from the real world of politics, not from some idealized fantasy-land. As well, it must explore, encourage, and develop the skills and dispositions needed for active participation. Political education must deal with the concerns and experience of students by focusing on the politics of everyday life, by seeing the classroom, the peer group, and the community as political systems in action. Finally as suggested by Botting et al. (1954), the criteria must be transferable in the sense that what students learn can be transferred to other settings beyond their classroom. These criteria obviously have to be applied in light of the age and capabilities of the students involved, however, they

provide the basic framework within which we might attempt to develop political education.

This study is significant in that it attempts to present politics to Grade Five students in the form of a story with which they can easily associate. The story deals with a classroom in which students are allowed to choose how to spend a Friday afternoon. After some disagreement, they decide to go to a movie, only to find that various groups in the community strongly object to their choice. Students are introduced to the realities of power, and decision-making both inside and outside the school as the principal, superintendent, schoolboard, the media, parents, and assorted pressure groups all intervene in the children's decision.

The story, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>, is written in a language that children can read easily and it focuses upon children and their choices and decisions. The story presents problems and choices for children as they read. Most importantly and of primary concern is that the story introduces the student to what is considered the fundamental concepts underlying political activity and decisions: <u>disagreement</u>, <u>decisions</u>, <u>action</u>, and <u>power</u>.

In summary, the researcher feels within this context this study is significant in that it tries to ascertain whether or not a Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>, would influence the political attitudes of Grade Five students in a direction keeping with participatory citizenship.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In this chapter a review of the related research, which provides a background for this study is presented. Particular attention is given to the school and its various components as an agent of political socialization. Two mediating factors, specifically sex and intelligence will be discussed in relation to their effect on the political socialization process.

DESCRIPTION OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Although the phrase "political socialization" is of recent vintage, the ways of preparing individuals for citizenship and the consequence of such preparation for life in a society or state have long been of keen interest to political and educational theorists. Since the days of the Greeks, philosophers and political theorists have argued about the right way to educate citizens politically. Both Plato and Aristotle, for example, wrote extensively about what is today called "citizenship training." Plato, in his treatise The Republic, a work which is commonly regarded as a classic in both political and educational theory, drew a close link between education and politics. Plato was largely concerned with the cultivation in individuals

of values suitable to maintain the stability of the state. Similarly, Aristotle in his Politics expounded at length on what constitutes the proper civic education, even claiming that the legislator's chief responsibility should be the proper education of the young. In his work The Politics Aristotle stated:

> But of all the safeguards that we hear spoken
> of as helping to maintain constitutional
> continuity the most important, but neglected
> today, is education, that is educating
> citizens for the way of living that belongs
> to the constitution in each case. It is
> useless to have the most beneficial rules of
> society fully agreed upon by all who are
> members of the politeia, if individuals are
> not going to be trained and have their habits
> formed for that politeia, that is to live
> democratically if the laws of society are
> democratic, oligarchically if they are
> oligarchic. (p. 215).

Massialas (1969, p. 18-20), while studying the evolution of political socialization, points out that the difficulty in producing well-grounded and fruitful responses to the perennial questions about citizenship raised by the early classical writers was largely due

to the following points. First, the assumption that
political and civic learning is acquired deliberately
through instructions in school meant that little
consideration was given to other socialization agents;
e.g., the family, the church, or the impact of other
mediating factors such as sex or intelligence. Second,
the notion of citizenship education was quite
ambiguous. Citizenship could mean either a process in
which an individual came to assimilate certain values,
or a desirable human quality. Third, the concept of
"citizenship" was defined in terms of broad human
qualities, which themselves tended to be ambiguous. It
suggested that people should possess knowledge; be
friendly and co-operative, and should demonstrate
socially desirable attitudes and habits. If these old
standards were used today, as Massialas points out, all
political activists would be judged as demonstrating
poor citizenship. Fourth, there was a failure to link
the study of citizenship to a broad theoretical
framework. The studies made loose references to the
relationship between citizenship and society or they
defined citizenship as desirable forms of behavior.

Emerging from these early studies has been a more
sharply defined field of study termed political
socialization. In recent years, the term "citizenship"

has been replaced by the concept of political
socialization. The new concept is generally defined by
Easton and Dennis (1969) as:

> Political socialization refers to the way in
> which society transmits political
> orientations, knowledge, attitudes, or norms
> and values - from generation to generation.
> (p. 40).

Easton and Dennis recognized that political
socialization is learned through a series of processes
ranging from the formal to the informal and through the
influence of other mediating factors.

Dawson and Prewitt (1967, p. 7), pointed out that
the study of political training is still carried out in
a scholarly inquiry, but what has changed is the
contemporary emphasis on "the democratic ideology and
mass participation in politics."

Kirby (1979, p. 14), stated that the contemporary
emphasis on political learning has resulted in an
increase in empirical research on the part played by
the various socializing agencies, and on the impact of
such socializing agencies, and on the impact of various
sociological factors in the process.

Langton (1969, p. 5), viewed the concept in this
way: "Political socialization is the process, mediated

through various agencies of society, by which an
individual learns politically relevant dispositions and
behavior patterns."

Forman (1961, p. 342), referred to political
socialization as: "the learning of politically
relevant social patterns corresponding to societal
positions as mediated through various agencies of
society."

All these conceptions of political socialization
acknowledge that political attitudes, knowledge,
values, and behaviors are learned. What is common to
all these researchers of political socialization is
that no aspect of political learning is excluded from
the political socialization process.

THE SCHOOL AS AN AGENT OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

To suggest that schools should teach politics is
nothing new. Citizenship has long been an aim of
public education and Civics has long been a part of the
curriculum. Traditionally schools were intended to
socialize the young as well as to educate them. As
Lukes (1972) defined it, public education was:

> The influence exercised by adult generations
> on those that are not yet ready for social
> life. Its object is to arouse and develop in
> the child a certain number of physical,

intellectual, and moral states which are required of him both by the political society as a whole and by the special milieu for which he is specifically destined. (p. 132).

Beck (1971) gave this analysis for the role of schools in political socialization:

In most modern nations, schools also occupy a favorable position in terms of the preconditions for successful socialization. Except for the preschool years, they often rival the parents in exposure to the children. American children, e.g. spend a substantial portion of their waking hours in school. College attendance extends this exposure into early adulthood for many. There is, additionally, identifiable political content in communication issued by the schools, particularly where norms of citizenship are involved. Finally, schools generally enjoy a considerable advantage in the receptivity of children to their messages. (p. 127-128).

Easton and Hess (1966) stated that not only has the school in recent years played a major part as an agent of socialization but that the emphasis has moved

from the period of adolescence to the elementary school
child:

> By the time the child has completed
> elementary school, many basic political
> attitudes and values have become firmly
> established . . . The truly formative years
> of the maturing member of a political system
> would seem to be the years between the ages
> of 3 and 13. It is this period when rapid
> growth and development in political
> orientations take place, as in many areas of
> non-political socialization. (p. 156).

Hess and Torney (1967, p. 101), claimed that in
the United States the public school is the most
important of all the political socialization agents.

Arons (1983) concluded that schools play a
significant role in shaping students' attitudes and
assumptions, many of which are political in a broad
sense. Arons provides evidence for this conclusion by
showing that there is an increasing willingness to
engage in a public struggle for the power either to
impose particular definitions of reality on school
systems or to withdraw children from the socializing
effect of schools altogether.

Sigel (1970, p. 311-317), wrote that educational institutions enhance the political socialization process through two types of learning: deliberate learning and incidental learning. The former through the study of Civics and the latter by encompassing the influence of teacher, peers, and parents through conversations and observations.

Over the past decade or so there have been a variety of opinions concerning the influence of schools as an agent of political socialization. Sears (1968), for instance, questioned Hess and Torney's study on the development of political attitudes in children. Sears claims that the methodological procedure used did not justify their conclusion that the school was the most important political socialization agent.

From this perspective Apple (1971) says the following about our schools:

> Schools are seen as falsifying and denying
> the central and creative role of conflict in
> society while at the same time presenting
> societal interactions as consensual and
> meritocratic. (p. 27).

Davis (1975, p. 84-98), in a study of a sample of children in British Columbia living in a remote part of British Columbia, suggested that it was the home, and

not the school, that was most responsible for the political socialization of children.

In recent years the impression arising from the literature on politically relevant effects of schooling are two-fold. Joyce et al. (1982) states:

> First, the attitudes, traits and propensities
> inculcated by the process of being schooled
> tend to be dysfunctional for a democratic
> society and are certainly contrary to the
> rhetoric and ostensible goals of many people
> involved in public education. Second,
> specific courses or curricula, the purpose of
> which are related to civic education, seems
> to have little effect. (p. 357).

Closely related to this criticism is Anyon's (1975) conclusion arising from an analysis of elementary social studies texts that, "students are frequently presented with sanitized, simplistic and conflict-free interpretations in their studies of past and current communities" (p. 40).

Osborne (1980) reaches the same conclusion after analyzing a sample of Canadian history texts. Further, it is argued by Jackson (1968) and Bowers (1974) that school, through its bureaucratic and authoritarian structure and processes, encourages in students such

tendencies as unquestioning acquiescence to authority and non-participatory modes of citizenship.

Other observers have clearly expressed a different perspective of school as an agent of political socialization. Silberman (1974) attributes the problem to the mindlessness of educational professionals and Merelman (1974) states his explanations as, "the allegiance of educators to the contradictory goals of teaching democratic values and imposing social control, or the bureaucratic nature of schooling" (p. 2). Jackson, (1968) in an ethographic study, observes that classroom life, because of bureaucratic constraints, provides an apt preparation for an authoritarian workplace. In his view, teachers are clearly the children's first boss.

Torney et al. (1975), in their study of civic education in ten countries, concluded that:

. . . nowhere has the (school) system proved fully capable of producing the ideal goal of well informed citizenry, with democratic attitudes and values . . . and interested in taking part in civic affairs. (p. 21).

The authors go on to speculate that perhaps a hierarchical organization such as the School is not the right setting for inculcating democratic values. This

argument has been supported by Kohlberg in connection
with the concept of the "Just Community." As Kohlberg
(1972) puts it:

> . . . if you want to develop morality or a
> sense of justice in kids, you have to create
> a just school, a just classroom environment.
> For the fact is that much of what kids learn
> comes not from books and materials, but from
> the moral environment and atmosphere that you
> establish in your classroom ...   (p. 10).

Langton and Jennings (1968, p. 853-867), in a
study of the impact of school programs on the civic
learnings of high school students, draw a similar
conclusion, that formal programs have a negligible
effect on pupils.

Stacey, (1978) in an extensive review of the
literature, concludes:

> Formal political education is a sphere in
> which educationalists and teachers appear to
> have failed miserably to make an impact on
> children, for good or ill. (p. 68).

In a similar view Rosnell and Hawley (1981)
conclude that existing studies indicate exposure to
social studies courses generally has little impact on
politically relevant learning.

Coleman, (1961, p. 23), in discussing the effect of political content in the educational curriculum concluded that the impact of manifest political socialization in schools is highly variable, and depends not only on the content but also upon particular context and the strength of reinforcing or negating experience outside the school.

Goldenson (1978), in a study which examines the impact of a specially designed program on a sample of high school students' civil liberties attitudes, argues for an approach which attempts to assess what might be possible under better than "as-usual" conditions. Goldstein in his study demonstrate that using selected materials and interested knowledgeable teachers could demonstrate that students' civil liberties attitudes were responsive in a democratically functional direction.

In a like manner, Rossell and Hawley (1981) observe that:

> While there is little evidence that
> conventional curricula significantly affect
> the acquisition of political knowledge,
> skills, or attitudes, this does not mean that
> instruction cannot, if properly conceived and
> delivered, have impact. Several studies of

experimental efforts to influence political

learning in particular directions suggest

that the formal curriculum can be an

effective, if not powerful, socialization

mechanism. (p. 4).

THE CURRICULUM AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Curriculum developers have recognized the

political nature of schooling and have, in their

rationale building and curriculum development, moved

toward making the teaching of political education a

part of their program in social studies.

Barr and Barth (1977) concluded that the most

solid common ground to be found in a diverse and

confusing arena of social studies was commitment to

citizenship education. A similar conclusion is

apparent in a recent survey of current provincial

social studies curricula. Redden (1982) concludes

that:

The major goal of the social studies programs

of all the provinces appears to be to provide

students with the knowledge, skills, values

and thought processes which will enable them

to participate effectively and responsibly

(emphasis added) in the ever changing

environment of their community, their
country, and their world. (p. 4).

One of the Aims of Public Education for
Newfoundland and Labrador (1984) is:

To acquaint pupils with the principles of
democracy and to provide opportunities for
the practice of these principles. (p. 3).

The formation of the person-citizen is perceived
by The Master Guide for Social Studies, K - XII to be
the inclusive, overall goal of the social studies
program for Newfoundland and Labrador schools. The
Master Guide places emphasis on the two-fold nature of
the goal, describing it as:

Person-centered. The social studies should
help the learner to find meaning in life and
in human relationships as he or she develops
in ways of knowing, thinking, feeling,
valuing, and intelligent behavior.

Citizen-centered. The social studies should
help the learner understand the society in
which he or she lives, develop the values and
skills essential for effective citizenship,
and apply this knowledge in daily living.
(p. 4).

The Master Guide recommends that emphasis be placed upon a number of major understandings. Three of these are:

Democracy is based on belief in the worth, dignity, and integrity of the individual person, in equality of opportunity, . . .

