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## President's Report

Mark Kunen, CCFA President

My term as president ends on August 31st. This is a time for me to reflect on the meaning of it all.

My priority has been to strengthen all CCFA members' sense of belonging within the Faculty Association. At the heart of my sense of what a union is – what the CCFA is – is the word, "collective." We live our individual lives and do our individual work while recognizing our connections and responsibilities to each other and the benefits and strength we each gain from these connections and this sharing of responsibilities. These responsibilities are well-expressed in the newly adopted Constitution and Code of Ethics. In essence, as the Code states, "We are helpful to each other."



Three events epitomize what I believe is the role and importance of the CCFA as a collective. In March, the executive hosted a lunch for new faculty members. We wanted to let the new employees know that the union is present for them from the word, go. Just yesterday, thanks to the PD Committee, the CCFA hosted workshops to assist members to prepare for retirement. The day before, the first CCFA SD Showcase took place, followed by a wine and cheese social. Five faculty members shared with colleagues the learning gained from their SD work. (Let's not forget that our SD entitlements resulted from positions taken and defended by the CCFA in bargaining.) Taken together, these events show the CCFA as a supportive presence for all members at the beginning and the end of their careers and all along the way. Sharing food added to the sense of community.

## CCFA Executive

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[Debbie Gascoyne](#), Chair, CMC  
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### CCFA Office:

[Erin Waugh](#), Admin Assistant  
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Community grows when everyone realizes that there are many ways to contribute. Too often, I've heard CCFA members refer to the Executive as the union, excluding themselves by implication. It is true that core union work is carried out by the Executive and the Standing Committees, but one need not be an activist to play a union role. Writing for the Confluence forges connections among members, as does responding to union surveys, attending meetings, asking questions, organizing social events, and making suggestions. A former bicycle-riding Camosun librarian, Phil Chiddell, used to be the go-to person for information about faculty exchanges. These exchanges have become more rare since he retired. Anyone want to take that on that role?

One of the most important ways for continuing faculty members to contribute is to ensure that the collective agreement is applied fairly, especially to term faculty members who may be leery of asserting their own rights.

Another key to a sense of belonging within a collective is the awareness that one's voice is heard and valued and that information flows freely throughout the organization. As president, together with the Executive, I've tried to increase opportunities for members to share their ideas with other members. I'm pleased with the number of people who have contributed to The Confluence this year. I would love to see our publication grow into a vibrant forum for sharing ideas,

interests, and discoveries. The number of people who responded to the CCFA's surveys was heartening. Results of the Surveys are available on the CCFA website. The idea for the Tuesday's SD Showcase grew out of survey responses seeking a greater CCFA focus on education.

Other ideas will undoubtedly arise from an Appreciative Inquiry workshop Erin Waugh will lead in September.

This past year, we posted Executive minutes on the CCFA website and invited members to observe Executive meetings. So far only one person has taken up the invitation to observe the Executive, but I hope that number will grow. In any case, whether people observe Executive meetings or not (there is better theatre) I hope the invitation is seen as a reaching out to the membership. Including in the Confluence reports from every CCFA member who participated in the FPSE AGM was another way to demystify Union activities. Finally, I continued the practice of previous presidents of regularly being available at the Interurban cafeteria to discuss CCFA matters. A little late, I realized that it makes sense to make the same offer to Lansdowne faculty members. At least one faculty member, and usually more, showed up to chat on every such occasion, and I always left with an improved understanding of matters of interest and concern to union members.

One was enough for me because I think we develop and improve the union one member at a time. It is for a reason that I address my messages to the members, "Hello everyone." As president I feel accountable to every CCFA member. I've seen the heart of my job to be communicating with and learning from the members. I'd like the CCFA to be the locus of an ongoing conversation that will shape the union to fit the values and dreams of the members. I think we took a few small steps in that direction this year.

I'm continually blown away by the knowledge, wisdom, and kindness of so many of the members of the CCFA. It's been a privilege and a joy to be your president again. I wish everyone a fine summer, whether you're working or on vacation.

See you around.

Mark

## *My SD Projects Connect the Classroom and the Outside World* Francis Adu-Febiri, Sociology

The main thesis of this short article on the role of SD in enhancing student learning inside and outside the classroom is that

*what I do outside the classroom with my SD opportunities is inspired by students' experiences with sociology in the classroom and transforms my pedagogy in the classroom.*

Students' questions and frustrations about the current conditions of our world--the issues of inequities, violence, environmental crises, graduate unemployment, poverty, etc—send me outside the classroom to look for answers. It is in this context that the support from the SD program and PD funding are vital. SD is a resource that facilitates my encounters with the Sociological Imagination, indigenous knowledge, communities, the poor, and globalization outside the classroom through research, conferences and field school. What I learn in these encounters transforms what I do in the classroom. Among other things, I have learned that

- Charles Wright Mills' (1959) Sociological Imagination concept affirms/confirms **what Indigenous Knowledge always knew:**
- **1. The source of poverty and inequities is the quality of social relationships:** Individuals and groups are poor and engage in the culture of poverty simply because historical and socio-structural relationships, operating through the conduit of "cheerful robots" (people who do not care deeply about the wellbeing of others), push them to the margins of the political economy.

