

The Linden Letter

Fall 2007

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Linden's 14th Birthday Party

Alana Bell, Dawn Chan, and Ina Székely



The Linden School celebrated its first full school day of the new academic year on Wednesday September 5th with a 14th birthday party.

The party, designed to reflect Linden's pedagogical philosophy and understanding of how girls learn best, included a potluck breakfast in the girls' homerooms, and a birthday celebration in the gym with the entire school community.

During the celebration girls lit candles, led by Ngaire, the youngest student in the school. The students were then introduced to all faculty members and staff. Following the introductions, students listened to the school history and some inspirational readings. The girls then participated in a game through which they became acquainted with the members of their Linden family. The party concluded with the Linden song.



Our birthday party is an important school tradition. It was designed by our founders and some of our first students to begin the year on just the right note. By the end of the party, students learn or are reminded of Linden history and traditions and hear important advice for the upcoming year. The game is particularly crucial. When it is completed, every girl in the school has spoken aloud to the rest of the community and the girls are familiar with our theme for the year. This year the theme is interconnectedness and sustainability.



Clubs at Linden

Club Selection Process Transformed

By Michelle Munk



A big part of Linden's appeal is our incredible variety and number of co-curricular activities. In the past two years that I have worked at Linden, students signed up for co-curricular activities in their homerooms. As a Grade 7 homeroom teacher with many students who were new to the school, I had to tell them what the clubs were so they could decide what to sign up for. The challenge for me was that I often didn't know what they were myself. This year, I had an idea to improve this system: instead of signing up in homerooms, the students would learn about the clubs in the gym. Teachers and students who ran clubs gave brief descriptions of their clubs, and then the students were given a blank timetable for the week. They then went around to the different teachers, who were stationed at tables around the gym according to the grades that their clubs were open to, and signed up for the clubs they were interested in. If they had questions about the clubs, they could ask the teachers directly or read the descriptions of the clubs which were posted at each table. When students signed up for a club, they signed their name to the posted club sign-up sheet, and the teacher filled in the club information onto their week timetable.

Despite the fact that this was a new system, it worked quite smoothly. Students were able to hear about all the different clubs, and had the opportunity to plan their weeks

in a way that avoided scheduling conflicts. In addition, this system provided a way for both visual and auditory learners to find out about the clubs they were interested in. Also, it gave an opportunity for people running new clubs to showcase their clubs. Some teachers brought in props to help promote their clubs.

Linden's commitment to risk- and initiative-taking extends well beyond the classroom.

This year, we have about thirty clubs, including quite a few new and exciting clubs. Christine started a Scrapbooking Club, in which students in grades 5-9 can make their own masterpieces using home-made embellishments. Jeanette and Claire introduced a Fit Club, where participants do circuit training designed to build up strength and endurance, including running, skipping, plyometrics, stability and core work derived from Pilates, strength training, and some calisthenics. Anne Van Burek revived the

French Scrabble Club, to help students expand their vocabulary, increase their knowledge and boost their confidence. Finally, Biljana started a Science Club, where participants discuss popular science books and popular science fiction books, and watch movies with scientific content as well as science fiction movies. Participants will analyze the science in the science fiction. Biljana's Animal Lovers' Club, Andy's Debating Club and Maureen's Cross-Country Clubs promise to be interesting and fun too!

One of the things I love about Linden (besides the great club selection), is the school's willingness to welcome new ideas. Many of us had recognized that the previous system wasn't ideal, and when I proposed changing it, everyone was supportive. Instead of being an institution in which decisions are passed down from the top and long-standing traditions immutable, we all feel a sense of responsibility toward the community, and if we have a concern, we can work with our community to make positive change. Linden's commitment to risk- and initiative-taking extends well beyond the classroom.



Linden Student Vote

Election Day

Daniela, Grade 5

Grades 5,7,8,9, and 10 all got to participate in the 'Linden Student Vote' on October 9th. We got to vote for the referendum and these candidates: Michael Bryant (Ontario Liberal Party), Charles De Kerckhove (Independent), Steve D'sa (The Green Party of Ontario), Julian Heller (NDP), John Kittredge (Ontario Libertarian Party), Carol Leborg (Freedom Party of Ontario), and Blake Thompson (Family Coalition Party of Ontario). The Green Party won over the NDP by only 3 votes. It was fun being able to vote like the grown-ups.