Democracy is dependent upon processes of free inquiry, exchange of views . . .

Canadian citizenship involves both rights and responsibilities. (p. 16).

The message from this document is clear. Teachers are to attempt to prepare students for a participatory and responsible mode of citizenship.

Hounsell (1983, p. 10-15), states that it is most ironic that the Social Studies Programme for Newfoundland focuses on the concept of the person as citizen, yet there are significant gaps in our curriculum relating to the concept of citizenship and the teaching of civic and political education. At the primary level, with the exception of grade III, one is pressed to find specific mention of citizenship goals; at the secondary level, with the exception of a few courses, most emphasis is on the traditional, historical growth of government structures and

institutions. Such a situation is not unique to Newfoundland but is commonly found across the nation.

Hounsell points out several reasons for this situation. In the past teachers used, almost exclusively, single-answer information workbooks. The futility of that approach has been realized and such books have been discarded. Until recently, little has surfaced to replace such materials. There has been a notion that political education is only for "mature" people, and the thought of really introducing students to our political culture is, for many, unnerving.

But the change is occurring. Kendall (1986) states that hectic developments have come about since the writing of the Master Guide. Kendall reflects on the status of social studies:

> Over the past several years considerable
> effort has been expended on the
> implementation of new programs and textbooks.
> The results are encouraging. We are in the
> process of preparing the way for real and
> lasting change. Such change will lead the
> way in an era that demands civic involvement,
> social responsibility, economic competency,
> and historical grounding on the local,
> national, and international scene. (p. 48).

He further states:

The social studies program at the primary

grades is playing an increasingly vital role

in the development of the person-citizen.

(p. 49).

Elementary social studies programs and the

materials introduced tend to emphasize

"process" rather than "product." It is

learner centered. (p. 56).

In conclusion Kendall states:

Social studies textbooks have been modified

in all grade levels in recent years. They

are more learner centered and emphasize a

greater number of teaching methodologies.

(p. 60).

One can conveniently contrast traditional civics
teaching with more recent approaches to political
education. Osborne (1982, p. 21), has constructed this
table to reflect the contrasting approaches:

Table 1

Contrasting Approaches to Political Education

Traditional	Recent
Concentrates on government to the neglect of other aspects of politics.	Concentrates on a political system of which government is only part.

Traditional	Recent
Emphasizes the formal structure and institutions of government.	Emphasizes political processes and behavior - the political culture.
Describes the ideal of what is supposed to happen.	Describes what actually happens.
Stresses consensus; downplays or avoids conflict.	Sees conflict (which is not the same as violence) as the core of politics.
Emphasizes factual knowledge and the one right answer.	Emphasizes personal opinion and argument.
Relies mostly on conventional teaching methods (textbook; chalk; and talk; etc.)	Uses discovery/inquiry strategies. Increasing attention being paid to action-projects.
Tends to avoid current controversies; reluctant to bring politics into the classroom.	Emphasizes current controversies either as worth studying in their own right or as examples of enduring them.
Uses common sense categories and knowledge; relies heavily on history.	Turns to the academic discipline of political science for concepts and insights.
Sees "good citizenship" as a set of specific virtues to be inculcated.	Sees "good citizenship" as a topic for analysis and debate, although insists upon certain procedural values.
Postulates the informed voter as the most desirable model of political participation.	Goes beyond voting to more active forms of participation.
Largely ignores the impact of the "hidden curriculum" (school rules; classroom climate; teacher attitudes; etc.)	Is very conscious of the impact of the "hidden curriculum" and works to remodel it.

Traditional	Recent
Promotes, often implicitly, obedience, trust, conformity.	Promotes personal autonomy; efficacy, a critical spirit, a suspicion of power-holders.
Tends to avoid normative questions of what might be; avoids value-issues.	Emphasizes value-issues; raises normative and ethical concerns.

Given the state of Social Studies, it was not surprising that Hodgetts and Gallagher (1978) singled out the teachings of political education or Civics education for special consideration. In the words of Hodgetts et al.

> Civic education in Canada . . . should not only consider areas of agreement but also face frankly the difference of opinion which have always been and will continue to be an essential element in our society. But a stable political community also requires a minimal ability among its citizens to resolve conflict with some understanding of opposing viewpoints. Without this ability, the tensions in our society might cease to be dynamic and become destructive. This means that the fundamental objective in any new program of Canadian studies should not be

national unity but national understanding.

(p. 120).

Hodgetts (1978), goes on to elaborate that the
main emphasis of such programs of study for civic
education, "is on the understandings that children
should understand something about the economical and
political systems and public issues of continuing
concern, and on understandings that should help them as
citizens to participate constructively in the civics
and public life of Canada" (p. 3).

Hodgetts and Gallagher (1978) rejected the
traditional legal-institutional approach to political
education and the consensus view of politics found in
so many textbooks.

It is the fundamental persistent diversities
in a society that makes governments and
political activity essential. Politics is
the process used when attempting to promote
an interest or resolve conflict . . . In
other words, politics is often about
disagreements and controversy; where there is
general agreement there need be no real
political activity. (p. 9).

In the same view, Hodgetts and Gallagher (1978),
stress that politics is far more than merely government

and goes far beyond a concern for the structure of
government to "issues, interest groups, and inputs to
the political system and feedbacks from the system to
the society" (p. 3).

The curriculum is potentially one of the major
instruments of political socialization. Its importance
as an initiator and reinforcer of cultural value is
clearly stated by Anderson and Fisher (1976).

> The school curriculum that lies in the heart
> of the educational systems of western
> societies is one of the great cultural forms
> of human history. Its content embraces
> diverse culture traits believed to be
> requisite for participation in the society .
> . . Many of the basic "values" of the society
> are to be reinforced (if not originally
> transmitted to pupils) by means of the choice
> of materials placed before them on society.
> (p. 96).

As stated earlier in this chapter, awareness of
the impact of schooling on political socialization is
not new. However, the tone of stated goals in our
curriculum has changed over the past decade or so.
Osborne (1984) says: "They appear to have become
explicitly political and participatory, with the notion

of civic competence supplanting a rather passive good orientation" (p. 6).

Osborne (1984) realizes that there is an increasing concern for developing civic competence and this can probably be explained in terms of recurrent doubts regarding government and people who are involved in government; but an issue that remains to be addressed is whether or not schools are the appropriate places in which to set about this task of developing the knowledge, skills and attitudes which together constitute both the competence and the inclination to participate politically.

TEACHING STRATEGIES AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

In recent years, traditional approaches to the teaching of politics have come under question. Milbrath et al. (1977), Osborne (1982), Vera et al. (1975), and Clark et al. (1979) all give similar versions of traditional approaches which they suggest have the following characteristics. First they concentrate on institutions at the national level - to the exclusion of more local concerns. Second, they present an idealized and therefore unrealistic, view of politics; they talk about the world as it is supposed to be, not as it is. The result is to make youngsters unduly cynical when they come to see the difference

between what they are taught and what, in fact, exists.
Third, they deal with institutions rather than with
processes and, in particular, they deal not so much
with politics as with government. They suggest that
the system has not worked, as evidenced by the
consistent research findings of the low level of
political participation by most people. In the words
of the Ten-Nation Survey of Civic Education (1975):

> . . . nowhere has the system proved capable
> of producing the ideal goal of a well-
> informed citizenry, with democratic attitudes
> and values, supportive of government policies
> and interested in civic affairs." (p. 21).

This realization has produced a new interest in
political education. Perhaps the most persuasive
argument is that, although we have been teaching civics
and government for generations, Canada is not
particularly reaping the positive effects. There is
increasing evidence that to teach civics or government
is not enough. Langton (1969) found that research into
political socialization suggests that civics,
government, and social studies are achieving nothing at
the secondary level. VanLoon and Whittington (1976)
found that the general level of political
participation, in anything more active than voting is

extremely low and is also dominated by middle and upper class groups. In 1979 Clarke et al. wrote that politics and politicians are generally held in very low esteem; general comments on politics were 33% positive and 52% negative. The general comments of politicians were a staggering 78% negative in tone.

From the preceding evidence one can speculate according to Patrick (1977) that inadequacies in instructional materials and in contexts of instruction have been associated strongly with shortcomings in the political learning of students.

All those courses in citizenship have not paid off. Even the Speech from the Throne (April 14, 1980) asked whether Canada will exist in the 1990's. Each region of our country is asking for special treatment. In one sense, all this represents healthy debate; in another, it shows a country in considerable political trouble. In either case, it demonstrates an urgent need to undertake a political education program in the schools that is something more than traditional civics or government courses.

Recent approaches to the teaching of political education, then, are very different from the teaching of civics as traditionally understood. Anderson et al. (1977, p. 61-72), suggests that more explicit and

systematic attention be given to the outcome of
increased participation, efficacy, and competence,
citizenship, conflict, and attitudes. In particular,
Anderson's recent approaches are characterized by these
features: the traditional legal-historical-
institutional approach has been largely abandoned in
favor of conceptual modes derived from the discipline
of political science; the organization principles of
curriculum are either issues or concepts rather than
factual descriptions of events or institutions; case
studies are a popular teaching device for introducing
students to issues and problems; discovery/inquiry
strategies are favored so that students learn how to
handle problems and formulate personal opinions so that
classrooms themselves exemplify participation and
involvement; and politics is broadly defined to include
political systems and/or political behavior. Politics
is seen as broader in scope than government and in some
cases it includes the politics of everyday life;
politics is seen as based upon conflict (of ideas and
interests) and attempts to contain and manage it,
rather than consensus; care is taken to make learning
as concrete and experimental as possible through
simulation, role-playing, and similar techniques;
political action and participation are being

increasingly emphasized; there is a serious concern for politically relevant attitudes, and values, e.g. tolerance, rationality, efficacy and competence, and finally students learn lifelong skills and attitudes, so that their political learning does not end when they leave school.

All this describes the consideration one has to keep in mind when organizing a programme of study. Values and dispositions are quite important. Pedagogical techniques are very important.

Thus, one of the concerns of the newer approach to teaching politics is to make the subject more readily intelligible to students. One solution is to see politics as involving far more than government and institutions. In 1965 a political scientist, Miller, suggested:

> Politics is a basic human activity which
> makes its appearance wherever there are
> rules. It may be seen in a small compass in
> a tennis club or a dramatic society, and in
> its widest scope in the manoeuvering of the
> cold war. (p. 290).

Politics, from Miller's perspective, is about rules which, of course, implies power, authority, obedience or resistance. Politics, then, can be seen

in the family, in the classroom, in the interaction among friends, and no one can deny that even young children know something about and have opinions about rules.

If, for example, one sees politics as <u>the creative conciliation of differing interests</u>, it becomes possible to make some fairly obvious connections with youngsters' personal experiences say Crick and Heater (1978, p. 34).

In particular, we need to teach students about the real world of politics; i.e., political issues, processes, and systems. This should start in the elementary grades, not to be neglected until one reaches high school. Durkheim (1972) stated that there was nothing new in suggesting that schools teach politics to youngsters, that schools were intended to socialize the young as well as to educate them, however, today this interest is one which takes political education and its commitment to participate in public life seriously. It takes various forms and pursues differing paths but follows a common goal, perhaps best described by Crick and Porter (1978) when they speak of "political literacy:"

> To have achieved political literacy is to
> have learned what the main political disputes

are about, what beliefs the main contestants have of them, how they are likely to affect you and me. It also means that we are likely to be predisposed to try to do something about the issue in question in a manner which is at once effective and respectful of the sincerity of other people and what they believe. (p. 13).

To put it briefly, the new approaches to political education concern themselves with political knowledge, with political attitudes and values, and with political skills. The view is that political education is crucial for effective democracy. Democracy is a word with many differing meanings to different people, but the key word is participation. Pateman (1970) states, "for a democratic society to exist it is necessary for a participatory society to exist; i.e., a society where all political systems have been democratized and socialization through participation can take place in all areas" (p. 43).

Almond and Verba (1965), in a five-nation survey, argue that commitment to democracy correlates significantly with school experiences. Techniques that led to open discussion and open climate led people to be more politically active. Almond and Verba's

observations need to be pondered by teachers, especially:

> . . . if in most social situations the individual finds himself subservient to some authority figure, it is likely that he will expect such an authority relationship in the political sphere. On the other hand, if outside the political sphere he has opportunities to participate in a wide range of social decisions, he will probably expect to be able to participate in political decisions as well. Furthermore, participation in non-political decision making may give one the skills needed to engage in political participation. (p. 271).

Milbrath (1977, p. 59) found this not especially surprising. He said that persons who feel more effective in their everyday tasks and challenges are more likely to participate in politics.

There is, then, evidence that if we want students to become politically effective adults, teaching strategies matter and they are important. The best way to give students a sense of efficacy is to lead them through active participation. Professor W. D. Hawley (1970) of Yale University wrote:

Despite the obvious need for improvement in formal political education programs, it seems probable that such reforms, in themselves, will have limited impact on the way young people relate to the political system. The reason is that while students learn about politics through the formal curricula and what instructors teach, they also learn by observing and experiencing the extent to which democratic values and processes are really adhered to in the life of the school as a social system. As many observers have noted, these two modes of learning usually lead to different conclusions . . . In other words, the contribution that education can make to the "training" of citizens, to the development of a deep respect for democratic values and a predisposition to see politics as an appropriate useful vehicle through which one's interest can be advanced, is related to the way schools themselves are organized and how students are treated. (p. 45).

Today the aim of teaching political education has not significantly changed from what it was in decades

earlier. What have changed in the schools in most provinces of Canada to a modest degree, are the approaches.