- **2. Sustainable solutions** to the poverty and inequity challenges lie in transforming the conduit of the relationships between the political economy and the marginalized, particularly the poor. The transformed conduit is the networks of deeply caring and sharing people who support the initiatives of the poor and the marginalized to transform their connections to the political economy.

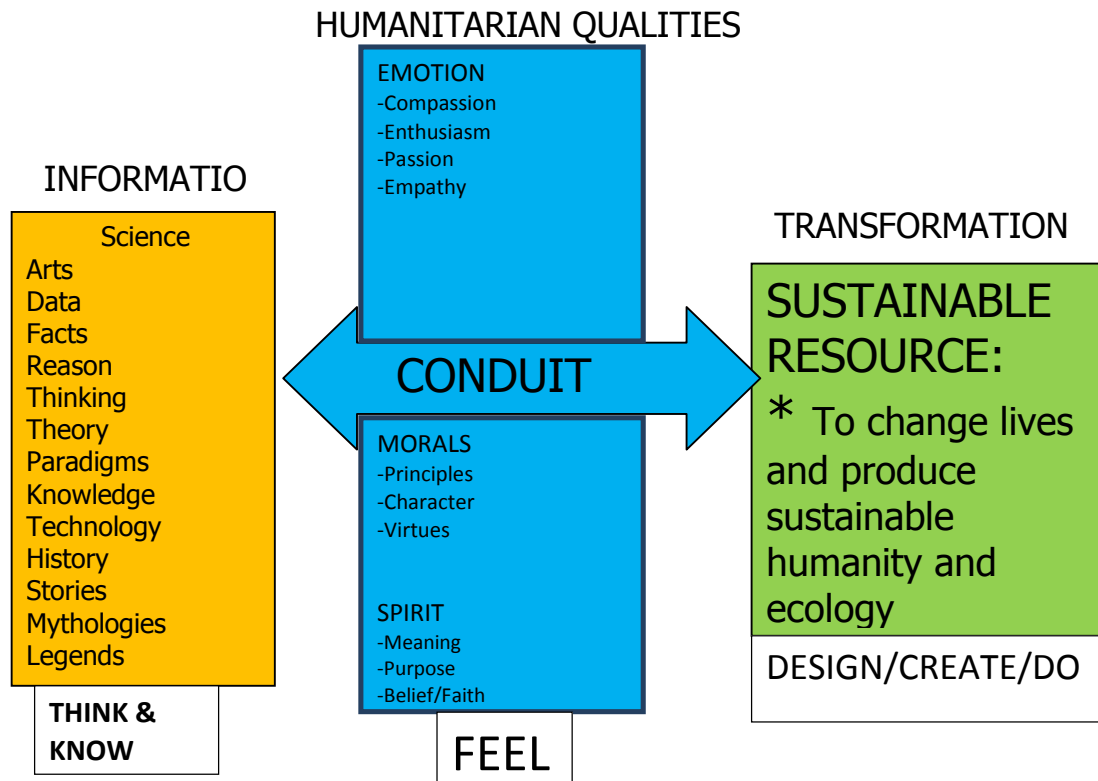
My search for practical ways to work with my students to co-create this conduit has led me to the discovery that

- What inspires these networks of people is what Indigenous African philosophy calls UBUNTU.
- These networks of people apply what the Human Factor Theory calls Human Factor Competency (HFC)

“Ubuntu means people are people through other people—‘*Umntu ngumntu ingabantu*’. Ubuntu acknowledges both the rights and responsibilities of every citizen in promoting individual and societal well-being” (Nelson Mandela). HFC constitutes peoples’ thinking and humanitarian abilities that inspire and facilitate their acquisition and application of appropriate resources to connect with our common humanity and the environment emotionally, morally and spiritually to make a sustainable difference in society (Adu-Febiri 2014).

This discovery has changed the way I organize and deliver my courses. My courses now focus on transformative education processes using the Human Factor Competency Education Model (HFCE). The HFCE model constitutes process, pedagogy and practice that are represented in the following diagrams—Figure 1, Figure 2, and Figure 3.

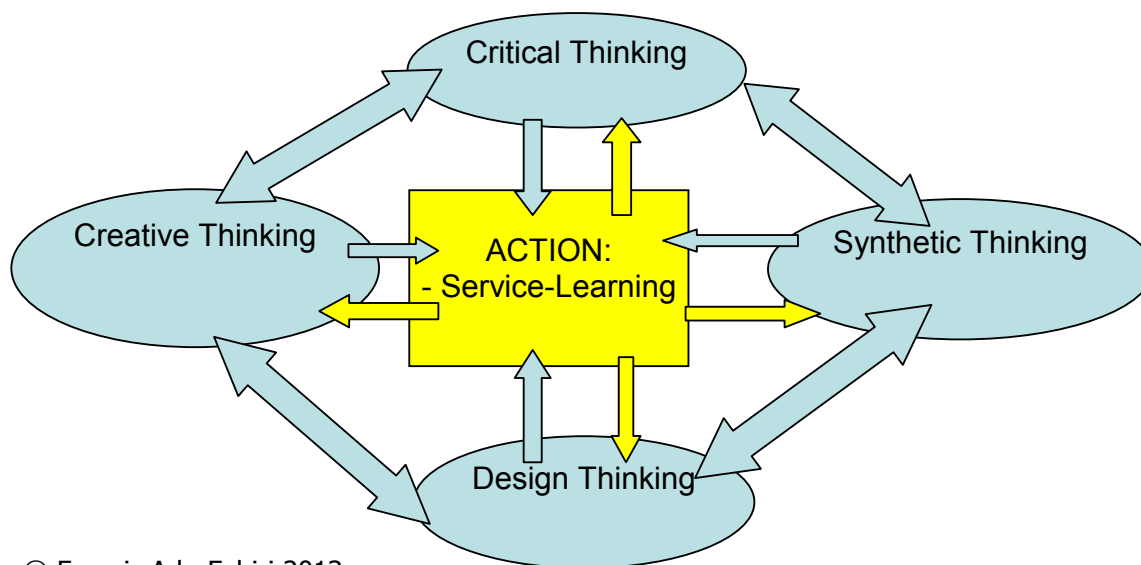
Figure 1. HUMAN FACTOR COMPETENCY EDUCATION: PROCESS