Linden Students Vote

On October 9th, Linden students in grades 5, 7, 8, 9, and 10 participated in Student Vote. We'd like to thank Michelle Munk and Leslie Esposito for facilitating this activity as well as the grade fives for their excellent work in organizing it. After seeing our results, Michelle has this important message for the girls:

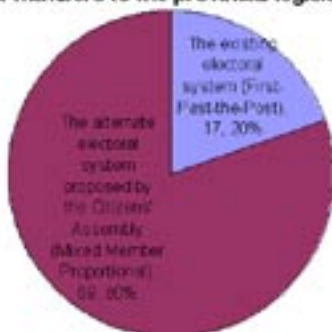
"I am so thrilled that so many Linden students participated in our Student Vote. The Grade 5 classes did an incredible job of organizing the election and counting the votes. It's interesting to see the results - the fact that the Green Party won in our election reflects our school community's commitment to environmental issues. I want to remind everyone that voting is only one way of many to make your voice heard on these issues: your everyday actions carry these messages too. If you are really interested in environmental change, try incorporating these changes into your daily life:

- Bring a truly litterless lunch to school every day.
- Use both sides of the paper when you print or take notes, and continue your notes on the same page you used the previous day.
- Keep your binders from year to year.
- Buy food that is local and organic if possible.
- Take your own mug to the coffee shop.
- See what you can find at thrift stores - or better yet, participate in our Buy Nothing Day Clothing Exchange at the end of November.
- Try to reduce more than you reuse, and reuse more than you recycle.

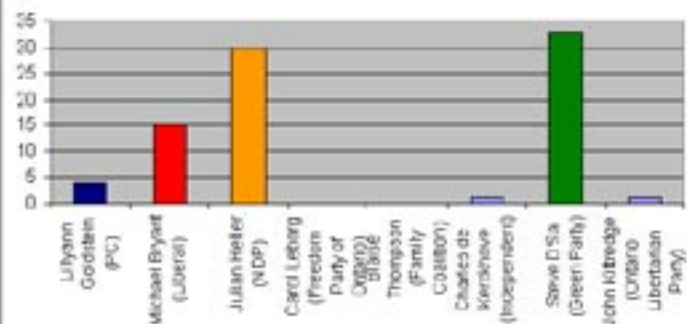
Remember that you can vote with your words and your actions every day (even before you turn 18!) and that the choices you make now will affect the world you will live in now and in the future."

The Linden School: Student Vote – Election Results

Which electoral system should Ontario use to elect members to the provincial legislature?



Candidate Selection



Week Without Walls '07

Grades 1-6

I liked the play called "Me, Me, Me." I liked looking at the sari at Gerrard Indian Bazaar. I liked their colours.

Isobel, Grade 1

I liked the Harbourfront. I liked the Hockey Hall of Fame.

Essence, Grade 1



Postcard image by Hilary, Grade 12

I enjoyed the first day when we went to the Harbourfront Centre because we had space to use our imagination and creativity. I also think it was fun to go on a walk near the lake since the air was so fresh. I also think ribbon dancing was expressing my movement and imagination.

Julianne, Grade 3



Harbourfront Center

On the first day of Week Without Walls, we went to this place where we learned about the history of books and how to make them. Learning about all the different kinds of books was very interesting. We had a good time learning how to make the books. We also had a great time making our books! We could make them any size we wanted. Some people made them big and some people made them small. Then, we put the book together. At the end, we had the chance to decorate our books. It was a great day!

Brie, Grade 5



I really enjoyed going to Little India. It was pretty neat to see the clothes that people in India wear. I saw the Indian dresses. The Indian dresses were so beautiful! They had so many jewels on them and the jewels sparkled a little bit. I saw a model of the Taj Mahal. I read the book. Then we went to a supermarket. We even saw Taj Mahal tea! How cool is that! There were samplers of spicy chips. I took one and as soon as the spicy chip touched my tongue my mouth went on fire! After going to the supermarket we ate lunch. When we got back to school we made paper kites and flew them at the park. It was an awesome day without walls!

Samantha, Grade 3



Hockey Hall of Fame

This week was Week Without Walls. On Wednesday in the afternoon, we went to the Hockey Hall of Fame where we got to look around. There were interactive games where you had to pretend to be the goalie in a game. There was also a TSN tower where you could pretend to be a producer, director, or an audio engineer. After this, we went upstairs and looked at the Stanley Cup. We even got the chance to touch it!

I thought the Hockey Hall of Fame was the best trip!

Adriana, Grade 5

Week Without Walls '07

Grades 1-6



Me, Me, Me

Grade five students enjoyed going to a play called "Me, Me, Me". It featured five characters: a janitor and four junior students: Nathan, Stanley, Matilda and Suzana. Matilda is a student who is being bullied. At the end of the play she gets accepted at a dance school where she can dance and follow her dreams.