According to Osborne (1985) all these approaches have certain similarities. They see politics as something far wider than government. They stress the dynamics and processes of politics, rather than forms and institutions. They concentrate on the actual rather than the ideal. They see political learning as an open-ended process of raising and examining issues rather than the traditional one-right-answer technique. They emphasize current political controversies as an important source of learning. They see "good citizenship" as a matter of analysis and debate rather than a bag of virtues. They turn to the discipline of political science rather than history for their insights.

The new view, which has been described as the politics of everyday life, has come to characterize many of the recent approaches to political education in Canada. It incorporates sound pedagogical advantages in its realism and practicality to students.

SEX AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Lane (1959) and Campbell et al. (1960) assert that throughout most of the world, politics is a man's job.

They suggest that even in the United States, where equality between the sexes seems more pervasive than elsewhere, women do not play a proportionally active role in political life. Compared with men, they have less knowledge about politics, less interest in political activities, a lower sense of political efficacy and less ideological sophistication. On both affective and cognitive dimensions, then, adult women display less political awareness than men.

Almond and Verba in their Five Nation Study, (1965) found that women (in all countries) generally rank lower than men on all the indices of political attitudes and activity associated with political behavior. Why is there such a division between the sexes? This can, in part, as Almond and Verba indicate, be explained by the differing pattern of socialization of men and women. They state:

> In both Britain and America, women are less
> likely than men to participate in the family
> and at school, are less likely to go on to
> higher education and, when they enter the
> paid labor force, are much less likely to
> have higher status jobs and experience of
> work-place participation. Thus women, too,
> will tend to be on the inactive side of the

civic balance. Nevertheless, in the United
States and Britain politically competent,
aware and active women seem to be an
essential component of the Civic Culture.
(p. 399).

However, compared to women in the three other
countries investigated, women in the United States and
Great Britain appeared as more active in civic affairs.

Miller, (1966, p. 88-89) while studying the
participation of women in political activity in the
United States, claims that the reason for the
relatively low degree of participation by women has
much to do with differing educational opportunities and
assigned family roles. Miller goes on to state that
the "suffragettes" desired role for emancipated
womanhood is still not realized and not wanted by many
women." (p. 89).

Past research also suggests that males express
more positive political attitudes than females. Hess
and Torney's national survey (1967) noted small but
consistent attitudinal differences between females and
males across grade levels. Males expressed more
interest in politics and reported more political
activity than females.

Research by Herskanen (1971, p. 83-85) found that Finnish female students were also less likely to report participation in political discussions than were males. Similar to the American study, the Finnish research found male students to be more politically aware than female students.

Other studies have examined gender differences in adult political attitudes. Both Bertelson (1974) and Welsh (1977) after examining national data from the University of Michigan's Survey Research Centre, found that 1968 males were more likely than females to say they devoted much attention to international affairs. Males were also more likely than females to report they had attempted to influence another's political choice. The results gave evidence that males tend to have a higher sense of political efficacy than females.

Arthur (1985, p. 55) in a study comparing the political attitudes and participation among high school teachers in Newfoundland found that male teachers were higher on all four modes of political activity which were voting, campaigning, contacting, and community involvement.

Can the same trend be evidenced among boys and girls? Research has shown that there is a correlation between the sex of a child and his/her level of

political knowledge. Charles Andrain (1971), in his study of political knowledge of boys and girls in Southern California, found that boys were more in tune with national politics than girls. But in the same study he found no difference in political knowledge of local politics within the sexes.

Rice (1981, p. 50) concurred with Charles Andrain in his study of political socialization of St. John's school children in grades four to eight. Rice's findings concluded that boys and girls tend to be equally capable of identifying all three of the leaders of Canada's political parties. However, it was indicated that boys were slightly more aware than girls of the nature and function of Canadian Parliament.

In their comprehensive study of sex in child political socialization in grade two through eight, Easton and Dennis (1969, p. 338-342) found that boys and girls have different perceptions of what government means, though they found sex differences as early as grade two to be small and without a simple pattern. The authors state that by the later grades there is a lessening of differences between the sexes as regards to political awareness.

If it appears that boys are more knowledgeable about politics than girls, it may result from, as Hess

and Torney (1967, p. 186) point out, boys are more
interested in political matters. Easton and Dennis
(1969), found that in all grade levels from two
through eight, boys displayed a greater interest in all
political matters.

There is a good deal of evidence in the political
socialization literature to suggest that males are more
active and show more political interest than females.
Hyman (1969), in his classic review of political
socialization concluded that boys were indeed more
likely than girls to take a more active role in
political matters. Hyman points out that:

. . . we may regret the type of ego-ideal
chosen as being a model for the child's
conduct and therefore as motivating him in
directions congruent with the ideal. Thus,
already at early ages, boys are directed
toward politics and here lie the seeds of the
adult differentiations everywhere found in
studies of political participation. (p. 22).

Besides the research reviewed by Hyman, there are
other studies which deal with sex and political
participation. Susan Clarke (1966, p. 2605) conducted
a study on political participation using 406 elementary
school students in Pennsylvania. One of her most

important findings was that boys participate to a
greater extent than girls in political matters.

Greenstein (1965, p. 111-118), in summarizing his
findings with regard to politically relevant sex
differences among children found that boys generally
show more interest and knowledge of matters pertaining
to politics. Greenstein qualifies this statement about
politics:

> although not of deep interest to children of
> either sex, politics is more resonant with
> the natural enthusiasm of boys. (p. 126).

The political socialization studies summarized in,
for example, Dawson et al. (1977) and Mishler (1979)
clearly indicated that boys are more knowledgeable
about civic affairs than girls.

More recent research on sex role variations in
America and in other countries in Europe reveals fewer
and less sizable differences between the political
views of boys and girls than the results of Hess and
Torney, Easton and Dennis, Greenstein, and Hyman. In
an investigation by Orun et al. (American Sociological
Review, 1974), there were very few variations between
the political beliefs and skills of boys and girls
across a wide range of dimensions - participation,
behavior, trust, and efficacy. The only exception

proved to be political knowledge; boys consistently did much better than girls.

Eileen Wormald (1983, p. 43) in her discussion with young Britains during an Inquiry In Adolescence and Politics carried out in 1979-80 showed no sex differential in knowledge or feeling of efficacy. Wormald showed other interesting findings when compared with those of earlier decades: girls were more interested in politics than boys, girls found politics less boring than boys did, girls were less likely to think politics too complicated for the ordinary person and girls were more likely to discuss politics with their parents.

A study conducted by Marjoribank (1981, p. 1-6) found females to have less conservative political party preference and socio-political attitudes than males. Ekehammer and Sidanius (1982), while testing the findings of Marjoribank concluded with these statements:

Females . . . express less general and political-economic conservatism to their attitudes . . . Females are more negative towards racism, punitiveness and social inequality as compared to males but are more positive to religion . . . (p. 255).

Rice (1981, p. 87) found that girls tend to display a higher interest in political participation than boys. This finding is different from those reported by Clarke (1956) and Greenstein (1967) in his New Haven Study. It was difficult to explain why girls in St. John's, Newfoundland, were more likely than boys to express a willingness to participate in the political system. Rice goes on to explain that there was at this time a woman mayor in St. John's and this could have provided a model of political participation for female students in the city. Since women are generally taking a more active role in society, school girls may be patterning themselves after this role. When other researchers such as Clarke and Greenstein did their studies in the 1960's, women played a more passive role in politics.

Mueller (1984, p. 7-21) stated that the rise of women in public ofice has been one of the most dramatic changes associated with the contemporary women's movement. For example, the number of women elected to the U.S. state legislatures rose from 3.5 percent in 1969 to 14 percent in 1983; in local offices, the increase over the same period has been approximately the same. Although still in a minority at every level of government, the considerable presence of women in

local and state governments represents a major break with the past.

Avery et al. (1985, p. 7) in their research regarding relationship between gender and students' political attitudes, showed that gender differences in political attitudes were apparent in only one area, Political Confidence. Females demonstrated a lower sense of Political Confidence than did males. Apparently, both female and black students sense a lower degree of personal influence on political action. The study showed no differences in Political Interests between male and female.

Campbell (1960) depicted women as generally apathetic citizens who left politics to the men in the family. This image is no longer conveyed by contemporary data on women's role in the realm of political socialization. We can conclude that women have become more politicized in terms of their attitudes toward the political system over the past quarter of a century. Nevertheless, as Evans (1980) cautions:

> We must not replace the old orthodoxy of
> women's lesser achievement by a new dogma
> that the sexes are politically identical.
> Such is not the case. (p. 221).

One can conclude from the research that political differences between men and women are diminishing, brought about either by circumstances in childhood, school, family, media, adulthood, or possibly a combination of these. To quote Bernard in Boulding (1976):

the looser definition of gender roles have brought American women into a new era, and there is no going back to a Status quo ante.

INTELLIGENCE AND POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

Education has been used frequently as a variable to explain direction of involvement of adults in political matters. Campbell et al. (1960, p. 14-16), gave evidence in a study which showed that political participation, feelings of citizen duty, and efficacy increase as education increases. Campbell presented evidence that level of education is the strongest predictor of voting and non-voting. Key (1961) suggested:

furthermore that the influence of education is not limited to the indoctrinating values of the culture; the most highly educated person is also subject to different influences, such as different social groups, and has greater familarity with the

intricacies of public policy throughout his
life. In other words, the social
reinforcements for political activity are
much stronger for the more highly educated
individual. (p. 36).

In children, according to Dreeben (1970, p. 70-
73), intelligence is the most significant enabling
factor that affects education. Intelligence is most
important in that it mediates school learning. The
curriculum is likely to be understood more completely
by children of higher intelligence. The greater
ability of bright children allows them to learn more
rapidly, giving them tools for synthesizing what they
have learned and for relating information and attitudes
to action.

The relationship between individual intelligence
and political socialization must be, however, read with
caution. According to Wechler (1961) there is general
recognition among psychologists that "general
intelligence cannot be equated with intellectual
ability, but must be regarded as a manifestation of the
personality as a whole" (p. 660). Gough (1961), in his
study, found that among psychological correlates of
general intelligence were self-confidence, personal
autonomy, skepticism, and good general psychological

functioning. A study by White (1968) attempted to link intelligence with political attitudes. White found that intelligence, as measured by scores on an I.Q. test, has great predictive power for ranges of political efficacy in children.

A similar study by Hess and Torney (1967) revealed that children with higher I.Q.s possess the greater knowledge and understanding of politics. In particular, children of higher I.Q.s possess more political information than those of lower I.Q.s. Level of intelligence was also related to children's ability to think in the abstract about the political system; those with higher I.Q.s are more likely to conceive the system in institutional rather than in personal terms. Hess and Torney also discovered various indications that children of greater cognitive capacity have less implicit faith in the laws and in the political leaders, that is, more realistic views of the laws and the leaders, than the general theory of cognitive development and the special theory of moral judgement led them to anticipate. Specifically, the children with higher I.Q.s are less apt than children of lower I.Q.s to see laws as compelling and circumstantially invariant. The children with higher I.Q.s moreover, are generally less willing to believe that the

operation of government produce the best results for
all people in a nation. Intelligence ranks as one
source for the acquisition of certain attributes in the
process of political socialization.

Hess and Torney (1967) in their study, showed that
the acquisition of more active and initiatory facets of
political involvement (activities, efficacy,
participation in discussion, interest) are strongly
affected by different levels of intelligence. The
school, Hess and Torney suggest, apparently plays an
important role in teaching these attitudes and skills
of participation, and children of high intelligence
grasp them more quickly.

Andrain (1971, p. 99-100), suggests that
intelligence, like increased age and education, has the
effect of making students more actively involved in the
political system. Compared with their less intelligent
classmates, the most intelligent students know more
about politics, place greater importance on it, and
evaluate candidates on the basis of relevant political
grounds - party affiliation - rather than on ethnic or
religious considerations. This greater knowledge and
sensitivity towards politics does not, however, result
in a greater respect for government institutions and

authorities. On the contrary, the most intelligent students are slightly more skeptical of government.

Milbrath (1977, p. 53-69) showed that those who scored low on intellectuality were significantly less likely to be active in a party, to feel strongly about their party identification, to participate in political campaigns, and to have held public office at some time in their careers. Dubin (1963) and Kohlberg (1963), while studying the process of political socialization stated that children begin with a perception of the system as absolute and unquestionable. As the child grows older he sees rules are more flexible and less absolute. This capacity to differentiate situations in which obedience to laws and rules required a high level of cognitive ability. Hess and Torney (1967) found, "I.Q. did not affect the child's perception of the importance of compliance as a mark of good citizenship" (p. 140). Consensus in the belief that all children should obey the law may reflect the school's effectiveness in teaching obedience as a vital characteristic of citizenship.

The involvement of citizens in elections is a critical aspect of political participation and involvement. Hess and Torney (1967) state:

voting is more salient as a symbol of government to children with high I.Q. The influence of intelligence was apparent at all grade levels. This shift in response is part of a general trend toward abstract conceptualization of the system and its operations in relation to the individual. Formal teaching in the school encourages perception of the system in terms of a process and, specifically in terms of voting. (p. 158).

Sniderman (1975, p. 125), illustrates a model of personality and political learning. This model includes three facilitating variables (exposure, comprehension, and reward values of acceptance) which leads to political learning. It seems that at least one major component of the model, comprehension, is clearly related to intelligence. It would seem logical that in a changing environment, it takes a certain amount of cognitive capacity to understand and to achieve.

