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Gender, Class and Curriculum at W.D. Lowe Technical Secondary School, 1923 – 1973: A Study in Continuity and Change

By

Kael R. Sharman

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Faculty of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for
the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy at the
University of Windsor
Windsor, Ontario, Canada
2014

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Gender Class and Curriculum at W.D. Lowe Technical Secondary School, 1923 – 1973:
A Study in Continuity and Change

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Author's Declaration of Originality

I hereby certify that I am the sole author of this dissertation and that no part of this dissertation has been published or submitted for publication.

I certify that, to the best of my knowledge, my dissertation does not infringe upon anyone's copyright nor violate any proprietary rights and that any ideas, techniques, quotations, or any other material from the work of other people included in my dissertation, published or otherwise, are fully acknowledged in accordance with the standard referencing practices. Furthermore, to the extent that I have included copyrighted material that surpasses the bounds of fair dealing within the meaning of the Canada Copyright Act, I certify that I have obtained a written permission from the copyright owner(s) to include such material(s) in my dissertation and have included copies of such copyright clearances to my appendix.

I declare that this is a true copy of my dissertation, including any final revisions, as approved by my dissertation committee and the Graduate Studies office, and that this dissertation has not been submitted for a higher degree to any other University or Institution.

Abstract

In June 1973, a series of contextual changes took their toll, ending the means by which W.D. Lowe Technical School (WDLTS, previously called Windsor-Walkerville Technical School) enriched Windsor's students for 50 years, marking the end of a unique kind of academic performance. Its story punctuated with external influences compounding to create a school culturally earmarked with the moniker 'Lowe Tech'. However, while historical aspects of policy, attitudes, and pragmatic foci of technical schools have changed, the particular approach WDLTS had in building the technical and creative capacities of students have yet to be investigated. WDLTS offers compelling insights into the negotiated identity of technical education in reaction to the ebb and flow of funding, the local economy, school leadership and the recruitment and makeup of the student population. While macro elements such as legislative change and social context provide the backdrop for this investigation, the purpose of this study is to qualitatively examine one school at specific junctures in its history. This analysis will aid in a better understanding of how stand-alone technical schools changed and how those changes influenced students. This historical analysis, like other case studies, is important to situate the complex social dynamics that continue to affect the growth and development of educational opportunities for students who attend specialized schools serving marginalized students today.

Dedication

I dedicate my dissertation work to my biggest supporter, my daughter, Tessa Marie Sharman. Her inspiration, sacrifice, and support have made this dissertation possible. I am eternally grateful for the guidance, patience, and kindness that my advisor has shown me. For more than twelve years Dr. Larry Glassford has been for me not only an excellent teacher, but also a mentor. I also dedicate this dissertation to my family, who have supported me throughout the process. I give special thanks to my best friend and partner, Theo Hummer. Thank you for your hours of proofreading. You have not only made this dissertation possible, you also made it fun, and for that, I absolutely adore you.

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It has been an honour to have had such a wonderful committee; your hours of reading, thoughtful feedback, and patience are an inspiration.

I want to especially thank Gayle Tait and Tanya Brogan. All of your help with the tedious details and words of encouragement have helped me out so much along the way.

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List of Abbreviations, Symbols, Nomenclature

WWTS - Windsor Walkerville Technical School

WWVS -Windsor Walkerville Vocational School

WDLVS -W.D. Lowe Vocational School

WDLTS -W.D. Lowe Technical School

CAAT- Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology

TVTAA - Technical & Vocational Training Assistance Act

Chapter 1: Situating an Historical Inquiry of WDLTS within Social, Political, Cultural and Theoretical Contexts and within the Body of Literature

> *One's gender or social origin was not always a clear predictor of behaviour. That Canadians of all varieties could favour and fear educational change, admire and admonish educational authorities was as true in the past as it is in the present. That officials and teachers could be both insightful and incompetent—and everything in between—was, and is, equally evident. Historians who are able to paint both the broad canvas (social structure) and the individual portraits (human experiences and responses) will especially advance the historiographical art, as will those scholars who are best able to hear their subjects in their own voices in their own times.* -Paul Axelrod[1]

As Windsor, Ontario, emerged as an automotive production centre in the early twentieth-century, technical secondary education was openly embraced by the community. W.D. Lowe Technical School (WDLTS) began as Windsor Walkerville Technical School (WWTS) in 1923 to meet the growing demand for skilled workers in specialized parts production for the automotive industry. The founder of technical secondary education in Windsor, F.P. Gavin, proposed that a day school would also be a preventative measure to correct deficits reflected in the increasing numbers of adults attending night school. The name of the school changed four times in the course of its fifty-year history, an indicator of adaptations the school made to its function, purpose, and meaning in the community. The social, political, and economic contexts are identified as influencing factors in the school's establishment, name changes, curriculum, and eventual closure. This study is an analysis of how and why WDLTS changed during the course of its history. The effects the changing context had on WDLTS over a fifty-year period provide insight into why this well-supported stand-alone technical school was closed, yet other stand-alone vocational schools remained.

Statement of the Problem

Hierarchies of social power have been institutionalized through the creation of secondary schools and curriculum associated with select populations of students. Technical

schools are generally associated with working-class jobs and skills, and as such, are devalued in comparison with other secondary schools. Hierarchies of social power are also perpetuated within technical and vocational schools via departments and curriculum that focus on work associated with gender. It is not enough to say that schools merely reflect the social structures of our society and are, therefore, not responsible for the continued social segregation. Educational policy makers have made, and do make conscious choices to institutionalise social power hierarchies and therefore have been and are very much responsible for creating the ways in which the structures of our educational system perpetuate oppression on the basis of class and gender. This study seeks understanding for the purpose of informing educational policy in the future. The intent of this study is to understand how gender and class have functioned in the establishment, adaptation, change, and eventual closing, of W.D. Lowe as a technical school, within a fifty-year context of federal and provincial agreements that shaped it. This understanding can be applied to current educational trends that seek to serve marginalized populations of students in specialized schools.

Background

Technical secondary schools in Ontario emerged from local pressure in urban centres such as Toronto, where the municipal councils saw fit to offer technical education on its own for 13 years, before succumbing to the overwhelming financial demands that came with this type of education. The popularity of the Toronto Technical School in Ontario in the first few years of the twentieth-century convinced the province to support high schools with multiple purposes, including vocational training.[2] Education was facing growing pressure to change in the face of industrialization and urbanization, state responsibility for some aspects of social welfare, institutionalization as a solution to social problems, and a redefinition of the family.[3] Even though the contextual pressure for educational change was great, proposed changes to education were hotly debated in 1904. On one side, W.S. Ellis, the principal of Kingston Collegiate, accused Ontario high schools of being mere feeders for universities.[4] Ellis argued that high schools should offer more variety, including vocational education.[5] Queen's University registrar John Watson

opposed this position, warning that multiple programs would lead to an unfortunate and unnecessary division of students.[6] This debate illustrated the concerns of the day. On the one hand, high schools were too narrowly focused drawing only students destined for university. On the other hand there was worry that expanding the curriculum might detract from the schools capacity to function as an agent of social equalization.

The curriculum was expanded, and the change was lead by John Seath, Ontario's superintendent of education, who revised regulations in 1904 to recognize no fewer than seven different high school programs: general, commercial, manual training, household science, agriculture, university matriculation, and normal-school entrance.[7] Positive public reaction to these new programs in urban centres such as Toronto made further formal support undeniable.[8] The provincial government in Ontario offered support via legislation in 1911. Even with provincial funding, technical schools were still slow to emerge in many cities due to the high cost required for initial start-up, such as buildings and equipment. It was not until federal support was provided through the Technical Education Act in 1919 that capital costs and the purchase of shop equipment were covered adequately enough to convince towns like Windsor to build stand-alone technical schools. According to educational statistics for the 1920s, Windsor was not alone. When WWTS opened its doors in 1923, there were 15 other technical day schools in the province.[9] Federal support of technical education had put the finishing touch on all that was required to convince urban centres in Ontario to begin offering technical education. According to statistics from the Ontario minister of education's annual report, in 1918, just before federal support of technical education was passed, there were only 11 technical day schools. By 1929, there were 47. Technical school students by 1929 made up more than 1/3 of the secondary student population in Ontario: 26,720 day students attending technical schools, while the secondary student population was 66,953.[10]

During the 1920s, urban centres in Ontario heavily invested in technical high schools.[11] Although the difficult times of the Great Depression and World War Two (WWII) posed challenges to the maintenance and funding of such schools, local support and the economic value of technical high schools remained high.[12] The advent of factory automation in the 1950s brought massive changes to industrial production, which would

depress the value of skilled labour and technical school programs. Once again the expense of technical education proved to be beyond what municipalities, the province, and the federal government were willing to invest in secondary public education. A new kind of education was on the horizon: technical colleges that could offer new equipment and training for the computer age. As technical shop classrooms became antiquated, the federal government announced it would no longer fund technical education at the secondary level and instead focus its attention on post secondary education, and the worst fears predicted by John Watson in the 1904 High School debate came to fruition – technical high schools were transformed into educational ghettos. After 1967, when federal support for technical secondary education ended, the spaces remained – empty shells of the promise of opportunity turned into segregation.[13] Even after three decades of criticism, many stand-alone vocational secondary schools remain. Since the criticism has generally claimed that stand-alone secondary schools have segregated and stigmatized technical students. The continued existence of stand-alone technical schools do not serve the promise of respect for diversity in public education, but rather the traditional image of the academic high school.

Purpose of the Study

An historical analysis of W.D. Lowe Technical School (WDLTS, originally called the Windsor-Walkerville Technical School) illuminates the issues of power that attend stand-alone technical, vocational, and commercial secondary schools and their corresponding curriculums associated with class and gender. Looking at issues of power over the school's fifty-year history will provide insight for any decision to establish or continue stand-alone schools for specialized student populations not traditionally well served in public high schools.[14]

Gender and social class are at the heart of past and continuing concerns with technical and vocational education.[15] As such, the purpose of this study is also to understand the significance of gendered institutions in the past, what meanings they held, and how they functioned to maintain the social order or promote its change.[16] Social class is a primary consideration in this study, as it is a defining feature of technical and vocational programs,[17] but it also plays a central role in contextualizing gender

construction.[18] Gender is ever present in our social lives, based on perceived differences between the sexes, including differences in power.[19] Since WDLTS has a student body divided by gender and drawn from working-class neighbourhoods, investigating WDLTS over a fifty-year period of considerable change to technical education policy serves this purpose well.

Terms

The terms *technical* and *vocational* will be used in this study; these terms can have different meanings depending on the time period. In the early twentieth-century these terms were often used interchangeably. In the Technical Training Act, 1919, the federal government used the word *vocational* as an umbrella term for schools and programs that offered practical skills that would prepare students for work after secondary school. After 1919, the term *technical* referred to specific vocational programs that involved learning practical skills and the theoretical and scientific basis upon which those skills were to be understood and applied. The meaning of these two terms changed after the Robarts Plan (1962) and unprecedented amounts of federal funding, including the Technical & Vocational Training Assistance Act (TVTAA, 1960), converged in the province of Ontario to bring about a more segregated and hierarchical system of programming. Beginning in the 1960s, *vocational* and *technical* became increasingly associated with the social value of their respective associated skills. *Technical* is deemed more specific and more highly skilled, whereas *vocational* has more association with special education.

Composite school – A regular academic high school with a vocational wing.

Stand-alone school – A school built and equipped for students to focus 50% of their studies on vocational, commercial, or technical education.

Another set of terms that require clarification are the names of the school, which changed four times over the course of its fifty-year life span:

Windsor Walkerville Technical School (WWTS), 1923 - 1935: This name reflects early use of the term *technical* as the type of education involving specific skills for the new industrial economy, including commercial education, indicating that Windsor had not yet begun using *vocational* as an umbrella term and was using *technical* in a general sense.

Windsor Walkerville Vocational School (WWVS), 1935 - 1945: The switch to the term *vocational* as an umbrella term adhered to federal criteria for funding. Domestic science, industrial art, and commercial studies were also taught at WWVS; hence the umbrella term *vocational* was taken on.

W.D. Lowe Vocational School (WDLVS), 1945-1959: This name change reflects the honouring of the school's one and only principal up to that point – William Duff Lowe. The term *vocational* is maintained for the reasons cited above.

W.D. Lowe Technical School (WDLTS), 1959-1973: This name change distinguished the school from the special vocational schools that had recently been opened, reflecting awareness that the word *vocational* was now linked with programs seen as less academically challenging.

Rationale

This study will begin to fill gaps in the literature, in seeking to understand not only class oppression, gender oppression, or the story of one school, but also historical trends in a community over a fifty-year period. The result will be a better understanding of how one stand-alone technical school morphed in response to changing social-historical conditions, into something quite different. The literature to date on stand-alone technical and vocational schools offers a firm understanding of issues of class and the effects of early educational reforms on girls. There is room, however, for a better understanding of stand-alone technical schools and the impact they had on students with multiple locations at the margins of education. With a wealth of knowledge from the historical research that has been conducted thus far, we can appreciate that students at technical schools are students at the margins of education and girls and other minorities who attend these schools are at the margins of the margins. Equity and social stigma are pressing issues for these secondary schools, and the methodological tools exist to appreciate the social complexity of how and why stand-alone vocational schools have historically developed and persist.

Issues of power are a particular focus. Initially, concern for technical education raised concerns about the power differential between youth and employers, yet F.P. Gavin's expression of concern in 1917 reflected middle-class fear, of idle working-class male youth

as a source of social problems.[20] While the creation of the school itself reflected issues of class, the curriculum offered within the school illustrated gender divisions found in labour. The amalgamation of the Border Cities (Ford City, Ojibway, Riverside, Sandwich, Walkerville, and Windsor) in 1935 which eliminated the technical school board in 1935, created a more centralized decision-making body for WDLTS and hence principals had less direct power in the school.[21] The delayed federal commitment to technical education and the implementation of the Robarts Plan and the TVTAA created a highly segregated and hierarchical secondary system in urban Ontario. Further, technological changes occurring in the tool, die, and mould industry beginning in the 1950s, created a demand for classrooms that could prepare students for automated design and assembly at the same time that Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology came into being.[22] New technical colleges created a new hierarchy in technical training and skills. With automation came a new conceptual differentiation between high and low technology; this created unfortunate associations for the school referred to as "Lowe Tech." Local tool, die, and mould makers found it increasingly difficult to compete in a market flooded with automated designers. As a result, the creative design talents of local tool and mould makers were often exploited in a global market economy, making it difficult to compete. These are among the multiple factors that came together and contributed to the establishment, maintenance, and eventual closure of WDLTS. This study offers a detailed look at the multitude of factors which impacted not only one technical school and its staff and students, but the entire school board.

Lessons from the analysis of WDLTS's history can be applied to current trends in education. Serving highly diverse populations within public secondary education has been a primary challenge for several decades.[23] In the name of catering to a broader populace, secondary education has added curriculum associated with the perceived goals of its increasingly diverse pupils. As documented in the pages and chapters that follow, result of this change has been that stand-alone technical schools have reflected and actively participated in divisions of labour and power hierarchies along the lines of gender, and class. As a mandatory public institution, school must not oppress or segregate students, either actively or by default. Looking at one school over a fifty-year period and the

influencing factors that shaped its establishment, maintenance, and closure, while in turn considering the influence that this one school had on its community, will illustrate the point.

WDLTS is a prime candidate to start this dialogue, as it was founded before any negative associations with vocational education were created.[24] WDLTS also withstood a myriad of challenges in the form of social, political, and ideological changes that drastically altered the original vision into a form of education that would have been unrecognizable to its founders. The story of WDLTS offers valuable insight into the site of struggle for value and pride in work performed by teachers and students, and into the continuing struggles that are a legacy of schools like WDLTS.

Significance

Feminist historical research on technical and vocational high schools such as WWTS/WDLTS helps scholars conceive how these schools challenge the status quo in some ways and perpetuate it in others. As the literature review will demonstrate, for several decades criticism has accumulated of vocational education based on social class and its influence on young girls. An analysis focused on gender remains a gap in the literature. Recent research contends that technical and vocational secondary education influenced a small minority of students, and that the presence of working-class students in high schools and collegiate institutes confounds any contention that stand-alone vocational schools posed significant barriers to students.[25] The present study will take a step toward filling an existing gap in the literature and presenting a counterargument to recent claims that the numbers of students affected were insignificant.

Even the most well-intentioned educational decisions must be critically analyzed for the ways in which they will influence students' choices and opportunities. Every single time we create a separate space to target the special needs of students who are not being served well in the standard secondary system, it is an admission that the secondary school system is exclusionary, and further, it is a choice not to accommodate that population in regular high schools. Vocational schools still exist; Afro-centric schools, rainbow schools,

and others are emerging. What does their separate status say about our public education system?

The benefit of this study is the contribution it can make to informing current trends toward specialized schooling. It is important that current decisions to cater to specialized groups of students not traditionally served well in public secondary schools are informed by past practices. While historical and social contexts change, the fundamental question of whether the very system in which students have existed on the margins can offer them equitable separate educational space remains. The results of this study should be considered by all stakeholders in separate schools designed to cater to minority students. This study can offer new qualitative understanding about the number of students affected by the segregated spaces of vocational schools. Indeed, by the very fact that stand-alone schools created segregated spaces in which some students existed, these schools also created an absence in regular high schools and collegiate institutes. In the context of compulsory attendance laws, vocational schools served many students who might not otherwise have attended school, but also ensured that the influx of students would not disrupt traditional academic schools. The problem was not only the presence of students within vocational schools but the absences stand-alone schools created in other schools within its boundaries.

Methodology

Critiques of stand-alone technical and vocational schools reached a peak during the 1980s, a period in historiography often acknowledged for its revisioning of historical events. The analysis of power relations that took place during this era drew clear and distinct lines between those historical actors with power and those without, noting that history too often reflected the voices of the winners, or those historical actors with formal power. While this revisioning of history did much to further historiography as a critical process, it came under great scrutiny in the 1990s for depicting historical actors who did not have access to formal means of power as victims. In reaction to oversimplified representations of power, informal forms of power and strategies of historical actors to resist and challenge inequalities in their local contexts took centre stage. Today, historiography is searching for a more nuanced appreciation of power in the face of

increasing inequities. Historians such as MichaelKatz, whose career has spanned the decades in question, attest to the continuity of social problems and the changes that it has demanded in the practice of doing history. Katz reflects on the changes to historiography, noting that

> The same problems persist [but] the historical context has undergone dramatic change; scholarship on key topics has experienced substantial revision; and my own reading of the literature and subsequent research has led me to new interpretations...Like most writers on poverty in the late 1980s, I did not realize how hegemonic the conservative story of welfare and poverty had become...This exciting historiography links community action to both the civil rights movement and to gender.[26]

Katz's sentiments indicate that these new links brought a more nuanced understanding of power to his work. Katz's latest work has been informed by critiques of second-wave feminist notions of gender as a category of analysis that speaks to all women: "conventional ideas about how the world is ordered lay smashed and in need of redefinition. These ideas included work, race, family, city and nationality."[27] Changes to feminist perspectives began with the notion of situated knowledge[28] also known as standpoints.[29] This conceptual framework served to complicate lived experience of gender. Judith Lorber explains, "feminist social science has devised research designs and methodologies that have allowed the standpoints of oppressed and repressed women throughout the world to come to the forefront, and which reflect increasingly sophisticated intersectional analyses of class, racial ethnicity, religion, and sexuality."[30]

Intersectional analysis investigates a concrete topic, finding the combined effects of race, class, gender, sexuality, and nation where before only one or two interpretive categories would have been used.[31] The practice of intersectionality as a methodology takes into consideration the complexity of life.[32] In keeping with current research on masculinities, this research considers gender as a construct that goes beyond the traditional binary, more in keeping with the complexity of lived experience. Gender is various, diverse, and pluralistic.[33] Researchers in masculinities are also concerned with power,

particularly with regard to hegemony. The making and contestation of hegemony in historically changing gender orders is a process of enormous importance for which we continue to need conceptual tools.[34] Intersectionality provides these tools, since it emphasizes an understanding that is not exclusively or even primarily preoccupied with categories, identities, or subjectivities, but with political and structural inequalities.[35] Intersectionality helps reveal how power works in diffuse and differentiated ways through the creation and deployment of overlapping identity categories.[36] Intersectionality is concerned with the way things work rather than with who people are.[37] In particular, McCall suggests that intercategorical complexity is an approach to intersectionality that provisionally adopts existing analytical categories to document relationships of inequality among social groups and changing configurations of inequality along multiple and conflicting dimensions.[38] I have used intersectionality for understanding issues of power and inequity related to stand-alone technical and vocational schools.

Feminist standpoint theory provides a conceptual framework for understanding both my position as researcher, and the approach used to analyze the changes that occurred at W.D. Lowe Technical School. A standpoint arises when an individual recognizes and challenges cultural values and power relations that contribute to subordination or oppression of particular groups. Feminist standpoints are developed through intellectual struggles to recognize, analyze, and contest broad power relations that account for the subordination felt by girls and women in the activities they are expected to pursue. A feminist standpoint is an intellectual achievement that reflects and necessarily entails political consciousness. In the following account of my experience as a vocational student (1984-1987), a women's studies student (1992-1999), a vocational teacher (2002-2004), and eventually a researcher of vocational education (2003-2006; 2008-current), illustrates both the social location that situates my knowledge and the process by which I arrived at a feminist standpoint.

Feminist standpoint theory is concerned with productions of knowledge and practices of power.[39] Such a theory is appropriate for a previous vocational student and vocational teacher now researching technical and vocational schools in the same community where I both attended, and currently teach school. My first-hand experience in

vocational schools and my current status as researcher gives me an insider/outsider status. Because I have had to negotiate education from a marginal position, I have had insider access to interpretive frames and forms of empirical evidence not available to researchers from outside.[40] This insider access does not automatically qualify as an epistemic advantage. On the one hand, marginalized subjects can develop an awareness of the dynamics of oppression that more privileged subjects do not have to develop.[41] On the other, my status as a teacher with access to educational opportunities and sources of information allowed me to search for ways to understand, explain, and take action against the oppression I experienced. So I was also able to access outsider knowledge, which brings with it contextualizing information and theoretical frameworks that offer analytical skills and explanatory tools. Thus, this research both contributes to larger dialogues about vocational schools' roles in the communities they intend to serve and functions as a part of my quest to understand the oppressions I witnessed and experienced in such a community.

Using my own standpoint to produce research rooted in personal experience has particular meaning for fostering agency and bringing about social change. As I reflect on my experiences—particularly the contrast between my experience as a vocational student and the glorious local lore of Lowe Tech—I know that reflection has shaped my questions and query, and I accept that influence and seek to make it explicit throughout my analysis. This is not simply a personal story; what I intend in the personal account below is to make explicit the factors that shape who I am as a moral agent. Feminist researchers must, by necessity, become social theorists and account for the emergence of our own reflexivity. Following Judith Butler, I want the reader to know that I understand my own position in the research process and the conditions under which my morality has emerged:

> When the "I" seeks to give an account of itself, it can try to start with its own singular past and origins, but it will find that this self, both as a narrating vehicle and as a subject to be narrated, is already implicated in the social temporality that exceeds its own capacities for narration; indeed, when the "I" seeks to give an account of itself, an account that must include the condition of its own emergence, it must, as a matter of necessity, I want to suggest, become a social theorist.[42]

My personal experiences as a vocational student are the seeds of my critical question, my need to find answers, and my desire to understand both whether change is possible and what that change might look like.

As a former vocational student in the 1980s, and as a teacher twenty years later, I struggle with how my past may have influenced my view of technical and vocational education. In light of my understanding of knowledge and subjectivity, I question how I can possibly remain objective in this particular study. Although I can reflect on and make visible my own multiple locations and ideological positions, I understand that such reflection carries no epistemological guarantees, as it is an imperfect, partial, and endlessly deferred process. Just as I explicitly document my research methods, I can make explicit my specific personal knowledge and use that explicitness as strong objectivity.[43] By "minding the gap between my methodological desires and my [research] practices," I can be "trustworthy" in what I relay about gender and class at WDLTS.[44] "Self-conscious partiality" is a necessary condition of being heard to make rational knowledge claims, setting up a knowledge that owns its specificity rather than making impossible claims to universality or objectivity.[45] Unlike any other researcher I know of in this body of literature, I can claim direct experience as a student in a vocational school. But like any responsible researcher. I also begin my research with a literature review. Through the interplay of my insider and outsider perspectives, supportable rational knowledge claims emerge.

In relaying the following narrative I want to include the reader in my preparations for reflexive practice. This narrative relays experiences that sparked my interest in stand-alone vocational high schools and influenced my methodological approach to studying these schools. Providing this narrative prior to my research, points up the difficulty of making sense of my experiences without this very research. Although I am making an effort to provide an informative account, I want to stress that this account serves simply as a starting point and is not complete, fully transparent, or fixed.