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In the context of this model, I design my course assignments and examinations to inspire students to transform information on sociological concepts, theories, and data into resources to make a difference in their lives, communities, and the world.

## Figure 2. HUMAN FACTOR COMPETENCY EDUCATION MODEL: PEDAGOGY



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Professor Kwame Anthony Appiah (2013) is right when he remarked in his talk on *Fragile Freedoms* broadcast on Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) radio that “Those of us who want to make the world safer for people to live lives of dignity have to do more than organize and act. We have to THINK! (CBC Radio One; SiriusXM ... Thursday, November 21, 2013: <http://www.cbc.ca/ideas/episodes/2013/11/21/fragile-freedoms---kwame-anthony-appiah/>). It is imperative for students in postcolonial African countries to learn how to think so that they can make life in Africa “safer for people to live lives of dignity” (ibid.). The pedagogy of the HFCE with its focus on integrative thinking system, as shown in the diagram above, can make a tremendous contribution toward this end.

According to Adu-Febiri (2014), in this pedagogical model there are four fundamental or primary thinking skills—synthetic thinking, critical thinking, creative thinking, and design thinking. There are also secondary thinking skills such as divergent thinking, conceptual thinking, analytical thinking, innovative thinking and others. The paper does not concentrate on the latter because they can be subsumed under the four primary classifications.

Synthetic thinking is the ability to process, connect and reproduce information. This type of thinking skills is easy to acquire. In fact, it is acquired by default in the education system. It is not surprising therefore that synthetic thinking exists in the postcolonial education system in Africa. The other three thinking skills—critical thinking, creative thinking, design thinking—are crucial because they provide the ability to transform information into a resource for transforming lives, families, communities, regions, countries, and/or the world. Critical thinking is about the ability to assess or evaluate situations, issues, communication, books, articles, technology, policies, programs, projects, organizations, systems, communities, societies, countries, and/or the world to identify their substantive flaws or gaps or missing links or problems or what improvements are

necessary. Creative thinking is about coming up with “original ideas that have value” (Robinson, 2008), that is, ideas that could be used to resolve flaws, fill gaps, provide missing links, problem-solve, and/or provide improvements. Design thinking skills help create plans, source resources, and coordinate tasks to implement construction, culture, political economy, human agency, and the human factor as well as sociological paradigms of functionalism, social conflict, interactionism, feminism, and structuration. In addition, students have put their humanitarian qualities into practice and possibly developed deep connections with our common humanity.

## CONCLUSION:

The CCFA’s SD program is relevant, useful and impactful because it connects the classroom and the outside world. It provides opportunities for me to transform my pedagogy, change the lives of my Camosun students and the lives of people locally and globally.

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## Progress National Tour

Mark Kunen, President



### Harry Leslie Smith: The Politics of Age, Compassion, and Hope

Imagine you are Harry Leslie Smith. You are 92 years old. You were born into severe poverty at a time Britain provided little or no social safety net. Your father was a Yorkshire coal miner whose wages could not pay for the medical care that might have saved your sister Marion from dying of tuberculosis. Yet, you defended your country

by joining the RAF to fight the Germans in WWII. Later you recognized the humanity of Germans, especially of his wife-to-be Friede, while stationed in their country during post-war occupation. You immigrated to Canada in 1953 and found that country to be dedicated, however imperfectly, to equality, inclusion, democracy, and merit. Ontario, with a government that was investing millions in public services at that time stood out to you as a veritable social democracy.

You thrived in Canada. You had three sons and ran a successful business. You admired the country’s social democratic practices, especially its universal medical care and its high quality and affordable post secondary education system. Knowing the horrors of war, you were proud of your adopted country’s well-earned reputation

as an international peace keeper. This was a country to be trusted—until everything began to unravel. Social safety nets and personal freedoms are eroding, the overheated earth plays havoc with climate, and your nation is at war for no good reason, you believe. What do you do? You could be forgiven for concluding that you've done enough. The future is not your problem. You deserve a rest.

