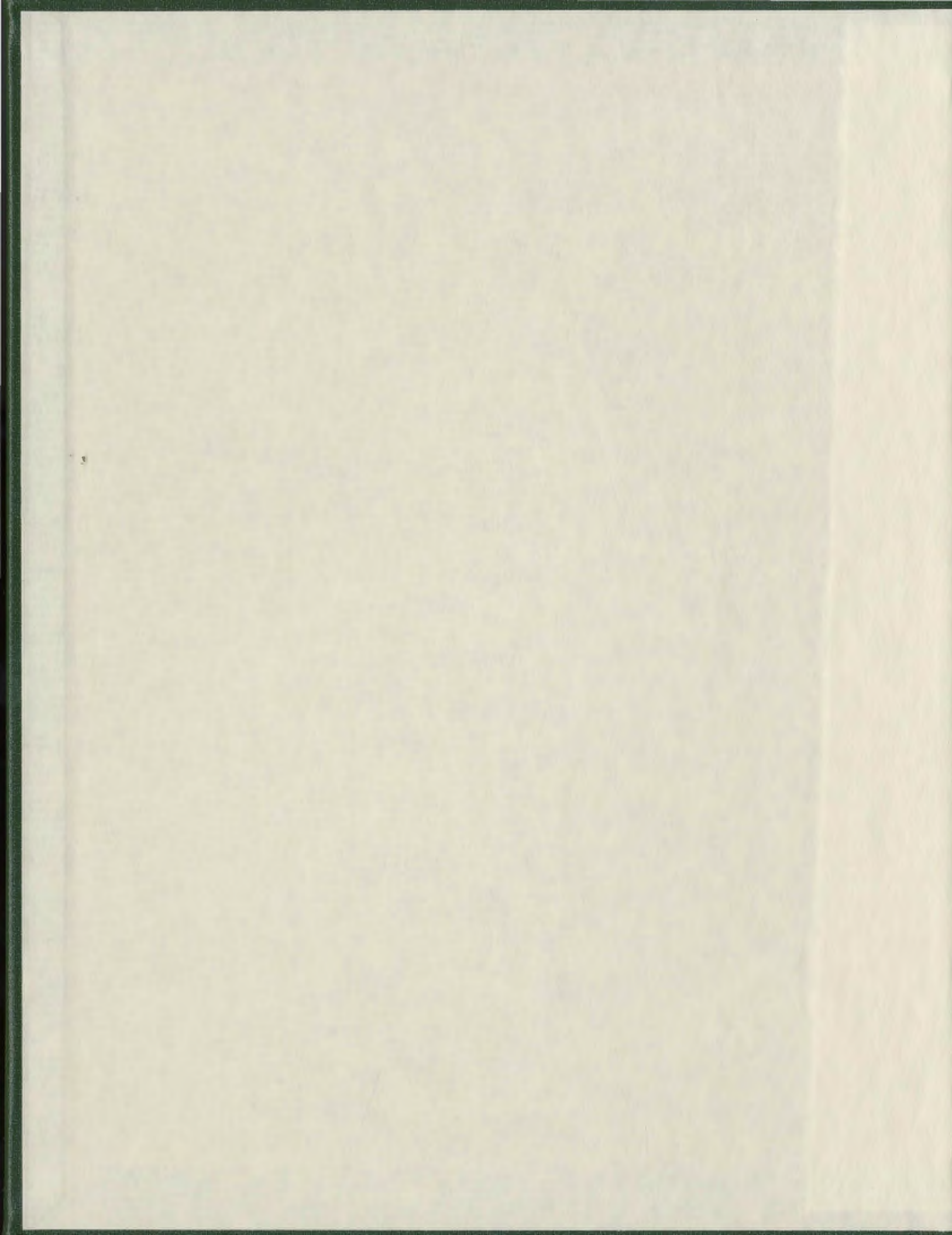


USING FILM TO EXPLORE HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS'
CULTURAL ATTITUDES IN SOCIAL STUDIES

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**Using Film to Explore High School Students' Cultural
Attitudes in Social Studies**

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Abstract

This thesis addresses the question, “Can a social studies learning activity, using film, help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes?” The research explores the use of the teaching tool, film, in combination with a learning activity to provide students with a valuable learning experience that encourages them to examine their cultural attitudes. This thesis argues for further inclusion of cultural attitude awareness in the social studies programs as part of citizenship education. The learning activity designed and used in this thesis proves to be a valuable way to encourage student cultural attitude awareness. The goal of this research is that further investigation and implementation of cultural attitude awareness of students will be carried out in high school social studies.

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Chapter One

Introduction

Objectives

This research addresses the question, “Can a social studies learning activity, using film, help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes?” This study has three objectives. The first objective is to help students recognize their cultural attitudes. The second objective is to have students generate definitions of culture and cultural attitudes. Finally, I hope to provide intermediate and secondary teachers with a valuable learning activity for use in the social studies curriculum. Film can be a useful teaching tool to engage students in a learning activity to bring about awareness of their cultural attitudes. This research is driven by my desire as a social studies teacher in Newfoundland and Labrador to link the teaching tool of film to a learning activity that hopes to promote students awareness of how they perceive cultural groups.

Students should recognize their cultural attitudes because it is an important step in understanding how what they believe about people affects how they treat them. Students in Newfoundland and Labrador could be sharing a classroom with another student who came to Newfoundland and Labrador because of a variety of reasons; their parents may have come here to work, they may be escaping hostile conditions in their country or they may be coming here as part of a student exchange program. By understanding their cultural attitudes and how they are formed, students will feel more confident to interact and be social with students or anyone else from a culture that is different from their own.

On March 21, 2007, the provincial government of Newfoundland and Labrador launched the province's first immigration strategy. *Diversity ~ Opportunity and Growth* is a strategy to significantly increase the attraction and retention of immigrants to the province. This means that if the strategy is successful, within the next ten years Newfoundland and Labrador will see the traditionally homogenous population change to include more diverse cultural groups. One of the goals of the strategy is, "To encourage Newfoundlanders and Labradorians to welcome immigrants into their communities and celebrate cultural diversity" (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, March 21, 2007.) The government's strategy also includes a rationale:

There are direct benefits associated with immigration. Immigrants help to stimulate economic growth within communities when they establish businesses and employ local residents. Immigrants bring new thinking, innovation and creativity to directly benefit local economies. Immigrants offer a wealth of connections to the global marketplace and can open doors for Newfoundland and Labrador business... Immigrants also bring their culture, food, music and art, all of which enriches a shared experience for residents of the province. (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, March 21, 2007)

To achieve this goal, social studies educators need to focus on what is included in the social studies program to help students understand their cultural attitudes and where they come from. The learning activity using film outlined in this research will help make the goal outlined by the government achievable.

The second objective of this research is to have students generate a definition of cultural attitudes. Students need to identify what they already know about culture in order to form new knowledge of cultural attitudes. By generating a definition, students have a starting point from which they can develop new knowledge and an understanding

of cultural attitudes. By using film in a learning activity the students are provided with a visual representation of a definition of culture. A film that highlights a cultural group or cultural event will present to students the characteristics of culture and cultural groups that they generated in their definition. Providing a visual of the definition of culture and cultural groups appeals to a wide variety of learning styles.

The final objective of my research is to provide teachers with a useful learning activity that will give them a plan of action for encouraging students to think about their cultural attitudes. My research will provide teachers with a framework to develop their own learning activities using film, which aims to bring about cultural attitude awareness in students. The choice of film and learning activity can be modified to suit the teacher's choice of film and students' choice of representing their cultural attitudes.

Social studies education is concerned with citizenship as its primary goal. This study is unique because it expands on the notion of citizenship to include not only what we do as citizens (for example, participating in the democratic process) but also how we feel as citizens. The awareness of attitudes about other cultural groups is part of citizenship education because it improves students' personal development and social conscience.

Need for the Study

Students need to reflect on their cultural attitudes to become better citizens. By understanding why they have attitudes, they can be aware of their feelings and seek to understand a culture before they form opinions. There is not an underlying assumption that students have poor attitudes or that they need to change their attitudes towards

cultural groups. The underlying assumption when teaching cultural attitude awareness is that all people need to reflect on their attitudes towards cultural groups who are different. Those who are aware of their cultural attitudes are then seeking to understand and appreciate what cultural groups bring to a society.

Cultural attitude awareness is needed in social studies education because in Newfoundland and Labrador schools students are being exposed to people from other cultural groups. For example, in Newfoundland and Labrador, there has been and will continue to be an influx of foreign people who come here to work in the oil and gas industry. Newfoundland and Labrador students will be interacting with people from various cultures and they need to understand their attitudes towards these cultural groups. As globalization becomes more apparent in rural parts of the province, students who have never been introduced to different cultural groups (other than through media) need to know how to assess their attitude and reflect on why they have the attitudes they do. Film is a way to present cultural groups to students and have them reflect on the content of the film as a way to reflect on their own cultural attitudes. Although Newfoundland and Labrador is becoming more diverse, many school populations still include only one cultural group. Film provides teachers with a teaching tool to present cultural groups to students.

Newfoundland and Labrador is predominantly Caucasian and students live in communities where traditionally there are few people who stand out culturally from the norm of their surrounding community groups. This could include people living with a disability, homosexuals or any cultural group that is a minority. This study will give

students the opportunity to think about how they feel about different cultural groups and the learning activity using film will encourage them to think about how they treat different cultural groups. This research also needs to be done because many Newfoundlanders and Labradorians are not staying in the province after they finish high school. Currently the trend is that young people are exploring various parts of Canada and the world for work. Where students go to live, they will encounter people who share a culture very different from their own. For example, there are a number of people working at the College of the North Atlantic campus in Qatar who are from Newfoundland and Labrador. The students of Newfoundland and Labrador will not be isolated from different cultures after they finish high school; they therefore need to understand cultural attitudes and how to identify their own.

It is challenging to examine cultural attitudes towards different cultures in Newfoundland and Labrador due to the homogeneous population. A homogeneous population is when the majority of the people living in an area are from the same genealogical background. The majority of the population living in Newfoundland and Labrador are of European origin. This is a result of the historical pattern of settlement by Europeans and the low levels of later immigration. There is an aboriginal population living mainly in Labrador and southern Newfoundland consisting of three ethnic categories; the Inuit live along the north coast of Labrador, the Innu live in the interior of Labrador, and the Mi'kmaq traditionally live in the southern areas of Newfoundland. A large majority of the present-day inhabitants of Newfoundland and Labrador are the descendents of people who migrated here from relatively small areas of southwestern

England and southeastern Ireland between the middle 17th century and the middle 19th century (Newfoundland and Labrador Heritage Web Site Project, 2000). According to the 2001 Newfoundland and Labrador census, the number of people of British Isle origin is 266, 010 of a total population of 508, 075. Those of French ethnic origin amounts to 27, 835, while aboriginal origin is 28,065 (Newfoundland and Labrador Statistics Agency, 2001). Because Newfoundland and Labrador's population has little ethnic diversity, I chose an alternative to having students examine their own culture as a way of accomplishing the task of showing students a diversity of cultural groups. I chose to use a film to introduce students to a variety of cultural groups.