Contradictions: The lore of "Lowe Tech" and my personal experience as a vocational student

My working-class family valued education that offered marketable skills, which is why I grew up hearing all about how great W.D. Lowe Technical School was. I heard about the positive outcomes of many of the graduates, including three of my uncles. My family assumed that the newer local vocational schools would offer the same potential and opportunity. If they provided such great opportunities though, why did it seem like students were coerced into attending the vocational schools that succeeded WDLTS? Once I was there, I found that the school was a far cry from the positive stories I had heard about W.D. Lowe Technical School, but I had no understanding at that time of the divide that had been socially constructed between technical and vocational education. This early disconnect between local educational lore and personal experience gave rise to my current research. I wondered what had happened in education to change how stand-alone technical and/or vocational schools were viewed.[46] This same discord has provided a critical lens.

Transfer Student

I was a vocational high school student, as were many youth from my neighborhood. Like myself, many students were coerced into attending vocational high schools via the transfer system in place at the time (1983). When I attended grade eight in 1983, many students—myself included—suddenly found ourselves failing all our courses, and then being offered an "option" to attend the nearby vocational school. The selling feature of this proposed "option" was that the transfer occurred in January so that failing students only lost ½ of a year instead of a whole year. Any student who didn't accept the option to attend vocational school, lost a full year with no guarantee of success when repeating the grade. Students were also assured by principals and teachers that if they did attend vocational school and obtained high marks, they could transfer back to a regular school with the credits they earned from vocational school intact. Hence, attending vocational school was pitched as a win/win situation. In my experience, transferring to a vocational school in January was not a win/win situation. A January transfer meant that the student missed out on graduating from elementary school. In my own experience, being denied graduation

from elementary school had a devastating impact on my sense of self-efficacy. Not only was I being sent to a socially rough-and-tumble school midway through the year, but I was also left to assume that I was not even capable of completing elementary school, and this transfer was presented as the best case scenario for my success.

The margins have margins—gender divisions between subject areas within the vocational school

Once I started attending vocational school in 1984, I became acutely aware of fine distinctions between the students there. These distinctions suddenly held great importance. We had branded ourselves as "stupid," after experiencing the grade eight transfer process, but we had that in common. That very commonality though made it all the more important to construct a social hierarchy that served to reassure some students (and perhaps the teachers too) that they had value, even if that process further devalued the "others." Not only were there gender divisions between shop classes due to gender associations with particular types of labour, but there were also contradictions between the vocational high school culture—which held back young men who violated those gender divisions—and workplace cultures that valued those same men over their women coworkers. For example, I remember a male hairdressing student returned from the bathroom one day, visibly shaken and upset. Two boys who were also in the bathroom had physically assaulted him. Boys in the hairdressing program were ostracized, yet that same male friend of mine held considerably different social currency in the workplace culture of salons by virtue of his status as male and gay. My employer was a gay male and "out" to everyone in the salon, as well as his clients. He made no effort to conceal that status; indeed it was an asset to him, and his clients seemed to love it. Those boys that broke allegiance with gender scripts and entered hair dressing were ostracized within the vocational school—but those same boys were held in much higher esteem within some salons than gender-conforming ("straight-acting") boys or any girls. This experience made me aware of just how crucial the intersections of sex, gender, class, and sexuality are to the value of a person's work in the hairdressing industry, and indeed in the skilled trades in general.

Returning to a Vocational School

After graduating from the Bachelor of Education program in 2000, I worked for two years as a cosmetology teacher at a vocational school. I was anxious to walk once again into the doors of a vocational school. This school was not that far from the school I had attended as a vocational student, and had since closed down. This vocational school was not much different, the "hard" shop classes drew mostly male students, and the first cosmetology class I taught included only two boys. I introduced myself to my class, explaining that I too had once been a cosmetology student at a vocational school. I joked that it was a long time ago and passed around some of the old yearbooks from Shawnee Secondary School that were being stored at the school I was teaching at. The students commented on how hairstyles had changed, and many students were able to identify aunts, uncles, and parents in the yearbooks that were circulating around. That's when I realized that many of these students were from my old neighborhood, and were second—even third—generation vocational students. This school, like the school I attended, had been built in the late 1960s and drew its students from the same poor neighbourhoods as my school, from the same families. This school, like the one I attended, did not have a glowing reputation, yet the schools' programs and demographics remained intact and seemingly unchanged. Why?

The Search for Answers: Researching the History of Technical Education in Ontario

My efforts to find the answer to this question brought me back to school in the graduate program at the University's Faculty of Education. My master's thesis helped me to understand the beginnings of the secondary education reforms that initiated stand-alone technical/vocational high schools in Ontario. In doing this research I learned that the first stand-alone technical school began with a community vision for an alternative to existing secondary schools. Ontario's first vocational school was founded under municipal control, but was taken over by the province due the funding demands that came with the popularity of the school.

Once amalgamated into the public school system, stand-alone technical schools were accepted in principle but were slow to emerge in many urban settings due to the large amount of funding they required for start-up equipment and maintenance. Between the years 1919 and 1967 the federal government helped to fund technical and vocational programs. This funding allowed for much needed equipment and materials required to run shop classrooms. Federal funding for technical and vocational education came to an abrupt end, and, after that, the quality of tools and materials in these programs suffered greatly. Although many vocational programs in Ontario have closed down, many stand-alone vocational schools remain.[47] In light of the struggles to maintain adequate funding to ensure quality programming materials, it seems clear that these schools persist because they serve a function in the communities that built them. As I think back on my own experiences as a student and as a teacher, I am struck by how those experiences contrast with what I was told about an older technical school—W.D. Lowe. The impetus for this work is the need to understand these conceptual and material shifts. Windsor once had a technical school that students would proudly say they went to, a school that was built with pride, yet it was closed while others, not so prestigious, remained, and while even more were opened. Although WDLTS ceased to exist as a technical school, it remained open as a secondary school. Two vocational schools were built in its absence: the school I went to as a student and the school I taught at two decades later. In the early 1970s another vocational school was built in the county and it is still in operation as of 2014. As a once struggling vocational student, and later, a vocational teacher, I am haunted by the seeming contradiction between the closing of a school deemed to be a success[48], and the persistence in its absence of three schools that represent a diluted and devalued version of the past. Why?

Research Questions

The preceding personal and methodological foundations have shaped the following research questions, which will guide and focus the proposed study:

1. What factors explain both the establishment of the Windsor-Walkerville Technical School in 1923 and the demise of W.D. Lowe Technical School as a stand-alone, elite technical school in 1973?
2. What political, social and cultural factors contributed to changing curriculum at WWTS/WDLTS from 1923 to 1973?
3. In what ways did the local social, political, and cultural context influence the formal and extra-curricular programs at WWTS/WDLTS?
4. How did the prevailing attitudes and assumptions about gender impact the evolution of WWTS/WDLTS?

To answer these questions in a way that contributes to broader educational-history knowledge and better future policy decisions requires tools that make historical methods transparent and systematic. The business of knowledge production is necessarily both a problem-specific and an open-ended process. In the field of historical research, understanding the historical thinking concepts outlined by Peter Siexas make the analytical work done by historians explicit and more transparent. Historical thinking concepts will be addressed in the following methods section.

Methods – Historian's Craft

The historian's craft is the way a researcher identifies historical events in the past and weaves critical analyses of primary and secondary evidence into a cohesive whole—a story that has human meaning. Those critical skills, explicitly stated, are what Peter Siexas calls *Historical Thinking Concepts*. The *Historical Thinking Project* has identified six distinct but closely interrelated concepts. Thinking historically entails:

1. Establishing *historical significance*
2. Using *primary source evidence*
3. Identifying *continuity and change*
4. Analyzing *cause and consequence*
5. Taking *historical perspectives*, and
6. Understand the *ethical dimensions* of historical interpretations.

Although each one of these concepts has relevance to the study at hand, the concepts of continuity and change and of cause and consequence have been most useful. The discord I felt between the stories I have heard of Lowe Tech and my student experience at vocational school, set the stage for identifying the change that had occurred in education, and I wanted to understand the causes and consequences of that change. The research questions, which are heavily focused on causation, serve as the basis upon which to identify significant points in the school's history, significant documents about the school, and in the case of authors with power, significant decisions about the school that brought about change. Historical perspective-taking is also a concept used when trying to understand why and how people in the past made the decisions they did, or trying to understand their role in influencing change. The recommendations for future research and educational policy reflect this study's ethical dimensions, suggesting how the research results can be used to inform schooling in order to be more equitable. Although much of what historians do is unseen intellectual work, that makes it all the more important to understand the process of analysis. In the chart below, the historical thinking concepts, along with the explanations for how those concepts guide historical research, are listed. Included in the right column is a list of how the guideposts have been applied in this research.

Application of Historical Thinking Concepts & Guideposts

	Guideposts	**Application to Current Research**
Significance	-events, people have significance if they resulted in a change, with deep consequences for people over a long period of time.	- my research questions and analysis focuses on who brought about change at WWTS/WWVS/WDLVS/WDLTS?
Evidence	-asking good questions of a source can help it yield evidence.[49]	- develop research questions for documented turning points that shaped the function and purpose of the school with respect to gender and class. - the research questions will inform the analysis of legislation and policy, architectural plans, school board

		documents, yearbooks, student artifacts, news articles, and questionnaire responses.[50]
Continuity & Change	-turning points are moments when the process of change shifts in direction or pace. -progress and decline are the evaluation of change over time. Depending on the impact of change progress for one may be decline for another. -periodization helps us organize our thinking about continuity and change. It is a process of interpretation by which we decide which events or developments constitute a period of history.	- what influenced the changes known to have taken place at the school, for example changes to the school name, student strikes, economic and legislative changes? - the discrepancies between the lore of Lowe Tech and personal experience of vocational schools are starting points to evaluating progress and decline.[51] - finding the major turning points in the school's history will point to the boundaries and limits that will constitute a period in the school's history and organize the narrative accordingly.
Cause & Consequence	-change is driven by multiple causes, and results in multiple consequences. These create a complex web of interrelated short-term and long-term causes and consequences. -events result from the interplay of two types of factors. 1) historical actors who took action; 2) social, political, economic, and cultural conditions. - the generation of unintended consequences. - events in history were not inevitable.	- documents must be considered from multiple locations, such as: student groups, school memos, school board minutes, municipal bylaws, professional associations, provincial legislation, federal commissions and legislation. -these documents have to be situated in their multiple locations of creation and application. -the interaction of events and people in different locations. For example the Technical and Vocational Training and Assistance Act, created by the federal government, with the provincial reorganization of programming known as the Robarts Plan. -historical actors had subjective

		interpretations of contemporary concepts and policies.
Historical Perspective Taking	-avoid presentism -actors are best understood when context is considered -make inferences based on evidence	-consistency of meaning for terms such as technical and vocational cannot be assumed. -attitudes about gender and class are imbedded in the beliefs and values of that time period. -I have to use the documents found to understand the meaning of *technical* and *vocational* at the time, as well as assumptions held by historical agents regarding gender and class. -multiple perspective are considered in this research through a variety of sources that represent the views of students, teachers, principals, administration, representatives of the department of education and the federal government.
Ethical Dimension	-understanding history can help us make informed judgements about current issues	-the notion of separate space is a contested concept in feminism. Can stand-alone technical and vocational spaces utilize this contested understanding to improve policy and practice about marginalized students in education today?

Table1: The Historical Thinking Concepts and Guideposts were developed by Peter Siexas and Tom Morton[52]

Why is an historical approach fitting for this research?

Historical research seeks to analyze significant aspects of an event that occurred in the past through a systematic collection of data to describe how, and explain why, a particular event occurred. Given this description of what historical research does, an analysis of WDLTS using an historical approach is appropriate for two primary reasons: 1) WDLTS no longer exists and therefore can be investigated using historical methodology; 2) it will

allow for an explanation of how and why the interaction between curriculum change and gender occurred over a long period of time.

Indeed, historical approaches can capture patterns of social change over long periods of time, perhaps even identifying cause-and-effect relationships.[53] Identifying, locating, and interpreting information relevant to these patterns of social change requires skills applied in a systematic way, ways that historical thinking concepts make explicit.

Historical investigation is appropriate to describe how and why WWTS opened, functioned locally, changed during its fifty-year lifespan, and eventually ceased to exist as a technical school. Finding out how and why this technical school existed, changed, and ceased to exist would contribute to how we contend with current concerns about vocational high schools and other specialized separate spaces.

One of the major changes that occurred at WDLTS was gender shifts in the student population. As such, some recommendations from historians of gender can be useful. Joan Scott[54] recommends that gender historians ask the following questions: what is the legitimizing function of gender, and what are the many ways in which it works? What is at stake in proclamations that invoke gender to explain or justify their positions? How have social institutions incorporated gender into their assumptions and organizations? As industrial capitalism unfolded, how did it alter class relations and shift gender relations?

As most of the questions previously posed illustrate, to pursue meaning in the history of WDLTS, we need to address the individual as well as the social organizations, and articulate the nature of their interrelationships, because both are important to understanding how gender works and how change occurs. It is a given that the historian must interpret all primary resources within the social and political context in which they were created. For the historian concerned with issues of gender, this means considering gender as a primary way of signifying relationships of power in its historical context. As an historian interested in a technical and vocational secondary school, I need to understand the role gender has played in establishing, changing, and eventually closing WDLTS. The study spans a fifty-year period from 1923 to 1973, and as such requires an appreciation of conceptual continuity and change that occurs in social categories such as gender.[55]

In the literature review that follows, the major works that have contributed to understanding technical and vocational education in Canada will be presented and discussed for what they tell us about stand-alone secondary schools; important gaps in the literature will be identified.

Literature Review

Technical and vocational secondary schools in Ontario have existed for over a century.[56] These schools slowly evolved from a variety of isolated educational visions inspired by economic and social upheaval. A variety of educational reforms began in the late nineteenth century as a result of industrial reorganization that had lasting implications for urban social life. The industrial revolution not only changed relations in the workplace, but had a profound ripple effect on the social fabric of working-class culture. Conceptions of childhood and gender roles were forever changed by the disintegration of craft culture, small-scale production, and apprenticeship.[57] The effects of these changes were visible on urban streets, and they roused public alarm that inspired educational reform.[58]

Several early reform efforts, such as mechanics' institutes, domestic science programs, manual training, industrial schools, and technical schools, evolved in isolation from each other for well over three decades. These isolated efforts morphed into a more unified challenge to education as support coalesced from private benefactors, municipal leaders, provincial governments, and eventually the federal government. Once these efforts evolved into unified programs and schools with a supporting curriculum, job training was relocated from the factory or shop floor to the school.[59] Although the transition was made, the institutionalization of job training was a contentious issue. These schools were established from overlapping and often conflicting needs between federal and provincial governments, labour, capital, reformers, and educationalists.[60] This unsettled beginning set the tone for the continued contentious existence of stand-alone technical schools in our provincial school system to this day.[61]

Stand-alone schools in particular stood out in this matter as a "separate and specialized curriculum for some students, one that ostensibly respected the democratic principle of public schooling while maintaining gender, race, and class inequalities."[62] We know from previous research on technical and vocational secondary schools that the local settings in which these schools were established have shaped their structures and functions and hence the degree to which the specialized curriculum served democratic principles or social inequality. Influencing the structure and functions of a vocational school through time and space are local combinations of economic climate and corresponding social issues, in combination with how education is used locally to meet economic and social demands.[63] Regardless of the reason behind the local support, when funds became available, most urban centres in Ontario took advantage of the opportunity.

In 1919 the federal government committed a total of 10 million dollars over a ten year period to aid provinces in their technical secondary education programs.[64] Urban interest in technical education had prompted Ontario to provide provincial support in 1911 under the Industrial Education Act.[65] With many technical schools already in place, Ontario was primed to take full advantage of the federal funds. "More than one-quarter of all Ontario high school students were studying in the vocational programs offered by forty-two high schools on the eve of the Depression."[66] The difficult economic times however saw federal and provincial funds wane, yet ironically "the socio-economic dislocations of that decade reinforced the perceived need for vocational training while also supporting certain national goals through both the curriculum and the developing extra-curriculum."[67] "By the mid-1920s, vocational education had been accepted as a legitimate function of secondary schooling in most provinces."[68] WDLTS emerges in this context of a firm commitment to technical education, a commitment that remained strong for most of its fifty-year run as a technical secondary school in Windsor, Ontario.

Literature on the Contextual Influences

Although Canada's commitment to technical education is far from unique, international trends suggest that our continuing efforts to maintain stand-alone vocational high schools are out of synch with ideological changes. In one of the only large scale meta-

analyses done on vocational education, Aaron Benavot sought to explain the reasons for the establishment and decline of this type of education in several industrialised countries.[69] Benavot's research summarized technical education in sociological terms, using three categories to explain why vocational education emerged in many societies.[70] Each category will be described briefly.

The first category is the *technical-functional* approach. From this perspective, technical education is explained as simply an outgrowth of, and adaptation to, the economic demands of industrialized workplaces. The second category is the *progressive-integrationist* explanation, which posits that technical education socializes new citizens and the working-class to conform to middle-class values and culture. The third and final category is a *neo-Marxist* perspective that views technical education as a class-based solution invented by those with capitalist interests. According to the neo-Marxist perspective, the introduction of technical education was an attempt to support the consolidation of corporate capitalist power.

Benavot's categories help to build an understanding of the various motives behind technical education in Western Democracies. However, these stand-alone schools still exist and research specific to Canada suggests that the explanations behind their presence are not so neatly categorized, but may be more aptly described, as suggested earlier, as a result of complex and changing balance of all these categories together, at any given time or place.

With regard to why technical and vocational schooling has declined, Benavot explains the trend using enrolment statistics, and ideological changes in several countries.[71] The conclusion he draws is that shifting perspectives about the role of education have included "shunning differentiated education"[72] and thus, vocational education has declined. These schools, however, still exist in many cities within Canada, and the debate continues as to their role and function. Recent research from Canada concedes that there is no one overarching reason why technical schools have emerged and continue to exist.[73]

An early explanation of the emergence of technical schools in Canada came from Robert Stamp, who suggests in his analysis of national policy and federal-provincial relations that technical schools and programs waxed and waned with federal initiatives.[74] The crucial element in this analysis is that the expense and demands of technical education

require more than provincial coffers would allow. The decline of vocational schools in the last four decades has been due to the absence of federal funding, which was reallocated to post-secondary institutions. Later research supports both Benavot's and Stamp's conclusions.

In 1991, Lyons, Randhawa, and Paulson suggested that the lack of consistent federal initiatives for technical education contributed to its socially devalued status. According to this research, what hampered continued national support for vocational education were the constitutional issues surrounding responsibility for education. Regardless of who is formally responsible for funding education, there are also more deep-seated issues about what kind of education is valued. Historically, Canadians have "valued academic education more than manual," and our lack of initiative for implementing a national system of education that properly funds vocational classrooms that are "challenging and worthwhile, not just a ticket to second-class status" is at the root of why vocational schools are not thriving.[75]

This explanation of federal funding is extended by Taylor,[76] who indicated that federal funding of technical schools and secondary programs was prompted by capitalist crises. Her analysis includes a comparison of two capitalist crises during the late 1800s and the 1970s and continues to the present. Taylor, like previous researchers, examines the variety of motivations behind educational reforms which implemented vocational education.[77] Her analysis presumed that educational change resulted from the struggles of different stakeholders for control of knowledge, social mobility, and power, as originally proposed by Michael Apple.[78] She concludes that during the first period of industrial crises from 1868-1911, capital simply wanted the federal government to reduce training costs and fulfil labour force requirements. The second capitalist crisis extends from the 1970s to the present, and includes education as a complicit partner in building support for free enterprise.[79] In conclusion, Taylor proposes that public pressure is required to stress the need for transparent policy procedures and practices.

In summary, broad global trends indicate that the declining presence of vocational education is a sign of ideological changes: the purpose of education is increasingly seen as contributing to, not detracting from, equality. Those vocational schools that have survived

the "the rise and decline of vocational education" are "second-class," and in the absence of adequate federal policy procedures and funding are "differentiated" as such. The emerging trend within Canada since the 1990s is that education has become more differentiated.[80] With the recent emergence of historical case studies in the literature, we are beginning to understand the specific ways in which these schools are differentiated within their local community contexts, regardless of the intentions behind the policies and legislation that made the schools possible.

Case Studies of Technical and Vocational Schools

The first provisions for technical schools in Ontario began as a Toronto city by-law in 1890.[81] With the power to open a school via new provincial legislation, Toronto found a way to fund the project. Without much debate, the profits from a previous strike and public take-over of the street car railway were used to fund the new school. A technical school board was established and the Toronto Technical School was opened on December 7, 1891. The response from students exceeded all of the Toronto city council's expectations and its success had direct influence on provincial legislation for technical education. However, subsequent legislation changed the TTS.[82] The original intention of the Toronto Technical School was to offer education that would ensure the value of workers through an emphasis on science in the curriculum.[83] This vision became secondary as cost efficiency became a priority for the Toronto city council. The original vision also became secondary as the province began to see TTS as a potential part of the public school system. As a result, divisions on the city council and within the technical school board were exacerbated by legislation in 1897 that placed demanding conditions on the city's resources. Unable to withstand the demands at both the local and provincial level, the Toronto Technical School was integrated into the public school system, and it lost its unique vision.

The struggle of the Toronto Technical School is significant for the history of work-based secondary education because it provides an additional perspective on the larger picture that is emerging from the literature. The struggle of the TTS suggests that not only were programs within the traditional school structure being used to perpetuate inequality along the lines of class and gender, but also that those schools that challenged the social

power hierarchy would be stopped. The promoters of the TTS envisioned educational space in which the needs of working-class students were a primary concern. The struggle for education that offered both theoretical knowledge and physical skills is significant for understanding the role of the TTS in technical education in Ontario. Later case studies suggest that the purpose and vision of vocational and technical high schools continued to be a site of contestation in the local communities in which they emerged.

In an intensive study of the history of educational reforms and changes in London, Ontario, Goodson and Dowbiggin suggest that the technical school in London was hotly debated and continued to be an issue as long as the school had access to sufficient funds and supporters who sought to create a status for the school equal to that of the collegiate institutes. [84] Establishing technical education in London, Ontario, was a struggle due to the differing views and objectives of reformers within the educational bureaucracy, union organizations, the local Canadian Manufacturers Association, and the industrial and commercial bourgeoisie. Goodson and Dowbiggin[85] state that the local fears and concerns were no different than those that exist in the broader history of the struggle to establish vocational education. They reach the conclusion that educational reforms were intended to create a diversity of options for a new, diverse group of students, but that diversity in the curriculum was acceptable only as long as it "would have the effect of perpetuating and legitimating class differences, that is, exploiting the capacity of educational systems to invest in social distinctions with cultural meanings."[86] In two subsequent studies conducted on the Central Technical School in London, Goodson and Anstead utilize this understanding of vocational education in London, Ontario to understand the struggles at the level of everyday functioning and practices within the Central Technical and Commercial School.[87]

A concerted effort was made in London to create a second-class status for the Central Technical School compared to the collegiate institute.[88] In a subsequent study, Anstead and Goodson found that teachers in commercial studies attempted to increase their own professional status by initiating new courses intended to attract male students.[89] This finding brings into question the role of gender and curriculum in efforts to maintain social status within these vocational schools in the face of policy changes. The issue of gender

emerges again in another study on the Central Technical School carried out by Goodson and Anstead which focused on the experiences of everyday life at the school.[90] This study is primarily interested in how students negotiated the structures of their school day. What stands out in the data is that senior male students enrolled in technical courses had the most control and power over the conditions of their education. The case of the Central Technical and Commercial High School suggests that gender in technical and vocational secondary schools needs to be investigated further.

The most recent case study of a vocational school was conducted by Freeman, who investigated three historical periods in one vocational school's forty-year history, from the 1960s to 2006.[91] Freeman found that vocational schools carried inherent contradictions, serving both as agents of equality and as a perpetrator of social reproduction.[92] Similar to the findings of Alison Taylor,[93] Freeman notes that current policy trends in Canada that seek to cater to diversity seem to be extending the lives of these stand-alone vocational schools and justifying their "differentiated" and "second-class" status as a necessity both for the system and the students.[94] But from what we know from the work of Goodson and Anstead this differentiation carries with it the threat of gender and class inequity.[95] These in-depth case studies are important for understanding how and why vocational education gets constructed along the lines of class and gender in one local context. We need to understand some of the perplexing problems for girls who attend vocational schools. Work by Lehmann asks: why is it that girls have broken down barriers in every aspect of education except within the skilled trades?[96] After nearly four decades of inquiry that includes gender and class as defining features of technical education, we are now in a position to conceptualize how gender, class, and curriculum have contributed to the educational barriers that are still an issue today. Perhaps the very social categories themselves are the issue.

Literature on Gender and Class as It Relates to Curriculum

The remainder of this literature review will discuss research focused on gender and class as it relates to curriculum. The research has been arranged according to three curriculum themes, Domestic science, CommercialEducation, and Industrial Schools.

Although this review has been done to demonstrate the role of gender and class, each theme also demonstrates gaps in the literature, which justifies the need for a case study that combines gender, class and curriculum at a predominantly male school.