Celeste, Grade 5



Kites

For our last day of Week Without Walls, we made and flew kites.

Each student made her kite in the gym. We used lots of crayons and markers. It was a little bit frustrating when markers dried out. We learned a lot and had lots of fun too. After we finished making our kites we went to the park and flew our homemade kites. Some kites would not fly or would break, but I think everybody had so much fun. I know at least that I had fun!

Katherine, Grade 5



On Thursday, October 4th 2007 (the last day of Week Without Walls) we built kites, all grades built them. Before we started building we tried to think of most of the things that fly. Then, we read a book about kites, where a little girl's father is stuck in a tower and the little girl keeps him alive by sending food up to him by kite. She saved him when he attached himself to the kite.

Next, we made our kites. We each got a piece of paper with the shape of our kite drawn on it. We decorated the kite. Next, we taped skewers onto the kite dividing it into 3 pieces. Then, we made holes on either side of the kite. We tied string into the holes to hold the kite and we also made tails on our kites.

When we were done we went over to the park and flew our kites. My favourite part was flying the kites. It was windy so they flew so well and it was cool to see them all decorated as they flew in the sky. This activity was lots of fun!

Aurora, Grade 6

Week Without Walls '07

Grades 7-12

Grades 7-12 went to Camp Wahanowin. We left at approximately 8:30 on Monday morning. We got there at about 1:30 then we had a tour of the camp. At 2:00 we got put into groups that were roughly based on our Linden families. Then we had an hour of free time. Then our groups got together and did different activities. We went around the camp doing different activities throughout the week. Some examples of activities each group did are: canoeing, kayaking, outdoor cooking, high ropes, team rope, and archery. During free time you could go swimming, do archery or tether ball, and the soccer field was open and the basketball courts were open as well. We got back to school at about 2:40 on Thursday. It was a great week!

Geneva, Grade 7



Camp was a blast! The grade 8's stayed in cabins 26 and 27. One of our favorite things about camp was the lip-sync competitions. We also really loved the high ropes. The camp spirit was a great part of camp. We also really liked getting to know the teachers better. It was a fun couple of days and we can't wait until we can go again.

The Grade 8's



I thought camp was an awesome experience. Before camp I was shy around my classmates, because it is my first year here at The Linden School. But, while I was at camp, I opened up to people and became closer to them. I also faced my fear of heights. I've had bad experiences with heights in the past so I promised myself I'd go on the team ropes. I didn't ring the bell, but it is still better than not trying at all. Here at Linden, I have seen how equal people are, especially at camp. I saw the teachers co-operating in the activities, just like the students. I never saw that at my last school. These are some of the many reasons why I really liked our camp at Wahanowin.

Bahar, Grade 9



What could be better than a lip-sync competition at Camp Wahanowin? Though great fun, lots of other activities were too including canoeing, archery, swimming, kayaking, high ropes, team ropes, outdoor cooking . . . During this Week Without Walls, as in past years, the friends, the teachers, and the place all came together in a special way. Wahanowin is more than just a camp experience; it's a total fun experience with its special brand of opportunities and challenges. Thanks a lot to all of the teachers who helped to make this adventure possible once again.

Merritt, Grade 9



Pendant 'Week Without Walls', la Semaine Sans Murs, les élèves de 7^e à 12^e année sont allées au camp Wahanowin pendant quatre jours. Quatre jours d'aventures en kayak et en canoë, et de natation dans l'eau froide. J'ai beaucoup aimé grimper à la corde.

Nous étions avec nos amies, alors vous pouvez imaginer que les trois nuits, il y a eu beaucoup de bruit. Le jeudi, quand nous sommes revenues, tout le monde était fatigué. C'est un indice que nous nous sommes beaucoup amusées.

Noa, Grade 9

Week Without Walls '07

Grades 7-12



The destination for this year's Week Without Walls was Camp Wahanowin. Students from grade 7 to 12 attended. Evening programs consisted of activities and games, organized and facilitated by the senior leaders and the grade 10's. A few highlights included 'Crazy Olympics' when Liz demonstrated her excellent burping skills, completing the whole alphabet and winning the event; swimming in the "warm" lake; and climbing the high ropes course. The grade 10's organized the semi-annual lip-sync contest and started the evening with a brilliant example of "how it's done". Cabin 27C took home first prize, each student getting their very own pair of Wahanowin boxer shorts. We can't wait for our next trip in 2009. We're already planning for our roles as counselors.