For the purpose of this study a cultural attitude is defined as an individual's feelings, expressed through words, of another person's culture. To understand what cultural attitude is, it is necessary to first define culture. Ling defines culture as "the behaviors, habits, beliefs, expressions, artifacts and signs that a group, community or society creates to adapt to its physical and social environment" (Ling, 1999, p. 52). Ling has broken down culture into a series of elements that encompass what culture means. When a group of people share the same elements of a culture, they are said to be a part of the same cultural group. Some examples of cultural groups are: the elderly, African American people, teenagers, disabled people and religious groups. Cultural attitudes are a response to the elements of a different cultural group that forms the overall opinion of that cultural group. The elements of a person's cultural group are the basis from which people form opinions and the opinions become the cultural attitude. In social studies education the elements of culture are explored in the curriculum.

Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum is a framework for social studies programs in the Atlantic Provinces. The framework includes the general curriculum outcome, “Culture and Diversity” (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2001). “General Curriculum Outcomes” is the term used by the Department of Education that refers to the expectations for the program and specifically what the students should be familiar with after completing the program. The document, *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* was written in collaboration with the four Atlantic Provinces of Canada, using groups of social studies experts. The document has three purposes. First, it serves as a framework for the design of a social studies program from kindergarten to grade twelve, and the framework guides and directs development of the curriculum guides. Secondly, the document provides a framework of the outcomes of the curriculum for educators, along with other people, to refer to when making decisions about the learning experiences, instructional techniques, and assessment strategies in social studies. Finally, the document informs educators and the general public about the philosophy and scope of social studies education in the Atlantic Provinces. The document was written to progress social studies education and improve teaching and learning, while validating the existing effective practices (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2001).

“Culture and Diversity” refers to the general curriculum outcome that states that students are expected to demonstrate the nature of culture, the diversity of culture, and various perspectives of culture. Students should be able to explain what culture is, how it is different across different cultural groups and what culture means for different areas of

the world and the people who experience culture. The general curriculum outcome, “culture and diversity”, provides the students with an opportunity to evaluate the formation of cultures, how cultures survive and change due to power struggles within structures, systems and individuals within society. For example, by the end of grade twelve students are expected to evaluate the policy of multiculturalism and its implications for Canada. In regards to this study, students will be able to reflect on their attitudes toward different cultures by watching a film that highlights different cultural groups and how those attitudes contribute to Canada being multicultural (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2001).

“Culture and diversity” is an important general curriculum outcome because its purpose is to develop an understanding of culture, diversity and worldview. The outcome encourages students to recognize the similarities and differences reflected in various personal, cultural, racial, and ethnic perspectives. The curriculum that teaches “culture and diversity” must be both a motivating experience and an engagement of students in a meaningful learning experience. This research explores a teaching strategy that aims to achieve a meaningful learning experience, using film as a tool to motivate and engage students to respond to the theme of cultural attitudes.

Currently, the social studies curriculum in Newfoundland and Labrador has several courses that include film as a teaching tool in high school social studies under the heading, “Sample learning/teaching strategies.” For example, in Canadian History 1201 the curriculum guide suggests that teachers have students view the movie *The Canadian Caper*, then use it as a forum to discuss the following points: a) Canada’s involvement in

the 1980 hostage incident in Iran, b) the role of Canadian diplomatic missions in general, and c) the positions (titles) of embassy personnel. This teaching/learning strategy would teach students the specific curriculum outcome: “The student will be expected to examine Canada’s contemporary role in international affairs.” Also in the same curriculum guide, in section VI under the heading “Resources” there is an extensive list of videos that can be used as teaching tools (Department of Education, 2000). Teachers are not required to use any specific film in the courses, however, there is mention of films in the curriculum, which suggests that videos are considered valuable teaching tools when linked to specific curriculum outcomes.

In addition to Canadian History, the World History 3201 curriculum guide mentions the use of film numerous times throughout the sample learning/teaching strategies. For example, under the specific curriculum outcome 2.2, which states: “Students will be expected to draw upon primary and/or secondary sources to demonstrate an understanding of the Great Depression and the emergence and nature of fascism in Italy and Germany” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003, p 30) it suggests that teachers have students view a video addressing the economic and political climate in Italy that contributed to Mussolini’s rise to power. There is no suggestion of a specific film to use; however, the film *Tea with Mussolini* would be an excellent suggestion. Also, the curriculum guide suggests in its resources section a list of useful videos that teachers can use as teaching tools (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003). Again, teachers do not have to use film in the classroom, but the

curriculum guide does encourage teachers to make use of videos when teaching the curriculum outcomes (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2003).

This research contributes to the educational strategies suggested in the previous curriculum guides in social studies education by exploring the effectiveness of one teaching strategy. I use film in a learning activity where students represent their cultural attitudes towards a specific cultural group. Students first brainstorm the definition of culture, cultural groups, attitude, and finally cultural attitude. Students then examine a set of viewing questions (see appendix A) to accompany the film, *Paper Clips*. After students watch the film, they are given a collection of resource materials (written information and pictures) on a specific cultural group. They then use the material to demonstrate their cultural attitude by representing it on a quilt patch. Finally, students present their quilt patch to the class.

Film is used as a teaching tool because of the underlying assumption that today's students are motivated to learn by using media resources. Students use media resources (music, film, and the internet) on a daily basis. D'sa (2005), an American social studies educator, points out that teachers in the United States now use entertainment films instead of textbooks, or often as an addition to textbooks. She argues that teachers use film as a resource of information that can be critically analyzed (D'Sa, 2005). She cites Bailey and Ledford (1994), who explain that film engages the visual senses and that more senses are involved in viewing a film than in listening to a lecture. Bailey and Ledford (1994) argue that engaging the senses leads students to a greater retention and commitment of the ideas and information, from the film to long-term memory. This is because the film appeals to

the emotions of the students and when emotions are activated information is better retained (D'Sa, 2005). In the same way that we rarely forget a life experience where we were highly saddened or intensely excited, a student will likely not forget an experience they viewed in a film that appeals to their emotions.

This research will demonstrate how a film in social studies can be a useful tool in helping students become more aware of their cultural attitudes. A goal of social studies education should include cultural attitude awareness and the rationale that becoming more aware of our cultural attitudes is part of citizenship education. How our attitudes are formed and play out in our daily lives makes us the kind of citizens we are, and they can best be explained by examining them more closely. Understanding our attitudes and how film can help to promote cultural attitude awareness will now be addressed.

In his book Blink (2005) Gladwell refers to the Implicit Association Test (IAT) as a possible means to understand the two levels of attitudes. The test was devised by Anthony G. Greenwald, Mahzarin Banaji, and Brian Nosek (www.implicit.harvard.edu). The test asks users to place things into categories as they flash on a computer screen. The test comes from the notion that we make connections quickly between pairs of ideas that are currently related in our minds more so than ideas that are not familiar to us. One of the most popular of the IATs is the Race IAT. It shows a series of pictures of faces on a computer screen, and asks you to put them into one of two categories. One category is "European American or Good" and the other is "African American or Bad." Most people who have taken the test realize they have a "moderate automatic preference to whites". Even Gladwell himself received "moderate automatic preference to whites" (p. 84), and

he is half Jamaican. The reason for this response is that when asked to perform quickly and place the picture of a black person in one of the two categories, most people will choose "African American or Bad." It is an automatic response that Gladwell explains by addressing the two levels of our attitudes towards things like gender or race (Gladwell, 2005).

Gladwell suggests that we have certain attitudes that we choose to believe. These are our *conscious attitudes*, our stated values and beliefs that direct our behavior deliberately. These attitudes we confidently state as being true. When we state that child labor in third world countries is wrong, or that hate crimes against homosexuals is immoral, or the fight for civil rights of minority groups is needed in our society, those are our conscious attitudes. What the IAT measures is our *unconscious attitudes*--the instant automatic assumptions that come out of our minds before we have had time to think about them. We do not choose to have these attitudes and we generally are not aware of them. They come from all the data that we process from books, magazines, news programs, television shows and films. Often times the IAT will show that the two levels of attitudes are not compatible with each other, which can lead the test taker to ask questions about where these attitudes come from and how they can be changed. What the IAT reveals is that our unconscious attitudes are predictors of how we may act in spontaneous situations (Gladwell, 2005). The images that are presented to us in the media on a daily basis are often pro-white. Those images play on our unconscious attitude level to produce attitudes that often associate bad ideas with African Americans and good ideas with European American. This relates to my research because just as

images of pro-white can influence our unconscious attitudes, so can images of pro-black, or any positive image of a minority group (Gladwell, 2005).

According to Gladwell (2005), one student of Banaji (a co-creators of the test) took the Race IAT everyday. One day he received a positive association with blacks that he had not received before and questioned where it had come from. He then realized that he had spent the morning watching track and field in the Olympics. Gladwell suggests that exposing individuals to positive images of minority groups on a regular basis influences attitudes towards different cultural groups. Basically, you can teach yourself to become comfortable with different cultural groups so that the rapid cognition that happens when you are introduced to different cultural groups is not limited to the images you see from the media. The film I chose for my research portrays a positive cultural image of different cultural groups.

The learning activity that I devised used the film, *Paper Clips*, which demonstrates how a group of students in a homogenous white population of Whitwell, Tennessee was introduced to cultural groups from all over the world. The film documents students studying the importance of respecting different cultures as well as understanding the effects of intolerance. The students in the film collected paper clips as part of a school project to represent the number of people killed in the holocaust. The students interacted with people from Germany (a country that often receives an automatic association with the terrible event of the holocaust) and other cultural groups as they got to know the stories of the holocaust and the people who remain to tell them. The film, *One Clip At A Time HMA*, was a production of the Johnson Group, in association with

Miramax Films and Ergo Entertainment. It was written by Joe Fab and was directed by Elliot Berlin and Joe Fab. Watching the film in my research study, and understanding the context in which the students in the film were being engaged, helped the students in the research group become more aware of their cultural attitudes.

I chose to use *Paper Clips* in the classroom because it provides positive images and a powerful message. Film can be used to show students positive images of different cultural groups. We are not helpless when it comes to our unconscious attitudes. We can seek to improve our automatic assumptions by educating ourselves with films and media images that highlight positive images of cultural groups (Gladwell, 2005). When teachers show films in the classroom, the films can show students cultural groups in a positive light. This can help students form unconscious attitudes that are more congruent with values and beliefs that are considered part of being a good citizen.

In the social studies classroom, teachers generally try to promote cultural attitudes of understanding, appreciation and valuing. This is relevant to social studies because it fulfills the rationales in social studies education for personal development and social activism (Case, 1999). Personal development is the expectation that graduates of high school will continue to learn along with pursuing an active and healthy lifestyle. Social activism is what we do to better society as a whole (Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2001).

In his article “Elements of a coherent social studies program”, Case (1999) states that social studies educators in Canada cannot begin to develop a coherent vision for social studies without understanding the underlying rationales for social studies and the

goals that social studies will promote to further the rationales. The rationales for social studies education provide teachers and curriculum developers with a direction for social studies programs. The first rationale is social initiation. Case (1999) explains that delivering a social studies program that provides students with the understandings, abilities, and values that they need to become productive members of society is a primary purpose in social studies education. My research on using film to help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes addresses this rationale to encourage students to reflect on their cultural attitudes and how their attitudes determine their perception of other cultural groups.