A study by Easton and Dennis (1969), investigated four important ideas in relation to political efficacy. They attempted to find the extent to which government officials are responsive to the desires of

individual citizens, the amount of power the individual feels he has to influence the political process, the means of influencing the political process and the extent to which the political process is open to influence by citizens. The children's responses, as reflected by the data, showed a marked increase in feelings of efficacy from the third to the eighth grade, with the sharpest increase between grade four and five.

According to Easton and Dennis as measured by their study, efficacy was significantly related to the child's I.Q. Although it is not clear precisely how I.Q. contributes to feelings of efficacy, they suggest several possibilities. For example, high I.Q. children in public schools probably feel confident in relation to their peers, satisfied that they have impact upon the teacher, and are effective within the school system, and they may extend these feelings to the political world. Children in low-prestige, low-power, and lower socio-economic situations within the United States may be caught in an opposite cycle, in which a general, culturally based sense of powerlessness is reflected not only in feeling of little political efficacy but in low I.Q. scores and low achievement.

A study by Harvey and Harvey (1970, p. 576-580) indicated that since intelligence is linked to the ability to solve problems, to process information, and to understand the meaning of complex norms in specific situations, we expect the more intelligent, enlightened students to place a higher value on political tolerance. Greater exposure leads to greater acceptance of democratic rules of the game. Harvey and Harvey indicated that higher intelligent children would be more selective in their voting behavior, children that possess less intellectual ability would have great difficulty in trying to convince political leaders to listen to them, the most intelligent students were more skeptical of government, and finally, the high I.Q. children were more likely to offer themselves as participants in running for office. In their conclusion, Harvey and Harvey showed that intelligence levels had a statistically significant relationship to both political participation, political efficacy, political cynicism, and sense of civic duty.

It is true, of course, that intelligent children who also feel politically efficacious may not necessarily translate such feelings into concrete action. More evidence is needed to determine whether such attitudes in childhood as a feeling of political

efficacy are likely to extend into adulthood. If we can assume that they do, then the significant association between intelligence and a sense of political efficacy becomes particularly meaningful in the light of the following conclusions of Almond and Verba (1963):

> Compared with the citizen whose subjective competence is low, the self-confident citizen is likely to be the active citizen: to follow politics, discuss politics, to be a more active partisan. In many ways, the belief in one's competence is a key political attitude. The self-confident citizen appears to be the democratic citizen. Not only does he think he can participate, he thinks that others ought to participate as well. Furthermore, he does not merely think he can take part in politics, he is likely to be more active. And, perhaps most significant of all, the self-confident citizen is also likely to be the more satisfied and loyal citizen. (p.257).

SUMMARY

In this chapter an attempt has been made to review some studies concerned with political socialization. Particular attention is given to the school and its various components as well as two mediating factors: sex and intelligence. The findings reveal that the school and its agencies, such as curriculum, teachers, teaching strategies and classroom organization, have played a role in determining how individuals acquire a degree of political consciousness. The studies show that sex has long occupied a prominent place as a consideration in the matter of political socialization. Current research, particularly, presents a changing perspective on the place of women in this process. On the basis of the research, one can conclude that women have become more politically conscious in recent years, and to the degree that society permits them, active participants in democratic political systems.

The final part of this chapter deals with the relationship between intelligence and political socialization. The most definitive study by Andrain (1971) suggests that there is a correlation between the intelligence level of individuals and the degree of their involvement in an existing political system. Individuals of comparatively high intellectual ability

appear to be more politically sophisticated than their less gifted peers in regards to the various indices of political socialization. Citations by researchers of earlier and later years seem to concur with Andrain's findings.

CHAPTER III

THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a description of the methodology used in this study. The questionnaire used to conduct the study is described and how it was administered is explained. The sample of students selected for the study is identified with a brief description of their educational environment.

In addition,the Unit of Study, The Green Slime Affair, selected for this research will be described and its historical - philosophical background will be provided.

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

The questionnaire for this study is designed to assess relevant political attitudes. The basic design was developed by Ken Osborne, John Seymour, and Rod Clifton, all members of the Faculty of Education, University of Manitoba, for a pilot project known as Teaching of Politics. Some of the items on the questionnaire were drawn from the existing literature on political socialization by the designers, while others were designed especially for the purpose of their pilot project. The investigator made minor changes in Part One of the questionnaire to meet the

students' circumstances. The changes included substituting the names of schools, places, and religious denomination.

The introductory part of the questionnaire is composed of information that provides descriptive data about the sample. The remaining sections of the questionnaire are made up of 46 Liekert Format items with four response choices. The questionnaire was administered (pretest and posttest) during the winter term, 1989.

THE SAMPLE

Since the investigator decided that the study required a questionnaire to be administered to two different samples of students in two different towns in Western Newfoundland at approximately the same time, it was necessary to have two teachers participate. Both teachers were aware of the appropriate instructions. There was no specific time limit for administering the questionnaire. The teacher read the questionnaire to the students and gave the necessary explanations for each part. This administrative procedure helped to overcome any problems of reading difficulties among students. This same procedure was used for both pretesting and posttesting.

Western Newfoundland. The students in School A were the experimental group while the Grade Five students in School B were used as a control group. Both groups were administered the pretest questionnaire. After the pretest was given, the Grade Five students in School A were introduced to the Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>. This part of the programme was carried out for a 4-5 week period. It was equivalent to approximately 10-12 hours of instructional time. The investigator taught and supervised the Experimental Group. After the Unit of Study was completed, the posttest was administered to the Grade Five students in School A. Meanwhile the Grade Five students in School B were not introduced to the Unit of Study, but were given the posttest at approximately the same time. The results of the two samples were analyzed. The main function of the Control Group or School B in this study was to control for possible current events which might have influenced the attitudes of all the students between pretest and posttest. Since both Groups were subjected to similar possible influences such as radio, newspaper, and television then if something happened to affect the attitudes of the experimental Group between pretest and posttest, this something should also affect the Control Group. With only an Experimental Group, it

would be impossible to determine if the treatment employed in the research process or external factors were influential in producing a particular effect. The use of a Control Group stabilizes the external variables. Secondly the researcher felt that a Control Group was necessary in that the analysis could be used for comparability with the Experimental Group and thus strengthen the validity of the research.

Table 2 gives an overall breakdown of the sample according to school, grade, and sex.

Table 2

Total Number of Students According to School, Grade and Sex

	Grade	M	F	T
School A	V	20	20	40
School B	V	20	24	44

CLASSIFICATION TABLES

The Canadian Multi-Level Edition of the Lorge-Thorndike Intelligence Test was administered to obtain the different levels of I.Q. for all the grade Five students in School A and School B in Western

Newfoundland. Table 3 gives an overall breakdown of the sample according to school, I.Q. level, and sex.

Table 3

Combination Number of Students According to School, I.Q. Levels and Sex

Levels of I.Q.	School A		Total	School B		Total
	Boys	Girls		Boys	Girls	
Above average 108	6	7	13	3	6	9
Average 92-108	9	8	17	11	11	22
Below Average 92	5	5	10	7	6	13
TOTAL	20	20	40	21	23	44

THE SCHOOLS

School A, Western Newfoundland. This school, which includes grades K-5, is part of the Bay of Islands-St. George's Integrated System. It is an urban school with an enrollment of approximately 250 students. There are twelve classrooms and a teaching staff of fifteen. There is no formal Civics or citizenship education course offered in the school. A small number of students are bussed to the school from nearby communities.

School B, Western Newfoundland. This school, which includes grades K-6, is part of the Bay of Islands-St. George's Integrated System. It is an urban school with an enrollment of approximately 300 students. There are fifteen classrooms and a teaching staff of eighteen. There is no formal Civics or citizenship education course offered in the school. A number of students are bussed to the school from nearby communities.

TREATMENT OF DATA

All data was analyzed by the Revised Edition of the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSSX). An Analysis of Variance was conducted to test for significance at the 0.05 level.

TREATMENT - THE UNIT OF STUDY

The student material that formed the core of the Unit of Study for this research consists of a case study, The Green Slime Affair taken from the book, Politics and You, authored by Botting et al. (1985). The case study is presented in story or narrative form. There were basically two general and related purposes for writing this type of material. It was designed to address knowledge, skills, and attitudes assumed to be important in the development of civic

competence and to address critiques commonly directed at traditional civics education.

Three considerations viewed by the writers as being critical to the material's success were the <u>content</u> of the case study, the <u>context</u> in which it was to be situated and the <u>means</u> that would be used to structure it.

The <u>selection</u> of appropriate <u>content</u> was influenced by several considerations. The <u>case study</u> topic was written to be interesting and salient to students at the elementary school level. An effort was made to portray the political problem selected as complex, multifaceted, and not lending itself to quick and easy resolution. The presence of different interest groups and the centrality of conflict were highlighted. Further, problems were selected that the writers hoped would seem convincing to students living in different communities. Finally the potential of a topic to illuminate significant and enduring political issues was an important consideration.

The <u>context</u> selected for the case study was analogous to those experienced by students in their daily lives. Critiques of practice in traditional approaches to civics education frequently point to the pedagogical ineffectiveness of having young students

focus primarily upon distant and presumably, from the students point of view, obscure government figures and institutions. Support for such a politics-in-everyday-life approach can be found in the work of Furth (1980) whose interviews with students suggest that they interpret community through the filter of their own perceived needs and they pay scant attention to the more psychologically and physically distant structures and institutions.

David Easton's model of political systems was selected as a means of structuring the case study as well as the expository material surrounding it. This framework which sets out an interlocking and circular set of functions that encompass the basic features of all political systems served three purposes. First, it focused attention primarily on processes rather than, as has been the tendency in civic education, on institutions. Thus the emphasis in the case study was on politics as political activities and not on a view of politics as a set of governmental structures. Second, the use of Easton's model highlighted several concepts judged by the writers to summarize understandings that were both comprehensible to students and essential to understanding a political system. These include conflict, political activities,

power, decisions and rules or laws. Finally, the model supplied a generalizable <u>framework</u> for interpreting a diverse issue. The concepts and the implicit structure uniting them provide a basis for perceiving common patterns when encountering new political problems.

Shortly after <u>Politics and You</u> was completed in its initial form, it was piloted in eight classrooms in both urban and rural settings in the province of Manitoba. The soliciting of anonymous assessments from students and teachers after this piloting suggested that the materials were both <u>appealing and convincing</u>.

The Unit of Study, "The Green Slime Affair" is given in Appendix D.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

This Chapter presents the results from the
analysis of research data. The responses of students
on a pretest and posttest questionnaire were analyzed
to determine whether or not the Unit of Study had a
significant effect on students' political
socialization using various indices and where sex of
the students and intelligence levels were potential
mediating factors.

In this research project two groups of students
were involved. The results obtained from both groups -
experimental and Control are recorded below. It
should be noted that, as stated in Chapter III, the
Control Group was used only to stabilize external
variables. The Analysis of the Data is not treated
with any degree of written interpretation. The
Analysis is given in each Table with the intention that
the reader can use it when comparing and interpreting
the Analysis of the Experimental Group.

HYPOTHESIS 1

In relation to political efficacy the Unit of
Study will have no significant effect on the responses

of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of Intelligence Levels and Sex.

Individuals' feeling about political efficacy as a dimension of political socialization were reflected in their responses to four items. These items were statements 1, 4, 9 and 13 on the questionnaire, as shown in below.

POLITICAL EFFICACY SCALE

1. If I tried, I could get someone in the Government to listen to what I want.
4. When I grow up, I believe I will have a fair chance of influencing people in Government.
9. If I joined together with others, we could cause some rules to be changed.
13. If people would quit complaining and get active, they could change what the Government does.

The pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group in Table 4 show that the Unit of Study had no significant effect on the responses of students on a political efficacy scale where intelligence level was the mediating factor. These results show that this part of the Hypothesis is accepted.

Table 4

<u>Political Efficacy Responses of Students in</u>

<u>Experimental and Control Groups by Intelligence Levels</u>

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	7.69	8.17	9.90	9.00	8.86	8.69
Posttest	6.76	7.29	8.00	9.44	9.09	8.15
Level of Significance	.1467	.2178	.0866	.7332	.7971	.6424
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

The results in Table 5 show that the <u>Unit of Study</u> has a significant effect on the responses of students on a <u>political efficacy scale</u> where sex of the student was the mediating factor. The comparison of pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group indicate levels of significance for male (0.0477) and female (0.0595) both expressed in a negative direction. The levels of significance indicate a rejection for the male but an acceptance for the female.

Table 5

<u>Political Efficacy Responses of Student in Experimental</u>
<u>and Control Group by Sex</u>

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>	<u>Male</u>	<u>Female</u>
Pretest	7.50	9.40	8.25	9.33
Posttest	6.65	7.95	8.35	9.33
Level of Significance	.0477	.0595	.9079	1.000
Number	20	20	20	24

<u>HYPOTHESIS 2</u>

In relation to general attitude towards politicians the <u>Unit of Study</u> will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of Intelligence Levels and Sex.

Individuals' feelings about the general attitude toward politicians were reflected in their responses to the statements which were derived from the major question: "How would you describe Politicians?" These

statements were 41, 42, 43, 44, 45 and 46 on the questionnaire as shown below.

GENERAL ATTITUDE TOWARDS POLITICIANS SCALE

How would you describe Politicians?