The Grade 10's



Nous avons aussi fait du tir à l'arc et mon activité préférée était le tir à la corde. La nourriture n'était pas aussi mauvaise que mes amies m'avaient dit. J'ai beaucoup aimé le *lipsync* de ma cabine et celui des 12^e années. En général, j'ai tout adoré, sauf la nourriture!

Alex, Grade 9



Wahanowin, what a joy! Being counselors was definitely an unexpected challenge. None of us anticipated it would be such an experience looking after so many campers. From organizing evening programs to hauling everyone out of bed in the morning in good time for breakfast to night patrol, it was definitely an eye opening experience. We have all learned the values of the hard work of looking after campers. Can't wait until YOU guys do it!

Lindsay, Grade 11



One of the highlights of my camp experience was the cabin-cleaning competition. The daily contest between the cabins to make sure they had the highest 'neat score' (as rated by captain cleanup) kept a healthy sense of suspense in the air. Congrats to cabin 27 for coming in third!

Esther, Grade 12



From the Faculty

Global Education Conference

Michelle Munk

During the last weekend of September, I attended a conference on Global Education at Kinark Outdoor Education Centre. It was organized by a collective of mostly non-practising teachers who work for organizations engaged in global education. Collectives included the Ontario Coalition for International Cooperation, Engineers Without Borders, World Vision Canada, and Canadian Physicians for African Relief. The conference was entitled "Not Your Average Global Ed Conference," and was committed to offering teachers ideas, materials, and contacts that would be most useful to them.

One of my reasons for going to the conference was to ascertain ideas about expanding global education beyond the classroom to a school-wide or even community-wide level. I learned about a few projects currently underway or scheduled to commence at other schools in Ontario. For example, one elementary school in Brampton helped a community in Sierra Leone to build a school for former child soldiers, and maintains an ongoing relationship with the students through the Internet.

Another goal I had going into the conference was to meet global educators from other schools. I was surprised to find out that some independent schools have a position devoted to "global education and community service." It was wonderful to meet teachers from all types of different schools, and to hear about their innovative and transforma-

tive ideas. One idea that caught my eye was by a group of teachers at a Toronto high school who are putting together a Global Education Certificate, in which participants take certain courses and have to do an internship abroad to complete the program.

In addition to attending many interesting workshops, I also presented a workshop on Math for Social Justice.



After attending many math conferences and being frustrated by the lack of social justice connection, and many global education conferences with no consideration of math, I decided I should just create my own workshop integrating these two concepts. After doing a dry-run with some teachers at Linden and getting some constructive feedback and helpful ideas, I presented my workshop at the conference to a group of teachers ranging from primary to secondary levels. I introduced

some of the reasons for incorporating global education into the math class, and discussed the various opportunities in a math class in which global education can be incorporated (e.g. as a warm-up or game, as a lesson, as an activity, as a journaling exercise, as an assignment, or as a test question). I then gave participants an opportunity to do some activities that Beth and I have used at Linden. Participants then worked in groups to develop ideas of their own, and together we generated quite a good list. I also shared some assignments I have used in my classes, such as having students develop a fundraising project for an organization of their choice and using an algebraic equation to represent how much money they could raise with n participants. Other assignment ideas I shared included using the concepts of data management to understand a social issue; using integers to see if we can observe climate change; and using two-dimensional geometry to understand tessellations from non-Western cultures. I concluded the workshop by sharing some resources that I have found useful. The workshop was very well-received, and many of the participants appreciated the ideas that were shared.

It was a wonderful weekend – a great balance of "give" and "take". I met some wonderful people, and it's exciting to know that there is a group of motivated educators committed to making school a site of learning about and addressing global issues.

Grade 8 & 10 Field Trip

LINDEN AU MUSÉE DU TEXTILE

C'était la troisième visite de Linden au Musée du Textile et, une fois de plus, cette sortie a été des plus enrichissantes pour nous toutes. Anne VB

Le 25 septembre, les 8^e et 10^e années de Linden sont allées au Musée du Textile voir l'exposition «Cloth that shook the World», Le Tissu qui a secoué le Monde. Nous avons été accueillies par le conservateur et fondateur du musée, Max Allen, qui a commenté pour nous cette riche exposition. Voici des extraits des comptes-rendus :

«Les femmes du village Patna aux Indes dépendaient totalement de leurs maris. Elles n'avaient pas de revenu à elles. En 1999, une organisation appelée ADITHI les a aidées à trouver une façon de commercialiser les couvertures brodées qu'elles faisaient. Ces couvertures sont très belles, elles racontent la vie quotidienne, et elles illustrent la force de ces femmes. Leur exemple est une bonne leçon.» Camille C.