The second rationale of social studies education, according to Case (1999), is social reformation. Case argues that social studies needs to empower students with the understandings, abilities, and values needed to improve or transform their society. When students are able to understand and reflect on their own cultural attitudes, they become students who are culturally aware of how they feel about people from different cultural groups, and they can then decide for themselves how they want to transform their own thinking.

A third rationale of social studies education is personal development. This rationale is focused on the talents and character of the student (Case, 1999). In relation to my research, when students become aware of their cultural attitude it helps them to become consciously aware of how attitudes are formed and what attitudes they have towards people from different cultures. When they are aware of their cultural attitudes it builds understanding towards cultural groups.

The fourth rationale is academic understanding, which are the disciplines and forms of inquiry that are a part of the content in the social studies program. The content acquired in the social studies classroom is the main focus of this rationale. My research connects students to different cultural groups and cultural awareness initiatives (as seen in the film *Paper Clips*), and provides them with information and a basis of knowledge needed to then reflect on their cultural attitudes.

Case (1999) identifies five goals of social studies education. They are: content knowledge, critical thinking, information gathering and reporting, personal and social values, and finally individual and collective action. My research involves each one of these goals for social studies education. While viewing the film and investigating a specific cultural group students retained content knowledge. Students in my research study also had to decide which information from the resource material was useful in designing their quilt patch that represented their cultural attitude, which is information gathering and reporting. While watching the film students were encouraged, using a set of viewing questions, to reflect on what they saw in the film and decide how they felt about the attitudes of the students (in the film) who studied the holocaust. This demonstrates critical thinking. Finally, by understanding their cultural attitudes students builds a character of empathy towards others' life experiences and respect for people of different cultural groups, which shows the development of personal and social values.

Sears (1994) states that "Citizenship has been a central concept for social studies educators in North America for most of this century and social studies is more often defined as being fundamentally concerned with preparing students for participation in

civic life” (p. 6). He supports this by explaining that a survey conducted in the early 1990s included an analysis of educational policy and curriculum documents along with interviews with officials from across Canada concluded to find that citizenship remains the primary focus of social studies (Sears, 1994).

Case and Clark (1999) expanded on the goals of social studies education stated by Case (1999), by reflecting on the four purposes of citizenship education. They are as follows: citizenship education as social initiation, citizenship education as social reformation, citizenship as personal development and citizenship education as academic understanding. These are all components of what educators believe a good citizen should be. Good citizens should be productive members of society, which means they should participate in the democratic process and have an understanding of how their attitudes influence their position. Students should be involved in bettering society. For example they should be activists for social change and equal treatment of people from different cultural groups. Students should have a strong sense of their personal development. For example they should be aware of their cultural attitudes and understand why they have the attitudes they do. Finally students should be intelligent about cultural traditions. For example they should know about other cultural groups and the experience of those groups (Case & Clark, 1999). Although my research is concerned with getting students to become more aware of their cultural attitudes, it also focuses on each of these purposes. Case and Clark explain that citizenship education cannot be achieved quickly. Students have to develop citizenship education and therefore a mastery of the social studies over

an extended period of time through exposure to the knowledge and standards in the social studies program (Case & Clark, 1999).

In May 2006 The Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education introduced a policy entitled “Safe and Caring Schools”. This policy was developed in an effort to provide a framework for the development and implementation of provincial, district, and school level policies and action plans to ensure that learning and teaching can take place in a safe and caring environment (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006). Included in the guiding principles of the policy are two statements that reflect the need for a learning activity that empowers awareness of cultural attitudes. Safe and caring learning environments are built on several principles. Two in particular are of interest to this study.

...an inclusive curriculum develops an understanding of the underlying causes of violence and inequality, recognizes diversity, promotes equal opportunity, and enhances safety, respect and mutual understanding... positive social behavior, beliefs and values are taught and reinforced through out the curriculum (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador, 2006, p. 4)

The learning activity developed and implemented in this study promotes students’ understanding of their cultural attitudes and their origins and influences. By including a learning activity that encourages an awareness of cultural attitudes, students are being introduced to diversity of cultures along with the promotion of understanding and respect for all cultural groups. The policy states that students will do their best to demonstrate respect for themselves and for others by “appreciating and caring for themselves and others; appreciating and respecting diversity; arriving at school on time, prepared and ready to learn; abiding for the school’s code of conduct and taking responsibility for their

own actions; and engaging in positive, non-violent conflict resolution” (p. 8). The learning activity in this research uses film to teach cultural attitude awareness. The process allows students to demonstrate their understanding of their cultural attitudes and this encourages respect and dignity to other people.

Chapter Two

Review of the Literature

Social Studies and education in general are becoming more focused on reflective thinking. This is a process where students evaluate what they accept to be true. Dewey (1933) says that a reflective thinker is someone who is aware of a problem and is able to bring critical judgment to that problem. Scholars (some of who will be examined) in the field of education have studied the use of reflective thinking and used it as a starting point to address important themes. These themes are as follows: multicultural education, culturally responsive education, student centered learning, social studies as a discipline and specifically citizenship (reflecting on the Canadian and American context), and the use of film as a motivational element in the classroom (Dewey, 1933). These are five themes from the literature that relate to my research study. The following section examines these themes and what researchers have established as important concepts in the context of the social studies classroom.

Multicultural Education

The starting point in research done on cultural education is multicultural education. Banks (1993) is a leading theorist on multicultural education. His focus is on the influence of knowledge on interpretation and getting students to reach beyond their cultural boundaries. He also has the students use their understanding of their own culture to form attitudes about other cultures. The need for students to investigate culture was apparent to Mingleton (1993), who wrote the practicum report at Nova University in the United States entitled, Using a Cooperative Learning Model to Improve Cultural

Attitudes and Increase Cultural Literacy, to expand cultural awareness of students. The report describes a program that was developed and used to expand cultural awareness of fourth grade students, using cooperative learning strategies combined with multicultural instruction. Mingleton grouped the students in a heterogeneous, multiculturally composed, cooperative learning model to facilitate the transformation of cultural attitudes and to increase cultural literacy (Mingleton, 1993). Learning about other cultural groups is part of social initiation and students learning to become socially competent individuals.

Ling (1999) says that teaching culture in schools can introduce students to a way of looking at and considering themselves in their own society and to recognize themselves as culture-bearers and culture-makers. Ling argues that educators must help students acquire sensitivity to and respect for the meanings that particular “ways-of-living-and-being” have for those cultural groups who practice them. Deep levels of expression and content surrounding cultures is not the primary focus, but rather appreciating how any expression is rich with significance and a valuable part of all cultures (Ling, 1999). The controversy often associated with culture in education is the debate over which culture to include in the curriculum. The argument by Ling suggests that it does not matter as long as students understand the significance and value that a culture has for that group of people and the world community. Understanding culture contributes to students’ academic understanding in becoming good citizens. A good citizen is someone who has strong values and morals that reflect, honesty, and a commitment to the democratic process. It is with those characteristics that having an awareness of cultural attitudes would make an individual a better citizen.

Geneva Gay (2004) expresses the importance of multicultural education for improving the academic success of students of color and preparing all students for democratic citizenship in a pluralistic society. Students need to understand how multicultural issues shape the social, political, economic, and cultural fabric of society, as well as how such issues influence their personal lives (Gay, 2002). Teaching culture in schools gives teachers avenues to explore academic knowledge and skills that students need to be successful citizens. By doing activities associated with culture and diversity, students learn about governments, human rights, and freedoms associated with the United Nations. They learn honesty and loyalty by looking at cultural expressions, family values, and justice by examining cultural rules and norms of different cultural groups.

Culturally Responsive Education

The next theme is culturally responsive education. Culture cannot be taught in the classroom without discussing the responses to culture. In an effort to create multicultural classrooms that incorporate values and beliefs such as kindness, understanding, and compassion, Bazron, Osher and Fleischman's (2005) focused on mastering social competencies in American schools. This article asks how schools can ensure that all students master the social, emotional, intellectual, and technical competencies necessary to fulfill the roles of the private and public sector of society. Three approaches are outlined. The first approach is a program called, Advancement Via Individual Determination (AVID), that gives students of color, ethnic, and language-minority, direct instruction in the "hidden curriculum" of the school (this includes which courses to take, teachers to try and get, importance of tests, and how to study). Secondly, the authors

recommend creating an environment that enables teachers and students to connect on a personal level with one another. By producing a classroom community of kindness and respect, all students will benefit. Culturally responsive education is using the cultural knowledge, prior experience, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective for them. This can strengthen student connectedness with schools, reduce behavior problems, and enhance learning (Bazron, Osher, & Fleischman, 2005). Although the previous research was done in the United States, the finding can be used to build the ethical framework of schools in Newfoundland and Labrador today.

Martorella, Beal, and Bolick's (2005) research focuses on building an ethical framework in students that is necessary to build an ethical framework in schools. An ethical framework is the principles that guides decision-making that could influence the lives of others (Martorella, Beal and Bolick, 2005). The research provides a definition of beliefs, attitudes, values, and value judgments. It also provides instructional strategies for examining beliefs, attitudes and values. Finally, the research encourages teachers to engage students in challenging beliefs and attitudes, and to recognize the influences that exist to help form their cultural attitudes and their worldview. They suggested that the family, media and school all play a role in how students form cultural attitudes and how they see world issues (Martorella, Beal and Bolick, 2005).

Student-Centered Learning

Social Studies education increasingly supports student-centered learning that incorporates several resources of information, film for example, to increase the emphasis on group processes and to encourage student-generated questions to guide inquiry (Gibson & McKay 2002). Learning activities that encourage students to build on their own knowledge and experience help to form new knowledge. In student-centered learning, students are engaged in a learning experience that explores, analyzes, evaluates, and synthesizes knowledge into a frame of reference that students can use to understand and interpret new knowledge. By engaging in student-centered learning, students are building their knowledge base through their learning (Jadallah, 2000).

When students seek to understand, they are motivated to learn. When learners engage to know more about an idea, they invest their energy into the learning activity and new knowledge is developed (Brooks & Grennon Brooks 1999). When educators use a learning activity where students are permitted the freedom to question and interact with ideas, objects and people, they construct meaning surrounding a variety of concepts such as culture (Brooks & Grennon-Brooks, 1999). The objective of my research study is to gain a deeper understanding of where cultural attitudes come from and how cultural attitude awareness can be introduced in the social studies curriculum. Changing established cultural attitudes was not the goal nor was it assumed that students have poor cultural attitudes. The primary focus was for students to understand and reflect on cultural attitudes to gain an awareness of their attitudes and where they come from.

Werner (1999) understands that Canadian students will be uneasy about the future after being introduced to social problems that are often associated with studying cultures and the impact of certain cultural attitudes around the world. He says that in the classroom there has to be a rationalization of the realities of society that are portrayed in the media, because no matter what the problem is and the politics that surround it, society has a desire for a better future. Werner argues that school curriculum should instill the quality of hope. Hope is the knowledge and reflective confidence in the future and a willingness to engage it (Werner, 1999). Learning about cultures and diversity will instill in students a positive attitude about what other cultural groups want and need to be successful contributing members of society. The attitude of hope in students offers them a positive framework to feel empowered in discussions about reform and progress with people from other cultures. Having students involved in the process of learning by relating to their own life cultural experiences is also a useful way of making active learning motivating.