41. Most Politicians are friendly.

42. Politicians care about me and my family.

43. Politicians do things for their own good.

44. Politicians pay attention to complaints.

45. Politicians cannot be trusted.

46. Politicians often get things done.

The pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group in Tables 6 and 7 show that the Unit of Study had no significant effect on the responses of students in relation to general attitude towards politicians. The results indicate that both parts of this Hypothesis are accepted.

Table 6

General Attitude Toward Politicians Responses of
Students in Experimental and Control Groups by
Intelligence Levels

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	14.23	14.88	12.70	13.77	13.81	14.84
Posttest	14.00	14.58	14.20	15.77	14.63	13.76
Level of Significance	.7443	.6779	.1630	.0944	.1826	.3735
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

Table 7

General Attitude Toward Politicians Responses of

Students in Experimental and Control Groups by Sex

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pretest	13.95	14.30	14.35	13.91
Posttest	13.70	14.90	14.65	14.58
Level of Significance	.7236	.3222	.7301	.3026
Number	20	20	20	24

HYPOTHESIS 3

In relation to political cynicism the Unit of
Study will have no significant effect on the responses
of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of
Intelligence Levels and Sex.

The sense of political cynicism of the respondents
was reflected in their responses to seven items. These
items were 3, 5, 7, 10, 11, 15, and 16 on the
questionnaire as listed.

POLITICAL CYNICISM SCALE

3. Politicians waste a lot of the money people pay in taxes.

5. Politicians <u>do not</u> treat everyone equally.

7. Most politicians work hard at their jobs.

10. When they are deciding what to do politicians pay a lot of attention to what people think.

11. Politicians <u>can not</u> be trusted to tell the truth.

15. Quite a few Politicians are crooked.

16. Politicians spend a lot of their time trying to help people.

This hypothesis postulated that the <u>Unit of Study</u> would have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experiment Group in relation to their feelings toward political cynicism. The Analysis of Variance values as shown in Tables 8 and 9 confirm this Hypothesis.

Table 8

Political Cynicism Responses of Students in

Experimental and Control Groups by Intelligence Levels

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	16.53	16.64	16.60	16.22	14.86	14.69
Posttest	16.84	17.29	15.10	16.88	15.68	16.23
Level of Significance	.7108	.3238	.4575	.4374	.2660	.0782
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

Table 9

Political Cynicism Responses of Students in

Experimental and Control Groups by Sex

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pretest	15.80	17.40	14.30	15.75
Posttest	16.20	17.00	15.80	16.33
Level of Significance	.6073	.6760	.0109	.4185
Number	20	20	20	24

HYPOTHESIS 4

In relation to view of citizenship, the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of Intelligence Levels and Sex.

The subjects' View of Citizenship was measured by the responses to the following sixteen items on the questionnaire. These items were 25 - 40 inclusively as listed.

VIEW OF CITIZENSHIP SCALE

25. A good citizen obeys the law.

26. A good citizen is always polite.

27. A good citizen is loyal to his or her family.

28. A good citizen works hard.

29. A good citizen has good table manners.

30. A good citizen studies hard in school.

31. A good citizen pays his taxes regularly.

32. A good citizen keeps up with what is happening in
     the world.

33. A good citizen stand up when 'O'Canada' is played

34. A good citizen shows respect for a funeral.

35. A good citizen joins a political party.

36. A good citizen tells others what he or she thinks
     about political problems.

40. A good citizen votes in every election.

The Analysis of Variance values as shown in Tables
10 and 11 indicate that the Unit of Study had no
significant effect on the responses of students in the
Experimental Group in relation to their view of
citizenship. The results indicate that both parts of
the Hypothesis are accepted.

Table 10

<u>View of Citizenship Responses of Students in</u>

<u>Experimental and Control Groups by Intelligence Levels</u>

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	30.84	33.94	42.60	30.77	31.27	32.30
Posttest	33.23	132.82	35.60	34.66	33.77	32.00
Level of Significance	.3183	.5751	.5537	.1001	.2165	.8938
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

Table 11

View of Citizenship Responses of Students in

Experimental and Control by by Sex

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pretest	29.95	40.25	32.25	30.83
Posttest	32.15	35.15	33.20	33.62
Level of Significance	.1906	.3834	.6753	.0551
Number	20	20	20	24

HYPOTHESIS 5

In relation to political participation the Unit of Study will have no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of Intelligence Levels and Sex.

The intended future political participation of the students was reflected in their responses to eight items on the questionnaire. These items were 17 - 24 inclusively as listed.

POLITICAL PARTICIPATION SCALE

17. Voting against the Government in the next election.

18. Writing letters and phoning members of the Government.

19. Writing letters to the newspaper.

20. Presenting briefs to Government meetings.

21. Signing Petitions.

22. Taking part in protests such as marches.

23. Trying to stop construction by picketing the play area.

24. Trying to stop construction by getting in the way of workers and machinery.

The pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group in Table 12 show that the Unit of Study had a significant effect on the responses of students on a political participation scale where intelligence level was the mediating variable. A level of significance (0.0425) expressed in a negative direction is shown for the below-average group. The level of significance indicate a rejection of this part of the Hypothesis.

Table 12

Political Participation Responses of Students in
Experimental and Control Groups by Intelligence Levels

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	17.69	17.11	20.00	13.33	16.04	15.46
Posttest	16.38	15.05	15.50	15.88	16.05	14.92
Level of Significance	.2475	.1028	.0425	.1814	.7399	.7318
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

The results in Table 13 show that the Unit of
Study had a significant effect on the responses of
students on a political participation scale where sex
of the student was the mediating factor. The pretest
and posttest results of the Experimental Group indicate
a level of significance for males (0.0030) expressed in
a negative direction. The level of significance
indicates a rejection of this part of the Hypothesis.

Table 13

Political Participation Responses of Students in
Experimental and Control Groups by Sex

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pretest	17.30	18.75	13.70	16.66
Posttest	14.45	16.75	14.20	17.33
Level of Significance	.0030	.1396	.6908	.5881
Number	20	20	20	24

HYPOTHESIS 6

In relation to political conflict the Unit of
Study will have no significant effect on the responses
of students in the Experimental Group on the basis of
Intelligence Levels and Sex.

Individuals' feelings about political conflict as
a dimension of political socialization were reflected
in their responses to five items. These items were 2,
6, 8, 12 and 14 on the questionnaire as listed.

POLITICAL CONFLICT SCALE

2. In politics people usually agree about how to
    solve problems.
6. In politics people argue a lot about how to solve
    problems.
8. Arguing and disagreeing is a good way to find
    answers to problems in politics.
12. I wish everyone could be made to agree on the
    best way to solve problems in politics.
14. It's a waste of time when people disagree and
    argue about how to solve problems in politics.

With respect to this hypothesis the pretest and
posttest results of the Experimental Group as shown in
Tables 14 and 15 indicate that the Unit of Study had
no significant effect on the responses of students on a
political conflict scale. The level of significance
values confirm an acceptance of the Hypothesis.

Table 14

Political Conflict Responses of Students in

Experimental and Control Groups by Intelligence Levels

	Means					
	Experimental			Control		
	AA	A	BA	AA	A	BA
Pretest	10.76	10.88	11.90	11.11	11.63	10.38
Posttest	11.30	11.00	11.10	11.55	10.81	11.23
Level of						
Significance	.2674	.8515	.5508	.5335	.1800	.2900
Number	13	17	10	9	22	13

Table 15

Political Conflict Responses of Students in

Experimental and Control Groups by Sex

	Means			
	Experimental		Control	
	Male	Female	Male	Female
Pretest	10.60	11.60	11.15	11.16
Posttest	10.75	11.50	11.10	11.08
Level of Significance	.7045	.8988	.9398	.8733
Number	20	20	20	24

DATA SUMMARY

The test results show that of the six null hypotheses formally tested, only two were rejected. In Hypotheses 2, it was shown that the Unit of Study had a significant effect on the responses of students on a political efficacy scale for the Experimental Group where sex of the students was a potential mediating factor. The pretest and posttest results as shown in Table 5 of the Experimental Group indicate a level of

significance for the male expressed in a negative direction.

Tables 12 and 13 for Hypothesis 5 show that the Unit of Study had a significant effect on the responses of students on a political participation scale for the Experimental Group where potential mediating factors were intelligence levels and sex of the students. The pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group indicate levels of significance for the below-average group and male. Again, both effects were expressed in a negative direction.

In essence the Unit of Study had negative significant effects in relation to how the Experimental Group children perceived their abilities to influence political process and to their degree of interest in political participation.

The Unit of Study had no significant effect on the responses of students in the Experimental Group in relation to Hypotheses 2, 3, 4 and 6. The Analysis of Variance values indicate that the Hypothesis concerning general attitude towards politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, and political conflict were accepted.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

SUMMARY: THE PURPOSE AND DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of a Unit of Study, The Green Slime Affair, taken from Politics and You, by Botting et al. (1985), on a selected sample of Grade Five school children in Western Newfoundland, using as criteria various indices of political socialization and taking into consideration selected mediating factors. The specific indices of political socialization that this study investigated were: political efficacy, general attitude toward politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, political participation, and political conflict. The mediating factors used were intelligence quotient levels and sex of the student.

In general the question addressed in this study is whether or not a unit of study will change the attitudes of Grade Five students in a direction consistent with the goal of an increased inclination toward political participation. The specific questions posed below were considered to be a guide to the investigation of the problem.

Will the <u>Unit of Study</u> have a significant effect on the students' attitudes with regard to:

1.   their perceived abilities to influence the political process where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

2.   their positive or negative feelings toward politicians where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

3.   the degree of political trust they have toward politicians where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

4.   their view on the importance of good citizenship where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

5.   their degree of interest in political participation where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

6.   their acceptance of the inevitability of political conflict in a democratic society where sex and intelligence levels are potential mediating factors?

To answer these questions a treatment lasting 4 - 5 weeks was implemented. Two schools comprising of four Grade five classes within the jurisdiction of the Bay of Islands-St. George's Integrated School Board in

Western Newfoundland were chosen. The students in School A were the the Experimental Group, while the Grade Five students in School B were used as a Control Group. All the students were administered an intelligence quotient test; scores were computed and for statistical purposes each student was assigned to one of the three I.Q. groupings: below-average, average, and above-average.

The two classes which constituted the Experimental Group participated in the Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>. No specific program of study was administered to the two classes which made up the Control Group. For this study a questionnaire was designed to assess political attitudes. The questionnaire included 46 Liekert Format items with four response choices. Both groups were administered the pretest questionnaire. After the pretest was given, the Grade Five students in School A were introduced to the Unit of Study, <u>The Green Slime Affair</u>. This part of the programme was carried out within a 4 - 5 week duration. It was carried out in approximately 10 - 12 hours of instructional time. Teaching was done by the investigator. After the <u>Unit of Study</u> was completed, the posttest was administered to the Grade Five students in School A. Meanwhile the

Grade five students in School B were not introduced to the Unit of Study, but were given the posttest at approximately the same time.

The raw data for the two samples were recorded. A Hypothesis was constructed for each question and postulated that the <u>Unit of Study</u> would have <u>no significant effect</u> on the responses of students in the Experimental Group in relation to the various indices of political socialization where potential mediating factors were intelligence levels and sex of the students. The Analysis of Variance was applied to each set of data and the results recorded. Significant levels lower than 0.05 were considered as level for a rejection of the hypothesis.

<u>STUDY OF THE FINDINGS</u>

Analysis of Variance with a significance level of 0.05 was used to evaluate the data. The results of this study indicate:

1.   The <u>Unit of Study</u> had a significant effect on the responses of students on a <u>political efficacy scale</u> for the Experimental Group where <u>sex</u> was a potential mediating factor. The pretest and posttest results of the Experimental Group indicate a level of significance expressed in a negative direction for the male.

2.   The <u>Unit of Study</u> had a significant effect on the
      responses of students on a <u>political participation
      scale</u> for the Experimental Group where potential
      mediating factors were intelligence levels and sex
      of the students. The pretest and posttest
      results of the Experimental Group indicate levels
      of significance for both parts of the Hypothesis.
      Again the effect was expressed in a negative
      direction.

3.   The <u>Unit of Study</u> had no significant effect on the
      responses of students in the Experimental Group in
      relation to <u>four</u> indices of political
      socialization where potential mediating factors
      were intelligence levels and sex of the students.
      The Analysis of Variance values indicate that each
      Hypothesis concerning general attitude toward
      politicians, political cynicism, view of
      citizenship and political conflict were accepted.

<u>DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS</u>

In general the question addressed in this study is
whether or not a <u>Unit of Study</u> would change the
attitudes of Grade Five students in a direction
consistent with the goal of an increased inclination
toward political participation. After the <u>Unit of
Study</u>, the students' attitudes would be either more or

less inclined towards politics or unchanged. The findings of this study indicate that the Unit of Study had a significant effect on the attitudes of children with regard to political efficacy and political participation both expressed in a negative direction. In relation to the other indices; general attitude toward politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, and political conflict the attitudes of the children were unchanged. To account for the negative effect, some possible explanations are offered but the reader may interpret the results in other ways.

Students' sense of political efficacy, which is measured by a sense of one's ability to influence the political process, could have been negatively affected simply because of the outcome in the Unit of Study. In fact the main characters, which were Grade Five students, in the final analysis, were unsuccessful in their attempt to change the minds of the decision makers. Political socialization does not presuppose an exclusively optimistic orientation. What's important in this case is attitudinal. By working with this Unit, the students by and large experienced frustration in getting the people with the power to listen and/or respond with action. One's attitudes regarding political efficacy are formed through participating.