«Les moustiquaires ont changé le monde! Elles sont gratuites dans beaucoup de pays d'Afrique où différentes organisations travaillent à lutter contre la malaria. C'est un succès énorme car les moustiquaires ont déjà sauvé des milliers de vies. Ce sont vraiment des textiles qui secouent le monde.» Nicole

«Au Musée du Textile, la partie la plus intéressante pour moi était le film. Il se passe à Taïwan, dans une petite usine de textile. Il montre comment les femmes qui travaillaient dans cette usine devaient dormir sans lit et sans oreiller dans l'usine. Le film nous montre que ces femmes n'étaient pas beaucoup payées.» Monica

«J'aime la technique de l'Inde: la teinture avec le mordant. Max Allen nous a expliqué comment le mordant permet de fixer la teinture sur les textiles.» Olivia

«L'art que nous avons choisi est le secret de la teinture. Les Indiens ont découvert une très bonne technique pour faire des tapis. Les Anglais voulaient la technique des Indiens. Les Indiens ne voulaient pas donner leur secret aux Indiens, alors les Anglais ont envoyé des espions. Avant longtemps, les Anglais sont devenus très riches.» Nora et Katie



«J'ai vu un tapis très intéressant. Il s'appelait «Terrorists Hit the World Trade Centre». Le tapis montre comment des terroristes ont volé des avions pour s'écraser contre le World Trade Centre. Il a attiré mon attention parce qu'il y a beaucoup de couleurs et beaucoup de détails.» Alexis

«Les Kunas ont leur tradition et le sens de la révolution. Ils produisent des textiles qui expliquent la culture de leurs tribunes. Les femmes portent une «mola», une blouse qui représente leur tribu et ses croyances. Le gouvernement de Panama a voulu que les Kunas soient modernes et que les femmes ne portent plus la mola. Mais les Kunas se sont rebellés contre le gouvernement et les femmes ont gagné. Les Kunas ont aussi établi un règlement : aucun étranger ne peut passer la nuit chez eux. Le peuple Kuna a gagné et vit en paix.» Jillian Z

TEXTILE MUSEUM of CANADA
connecting cloth, culture & art

Linden Events

Mother Daughter Math

Ina Székely

On Wednesday, October 10, Linden's primary and junior math teachers hosted the annual Mother-Daughter Math event—an opportunity for girls and the important women in their lives (including mothers, grandmothers, aunts, and guardians) to sample a bit of Linden's math pedagogy in action! Students from grades 1 – 6 and their companions participated in an impressive range of interactive and highly entertaining activities, which included old favourites like puzzles, riddles, and board games as well as lifting a brick on a string, sending balloon rockets to the moon, disassembling electronic devices, and much, much more.

Special thanks to Beth, Tonja, Christine, Maureen, and their students for another successful event—and to the “mothers and others” who participated. We know your daughters see and appreciate your support and willingness to engage in their education.



Diane and Eleanor talking with Judy Chicago, feminist artist, as she signed a copy of her 2007 book about her most famous work, *The Dinner Party*, for The Linden School students. Her inscription says:

“Go girls. Make a difference”.



Sports at Linden



U14 Soccer



U20 Ultimate Frisbee, September 25th

The girls arrived ready to play.
Finally a hot sunny day
After years of rain, creating a lot of pain
The heat was a welcome change.

Four games in all
We battled tall
When we finally scored
The whole crowd roared.

Thanks for another great battle
We always scare the boys
We leave them a little rattled
As we demonstrate our joy.



U20 Soccer



U14 Basketball



Thank you from the Science Department!

Thank you very much to Ziva and her family for their generous donation to The Linden Science Lab. In memory of Ziva's grandfather, Ray Mandel, they have donated a brand new laboratory fume hood, which will be essential in further developing the high school science programme. We truly appreciate this thoughtful and most generous gesture.

Faculty Preparation

A New Year for Linden Faculty

Alana Bell

Linden faculty begins each new school year with two days of intensive meetings during which we convene as a community to review our pedagogy and renew our focus on the Linden mission. We begin by exploring a particular aspect of our mission, an activity that forms the foundation of our year's theme. This theme is developed throughout the year in activities like greetings and whole school, in our curriculum and co-curriculars, and in our community initiatives. This year, the areas of the mission we have chosen to focus on are social justice and service. We envision social justice as our theoretical foundation, and service as the way in which we put our social justice ideas into practice. Through a consideration of these elements of the mission, we have developed our year themes of interconnectedness and sustainability. Thinking about interconnectedness helps us to see that each of us in the Linden community is connected to larger communities and in turn to the world around us, that even our smallest individual actions have a ripple effect on our community and the world we inhabit.