Domestic Science: A Need for Case Studies Focusing on Gender as a System

The literature on domestic science indicates that this subject, offered in many technical high schools in Ontario from the early 1900s well into the 1940s, was controversial. The first technical school, the Toronto Technical School, established domestic science in 1897, as a girls' analogue to technical shop classes for boys. This curriculum reflected a new economy that tended to de-skill all aspects of labour, even labour in the home. The following literature on domestic science illustrates a need to go beyond analyses of curriculum geared to girls; the literature cries out for critical analysis of technical shops that prepared mostly working-class boys for male-dominated industries. Following feminist social historian Joan Scott's lead, educational historians must present technical school curriculum as a whole, influenced by a system of gender relations.[97]

One of Ontario's strongest proponents of domestic science was Adelaide Hunter Hoodless; beginning with Robert Stamp in 1977, Hoodless's efforts and domestic science in general came under increasing historical scrutiny. Stamp critiqued progressive reforms because they used education as a way to socialize girls according to an "ideal" notion of women's "god-given" domestic roles. The same documents analyzed by Stamp were reinterpreted by Diana Pederson in 1983; she notes that the letters, speeches, and pleas for educational change were produced for a specific audience. Pederson proposes that Hoodless strategically created these texts for an audience of men in the roles of school board trustees, government officials, and philanthropists, to whom she was appealing for funding. This was not the only point of Stamp's research that elicited a critique.

Stamp's explanation that domestic science was a way to accommodate the growing number of girls in collegiate institutes sparked the interest of Danylewycz, Fahmy-Eid, and Thivierge in 1984.[98] This later research proposes that introducing domestic science at a time when girls were, for the first time in history, outnumbering boys in collegiate institutes suggests that perhaps the introduction was a strategic way to divert girls from a path that

would destroy the sanctity of the middle-class home. Terry Crowley poses yet another explanation for the timely introduction of domestic science.[99] According to Crowley, political differences may have stalled the introduction of domestic science at the secondary level.[100] Hoodless's alliance a with conservative government and those in education who supported manual training set her up against proponents of technical schools such as labour organizations, as well as those in education defending the academic status of high schools. The contention between Hoodless's ideas of reform and those behind technical education slowed official changes.

The literature thus far demonstrates that educational reforms at the turn of the century were complex. This complexity is emphasized in the work of Ruby Heap, who carried out a case study of domestic science programs at the Toronto Technical School.[101] Heap's work acknowledges the ideological influence of progressive reformers, but sheds new light on the potential for resistance in a context where a local community is united for the purpose.[102] At the Toronto Technical School, a diverse group of girls and women sought education in domestic science. Supported with statistics, Heap illustrates that not only young girls, but also married, widowed, divorced, separated, and deserted women attended the school.[103] Further, due to the addition of a fourth-year matriculation course, girls and women who graduated from the Toronto Technical School could attend domestic science courses at the University of Toronto, presenting yet another option for girls.

This research supports Crowley's article, which suggests that Toronto had a unique context, one that Hoodless was excluded from because labour organizations had initiated the local reforms there.[104] Although Hoodless had secured a monopoly on the creation of textbooks and training centres, and hence dominated the provincial goals and purposes for domestic science, Toronto has been acknowledged for their accessible and inclusive domestic science programs and one community's ability to resist dominant forces. Heap provides a valuable look at one unique local context that was able to organize and maintain a resistance to broader influences.[105] This work sets the tone for the value of case studies of vocational education as it emerged in a time in which secondary education needed to be relevant to the communities it served.

The work of Crowley and Rafferty is also a reminder that ideological forces are important to historical understanding.[106] Both of these authors suggest that industrialization brought with it social ideals of efficiency in production. Terry Crowley explains that science was the means by which the "drudgeries of cooking and cleaning" could be reclaimed and the domestic duties of women re-valued.[107] He notes that Hoodless saw women's role in society as eroded; women once "provided all the duties necessary to prepare food, clothing, light etc., the minds were kept bright and the hands dexterous. But nowadays the factories perform those duties."[108] It was hoped, that making cooking, cleaning, and managing the home more "scientific" might compensate for all the artisan craftwork women had once carried out, but had lost to mass production. Parallels were drawn to men and their experience of a disrupted apprenticeship system along with the loss of craft culture. Women had experienced the same disruption, and were adapting in similar ways to maintain value and worth in what little was left of their traditional roles in paid and unpaid workplaces. Unfortunately, these adaptations may have served not only to reinforce the tradition of separate spheres, but also to perpetuate increasing dependence on consumerism, which was at the heart of the erosion of female traditional skills. In Crowley's eyes, not only did Adelaide Hoodless contribute to the continued sexual division of labour, but she helped to ensure that the new skills would be completely defined through the domestic technology of the new industrial economy.[109] Rafferty's research supports this, noting that although Hoodless despised the effects of industrialised society on the family, she nonetheless adopted concepts of industrialised efficiency and production in her approach to education.[110]

Continuing the detailed look at unique contexts, Sherene Razack set out to understand the ideological forces behind domestic science in Quebec.[111] Crowley mentions nationalist tones in Hoodless' speeches, but Razack's research provides further details of Catholic nationalism in Quebec, spanning six decades from 1900 to1960. Domestic science was used to address social concerns about the preservation of language and culture in rural communities in Quebec. This reform was welcomed by many agricultural communities who desired to extend education and improve literacy. This research illustrates how the maternal feminist ideology behind some domestic science reforms flourished within

specific socio-political contexts. Discussed below, is the complexity brought to the literature on the history of technical and vocational education via case studies and feminist critiques began to be discussed in the mid 1990s in terms of changing feminist theory that is sensitive to intersections of race, class and gender. These new theoretical conceptions included changing notions of identity and gender diversity, and are evident in the two examples that follow.

In a meta-analysis of practical strategies that attempt to deal with gender inequality in home economics (a later version of domestic science) classrooms, Linda Eyre stresses that theory is important: otherwise we run the risk of repeating the mistakes of the past (she is referring to approaches to domestic science, now categorized as "maternal feminist").[112] Eyre warns, "Without a gender sensitive and gender balanced perspective, home economics is good for patriarchy; it is neither good for women, nor men, nor ultimately for family well-being."[113] This view that home economics can be redeemed with new theoretical approaches to curriculum and textbooks is also asserted by Linda Peterat.[114]

Peterat's research calls for an understanding not only of gender as a system, but also for an appreciation that culture and race have influenced the domestic science curriculum, which has evolved from cultural understanding and traditional informal knowledge bases.[115] It is feminism that has the ability and skill to transform teaching practice in the area of family studies (a recent expansion of domestic science curriculum), but it will be a particular kind of feminism that is sensitive to a range of issues for inclusive practices and texts, not just issues of gender. Although Eyre and Peterat are primarily concerned with classroom practice, their arguments can be applied to the need for further feminist critique in the academic literature as well.

Commercial Education: A Need to Combine Gender, Class, and Curriculum

Commercial education, as investigated by case studies conducted in London, Ontario, demonstrates its association with technical and vocational schools.[116] Although much of the work done by Gaskell demonstrates the unique features and issues within commercial studies, it nonetheless has become associated with other curricula intended to

prepare students for work after leaving high school. This association makes the literature on commercial education relevant to the current study. The technical day school established in Windsor had a large commercial department that eventually grew so much that it was decided to establish a separate commercial high school.

Gaskell investigated the gendered experience of schooling through interviews with a group of girls enrolled in and/or graduated from business courses in high school.[117] From these interviews, Gaskell concludes that these courses reinforced gender inequalities by channelling girls into low paid, gender stereotyped work.[118] Several years later, Jackson and Gaskell traced the historical roots of business courses in the high school curriculum.[119] This later research illustrated a historical pattern by which commercial studies in high schools was marketed, fragmented, and feminized for the purposes of reserving power and privilege for men.

Gaskell also addresses issues of agency for girls "choosing" commercial studies courses in high school.[120] This research focuses on the process whereby girls internalize stereotypical beliefs that perpetuate social inequalities. Gaskell's study illustrates how "aware and self-directed actors" take cues from a world that is "stacked against them."[121] This gendered perspective is also supported by later work by Curtis, Livingstone, and Smaller on the "streaming" of working-class students.[122] The research on commercial studies in general suggests that vocational programs have a unique impact on the lives of girls who attend them. These girls experience not only all the issues that come with segregation by class, but also segregation within vocational schools by gender. Given the attention in the literature to curriculum geared towards girls, along with the understanding that trades have a longstanding male bias and are particularly resistant to change, attention should be directed at the historical processes by which technical and vocational schooling has been masculinised.[123] The work that has been done on industrial schools is a step in this direction. It should be noted, however, that the research examples used in the following section that focus on boys in industrial schools are not feminist critiques, but have been included because they serve as evidence of the need to scrutinize masculinity.

Industrial Education: The Need to Scrutinize Masculinity

It is clear that the industrial schools in the literature were established with different intentions than those of WDLTS. Like Toronto, however, Windsor looked to education to deal with the "boy problem," as indicated in early media releases by F.P. Gavin, who is considered the founder of technical education in Windsor. In addition, WDLTS also included curriculum that fell under the description of industrial education. Although the term *industrial education* has come to mean different things throughout the development of education for work after high school, it is clear that early forms of industrial education were created to care for children not otherwise provided for by families. This residential care was an important function of the schools, but these schools, like current vocational schools, did intend to provide an education that would prepare their students for work in industry, agriculture, and skilled trades. This meaning changed, however, with the report on industrial education by John Seath, who in 1910 used the term to refer to forms of education that prepared students for skilled trades and roles within workplaces. Another factor that altered the associations with industrial education was the closing of early residential industrial schools, which were no longer needed as Ontario's social welfare system evolved. Since WDLTS emerged well after John Seath's report, it can be assumed that industrial education no longer had a sole association with residential care, but this literature does provide a glimpse into schools and curricula designed to address the boy problem within an all-male environment. These specific case studies on the Victoria Industrial School for boys are relevant to this study for two reasons: first, they highlight the obvious need for more research on boys and gender as a system; second, the treatment of domestic duties at the Victoria Industrial School is telling regarding the value placed on work traditionally associated with women.

Research on industrial education discusses the "boy problem" in Toronto from 1883-1920.[124] Bennett illustrates that the Victoria Industrial School was intended as way of dealing with the boy problem and had quite a different approach than "do-gooders," such as J.J. Kelso, who have been characterized as social reformers intent on saving children. Industrial schools, according to Bennett, were initially intended to provide a loving but firm family atmosphere for boys. The school, however, would often become overcrowded. This chronic overcrowding, and efforts to accommodate extremely large numbers of boys,

turned the family atmosphere into an institutional one, providing custodial care at best. The boys at Victoria School distinguished themselves, and were segregated according to the work departments to which they were assigned. The youngest boys were employed in housework inside the cottages under the supervision of a matron, where they would be expected to mend, darn and knit clothing and socks. Especially dreaded by the boys at the school was laundry work. It was, accordingly, reserved for "new boys" or "lads guilty of misconduct." When a boy ran away he would be sent back to the laundry, to work his way up again.[125] These duty assignments not only helped to separate groups of boys from others, but also appear to reflect a hidden curriculum at the Victoria Industrial School that reinforced the devaluing of domestic work and skills.

Summary

As a school that offered domestic science and commercial studies as well as technical education, and that at some points in its history catered to primarily working-class boys, all of the above themes in the literature are relevant to WDLTS. The majority of the literature focused on a critical analysis of girls in domestic science and commercial studies. The work that has been done on boys at the Victoria Industrial School is highly specific and wholly lacking a critical lens for gender analysis; the literature that *has* been critical of technical and vocational secondary schools has focused primarily on social class. While case studies have provided a more nuanced look at the intersections of social class and gender, a more explicit effort needs to take place that is sensitive to existing gaps in the literature and the need to continue informing educational policy as highly specialized programs and schools geared to vulnerable student populations continue to emerge in Ontario.

There is a growing body of literature on masculinities and schooling that can aid in providing direction for filling this gap in the literature on technical schools. Primary importance has been placed on the need to situate gender in its historical context.[126] A study that spans 50 years must consider not only the complexities of gender within one time period, but also the shifts and changes that occur in those complexities over time. "All too often boys and masculinity 'have been situated as a monolithic, unitary, fixed construction

that has been culturally and socially defined within a matrix of cogent gender norms and has been vehemently positioned in opposition to anything feminine.'"[127] Frank Blye and Kevin G. Davison encourage scholars of masculinity to do what feminists have been doing for decades: to "problematize the ordinary ways in which masculinities often escape the critical eye."[128] In keeping with feminist traditions, Blye and Davison are proponents of positioning boys and schooling within the context of gendered, social, and educational relationships. By doing this, gender can be viewed not as a coherent unified practice, but as an approach with sensitivity to masculinities' multiple ways of functioning in and through educational institutions.[129] Unlike Blye and Davison, this study will focus on gender as a system of complex relations that involve identification with curriculum associated with labour vested in the binary gender system. This is something that Blye and Davison avoid because they find focussing on both boys and girls "has the effect of creating a zero-sum equation where one party inevitably loses out or absorbs greater critique."[130] In an effort to be sensitive to the "messiness" of gender, duplicating the gender binary through a categorical analysis on masculinity that assumes that it applies only to boys may function to reinforce stereotypical assumptions and false fronts that a binary places on the analysis before it even begins. When curriculum is often associated with gender, looking at the school and the student population as whole allows for an appreciation for the messiness of gender. Although WDLT is often remembered as a boys' school, the reality is that in its fifty-year history it was only officially all-boys for the final three years. During most of its history, the gender divisions at Windsor's technical secondary school existed in the context of gender divisions in labour and the gendered structures of the school's physical and cultural make-up.

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[1] Paul Axelrod. Historical Writing and Canadian Education from the 1970s to the 1990s. *History of Education Quarterly* 36, no. 1 (1996), 19-38. URL: http://www.jstor.org/stable/369299 Accessed: 17/06/2010.

[2] Robert Stamp. *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto, 1982) 82.

[3] Michael B. Katz. The Origins of Public Education: A Reassessment. *History of Education Quarterly* 16, no. 4 (1976): 384. http://www.jstor.org/stable/367722 accessed: 29/10/2008.

[4] Stamp, *Schools of Ontario,* 80.

[5] Ibid, 80.

[6] Ibid, 80.

[7] Ibid, 82.

[8] Kathleen Sharman. "The Origins and Significance of the Toronto Technical School, 1891-1904." (MEd Thesis, University of Windsor, 2006).

[9] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1923) Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 266.

[10] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1929) Legislative Assembly of Ontario, 91.

[11] When using the term "urban centre" I am referring to places where population density was increasing due to the growth in industrial jobs. Places like Windsor, Hamilton, Kitchener, Sarnia and St. Catharines were new urban centres in Ontario. These were all places where technical education was also being implemented due to needs within the local economy according to the 1925 Annual Report of the Ontario Minister of Education, see page 8 for the technical education report.

[12] Kathleen Sharman and Larry Glassford, The Appeal of Technical Education in Tough Times: A Comparison of the Toronto and Windsor Experiences, 1890 – 1930. *Historical Studies in Education*, 23 no. 2 (2011): 54-71. http://historicalstudiesineducation.ca/index.php/edu_hse-rhe/article/view/3532/4207

[13] The practice of transferring failing students to WDLVS/WDLTS had been an informal practice which became formalized and institutionalized with its closing as a stand-alone technical school, the reduction of funding, the continued and increase in special vocational schools. This process is discussed further using specific evidence in Chapter 5.

[14] Some examples of this trend are the Africentric Alternative School that began operating in September 2009 in response to an initial community request (in Toronto) for such a school in June 2007 to address a high dropout rate and achievement gap affecting students of African descent, see description of the school at http://schoolweb.tdsb.on.ca/africentricschool/Home.aspx . Calls for first all-gay high school in Toronto also occurred in 2012, see http://www.torontosun.com/2012/09/26/calls-for-first-all-gay-high-school-in-toronto . A school is in the planning stages in Ontario's Niagara region for low-income students whose parents do not have a college or university education, http://www.mytorontonews.com/2011/01/28/new-ontario-school-created-for-poor-children/

[15]Jane Gaskell. "Stereotyping and Discrimination in the Curriculum." In *Precepts, Policy and Process: Perspectives on Contemporary Canadian Education*, edited by Hugh A. Stevenson and J.D. Wilson, 263-84. (London, Ontario: Alexander Blake Associates 1977); Linda Eyre. "Gender Equity and Home Economics Curriculum" In *An Education for Women: the Founding of Home Economics Education in Canadian Public Schools*, edited by Linda Peterat and Mary Leah DeZwart, 214-222. (Charlottetown, PEI: Home Economics Publishing Collective, 1995); Linda Peterat. "Family Studies: Transforming Curriculum, Transforming Families." In *Gender In/forms Curriculum from Enrichment to Transformation*, edited by Jane Gaskell & John Willinsky, 174-90. (Toronto: Teacher's College Press, 1995); Marta Danylewycz, Nancy Fahmy-Eid and Nancy Thivierge. "Domestic Science Education in Ontario, 1900-1940." In *An Imperfect Past: Education and Society in Canadian History* edited by J. Donald Wilson, 94-119. (University of British Columbia: Canadian History of Education Association & Centre for the Study of Curriculum and Instruction, 1984);Wolfgang

Lehman, "Choosing to Labour: Structure and Agency in School-Work Transitions," *Canadian Journal of Sociology* 303 (2005): 325-375.

[16] Joan Scott, Gender: A Useful Category for Analysis*. The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053-1075.

[17] Bruce Curtis, D.W. Livingstone and Harry Smaller. *Stacking the Deck: The Streaming of Working-Class Kids in Ontario Schools.* (Montreal: Our Schools/Our Selves Education Foundation, 1992); Danylewycz, Fahmy-Eid and Thivierge, "Domestic Science"; Goodson and Dowbiggin, "Vocational Education and School Reform"; Jackson and Gaskell, "White Collar Vocationalism"; Kathleen Sharman. "The Origins and Significance of the Toronto Technical School, 1891-1904." (MEd Thesis, University of Windsor, 2006); Lehmann, "Choosing to Labour"; Morrison, "Reform as Social Tracking"; Rafferty, "Apprenticeships Legacy"; Richard D. Heyman, Robert F. Lawson and Robert Stamp. *Studies in Educational Change*. (Toronto: Holt Rinehart and Winston of Canada Limited, 1972); Sheryl Susan Freeman "The Intersection of Policy and Practice in One Stand-Alone Vocational School: The ABC Story" PhD Diss., Ontario Institute for Studies in Education of the University of Toronto, 2006); Smaller, "Vocational Education".

[18] The intersection of class and gender is a main focus of Joan Sangter's research on education for working-class girls. See chapter 2 in, Joan Sangster. *Earning Respect: The Lives of Working Women in Small-Town Ontario, 1920-1960.* (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press. 1995).

[19] Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category."

[20] See news article authored by F.P. Gavin in Chapter 2, on pages 44 -45.

[21] Report of the Royal Commission on Border Cities Amalgamation, April, 1935. Province of Ontario, Department of Municipal Affairs. Toronto Ontario: T.E. Bowman Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty. https://ia600608.us.archive.org/6/items/amalgamationcomm00onta/amalgamationcomm00onta.pdf

[22] Government to Withdraw from Cost-shared Education Programs. *Technical and Vocational Education in Canada*, Issue 10, Fall & Winter, 1966/67. 33.

[23] This statement refers to the ever increasing expectation in Ontario since the Adolescent School Attendance Act was passed in 1921, that secondary education should be mandatory for all youth. All exemptions to mandatory education in legislation were removed by 1970 and school leaving age continues to be extended (current school leaving age in Ontario is 18). Further, the inclusion of special education in the 1970s brought a broader scope of ability into schools. See block quote in Chapter 4, page 109 for documented critiques cited by Harry Smaller that appeared in Toronto Newspapers in the late 1960s and early 1970s that serve as evidence of diversity as a pressing challenge for Ontario's school boards.

[24] Compare chapter 2's more detailed outline of how terms like *technical* and *vocational* were used to chapter 4's documentation of later uses of both terms, which gradually took on distinctions related to academic ability.

[25] In Gidney, R.D. and W.P.J. Millar. *How Schools Worked. Public Education in English Canada, 1900-1940*. Montreal, Quebec: McGill Queen's University Press, 2012, Gidney & Millar clearly demonstrate that "the vast majority of school attenders during the interwar years – and substantially more than half in the years before that lived in rural communities" (p. 11) using descriptive statistics, there is a qualitative difference in urban and rural experiences and stand-alone vocational schools played an important role in illustrating how

schools "actually operated within the opportunities the world around them provided and the constraints that world imposed" (p. xviii) even if it is for the most part an urban pattern of schooling. I contend that descriptive statistics are unable to illustrate that in every community that a stand-alone school existed they influenced the population profile of every other secondary school from which it drew students. This research contributes to that appreciation.

[26] Michael Katz, On Rewriting the Undeserving Poor. October 2, 2013. http://www.berfrois.com/2013/10/michael-b-katz-on-rewriting-the-undeserving-poor/ Accessed on: July 9, 2014.

[27] Ibid.

[28] See the work of Donna Harraway

[29] See the work of Sandra Harding

[30] Judith Lorber. "Shifting Paradigms and Challenging Categories." *Social Problems* 53, no. 4 (2006): 448.

[31] Ibid, 452.

[32] Leslie McCall. "The Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs* 30, no. 3 (2005):1777.

[33] Christopher J. Greig, *Ontario Boys: Masculinity and the Idea of Boyhood in Postwar Ontario, 1941—1960.* (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2014): xiii.

[34] R. W. Connell and James W. Messerschmidt. "Hegemonic Masculinity: Rethinking the Concept." *Gender Society* 19 (2005):854.

[35] Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall. "Toward a Field of Intersectionality Studies: Theory, Applications, and Praxis." *Signs* 38, no. 4 (2013):797.

[36] Ibid, 797.

[37] Ibid, 797.

[38] Leslie McCall. "The Complexity of Intersectionality." *Signs* 30, no. 3 (2005):1773.

[39] Sandra Harding, ed. *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies.* (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 2004).

[40] Alison Wylie. Why Standpoint Matters. In *The Feminist Standpoint Theory Reader: Intellectual and Political Controversies*, edited by Sandra Harding (New York, N.Y.: Routledge, 2004).

[41] Wylie. "Why Standpoint Matters."

[42] Judith Butler. Giving an Account of Oneself. U.S.A: Fordham University Press 2005: 20.

[43]Sandra Harding, ed. *Feminist Standpoint*.

[44] Constance L. Russell "Minding the Gap between Methodological Desires and Practices." OISE Papers in STSE Education (2002): 125-134.

[45] Patti Lather. "Fertile Obsession: Validity after Poststructuralism." *The Sociological Quarterly* 34, no.4 (1993): 673.

[46] Not only have I experienced this shift personally, but it is also noted in the literature, for example: Aaron Benavot. 1983. "The Rise and Decline of Vocational Education." *Sociology of Education* 56:63-76; Lyons, John E., Bikkar S. Randhawa and Neil A. Paulson. "The Development of Vocational Education in Canada" *Canadian Journal of Education* 16, no. 2 (1991): 137-150. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1494967; Harry Smaller "Vocational Education in Ontario's Secondary Schools: Past, Present – and Future?" In Integrating School and Workplace Learning in Canada: Principles and Practices of Alternation Education and Training, edited by Hans G. Schuetze and Robert Sweet, 95-112. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

[47] Research on broader trends such as: Benavot, "The Rise and Decline of Vocational Education" indicate that vocational programs are on the decline, and that broader trend is certainly reflected in Windsor, which one had one technical school (opened in 1923), one commercial school (opened in 1959), two junior vocational schools (opened in 1964), and three vocational schools (opened between 1966-1976), but only one vocational school remains (Western Secondary School) as of September 2014.

[48] The word success is used to indicate the perception in the community of WDLTS being a key element in the local economy. WDLTS was a school that helped to create skilled workers for automotive production, particularly leaders and innovators in the tool, die, and mold industry.

[49] The evidence I am referng to in this study includes textual evidence from personal and local archives, educational reports and records from the provincial archives, local news articles, local history books, as well as a questionnaire distributed to alumni (see appendix) at WDLTS 90th reunion which was approved by the research and ethics board.

[50] See Appendix A for the questionnaire and letter of information that was distributed at the "W.D. Lowe 90th Anniversary Reunion" on Friday May 17, 2013. I did not initially intent on using a questionnaire in this research, but the opportunity to attend the reunion presented itself and my REB application was revised and approved to include a very short questionnaire which was returned by one teacher and three students who taught at and attended WDLTS between the years1947 to 1973.

[51] The use of the term progress in this study is used to describe the adaptations of the school, such as the initial views that determined a need for the school, the leadership of Principal W.D. Lowe, four changes to the name of the school, struggles in the 1950s in relation to changes that were internal and external to the school, curriculum change in the 1960s, the definition of WDLTS as an all-boys' school from 1970 – 1973, and finally the decision to close the school.

[52] Peter Siexas and Tom Morton. The Big Six: Historical Thinking Concepts. Toronto, Ontario: Nelson Education Ltd. 2013. http://historicalthinking.ca/sites/default/files/Guideposts.pdf.

[53] Jack R. Fraenkel and Norman E. Wallen, *How to Design and Evaluate Research in Education*, 5th edition. (New York, NY: McGraw-Hill Higher Education, 2003), 546-567.

[54] Scott, "Gender: A Useful Category."

[55]Joan W. Scott. "Deconstructing Equality-Versus-Difference: Or, the Uses of Poststructuralist Theory for Feminism" In *Feminist Social Thought: A Reader*, edited by Diana Tietjens Meyers, 758-770. (New York: Routledge, 1997).