These attitudes are molded through observing and interacting with others, whether in a small group or in the larger society. One is increasingly socialized when knowledge and insight are gained as to the capabilities of the individual to influence the workings of a political system. What happened in this Unit of Study concerning political efficacy and political participation is a key factor with regard to the negative direction the responses took. The Experimental Group of Grade Five students emerged from this study politically sophisticated enough to say: "Little or nothing can be done to change the status quo." There is a worrying suggestion in the evidence that it is not constructive skepticism, but cynical negativism that is the dominant mood.

Another possibility is that the lack of knowledge as to how politics works at a local level could, in itself, have had a negative effect on political efficacy and political participation responses. The Unit of Study is somewhat short on the formal transfer of knowledge but long on attitudinal dynamics. In retrospect, the researcher questions the amount of time spent on discussing thoroughly the whole question of politics; specifically on how it embraces our lives in so many environments such as home, church, school

sports, etc. In essence did most kids really know what the term "politics" meant before the introduction of the Unit of Study? Were the preliminary discussions expansive enough? Because of time limitation, the teacher could not engage the students in a parallel study of a political problem in the students' own community or their school. The researcher feels this was a limitation with regard to emphasis on process and student involvement.

The transferability of the context of the Unit of Study beyond the classroom could be given as an explanation for the negative direction taken by responses. For the past two years these Grade Five students have gone through, along with their parents, the contentious issue of their school being phased out and consolidated with the nearby High School. The issue has been highlighted with many controversial meetings between parents and School Board Personnel. The results show that the school is tentatively scheduled to close in June, 1990. In this context the students' attitudes with regard to their parents' inability to influence the political process could be reflected in a negative direction.

More specifically the matter of gender and intelligence levels were indeed mediating factors in

the effect of the <u>Unit of Study</u> in the realms of political efficacy and political participation. In relation to sex differences both indices as shown in Tables 5 and 13 indicate a significant greater effect for males both expressed negatively. In the review of the relevant literature it was noted and quoted that many findings showed that the degree of political awareness and political participation of males was recognized as being beyond that of females, even though the last two decades have shown some marginal changes. Males have historically held the political power; hence the heightened awareness. The greater degree of political participation has a socio-anthropological source and significance. The male was feeling comparatively ineffectual after the <u>Unit of Study</u>. Thus the result is all-the-more dramatic.

With regard to the effect of the study on below-average students, as shown in Table 12, for political participation, the researcher feels that one must interpret the data realistically. One concedes sadly that below-average students have become accustomed to failure in some sectors of their lives. They have had to accept the fact that all-too-often they are ineffectual in personal endeavors. As a consequence these students have developed a low self-esteem. With

this negative self-image comes a degree of cynicism in the negative direction. The below-average student often has the tendency to "opt out" of any form of political participation. Such an attitude can have its most destructive manifestation in anti-social behavior where the individual not only refuses to participate in the workings of the "system" but often acts rebelliously against it.

There were four hypotheses where the <u>Unit of Study</u> had no significant effect on responses of students in the Experimental Group. With regard to general attitude towards politicians, political cynicism, view of citizenship, and political conflict the students' attitudes toward these indices were unchanged. There are obviously many variables, such as the home, the school, the church, peers, the media, and numerous others that must certainly be considered important in the whole process of socialization. This was, of course, a single brief Unit of Study. The process of political socialization is a long, complex, and multifaceted one.

IMPLICATIONS

    The reasons discussed as possible explanations for the study's findings have contained some elements of conjecture. However, they carried several tentative implications. First, given the political message of the <u>Unit of Study</u>, the results indicate that this type of material has a place in a public school system. The <u>Unit of Study</u> had an effect on students' attitudes with regard to political efficacy and political participation. The findings suggest, contrary to the arguments of some investigators of political socialization, that political attitudes acquired in childhood and early adolescence may be quite malleable and open to influence through appropriate classroom learning experiences. The findings of the study suggest that children have acquired certain specific political concepts and attitudes by the time they reach grade five. If new materials are to be used with particular emphasis on civic education to help students grow in their political socialization process, certain factors must be given consideration. First, educators would do well to accept the fact that students are much more aware of their political world than many people give them credit. If we wish to follow the overall purpose of social studies, as stated in the <u>Master</u>

Guide for Social Studies, K-XII, "personal development
and growth in qualities of good citizenship," the
curriculum must contain courses which are both
theoretically sound and lead themselves readily to
practical application. The new curriculum must be so
designed that it is tuned to local, national, and
global realities, and it must also be consciously
designed to prepare our future generations of youth for
a more rational, participatory, and compassionate
citizenship.

A second consideration, besides the inclusion of
new curriculum material, is that the present condition
of social studies teaching must be evaluated. It would
be futile to change the curriculum content and teaching
strategies without adequately training teachers to deal
with this change. Teacher education institutions must
prepare teachers to be aware of the problems existing
in a pluralistic society and to recognize the realities
of public life. Teachers are the main models and their
classroom settings are the political forums in which
children can act creatively in the process of shaping
resent and future roles as citizens.

Another implication of this study concerns the
school as playing a key part in the political
socialization process. To suggest that schools should

teach politics to children is nothing new. Citizenship
has long been an aim of public education and civics has
been a part of the curriculum. Schools were intended
to socialize the young as well as to educate them. The
school itself must try, to a greater extent, to become
a model of the kind that would give students a genuine
sense of freedom, fairness, and justice. If one
attempts to cultivate moral values or a sense of
justice in kids, one has to create a just school, a
just classroom atmosphere. The so-called "hidden
curriculum" must not be divorced from reality. The
school itself should be the best setting for practicing
democratic values. From the researcher's personal
observation, it was noted on several occasions during
discussions that students from both Experimental
classes displayed moments of negativism towards their
school. Even in the microcosm of a school environment
one concedes that the boundary between democratic
freedom and irresponsible licence is not easily
defined. Some children exhibited frustration when
riding their bicycles on the school grounds was
forbidden. The question arises, of course, what of the
right to safety of small children to play without being
run down? Other students expressed irritation about
the fact that some teachers were cutting in front of

them in the canteen line. Still others wanted to chew gum in class. Such gripes and general concerns are universal and have little importance when compared to the larger moral conflicts of our society. But the investigator sensed that the students were not objecting so much to certain rules and regulations in themselves as to the fact that their questioning of school authority, in general, tended all-too-often to be a futile gesture.

It is obvious that the tone and atmosphere of a given school cannot be successfully fostered in the corridor or at the Monday morning assembly; and while an attempt at establishing it can take place in administration offices, the <u>classroom</u> is the key setting and the pivotal agent will always be the teacher who co-ordinates its management.

While the researcher states this with humility, even caution, he proposes here that the most real and complete implication that could be drawn from the response to a <u>Unit of Study</u> such as this would be more authentically interpreted within the context of additional knowledge of the tones and atmospheres of the classrooms in which it was carried out.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

    Unlike the research within scientific laboratories where the environmental factors making up the experiments can be isolated, measured and controlled, educational research must contend with many environmental factors which are difficult to measure or control. For this reason, the results of no one educational research project can be cited as completely conclusive; many research studies need to be done in any particular area to discover patterns or trends of results from individual studies. As a result of this study, the investigator put forth the following recommendations for further research.

1.   A study, similar to this one could be replicated. It is suggested that the Unit of Study be conducted over a semester. This would result in a more extensive program with all three case studies from the text Politics and You being taught. As well, the teacher should engage students in some parallel study of a political problem in the students' own school or community. This would strengthen the validity of the responses in a context that helped determine whether or not the Units of Study influenced

students' political attitudes in a direction in keeping with participatory citizenship.

2. A similar study might be conducted in relation to other potential mediating factors such as socio-economic status, home environment, religion, peer influence, media exposure, and others. These factors would certainly play an important part in the process of political socialization.

3. A study, similar to this one, could be undertaken and the retention rate of the students assessed one or two months after the completion of the initial study. One could use the same questionnaire.

4. A similar study could be replicated in another region of Newfoundland-Labrador. Such a study could compare political socialization patterns of Western Newfoundland children to those in another region.

5. Since the present study only included students in Grades Five, research should also be conducted at other grades levels - Four, Six, and Seven in order to get a more complete picture of the socialization process. <u>Politics and You</u> could easily be adapted or modified for different grade levels.

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APPENDIX A:

INDICES OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

INDICES OF POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION

A.   Political Efficacy

B.   General Attitude Towards Politicians

C.   Political Cynicism

D.   View of Citizenship

E.   Political Participation

F.   Political Conflict

APPENDIX B:

SCALES FOR POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION INDICES

SCALES FOR POLITICAL SOCIALIZATION INDICES

A. Political Efficacy

1. If I tried, I could get someone in the Government to listen to what I want.

2. When I grow up I believe I will have a fair chance of influencing people in Government.

3. If I joined together with others, we could cause some rules to be changed.

4. If people would quit complaining and get active, they could change what the Government does.

B. General Attitude Toward Politicians

How would you describe Politicians?

1. Most Politicians are friendly.

2. Politicians care about me and my family.

3. Politicians do things for their own good.

4. Politicians pay attention to complaints.

5. Politicians cannot be trusted.

6. Politicians often get things done.

C. Political Cynicism

1. Politicians waste a lot of the money people pay in taxes.

2. Politicians do not treat everyone equally.

3. Most politicians work hard at their jobs.

4. When they are deciding what to do, Politicians pay a lot of attention to what people think.

5. Politicians <u>can not</u> be trusted to tell the truth.

6. Quite a few Politicians are crooked.

7. Politicians spend a lot of their time trying to help people.

D. <u>View of Citizenship</u>

1. A good citizen obeys the law.

2. A good citizen is always polite.

3. A good citizen is loyal to his or her family.

4. A good citizen has good table manners.

5. A good citizen works hard.

6. A good citizen studies hard in school.

7. A good citizen pays his taxes regularly.

8. A good citizen keeps up with what is happening in the world.

9. A good citizen stands up when O'Canada is played.

10. A good citizen shows respect for a funeral.

11. A good citizen joins a Political party.

12. A good citizen tells others what he or she thinks about Political problems.

13. A good citizen tries to change things in the Government.

14. A good citizen gets other people to vote in elections.

15. A good citizen works to get Politicians to do what he or she wants them to do.

16. A good citizen votes in every election.

E.   <u>Political Participation</u>

1.   Voting against the Government in the next election.

2.   Writing letters and phoning members of the Government.

3.   Writing letters to the newspaper.

4.   Presenting briefs to government meetings.

5.   Signing Petitions.

6.   Taking part in protests such as marches.

7.   Trying to stop construction by picketing the play area.

8.   Trying to stop construction by getting in the way of workers and machinery.

F.   <u>Political Conflict</u>

1.   In politics people usually agree about how to solve problems.

2.   In politics people argue a lot about how to solve problems.

3.   Arguing and disagreeing is a good way to find answers to problems in politics.

4. I wish everyone could be made to agree on the best way to solve problems in politics.

5. It's a waste of time when people disagree and argue about how to solve problems in politics.

APPENDIX C:

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

<u>QUESTIONNAIRE</u>

IN THIS QUESTIONNAIRE YOU ARE BEING ASKED TO SHARE YOUR
IDEAS ABOUT A NUMBER OF TOPICS. PEOPLE HAVE VERY
DIFFERENT IDEAS ABOUT THESE TOPICS AND THERE ARE NO
RIGHT OR WRONG ANSWERS. IT WILL HELP TEACHERS
UNDERSTAND PEOPLE YOUR AGE BETTER IF YOUR ANSWERS ARE
BASED ON HOW YOU REALLY FEEL AND THINK. THIS IS NOT A
TEST SO IT WILL NOT BECOME PART OF A GRADE OR A REPORT
CARD. AFTER YOU HAVE FINISHED THE QUESTIONNAIRE -
  - PUT IT IN THE BROWN ENVELOPE AND SEAL THE
    ENVELOPE.
  - WRITE YOUR TEACHER'S NAME ON THE ENVELOPE.

<u>PART 1</u>

PLEASE ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF:

1.   How old are you?   _____ years.

2.   What is your sex?   _____ Male   _____ Female

3.   To which religious denomination do you belong?

      _____ Anglican   _____ Salvation Army

      _____ Roman Catholic   _____ Pentecostal

      _____ United Church   _____ Other

4.   Do you like School?

      _____ Yes _____ No _____ Sometimes

5.   How many sisters do you have?   _____

6.   How many brothers do you have?   _____

7.   Do you like Social Studies?

      _____ Yes _____ No _____ Sometimes

PART 2

EXAMPLE

READ THE FOLLOWING SENTENCE. THEN CIRCLE THE NUMBER
THAT SHOWS HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT THE IDEA IN THE SENTENCE.

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
I think that the Government should make people stop smoking.	1	2	3	4

If you agree strongly, circle the number below STRONGLY
AGREE. If you disagree strongly, circle the number
below STRONGLY DISAGREE, and so on.

All the statements in this questionnaire are set up the
same way as this example. Show how you feel about each
statement below by circling a number beside it.