When we think about the interweaving of our community, our larger society and the world, sustainability of our planet becomes crucial. What we do at Linden to create a more sustainable environment affects other people and communities the world over. Working toward the health of our planet is an important way to carry out our work toward social justice.

Developing Our Theme

Faculty spent much of the day on August 29th considering the vast interweaving of our community. Out of this came many different interpretations of these connections. Our workshop groups noted:

- interdisciplinary connections within our curriculum
- the importance of developing a national and global conscience and context for the knowledge students gain
- the importance of maintaining our links with our community through charity fund-raising and student volunteer hours
- the link between teachers' knowledge of pedagogy, their classroom practice and the learning experience of students
- the importance of enhancing relationships between administration and teachers, teachers and students, and among students themselves through conversation, sharing of ideas and experiences, and collaborative learning opportunities
- the link between the health of our planet and the health of our bodies, families, and communities.

We discussed many ways of putting these ideas into action in our classrooms and larger school environment. Teachers are working hard to make Science Fair a more interdisciplinary process.

Students, especially in the younger grades, will work on their projects and questions in science, develop their science writing skills in English, and work on their display boards in art. We also continue our attempt to support the health of our planet by reducing Linden's environmental footprint. We continue this year to stress the importance of reducing waste within the school. Our environment club is active in reminding us not to bring garbage into the school and to dispose of compostable and recyclable materials appropriately. In recent years, the school has purchased a dishwasher to reduce our use of disposable dishes for school events. This year, in cases when we must use disposable dishes, we have moved to purchase biodegradable supplies. We continue to search for ways to reduce our consumption of electricity and to become generally more environmentally efficient and sustainable, and we remind ourselves and our students that each small step makes a difference.

Pedagogy

Along with establishing and developing our year theme, we also use our early faculty meetings to explore and develop our pedagogical philosophies. An exciting new development in pedagogy this year has been the growth of our Linden pedagogy library. Our hope is that, through the exploration of this library, we can continue to read and respond to the most recent and credible research available on girls and learning.

To begin our exploration of pedagogy through these texts, I presented Patricia H. Hinchey's book, *Finding Freedom in the Classroom: A Practical Introduction to Critical Theory*. Hinchey outlines the value of critical theory and critical pedagogy for a classroom that empowers its students. She explains critical theory using the Zen parable of the young fish who asks the elder fish about the sea:

The young one complains that although everyone talks constantly about the sea, he can't really get a clear understanding of what it is. The wise elder notes that the sea is all around the young one; it is where he was born and where he will die; it is a sort of envelope, and he can't see it because he is a part of it.

Such is the difficulty of coming to understand our own cultural beliefs and how they influence our actions. (15)

Hinchey notes that critical theory is helpful in overcoming this difficulty because it offers us new perspectives through which to view the world around us. Critical theory asks questions about power – Who has power? How did they get it? How do they keep it? How does their power affect the less powerless? It asks us to consider our institutions, our culture, and the world around us as the result of a decision-making process, not as something naturally occurring that cannot be changed. It asks, "Who benefits?" from the

Faculty Preparation

status quo and in what ways can we change our world to make it more equitable? Critical pedagogy is about empowering our students to think critically about the world around them and their place in it, to make choices, and to become agents for change. This has several practical implications for our classrooms, many of which can be seen played out at Linden on a daily basis.

Hinchey outlines several important areas in which students must be literate in order to develop an understanding of and become active agents in the world around them. Along with the literacies we traditionally focus on – reading, writing, and speaking – Hinchey outlines three other important literacies students must possess in

order to “defend themselves against unconscious indoctrination”; these are media literacy, mathematical literacy, and political literacy (153). Linden teachers, Michelle Munk and Andy Ranachan spoke about how they help students to develop an understanding of these areas in their classrooms.

All in all, the staff and faculty at Linden came away from the 2 day meeting with a clear sense of the goals and themes for the year and an enthusiasm to turn their ideas into action.

Hinchey, Patricia H. *Finding Freedom in the Classroom: A Practical Introduction to Critical Theory*. New York: Peter Lang, 2004.

Applying Critical/Feminist Pedagogy to My Teaching

Michelle Munk

During our start-of-the-year staff meetings, I was asked to present on how I incorporate critical and feminist pedagogy into my math classes. While critical and feminist pedagogy are different, they share some basic themes. For example, there is an attention to who has power and who has voice in the texts studied; there is an attempt to empower students to be meaning-makers; and knowledge is understood to be produced and not just transmitted within the classroom. These pedagogies share a goal of raising learners' critical consciousness regarding oppressive social conditions through what they learn and how they learn it. Ultimately, these pedagogies seek to empower students to understand their social positions, challenge oppressive conditions, and work toward changing them to create a more equitable society.