Harry Leslie Smith has made another choice. The author of several books, including Harry's Last Stand: How the World My Generation Built is Falling Down, and What We Can Do to Save It. Mr. Smith is dedicating the rest of his life to trying to revitalize adherence to social justice in his adopted country. He also writes for The Guardian. He is the featured speaker in the Broadbent Institute's awkwardly named but progressively-driven Progress National Tour. At 92, Mr. Smith is not raging against the dying of the light but speaking calmly and rationally in a sustained effort to bring about a new dawn of democracy, equality, and sustainability. At the tour's opening in Victoria on June 18th, sponsored in part by FPSE and the CCFA, Mr. Smith urged the near-capacity audience at the Belfry Theatre to "not despair. It is within us to build a better country. We must demand more of government and ourselves." He described himself as a "relentless optimist," a phrase I love.

The Broadbent Institute is a non-partisan (not non-political) organization, and neither Mr. Smith nor the other speakers attempted to instruct the audience on who to vote for in the approaching federal election. Harry Smith, however, did not stint on advice on who not to vote for. His generally civil and calm tone heated up whenever he mentioned Stephen Harper. He regards the current federal government as a "catastrophe in the making" with its indifference to the environment, its "contempt for First Nations," disdain for veterans, erosion of education, reduced commitment to health care, and appetite for military adventures which Smith believes are none of our business. He no longer wears a poppy on Remembrance Day because he believes the poppy is being used to promote current military conflicts.

Hanging over the whole debacle, Smith believes, is Bill C-51, which is now law and which Smith, along with many others, believes poses a serious threat to freedoms essential to a democracy: freedom of speech and the rights to free assembly and to public protest. Smith stated the culprits to be "the elite and their politicians," Harper foremost among them.

Smith is not running for office, and he did not lay out a detailed plan for reversing the corrosive governmental and societal trends that so alarm him. He did call for higher taxes on corporations, a livable minimum wage, and a

return to affordable post-secondary education. The heart of his speech was a plea to Canadians to think hard about the kind of country they want to leave for their children and grandchildren and grandchildren's grandchildren and to then vote accordingly at every opportunity. The core message of the evening from all speakers was to do everything possible to galvanize the progressive electorate for the federal election. Each person must do what he or she can. Buddy up for the vote. Run shuttle service to the polls. Find people who would not vote without your help. It all makes a difference.

Smith's address was followed by brief presentations by three panelists, each of whom expanded on a theme mentioned by Smith. Laurel Collins, an instructor in the Social Justice Studies program at UVic, focused on the perils of Bill C-51. She believes that some of its language threatens Charter-protected freedoms, especially for Muslims and aboriginal and environmental activists. She also cited inhibitory effects on sharing of information and bemoaned the lack of sufficient governmental oversight in the Bill's provisions. She looks to a government that will repeal the Bill.

Sharon Gregson, a spokesperson for the \$10 a Day Child Care Campaign, emphasized how central affordable day care is to combatting poverty and lack of social opportunity, while Zoe Macillan, a legal advocate explained the work of TAP, the Together Against Poverty organization. The moderator was Janni Aragon, the Director of Technology Integrated Learning at UVic. Mr. Smith also took part in the panel and expanded on his earlier remarks.

The core of the message of evening was that the people of Canada have an opportunity in the next election to reverse the trend towards a society that values corporations over individuals and communities and to reposition the country on a foundation of fairness, social justice, equality of opportunity, respect for Aboriginal peoples, and love of the environment. Smith stated that his last stand will be at the ballot box. He and the other speakers will be there in October to vote for progressive candidates. They hope to be overwhelmed by the volume of company of like-minded people.

Harry Leslie Smith will remain in my memory as reminder and an exemplar of the truth that democracy demands citizens, one by one, to act as though the state and future of their country is their responsibility. I was proud that the CCFA supported forum that conveyed that message. Such support is consistent with the new provision in the CCFA Constitution calling the union to foster principles of social justice and sustainability in the local and global communities.

This past weekend, I spent the better part of 24 hours out at the Westshore Velodrome (it's ALWAYS about cycling with me, isn't it?) watching an event in which my son was competing. Racing started at 10am Saturday and went all day, both days. There were about 60 racers all told – the youngest was 8, the oldest...I don't know, let's say: 50.

My John has had a pretty good year so far: he competed for and won a spot on Team Canada's Junior Men's Pursuit Team, and will be travelling to Kazakhstan in August to race in the UCI Juniors Track World Championships. It's an exciting time for him, and this past weekend he was entered to race for the first time in the Elite Men's category. I don't get much opportunity to watch him race anymore so I thought I'd help out and spend the weekend soaking in (what I believe) is a pretty exciting sport.

Part of John's "work" as a cyclist has also been volunteering in a program called FastTrack – young aspiring racers learn to ride and race on the track with the help of one of the most amazing coaches I've seen: Kurt Innes, who sometimes teaches in our CSEE programs and is the Director of Talent Development at the Canadian Sport Institute Pacific. When he can, John helps out with the kids at FastTrack, so he's pretty well known to the up-and-coming racers (and their parents) here in Victoria.

I was helping out with the event, and all day Saturday I saw firsthand the influence my son has had on the younger racers. The chatter about him was astounding. The kids were talking about his technique, his abilities, how funny he is. The parents were talking about John being a good role model, his success, how much fun their kids have when he is helping out with their program. Mostly, this chatter was happening around me, not to me. I felt pleased that he is seen for the kind and generous person I believe he is.