[56] Robert. M. Stamp "*The Campaign for Technical Education, 1876-1914*". (PhD Diss., University of Western Ontario, 1970).

[57] Rafferty, "Apprenticeships Legacy."

[58] Paul W. Bennet. "Turning Bad Boys into Good Citizens": The Reformatory Impulse of Toronto's Industrial School Movement, 1883-1920s" Ontario History 78, no.3 (1986): 209-227.

[59] Cynthia R. Comacchio. The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of a Modern Canada, 1920-1950. (Waterloo: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2006).

[60] Lyons, John E., Bikkar S. Randhawa and Neil A. Paulson. "The Development of Vocational Education in Canada" *Canadian Journal of Education* 16, no. 2 (1991): 137-150. http://www.jstor.org/stable/1494967 Our Latin Grammar Schools and Grammar Schools were a British tradition, 138; Smaller, "Vocational Education"; Stamp, "Technical Education".

[61] Sharman, *The Origins and Significance*, 41.

[62] Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*, 409.

[63] Christopher J. Anstead, and Ivor F. Goodson. 1993. "Structure and Mediation: Glimpses of Everyday Life at the London Technical and Commercial High School, 1920-1940." *American Journal of Education* 102 (1):55-79.

[64] George S. Tompkins. *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum.* (Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1986)

[65] Comacchio, *Dominion of Youth*.

[66] Ibid, 408.

[67] Ibid, 409.

[68] Tompkins, "A Common Countenance," 166.

[69] Aaron Benavot. 1983. "The Rise and Decline of Vocational Education." *Sociology of Education* 56:63-76.

[70] Ibid.

[71] Ibid.

[72] Ibid.

[73] Harry Smaller "Vocational Education in Ontario's Secondary Schools: Past, Present – and Future?" In Integrating School and Workplace Learning in Canada: Principles and Practices of Alternation Education and Training, edited by Hans G. Schuetze and Robert Sweet, 95-112. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2003).

[74] Robert Stamp, "Technical Education, the National Policy, and Federal Provincial Relations in Canadian Education, 1899-1919" *The Canadian Historical Review* LII, no. 4 (1971): 404-425.

[75] John E. Lyons, Bikkar S. Randawa & Neil A Paulson. "The Development of Vocational Education in Canada." *Canadian Journal of Education* 16, no.2 (1991); 137-150. Our Latin Grammar Schools and Grammar Schools were a British tradition, 148-49.

[76] Alison Taylor. 1997. "Educational for Industrial Purposes." *Educational Policy* 11(1):3-40.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Michael Apple, *Official Knowledge.* (New York: Routledge, 1993).

[79] Taylor. *Education of Industrial Purposes*, 1997.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Toronto City council established a committee for technical education, which led to recommendations for a school, and moved forward with a by-law unaware that they did not have the power to do so (RG2-42-0-6597). Subsequently the province provided legislation for the city to continue with their plans by amending the Municipal Act in 1891 (Municipal Amendment Act, 1891).

[82] Sharman, "Origins and Significance."

[83]Patrice Milewski. 2010. "The Scientisation of Schooling in Ontario, 1910-1934." Paedagogica Historica 46.3: 341-355.

[84] Ivor F. Goodson and Ian R. Dowbiggan."Vocational Education and School Reform: The Case of the London (Ontario) Technical School, 1900-1930." *History of Education Review* 20, no. 1 (1991): 39-60.

[85] Ibid.

[86] Ibid, 41.

[87] Ivor F. Goodson and Christopher J. Anstead. "Subject Status and Curriculum Change: Commercial Education in London, Ontario, 1920-1940." In Through the Schoolhouse Door: Working Papers. (London, Ontario: Garamond Press/Ruccus, 1993), 171-199.

[88] Goodson and Dowbiggin, "Vocational Education and School Reform."

[89] Christopher J. Anstead and Ivor F. Goodson "Structure and Mediation: Glimpses of Everyday Life at the London Technical and Commercial High School, 1920-1940." *American Journal of Education* 102, no. 1 (1993):55-79.

[90] Goodson and Anstead, "Subject Status and Curriculum Change."

[91] Freeman, "ABC Story."

[92] Ibid.

[93] Taylor, "Education for Industrial Purposes."

[94] Freeman, “ABC Story.”

[95] Goodson and Anstead, “Subject Status and Curriculum Change.”

[96] Lehman, “Choosing to Labour,” 325-375.

[97] Joan Scott, “Gender: A Useful Category for Analysis,” *The American Historical Review* 91, no. 5 (1986): 1053-1075.

[98] Danylewycz, Fahmy-Eid and Thivierge. “Domestic Science,” 1984.

[99] Crowley, "Madonnas before Magdalenes," 1986.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ruby Heap. “Schooling Women for Home or for Work? Vocational Education for Women in Ontario in the Early Twentieth Century: The Case of the Toronto Technical High School: 1892-1920.” In Gender and Education in Ontario: An Historical Reader, edited by Alison Prentice & Ruby Heap 195-243. (Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press Inc., 1991).

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

[104] Crowley, "Madonnas before Magdalenes," 1986.

[105] Heap, “Schooling Women,” 1991.

[106] Crowley, "Madonnas before Magdalenes," 1986; Patrick Oisin Rafferty. “Apprenticeships Legacy: The Social and Educational Goals of Technical Education in Ontario, 1860 – 1911.” Ph.D. diss., McMaster University, 1995.

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[108] Ibid, 258.

[109] Ibid.

[110] Rafferty, “Apprenticeships Legacy,” 1995.

[111] Sherene Razack. “Schools for Happiness: Institutes Familiaux and the Education for Ideal Wives and Mothers.” In *Rethinking Canada: The Promise of Women's History*, edited by Veronica Strong-Boag and Anita Clair Fellman, 356-75. Toronto: Copp Clark Pitman Ltd, 1991.

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[113] Ibid, 222.

[114] Linda Peterat, 1995.

[115] Ibid.

[116] Anstead and Goodson1993; Goodson and Anstead1993; Goodson and Dowbiggin1991.

[117] Jane Gaskell, 1981.

[118] Ibid.

[119] Nancy Jackson and Jane Gaskell, "White Collar Vocationalism."

[120] Jane Gaskell, "Stereotyping and Discrimination."

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[122] Curtis, Livingstone & Smaller, "Stacking the Deck."

[123] Lehman, "Choosing to Labour," 2005.

[124] Paul W. Bennett. "Turning "Bad Boys" into "Good Citizens": The Reforming Impulse of Toronto's Industrial School Movement, 1883-1920's" *Ontario History* 78, no. 3 (1986): 209-232.

[125] Paul W. Bennett. "Taming "Bad Boys" of the "Dangerous Class": Child Rescue and Restraint at the Victoria Industrial School 1887-1935" Histoire Sociale-Social History 21, no.41 (May 1988): 71-96, 86.

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[128] Frank W. Blye and Kevin G. Davison eds. *Masculinities and Schooling: International Practices and Perspectives*. (London, Ontario: The Althouse Press. 2007).

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[130] Ibid, xii.

Chapter 2: Vision into Reality: The Years of Growth, 1913-1930

> *Schools function as cultural sites actively engaged in the production not only of knowledge but of social identities*[1]. -Henry A. Giroux

The inside cover of the 1929 Windsor Walkerville Technical School yearbook celebrated the school's growth. It reported that in the first five years, the school population more than doubled. During the first year, enrollment for the day school was 650 students; by 1929 enrollment had reached 1,500 students.[2] This success could simply be attributed to the growth of the surrounding population, attracted to the industrial jobs emerging in the area over the last decade, but strong leadership was also a factor.

The recognition of the school's first principal, William Duff Lowe, by the Ontario Educational Association (OEA) at the annual meeting in 1929 would also attest to the successful leadership at WWTS. W.D. Lowe was named head of technical education for the OEA. In his address to OEA members, Lowe presented a paper on academic work required for technical school students. This speech emphasized that academics were just as important as practical work, a position later applauded at the technical school board meeting on April 15, 1929 where Lowe reread the address.[3] So while there is no doubt that the growing population in Windsor and Walkerville might account for the increased enrollment at WWTS, the perspective that technical education offered both practical and academic opportunities for youth in the region was a strength that would serve as a point of pride for the school. The leadership role in the OEA attained by W.D. Lowe is evidence of his influence on the school's success.

The establishment of WWTS, and its success, required more than willing students and a strong leader. Local support, popular evening classes, and provincial and federal funding all aligned to create a school that reflected a specific vision, as well as locally determined needs at the time. This chapter will present the factors that came together between 1913 and 1930 to create a successful stand-alone technical school. WWTS began as a vision by F.P. Gavin in 1913. As political support came together at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels, Gavin's vision of a technical school became a reality. Once in place, W.D. Lowe's leadership created a positive and lasting reputation for the school

in the community. The following section provides the local historical and geographical elements that contributed to WWTS's success.

Historical and Geographical Context of the Windsor (and Border Cities[4]) Region 1854-1913

Windsor was incorporated as a village in 1854[5] and grew quickly, according to James Dougall,[6] who noted that "As the village of Windsor increased with such rapidity…the old brick school house was no longer able to contain the pupils."[7] Four years later, in 1858, this small village was incorporated as a town. Its early growth can be attributed to its position at the junction of major rail and water transportation routes. This was later augmented in the twentieth-century by the advent of automobile manufacturing. In 1903, the Ford Motor Company was incorporated in Detroit, Michigan, and by the following year a Canadian branch plant had been established.[8] When the U.S. automotive industry established production plants in the Border Cities, population growth followed, leading inevitably to economic and social changes.

Windsor's geographic location made it an important gateway between Canada and the United States, and, transportation routes were important in its economy. In addition to having the most paved roadways in North America[9], Windsor also marked the point of entry for all main rail trunk lines as it does to this day. A railway tunnel running under the Detroit River was opened in 1910, assisting the commercial and economic growth of the entire mid-west. This first decade of the twentieth century was also the golden age of the trolley car and the excursion steamer; ferry services for both trains and automobiles between Detroit and Windsor added to the transportation landscape.[10] A remarkable feat of engineering by William Livingstone created the Livingstone Channel, which opened the lower Detroit River up for large ship navigation in 1912.[11] Thanks to its ready access to Detroit, the Border Cities became, in the span of less than two decades, a hub of manufacturing for the automotive industry in Canada.

As the automobile industry grew in Windsor, it attracted people to the area. Windsor's population grew from 16,147 in 1909 to 22,077 in 1913 and to 38,591 in 1921.[12] Approximately 1,500 men were employed by the Ford Motor Company in 1915.[13]

The major automobile plants in operation were the Studebaker Company, General Motors, and the Chrysler Corporation. By 1908, Model T production was in full swing, and in 1913, assembly line techniques were introduced[14]. Ford's assembly line production made cars more affordable than ever before. Assembly-line production required new kinds of talent and skill that builders in Windsor had to learn. The stereotype of assembly-line production as a well-planned and finely-honed process was hardly the reality in the early days. The first site of assembly was a makeshift wagon works owned by Gordon McGregor.[15] Initially efficient assembly:

> …was a struggle, but McGregor assembled cars one-by-one with chassis and other parts ferried from Detroit, then relayed by horse and wagon to the factory. Wrong parts were often shipped or lost, forcing McGregor to lose time.[16]

Even as production increased, the pace of activity was often casual. In 1907 when Robert Conklin, an implements dealer from Kingsville, Ontario, dropped in unexpectedly to buy a car from Gordon McGregor, everyone in the office was at lunch. To kill time, he wandered through the adjacent shed, where a few Ford cars of the B, C, K and N classes were in the process of manufacture, but there was no one there either. When McGregor finally did return, Conklin ordered a Model N.[17]

The reliance on Detroit for specialized parts production was a critical problem for early assembly efforts in the Border Cities. To achieve independence from their parent plants in the United States would require workers here to gain skills and knowledge. The situation is explained best in the book *Windsor 1892-1992: A Centennial Celebration*.[18] In this illustrated history, Windsor is described as inferior to Detroit in the technical skill of its manufacturing processes. In the early years of industrial growth, the region was protected to a degree national policies that encouraged investment in new manufacturing for Canadian markets.

> American entrepreneurs sensed opportunities in penetrating the Canadian market. Windsor branch plants could operate at a price advantage within the Canadian market, using U.S. technology, management direction from the Detroit parent plant and many component parts produced there…The problem of such an industrial gestation is that it was not completely based on indigenous capital; consequently, a portion of the profits was repatriated

> to the U.S. It was not based on home-grown technology either, and therefore research, development and product innovation did not occur here. This meant that Windsor was unable to achieve a high-level technical work force comparable to that of Michigan.[19]

As the auto industry expanded, more parts were made in Windsor, and "by the 1920s many new manufacturers had joined in making parts and products for Ford here in the Border Cities instead of bringing in most of the parts from Detroit."[20] Ford Motor Company reported to the technical school board that they were experiencing difficulty getting trained die-makers, and had taken to training tool makers themselves in the art of die-making.[21] Slowly, small production shops began to emerge. These small machine shops were the creative lifeblood of the assembly lines, providing innovative fine tuning to designs of the cars as models evolved and changed. In the first two decades of the twentieth century the citizens of the Border Cities were witness to a whirlwind of change brought about by technical innovation and skill. The skills, however, were taking on new forms.

New assembly line production demanded knowledge of machines used in assembly, as well as specialized parts production. Early efforts to respond to auto industry needs, such as the establishment of Windsor Machine in 1923 to provide jigs and fixtures for the Ford model T, would help make manufacturing and assembly more independent from the U.S.[22] The demand for new kinds of skilled labour gave direct rise to a demand for technical education. As assembly line production was fine tuned and Windsor realized its reliance on Detroit for the technical skills needed to make specialized parts, technical education became a local issue. This local struggle for technical skill is important for understanding WWTS and the role it would play in the local economy.

The small production plants and tool-making departments at Ford Motor Company as well as a variety of small locally-owned shops extended the life of the apprenticeship system in Windsor. Windsor had identified technical education as a way to supply not only the "infantry of troops for the industrial army"[23] but apprentices and even potential students for the new post-secondary practical science programs that were emerging, such as the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto.[24] WWTS prepared apprentices to learn specialized parts production on the job while most other

urban centres saw such job training relocated from the factory or shop floor to the school.[25] Employers and students were aware that those with technical skill and business knowledge became part of an emerging working-class elite, since graduates from technical programs filled a need for apprentices in small production sites. Suitably trained apprentices were highly valuable and sought after due to their short supply. For instance, George Dixon, a tool maker in the Canadian Ford plant in 1906, "earned the incredibly high wage of 35 cents an hour because of his skill making front axles. The average worker made 17 cents at a time when a good meal with a beer cost 20 cents and a hotel room cost 12 dollars a month."[26]

Since high schools and collegiate institutes, in their traditional format, would not have been the most practical choice for some young men, technical schools may have had particular appeal for working-class male youth. Further, labour populations were at the center of great public uneasiness just prior to federal legislation that more fully supported technical and vocational high schools. High postwar unemployment was aggravated by returning soldiers, and the Winnipeg General Strike attested to the need for drastic measures.[27] It was a time of defining new conceptions of social reality.[28] Mass production placed an increasing reliance on industrial machines and produced a new working-class hierarchy: some men worked alongside machines, some men had skill enough to fix and maintain machines, some men could produce tools and machines, and still others could design and invent new machines.[29] Those involved in the design and creation of machines were the new working-class elite, the new self-made-men in industrial capitalism.[30] The emerging definitions of the new social reality were reflected in a curriculum which could offer opportunities to rise within this new local hierarchy, which was no doubt highly attractive to many male students. Evening technical classes and technical departments within existing schools proved appealing in several cities in the province.[31] The demand in cities and industrial towns prompted provincial, and eventually federal, support for a major expansion of technical education.

The Political Context

The emergence of technical and vocational high schools in Canada in the early twentieth century slowly built momentum over the first two decades of the twentieth

century. As Canada became more and more industrialized and urbanized, pressure from a variety of groups and organizations demanded a change in the public education system, which was only serving a small minority of the public. When investigative commissions made the recommendation that the federal government provide funds for technical education across the country, legislative change followed that would provide the long awaited support for cities like Windsor to realize the vision of a stand-alone technical school. At the same time, provincial legislation in Ontario laid the firm groundwork for many municipalities in the province to start evening classes and open technical departments within existing high schools and collegiate institutes.

In 1909, the Ontario provincial government commissioned a report on technical education to be conducted by John Seath.[32] On December 1910, after a tour of Europe and the United States, Seath published the report entitled *Education for Industrial Purposes*.[33] Seath's main concern was for the large number of children who left school with only an elementary school education. These children were not prepared in any way for industrial jobs. From this vantage point, technical education was needed for the children not inclined to attend high school. Further, Seath argued that the creation of technical and industrial schools would preserve the standards of Ontario elementary and high schools.[34] Seath recommended that Ontario offer industrial schools for those students who would not pass high school entrance examinations, and technical schools and departments for students requiring specialized technical knowledge and possibly post-secondary education.[35] Seath provided mainly socioeconomic reasons for providing technical and industrial education, an idea much more palatable to the government than were earlier arguments that focused on morality. Within three months of the publication of Seath's report, the provincial legislature passed the Industrial Education Act of 1911.[36]

The new provincial legislation supporting technical and industrial education would provide for students who would not complete elementary education by offering two years of industrial schooling in order to defer young workers entrance into the workplace. The Industrial Education Act would also offer what was termed "special industrial education" if students wanted to continue their education by adding more theoretical knowledge.[37] Those students who had graduated from elementary school could pursue technical education within technical departments in existing high schools or attend

a stand-alone technical high school with the same academic rigor expected within regular high school programming. This legislation would also provide generous and much-needed financial support required for start up costs and maintenance of all technical, commercial, and agricultural programs.

In 1910—at the same time that Seath had been preparing his report for the provincial government—Canada had created a royal commission to investigate technical education. The commission's report was released in 1913. The report gave every hope that the federal government could financially support technical education. It stated that provisions would be made to support "equality of opportunity for all preparing for industrial, agricultural and housekeeping occupations."[38] It suggested that annual grants amounting to three million dollars should be offered to provinces based on population distribution and coordinated by advisory committees at the local, provincial, and federal levels. The funds were to be used for the establishment, maintenance, and extension of schools, including all equipment, supplies, student scholarships, teaching staff, and executive officers.[39]

These intentions, however, were put on hold until the war ended in 1918. Long-awaited federal legislation was finally passed in 1919. The Technical Education Act of 1919 clarified the division of responsibilities between the provinces and the federal government.[40] The federal government would pay out ten million dollars over a ten-year period. Provinces would have to signify a desire to take advantage of technical education by passing legislation to that effect. Provincial reports would have to be made annually to account for spending, which was not to exceed the grant.[41] Ontario was ready to take full advantage of these funds, utilizing the entire amount available from the federal government.[42]

Ontario as a whole was well situated to make the best use of the federal monies offered for technical education, especially after the war. In a press release, Minister of Education H.J. Cody described technical high schools as "great centres of re-education" for youth, men already in industry, and returning soldiers.[43] Cody emphasized the returning soldier's potential role as male teachers responding to a scarcity that posed a significant barrier to establishing more secondary technical schools.[44] The 1920s had witnessed a surge in female teachers, leading to some public anxiety about the

feminization of high schools; added to the growth in number of technical classrooms, this anxiety fueled a burgeoning demand for male teachers. With additional funding from the federal government, the province was able to recruit and train male teachers to prepare for the sudden spike in interest among school boards that the new funds would generate. Technical schools in Toronto hired double the number of men as women teachers between 1920 and 1930,[45] a pattern no doubt indicative of the new funding for technical high schools and the incentive provided for teacher training by the provincial government.

Cody hoped that these schools would "lead boys to like school and want to continue their school life...the school...produces familiarity with machines and tools, and the rationale for operations. It develops in the boys good judgment and a sense of values, clearness of thought and accuracy of hand, and the self confidence that can come only from production."[46] With policies and philosophies aligned, Windsor could confidently look to a new stand-alone technical high school suited well to local needs, the aims and objectives of the Ontario Educational Association, and the provincial government. Federal funding provided the last piece of support required to make such an undertaking possible.

By the time of Cody's press release, enough reasons had mounted that if a city had not begun to take steps to acquire technical education for its citizens, then the question became, why? In two scathing articles that appeared on the same day, the *Border Cities Star* indicated in no uncertain terms that the time had come to take concrete actions to establish a day school in the region. On January 14, 1919, an article appeared in the *Border Cities Star* entitled "Technical Education in Demand." This article was a reaction to a survey conducted by "the research council," results previously released in the *Toronto Globe*. The results of the survey, the article pointed out, were in no way flattering to Canada. Canadian legislators needed to do more to encourage technical training. The expenditures on the Massachusetts Institute of Technology alone by the United States government exceeded the combined expenditures of all faculties of applied science in Canada.

> Britain too, long before the war, had begun to equip herself with technical schools which are second to none with assistance from the

> government…for all boys and girls up to the age of eighteen, and if they are employed after sixteen, they are allowed time off to study, with pay. British employers are not only heartily in favor of this better education, but are offering special rewards and inducements to those who avail themselves of it.
> Everywhere there is keen desire among young craftsmen to improve themselves in the knowledge of their trade and profession. There is a responsibility upon employers as well as on the government, federal or provincial, to afford better facilities to the younger workers to get the benefits of vocational education. Canada has long leeway to make up. In the matter of its elementary education Ontario holds a foremost place among the provinces. By stepping out in technical education and the encouragement of scientific research it will lay the foundation of future industrial prosperity of the province strong and wide.[47]

On the adjacent page, a large article on the results of a report by school inspector R. Meade informed the school board that no less than twelve of its elementary classes were overcrowded, and lacked up-to-date accommodations; therefore Windsor needed another school. Meade suggested that a new school should be built in the south east section of the city, as well as another school in a central location, on Victoria Avenue. The school board was to take immediate action on the report.[48] The appearance of these two articles, almost side-by-side in the local newspaper, seems purposeful. On one hand, there was a scathing review of the slow progress on technical education, while an adjacent article pointed out the near emergency conditions of elementary schools in Windsor. The combination of these two articles suggested that perhaps Windsor was not living up to province wide educational standards

In 1920, Canada had amended its Technical Education Act, to financially reward those provinces that had already invested in technical education; Ontario was eligible for those funds.[49] In 1921, the province passed The Vocational Education Act which outlined the programs for day and evening classes and the structure and jurisdiction of advisory committees.[50] Due to the earlier steps taken by the provincial government in Ontario, Windsor had already established evening classes and a technical department in the collegiate school, so a well-informed and dedicated advisory committee was already taking steps toward establishing a technical school. With all the necessary supports in place and leeway given to develop curriculum suited to the local economy, Windsor was

in an optimal position to establish a technical school suited to local need and vision. That vision began with F.P. Gavin.

F.P. Gavin's Vision for Technical Education

At the suggestion of F.P. Gavin, principal at the Windsor Collegiate Institute, the Windsor school board had begun as early as 1913 to entertain the idea of introducing technical education. With the support of the province, which had already passed both the Industrial Education Act (1911)[51] and the Adolescent Attendance Act (1912)[52], Windsor was well prepared to meet its communities' changing educational needs.

The Windsor School Board established an advisory committee headed by Gavin to investigate the possibility of offering "industrial night classes" for both men and women at the collegiate institute where Gavin was principal.[53] Once the popularity of industrial evening classes was established, it paved the way for city-wide support of a new technical wing in the Windsor Collegiate Institute to accommodate day pupils.[54] The technical wing of the school was opened to students in 1917 with evening classes continuing as usual. After several years of offering night school, Gavin developed strong opinions about boys staying in school rather than working. He wanted to provide alternatives for boys in the community, but felt that day classes in particular would address the root cause of the problems at hand.

In the spring of 1917 Gavin presented his vision for industrial training in the *Border Cities Star*.[55] Gavin was concerned about the effects that current industrial conditions had on boys and presented a preventative measure in a proposed educational change within the city. He provided Windsor with a detailed account of his vision for change:

> A serious defect in our school system – or rather our social system – is the absence of supervision by the state over boys of the age 13…to…17 who are not in school, and any plan where-by boys leaving the school may be directed into paths of permanent and useful employment. That this defect is being realized by schoolmen and statesmen is shown by the efforts being made in different countries to retain the children in school for a longer time and to give them a greater opportunity of securing an education that will be directly helpful to them on entering industrial life.
>
> Under our present school law large numbers of children leave the public schools at the age of 14, or even younger, without having finished

the public school course. For 1915, the latest returns available, Windsor shows in its public and separate schools:

Primer……1,379 pupils
Book 1 ….. 765
Book 2 ….. 795
Book 3 ….. 774
Book 4 ….. 526
4,230 pupils

…A large number of pupils who had reached the third or fourth book dropped out of school. Boys at this age are in greater need of friendly supervision, kindly advice, and constant vigilance than at any other period in their lives. Passing out of school they are suddenly set free from discipline and in too many cases from all bonds of restraint. The danger is great and the result often disastrous.

Physical degeneracy and under development is not the least of the results often seen. One of the after-the-war changes Great Britain is now providing is for more efficient physical education of her youth.