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
1.	If I tried to, I could get someone in the Government to listen to what I want.	1	2	3	4
2.	In Politics people argue about how to solve problems.	1	2	3	4
3.	Politicians waste a lot of the money people pay in taxes.	1	2	3	4

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
4.	When I grow up I believe I will have a fair chance of influencing people in government.	1	2	3	4
5.	Politicians do not treat everyone equally.	1	2	3	4
6.	Arguing and disagreeing is a good way to find answers to problems in Politics.	1	2	3	4
7.	Most Politicians work hard at their jobs.	1	2	3	4
8.	It's a waste of time when people disagree and argue about how to solve problems in Politics.	1	2	3	4
9.	If I joined together with others, we could cause rules and laws to be changed.	1	2	3	4
10.	When they are deciding what to do, politicians pay a lot of atten-tion to what people think.	1	2	3	4

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
11. Politicians can <u>not</u> be trusted to tell the truth.	1	2	3	4
12. In Politics people usually agree about how to solve problems.	1	2	3	4
13. If people would quit complaining and get active, they could change what the Government does.	1	2	3	4
14. I wish everyone could be made to agree on the best way to solve problems in Politics.	1	2	3	4
15. Quite a few Politicians are crooked.	1	2	3	4
16. Politicians spend a lot of their time trying to help people.	1	2	3	4

PART 3

If the government in your area decided to turn your favorite outdoor playing area into a parking lot how do you think you would feel about people doing the following things? (Statements 1 to 8 below).

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
17. Voting against the Government in the next election.	1	2	3	4
18. Writing letters and phoning members of Government.	1	2	3	4
19. Writing letters to the news-paper.	1	2	3	4
20. Taking part in protests such as marches.	1	2	3	4
21. Presenting briefs to Government meetings.	1	2	3	4
22. Signing petitions.	1	2	3	4
23. Trying to stop construction by picketing the play area.	1	2	3	4
24. Trying to stop construction by getting in the way of workers and machinery.	1	2	3	4

PART 4

All statements in Part 4 describe different opinions about what a good citizen does. Share your ideas about what a good citizen does by showing how you feel about each statement.

		STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
25.	A good citizen obeys the law.	1	2	3	4
26.	A good citizen is always polite.	1	2	3	4
27.	A good citizen votes in every election.	1	2	3	4
28.	A good citizen is loyal to his or her family.	1	2	3	4
29.	A good citizen works hard.	1	2	3	4
30.	A good citizen joins a political party.	1	2	3	4
31.	A good citizen tells others what he or she thinks about political problems.	1	2	3	4
32.	A good citizen has good table manners.	1	2	3	4
33.	A good citizen studies hard in school.	1	2	3	4

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
34. A good citizen pays his taxes regularly.	1	2	3	4
35. A good citizen keeps up with what is happening in the world.	1	2	3	4
36. A good citizen tries to change things in the Government.	1	2	3	4
37. A good citizen gets other people to vote in elections.	1	2	3	4
38. A good citizen stands up when O'Canada is played.	1	2	3	4
39. A good citizen works to get Politicians to do what he or she wants them to do.	1	2	3	4
40. A good citizen shows respect for a funeral.	1	2	3	4

PART 5

All the statements in Part 5 tell how people feel about
Politicians. How would your describe your feelings?

	STRONGLY AGREE	AGREE	DISAGREE	STRONGLY DISAGREE
41. Most politicians are friendly.	1	2	3	4
42. Politicians care about me and my family.	1	2	3	4
43. Politicians do things for their own good.	1	2	3	4
44. Politicians pay attention to complaints.	1	2	3	4
45. Politicians cannot be trusted.	1	2	3	4
46. Politicians often get things done.	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX D:

THE UNIT OF STUDY - "GREEN SLIME AFFAIR"

INTRODUCTION: THE GREEN SLIME AFFAIR

Politics is about the way people decide what to do and what not to do. If people always agreed about the best thing to be done, it would be easy to make decisions. However, people often disagree. Some people want one thing and some want another, so there is <u>disagreement</u>.

For example, some people in your community might want to build a new school. Other people might think there is nothing wrong with the old school and a new hospital is what is really needed. A third group might want neither the school nor the hospital and want a hockey rink instead. Other groups might want other things.

Despite all this disagreement, a <u>decision</u> must be made. Since there is not enough money to build everything, some way must be found to decide what to build: a school, a hospital, a hockey rink or something else.

Groups will use different <u>activities</u> to get what they think is the best decision. For instance, they might hold meetings, write letters, sign petitions, make speeches, and do anything else they think would cause other people to support them.

Sooner or later, a decision will be made by someone or by some group which has the power to make sure that the decision will be obeyed.

These four words - disagreement, activities, decisions, and power - are at the centre of politics. They affect the lives of all of us.

Decisions are being made all the time, and it is very important that we have a voice in decisions that affect us. Of course, we will not always get what we want. The important thing is that we are involved in what is being decided and that we treat each other fairly.

This unit of study, The Green Slime Affair, describes some ways in which politics affects us. It deals with disagreement, activities, decisions, and power and shows how we can become involved in influencing decisions.

THE GREEN SLIME AFFAIR

Mr. Shuster's class decides to see a horror film. Not everyone is happy with the decision and some people try to change it. Mr. Shuster and his class must choose what to do and take responsibility for their choice.

The Green Slime Affair

You will read about:

.discussion

.voting

.decision making

To think about:

.Can disagreement be solved through discussion?

.Is voting a fair way to

.disagreement decide what to do?

.Should everyone have to go along with what the majority decides in a vote?

The harsh clang of the bell forced its way into the students' games and conversations. Ten-thirty. Friday morning recess at Webster Elementary School was over already. Being called back inside on such a warm spring day seemed unfair. Most of the students responded slowly, reluctantly, trying to squeeze in a

few more minutes of play. There were some, however, who moved eagerly at the first sound of the bell. These were the students in Mr. Shuster's grade six class.

CHAPTER 1

FREE TIME AND GREEN SLIME

Two days earlier Mr. Shuster had told them that all their hard work on Parents' Day was to be rewarded. In exchange for guiding parents to classrooms and hanging up displays and notices, they would have a free Friday afternoon. That meant no math, spelling, reading or social studies. This morning Mr. Shuster had suggested they think about what they would like to do with their free afternoon because they were discussing their ideas and making a decision after recess.

There was a lot of good-natured pushing and noisy chatter as students filed into the room. Once everyone was seated and quiet, Mr. Shuster again mentioned the free afternoon. Immediately, there was bedlam as the class shouted ideas about what to do.

"What about going swimming?" suggested Nicole.

"I hate that idea," said Jason. "Why don't we have a class party with everyone bringing something to eat and drink?"

A chorus of "yeah's" immediately followed.

"I think," said Maxine, waving her arm furiously, "that we should go on some kind of educational visit or

field trip . . . to a museum, or an art gallery, or even the T.V. station."

"What about skating?" asked Peter.

"Or how about floor hockey? I hate all that field trip stuff," moaned Jason.

Mr. Shuster soon realized that nothing was getting accomplished. After restoring order he proceeded to list on the board the suggestions offered by the class.

"So far we have a trip to a museum, T.V. station, art gallery, a class party, floor hockey, and ice-skating. Are there any other ideas?"

Fred's hand shot up.

"Excuse me, Mr. Shuster, but why can't we have the afternoon off like the other kids did? No one here can agree on what to do, so maybe we should each have our own choices. And I want the afternoon off."

"I don't think it's possible," replied Mr. Shuster. "We're talking about an afternoon off from regular schoolwork but I'm still responsible for supervising you. I can't just turn you all loose to do whatever you want."

Fred wasn't entirely satisfied with Mr. Shuster's explanation but decided to let it go for the moment. Again Mr. Shuster asked for further ideas.

Marcia was sitting in her usual place at the back of the room. She was frightened to take part in class

discussions even when she really wanted to add something. But, caught up in the excitement of the class, she raised her hand and quietly asked, "Could we go to a movie? There's a new one called The Green Slime Affair, and I hear it's really great."

Mr. Shuster first thought simply to say no to this suggestion. He had heard from a friend that Green Slime Affair was a trashy film full of killing and gore. Parents might object to this use of school time. Still, he had said the class could choose and had already turned down Fred's suggestion of a day off. If he ruled out another suggestion, the students might think they had very little freedom in making a choice. After a moment's hesitation Mr. Shuster added the movie to the list.

Now the class faced the biggest problem of all - how to decide what to do.

"Why don't we just keep talking about ideas until we all agree?" asked Keith.

"That's dumb," responded Sarah. "We'll never agree. We could be here for hours. Anyway, the more I think about it, the more I like Fred's idea about taking the afternoon off. After all, it's only fair."

"I think we should have a vote, said Serge, "using paper ballots. Everyone can put down what he or she wants to do, and the idea with the most votes wins."

At this point Mr. Shuster interrupted. "I think you should know that, if you people can't agree, we may not get a free afternoon."

A lot of groans followed.

Mr. Shuster then asked for a show of hands favoring voting. All were in favor except Fred and Sarah.

Mr. Shuster looked carefully around the class. "Let's make sure we all understand what we've decided," he said. "We're going to take a vote to choose which of all these suggestions we're going to follow. Is everybody clear?"

"Yes," said Serge, "we've agreed that we're all going to have to do the same thing. that means that we'll go along with whatever gets the most votes, whether we voted for it or not."

"That's not fair," insisted Sarah. "Why should I have to do something I don't want to do, just because that's what everybody else wants?"

"Yeah," added Fred, "Sarah's right. It's like punishing people because they don't agree with everyone else."

"It's like a game," Jerry answered. "There have to be rules; otherwise everything just collapses. Even though you may not like all the rules, especially if

you get a penalty or something, you have to go play the game."

"Yes," added Karen, "it's the only way a group of people can get along together. If people could just do what they like, or if they could refuse to do something just because they didn't want to, nothing would ever get done."

"What you're saying," said Mr. Shuster, "is that there have to be rules, and that majority voting is our rule."

Fred was not convinced. "It still doesn't seem fair to me," he said. "Suppose you all decided to do something like robbing a bank. Does that mean I have to go along just because the majority took a vote?" This caused an outbreak of laughter in the class. "Well, all right," Fred continued, "let's say you all decided we should buy a present for a teacher that I didn't like. Does that mean I have to pay up, just because other people thought it was a good idea?"

By this time several people in the class were beginning to lose interest. One or two of them told Fred to be quiet, and others made it clear that they wanted to get on with the voting.

Mr. Shuster tried to make peace. "I know that most of you want to get moving," he said, "and in a minute or two we will, but I want you to realize that

Fred has got a point. He's talking about a problem that affects everybody sooner or later. A majority of people can force other people to do what they don't want to do. In a way, the question is, why should you obey a law that you don't agree with? Over the next two days I want you to listen to the news and find examples of people having to do things they disagree with. Also, see if you can find examples of people doing things the majority disapproves of."

With this, the class settled down to vote. Mr. Shuster asked for volunteers to organize the voting. They gave out paper for the votes to be written on, then they collected and counted them. The results were:

Movie	10
Field trip	2
Class Party	3
Swimming	3
Skating	3

All the other suggestions got one vote each. On two ballots were written, "We should do what we want to do." So the movie it was to be.

"It's getting unfairer all the time," Fred cried. "First, you all agreed that the majority could tell everybody else what to do, and now it turns out that there isn't even a real majority for the movie. More

of us voted against the movie than for it. It's just
that people who don't want to see the movie split their
votes on different things. It isn't fair." Once
again, some students started to argue, but before they
could get very far, the bell rang for the end of the
class.

"Just before you go to gym," said Mr. Shuster, "I
want you to realize that Fred has made another good
point and there isn't an easy answer. Let's talk about
it next week."

Mr. Shuster felt pleased with what had happened
this morning. Although he didn't personally want the
class seeing the movie during school time, he thought
the students had handled the decision making very well.
They had discussed the whole thing thoroughly and
fairly. Everybody had had a chance to present his or
her ideas. They had agreed to decide by a majority
vote, even though Fred and Sarah had raised some
objections. Maybe the students had learned something
about how to make fair choice among different ideas.

Mr. Shuster and his class approached a problem in
a way used over and over in Canadian politics.
There was a discussion in which students expressed
their views. The discussion was followed by a
vote, which resulted in a decision. The decision
did not meet with everyone's approval and

disagreement arose. Problems, discussion, vote, decision, and disagreement is a pattern which occurs in a democracy.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. Discuss the following questions:

   a. There are 27 students in Mr. Shuster's class. How many voted for the movie? How many voted for some other activity?

   b. Examine you answers in 1(a) and explain why there was a problem that the movie didn't get more votes.

2. a. Organize your class into two groups, one group taking Fred's position and the other opposing it. Hold a discussion or debate on the question of which position is better.

   b. Try to come up with another method that the class could have used to make a choice. In what ways is your plan for making a choice better?

CHAPTER 2

STRIKING BACK AT GREEN SLIME

You will read about: To think about:

.disagreement   .Why do people decide

.influencing   to take action?

                         .What kinds of action can

                          people take to change

                          things?

                         .How do these actions

                          affect people in power?

Jane arrived home from school and waited for her
mother to return from work. As her mother entered the
house, Jane called, "Guess what, Mom, we're going to
The Green Slime Affair with our class next Friday
afternoon.

Mrs. Gouldner raised her eyebrows as Jane
explained how her class was to receive a reward for
helping on Parents' Day. "We'll see about that." Mrs.
Gouldner muttered to herself.

Later that evening, at the Community Club, Jane's
mother raised the matter with some of the other
children's parents. Some of the parents did not worry

about their children going to a horror movie. Others
were strongly opposed to the idea for a variety of
reasons. One of the parents felt that attending the
movie would conflict with their family's religious
beliefs. Another was opposed to the violence in the
movie. A few disliked the idea of using school time
for "such trash," and still other disapproved of the
children making decisions about what happens in
classrooms.

After the discussion had gone on for a long time,
Mr. Lind, whose son Terry was in Mr. Shuster's class,
announced to the group that he felt it was time to act.