Social Studies as a Discipline

Smith (1999) argues that in Canada, social studies can only be a motivational and educationally significant experience if teachers and curriculum developers link active learning with reflective practice. Students need the opportunity to make conclusions about the content they have learned. My research is concerned with the knowledge that students gain from my learning activity and the new knowledge they construct from drawing conclusions about their cultural attitudes. In order to be actively engaged, students have to make meaningful connections between new knowledge and previously

learned facts and concepts. Students have to ask their own questions and associate the learning with meaningful experiences. Students also have to take a responsibility for their learning. It is the teacher's job to enlighten, identify, and develop the skills and knowledge to empower students to take responsibility for their own learning (Smith, 1999). Effective social studies teachers engage students in a learning experience by making the experience meaningful to the students.

Smith addresses the issue of social studies being the least popular subject at many schools, because the human character is absent from the content. Smith says that there is little to engage and motivate students because they see no relevance to the curriculum and they do not attach meaning to the learning experience. It is ironic that social studies is considered difficult because despite this claim, according to Smith, critical thinking (the reflection on and evaluation of knowledge), is frequently absent from instruction as well as assessment. Smith concluded that students have to be engaged in social studies before it is possible for them to perceive the classes, topics, and concepts as being a worthwhile experience. Engagement means the students are participating by asking questions and seeking answers. Students are then aware of their learning and are driven to form new knowledge of social studies topics. Social studies programs and courses have to include avenues for teachers and students to learn in an environment that is active, engaging and motivational (Smith, 1999). Similarly, Dewey (1929) felt that all subjects must relate to social life in expressive and constructive activities. Dewey (1929) felt that value is lost in many subjects because there is an abstinence of the social element. Teachers and curriculum developers need to design activities and learning experiences around elements

that appeal to students' learning and development. In the general curriculum outcome "culture and diversity" there are opportunities for activities that involve students being active in the culture they are studying. For example students can also choose different cultural groups of Canada, and present diversity to their class by addressing the important customs of the cultural group. "Culture and diversity" as a theme in the curriculum provides teachers with an opportunity to bring human characters into the lessons they teach in social studies.

Dewey continued to address progress as the development of new attitudes and new interests in experiences and not in the succession of curriculum. It is the responsibility of education to reconstruct cultural experiences using images and experiences. In social studies, teachers have to ensure that students are engaged in the learning experiences through their emotions and reactions to visual and physical engagement of the content (Dewey, 1929). Dewey furthered his argument by saying that without a basis in a qualitative event, the content is foreign and relationships do not exist (Dewey, 1929).

In order to expand social studies as a discipline and make it more appealing, the teacher needs to provide opportunities for students to be a part of the learning process. Hope (1999) says that Social Studies fails to get respect in the Canadian curriculum. This is because teachers fail to relay meaningful and relevant objectives, and the students do not find it interesting because the students see social studies as irrelevant. Administration gives social studies little respect because teachers with no background in social studies are teaching it. Hope says that we need to go beyond finding new ways of organizing the

content and suggests using strategies to make it an interesting and meaningful learning experience. These could include role-playing characters, doing projects, having review games and viewing historical videos and films. He feels that teachers should take the attacks on social studies personally and move away from the obsolete methods of the past, such as note giving. We need to revive social studies by making learning student-centered, which takes Smith's analysis of social studies as a boring subject to a new level. The responsibility is on the teachers planning the course. Hope examined the constructive approach that empowered students to ask their own questions and seek their own answers. He also explored the importance of citizenship education and used it as a means to enrich the learning experience of students. This, done with a constructivist learning approach, introduced them to responsibilities, values, and decision-making (Hope, 1996).

Citizenship

In the Canadian context, Sears (1994) explains that students tend to identify more with their region at a local level than with the country as a whole. For that reason, Canadian schools need to promote cultural diversity while taking into account the strong regional perspectives and perceptions. He explains that much of the research he has done on citizenship education has dealt with attitudes and that one must be cautious as to how far attitudes can determine behavior (Sears, 1994). That is why in my research the attitudes themselves were not the concern but the practice of students becoming aware of their attitudes was the primary focus.

Sears argues that students, as citizens, need to understand that in Canada, there are communities that have separate attitudes, aspirations and interests, especially between the French and English cultural groups (Sears, 1994). He furthers his argument when mentioning research done on assessments of student attitudes towards human rights. Support by students is low for the freedoms in the Canadian charter of rights and freedoms; however, students do show strong support for freedom of speech, equal pay for equal work, and preservation of native peoples' cultures (Sears, 1994).

Jones (1982) explains that in the context of Newfoundland and Labrador, social studies education deals with the relationship among people and therefore social studies education includes values education. He argues that value judgements by students are to be expected, however teachers have the responsibility to raise questions and present issues that encourage students to think and challenge their values and attitudes after being presented new information and forming new knowledge. Beyond obtaining cognitive knowledge, students in a successful social studies program need to examine knowledge and reflect on how their attitudes and values are shaped and formed (Jones, 1982).

Research done in Newfoundland and Labrador on students' attitudes and values indicates attitude awareness and values education should be included in the social studies curriculum. Mintz (1992) argues that high school graduates do possess a fairly comprehensive set of attitudes and values that have social and political implications as they develop to become responsible citizens. The goal of social studies education is to educate students to become effective citizens. Therefore social studies education has to be involved in transmitting values and encouraging the development of effective

decision-making (Ludlow, 1993). To do this, educators have to include in their lesson plans situations that encourage students to deal with problems and to cope with real life situations. This is part of social participation and it has to be a focus of a reflective teaching approach, according to Ludlow's research. Ludlow also stresses that identifying students' beliefs and attitudes through an expression of feelings needs to be encouraged and used as a source of evaluation after social participation. He offers a variety of devices to assess students' attitudes like, log books, interviews, journal, anecdotal records, and attitudinal measures (Ludlow, 1993).

Film as a Motivational Element in the Classroom

The final theme is film as a motivational teaching tool. The use of film as a teaching tool provides students with the opportunity to develop feelings about an issue: "Vicarious experiences allow students to "live" the lives of others and in so doing experience the power of feelings and caring about matters that may otherwise be foreign or remote" (Case, 1999, p. 239). After viewing a film and engaging in a learning activity that encourages reflective thinking, students are more sensitive and concerned about individual circumstances and the lives of others. Therefore, they will become more aware of their cultural attitudes and seek to understand why they have the attitudes they do. An emotional connection is valuable to the learning experience because it engages the interest and creativity of the students beyond the lesson and the curriculum to the personal significance that helps foster learning (Werner, 1999).

I think that film can help students become engaged in the learning, but they must see the film as part of the curriculum. They must also examine the film from a critical

perspective, and finally they have to engage in exploring meaning beyond the images on screen (Clark, 1999). Popular film can be used to encourage students to view a film critically and deconstruct a medium that they experience regularly. Many movies and films are a useful teaching tool because students are often visual learners. Through the images on screen, details are communicated to the student visually, which may not happen with any other media (Clark, 1999).

Clark suggested three ways for developing lesson plans for using film in the classroom. A pre-viewing activity aims to arouse interest and reveal existing knowledge about the theme of the film (Clark, 1999). Using film provides the possibility of making the learning experience meaningful for the students and engaging them to think critically about the context and theme of the film, and how it relates to themes and concepts in the curriculum.

My learning activity helped students explore their cultural attitudes. The research adheres to the learning theory of constructivism because it seeks to identify what students already know about their current cultural attitudes. Furthermore, as stressed by Gibson and McCay, the learning experience engages students in a reflective activity that encourages them to think at a deeper level concerning the issue of cultural attitudes, asking questions about why they have the attitudes they do and what consequences there are for those attitudes (Gibson & McKay, 2002). This style of teaching involves student-centered learning.

My research began with my desire to explore the general curriculum outcome in the *Foundation for the Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* (Newfoundland and

Labrador Department of Education, 2001). In addition, I wanted to develop a teaching strategy that would motivate students to learn about cultural attitudes by appealing to their emotions. I chose to use film as a teaching tool because of the appeal it brings to the classroom experience, as students are often motivated to learn using multi-media resources. Culture is a concept that is important to citizenship education and in this research the learning activity encouraged students to seek to understand their own cultural attitudes, along with the cultural attitudes of others. This study is relevant because it asked students to assess their current attitudes, recognize cultural attitudes and identify influences on cultural attitudes.

The five themes discussed in the review of the literature help to inform my research in a variety of ways. Understanding multicultural educational theories provide me with a justification for my research and provided a platform for this new educational forum, cultural attitude awareness. Having students reflect on their cultural attitudes makes provides the possibility of becoming culturally responsive and focus their learning as student centered. Understanding social studies education and specifically citizenship, informs my research to the extent that it provides the objectives and outcomes that need to be met by learning activities and informs me of the work that needs to be done in the classroom to fulfill the mandates of the curriculum. Finally, reflecting on film provides me with an interesting teaching tool that used correctly can be a motivational element in the classroom. These themes were all instrumental in the design of my research and the methods I choose.

Chapter Three

Research Design and Methodology

This research employed qualitative methods. The focus was on the “meaning” that students had of other cultures as well as their culture and how that meaning was used to form cultural attitudes. Nestor (2001) says that qualitative research (critical) attempts to show the process that occurs when people define the meaning of their world. Qualitative strategies can suggest how change may have come, by studying such things as the assumptions or predispositions of subjects, or the setting that led to change (Nestor, 2001). In this research, the learning activity that used film may or may not have brought about the awareness of the students’ cultural attitude. Tripp (1992) argues that critical research sees knowledge as socially constructed and therefore artificial and held differently by different groups. The goal of my critical research was to investigate what influences existed to socially construct students’ cultural attitudes and how they as learners could be more aware of their attitudes and the influences that played on those attitudes (Tripp, 1992).

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2000) define critical research, as “a view of what behavior in a social democracy should entail” (Cohen et al., 2000 p. 28). This type of research does not just give an account of society and behavior but also focuses on the possibility of a society that is based on equality and democracy. Critical research goes beyond describing situations and phenomena, and seeks change. There is an engagement of the disempowered, to address inequality and promote individual freedom in a democratic society. The agenda of critical methodology examines and interrogates the

relationship between school and society. My research study focuses on the relationship between a social studies learning activity using film and the awareness of the students' cultural attitudes as they engage in a learning activity (Cohen et al., 2000). I investigated and sought change in cultural attitude awareness of students, as well as a change in how cultural attitude awareness is introduced in social studies education.