The boy who leaves school at the age of adolescence to take the usual boy's job as messenger, etc. in many cases suffers a deterioration of character. The gangs of hooligans loafing about street corners until all hours of the night are not made up of boys attending school.

Boys who leave school at 14 are not mature enough either mentally or physically. Those who employ child labor without furnishing them with the conditions for growth and training are receiving a subsidy from the nation, while at the same time, causing expense and loss to the nation on the other.

…The boy is a future citizen and producer. If he becomes economically swamped in the cheaper and unskilled grades of work he is not likely to show much intelligence or energy in his life as a citizen or to feel very keenly his responsibilities to the state. Indeed he may feel he owes no duty to the state.

The solution of this maladjustment between the school and industry seems to be to keep the youth in school a whole or part of the time until he is economically fit to enter industry. …and yet schools do not provide any sort of instruction that will justify keeping in school those looking forward to industrial life. …Further the boy who leaves school too soon increases his earning power so slowly, and soon reaching a maximum – the low maximum of unskilled labor, that he really never catches up in earning power and productive efficiency [as] the boy who stays in school. The gain is very temporary.

A large number of the boys who leave school under this conviction are the so called motor-minded boys. They want to make things, to see the wheels go round, work with their hands. They do not take to the usual book studies and school methods and fall behind in their classes, become discouraged and indifferent, and want to go to work. And yet these boys are better off in school than in industry.

> What is wanted for these boys is such a modification of the usual school course as will meet their needs and abilities. Under the Industrial Education Act of Ontario such a modification can be made…In Windsor the time seems especially opportune to do something. The completion of the addition to the collegiate institute, with its shops, makes it possible for the first time to seriously consider establishing an industrial day school.[56]

The full-page article continued, describing the success and offerings of the industrial evening courses which have been in place since 1913. Gavin made clear, though, that while these evening classes were needed they were a corrective measure for a problem that, he proposed had a fuller solution – a technical day school. Gavin had seen the social and economic effects via attendance at the night school. His experience in evening industrial classes provided evidence for his argument in favour of day classes catering to young men who needed to be in school rather than prematurely in the work place.

To take this point one step further, an article by George A Courtenay, Chairman and Secretary of the Technical Advisory Board, appeared on the same page of the paper to discuss the type of education the community needed.[57] This article stated that while Windsor had not yet enforced the Adolescent Attendance Act, some educators advocated a by-law to enforce attendance by those students who would otherwise drop out of school in the third and fourth classes. Courtenay cited London, Ontario, as a town that enforced the Adolescent Attendance Act and hence was able not only to establish technical classes, but also to build Ontario's first specially-designed technical school. A technical school was Courtenay's desire for Windsor as well. Courtenay believed that nothing short of a "Trade School," equipped with "lathes, drills and other machines," would entice the so-called "motor minded" boy to stay in school beyond the fourth book, or after finishing elementary school.

The initial leadership provided by F.P. Gavin, has earned him the epithet "father of technical education in Windsor."[58] Gavin's views and leadership did not go unnoticed by the Department of Education. In January 1919, Gavin announced to the school board that he had accepted a position with the Department of Education as the assistant director of industrial and technical education for Ontario.[59] Gavin was to assume his duties with

the province at the end of the term in June. This appointment provided an advantage for the local efforts to establish a day school. Gavin would be a well-informed advocate at Queen's Park for establishing a technical school, making the process more efficient. In addition, Gavin had a vested interest in getting the best technical school possible for Windsor. Gavin worked closely with the school board to choose his successor at Windsor Collegiate Institute. That successor was W.D. Lowe. On April 18, 1919, it was publicly announced that Lowe had been chosen from 25 applicants to become principal at the collegiate school in the fall.[60]

The school board put together an advisory commission in the fall of 1919 for the purpose of starting up the new technical school. The first meeting of the commission took place on November 17, 1919. "The…provisional commission, composed of one representative from each school board in the Border Cities and a representative from the municipality of Ojibway, [had] been appointed to deal with the proposal to establish a technical training school in the border district..."[61]The committee quickly requested that W.F. Merchant (director of technical education with the department of education) meet with them to guide the committee through the steps required to establish a technical school. At the meeting, Merchant informed the committee that if they wanted a day school that would serve the border cities region, special by-laws would have to be passed by the participating municipalities acknowledging a "union school".[62] Further, a survey of the region's industries would be the first step required to determine the school's location, the space needed, and a curriculum that was suited to the local economy.

The technical education commission moved swiftly to arrange a community information meeting at the collegiate institute. This meeting was intended to inform ratepayers in the border cities about the plan for a new school that would serve the entire region and get crucial feedback from the public on the idea. Community feedback would serve as justification for by-laws the committee planned to request from city council.

With by-laws in place, the committee's next step was to survey the region's industries. The survey, entitled "Where Employed Men Reside," calculated the number of men, as well as the number, type, and sizes of industries that they worked in. The assumption that men should be the focus of the survey is not only a product of the time, but also reflects the fact that many high-school girls who were destined for work after

graduation were already being served by the well established and popular commercial classes offered at the Walkerville Collegiate Institute.[63] The committee's focus, then, rested on attracting male youth to the new programs. The survey was intended to determine not only the size of the target population for technical courses, but also the types of industry, which would inform the curriculum offered.[64] With an already established attendance in the commercial courses there was no need for further determination.

Although minute records indicate that all of the towns agreed that there was a need for a large and accommodating day school in the area, once discussion began to determine municipalities' joint roles and responsibilities towards a technical school, the smaller towns of Ojibway, Sandwich, and Ford City dropped out of the committee. A by-law was passed establishing a union technical school between Walkerville and Windsor, along with a joint technical school board. From this point on, the committee would hold their meetings as the industrial and technical school board for Windsor and Walkerville.[65]

Much like a reserve army of labour for factory work, the population of readily mobile girls from nearby commercial classes seemed to ease concerns about adequate enrollment at the new school. Without heavy equipment like some technical shops required, commercial classes were easily accommodated at collegiate institutes, high schools, and technical schools. In the event that WWTS experienced a high enrollment, commercial classes could remain at Walkerville, but if enrollment needed a boost initially the classes could be relocated to the new school. A by-law enforcing the Adolescent Attendance Act could also insure robust enrollment, as would the implementation of prevocational classes that the province allowed.

If Gavin's vision was to become reality, the school would be comprised mainly of male youth in the city who were deemed to be struggling socially, educationally, and economically. These particular boys were unskilled labourers in low-paying, dead-end jobs, and the curriculum that would appeal to them ranged from an expanded basic education for literacy and math that would potentially open up the opportunity for general skills and some theoretical knowledge of trades, to preparing more capable boys for postsecondary practical science programs or as apprentices for highly skilled work. Perhaps there was fear that the gangs of hooligans of which Gavin spoke, would not

immediately, or willingly, enroll, thwarting the school's initial progress. Once the new school opened would the reality match the initial vision?

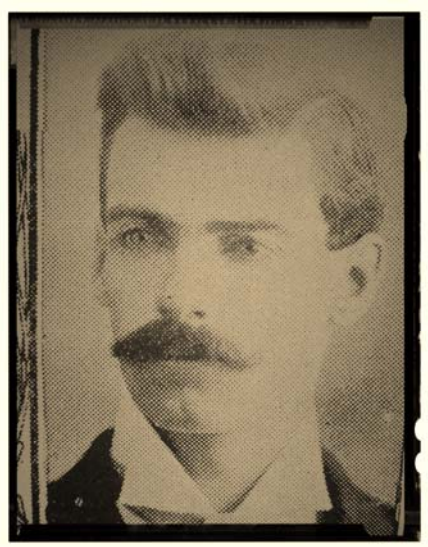




Figure 1: F.P. Gavin, originally published in "The Township of Sandwich"[66]
Figure 2: W.D. Lowe, courtesy of InternationalMetropolis.com[67]

Opening Day at WWTS – August 23, 1923

Gavin and Lowe took the first concrete steps to build a technical school. W.D. Lowe was named principal of the new technical school by a unanimous decision of the school board. In a news article that followed the decision, Lowe was described as one of Ontario's leading educationalists according to Ontario's first director of industrial and commercial education, F. W. Merchant. Lowe was already principal of Windsor Collegiate Institute, he accepted the appointment as principal at the new school and began his duties on August 1st, 1922.[68] Lowe was expected to oversee temporary classes held in the collegiate institute and in Walkerville, in addition to continuing to play a direct role in further hiring and setting up the new technical school.[69] The technical school board members suggested that Lowe waste no time hiring the directors of technical education and domestic science departments, as they would aid in the purchase of equipment. "As director of vocational work for girls, the Department has sanctioned the appointment of Miss Mary O'Donoghue..." from the collegiate school.[70] "Equally, if not more important than the appointment of a director of vocational work for girls, is the appointment of a

director of industrial and technical work, a name Dr. Merchant prefers to Vice Principal."[71]

The first task of the new board was to secure land and to determine the courses that would be offered so that the building could meet the curriculum's needs. The board requested F. P. Gavin's direct input on devising curriculum and school plans.[72] Gavin was pleased to advise the board and arrived in Windsor ready to present all of the building plans for technical schools already established in Ontario. Through the presentation of previous building designs Gavin demonstrated that the best designs placed classrooms for lectures away from shop classrooms.

The outcome of the presentation was specific recommendations for land, building structures, and classroom needs, which were used as guidelines given to those architects who wished to submit blueprints in a competitive bid for the contract with the Windsor Walkerville board.[73] After a ceremonious competition which included special guest H.B. Beal from the London Central Technical and Commercial School to help choose the winning bid, D.J. Cameron was chosen to design the new technical school. He revised his plans several times to suit provincial approval, and added a detailed budget of building materials and costs for construction; his plans for the school were approved on December 15, 1921.

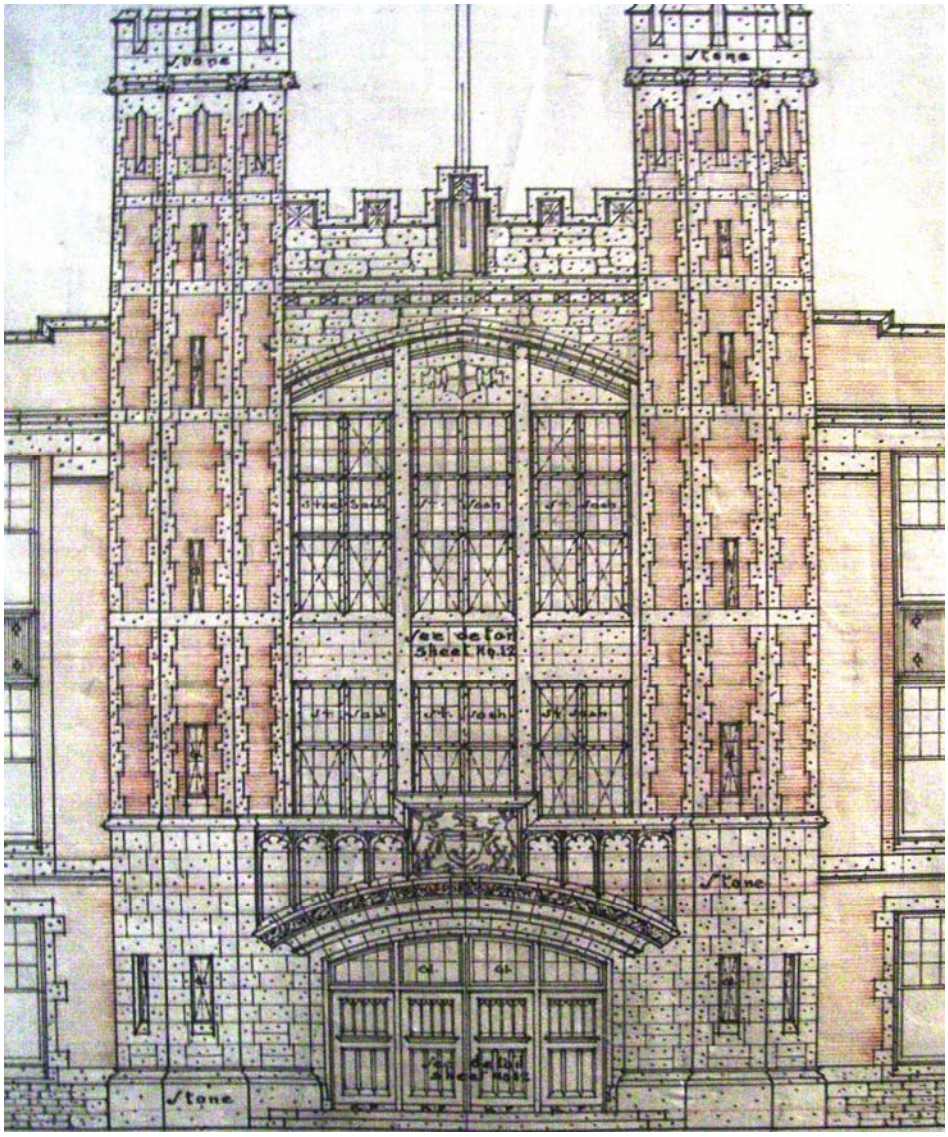


Figure 3: Blueprint of WWTS: DJ Cameron, 1923, courtesy of the GECDSB.

The new school consisted of three floors. The main floor would have "eight shop classrooms for boys,"[74] and a few classrooms for lectures and laboratories. The gymnasiums, shower, and locker room would be on the main floor as well as the main offices, a boardroom, a sales office, a library and an auditorium. Some of the main floor shops, the gymnasiums, and the auditorium extended into second floor space. The second floor also included several regular classrooms and had separate staffrooms for male and female teachers.[75] The third floor of the school was reserved for the girls' shop classrooms for millinery, commercial studies, and domestic science labs and lecture

rooms. The only exceptions to the third floor's female focus were a third floor drafting and blueprinting room and a room labeled the boys' lunch room which was situated directly beside the girl's cooking room and included a service window.[76] The girls' lunch room was down the hall beside a second kitchen. The third floor of the school had one quarter of the space of the first two floors of the school. Some additional space was available to girls since two "model suites" similar to small apartments had been built into the towers which extended beyond the third floor. Each of these small suites contained a living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom and bathroom.[77] Work done in the shop classrooms would furnish, decorate, and maintain these suites. The basement of the school was occupied by mechanical features that kept the school running, such as furnace boilers, but there were also storage areas for sports equipment, equipment for the cadets, and a rifle range.



Figure 4: WWTS Auditorium: taken by author, 2010

It was obvious from the approved plans of the school that the technical school board was expecting that boys would greatly outnumber girls, even though initial registration would indicate otherwise. With so much interest in technical education, classes were offered out of the Walkerville Collegiate Institute during construction of the new school. In December 1922, the first numbers were reported for the day school. There were 358 students attending day classes for commercial and technical education; 101 were boys and 257 were girls.[78] One year later the numbers remained similar: 104 boys and 262 girls enrolled in commercial and technical classes. Existing commercial day classes at Walkerville, combined with the continued offering of popular technical courses, such as auto mechanics at night, influenced male enrollment at WWTS. Prevocational courses were planned in hope of increasing the number of boys who continued in school rather than dropping out in the fourth book as was the trend; employed dropouts accounted for most night-school students. Retaining boys in school would decrease the need for night school which Gavin saw as a band-aid solution to the problem of drop-outs and the social and economic impact it had.

The number of boys at WWTS did rise, but girls continued to outnumber boys slightly in the initial years. Attendance reported to the industrial and technical school board in December of 1923 by Principal Lowe indicated that there were 638 students at the school, 302 boys, and 336 girls.[79] While 73 of the boys were attending commercial classes, there were no girls at all attending technical classes.[80] In the following semester, eight girls entered the technical program, and that number slowly rose with general attendance at the school. By 1933, the population of the school was 1882, of those students 1058 were boys and 824 were girls.[81] Two hundred and thirty-four boys attended the commercial program, while 218 girls attended the technical studies department.[82] Some technical classes were predominantly female suggesting that some courses offered under technical studies catered mostly to girls such as millinery.[83] There were, however, a few girls outside of the traditionally female-dominated courses at each grade level.[84]

In contrast to Gavin's vision of a school to get "gangs of hooligans off the streets", the reality of the school reflected the need to attract a wide range of students, both girls and boys alike. The school needed to appeal to students who would otherwise enter the

workplace at too early an age, as well as to those aspiring to post-secondary technical programs. These programs were open to girls just as they were to boys.

The official opening of the school was scheduled on August 30, 1923, with elaborate opening ceremonies planned. From that point on, Principal Lowe would hold office hours to meet with students and parents interested in enrolling at the school. An article published in the *Border City Star* on August 23, 1923 gave a detailed outline of the school's curriculum and made a clear point that the technical school ranked as a high school.

> The textbooks are similar to those used in the high school. The courses of study on the academic side are much the same and there is the same requirement for entrance. The technical school, however, in addition to affording a general education, will give training in vocations to those boys and girls who will find their employment on leaving school in business, in industry, or in the home.[85]

The article goes on to describe the intention and purpose behind the preparation of students at the school:

> …The technical school courses are designed for those pupils who will not attend the universities, but is, as been said, will find their vocation in business or industry. No attempt will be made to prepare students for matriculation and the languages will not be studied…Sometimes boys and girls on account of their age, size, or for other reasons, become quite dissatisfied with the grade school before passing the entrance examination to high school. Realizing this fact and unwilling that any of our boys or girls should be thrust into the ranks of a wage earner at too early an age, and without adequate training for making a livelihood, the Department of Education permits such pupils to be admitted to the Technical School at the discretion of the principal provided they have gained fourth book standing and can furnish adequate reasons for not continuing at the grade school. In addition to the general subjects of the fourth book, a portion of each day will be allotted to vocational training.
>
> Experience has shown, however, that pupils entering the technical school with entrance standing make much better progress than those who have not reached that grade…By regulation of the Department of Education, high school courses are now four years in length. It is the intention in the Technical School, therefore, to provide in every course four years of continuous training. This will not only assist in carrying out provisions of the Adolescent [Attendance] Act, but will meet very general demands amongst employers that our boys and girls be given a very general education. Opportunity will be given pupils who show special aptitude to gain their diplomas in three years.[86]

W.D. Lowe was making every effort to keep the new technical school up to the academic standards of a high school. He notes in the article that anything below the

standard was in keeping with the dictates of the Department of Education and out of his personal control. Lowe saw technical education as on par with academic subjects at the secondary level. It was only after attending a convention in Ottawa for the Canadian Education Association in 1922 that he "came away with a very clear-cut conception of the function of a technical or vocational school [under the new federal guidelines] namely, to prepare pupils for Commerce, Industry and the Trades rather than for Universities."[87] It must have pleased Lowe to see university programs such as the School of Practical Science at the University of Toronto, recruiting in the 1926 year book, making special note that language requirements would be waived for graduating technical students of WWTS.[88] So while prevocational courses may have insured an adequate number of students for the new school, it is clear that W. D. Lowe expected to keep the standard and reputation of the new technical school as high as possible while working within government guidelines.

Growth in the 1920s: Establishing a School Culture

As Gidney and Millar point out, in the first three decades of the twentieth century it was not at all uncommon for students to end their education without going to high school. Across Canada, "the average length of schooling extended from just under seven years in 1911, to eight years in 1921, eight and half years in 1931, and by 1941, ten years."[89] Without a doubt technical, commercial, and manual training programs contributed to the increase in years that students attended school.

The local context of a technical school and the community leaders who worked to establish and maintain it, shaped how the school fit into local needs, both socially and economically. In Windsor, the pressure from the emerging local auto industry contributed to the demand for highly skilled labour, as well as factor workers. This pressure was increased after World War I, when Canadians became more conscious of where they stood in comparison with countries like England, Germany, and the United States. Joint provincial and federal funding insured opportunities to build specially equipped stand-alone technical schools in Ontario's cities like Windsor. The guidelines that came with such legislation emphasized industrial preparation from the basic and practical to the theoretical and skilled.

The local champion of technical education, F.P. Gavin, was passionate about the negative impact of unskilled child labour, particularly for boys—motor minded boys. The actual make-up of WWTS reflected this vision, two-thirds of the school's space was dedicated to technical education. W.D. Lowe, in his published outline of school courses, emphasized the academic potential of the school, while at the same time gently acknowledging the need to accommodate students not able to graduate from elementary school.

Before WWTS, Windsor already had well-established and well-attended technical courses that were offered in the evening. Walkerville had been offering commercial courses that were well attended, too. The missing piece of the puzzle was a technical day program in a fully equipped school that would attract those boys who had the potential to meet the demand for skilled labour, as well as those boys whose options were not as promising. For those students who would otherwise leave elementary school before graduation, WWTS was a second chance. Although a gender breakdown of the dropout statistics presented by Gavin in 1917 is unavailable, we do know how passionate he was that this was an issue particularly pertinent to boys.

Enrollment statistics at WWTS substantiate all of the factors which influenced the school's makeup. The city's well-established commercial program continued as per usual at WWTS. Enrollment trends though, indicated that the technical program was growing, and those students who were accessing the prevocational program for early school leavers were indeed predominantly boys. The three tables below illustrate the make-up of the school according to curriculum and gender.

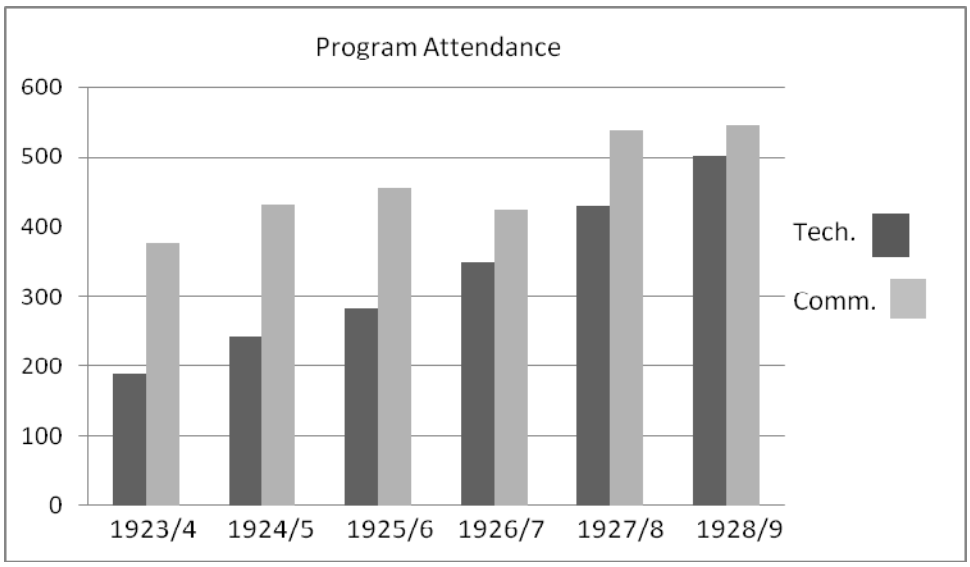


Table 2: Average attendance per year by program.

Table 2 shows the average attendance figures for the technical and commercial programs over the course of the first six years of the school. While the already-established commercial program continued to grow even from already impressive numbers, technical courses made large and steady gains from year to year, nearly matching commercial attendance in the 1928-29 school year.[90]

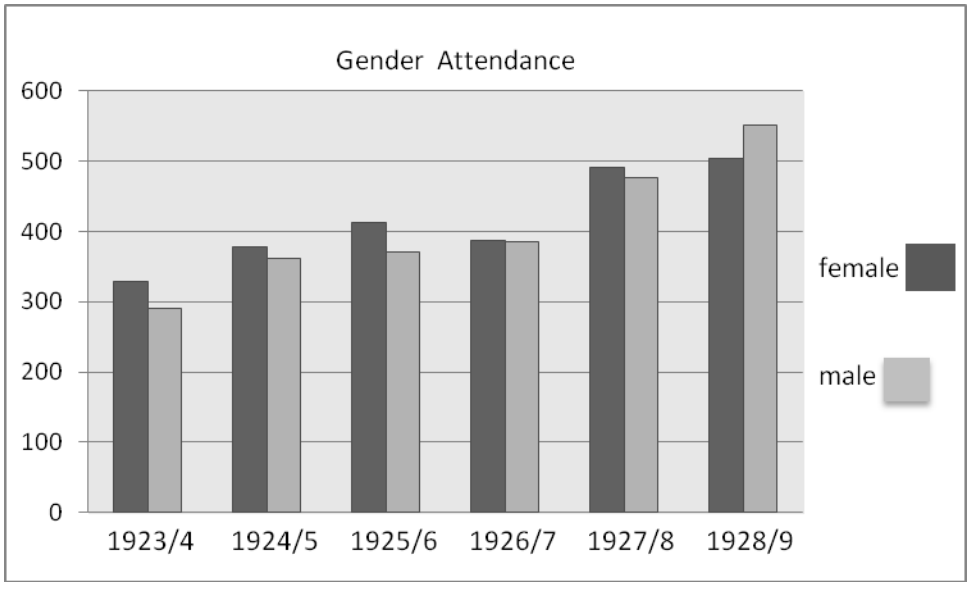


Table 3: Average attendance per year according to gender

Table 3 illustrates that while girls at the school outnumbered boys at WWTS for the first five years, attendance for boys consistently rose until boys outnumbered girls in 1928-29. Further, boys outnumbered girls by a larger margin than girls had ever outnumbered boys.[91]

The most revealing statistics accumulated from the attendance records came from the prevocational program. The prevocational program was attended by students who were not otherwise going to complete elementary school. It is this group that most concerned Gavin and Seath. These students were granted access to the school once they provided evidence to W.D. Lowe that they could not complete elementary school.