At one point, I was walking with a friend who exclaimed as John finished his pursuit "Man, John is a MACHINE!" In response, some woman I had never seen before yelled to us, "THAT'S why HE'S going to Worlds!", as though she had some part of his accomplishment. I bristled: she wasn't shouting to me about my son; she was telling me about *John Willcox*. She clearly hadn't any idea who I was, and so she took it upon herself to *educate* me about

him. It was fascinating to experience the other side of the equation: I can remember making comments about older athletes when John's sport was swimming. We didn't really know them, but held them up for our children as role models – their work ethic something we wanted the kids to aspire to. We marvelled among ourselves at their talent and success, and talked about their journey through sport: "Oh, he won nationals", "is going to the Olympics", got a scholarship to the University of Boulder"... It was something we talked about while we watched the kids swim. We wondered if our kids would ever be that good, dedicated, and lucky. I now wonder if their parents bristled at our comments about their children as I did in that moment when a stranger shared with me my son's accomplishment. It wasn't that I didn't like hearing about how people see him; it was that I heard a tone of ownership and my inner Mama Bear stood up and wanted to take a swing.



Later in the day I was at the results table helping out when the woman running the computer started talking to me about John: "John is such a nice kid, he's always so helpful with the younger riders," said she. I responded with my customary, "Ya, he's pretty great," (because, I think he is pretty great.) She turned to me and said, "Oh! How do you know John?" My response: "Ah...he's my son." She was surprised and a little confused – she observed that I don't react so much while he is racing so it's not that obvious. I agreed – I usually watch my son race with silent trepidation. He can't hear me cheer anyway, so what's the point?

I find myself in new territory with my children – I'm no longer a part of their activities and the parent community that forms around those activities. I didn't really even notice it happening, but found myself watching a weekend of racing and didn't really know many of the people around me. There was a time when I knew them all: kids, parents, coaches. Now, I'm not even 'John's Mom' – I'm the woman watching silently as my son makes his mark. I show up when it works for me, help when I can, and watch him lead by example. It's a pretty great view, but I think it is going to take some getting used to.

中  
國  
和  
我

Zhōngguó hé wǒ<sup>1</sup>

寫  
的  
白  
雲

(Xiě de báiyún<sup>2</sup>)

**“It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it season of Darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair, we had everything before us, we had nothing before us, we were all going direct to Heaven, we were all going direct the other way...”<sup>3</sup>**

In 2011 I suddenly found myself retired from Camosun College and living in China. How this came about is another story that involves decisions at the college that I could not tolerate, but that is for another day, if at all.

The above quote could almost be applied to that story too, but as promised, another day. I've included a few Chinese characters as the title to this piece in part as reference to one of my major activities in the Peoples' Republic, the study of Chinese calligraphy and painting. I had been interested in Chinese poetry and painting since the early 70's but now I had the opportunity to study them at their source, in a Chinese elementary school.

Once a week for most of three years I walked and took a train and walked some more to one of the elementary schools run by [Maple Leaf Educational Systems](#). I was living in China, an hour by train outside of Dalian, because my wife, Dawn Sutherland, had taken a job as Vice President of Maple Leaf. Maple Leaf is a large, private school system that owns and operates more than thirty schools in China. Seven of these schools are essentially B.C. high schools that teach the B.C. high school curriculum plus the Chinese curriculum so that graduates are awarded a Chinese high school diploma and the B.C. Certificate of Graduation or “Dogwood Diploma” that facilitates their applications to North American and European colleges and universities. Fortunately for me, one of the elementary schools was only an hour away from our apartment, had a calligraphy and art program, and two teachers who were willing to allow a retired psychologist to sit in on one of their classes, usually about grade three, and give me some private assistance in their spares. My first teacher was Mr. Wei and when he moved to the Maple Leaf school in Luoyang, Mr. Li. Both were very generous and patient with a student who spoke very little Mandarin. For most lessons I had friend/translator in YanLin (Annie), a curriculum designer and teacher for Maple Leaf.

One of the first things I noticed about China was that it is different than Canada. This should be obvious to anyone paying attention as they walk off the plane, but it is not a lesson easily remembered and the consequences of forgetting it are many and varied. Oh, so many examples. Getting on a Skytrain in Vancouver is an orderly, essentially civil experience. The cars are never crowded, by Asian standards, and almost everyone waiting to get on a car waits for people to exit

<sup>1</sup> China (Centre Country) and I (me).

<sup>2</sup> “Written by Bai Yun” or White Cloud, the Chinese name for John Conklin.

<sup>3</sup> [https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/A\\_Tale\\_of\\_Two\\_Cities](https://en.wikiquote.org/wiki/A_Tale_of_Two_Cities)

before they enter. Not so in China with the exception of Beijing as long as each door has a monitor. Out in Jinshitan, where we lived it was a daily battle to get on or off a Qinggui<sup>4</sup> light rail car. People would line up shoulder to shoulder and discuss tactics, as they were about to exit. People waiting to get on would line up shoulder to shoulder and discuss tactics, as they were waiting for the cars to arrive. Then the battle would begin and often, at our stop, an interesting phenomenon would occur. A lone Canadian would decide that this was the time to reform Chinese history and behaviour, not through example, a clearly futile strategy, but through exhortation accompanied by yelling, in English, of course, because they had clearly forgotten where they were. Occasionally, these sacrifices to the gods of futility would take the form of asserting their rights through aggressive pushing on, or off, which was fascinating because this was the behaviour they were trying to do away with.