The conceptual framework for this study was phenomenology, which focused on the experience of the learning activity and the meaning it had for the students. Methods included participant observation, interviews, and surveys. Phenomenology includes the notion of life-world, the conscious experience of everyday life and social action. It also includes the practical reasoning and commonsense knowledge that people take for granted. In this study, the aim was to describe the life-world of the students and the influences that form their cultural attitudes (Schwandt, 1993). Schram (2003) explains the approach of phenomenology as studies that "investigate the meaning of the lived experience of a small group of people from the standpoint of a concept or phenomenon" (Schram, 2003, p. 70). This approach to critical research focuses on what an experience (social studies learning activity using film) means for students who have had the experience and are able to provide a description of it. I investigated their description at the end of the learning activity when I had the students answer a survey about the experience. The assumption with this approach is that dialogue and reflection, examined through use of discussion, interviews, participant observation and student writing, can reveal the essence or underlying meaning of the experience (Schram, 2003). The students provided the meanings of their cultural attitudes before and after the experience

of the learning activity, using a case study-based scenario, questionnaire, and a survey. Prior to the learning activity, students investigated their cultural attitudes using an activity that asked them to respond to hypothetical scenarios. Students were given a series of short case studies and asked to choose from three choices, as to how they would expect to react to the situation. Following the learning activity, students chose responses to a series of statements about attitudes and whether they think the learning activity shaped their current attitude toward cultural groups, helped to identify their cultural attitudes, and helped them gain a better understanding of what influences their cultural attitudes.

This research study included an interview to supplement the research. I interviewed the social studies teacher of the research group about what cultural attitudes mean to social studies education and the benefits of this learning activity to the social studies curriculum. The interview focused on the theme of social studies education and the influence it has on students' cultural attitudes. The interview was not highly structured but I did have a list of standardized questions to obtain data from the interview to reach a research conclusion (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2003). The research interview has been defined as "a two-person conversation limited by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information...on content specified by research objectives of systematic description, prediction, or explanation" (Cannell & Kahn, 1968, p. 527).

Participant observation is a tool for gathering evidence about processes, circumstances, or other observable conditions. (Schwandt, 1993). In 1958 Gold devised a

typology of participant observers to describe the four participant observer field roles. They are complete participant, participant-as-observer, observer-as-participant, and complete observer (Scott, 1996). During the learning activity I observed the students and made field notes based on classroom observations. I focused on students' motivation for the learning activity to determine whether or not they were attentive and engaged in the learning process. Students' emotional responses to the film were observed from their emotional reactions to the events of the film. Students' awareness of their own cultural attitudes was addressed by whether students were conscious of their attitudes and astute as to why they have the attitudes they do. Finally, students' interest in the learning activity was noted by whether they enjoyed the process of investigating cultural attitudes. When doing participant observation, I recorded facts and put them together into a meaningful picture (Nestor, 2001).

Participant observation includes several types of data. These are the physical impressions of the setting, a description of actions and behaviors, the documents of written material that could consist of census data, and students' written material (Nestor, 2001). For this research I was a "participant as observer." I was open about my purpose and therefore had to negotiate access with the students, teachers, and administrators at every level. I carried out the activity with the students and therefore I was participating in the research (Scott, 1996). However, as a participant observer, my presence did have some influence on the students and this affects the findings of my research. At the time, I was a substitute teacher and I had taught in the school prior to my research. This was a limitation. As Milson did in his research in 2002, I did observe and in some cases

assisted the students on the days they worked on this learning activity. I set up the class discussion, showed the film, gave instructions on designing their quilt patch and issued the survey. I attempted to limit my direct interaction with the students; however, since the regular classroom teacher was not involved with the creation of the learning activity, I had to assist a number of students on several occasions. During the survey portion, I did leave the room and did not offer any assistance (Milson, 2002).

The notion of triangulation aims to strengthen the reliability and validity of qualitative data. It is a series of strategies directed toward both the generation of data and the clarification of findings. There are triangulation strategies for data, methods, investigators and theory. Qualitative findings still need to be related to the problem employed and research will often require further confirmation. That means that the data has the potential to confirm findings, but doesn't always. For my purposes I had to ensure that the findings from personal observation, interviews, and documents generated by students (surveys and journals) that I used in concluding my research was related to the original question (Miller & Fredericks, 1994).

Sampling Method

The research took place at a high school in an inner city school in St. John's Newfoundland and Labrador, and involved 17 students. The school was relatively large with approximately 600 students. The research group consisted of six females and eleven males, and were a Canadian History class. I spent five classes with them and spoke about my purpose on the first day of our meeting. I related to the students in a role not as teacher, but as a "group leader". I did not want the students to view me as a teacher, so I asked them to call me by my first name. Having the students view me as a teacher would have caused the students to work towards achieving an academic goal of success, rather than an honest representation of how well the learning activity led them to think about their cultural attitudes. I interacted with the teacher regularly during the learning activity and we discussed the students' involvement in terms of how much they seemed to enjoy the experience. All the students in the group were Anglo-Saxon with the exception of one student who did have some Japanese heritage. All the students were born and grew up on the island of Newfoundland.

Type of Research Design

I labeled my learning activity "Understanding our Cultural Attitudes using the Film *Paper Clips*". The activity was included in the Canadian History 1201 curriculum consisting of grade ten students. The activity made use of the following materials: copy of the film *Paper Clips*, resources from different cultural groups from around the city (brochures, books, and pictures), quilt patch for each student, markers, and bristol board.

The goal of the learning activity was to have students identify what cultural attitudes they have, where they come from, and why they exist. To introduce the learning activity, I showed students pictures of people from different cultures around the world. They included racial and ethnic cultural groups, disability groups, elderly groups, homosexual groups, women's groups and other cultural groups. I gave students two case studies that asked them to anticipate their attitudes and actions in a given situation with a person from a cultural group other than their own. The next activity involved a whole class discussion on the meaning of cultural groups. Student responses were recorded on bristol board and posted in the classroom for the duration of the learning activity. Students concluded from a discussion that they have the attitudes they do because of what they are taught in school, taught from their parents, see on television and movies, and read in magazines and newspapers. Students generated a definition of "cultural group" as a group of people that share the same beliefs and values. Students also provided examples of cultural groups like African Americans, students, Islamic, and other groups and elements of culture, being food, religion, clothing, music and politics. Students also generated a definition of attitude as an opinion or belief about someone or something and provided examples of attitudes they have towards school, their friends, their family, sports, and music. The research group considered why people have certain attitudes towards cultural groups. Finally, as a class they generated a definition of "cultural attitudes" as the attitudes they have towards people from cultural groups.

Students watched the documentary film *Paper Clips*. Prior to the film, students were given a viewing guide (see appendix A) to use as they watch the film. These

questions were read aloud to the students before they watched the film. During the film, at specific times, students would respond and I would pause the tape to hear comments and reflect on the definitions we generated on the bristol board.

Following the film, students examined information, pictures and fabric from different cultural groups around the city of St. John's. They were asked to demonstrate their attitudes towards a cultural group in a visual presentation on a piece of fabric that will be used in a quilt. Students were directed to make connections between the goals of students in the film to collect paper clips to represent the number of people killed in the holocaust (in the film) with what they believe are their cultural attitudes. Furthermore, the quilt activity was intended to bring a sense of hope that cultural attitudes towards cultural groups will grow in our society to be that of understanding and open to acceptance. I provided the students with some possible examples of how they may represent their cultural attitude using poems, pictures, song lyrics or personal letters (see Appendix B).

Students presented their quilt patch to the class and discussed their cultural attitude toward a given cultural group. Using what they have learned about cultural groups and cultural attitudes, students engaged in a reflective discussion as a whole class. Students were asked to generate ways that they can learn about different cultural groups on an on-going basis and how they can promote positive cultural attitudes towards cultural groups throughout their own lives.

The evaluation and assessment consisted of a written survey that included ten statements that they were to rate from five choices and they also answered three questions

(see survey in the appendix). They were asked to comment on whether the activity helped them identify cultural attitudes and whether the activity encouraged them to think about their own attitudes towards cultural groups. The instruments used to collect data were examined by my thesis supervisor for wording, clarity and appropriateness.

Information was gathered throughout the study using student work (two surveys and the quilt patches), principal investigator's observations of the class, and an interview with the teacher. These were kept by the researcher for analysis to complete the research study. The data was analyzed by reflecting on the students' responses to the survey questions.

Chapter Four

Findings

There were three categories of data: participant observation, an interview and surveys. There was a survey prior to the learning activity and after the learning activity.

RESULTS OF CASE STUDY PRIOR TO LEARNING ACTIVITY:

Case Study One

You have just been given a brand new car for your graduation. You and your friends arrive at your prom and find out that they have valet parking (a service where an attendant parks your car for you). The attendant is a Hispanic man in his early twenties and he speaks with a distinct accent. Valet parking is free on the night of your prom; however if you choose to park your own car, there is a ten-dollar meter fee. Do you trust the attendant with your car or do you choose to park the car yourself? Explain why.

Eighty seven percent, (87%) of the students said they would trust the attendant for a variety of reasons. Students said they would call the police if anything happened and that the man is no different than anyone else hired for the job. Some suggested it was cheaper to go with the attendant and that it is the man's responsibility if anything happens with the car and that he must have skills to do the job if he was hired. Other students said they are used to seeing people in Canada who are different races because we live in a

multicultural country and that they would trust the man based on his demeanor as a polite and mannerly person and you cannot judge people based on their race.

Twelve percent (12%) would not trust the attendant because they wouldn't trust anyone with their brand new car.

Case Study Two:

You have just spent your whole summer working to save your money to buy a brand new computer. You purchase the extended warranty, and after three weeks, your computer crashes. Having purchased the warranty you bring your computer in for maintenance at the store where you bought it. There are two individuals at the repairs desk, a Caucasian woman in her early twenties and a Chinese woman in her early twenties. Whomever you approach will be in charge of taking your computer apart and finding out what is wrong. You need your computer back quickly and you want to make sure whoever you choose to fix it, gets it done promptly. Who do you decide to approach? Explain why.

Fifty percent (50%) said they would go to either woman who was closest or the individual who was not busy because they were both hired for the job, have the same training and that race, skin colour or gender does not matter.

Thirty-one percent (31%) of the students said they would go to the Chinese woman for the same reason, because the Chinese have a strong reputation of knowing a lot about electronics and they are more focused on their schooling and tend to be very bright. This is an example of students stereotyping and is a part of their current cultural attitude.

Eighteen percent (18%) said they would go to the Caucasian woman because she would be faster and they are more “used” to white folks than Chinese and that the Caucasian woman would have a greater understanding of what she is doing.

Participant Observation Data:

Setting: The classroom was newly painted blue and had large windows overlooking the school parking lot. The room was fairly large at 40' X 20'. There were a number of posters, maps and student work on the walls, as well as a large selection of books in the rear of the classroom on bookshelves. The classroom consisted of one computer in the back used mainly by the teacher, about 25 student desks, book shelves with a number of films, textbooks and binders in the front of the room, a TV/VCR, chalkboard and the teachers desk in the front. The classroom had a friendly atmosphere and was clean and well organized.

Description of actions and behaviors: Throughout the learning activity the students seemed very interested in the ongoing classroom activities. In the initial portion, students were anxious to find what they would be doing and participated in the case studies. The next activity involved a group discussion, where students generated their own definition of “cultural attitudes” while discussing culture and attitude separately. The students’ suggestions were recorded on bristol board and responses came from all 17 students. While viewing the film, students were given a viewing guide that was reviewed with them prior to watching the film. Throughout the film many students were emotional (they would express distress by saying “oh my” and “wow”). All the students seemed very interested in the film. While completing their quilt patch, students were very motivated by the process.