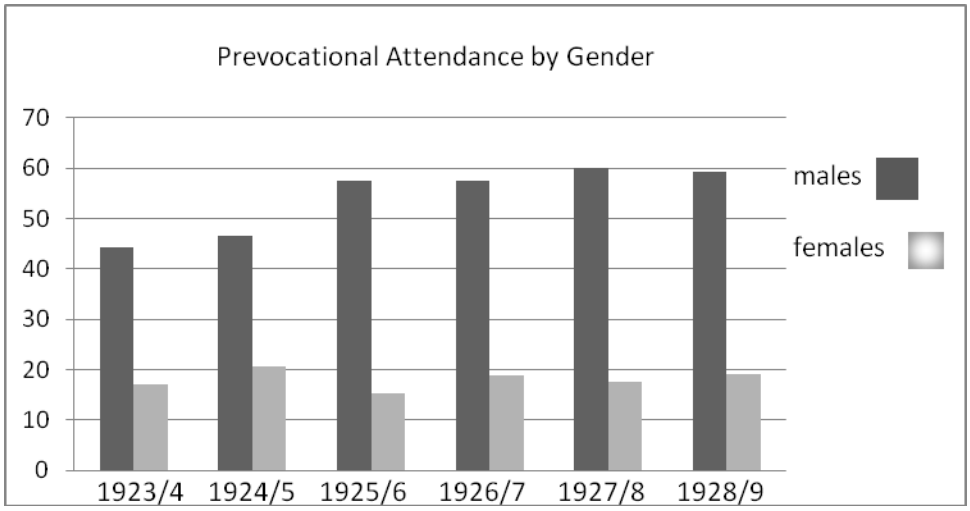


Table 4: Average attendance per year in the prevocational program by gender

In the prevocational program there were more than twice as many boys as there were girls. Further, the number of boys in the program rises over the six year period, whereas the number of girls stays fairly consistent over the same span of time.[92] It is clear from these attendance figures that the prevocational program predominantly served young boys who would otherwise not be in school, but were now attending WWTS. This is evidence that WWTS did indeed serve the function that Gavin saw as a need in the community.

Other evidence that indicates the new position that WWTS was carving out for itself in the community were letters from local employers, published in the first yearbook in 1924-1925, that attest to the new role the school played in the economy:

> We now have in our employ three boys who are graduates of your school, and we do not think we can say more than that in future we intend to make your school our source of supply for apprentices. Your boys have a good knowledge of shop practice, as well as being courteous and attentive to their work, which we feel is the result of their school training.[93]

Another letter that appeared in the same yearbook states the type of work that a graduate might get after completing an apprenticeship:

> We have as you know about twenty boys as apprentices in our various tool rooms and the result of their training, we believe, has been eminently satisfactory. These boys come to us at the receptive age – they are pretty well along in mathematics and are ambitious and eager to master the running and operations of the various machines with an unjaded appetite for whatever knowledge may come their way. After two years experience with us we consider that these boys equal qualified tool makers who apply to us for work.[94]

There are 11 more letters like these in the 1924-1925 year-book. Publishing all of these letters in the first yearbook served to let students know about the role that technical education played in creating the industrial self-made man. Once the province had established funding for technical education, it allowed Windsor to develop the kind of education graduates needed to thrive in the local economy.

The Reality in 1929-1930

From a vision to save gangs of hooligans, to a well-populated, state-of-the-art, technical school catering to a variety of youth with both practical and academic ambitions, it is safe to say that WWTS far exceeded the plan laid out in 1913. With a varied curriculum well suited to male and female students alike, the one factor which may be said to distinguish the school from other high schools is its obvious association to working class youth. However, W.D. Lowe emphasized the importance and necessity of academic standards at the school; he insisted workplace skills were best founded upon a knowledge base no less formidable than that found at the collegiate institute or high schools. This perspective was embraced in a community that witnessed rapid growth and expansion through industry and technical innovation. Hence, WWTS was not subject to the same stigma and stereotyping as was the case a short distance away at the London, Ontario, Central Technical School.[95] Would the achievements of the school in its first

decade be sustainable? Would the passion and commitment of the community and leaders of the school be enough of a buffer against the trials and challenges the school would face in the Great Depression? Would the strength of Lowe's leadership prove to be an asset that carried the school well beyond the economic distress of the 1930s?

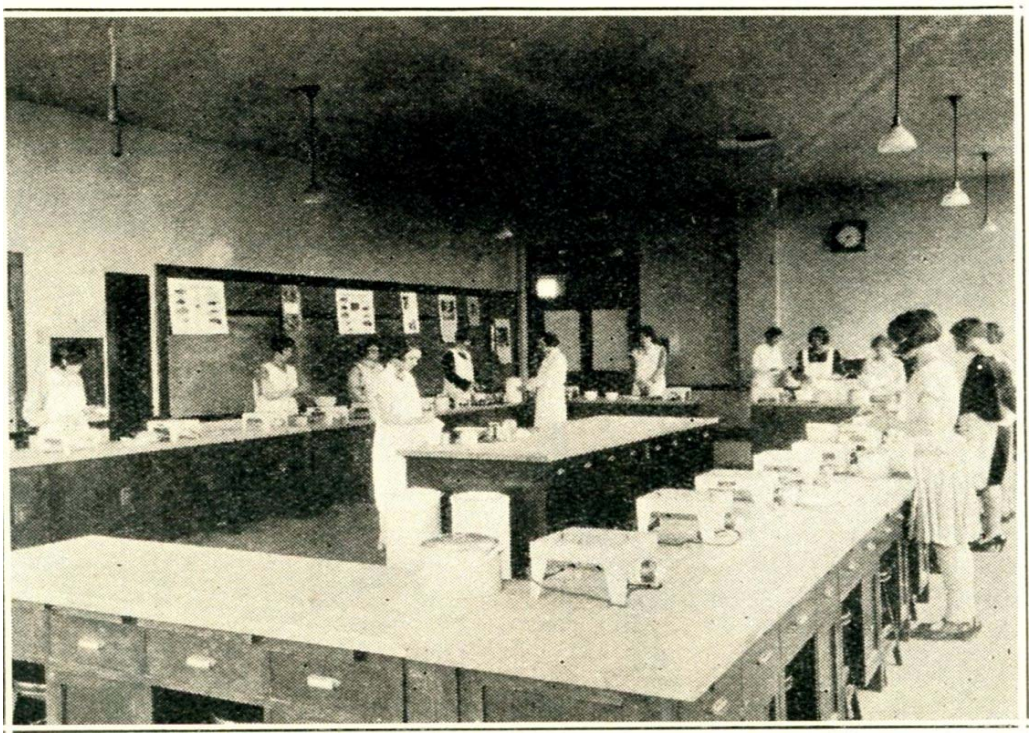


Figure 5: Domestic Science Class[96]

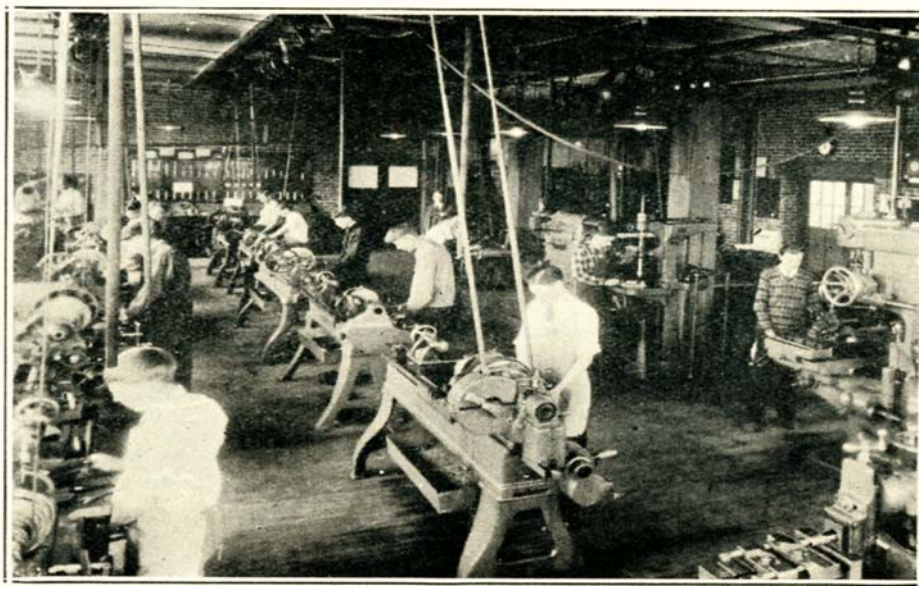


Figure 6: Machine Shop[97]

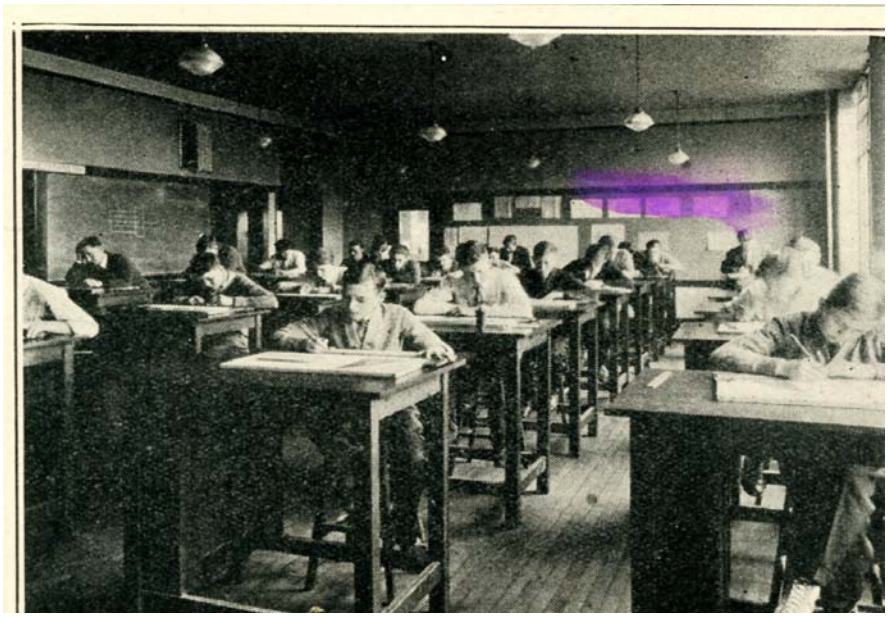


Figure 7: Classroom[98]

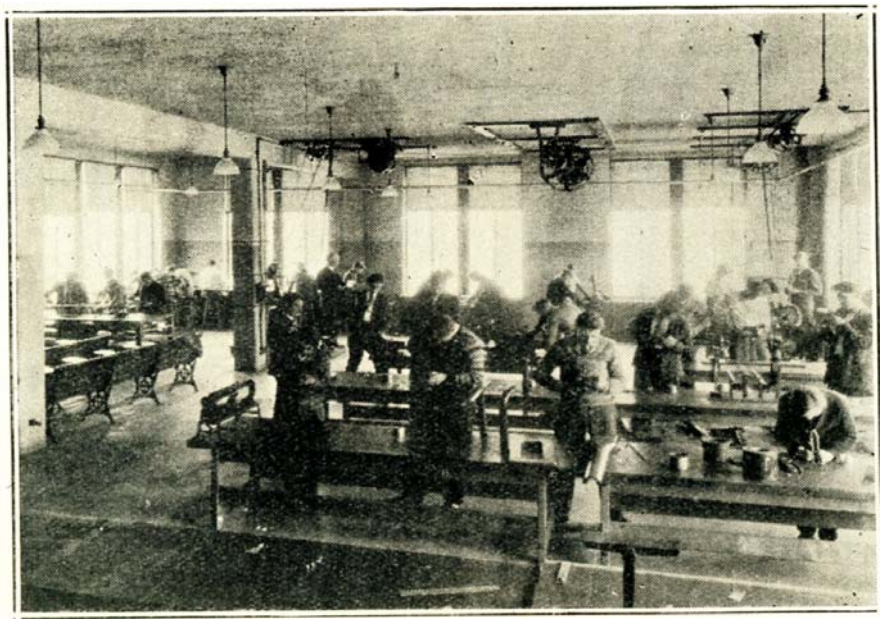


Figure 8: Shop Class[99]



Figure 9: Sewing Class[100]



Figure 10: Automotive Class[101]



Figure 11: First Aid Class[102]

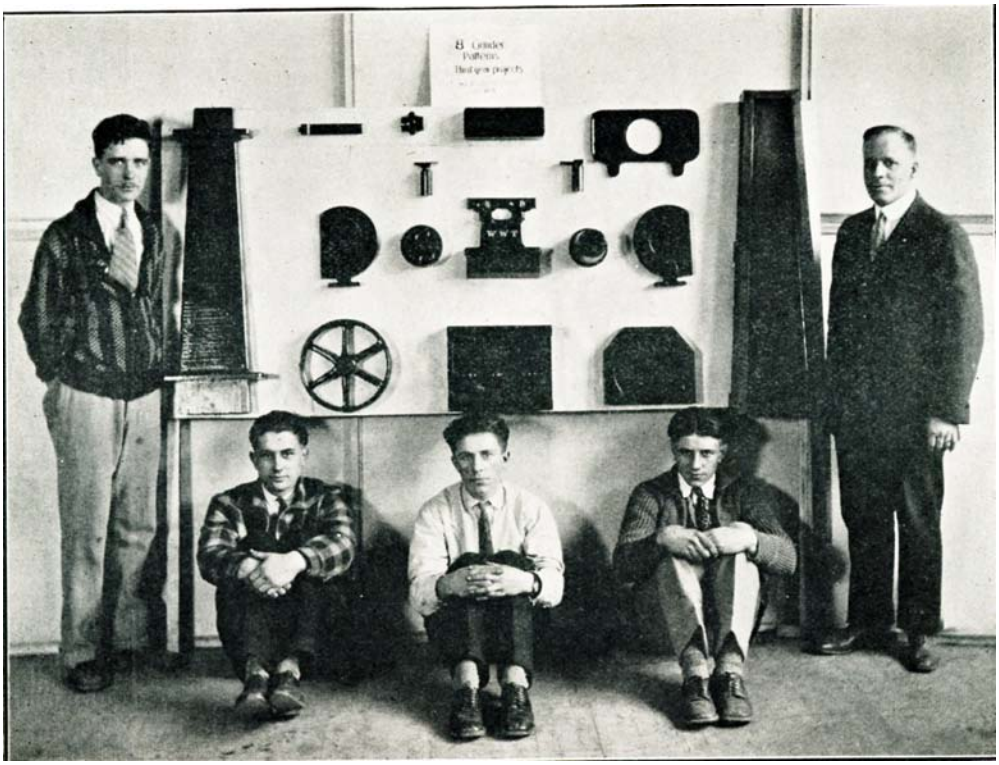


Figure 12: Shop Display[103]

[1] Henry A Giroux, series editor. "Forward," In *Weaving a Tapestry of Resistance: The Places, Power, and Poetry of a Sustainable Society*, Sharon E. Sutton. (London, England: Bergin & Garvey, 1996), xi.

[2] The Towers. (1928-1929). *Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archive Windsor Public Library.

[3] Minutes of the Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board, 15 April, 1929.

[4] The Border Cities consisted of Windsor, Sandwich, Walkerville, Ford City, and Ojibway. They were eventually amalgamated into the new City of Windsor in 1935.

[5] As quoted by Neil F. Morrison. *Garden Gateway to Canada* (Windsor, Ontario: Herald Press Limited, 1982), 41.

[6] James Dougall was Windsor's first elected mayor, but also played a prominent role in the local economy as a merchant, He is probably most known for his lengthy role as head of the school board, a position he held for the remainder of his days. A more detailed description of James Dougall can be found online in the dictionary of Canadian Biography: http://www.biographi.ca/009004-119.01-e.php?&id_nbr=5486

[7] Ibid, 40.

[8] Ibid, 178.

[9] David Roberts, *In the Shadow of Detroit* (Detroit, Michigan: Wayne State University Press, 2006), 44.

[10] Ibid., 189.

[11] Ibid., 238-9.

[12] Ibid., 229.

[13] Neil F. Morrison, 231.

[14] Ibid., 181.

[15] Trevor Price and Larry Kulisek, *Windsor 1892-1992: A Centennial Celebration*, (Windsor, Ontario: Chamber Publications, Border Press Inc., 1992).

[16] Herb Colling and Carl Morgan, *Pioneering the Auto Age*, (Tecumseh ON: TravelLife Publishing Enterprises, 1993), 13.

[17] Roberts, *In the Shadow of Detroit*, 44.

[18] Price and Kulisek.

[19] Ibid., 86.

[20] Ibid., 87.

[21] Minutes of the Industrial and Technical School Board, 18 December, 1922.

[22] "Windsor Tool and Die," on *International Metropolis* website, accessed on November 19, 2012. http://www.internationalmetropolis.com/2007/08/03/windsor-tool-and-die/.

[23] This is quoted from a often cited passage by Robert Stamp (Ontario Schools, 1982, 84) who claimed that technical schools prepared the infantry for the industrial army while the academic secondary programs prepared the captains and generals.

[24] Two universities paid for recruitment advertising in the *The Towers*, 1927-1928 yearbook. Windsor Ontario; Border Cities Commercial Printing Services.

[25] Cynthia R. Comacchio, *The Dominion of Youth: Adolescence and the Making of a Modern Canada, 1920-1950*. (Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfred Laurier University Press, 2006), 109.

[26] Colling and Morgan, *Pioneering the Auto Age*, 13.

[27] Robert S. Patterson, "Society and Education during the Wars and their Interlude: 1914-1945," In *Canadian Education: A History*. eds. Donald J. Wilson, Robert M. Stamp and Louis-Phillip Audet (Scarborough ON: Prentice Hall of Canada Ltd. 1970), 360-384.

[28] Katz, *The Origins of Public Education*, 400.

[29] Even in traditional trades such as cabinetry and woodworking, machines were transforming the way work was done, both in small-scale production and individually custom-crafted work.

[30] Union leaders who were the Initial proponents of technical education in Toronto, Ontario stated that workers involved in understanding the science behind production of tools, machines and production assembly could resist becoming slaves to machines in the changing economy. See a more detailed discussion of this in: Kathleen Sharman. "The Origins and Significance of the Toronto Technical School, 1891-1904." (MEd Thesis, University of Windsor, 2006).

[31] The 1911 report of the Minister of Education indicated that night classes served 1,645 pupils. In 1923 the Minister of Education report indicated that evening vocational schools served 33,511 pupils.

[32] Robert M. Stamp. "The Campaign for Technical Education in Ontario, 1876-1914" PhD Thesis: University of Western Ontario, 1970.

[33] Ibid.

[34] Ibid.

[35] Ibid, 251-252.

[36] Ibid, 258.

[37] An Act Respecting Education for Industrial Purposes, Provincial Statutes of Ontario, March 24, 1911, c. 79, 525.

[38] Young, D.R. and A.V. Machinski. "An Historical Survey of Vocational Education in Canada" (1971) Ottawa Ontario: Reprinted with the permission of the Canadian Vocational Association.

[39] Ibid.

[40] Ibid.

[41] Technical Education Act. (July 7th, 1919). Federal Statutes. 9-10 George V. Chapter 73, 665-667.

[42] Young and Machinski, *Historical Survey*, 19.

[43] H.J. Cody, "Technical and Industrial Education in Ontario," (1919). Ontario Archives, series 600, sub-series 1, file 55.

[44] Ibid.

[45] Susan Gelman, "The 'Feminization' of the High School: Women Secondary Schoolteachers in Toronto: 1871-1930," In *Gender and Education in Ontario*, edited by Ruby Heap and Alison Prentice (Toronto Ontario: Canadian Scholar's Press, 1991).

[46] Ibid.

[47] Technical Education in Demand. *The Border Cities Star*. 14 January, 1919, 4.

[48] Erection of Two New Schools Here. *The Border Cities Star*. 14 January, 1919, 3.

[49] An Act to Amend the Technical Education Act. (May 11th, 1920). Federal Statutes. 10-11 George V. Chapter 20. p.59

[50] An Act Respecting Vocational Education. (May 3rd, 1921). Statutes of the Province of Ontario. Toronto, ON: L. K. Cameron, Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty. Chapter 90, p. 316-324.

[51] An Act Respecting Education for Industrial Purposes, Provincial Statutes of Ontario, March 24, 1911, c. 79, 525

[52] An Act Respecting the Compulsory School Attendance of Adolescents, Provincial Statutes of Ontario, April 16, 1912. c. 77, 729.

[53] "Night Classes to be organized in Windsor Schools," *Border Cities Star,* October 7, 1918, 3. This article announced the expansion of night classes to the collegiate institute and described evening classes previously offered.

[54] *The Towers*. (1947-1948) 25th Anniversary Edition. Page 2 of this volume provides a history of how technical education was established in Windsor leading up to the opening of the Windsor Walkerville Technical School.

[55] Fredrick P. Gavin, "The need for Industrial Training Schools," *Border Cities Star*, May 23, 1917, 8.

[56] Ibid, 8.

[57] George A. Courtenay, "Windsor Schools Have Kept Pace with City's Development," *Border Cities Star*, May 23, 1917, 8.

[58] Gary Douglas. "W.D. Lowe Secondary School, 1923-1983." Informally re-published manuscript for the 90th reunion, May 17, 2013.

[59] "F.P. Gavin Receives a New Government Appointment," *Border Cities Star,* January 31, 1919, 3.

[60]"Wm.D. Lowe is New Principal of Collegiate," *Border Cities Star*, April 8, 1919, 3.

[61] Proceedings of the Provisional Committee Meetings from 17 November, 1919.

[62] Ibid, 17 November, 1919. The word "union" in the term "union school" refers to the municipal union, and school board union, for the purpose of operating the school.

[63] For further discussion on the high number of girls enrolled in commercial classes see; Nancy S. Jackson & Jane S. Gaskell, "White Collar Vocationalism: The Rise of Commercial Education in Ontario and British Columbia, 1870-1920" *Curriculum Inquiry*, 17, no. 2 (1987): 177-201.

[64] The Minister of Education at the time, H. J. Cody publically stated that the new schools should directly reflect the industries in their community; Cody, H.J. (1919). "Technical and Industrial Education in Ontario". Ontario Archives, series 600, sub-series 1, file 55.

[65] Ibid, January 18th, 1921.

[66] Frederick Neal. The Township of Sandwich. Windsor, Ontario: The Record Printing Co., Ltd. 153.

[67] http://www.internationalmetropolis.com/2009/12/03/w-d-lowe-1927/ Accessed on 24/02/2014.

[68] "Lowe Chosen Principal of New Tech School," *Border Cities Star*, March 25, 1922, 3.

[69]Provisional Committee Meetings and the Minutes of the Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and the Town of Walkerville. (November 17th, 1919-December 17th, 1923). Vol. 1, March 22, 1922.

[70] Ibid June 19, 1922.

[71] Provisional Committee Meetings and the Minutes of the Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and the Town of Walkerville. (November 17th, 1919-December 17th, 1923). Vol. 1, March 22, 1922.

[72] Ibid, May 18, 1921.

[73] Ibid, May 31, 1921.

[74] Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and The Town of Walkerville. (November 17, 1919 – December 17, 1923). Including proceedings of the Provisional Committee Meetings. Vol. 1, 90.

[75] D.J. Cameron, Architectural Drawings of the Windsor Walkerville Technical School, Greater Essex County District School Board.

[76] Ibid.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and The Town of Walkerville. Minutes from November 17, 1919 – December 17, 1923. Including proceedings of the Provincial Committee Meetings. Vol. 1, 90.

[79] Principal's Monthly Report. Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and The Town of Walkerville. Minutes from November 17, 1919 – December 17, 1923. Including proceedings of the Provincial Committee Meetings. Vol. 1, 90.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Ibid.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] "Principal Outlines New Courses," *The Border Cities Star*, August 23, 1923, 11.

[86] Ibid, 11.

[87] Industrial and Technical School Board, 1 November, 1922.

[88] The Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook, 1926.

[89] Gidney and Millar, *How Schools Worked*, 15.

[90] Figures compiled from the Principal's monthly attendance reports recorded in the Minutes for the Industrial and Technical School Board for the City of Windsor and The Town of Walkerville.

[91] Ibid.

[92] Ibid.

[93] General Manager of the Universal Cooler Company of Canada Ltd., A letter to W.D. Lowe, Windsor, Ontario. The Windsor Walkerville Technical School Year Book, 1924.

[94] Vice President of the Ford Motor Company, A letter from the Ford Motor Company. The Windsor Walkerville Technical School Year Book, 1924.

[95] Ivan F Goodson and Christopher J Anstead. *Through the School House Doors: Working Papers*. (London, ON: Garamond Press in association with Ruccus, 1993).

[96] Originally printed in the 1926 Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook.

[97] Ibid.

[98] Ibid.

[99] Ibid.

[100] Ibid.

[101] Ibid.

[102] Ibid.

[103] Ibid.