Canadian teachers find it difficult to work on weekends, to clean their own classrooms, to hire their own nurses and find their own food when in the hospital, etc. but these are all natural events in Chinese culture. Many of the problems of running a mostly Canadian school in China derive from forgetting that you are living in a complex culture, thousands of years older than the one you grew up in, with its own language, history, beliefs, assumptions, and implicit rules.

The nature of family is another example. Should I ever meet someone with last name of Conklin I would be interested and we would try briefly to look for connections, but likely neither of us would have much information beyond a generation or two. I once saw my friend and translator Annie meet a new teacher at our school with the same family name. They clearly treated each other as cousins or brother and sister from the start. Then they sat down at a computer and went into the family web site where they traced each other's family roots back to the wife of Confucius, in the process establishing which branch of the family has more status so they could then adjust their use of language with each other. Would Annie subsequently call her newly found relative "younger brother" or "older brother?"

This also illustrates how language is used to stratify relations in a way that English, at least Canadian English, has not done for many decades. It also implies that ultimately almost every Chinese person is related to every other Chinese person, and they are almost all first nations people. As I observed Chinese society and customs I used to imagine what Canada would be like if it were a first nations society with traditions, customs and languages linked to 20,000 years of history.

My lessons in calligraphy involved a good deal of attempted translation. I say attempted because I became increasingly convinced that it is simply not possible to translate Chinese into English with any degree of certainty. In part this is because Chinese, the language and culture, doesn't really recognize or value certainty. English is designed to try to forge certainty. Chinese is designed to forge ambiguity. One of the most frustrating aspects of living in China, for Canadians, is the daily frustration with this lack of certainty, the valuing of uncertainty, and attempts to eschew certainty. Typically I would choose a Chinese poem to work on in calligraphy class. I would then try to translate it character by character comparing it with other translations. Early on in my instruction I came across the following website<sup>5</sup> which has 56 translations of one poem by Tu (Du) Fu. My translation made 57 and the translation of my friend at Hong Kong University made 58. Many of these translations are certainly close, but many carry quite different meanings and tones in English. Part of Dawn's job in China was to take English translations of Chinese speeches and policies for the school system and try to reformulate them into English from which a contemporary Canadian might derive some meaning. At times I assisted in this process and there were sections that seemed to go through 56 attempts. Chinese is just different. Chinese prose, poetry, calligraphy, and painting hint at ideas and feelings. They reference the past in images, similes, and metaphors and draw an abstract of a set of ideas and feelings that invite the reader, listener, or viewer to participate in a very fluid reality. Chinese has no tenses, no modal verbs, and no articles. Most of the information that an English speaker would derive from these must be constructed from context or hints in Chinese. I think this is why much Chinese business used to be done -I guess still is done in many cases- in a state of drunkenness, a very fluid state of reality.

Clearly the earth is entering a phase of scarcity. We have pushed it beyond its caring capacity with regard to water, food, housing, etc. One of the reasons that China is emerging as the world's most dominant societies is that they have been at this impasse many times before in their last ten thousand years of civilization and development. This is not to say that they have ever elegantly forged their way through an environmental disaster caused by human activity, but at least they have survived. An interesting book about such an event is Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom<sup>6</sup>, about a civil war in China

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<sup>4</sup> 輕軌

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.chinapage.com/poem/dufu/chunwang.html>

<sup>6</sup> Platt, Stephen R. (2012). Autumn in the Heavenly Kingdom. Toronto: Alfred A. Knopf

in the middle of the 19<sup>th</sup> century which left, it is estimated, 100 million dead and a huge swath of the Yangtze river basin barren of life. A great deal of Chinese painting, poetry, and calligraphy is devoted to artists' attempts to escape the chaos of war and environmental devastation caused by human activity. Built into the Chinese Zeitgeist is an intuitive sense of competition, of imminent catastrophe and the need for families and close friends to shelter and protect each other. No one is going to help you get a seat on the qingqui (light rail car) except your family and your new platform allies who will abandon you as soon as they spot a seat for themselves. The Communist Party in China is essentially a very large mutual aid society. Many companies attempt to run this way also. Sacrificing weekends and holidays for the Party, or the company, or the family is expected, assumed and many Westerners find these assumptions very disconcerting.

This same sense of need to protect and foster children from the chaos that is always just around the Chinese corner is what drives Chinese education also. Especially with small families it is necessary for one's children to be as well educated as possible. And "well educated" means having a degree with sufficient status to get you a very well paying job so you can contribute to the general fortunes of the family. Since at least 500 BCE, there has been a dynamic interaction in Chinese society among Buddhism, Taoism, Confucianism, and various local and regional "isms." For me, one of the most fascinating discoveries was the overlap between modern humanistic psychology and certain ideas of Kong Fuzi<sup>7</sup> (Confucius) and how they play out in post Cultural Revolution China. Both systems take it as given that children have great potential for growth and development. Within humanistic psychology it is assumed that each child has basic potentials and if the family and school system can adapt to each individual child their unique talents and potentials can be fostered and developed. A Confucian child, on the other hand, is seen to have unlimited potential artistically, intellectually, or physically. It is the task of the family and school system to foster "effort" within the child to develop all of these potentials. Effort, on the part of the child, is all that is really required for them to be brilliant musicians, dancers, mathematicians, poets, etc. A failure on the part of the child to put in enough effort is, in part, a reflection on the family, but ultimately is a failure on the part of the child. It is logical then to use corporal punishment on children for failing to put in the requisite effort. One day an administrator of one of the schools arrived at a school to find a number of middle schools students being shamed by being forced to stand in a field outside the school grounds, something that, along with hitting children, is allowed in state schools but not in Maple Leaf Schools. One of the most difficult concepts for many Chinese parents and Chinese teachers who have recently moved to Maple Leaf schools is this insistence that children be neither beaten nor humiliated when their efforts fall short of the expectations of parents and teachers. I once listened to a very well meaning Canadian teacher try to explain this to a Chinese couple. The message clearly did not compute for the Chinese couple, and it was not a language problem; it was a lack of overlap of cultural assumptions.