I also observed students’ motivation, students’ emotional response to the film, students’ awareness of their own cultural attitude and finally students’ interest in the learning activity. This was done by making field notes throughout the study. Student motivation appeared to be high during the process. Many students asked numerous questions prior to the learning activity regarding what they would be doing and the film they would see. Initially, students were given a case study and students were interested in how the case study related to the learning activity. While they were watching the film, students sat close to the television and no students asked to leave the room, indicating that they did not want to miss any part of the film. During the film, a few of the students became emotionally engaged as many felt connected to the students’ efforts in the film.

They exhibited these emotions by crying, laughing, and making comments to me after the class about how “cool” this was.

Students did become aware of their cultural attitudes after watching the film, as many of them said that they did not understand how anyone could be racist. They showed in their quilt patches that they have thought about the cultural group they had investigated and represented their cultural attitude towards that group.

Written Material, Student Work: The quilt patches designed by the students were very well done. I have included pictures of them and have commented on how the students have represented their cultural attitude. There are only 13 quilt patches, because three of the students did not wish to submit their quilt patch, and one student completed a patch that was off topic and as a result was not included. They took part in the survey and were a part of the classroom observations, so they still contributed to the results of the research.



1.

The above quilt patch done by a student shows how she has thought about the different cultural groups that exist and has represented them by a jig-saw puzzle that “fits together”. The student has included the phrase “No matter the color, no matter the shape,

we all must come together” to express her cultural attitude as one of co-operation and understanding that although cultural groups are different, they can still live and work together.



2.

This quilt patch represents one student’s cultural attitude of the cultural group of Catholic sisters who call themselves, “Sisters of Mercy”. The Cultural Group of Sisters of Mercy would likely be a difficult one for students to relate to, but once this student had an opportunity to investigate what the group is involved in, she was able to express all the positive components. This student has expressed her cultural attitude as one of appreciation for what another cultural group has contributed to making the world a better place.



3.

This student examined the cultural group of the physically disabled. She has expressed her cultural attitude towards this group by examining the group from their perspective. She has included the logo in front of the globe to symbolize the global awareness that people who are in wheelchairs are capable of living accomplished lives. The slogan “what doesn’t kill us, makes us stronger” represents her attitude that people who use wheelchairs as a result of becoming a paraplegic, have survived a tragedy, but that they are still strong contributing members of society.



4.

This student has chosen to express his cultural attitude towards the cultural group consisting of people who are from the Netherlands. He has chosen to reflect on the history of the cultural group and show that his attitude is that this group is strong yet peaceful.



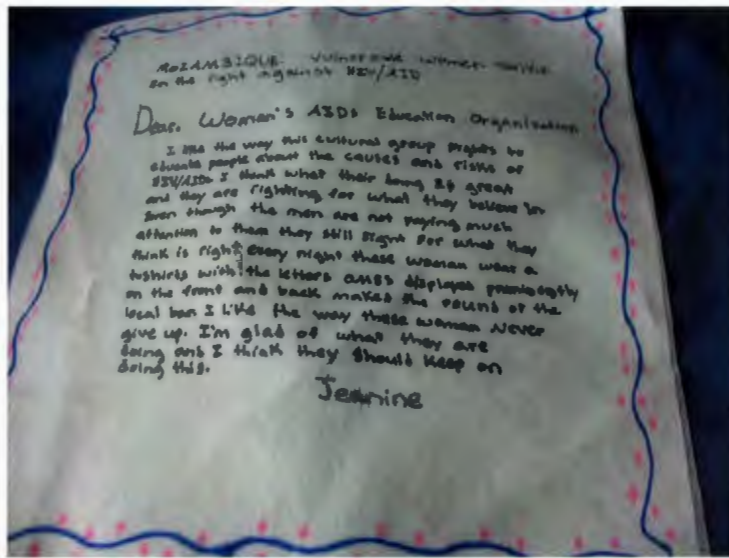
5.

This student's attitude towards disabled people is reflected in her slogan "Your Right as a Disabled person!" Her cultural attitude is one of social acceptance and social rights for people who use wheelchairs and need to avail of parking spaces and other facilities reserved for them. This student's attitude is that the people of this cultural group have certain rights that should not be violated by people outside the cultural group.



6.

This student has reflected on his cultural attitude of the aboriginal cultural group. He has expressed that he likes "their creativity with how they dress when they compete in dance competitions". His cultural attitude is one of appreciation for the cultural groups expression in their dance and clothing traditions.



7.

This student has written a letter to the cultural group organization “Women’s AIDS education organization” to express her attitude of appreciation. She has admiration for the cultural group and her cultural attitude is reflected in the letter.



8.

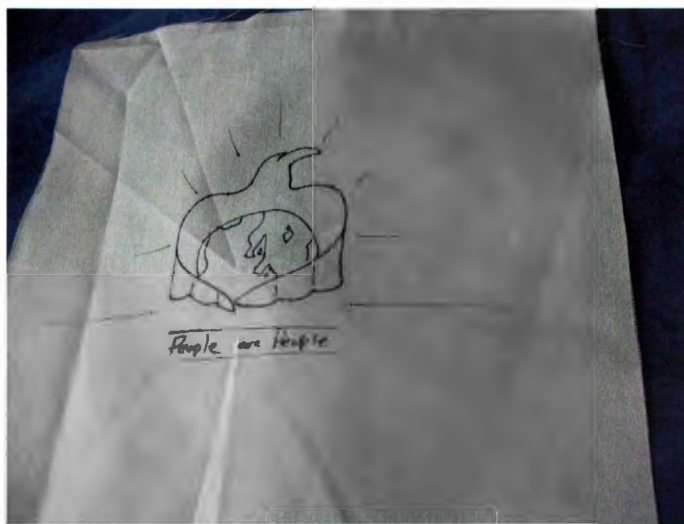
This student is reflecting on his attitude towards the citizens of Iran. Although he does not understand the politics of Iran or fully understand their culture, he appreciates the changes in the culture and has made suggestions as to how they have gotten better as a country. His cultural attitude is one of understanding and hope for the possibility of a

better life for the people of Iran. Understanding the content is a big component of cultural attitude awareness and will be closely examined later.



9.

This student has chosen to reflect on the Jewish cultural group. He has suggested that we as a global cultural group are more alike than we are different. His attitude is one of acceptance of all cultural groups, but has chosen to specifically acknowledge the Jewish cultural group.



10.

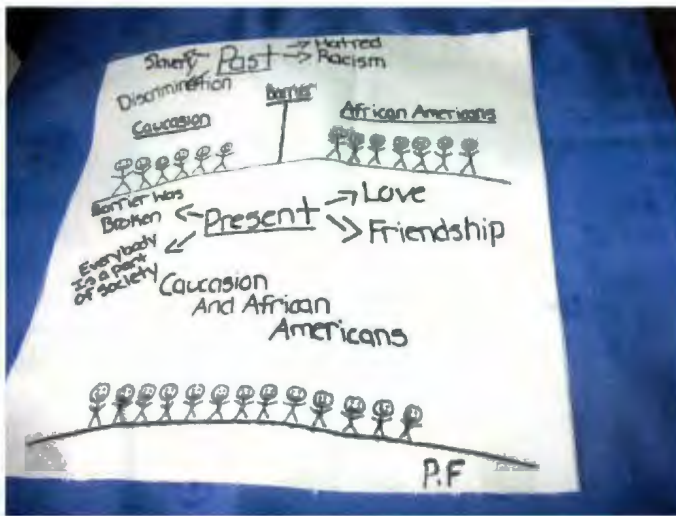
This student chose to do a simple design to represent his cultural attitude in a direct way that encompasses all cultural groups. His slogan "People are People" stresses his attitude

that we are all more alike than different, and that whatever a person's cultural group, they are still people like everyone else.



11.

This student has represented his cultural attitude by a message of understanding the powerful minds of the Chinese cultural group. He has presented his attitude as one of admiration of the people of China and how they will once come to know their powerful place in the world.



12.

This student has chosen to represent his cultural attitude towards the two cultural groups of African Americans and Caucasians. His attitude is expressed by outlining the changes that have occurred in the history of the relationship between the two cultural groups. He

acknowledges that barriers have been broken and his attitude is that all people should feel a part of the same global community.



13.

This student has reflected on her cultural attitude towards people from the homosexual cultural group. She says that she “feels that love is love”, meaning that a homosexual relationship is based on the same guiding principle as a heterosexual relationship, love.

Interview Data:

On March 4th 2007, I interviewed the classroom teacher. I asked him the set of questions listed below. These questions were reviewed prior to the interview by my thesis supervisor.

1. As a social studies teacher, how important is it that new teaching strategies are being developed and used in social studies education?
2. With the recent development in values education and reflective thinking, do you think this teaching strategy could be a valuable contribution to the social studies curriculum?

3. What benefits are there to a social studies program that includes learning activities that focus on students' cultural attitudes?
4. Do you think this activity will help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes as well as identify the influences that exist to structure their cultural attitudes?

The interview was done to reach a conclusion about the use of the learning activity in the Social Studies classroom. He stated that it is important to be progressive and adopt new strategies, as times change the methodologies have to change too. He suggested that this teaching strategy would be a valuable contribution to the social studies curriculum because it was "interactive and students actively participated in a process". With cultural attitudes and the global community as major themes of the activity, students came in contact with ethnicities and were made aware of differences and the need to be tolerant.

Throughout the interview, he said that including cultural attitude awareness in the Social Studies curriculum was important. "It fosters a broader awareness of society and how society is often changed, it is rare to find homeogenous areas and that students need to be aware that the world is becoming a smaller place and that they should understand that there are different cultures". He also added that this activity potentially will bring out the weaknesses in students' character or the character of their peers. It can provide for them an eye opener to find out that others may not be as broad minded as you may assume them to be. This learning activity encourages students to check their own perspectives and look at their positions to stop and analyze their own views. This learning activity asks them to pause for thought.

Finally, he offered suggestions as to how this learning activity fits into the existing Social Studies curriculum. He said that “in the curriculum now students learn about Canadian society in the twentieth century when people came over as immigrants and were exposed to intolerant racist views. This shows students the shortcomings in our history. This activity would help students understand the sensitivity that is needed when dealing with cultures other than our own.” He also suggested that with the Eastern School Board recruiting many international students (the Newfoundland International Students Experience program is a link on the Eastern School District website) this activity could be very beneficial to encourage students to “understand their cultural attitude and be more comfortable in a classroom environment where not everyone is from the same cultural heritage.”

From this interview it can be concluded that including cultural attitude awareness in the social studies curriculum is a valuable component and useful area of citizenship education. What we achieve when we incorporate cultural awareness is an area of citizenship education that focuses on understanding cultural groups and their contributions to our society.

Students need to have an understanding of the content surrounding the cultural groups that they are studying before they reflect on their cultural attitude. As seen in many of the quilt patches, students are using phrases about being tolerant and accepting but many of them do not have a knowledge base of the specific cultural groups. Although each student was given a folder of resource material, many chose to ignore it or were not given enough time to read and understand it. This learning activity needs to be

done after an extensive study of a cultural group has been conducted through individual investigation (like student projects) or by classroom units of study. If students are not given adequate amounts of time and resources to fully engage the content of the cultural group, the result is often stereotyping which is what we as educators want to avoid.