Chapter 3: The Lowe Years, 1930 – 1945

> *With the almost complete disappearance of the erroneous idea that education in the schools is possible only through the media of so-called academic studies, the contribution of vocational training towards the development of both mind and character is becoming more and more widely acknowledged. The value of "industrial arts" in the educative process is now freely admitted, even stressed, as the natural corollary of what is known variously as academic or cultural education. It is now thoroughly established that there is no conflict between the two types; each is dependent upon and complementary to the other. There is no doubt that the work accomplished in vocational schools has contributed largely to this modern conception of education. The success attending matriculation students in the courses provided for admission to university faculties of Engineering, Household Science, and Commerce has been most marked.*[1] -F.S. Rutherford, 1936

The irony of technical education during the Great Depression was that just at the moment technical education reached its peak in popularity it also experienced an unexpected discontinuation of all funding from the federal government.[2] During the Great Depression, Ontario reduced provincial funding for technical education to the same level as that for academic classrooms.[3] At the local level, though, Windsor was experiencing an unprecedented demand for technical education and needed desperately to expand its facilities. Overcrowding at WWTS insured local support for an expansion to the school. Accommodating students was important to maintaining a vision for the school that included attracting boys in the community who were deemed to be most exposed to the social problems that accompanied tough economic times. It was the pressure from teachers' unions and the support of the local community that made expansion and continued growth at the school possible. Municipalities took on the brunt of keeping technical education going during the 30s. The expansion of WWTS meant that Windsor alone would commit to a 20-year repayment plan just prior to the most financially trying years of the Great Depression. During these years WWTS required a style of leadership which would appeal to the community's sense of school as an extension of the family.

In founding the Border Cities' first technical program, F.P. Gavin envisioned a type of education that would, as he saw it, remedy pressing local educational and social issues. That vision led to the establishment of the Windsor Walkerville Technical School in 1923. This chapter will show that the school's first principal, W.D. Lowe, sustained Gavin's vision for 23 years, during which the school established its niche in the communities that it served during the difficult economic times of the Great Depression. As demonstrated in this chapter, WWTS played an integral role for citizens personally, socially, and economically. After the 1930s, technical education was well-supported financially due to its integral role in wartime production. Through good and bad times principal Lowe remained steadfastly committed to WWTS. But then, in the span of less than a year, Windsor lost its two leaders of technical education. On October 3, 1944, *The Windsor Star* announced the death of F. P. Gavin. On June 26, 1945, W. D. Lowe died suddenly.

This chapter considers the period from 1930 to 1945 when W.D. Lowe's leadership helped establish WWTS as a proud and contributing part of the community. All of the challenges and successes he faced will be covered in five sections: Accommodating the Growing Population; Student Participation and Influence; The Loss of Two Founders; Memories of Lowe; and Concluding Remarks about Lowe's Influence.

Accommodating the Growing Population of the School

Industrial development in the 1920s paved the way for unprecedented increases in the student population in the Border Cities region. Many schools in Windsor were built in the 1920s.[4] While population growth in Windsor peaked in the first two decades of the twentieth century, it came nearly to a complete halt in the thirties.[5] The financial woes of the 1930s did not affect increasing enrolment at WWTS. Overcrowding was a continuous problem at the technical school with many classes between 40 and 60 students. Mr. Lowe suggested that if the Border Cities amalgamated into a single municipality as was the rumour as early as 1933, it might be advisable to open a second technical school.[6] However compromises had to be made in challenging economic times. The Technical Education Act of 1919, which supplied the much needed funds for building technical schools, had expired in 1927. Many of the funds promised in the Technical Education Act

of 1919 went unused by some provinces. The federal government made amendments to the Technical Education Act to provide access to the unused funds. Ontario, however, had used all of the funds allowed under the Technical Education Act; this legislation only helped those provinces that had not used the maximum funds allowed.

Even provincial aid for technical education seemed to be out of reach: "After 1929, those provinces that had received financial assistance from the federal government continued to report progress and, although little new was undertaken, those programs [that had] already begun were continued, sometimes at a reduced rate...Ontario provided assistance to allow for vocational expansion into the less heavily populated areas."[7] Under these constraints, WWTS struggled to find the necessary funds to expand technical education. A glimmer of hope came in 1931 with the announcement of more federal money. The Vocational Education Act, 1931, would have provided "$750,000 per year for 15 years to be distributed to the provinces based on population...but the act was never proclaimed and no money was distributed,"[8] due to the impact of the great Depression on federal government finances. The next commitment from the federal government did not transpire until 1939, with the Youth Training Act.[9] It would be the city's ability to fund education initiatives locally that would make expansion possible.

The Border Cities amalgamation in 1935 contributed to an increased demand for technical education, so the technical school board found strategies to accommodate the influx of students. With few funding options, the board planned to move junior programs to the elementary schools, but this was not enough to remedy overcrowding. Principal Lowe advised the technical school board that Mr. F.S. Rutherford (Inspector) had stated that the Department of Education believed 1500 was the maximum enrolment for any Technical School, and that a school gets too cumbersome otherwise. The maximum of 1500 had already been exceeded in September of 1930. By September 1931, school enrolment had reached 1749 students. While the school board set maximum class sizes at 35, the average class at WWTS was often 40 pupils. At a technical school board meeting on April 1930, W.D. Lowe admitted in a discussion on overcrowding that "25 of our classes exceed 40 pupils; 3 exceed 50 and one exceeds 60."[10]

On May 29, 1930, at a special meeting of the technical school board "[t]he acting secretary read a communication from the Department of Education setting forth that the

Department was prepared to share in an expenditure of $73,146.65 for alterations in the present building and purchase of equipment to be used in the addition. The letter stated, however, that it would be necessary to get the Department's approval of the individual items for each shop."[11]On the 25th day of August, 1930, Windsor city council passed a by-law committing $254,266.40 for the expansion of the technical school. The by-law meant that for the next 20 years, $20,402.99 would have to be raised by Windsor taxpayers each year to fund the expansion and maintain the municipal budget.[12] D.J. Cameron, the original architect for the school, submitted plans for the school expansion in October 1930.[13] The board quickly approved the plans, which would allow for a large addition to be completed in 1931.[14] The school population had grown to such a degree, though, that the new addition served only to provide appropriate space for students who were already at the school, and as new students enrolled, overcrowding continued. Years of cutbacks would be the only remaining option in the context of growing concern about Windsor's financial woes.

An article in the *Detroit Free Press* on December 29, 1931, entitled "Bankruptcy Action Threatens Windsor," captured the attention of the technical school board.[15] The article reported that Windsor City Council was warned that bankruptcy proceedings were threatened by the Guaranteed Trust Company unless the city paid its portion of the hydro deficit, which was over $254,000.00. The problem, according to some council members was excess welfare costs and medical relief. The rising welfare costs were blamed on mismanagement rather than increased demand. As a result the welfare department was abolished and a welfare commission appointed to oversee welfare services beginning on January 1st, 1932.[16] The technical school board discussed the article as if the financial problems of the city were exaggerated, and were confident that no bankruptcy would take place.[17]

The technical school board knew all too well the difficulty that many towns were having in keeping up with their bills. As the Great Depression reached its peak in the mid 30s the technical school became a draw for students from out of district. When students from out of district did attend WWTS, the municipality where that student was living would be responsible for contributing the appropriate fees. Outstanding fees for students who attended WWTS from other municipalities were an issue prior to amalgamation, and

so were collecting those fees. The technical school board took legal action against the county of Essex and the town of Sandwich to collect the fees for students attending WWTS from out of district.[18]

Local action against the County of Essex was filed in 1933.[19] According to calculations done for the legal proceedings, close to 30% of the student population at WWTS were from East Windsor and the County of Essex. The costs for these students were estimated at $88,857.[20] The judgement was in favour of the technical school board, but collecting the money from the county proved to be very challenging. Many letters were sent to the councils for East Windsor and Essex, but it was a matter that had to be sorted out in amalgamation. Technical education was doing without much needed funding from the federal government, and this gap put an even greater strain on the school, now reliant on local funding. In the early spring of 1930, the Vancouver, British Columbia, board of education wrote a letter asking the Windsor Walkerville technical school board to "induce the Dominion Government to continue the plan of giving financial aid in the matter of technical education." The board decided to cooperate and would write a letter to the Federal government asking for restored funding for technical education.[21] Renewed federal funding, however, was years away.

The lack of adequate funding made other financial strategies necessary, such as cutbacks on educational spending. In the context of overflowing classrooms, proposed decreases in teachers' salaries were difficult to accept, but the teachers' at WWTS understood that the economic times demanded sacrifice by everyone and agreed to a 10% decrease in wages.[22] Without any further notice or discussion, the teachers then received notice from the administrative committee in charge of finance announcing very different wage cuts. In a memo received on December 29, 1931, the teachers' were informed of pay decreases ranging from 14.5% to 17%.[23] It was also indicated in the letter that the finance committee was intending to make changes to the salary grid that included decreasing the minimum and maximum salary levels for teachers. To add insult to injury, the letter also noted that these proposed cuts to the salaries of technical teachers were not being made in any other school boards in the area. The teachers' organized and wrote a joint letter to the technical school board in response to the letter from the administrative committee's decision. This letter brought the issue to the attention of many technical

school board members at their regular meeting on January 27, 1934. Many of the members of the technical school board were unaware that the administrative committee had informed the teachers at WWTS of proposed pay decreases. The Technical Board felt deceived by the member of their board who sat on the administrative committee who had failed to bring these changes back to the board for any further discussion. The technical school board member who issued the memo to teachers on behalf of the administrative committee, of which he was member, explained that much time and effort had gone into the changes made to teachers' salaries, and moved to refer the matter back to the administrative committee. The motion, however, was lost, as no other technical school board member would second the motion. The next motion moved to reinstate the salaries of the teachers with their expected annual raises and continue with the 10% decreases as agreed – motion carried.[24] Providing the teachers with their expected annual raises before the 10% decrease was applied by the administrative committee in charge of financing allowed for a portion of the decrease to be cancelled out. It also sent a strong message to the administration in finance that the technical school board did not appreciate the way they handled this matter.

Cuts to education had become a sensitive issue for teaching staff at WWTS. The popularity and expense of technical education during the great depression was a double-edged sword. Education was an opportunity for retraining, and for gaining a sense of accomplishment in hard times, but the cost of technical education was difficult to maintain when the tax base from which funding would come was experiencing unprecedented strain. The Windsor City Council had been accused of using education as a scapegoat for the city's financial problems. In an article that appeared in the *Border Cities Star* the Men's Teachers Union offered their opinion on the city's financial woes. "It looks to us," declared the secretary treasurer of the Ontario Public School Men Teachers' Federation (OPSMTF) in 1933, "as though the city council of Windsor, having gotten into a financial jam during these exceptional times, is out to squeeze the educational system of the city, and the teachers, in order to make ends meet."[25] Teachers and trustees joined forces to counter the challenge from municipal bodies.[26]

As the Depression continued, awareness grew that everyone would have to make compromises and accommodations. In 1932, the teachers at WWTS volunteered to teach

night school without pay to help the community. In 1933, they gave up their scheduled pay raises, only to get an additional 11 to 16% pay reductions that same year. By 1936, wages had bottomed out and three staff members resigned because their wages were reduced to $200 below their starting salary from 12 years before! These were truly hard times.[27] The city stepped in, however, and offered to fund those teachers who would be willing to continue to teach night school classes.

The reality of how hard times were for many citizens is reflected in the monthly report from Mr. Howe, the school's truancy officer. On April 16, 1934, Mr. Howe reported to the technical school board that he had

> ...made 24 home investigations, and had 15 office interviews. These interviews are mostly with parents who want clothing or shoes in order to send their children to school. When the families are on City Relief, I get in touch with the Welfare Department, and they give me full co-operation. Some cases I have to take care of through a private fund I have at my disposal... If such children are not in school they will, for the most part, become loafers and perhaps get in with bad company, and before they know it will be in court and in some cases sent to the reformatory. If we can only keep these boys in school, it will help materially in keeping them out of trouble.[28]

The concerns voiced by Mr. Howe echo the same logic and concern voiced by F.P. Gavin seventeen years earlier, in 1917. Keeping boys in technical school was seen as a direct means to keep them out of trouble. In the context of rising unrest with unemployed men who were being kept off the streets by containment in work camps, sentiments like those expressed by Howe would not have seemed out of place or unusual. It is more likely that, as in Gavin's time, education of school aged boys was seen as a preventative measure that had the potential to avoid social problems that were viewed by all levels of government as threatening to the social order and resulting in events like the On-to-Ottawa Trek. The municipal government made sweeping changes to run the cities and the technical school in an efficient way, serving the maximum amount of students possible. Ultimately, the municipal governments implemented provincial instructions to amalgamate the Border Cities, making WWTS open to even more students than ever before.

The Border Cities amalgamated on July 1, 1935, and this contributed to the already growing numbers at WWTS. The amalgamation included the municipalities of

Sandwich, Windsor, Walkerville, and East Windsor. These changes also had an impact on educational administration. The Windsor Walkerville technical school board was eliminated, leaving the Windsor Board of Education in charge of technical education.[29] After amalgamation, there were a total of five high schools in Windsor: Kennedy Collegiate Institute; Patterson Collegiate Institute; Sandwich Collegiate Institute; Walkerville Collegiate Institute; and Windsor-Walkerville Vocational[30] School (WWVS).[31] The school's name change from *technical* to *vocational* seems to have occurred without any discussion. It does seem from wording in An Act Respecting Vocational Education, 1930, passed in Ontario, that the term *vocational* was used as an umbrella term for schools that offered a variety of programs including industrial programs; homemaking departments; art schools and departments; technical high schools and departments; and commercial high schools and departments.[32] Even in federal legislation proposed one year later in 1931, the term *vocational education* is used as an umbrella term that could be used to describe almost any programs—not traditionally fitting within the academic curriculum—that the provinces saw fit.[33] This new use of terminology stands in contrast to all previous provincial and federal legislation, which almost exclusively used the term technical.[34] The lack of discussion may indicate that there was no concern at the time about loss of social status in this change of title.[35] The school was more popular than ever, and was by far the largest high school in Windsor. Even after junior vocational classes were relocated out of the high school, WWVS was twice as large as any other high school in the area. The second-largest school was Kennedy Collegiate, with 28 teachers and 943 pupils, while WWVS had 64 teachers and 1870 pupils.[36] These statistics alone would indicate that there was no apparent stigma attached to attendance at a vocational school. The switch in title, then, seems to be nothing more than a reflection of a change in terminology to coincide with the upper echelons of educational policymaking.

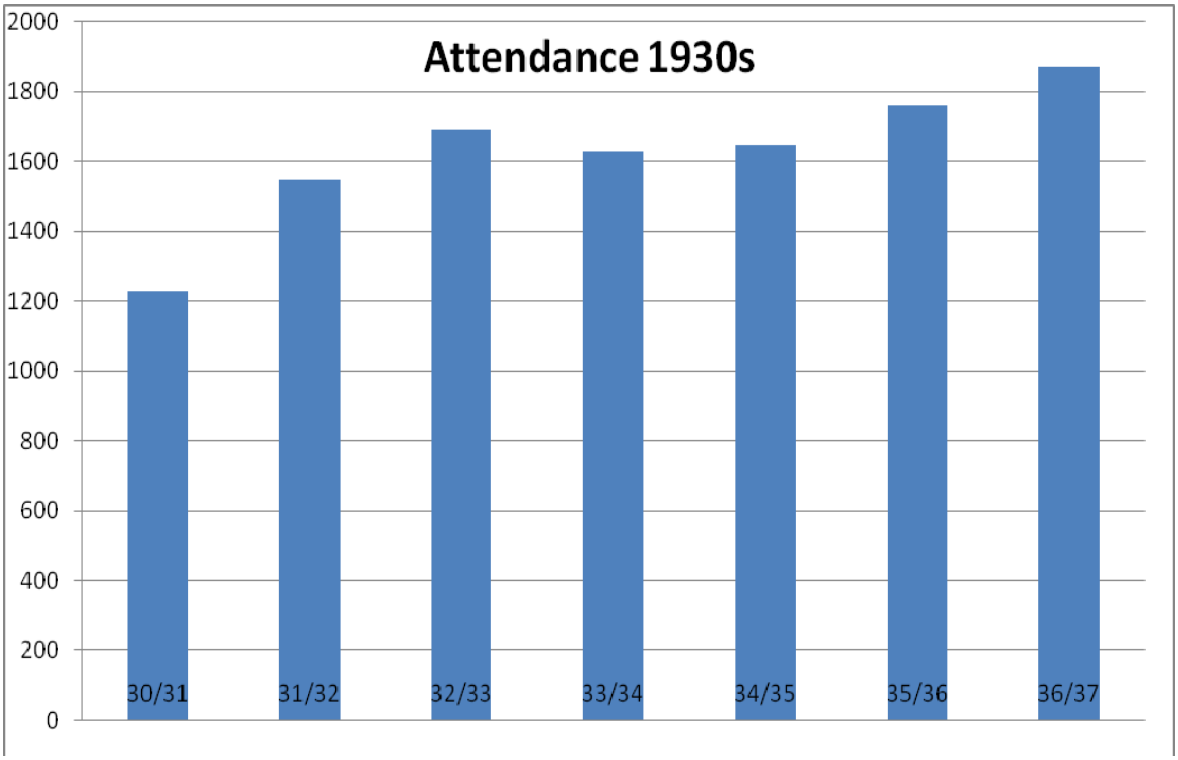


Table 5: WWVS Attendance from 1930/31 to 1936/37[37]

Regardless of the relative size of the WWVS as compared to other secondary schools, the technical school board, which also managed and reported on night school, was eliminated after amalgamation. Windsor Walkerville School Board Trustees tried to continue administratively as usual, simply going back to calling the technical school board an advisory committee, but the school board intervened. A letter from the Windsor Board of Education's Secretary Treasurer, dated November 12, 1936, explained:

> Although the Windsor Board of Education has temporary respite from appointing a Vocational Advisory Committee[38] we feel it well to at this time have legal opinion on this matter. The Board of Education contends that it is not necessary for us to have an Advisory Vocational Committee, that by the provisions of the City of Windsor Amalgamation Act 1935, section 14, the Board of Education for the new City shall have vested in its ownership, management, control and maintenance of the Windsor-Walkerville Vocational School in place and stead of the Windsor-Walkerville Vocational School Board, which from the first day of January 1936 shall be dissolved and cease to exist. This special act over-rides the provisions of the general statutes such as the Vocational School Act where there is any conflict, and it is obvious that the intent of the Windsor Amalgamation Act

> was to dissolve all former Boards and Commissions and concentrate control in the new bodies set up by the act, such as the Board of Education.
>
> I may add that I had our Vice-Chairman, Mr. J. F. Twigg, K.C., go over the acts with me and he agreed with my contention the same as did Honourable David A. Croll when we consulted with him on the subject; therefore, I would ask you when you are arriving at your decision that you take every possible precaution to be sure that all the ground is covered. The Members of the Board of Education, the members of the former Windsor Finance Commission, the Principal and staff of the Vocational School (and I may say confidentially, Honourable David A. Croll) are unanimous in the feeling that there is no necessity for having an Advisory Committee under the law, nor is it advisable in the interests of the Vocational School that one be set up.
>
> I would be pleased to receive your legal opinion on this at your earliest possible convenience.[39]

The following day, a response was received from the City Solicitor:

> I have your letter of yesterday in connection with the necessity for the appointment of a vocational advisory committee.
>
> I quite agree with your view that this is not required and that the complete management and control of the Vocational School is entrusted to the Board of Education. I may say that this matter was given consideration at the time the Amalgamation Act was being drafted, and it was drafted in the way in which it was with the very object in view of eliminating the advisory committee, as it was felt that, under present conditions, the committee was unnecessary.[40]

The school board was acting in accordance with recommendations that were published in April, 1935 by the royal commission on the Border Cities Amalgamation set up by the Department of Municipal Affairs.[41] The commission made thirteen recommendations with respect to education; three specifically mention vocational education. The Federal commission recommended that the school reinstate junior vocational classes and expand adult night classes. The commission also recommended that "the supervision of the Vocational School [be] directly under the Board of Education of Greater Windsor and the Vocational Education Act, Ontario Statutes 1930."[42]

At the same time that municipal amalgamation exacerbated overcrowded conditions, provincially, there was a push to eliminate "frills and fads" during tough times. According to George Rogers, the former high school inspector who had succeeded F.W. Merchant as chief director of education, "the fads and frills were the latest office

machines and power tools continually requisitioned by the commercial and technical schools."[43] The need for added space and equipment to deliver vocational programs meant that equal funding was simply inadequate for WWVS. Local donations and municipal funding had to make up the difference. It was not uncommon at the time for the school to receive donations from a variety of businesses. At a technical school board meeting on February 19, 1934, the technical director, Mr. Ross, reported that the school had received a number of donations, including:

1) A quantity of scrap wire from the local Bell Telephone Co.
2) A quantity of central station equipment from the Bell Telephone Co., Toronto.
3) A quantity of pipe, wire, fuses, three small motors, etc., from the Millen Electric Co.
4) Miscellaneous wire from the Canadian Bridge Co.
5) Miscellaneous supplies from the Johnson-Turner Co.
6) Miscellaneous supplies from Moncur-Waffle Electric Co.
7) Miscellaneous items from Meretsky, Burnstine & Meretsky.
8) The Windsor Gas Co. has donated an electric range, numbers of which, according to the company, are being displaced by the increasing popularity of gas.

For our Auto Department, the Champion Spark Plug Co. has donated a spark plug tester and cleaner.[44]

Ross expressed his appreciation for the local support of the school after reading the report to the school board. In a climate of financially tough times for education in general, technical schools faced particularly high hurdles because of the financial demand for equipment and increasing student demand for education that provided some hope for future employment by providing valued practical skills.

Despite overcrowding, an extensive article promoting the programs at Windsor Walkerville Vocational School appeared in *The Windsor Star*[45] on March 16, 1935. Perhaps this attempt to promote the school's programs reflected the push from Ontario Secondary School Teacher's Federation (OSSTF) at the time to sway public opinion against slashing school budgets, particularly those of technical schools. OSSTF believed that if communities were well informed about the purpose and functions of the schools and their programs, this informed public would oppose budget cuts.[46] Since the expiration of Federal funding in 1929, technical schools' funding had been reduced to the same as that for academic classes.[47]

The article promoting programs at WWVS provided a brief history of the school and a justification for vocational education. It summarized the recent physical expansion of the school and outlined the departments and courses offered. The historical overview that the article presented highlighted the steady growth of the school from isolated departments in existing schools to a technical school with 1900 students in 1934. This history concluded with a statement about the new importance of vocational counselling: "A student's first year at the vocational school included experiences in a variety of shop classes so that students can make informed decisions about their choices in the future. Time is set aside after school hours so that the technical director, Mr. S. R. Ross, can counsel boys. Miss Mary O'Donoghue acts in a similar capacity in giving guidance to girls, while Mr. E.C. Srigley, director of the school's commercial work, advises boys in his department."[48] This counselling resulted in decisions to go straight to work, to pursue further training in the student's field of study, or even to enter university. The most coveted local opportunity was the Detroit Institute of Technology, which offered scholarships to WWVS' best and brightest technology students.[49] Other coveted positions included apprenticeships with Ford Motor Company of Canada. In the 1930s the Ford Trade School in Windsor produced a steady supply of talented young men, most of whom stayed in the area rather than Detroit where there were opportunities for formal advanced training at the Institute of Technology.[50] Regardless of the public promotions of the fine work done at the WWVS—which may have slowed funding cuts—any new funding would not be received until 1939 when new federal initiatives would begin to support the war effort.

Provincial grants to local school boards were reduced by 10% in the fall of 1932, then again by 10 to 20% in the spring of 1933, and yet again that autumn. Between 1933 and 1934, total annual expenditures on schooling in Canada dropped by one-third.[51]In 1936 the Dominion Bureau of Statistics released some information to CBC Radio about Canada's investment in schools, stating that investment in schools equals about 2% of the total national wealth in Canada. This investment

> ...is about double our investment in telephones; equal to our investment in the electricity supply industry, or in automobiles; about one fifth or one sixth of our investment in railways; about one tenth or less of our investment in farming.

> There is still a considerable part of the investment in schools to be paid for by the public. The ordinary publicly-controlled schools are valued at less than $400,000,000 and there is indebtedness against them of more than half this amount. But if they could collect the $50,000,000 or thereabouts owing in arrears of school taxes, and apply it to the reduction of debt, their net indebtedness would be only about $150,000,000.[52]

With criticisms of educational funding mounting, during the slow rebound from the worst of the Great Depression, there is some local evidence that change was on the horizon. In the annual 1935 inspector's report, J. E. Benson felt the need to address the subject of public opinion and funding directly in a section of the report entitled, "The School and the Public." In this report, Benson explains:

> School education continues at the peak of popularity. Evidence accumulates that it is closely related to the good and successful life. Parents are willing to undergo great sacrifices in order that their children may get an adequate education. The school and its activities are becoming front page news and the topic of many editorial comments. Educational authorities from the minister of education down are conscious that there are school problems requiring solution and adjustment and that an effort must be made to solve them. Primarily the problem is the adequate selection and training of teachers with the supplementary problem of adequate pay for ideal service.[53]

Benson went on to thank the board and the educational community, as well as the community at large, for making education a success in 1935.