Chinese paintings and poems are filled with references to nature. I just viewed an exhibit of 500 years of Italian painting at the Vancouver Art Gallery.<sup>8</sup> Having seen many examples of Chinese painting that date from similar and significantly earlier times in books and galleries in China I was taken by how much more developed Chinese art was in its depiction and intuitive feel, perhaps sympathetic identification, with nature. One of my favourites is Ni Zan<sup>9</sup> (倪瓚) who captures mountains, water, and trees in a way that transports me into the scene, and yet his style, from the late Yuan<sup>10</sup>, is almost impressionistic. In addition, his calligraphy is inspirational in its precision and beauty. And yet, China is currently one of the world leaders in environmental destruction. Almost every expat working in China has an app that warns them when the air pollution has reached dangerous levels. When we returned to China after a visit to Canada we always took baby formula to the staff who had or were expecting babies because very few people in China trust Chinese made baby formula or milk for that matter. The government of China is so powerful that they could make the country a model of environmental responsibility if they chose to do so. We observed one small example of this one weekend.

One of the first things you learn, if you want to survive long, when arriving in China is that traffic laws are rarely obeyed and enforcement is generally minimal. Red lights mean little and crosswalks mean absolutely nothing. I was chased out of a crosswalk early in my tenure in China by a semi-truck using it to make a u-turn. You could say this is true of most laws, especially environmental protection laws, except certain laws that forbid criticizing the government. And yet, one day, literally overnight, in our region, safety belt laws, speed limits, and traffic light rules were suddenly enforced and for the

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<sup>7</sup> Kong Fuzi (孔夫子 Kǒng Fūzǐ, literally "Master Kong" <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Confucius>)

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/the\\_exhibitions/current\\_exhibitions.html](https://www.vanartgallery.bc.ca/the_exhibitions/current_exhibitions.html)

<sup>9</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ni\\_Zan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ni_Zan)

<sup>10</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuan\\_dynasty](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Yuan_dynasty)

most part obeyed. This was a coordinated effort and apparently happened in many provinces at the same time. So there is a certain residual ability to enforce laws and policies that are deemed important. "The best of times, the worst of times." Mountains have been traditionally almost sacred in China,<sup>11</sup> but while we were there it was announced that in order to build a new city, Lanzhou New Area, 700 mountains would be levelled<sup>12</sup>. Several mountains near our apartment were levelled and moved to fill in a bay just before we arrived in China. Several times we visited small villages with small farms. These are farms that are worked with mules and oxen. In small Chinese villages typically a village elder remembers the boundaries between farms as there is no paper work left after the Cultural Revolution. And yet every farmer knew about pesticides and herbicides. They grew all their food, for their own consumption, completely organically. Many Communist Party buildings that we saw had organic gardens growing around them to feed officials organic food. And yet all large-scale farming is done with heavy doses of pesticides and poisons. The knowledge is there, the understanding of the issues is there, but greed often triumphs. Of course we have to keep in mind that the governments of Canada and B.C. is willing to destroy whole rivers and watersheds to clear-cut logging, LNG, and tar sands development so this is not behaviour unique to China, but the scale is unprecedented and the links to Chinese demands for energy and natural resources need to be considered. What potential for environmental respect resides in Chinese history, culture, and law! What a disaster the current Chinese environmental reality is!

It is truly beginning to feel like the Chinese century. This could be a very, very good thing, or it could be a very, very bad thing. Its hard to see how a world with China at the helm could be any worse than a world with U.S. at the helm, but it could be, for no other reason than sheer size. There are many Chinese and they need a great deal of food, water, land, and energy. And yet, the U.S. has devolved into chaos and lawlessness and China hasn't. So far the Chinese seem to be holding the centre together, which means if they decide to try to save the environment, to reduce the gap between rich and poor, etc. they might have a shot at it. U.S. rhetoric values an ever expanding gap between rich and poor; Chinese rhetoric at least suggests that economic and social equality is still a goal. China is still ostensibly a communist/socialist state. They have historical, artistic, and philosophical precedents to draw from should they choose to do so. One obstacle they have to contend with is the on-going effects of the Cultural Revolution<sup>13</sup>. I think it was much more "successful" than most westerners or even Chinese realize. Take Buddhism for example. China had a very long history of Buddhist influence in politics, the environment, and culture in general. One of the goals of the Cultural Revolution was the attempt to erase from memory the ideas behind Buddhism, Taoism, even Confucianism. I met many people in China who were interested in Buddhism, even considered themselves to be Buddhist, but very few who had any sense of what it is actually about. I saw way too many people "praying" at Buddhist temples for money. The vast majority of Chinese have been educated that all religion or philosophy is useless in the light of the need to conquer nature, make money, and "develop" the economy. Zhou EnLai is almost universally revered in China, but very few know that he was a Chan (Zen) Buddhist who worked hard throughout the Cultural Revolution to protect Buddhists and Buddhist centres from destruction. He had the Lama Temple in Beijing filled with grain to protect it from destruction and always had a copy of the Heart Sutra in his possession. If China is to be the leader that the world needs, a leader that protects the poor and the environment, then they have a great deal of remembering, or re-inventing, to do. They have the best of tools and the worst of tools at their disposal.