Survey Data:

The results of the survey following the learning activity using film show that using film as a teaching tool can be an effective way to teach cultural attitude awareness in Social Studies education. Students were asked to respond to ten statements by choosing strongly agree, agree, disagree, strongly disagree or not sure. Students were also asked to respond to three questions:

1. "Is this the first time that you have been exposed to a learning strategy using film that helps you recognize your cultural attitudes?"
2. "If no, how have you recognized your cultural attitudes before?"
3. "Did you benefit from using the learning activity using film?"

Using the responses from the three questions along with the results of the students' choices to the statements, I analyzed the students' cultural attitude awareness. I then organized the results using figures and added student response from the survey after each figure.

Survey:

NAME: _____

Using Film to teach Cultural Attitude Awareness in Social Studies

Below is a set of statements related to your overall perceptions of the learning strategy that used film as a teaching tool to help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes. Indicate your degree of agreement with each statement by circling your category of response. Use the following scale when responding to each item:

SA- Strongly Agree **A**-Agree **D**-Disagree **SD**-Strongly Disagree **NS**-Not Sure

1. I have thought about cultural attitudes (your own and other peoples) before I participated in the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*.
SA A D SD NS
2. During the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*, I was motivated to learn about cultural attitudes.
SA A D SD NS
3. During the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*, I was more aware of my cultural attitudes, than I was prior to the learning activity.
SA A D SD NS
4. As opposed to other teaching strategies, I think using the film *Paper Clips* in the learning activity helped to make me more aware of my cultural attitudes.
SA A D SD NS
5. I now understand more of the influences that exist to shape a person's cultural attitude.
SA A D SD NS

6. I think that recognizing my cultural attitudes is an important part of social studies education.

SA A D SD NS

7. Prior to this learning activity, I rarely learned about cultural attitudes in social studies.

SA A D SD NS

8. I think film should be used in social studies and other courses to help students learn.

SA A D SD NS

9. I have thought about my cultural attitudes more as a result of participating in the learning activity.

SA A D SD NS

10. I have rarely had an opportunity to explore my cultural attitudes in other courses.

SA A D SD NS

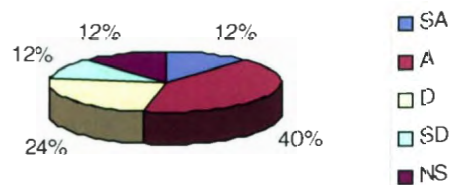
Please respond to the following questions in the space provided:

1. Is this the first time that you have been exposed to a learning strategy using film that helps you recognize your cultural attitudes? YES NO
2. If no, how have you recognized your cultural attitudes before?

3. Did you benefit from using the learning activity using film? Please explain.

Figure 1:

Statement 1: I have thought about cultural attitudes (your own and other people's) before I participated in the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*.



SA-12%

A-40%

D-24%

SD-12%

NS-12%

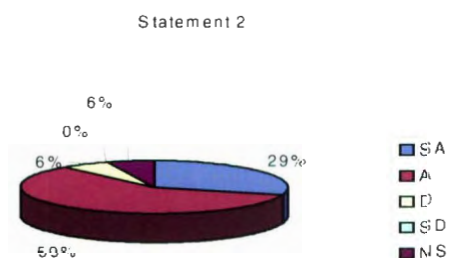
This figure indicates that 52% of the students either agreed or strongly agreed that they had thought about cultural attitudes before participating in the learning activity.

Student responses indicate that very little time was spent in class on cultural attitudes.

Students indicated that they would discuss and debate but little time was spent reflecting on cultural attitudes in a formal or systematic way.

Figure 2:

Statement 2: During the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*, I was motivated to learn about cultural attitudes.



SA- 29%

A-59%

D- 6%

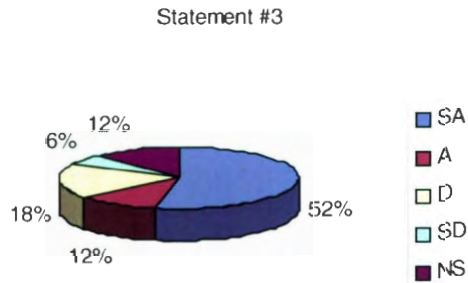
SD-0%

N-6%

The above figure shows that 88% of the students were motivated to learn about their cultural attitudes during the learning activity using film. Students responded in the survey with enthusiasm regarding the learning activity, which suggests that film and creative learning experiences are motivating. One student stated that “learning about a cultural group to make a patch made me learn and realize so much (simple, effective and quick). Loved it!”

Figure 3:

Statement 3: During the learning activity using the film *Paper Clips*, I was more aware of my cultural attitudes, than I was prior to the learning activity.

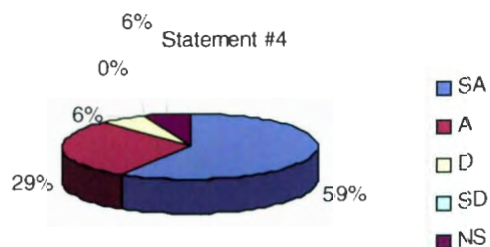


SA- 52%
A- 12%
D- 18%
SD- 6%
NS- 12%

Figure 3 indicates that 64% of the students were more aware of their cultural attitudes during the learning activity. Students responded with statements such as “it [learning activity] opened my eyes completely” and “I believe it [learning activity] opened me up to seeing that no matter our background or history, we can overcome anything and make a difference”. Including learning activities such as this one can be an effective way of encouraging cultural attitude awareness in the classroom.

Figure 4:

Statement 4: As opposed to other teaching strategies, I think using the film *Paper Clips* in the learning activity helped to make me more aware of my cultural attitudes.

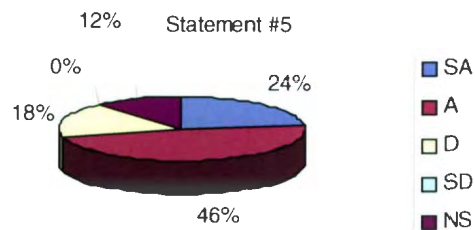


SA-59%
A-29%
D-6%
SD-0%
NS-6%

As indicated in figure 4, 88% of the students surveyed strongly agreed and agreed that using the film *Paper Clips* in the learning activity helped to make them more aware of their cultural attitudes. By watching the film, one student responded with the comment that it made them “think more because I got to experience the life of cultural attitudes”. It can be suggested that film is a useful learning tool because it brings emotional and physical experiences to life for students to see and think about.

Figure 5:

Statement 5: I now understand more of the influences that exist to shape a person's cultural attitude.

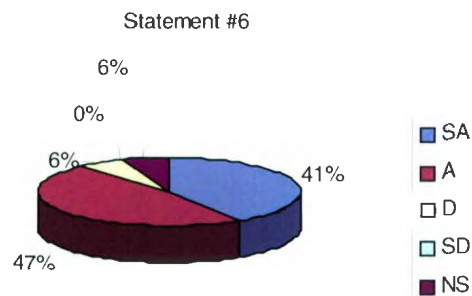


SA-24%
A-46%
D-18%
SD-0%
NS-12%

Figure 5 indicates that 70% of the students strongly agree and agree that they now understand influences that exist to shape a person's cultural attitude. One student pointed out in their response that "using the film made it much more easy to understand about other cultures and how other individuals feel about cultural attitudes". Another student reflected on their own prejudice by explaining that "I was expecting the community in which the film was based to be basically ignorant southern people who in the beginning wouldn't want to learn about another culture, but by watching this film it made me reconsider my prejudice and it really made me think in more depth about the people around me". Using the film in this learning activity helped this student to reflect on what was happening in the film and apply it to their lives, which made it a meaningful learning experience for them.

Figure 6:

Statement 6: I think that recognizing my cultural attitudes is an important part of social studies education.



SA-41%

A-47%

D-6%

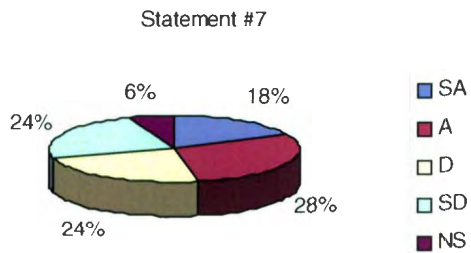
SD-0%

NS-6%

The majority of the students, 88%, believe that recognizing their cultural attitudes is an important part of social studies. In social studies, cultural groups are often examined but as one student indicated regarding cultural attitudes “[learning about cultural attitudes] helps you see what cultural groups are really like”. Another student expanded on this idea by suggesting that, “I didn’t know that so many cultural attitudes existed. I now know that categorizing a culture is wrong. And that everybody has a different thought or opinion about a cultural group (e.g. gays, Indians, Jews). I learned so much from this experience.” When learning about cultural attitude awareness, students can become more connected to the cultural group they are studying and apathetic to the life experiences of others.

Figure 7:

Statement 7: Prior to this learning activity, I rarely learned about cultural attitudes in social studies.

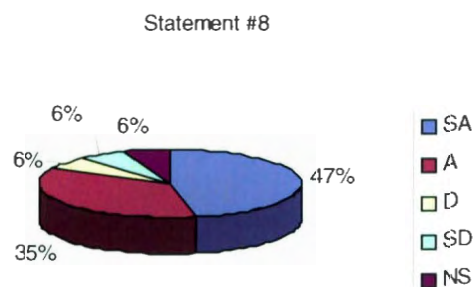


SA-18%
A-28%
D-24%
SD-24%
NS-6%

The results of this statement were divided as 46% agreed and strongly agreed, where as 50% disagreed and strongly disagreed. From this it is reasonable to assume that although cultural attitudes are taught in the social studies curriculum, not all students feel that they have learned about cultural attitudes effectively. One student stated, “We never talked about cultural attitudes in school before”. In the social studies curriculum, students often do not see cultural attitude awareness as a specific goal of the learning activities.

Figure 8:

Statement 8: I think film should be used in social studies and other courses to help students learn.



SA-47%

A-35%

D-6%

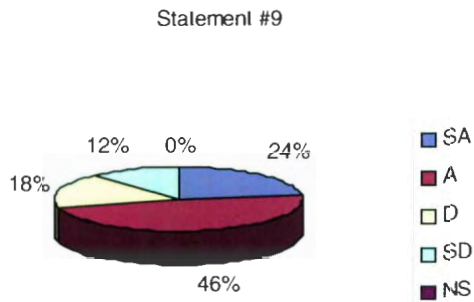
SD-6%

NS-6%

As indicated by the 82% of students who agreed or strongly agreed that film should be used in social studies and other courses, it is reasonable to assume that as a learning tool, film is a useful resource. One student explained this by saying that "I did benefit from this film. I have never before seen people who actually survived the holocaust speaking about their experiences. The way the film was put together was very moving and educating".

Figure 9:

Statement 9: I have thought about my cultural attitudes more as a result of participating in the learning activity.



SA-24%

A-46%

D-18%

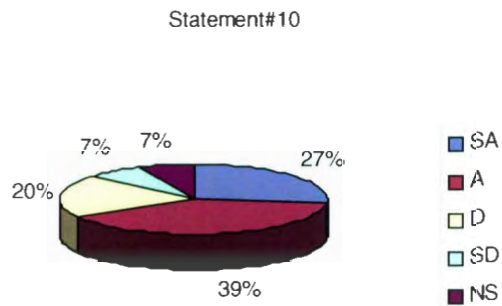
SD-12%

NS-0%

This figure shows that 70% of the students have thought about their cultural attitudes more after participating in the learning activity. This learning activity has helped students think about their cultural attitudes outside the classroom experience. A student responded in the survey by saying "I did benefit by using this activity because I'm more aware of my cultural attitude and it made me think about other cultures and how they are like us."