As much as possible, I apply these theories in my classroom through both pedagogy and curriculum. In terms of my pedagogy, I seek to understand and address why girls traditionally don't tend to succeed in math beyond middle school. In addition, I challenge the sense of “math phobia” by making sure that the math class is a space in which everyone can meaningfully contribute. I invite students to share in the creation of an inclusive space that values different perspectives and approaches. Students are encouraged to share their understanding and opinions on problem-solving, and to justify their methodology using logical reasoning. I also use journaling in math, which enables students to be definers and meaning-makers of math.

In terms of curriculum, I seek to foster a sense of critical numeracy in my students. We use math to understand current events, and think critically about the math we are given by the media. We think about how math is used to empower and disempower citizens. In addition, I challenge the perception that math has been produced entirely by Western genius; we consider the various different roots of mathematical ideas, such as the development of algebra, and we explore the often non-Western origins of many ideas touted as Western inventions. We also play non-Western mathematical games to redefine who can legitimately claim to be a mathematician and where math authentically happens. For their assignments, students apply their knowledge of mathematical concepts to understand social issues, such as using integers to understand climate change and graph analysis to learn about HIV/AIDS.

These are a few of the ways I incorporate feminist and critical pedagogies into my math classroom, and I am constantly working to expand my program to be more inclusive and critical, as I attempt to apply theoretical concepts into our shared learning experience.

EdGE Update

Update on EdGE's Afghanistan Project

Beth Alexander

In the summer of 2005, 9-year-old Jazmine read *The Breadwinner* by Deborah Ellis. Inspired to learn more about the barriers to education for girls, and to specifically help the girls of Afghanistan, she started **EdGE—Education for Girls Everywhere**. "I knew we couldn't fix all the reasons that girls were not able to go to school, but I wanted to do something to let these girls know we care."



EdGE quickly became one of the most popular clubs at Linden, with almost one in five students taking part. **EdGE** raised money and awareness in a number of ways: with an information booth

at community events, a joint benefit with the Toronto chapter of Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan, featuring human rights activist/journalist Sally Armstrong and another benefit featuring journalist/women's rights activist Michelle Landsberg and internationally acclaimed Afghan singer, Sima Tarana. Another highlight of **EdGE**'s campaign was an All School event in which students wrote letters to the Afghan government requesting that education become mandatory for girls. **EdGE** arranged to have Frozan Wahidi, who came to Canada after the Taliban barred girls from her high school, speak to the students at Linden about Afghan culture, her experiences in school in Afghanistan, and her impressions of life under the Taliban. **EdGE** held some lighter-themed events too. "I especially liked the school fundraisers, like Pizza Lunch Day," says Emma, an **EdGE** member in grade six. Jazmine also took the story of Afghan girls to the larger community, giving presentations for the High Park/Parkdale Rotary Club and other community organizations. In the end, **EdGE** raised more than \$5000 for the Abul Ahmad Jawid school in Kabul. This money was generously matched by **Canadian Women for Women in Afghanistan**, so we were able to make a donation of \$10,000 to improve school conditions and educational programs.

Originally, Jazmine and her team wanted to provide school-age girls in Afghanistan with basic supplies like pencils, school books and water bottles. Abul Ahmad Jawid school let us know that they were most in need of computer equipment, and **EdGE** members agreed to spend the money on computers—provided they could be assured that girls would get equal time using them. "We hoped that having computers would mean that later on the girls would have more chances to connect with others

outside of Afghanistan. We also hoped that computer skills would mean more job opportunities for the girls when they graduate," said Jazmine. In the spring of 2007, **CW4W** colleague Roya Rahmani and her assistant brought to our



sister school in Afghanistan, 18 new computers with software for the high school students and school bags for the younger students. The school staff and students were especially excited to receive the donation of computers, as the Ministry of Education had promised to hire a computer teacher for the school. Roya was instrumental in helping **EdGE** liaise with the school, and for making all the arrangements for the purchase and installation of the appropriate equipment. "We are so grateful to **CW4W in Afghanistan** for believing in our dream", says Jazmine. "It was wonderful to hear Roya's stories about getting the computers into the school, and hearing the reactions from the students. We can't thank you enough. We've learned so much from this experience."