We are often asked if we miss China now that we have move back to Vancouver and Victoria. I always stumble over this question because I do miss certain things, especially people, and yet life in China is difficult especially for someone raised outside. So many people were so lovely to us. I loved it when we were in a village or section of Beijing or Chongqing where very few Westerners had been seen and a grandmother would bring a young child up to touch my white beard. Places exist, we were told, where it is not safe to go in either Beijing or Dalian, but I never experienced any sense of danger as I roamed Chinese cities. I did fear much of the food and the air in many places. Many Chinese people feel the same, but there is an amazing sense of optimism, of things getting better that comes through in daily conversation. The best of times and the worst of times. The best of futures and the worst of futures. We, and our children, will see.

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<sup>11</sup> <http://www.mountainsongs.net/mountain.php>

<sup>12</sup> <http://newsfeed.time.com/2012/12/08/china-to-flatten-700-mountains-to-build-a-city/>

<sup>13</sup> <http://www.history.com/topics/cultural-revolution>

1. The 2014 – 2019 CCFA Collective Agreement is now in effect. Initially, the changes made to the 2012- 2014 agreement will be posted tomorrow on the CCFA web site. It is in the interest of all members to become familiar with the new provisions, starting with changes to Clauses 21.01 (Grievance procedure) and changes to the benefit plans. Anything not changed in the old agreement remains in effect. Printed and electronic copies of the whole new agreement will be prepared over the summer, and the first salary increase is expected in August, retroactive to April 1st of this year.
  2. Also in effect is the new CCFA Emergency Bursary Fund, approved by the membership at the February general meeting. The CCFA will donate \$1000 annually to this fund to assist students facing financial emergencies. The fund is also open to individual donations, which are tax deductible. The fund is administered by the Financial Aid office. Student applicants will be self-selected or referred by faculty or staff members. All students except those in CE courses are eligible. The maximum donation per student is \$200. The definition of emergency is the one used by financial aid. One possible use is to assist students with the \$175 tuition deposit. The CCFA's donation for 2014/2015 is ready for use, so faculty members working this summer can be on the lookout for students in need. The 2015/2016 donation is due in September. Funds not used in one year will be carried forward to the next.
  3. ETEA Local 10 union is on strike in Vancouver. The local is part of FPSE Local 21, the Private Sector Faculty and Staff Association. The striking local is seeking a first contract for ESL teachers at four private language schools. The employer has not backed off of a proposed six-step scale on which the faculty members would not reach the stop step for 15 years. The striking employees are receiving strike pay from FPSE. I have sent a message of support to Kevin Drager, the president of Local 21.
  4. The first SD Showcase, sponsored by the Executive on June 22nd was well-received by the 22 faculty members who attended. Thank you to Nicole Kilburn, Francis Adu-Febiri (see article in this issue), Martha McAlister, and Bob Sedlock for their well-prepared and thought and feeling provoking presentations. Nicole reported on the integration of foodways, landscapes, and social structures in southern Italy. Francis discussed the essential role of transformative social interaction and relationships in confronting poverty. Martha McCalister presented findings and implications from her doctoral research on, "Dissonance and Resonance in a Community of Practice," and Bob Sedlock sent sparks flying with his demonstration of the Tesla coil, noting that resonance plays a role in electricity as well as in community practice. Thanks also to Jody Isaac who demonstrated her SD project in real time by using the Graphic Record modality to represent on paper Nicole's presentation. At the social following the showcase, ideas were arising for the next one. I hope these opportunities to learn from each other will become regular events.
  5. Pre-retirement workshops presented yesterday by the Association of British Columbia College Pension Plan Retirees to over 20 CCFA members. Comments from the participants indicate the sessions were of great value. The workshops will be repeated in late August. Please contact Erin Waugh if you'd like to enroll.
  6. On behalf of the CCFA I spoke briefly at the farewell gathering for Peter Lockie to honour his service at the College as Chief Financial Officer and Interim President.
  7. The Executive agreed to a 2010-2014 Collective Agreement with CUPE 1004, the office staff union which provides salary increases commensurate with the CCFA's increases over that period. Discussions are underway in preparation for collective bargaining to achieve an agreement retroactive to April 1, 2014.
- In conclusion, I want to thank all executive members for their hard work and good ideas in the course of the year. Special thanks to Debbie Gascoyne, Tom Rippon and Paula Young who, like me, are leaving the Executive. Also, I feel boundless gratitude to Erin Waugh and Peg Ford for their extensive knowledge and invaluable work, their generous spirits, and all their smiles and laughter.

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