Figure 10:

Statement 10: I have rarely had an opportunity to explore my cultural attitudes in other courses.



SA-27%

A-39%

D-20%

SD-7%

NS-7%

66% of the students rarely had the opportunity to explore their cultural attitudes in other courses. However, some students have thought about their cultural attitudes before in other ways. One student pointed out that “I have thought about cultural attitudes before. Although in the media they tend to stereotype certain groups of people, I think about it and realize isolation and prejudice should not be a part of my life. Also, being a Newfoundlander we know what it feels like to be judged. I try not to judge in return of knowing the feeling”. Given the opportunity to explore cultural attitudes further in courses, the students’ feelings of being judged could be reflected on and examined in light of cultural attitude awareness.

Chapter Five

Discussion

The results of this study reveal that a social studies learning activity, using film, can help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes. The students demonstrated in their responses to the survey that they were more aware of their cultural attitudes following the learning activity than they were before participating in this learning activity. The film, along with an accompanied learning activity, encouraged students to empathize more with the experiences of people from different cultural groups and the learning activity helped to make them reflect on how they felt about those cultural groups. By creating a meaningful learning experience in the classroom, the students could use the information they received in the film and apply it to their own life experiences. They created a quilt patch that reflected how they felt about a cultural group and by doing so were engaged in a lesson of empathy and cultural awareness.

The life world of the students in this study is that of students living in the inner communities of St. John's. Most students come from lower to middle class households. The main influences in their lives that contribute to their cultural attitudes is media, school, and their parents. Understanding that media contributes to the students' cultural attitude from an educational perspective drives educators to focus on using media in the classroom. Media needs to be used in the social studies classroom so that what the students are viewing in the media in their daily lives (books, magazines, television, music videos and movies) is filtered through a thought process before it becomes a part of their collective understanding.

The students in this research were culturally homogenous. Their cultural differences were limited to white, Anglo Saxon middle class group. Therefore, their understanding of cultural groups outside of their own is limited mainly to media. By bringing media into the classroom and using it as a resource to understand cultural groups representations, students have an opportunity to then ask questions about how cultural groups are represented and how attitudes get formed and generated in society.

Students also gain cultural attitudes from parental influences. By educating them and listening to their own opinions about cultural groups we are encouraging them to think for themselves and ask questions about what they believe a particular cultural group contributes to society. What we teach them in the classroom about cultural attitudes and understanding people's place in the world builds in them a capacity to be caring and thoughtful.

Using the film, *Paper Clips*, in the learning activity resulted in students becoming more aware of their cultural attitudes. It was one learning tool, incorporated into a learning activity, that worked to help students represent how they feel about other cultural groups. Using film in the classroom has to be connected to the curriculum and must be seen by the students as a part of the course they are studying. When done this way, this research has provided the support for using films to help students become more aware of their cultural attitudes.

For teachers who are interested in designing learning activities that will promote reflection on cultural attitudes, three components should be implemented in the classroom. First, teachers need to acknowledge what the students already know about the

concept of culture and how attitudes are formed. Secondly, the teacher needs to give the students an opportunity to understand and form new knowledge about cultural attitudes in a meaningful learning experience. Thirdly, the learning activity that the students participate in needs to conclude with an evaluation of how the students will implement what they learned in their everyday lives. Finally, it is necessary to have an extensive study of the cultural groups prior to the learning activity so students have the content knowledge they need, to investigate their cultural attitudes.

Acknowledging what the students already know about the concept of culture and their understanding of attitudes has to be the starting point for the learning activity. The components have to be outlined in the classroom prior to the learning activity on cultural attitudes because the teacher needs to have a starting point. The teacher may be in a classroom where there is a diverse population of students who come from many different cultures, and their reality of what culture is and how attitudes are formed is very different in that situation than in a classroom where all the students are from a single cultural group. Also, there may be only one or two students in the class who are from a different cultural group. That needs to be acknowledged and addressed so that the students in the class understand that how they individually understand culture and attitude formation is not how all the students understand it. Finding out what the students already know about cultural attitude awareness will ensure that the teacher who is designing the learning activity understands what needs to be included to help the students build new knowledge.

Creating a learning activity that allows the students to learn by actively engaging in the process is important if our goal is to have the students build on the knowledge they

already have to create new knowledge. Actively engaging the learner means that the students are a part of the learning process and they are responsible for how they learn. In this learning activity students viewed a film and represented their cultural attitude on a quilt patch. They were applying the knowledge they learned from watching the movie to their representation of what their cultural attitude was. There are other ways to engage students in an active learning process. A learning activity may include writing a story or poem to express their understanding. The important component to active learning is that the students are engaged in a process that makes them responsible partners in the learning process.

Finally, teachers who are interested in designing learning activities that promote reflection on cultural attitudes need to have a session at the end that evaluates how the students will implement their understanding of what cultural attitudes are and where they come from in their everyday lives. In this learning activity, a discussion at the end where students made suggestions as to how to treat people from different cultural groups, allowed for reflection on what the understanding of cultural attitudes means in our lives.

The results of this research will benefit the practicing teacher because students' conception of cultural attitudes is described and a learning strategy was tested. This research shows that the learning activity, using film, aided in having students become aware of their cultural attitudes. This research gives teachers a framework for designing lesson plans and projects that include the outcome, cultural attitude awareness.

This research has provide a conceptual framework of cultural attitudes including the influence learning activities using film has on bringing an awareness of the cultural

attitudes of high school students. This study seeks further action and change in social studies. Students should engage in activities that encourage them to consider the cultural attitudes they have, and recognize that their cultural attitudes are a result of various influences. Further research on student attitude formation and the influences of education, family life and media on those attitudes is encouraged along with designing learning activities that have students investigate cultural groups. This research is essential because of the current push in social studies for values clarification. This research has outlined one aspect of value clarification regarding the influence of social studies learning activities on bringing awareness to students' cultural attitudes.

There are some cautions when designing activities to bring awareness to students' cultural attitudes. It is important to be sensitive to students who are from other cultural groups in the classroom. As this is an activity in awareness of attitudes and not an activity in building or developing attitudes, some students may have attitudes that are not socially acceptable and the teacher has to be aware of how the students present their attitudes in class. Working with a homogenous group as I did is different from implementing this activity in a classroom where students were from a number of different cultures. In my study I had to avail of film to present a story about another cultural group.

Another limitation with doing this activity is that teachers should not impose their attitudes onto their students. Teachers should be aware that one's attitude is just that and that although the teacher can suggest good positive cultural attitudes and present to the students a role model for good cultural attitudes, he or she cannot evaluate them based on

the attitudes they have, only on the degree that they have reflected on their attitudes. This is only a learning activity on developing students' awareness of their attitudes, not in developing cultural attitudes.

Conclusion

This research provides the educator with a starting point for developing a social studies curriculum that uses film to teach cultural attitude awareness. The use of film in this research has proven to be an effective method to teach students how to be aware of their cultural attitudes. By using this learning activity in the classroom, teachers are encouraged to modify the film choices and the representation choices for the students to suit the curriculum content and the learning styles of the students. By using film in the classroom to bring awareness of the cultural attitudes of students, teachers are able to provide students with a motivating learning resource that serves to teach them awareness of the cultural attitudes and contribute to their overall development as thoughtful considerate citizens.

By creating empathy in the classroom it may make students more caring and thoughtful. The goal in this research was to create a learning activity that would encourage the students to think about their attitudes towards cultural groups other than their own. By doing so, a classroom environment is formed where students are considerate of the life experiences of other cultural groups and are conscious of the attitudes they have towards those groups.

The study provides the opportunity to investigate the effectiveness of a new teaching strategy, to improve instruction and learning in social studies. There has been very little research done in the area of exploring cultural attitudes and how teaching strategies affect them. The findings in this research shows that students are motivated to learn about their cultural attitudes through the use of film.

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Appendix A

Paper Clips: Viewing Guide

Please think about the following questions as you watch the film:

1. What are some similarities between yourself and the students at the school in Whitwell?
2. What are some cultural attitudes of “Depressed Communities”. Are there any “Depressed Communities” here in Newfoundland and Labrador?
3. What is a homogeneous group of people?
4. How can a person learn to be tolerant?
5. What are some stereotypes toward the students in the film?
6. What was the initial goal of studying the Holocaust?
7. What were some of the other lessons that the students learned from the activity?
8. What does it mean to be close-minded and a fundamentalist? How does that affect a person’s cultural attitude?
9. Do you think the activity the students did in the film helped them become more aware of their cultural attitudes?
10. By understanding their cultural attitudes, do you think it is possible that people are more respectful and open-minded to other cultural groups?

Appendix B

Students:

You have just viewed the film "Paper Clips" that focused on the themes of Prejudice, Tolerance, and Culture. I would like you to think about your own **Cultural Attitudes**. In the same way that the students and teachers in the film would reflect on their own attitudes towards people who were different than themselves, let us now consider our attitudes towards different cultural groups, our **CULTURAL ATTITUDES**. To do this, I will give each of you a cultural group (this will be given to you in the form of a package of information). Read through the information to the extent that you get some idea of what that cultural group consists of. Become familiar with the general elements of the culture. After you have gotten to know a little about the culture, start to reflect (think about) your attitudes towards that culture. Here are some guiding questions to help you:

1. What do I like about this cultural group?
2. How am I similar to this cultural group and in what ways can I relate to them?
3. What is so distinct about this cultural group and how does that make them interesting and diverse?
4. What is my overall opinion about this cultural group and how do I feel about the people who are a part of this cultural group?

After you have thought about these questions (and it may help you to write down a few notes as you respond to the questions), represent your cultural attitude towards the cultural group. What that means is you are given an opportunity to be creative and insightful. You will design a quilt patch that shows how you feel about the cultural group you investigated (that is your **CULTURAL ATTITUDE**). You can do what ever you want with your quilt patch (be as creative as you wish). Here are some suggestions:

1. Draw a picture that demonstrates your opinions and feelings toward that cultural group.
2. Write a Poem that reflects on your emotions towards the cultural group.
3. Write a letter to a person of that cultural group that expresses your thoughts about their culture.
4. Draw a symbol and incorporates words or phrases that express your feelings toward that cultural group.
5. Collect quotes that highlight how you feel about your cultural group.

Feel free to bring in other supplies to design your quilt patch (I will provide markers). Your assignment for Thursday, November 23rd is: **DESIGN YOUR QUILT PATCH** (you can use the back of this sheet). Friday's class will be used for you to transfer your design onto the fabric. You have to come prepared to transfer your **design** (do not come without something designed!). During Friday's class you will focus on the reflective process of thinking about your cultural attitudes towards your cultural group, as you work on your

quilt patch. On Tuesday, November 28th, we will conclude this activity. I will ask you all to present your quilt patch and we will reflect on the learning activity as a whole. I will then have you fill out a survey that will be used as a source of data for my thesis.

Thank you for taking part!