The impact on *our* school was also significant. Pictures and stories from Afghanistan inspired our students to see that girls share the same hopes and dreams all over the world—and also outlined the disparity between school conditions in Canada and in countries that have been devastated by war. "It felt great to help girls who aren't as fortunate as us", says Alex, an **EdGE** member for the past 3 years. Part of our mission at The Linden School is to integrate themes of equity and justice into our programmes, and to inspire our students to become activists for change. Our club this year is larger than ever. "I love **EdGE**. I love helping girls all around the world," says Jillian, in grade six.

Thank you to The Linden School community for your invaluable support on this project!



Linden Graduate Receives Provincial Award

We have just been notified that Lidia Salvador, class of 2007, has earned a Queen Elizabeth II Aiming for the Top scholarship in recognition of her outstanding academic achievement in her final years at Linden. In addition to a rather lovely certificate, Lidia stands to receive as much as \$3500.00 per year for the next four years of her postsecondary education.

We are quite thrilled and pleased for Lidia, proud of her efforts, and of course deeply honoured to name her among our graduates.



Music at Linden – Fall 2007

Ian Guenther

Once again this year, Linden students are involved in a variety of musical activities.

I am teaching a strong grade 6/7/8 string ensemble. This group is preparing for the Festival of Lights in December and the Kiwanis Festival in late February 2008.



I've also started working with two beginner grade 5 classes. The younger students' enthusiasm for learning violin, viola and cello is a pleasure to experience every Wednesday afternoon.

I am very grateful to Jacquey Malcolm, Myfanwy's mom. She is a cello teacher and has volunteered to come in whenever her schedule permits to work with the cello players. It makes a very positive difference. Thank you Jacquey!

The Linden Band is well into weekly rehearsals again. The Linden Band will perform at the Festival of Lights and the Kiwanis Festival. However, we need more singers! Parents - especially parents of senior school students - consider encouraging your daughter to join the Linden School Band. The time commitment is minimal and we have lots of fun!

See you in December at the Festival of Lights.

Our Wish List:

Reading Books in English and French
HP Laser Printer that is compatible with DOS
Headphones
Board Games
VCR
Tripods
Cupboards for the kitchen
Kitchen appliances
"Canada: A People's History" DVD Set
Centrifuge
Spectrophotometer
Power Tools and Handheld Tools
Low maintenance perennials and bulbs for the roof garden

Update on Water Testing



As you may be aware, all schools have been required to test for lead in their water systems. We have had our water tested and the Ministry of the Environment and Public Health have informed us that our levels are well within the limits of safety. We will continue the Ministry's recommendation for daily flushing and will follow their future directives.

Admission Update:



Open Houses

November 9, 2007 and February 1, 2008
9:00 AM - 12:00 Noon
Co-Principals' Presentation at 9:30 AM

Admission Guidelines

Applications are invited for Grades 1 to 12.

Prospective families should:

- complete The Linden School application form with the non-refundable application fee.
- enclose copies of final school reports for the previous two years including any reports from the current year.
- request a teacher who has taught the applicant recently to complete and mail to us The Linden School's confidential reference form.

Applicant Interviews

Once the application form is received, we will contact you to arrange a school visit and interview, and schedule the academic assessment.

Academic Assessment

Students applying to Grades 4-12 are required to write The Linden School's academic assessment, February 22. Anyone applying after that date, may write the assessment on the same day as the admission interview, on weekdays, 9:00 AM - 12:00 noon.

Contact Information

Email: admissions@lindenschool.ca
Tel: 416-966-4406
Web: www.lindenschool.ca

Calendar of Events

For updates and permission forms, please visit:
www.lindenschool.ca

OCTOBER 2007

- 1 - 4 Week Without Walls
- 8 Thanksgiving (no classes)
- 10 TTC Photos (Gr 7 and up) 12:30 PM - 2:00 PM
- 18 Interim Report Cards (hand-delivered by students)
- 24 Faculty/Family conferences, 2:50 PM - 8:50 PM
- 25 Faculty/Family conferences, 3:00 PM - 6:00 PM

NOVEMBER 2007

- 9 Open House, 9:00 AM - 12:00 PM
- 16 Linden School Holiday (no classes)
- 29 The Linden School Annual Business Meeting

DECEMBER 2007

- 3 - 7 Grade 7-12 Midterms
- 18 Festival of Lights, 7:00 PM at Flora McCrae Auditorium, Timothy Eaton Memorial Church, St Clair Ave
- 19 Winter Holidays begin (to January 6)

JANUARY 2008

- 7 Winter Term Begins
- 16 Faculty & Family Conferences 2:50 - 9:00
- 24 Science & Technology Fair and Information Evening, 6:00-8:00 PM