"Sitting around griping isn't going to solve
anything. We need to let more people know what's
happening. I think I'll phone Hotline Harry and see if
he'll use this business about children going to horror
movies during school time on his program tomorrow."

Some parents felt it was a splendid idea to call
Hotline Harry, who should be able to put pressure on
the school. Others were worried about causing trouble,
and voiced their objections to Mr. Lind.

"Trouble? Who's stirring up trouble?" demanded
Mr. Lind. "Mr. Shuster made the trouble. I just want
to make sure it's stopped now. I'm going to phone
Harry."

The next morning the whole community tuned into its favorite radio broadcaster, Hotline Harry. Most of the callers were very upset and angry.

Harry tried to contact Mrs. Fellini, the principal, for her comments, but she was out of town. Instead, he called Mrs. Muller, the chairperson of the school board, who offered to investigate the matter immediately. She in turn, phoned Mr. Fowler, the superintendent of the school district. "Listen, Richard, what's going on at Webster School? Hotline Harry's put me on the spot and I want some answers."

Now that the radio station had publicized the issue, many people and groups became involved. The president of the Parent's Advisory Committee was extremely angry. The school he had worked so hard to support was being made to look foolish and irresponsible by Hotline Harry. Members of a local church were enraged. They felt that the movie would be a bad influence on students since it contradicted many of the ideas they were teaching in Sunday School. The local Status of Women group complained that students should not be exposed to the violence against women shown in the movie.

On Sunday night Mrs. Fellini returned. She was greeted by her son, who excitedly told her about the events of the weekend and all the phone calls she had

received. Immediately Mrs. Fellini placed two calls; one to the superintendent of schools, the other to Mr. Shuster.

Mr. Shuster arrived at school early on Monday morning. He was still amazed at the events of the past two days. It was hard to believe that the class's decision to see the movie could cause such a stir. There had been phone calls all weekend, from parents, a church group, and finally from Mrs. Fellini, who told him to be in her office at eight o'clock. As Mr. Shuster walked toward the school's front doors he noticed they seemed less inviting than usual.

Three minutes after eight, Mrs. Fellini was in her office. She looked up from her desk as Mr. Shuster entered. "Good morning, David. Sit down. Let's not waste nay time. We both know what we're meeting about. I think you are an excellent teacher, and I don't like to interfere with the decisions you make in your classroom. In this case, though, I have no choice. Mr. Fowler, the superintendent, was very definite. His message to me was, "Tell Shuster to solve this problem in some sensible way and to solve it quickly. Today! So that's the message I'm passing on to you. Is that clear?"

Mr. Shuster started to protest, "Yes, but . . . that is, I've already given my word to the class. I don't see how . . . "

"Yes, I know," sympathized Mrs. Fellini, "it is a difficult situation. But, as the superintendent pointed out, we can't let a problem like this destroy the community support we've worked so hard to build up. I know you've worked hard to gain the trust of your students. And, believe me, I realize that in some cases it hasn't been easy."

Mrs. Fellini leaned forward on her desk and continued in a quiet voice, "Look, I realize that you've got to work something out with your students. But by one o'clcok I have to phone the superintendent and tell him how we are going to solve this problem. And at two-thirty I'm expecting a visit from Mr. Lind. He also wants answers. I'm not going to tell you what to do. But I'm going to have to tell the superintendent and Mr. Lind you've made a sensible decision."

After a long pause Mr. Shuster nodded, mumbled something about getting ready for class, and headed for the staff room

Twenty to nine. In only a few minutes he would be facing his class. Mr. Shuster was sure most of his students would have heard even more than he had about

this mess. As he walked down the hall, he wondered where this would all lead? Was he willing to risk being moved to another school over this? If he stayed here, would his reputation be so damaged that he would have difficulty teaching well? What if he broke his promise to his class? Would his students lose trust in him? Would their education suffer?

As he entered the staff room, Mr. Shuster saw Jean MacDonald, the other grade six teacher, sitting at a table.

"Too bad you're going to have to tell your class the movie idea is out," Ms. MacDonald said.

"Out? Who said it's out?" asked Mr. Shuster.

"Well, I just assumed what with all the things I heard this weekend and the comments some of the other teachers were making earlier this morning that you really haven't any choice but to cancel."

"Just what did the other teachers have to say?" interrupted Mr. Shuster.

"They think that what you're doing is really going to hurt us with the community. Volunteer programs will suffer, and money will not be raised for field trips if parents think we see The Green Slime Affair as a worthwhile activity for students."

Mr. Shuster stared at her. He knew what Jean was saying was important. And yet he felt the commitment

he had made to his class was equally important. If he were to cancel the movie plans . . .

His thoughts were interrupted by the bell. "I've got to get to my room. The students will be coming in in a few minutes."

"Right," said Ms. MacDonald, "so do I. What are you going to do?"

Mr. Shuster looked at her, shrugged his shoulders, and walked quickly down the hall.

Some parents opposed the students' idea to see <u>The Green Slime Affair</u> and took action in order to influence those in power to change the decision. Sometimes people join together and form pressure groups or special interest groups so that they can exert greater influence.

QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

1. a. How do you think your parents would react if the same thing happened in your class as happened in Mr. Shuster's?

b. Adopt the roles of family members and act out your ideas for the class.

2. Imagine that it is twenty years in the future and that you have children who are in grade six. A number of events that happen in your child's school are listed below. As a parent would you

approve or disapprove of the events? If you think you would disapprove, how would you try to influence the school?

a. Your child's class decides to see a horror movie.

b. Students petition the principal for both soft drink and candy vending machines in the school and the principal agrees.

c. The principal decides to abolish morning recess.

d. The school day is scheduled to start half an hour earlier and end one hour later.

3. Different people and groups became upset about the events in Mr. Shuster's class. They often phoned someone with power over what happened in Webster School. The people in power included:

.Mrs. Muller, the school board chairperson

.Mr. Fowler, the superintendent

.Mrs. Fellini, the principal

.The parent's group chairperson

a. Find out who has these jobs in your community.

b. Find out:

.how they got their jobs

.what they do in their jobs

.who are they responsible to

.what powers and responsibilities they have

4. The parents who opposed the class's decision to
   see <u>Green Slime</u> acted as a special interest
   group. <u>Special interest</u> or <u>pressure groups</u>
   exists in most communities. Some that may be in
   your community include:

   .women's organizations

   .trade unions

   .farmer's organizations

   .chamber of commerce

   .a church group

   Select a special interest group that is in your
   community and find out all you can about it.
   Where possible, interview a representative of the
   group you have selected. Write a report which
   answers the following questions:

   a. Who does the group represent?

   b. What are the main goals of the group?

   c. How does the group apply pressure on others in
       the community in order to reach its goals?

   d. Do you think the group should try to influence
       what happened in your school? Why or why not?

CHAPTER 3

WILL THE GREEN SLIME AFFAIR STRIKE AGAIN?

<div style="border:1px solid black; padding:1em;">

You will read about:	To think about:
.a problem	.Who should be involved in making decisions?
.discussion	.Is it possible to make a decision that will please everyone?

</div>

Monday already, Billy thought as he walked toward the front door of the school. Well, at least there might be some excitement today. The way his parents had reacted when he told them about The Green Slime Affair had really been something. Supper had been a mess that night. He had thought his father was going to have an attack.

"Come on, wake up Billy," Jerry shouted in his ear, giving him a shove from behind. "What did you do this weekend? See the Green Slime Affair?"

More students came into the room and went to their seats. From comments and glances, it was clear that most of them had heard something about the "Green Slime Affair." The feeling in the room was different this

morning. The usual chatter about weekend fun was missing. Mr. Shuster who always talked and joked with students as they settled down, was silently staring out the window.

Gradually the room became quiet. The last whispers stopped. Still Mr. Shuster continued to sit, lost in his thoughts.

"Good morning everyone," crackled Mrs. Fellini's voice over the P.A. system. "Just a few announcements this morning." After the announcements and opening exercises the room was quiet again.

Finally Mr. Shuster looked at his students. "I'm sure we're all thinking about the same thing." After a pause, Mr. Shuster went on. "We usually have Language Arts at this time, but I doubt if any of us will be able to do much work until we deal with the issue that I'm sure is on all our minds, the Green Slime Affair. Wasn't that what I hear you call it, Jerry?" There was some laughter and the atmosphere became a bit more relaxed.

"What do you think we should do, Mr. Shuster? I mean, you're the teacher," asked Jane.

A few other students nodded, hoping Mr. Shuster would tell them what was going to happen.

After a long pause, Mr. Shuster answered. "I'm not sure what should happen now. It seems to me that

this is a problem we got in together. I think we should work it out together. Are you willing to help solve this problem? I'm not saying you have to help. I can make the decision on my own."

"I think we should work on it," said Jerry. Slowly most of the students started to nod in agreement.

When Mr. Shuster was sure he had most of the class with him, he began by reviewing with the students what they knew of the weekend's events. It was important that everyone understood what had happened. "We should get any ideas about what we should do up on the board," said Mr. Shuster. "Do you remember the brainstorming we tried in Social Studies? Just get our ideas up without discussing whether they're good or bad. Alright?"

Sensing that there was general agreement, Mr. Shuster went on. "Now, what options do we have? What different things can we do?"

"I think we should forget the whole thing," Billy blurted out. "Just drop it. No movie or anything else."

Mr. Shuster wrote, "No special afternoon," on the board and then looked around the class.

"That's not fair," objected Lucy. "We've earned a reward and you said . . ."

"Wait, Lucy, remember we're brainstorming. I know you feel strongly about this, but let's save the arguments until we get up as many options as we can. Any other ideas?"

"We could choose another movie," suggested Jerry.

"Why not something different? We could go skating," offered Serge. Several others nodded approval.

"How about a dance? We could have a dance in the gym." Mr. Shuster heard the group in the corner whispering, "yeah, yeah."

"I think," said Karen, "that the suggestion Maxine made on Friday is a good one. We should try something more educational, like the art gallery or the museum." Groans sounded from different parts of the room. "Well, at least we wouldn't get so much static from the community, and you might learn something," retorted Karen.

"Come on now," cautioned Mr. shuster, although he sensed the exchange had been in good humor. "We have quite a few ideas now. Are there any more?"

Ron, who had been sitting back and not paying much attention, put up his hand. "I don't see why we should change. Let's go to The Green Slime Affair."

"We could ask Mr. Lind and the others who are upset to come and meet with us," suggested Jean. "That

way we could hear their side of it and explain our
side."

Mr. Shuster looked alarmed but managed to say,
"That's an interesting idea, Jean." When there were no
more suggestions, Mr. Shuster continued. "that was the
easy part. Now let's try to figure out the best
choice, if there is one.   I know a lot of you feel
strongly about this. You've talked about it with
friends and families. You might not agree with other
people, but it's important to give each other a chance.
Try to listen and understand each other's ideas. Well,
who wants to start?"

"I do," said Ron. "Why should we change? What's
all the fuss about? I watch stuff like that on T.V.
all the time. I think it's stupid that everyone is
getting so upset."

"Yeah," added Elizabeth, who had been silent till
now. "My sister saw the movie and said it was really
great."

"Yes, Billy?" said Mr. Shuster.

"My father says he isn't paying taxes so his kids
can see junk like The Green Slime Affair."

Terry chimed in, "Yeah, that's what my parents
said too. Boy, were they angry."

"Lucy?"

"I really think we earned a reward. It just wouldn't be fair if we didn't do something fun. A skating party might be o.k. and that shouldn't upset anyone."

"Terry?"

"My parents wondered why we were getting a half-day off anyway. They said we agreed to come in and help out on Parents' Day and that was our choice. I think we'd better just drop the whole thing. I don't care who's right or wrong. I don't think we should risk stirring up any more trouble."

Bill nodded his support, but a chorus of "no way" and "no fair" greeted Terry's comment.

"Well, I don't agree with that. We really did earn a half-day off, said Lucy. "But I'm not going to the art gallery or the museum. This is supposed to be a reward."

Mr. Shuster noticed that Jane was slouched in her seat, looking unhappy. "Jane, what do you think we should do?"

"I think this whole thing is dumb. You're the teacher. You should tell us what to do." Mr. Shuster noticed several nods.

"Wait, that wouldn't be fair. This is our responsibility. Shouldn't we choose now?" demanded Jerry.

"That's right," and "Yeah" could be heard from a number of students.

Mr. Shuster looked around the room. There was silence. All eyes were on him. "Well, what are we going to do?" he asked.

The problem faced by Mr. Shuster and his class is called a <u>political</u> problem. In a political problem:

.There is a choice to be made among two or more plans.

.People have different ideas about what should be done.

.It usually is not possible to find answers that will please everyone.

.Some people try to influence others. They try to get their ideas accepted.

<u>QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES</u>

1.   Now that you have finished reading "The Green Slime Affair," what do you think Mr. Shuster and his class should do? Write a story or draw and caption a cartoon sequence which shows your ideas about how "The Green Slime Affair" comes to an end.

2.   a.   Identify the different choices or courses of action suggested by the students in Mr. Shuster's class in their last discussion.

        b.   What other courses of action can you think of?

        c.   Select, discuss, and defend what you think is the best course of action.

        d.   How do you think the different people and groups in the story would react to your choice? Why?

3.   Hotline Harry played an important role in "The Green Slime Affair." How do people use radio, television, newspapers, and magazines to influence political decisions.

4.   Collect and share examples from newspapers or magazines of people disagreeing with the majority.