The first break for technical education came with funds provided by the Youth Training Act, 1939, that finally served to provide federal funding. Under this act, the federal government dispersed $1,500,000 each year for a three-year period.[54] In 1942, the federal government offered what appeared to be a more serious commitment to vocational education. For the first time, the federal government convened a Vocational Training Advisory Council to advise the Minister of Labour on matters related to vocational education. The Vocational Training Co-Ordination Act, 1942, provided funds for technical schools to support the war effort, offering training in tool making for war production jobs, and military training by H.M.C.S. Hunter, a local recruiter for sea cadets.[55] Domestic science curriculum was adapted to war efforts by offering night classes including cooking lessons, rationing and food substitution. Domestic science students also prepared care packages for soldiers overseas. The much needed funding

during wartime helped to expand the curriculum to include tool and die and metallurgy studies, heat treatment, electrical and oxyacetylene welding, and diesel studies. These topics were vital to the war effort because the demand for weapons, transportation, and communication technology was ongoing, and once the war was over, they helped students find good paying jobs in automobile manufacturing.

These new courses were showcased alongside more traditional work done at the school during open house nights,[56] hosted by Clarence Smith, a local department store owner.[57] These events quickly grew in popularity drawing over 5,000 visitors per event.[58] The semi-annual open house became known as the C.H. Smith Department Store Nights and would take place over a week and involved approximately 200 students who were chosen to take part in every detail of running a mercantile operation. Students would do everything involved in the stores operation, from marketing to window dressing, customer service and even accounting. During the 1940s, vocational talent was showcased at the C.H. Smith Department Store, beginning a tradition that lasted decades[59] in Windsor.[60] These open house nights were a chance for the community to see first-hand the program's purpose, the students' potential and ability, and their efforts' products, all in one night. It must have been a point of pride for everyone involved, as the number of community members who turned out for these events attests. Students themselves also took initiative to play an organized role in their community, as the next section will illustrate.

Student Participation & Influence at the School

Principal W.D. Lowe valued the school's connections with the community. Lowe emphasized how valuable the opportunity was to attend a technical school and encouraged students to give back to their community. Organizations during war time included a cadet corps which led to greater wartime military recruitment among students during WWII. Student initiatives such as the formation of the Alpha Kai Omega Fraternity (AKO) and the 1944 student strike, both described in subsequent pages, attest to students' ability to influence their community on their own terms. But their focus and vision still reflect the influence of Lowe.

Student activities made significant contributions to the community during the 40s. Immediately after Canada became involved in WWII, WWVS became a beehive of activity. From 1941 to 1945, the school took on three shifts. The first shift was the regular day school; the next shift was the emergency wartime classes that took place from four in the afternoon to 12 midnight; during a third shift Windsor's Naval Reserve Division, HMCS Hunter, utilized the school from midnight until 8am.[61]

WWVS's cadet corps continued as the largest in Western Ontario, with specialty groups such as first aid, rifle team, gymnastics unit, and the first-ever girls' corps, which focused on training girls as nurses' aids for the war effort. The cadet corps captured the Strathacona Award on several occasions during the 1940s. The Strathacona Award is the highest award which can be bestowed on a Royal Canadian Army Cadet in recognition of exemplary performance in physical and military training.[62] Other extracurricular groups at WWVS in the 1940s included the literary society, the drama club, the oratorical society, the school newspaper, and the glee club. The spring style parade, amateur talent nights, and a prom complete with a swing band, all came to play important parts in social life at WWVS.[63]

A 1945 advertisement in the *Saturday Night Post* for the Ford Trade School in Windsor declared, "War comes to the classroom."[64] Students in turn went to war: 3,000 former WWVS students joined the active armed forces during WWII and 191 (including one staff member) made the "supreme sacrifice".[65] When the war concluded, evening classes continued to aid veterans in adjusting to postwar employment opportunities. The school also attracted many of the newcomers to Canada who were displaced from their native countries during WWII.[66]

The sudden restoration of funding and flurry of activity and interest in the school was critically questioned by Vice Principal S. R. Ross, who expressed concern about earlier attitudes toward technical education. Ross said, "It was unfortunate the realization of the need and importance of technical education had to come as a result of a war".[67] In 1941 the armed forces recognized technical and commercial graduates as equivalent to graduates of collegiate institutes. This demand for graduates of technical schools prompted discussions about the need for a provincial institute of technology."[68] At the time many students who wanted to pursue further training after grade 12 attended the

Ford Trade School in Windsor, or may have even attended school in the United States at the University of Detroit, Wayne State University, or the Detroit Institute of Technology which even extended scholarships to honour students from WWVS.[69] In many cases, though, students created their own opportunities. Such was the case with football. Those boys who wanted to continue playing football after high school created opportunities through student-alumni-led organizations like AKO.

In 1935, the Alpha Kai Omega Fraternity (AKO) became incorporated and obtained a Provincial Charter under issues of letters patent by the Provincial Secretary. AKO was founded in 1929 by seven students at Windsor Walkerville Technical School: Norman Hull (the first president), Bill Begley, Ron Truscott, Jay Love, Ivan Stokes, Jim Fairhurst, and Jack McMillan. The fraternity was named by Mr. Siers, a teacher at WWTS. The name means "the first and last."[70] This fraternity became a well-known local charity organization in Windsor and Essex County. Their charitable activities included establishing a well-equipped local park.[71] AKO developed a reputation for assisting other charities like the Windsor Goodfellows Club and the Institute for the Blind. AKO fraternity assisted in the construction of Windsor's first community centre, the AKO Community Centre, which was dedicated to 5 members who lost their lives in WWII: Herbert Baker, James Cross, Jack Peck, Louis Reaume, and Frank Winegarden, Jr.

AKO's local work establishing a park and a community centre gained them an honour in 1968 by the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association. AKO is also well known for its contributions to youth via its sports clubs. In 2001, AKO was the second recipient of the Windsor/Essex County Sports Hall of Fame's Board of Directors Plaque in recognition of their service to youth. AKO was the first organization in the Canadian Junior Football League to be honoured by the Canadian Football Hall of Fame Museum[72] in 2006. In this museum, located in Hamilton, Ontario, AKO has an extensive exhibit of memorabilia spanning five decades, arranged in a partial replica of the AKO Fratmen Football Team's locker room.[73] Both of these honours are testament to the significance and lasting effect that the student leadership that emerged in this era had on the local community. The legacy of the founders of AKO would have pleased W.D. Lowe.

In another example of student participation and leadership, the student strike in 1944 is a telling sign of the initiative of students within the context of the community.

Windsor's labour movement grew at a fast pace after World War II ended in 1945. The demand for wartime production made industrial jobs plentiful in Windsor. As a result, workers came together to voice their needs. The many strikes that took place in 1944, led to a landmark Order-in-Council, P.C. 1003,[74] which legally recognized Canadian labourers right to organize and set up collective bargaining units.[75] The presence of labour unrest no doubt had an effect on students who were looking to implement change in their schools at the time. Staff at the vocational school may have seen value in students learning the rights of labour organization and the importance in striking as a way to negotiate future working conditions. As former trade unionists, many vocational teachers were active in teacher unions, attesting to this possibility.[76]

In the midst of many strikes that built up to the famous 1945 Windsor Ford Strike,[77] students in Windsor may have seen striking as a way to negotiate the context in which they spent their day. When educational administration denied football coaches overtime pay for their work in coaching, prior to the beginning of the 1944 school year, Windsor secondary students organized a citywide strike and WWVS students led the walk out. The event was covered by *The Windsor Star*, which described the event as follows:

> Emergency measures were the order of the day today as the Windsor Board of Education found itself face to face with a walk-out of all its secondary school students in a protest over the threatened loss of inter-school football in the city this fall.[78]
>
> The coaches of football were denied overtime pay by the school board. Overtime pay had been provided in the past since inter-school football was not a part of regular inter-school games. The coaches were asking $200 for the overtime hours spent coaching players for the football season. The board offered $50 which would come out of funds usually destined for students. The coaches refused the offer, explaining that the funds offered were insufficient and should not come from student educational funding. 1,500 students (350 girls from Windsor Vocational were the first to arrive) marched to city hall in a mass demonstration, declaring that they would not return to school until the demands of the coaches were met.
>
> The marching students carried banners with such slogans as "Football or Poolroom?" and "No Sports – No School." Students on bicycles, some of them carrying bugles, sped ahead of the marchers to take care of traffic. Evidently the police department did not consider the "strike" an occasion to detail special squads of police to watch the goings on. As the students marched they were full of life, singing school songs and shouting school yells.[79]

By the end of the emergency meeting, a tentative deal had been struck that would bring inter-school football back until a formal decision was agreed upon at the next school council meeting on October 18, 1944.[80]

The treatment of students as a resource to the nation that was so popular in the early wartime period began to shift with the growing awareness that students could be leaders in their communities through organization. That realization was put to use effectively in the 1944 student strike. Perhaps it could be argued that the lasting presence of the AKO and the success of the student strike in 1944 served as a testament to the strong leadership that existed at the school and the high expectations for citizenship that Lowe expressed to students. The foundation had been laid, but would the high expectations of student leadership at school and in the community last beyond the principalship of W.D. Lowe?

The Loss of Two Founders of the School

Although Frederick P. Gavin did not have a direct role with the students at WWTS, he did identify the need for technical education in the Border Cities, publicly declare a vision for the school, make a plan of action, and set it in motion, seeing it through step by step. The fact that F.P. Gavin gained popularity as an educationalist in the province also attests to the resonance his message had within our provincial education system. On October 3, 1944, *The Windsor Star* reported that the local founder of technical education had died. His contributions included establishing night classes in 1913, and the first technical wing at Patterson Collegiate. Gavin was also given credit for being a "prime mover" in establishing the Windsor Walkerville Technical School. Some biographical information was provided in the obituary:

> [Frederick Pierce] Gavin came to Windsor collegiate as a science master in 1894. In 1905 he was appointed principal of the collegiate.
>
> In 1919, Mr. Gavin was appointed assistant to Dr. F.W. Merchant, director for vocational education in Ontario, and he left Windsor for Toronto. Later, when Dr. Merchant was appointed Superintendant of Education for the province, Mr. Gavin succeeded him as Director of Vocational Education.
>
> When the Ontario Training College for Technical Teachers was opened in Hamilton, Mr. Gavin resigned the directorship of vocational education for Ontario to become principal of the training college.

> He held the post as principal of the training college with distinction, until the war made it advisable to close that college temporarily. Since that time, Mr. Gavin served as technical advisor to the war training program in Hamilton – a post he filled so well that he was awarded the O.B.E [Order of the British Empire] a year ago [in 1943].
>
> Mr. Gavin was outstanding as a teacher. All who came under him, whether high school students or teachers-in-training, were both impressed and inspired. In the fall of 1939 when Patterson [Collegiate] celebrated its 50th anniversary, he was the guest of honor and hundreds of his former students thronged the school till the wee small hours to again greet their beloved teacher, a remarkable tribute.
>
> He always took a prominent part in the affairs and the deliberations of the Ontario Educational Association, whose sessions at Easter time he never missed. He was president of the association in 1931. Mr. Gavin was also keenly interested in vocational guidance and was president of the Ontario association in the year 1936...
>
> In 1944 Mr. Gavin was elected honorary president of the Ontario Vocational Association, which position he held at the time of his death. Mr. Gavin was 17 years of age when he first taught school in Windsor, taking his degree extra-murally from Queen's University. Prior to his death Mr. Gavin had been supervising technical training at the Canadian Army Trades School in Hamilton.[81]

Less than one year after F.P. Gavin died, W.D. Lowe also passed away. W.D. Lowe was found dead in his home on June 26, 1945. *The Windsor Star* reported the following day that William Duff Lowe died suddenly at home with no sign or warning of ill health.[82] Lowe's career in education spanned 37 years, 35 of which were in Windsor, and 23 of those years were as the principal of WWTS. Lowe was the only principal the school had known. Lowe was described by mayor, Arthur J. Reaume, as an "untiring worker in the interest of young people of this community...his was a great influence for the good of this city. And much of his work will be carried forward by those young men and women who graduated under his guidance."[83] Dr. H. D. Taylor, chairman of the Windsor Board of Education, paid tribute to Lowe in the following words:

> All citizens, not only of this city but of the whole province, will be shocked to learn of the sudden death of W.D. Lowe. It is with a sense of profound personal regret that I record his untimely passing.
>
> He was highly regarded throughout the country as an educationalist, and we also knew him as an outstanding citizen. For 36 years he served this community as a teacher and principal faithfully and well and there is evidence in his former students of the thorough education they received

> under his guidance in business, professions or vocations, in which they become successful and prominent in the City of Windsor, the province of Ontario, and the Dominion of Canada.
>
> At all times those who came in contact with him noted his unfailing kindness, consideration and courtesy. No regret escaped his sympathetic study, always one felt that a problem the solution of which might be difficult had at least been left in the hands of one whose generosity of mind and sterling integrity assured that a satisfactory solution would be found. Teachers, administrators, citizens and his former students, hundreds of whom are in the armed forces, have lost a good and kindly friend and leader, who amid the stern rigours of war never forgot to exemplify those gentlemanly qualities we all admire in people whom we greatly respect.[84]

That same respect was demonstrated on March 12, 1947, when the new name and a memorial plaque were unveiled at the school. Another fitting tribute came in the 1946-1947 yearbook, the first printed since 1929, and was dedicated to Mr. Willian Duff Lowe.[85] In that memorial issue of *The Towers*, Myra Plawucki, a student at WWVS, writes in the year book about the re-naming of the school:

> [O]ne of the greatest events in the history of the school occurred on March 12, 1947, when the Windsor Walkerville Vocational School was officially re-named The W.D. Lowe Vocational High School, in honour of the late Mr. W.D. Lowe, the first principal. Since Mr. Lowe's death in June, 1945, an oil painting of him has been hung in the main lobby of the school. Now the school he loved so well and worked so hard to make famous, bears his name...
>
> The plaque bears these words in Latin – the language Mr. Lowe knew and loved so well – "Eregi Monumentum aeri Perennius" – I have reared a monument more lasting than brass. The hundreds of ex-students, whose lives have been shaped by Mr. Lowe's precepts and example, are the living memorial represented by these classic words.[86]

The re-naming ceremony of the school made news. The following day, on March 13, 1947 it was reported that the inscription on the plaque described Lowe as a "gentleman, scholar, outstanding citizen who dedicated 35 years of his life to the advancement of education in this community."[87]In the same article, *The Windsor Star* reported that "Leonard Wheelton, Superintendent of Schools, told the students that this occasion should not be regarded as just another event in their school lives. Rather, he said, 'we should dedicate ourselves to those fine ideals and purposes which Mr. Lowe wove into a

pattern and a great tradition in the vocational school, and from this all students should take something and dedicate themselves to these ideals set forth by Mr. Lowe.' "[88]

Memories of Mr. Lowe

Lowe seemed to be aware of the impact he wanted to have on student's right from the beginning. In the principal's message from the 1927-28 year book, Lowe wrote about the type of character he believed laid a firm foundation for life. In this message he stated:

> The Technical School is endeavouring to impart to the boys and girls who throng its halls knowledge and skill that will enable them to lead useful and happy lives in the world of business and industry. But the task will be incomplete unless at the same time the foundations are laid, upon which any success that is to endure must rest. Uprightness, honesty, industry, courage, cheerfulness – all that we mean by Character – these are the foundation stones upon which we must build.
>
> And of all of the agencies in the school that most help or hinder the formation of character, none is more potent than school traditions. Our school is very new, its traditions are in the making, so that the boys and girls of to-day have a glorious opportunity and a great responsibility in ensuring that at the Windsor-Walkerville Technical School only the best traditions may be established. Traditions of industry – for the world has no honours for the shirker; of courtesy and consideration for others; of sportsmanship, that always plays the game whether winning or losing; of courage in the face of difficulties; of cheerfulness, even when things go wrong; of modesty and purity.
>
> What an ideal place our school will be if we can establish firmly such traditions as these! How fondly shall we look back in future years to the days spent here! Boys and girls of Tech! Our traditions are in the making! Let us see to it that they are worthy traditions! [89]

Lowe was known to students as caring and approachable, but also as one who could keep students in line when need be. John Brueggeman, or "Bruggy," as he was known, attended the school from 1931 to 1933. In 1973 he recalled that even though WWTS had the largest cadet corps in the nation, they were still no match for Principal Lowe. Bruggy was a part of that cadet corps and remembers:

> One time we were supposed to march to Lanspeary Park. We marched down Elsmere [Ave.], over to Erie [Street] and were supposed to go up Parent Avenue. Instead, the whole platoon turned down and we went to the Capital Theatre. On the Monday, Mr. Lowe called us all in and whipped the whole damn 40 of us.[90]

Corporal punishment was common in schools, and not questioned as long as the disciplinarian was perceived as being fair.[91] By all student's accounts, Lowe was more than fair; he was often described as kind and caring. At the twenty-fifth reunion after Lowe's death, many students fondly remembered their principal and said a few words in his honour.

Valya Conosevitch Campbell remembered W.D. Lowe as follows:

> He was known as a strict (but fair) disciplinarian. He was dedicated to his school and to his students. His blue eyes were keen, searching and penetrating. I don't think anyone would care to lie to him about anything. He smiled easily. He was tall – around 6'5" with a straight, trim, slim figure. I remember him as being constantly in motion – walking, walking, walking, down the corridors, up the stairs, down the stairs, into class rooms. He had an easy swinging walk. No paunch on this man!
>
> He was a humanitarian. He cared about us – the students, and what happened to us. He expected much from us and we were inspired to live up to his expectations.
>
> When work was scarce for our fathers back in 1925, and they were laid off, the children would often have to quit school to work to help buy the groceries (no employment insurance or SUB in those days). This troubled Mr. Lowe. And he tried to do something about it.
>
> For example, he would not hesitate to go to Ford's on behalf of a student's father who had been laid off or lost a job. Or to go to Woolworth's and arrange a part-time job after school and on Saturdays for a student faced with the possibility of having to leave school. I know. For it happened to me. And through the years there were many similar trips for Mr. Lowe.
>
> We all, I'm sure, remember him well in assembly on Wednesday mornings – up there on stage – baton in hand – with Mr. Percy Bennett at the piano – leading us in the national anthem at a clippity-clip speed. When 750 voices were raised in unison to sing God Save the King, with his baton as pace setter – we sang with gusto, abandon and feeling! We had no choice. Mr. Lowe was up there facing us, expecting us to sing. We sang![92]

This excerpt relays the acute awareness students had of W.D. Lowe's expectations. The next quote is from the principal's message in a 1928-29 yearbook. In this message Lowe directly offers his expectations, and also reveals that he understands that these expectations may be perceived as difficult. This message was intended to inspire students at the school to meet challenges head on and not be afraid of failure:

> Every boy loves an adventure. Every girl admires a hero. And of course the outstanding characteristic of a hero is the resolute way in which he

> encounters dangers and difficulties. It is surprising too how often difficulties and dangers are dissipated when opposed by a stout heart! But one doesn't need to be in a story book to display heroic qualities, for 'man is born to trouble as the sparks fly upward!' This is not a prophecy of gloom but a challenge to us to show what stuff we are made of. Life will present each one of us with trials and tribulations enough, but moral strength is gained in no other way than by grappling with difficulties. Is it algebra or drafting that causes you grief? Or stenography or oral composition? Here is a chance to show heroic qualities. Grapple with your difficulty and refuse to give in until both shoulders have been pressed to the mat. Of course heroic attempts do not always end in success...There is no disgrace if a brave attempt ends in failure. Failure is disgrace for those only who have refused to try."[93]

It may seem lofty to expect students to aspire to the hero image but Lowe wanted to communicate in this passage that the daily challenges of school and life were to be expected. For boys in particular, it was important to understand that overcoming daily challenges builds character. Lowe's use of a wrestling metaphor and words like "danger," "grappling" and "bravery," may have held appeal for boys who were in other circumstances expected to be loafers, likely to associate with bad company and get into trouble, or even worse, wind up in a reformatory as the truancy officer Mr. Howe expressed in a previous passage. The message seemed to be well received by students who remembered Lowe as a positive role model. George Vandoorn reflected on W.D. Lowe's influence at the school and wrote the following statement in the 1947-48 year book:

> ...the students and staff realized that here was a man who lived and breathed nobleness. Never too busy to listen to student problems and always eager to guide and assist puzzled or erring students, Mr. Lowe made it his business to know each and every pupil. His humour, humanity, and knowledge of both books and people influenced all of us who knew him.
> The standard set by Mr. Lowe is something for every student to work towards in playing his part on life's stage. Naming the school after him is a fitting tribute to that standard.[94]

Not only were the expectations high, but they were an acknowledged standard as reflected in the most permanent memory of Lowe at the school – the plaque which commemorated his leadership and hung in the school. It read:

> As I first gazed in silent pause,
> Behold, to my surprise,

The plaque spoke out in loud applause--
A great man never dies.

This gentleman a full life chose,
So humble, true and kind;
As scent adds beauty to the rose
So virtue to the mind.

A scholar keen, of highest rank,
His praise of Homer voiced,
With great delight of Horace drank,
In Scott and Keats rejoiced.

This man inspired us all to find
A joy in noble deeds;
A zeal in service for the Blind,
And all our fellows' needs.

A nobler Kingdom now endears
This godly citizen;
But his bright spirit reappears
In hearts and lives of men.[95]

These lasting words intended to capture Lowe were written twenty years after Lowe's first principal's message, and they both have a common central message - character is a needed foundation for success in business and industry. In this first principal's message Lowe also seemed to be setting the stage and expectations for his own leadership. According to students' memories of Lowe, he held steadfast to the belief that the keys to success, no matter what a student's plans were for life, were moral character and a sense of responsibility to the community. Organizations which grew out of WWVS, like AKO, are an indication that the foundations had indeed been set. The AKO centred its efforts on charitable contributions to local organizations like the Goodfellows, the Institute for the Blind, and running a junior football team. The chosen charities that AKO gave to, speak volumes to Lowe's influence. William Duff Lowe was known for his commitment to the Goodfellows of Windsor, and the Institute for the Blind, and sportsmanship, as indicated in his many principal messages and his memorial plaque.[96] The lasting presence of the AKO to this day in Windsor is evidence of the enduring influence Lowe had.

Concluding remarks about Lowe's Influence

This era included both the most trying and the most prosperous times for technical education. The Great Depression presented financial challenges which led to municipal restructuring in order to make the Border Cities' administration and services more efficient. This strategy included eliminating the technical school board and opening up WWTS to more students. The demands of war production during WWII insured increased support for technical schools. WWTS once again enjoyed funding and support unmatched by any previous era. Plentiful jobs created a context in which unions could demand safe working conditions and fair compensation for dangerous work. The growing strength and presence of union organization was visible to students in the Border Cities, who took on leadership roles at WWTS and in the community. Student leadership also reflected the vision that gave rise to a technical school and the qualities of the only principal for more than two decades – William Duff Lowe.

In acknowledgement of W.D. Lowe's influence and dedication to the school, the Windsor Walkerville Technical School was renamed W.D. Lowe Technical School in 1947. Some of the changes and challenges the school endured while Lowe was principal included overcrowding, building an addition onto the school during trying financial times, a municipal amalgamation of the Border Cities that eliminated the technical school board in the name of efficiency, and the continuous need to cut educational costs, which saw repeated wage cuts depressing the morale of the staff. The material limitations of students were also an issue as it affected their ability to attend school. Students took on active roles in the school with their extracurricular activities. The activities of the cadet corps were reduced at the school during the Great Depression, but the AKO fraternity was established and remains a local charity in Windsor to this day. A 1944 student strike in which WWVS figured prominently succeeded in its goal to reinstate football at Windsor secondary schools. It was mainly students who would later testify that F.P. Gavin and W.D. Lowe were important role models for leadership. Lowe's reputation as a kind, but tough and judicious, parent figure is given credit for inspiring students to live up to his expectation, take on leadership roles in their community, and influence change both in their own lives and in their communities.

In summary, the challenges of the Great Depression influenced the expansion of the school at a most unlikely time. In a political context where the necessities to deliver technical education were widely seen as "fads and frills," the easy solution might have been to simply let technical education do without, but Lowe's confidence in students and staff influenced the maintenance of positive relations among the school, community, teachers' unions, and administration in trying times. Times change, however, and the student strike in 1944 indicates that a shift was starting to take place: students would no longer tolerate their role as passive resources to be molded for national purposes. Instead they saw themselves as active participants in their education. This shift, combined with the end of an era in school leadership, suggest that more momentous changes were to come.

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[1] F.S. Rutherford. Report of the Director of Vocational Education. The Report of the Minister of Education for the Province of Ontario. Toronto, Ontario: T.E. Bowman Printer to the King's Most Excellence Majesty, 1936.

[2] Darious R. Young and A.V. Machinski. "An Historical Survey of Vocational Education in Canada" (1971) Ottawa Ontario: Reprinted with the permission of the Canadian Vocational Association.

[3] Robert Stamp. *The Schools of Ontario*, 1876-1976. Toronto, Ontario; University of Toronto Press, 1982, 144.

[4] Neil F. Morrison. *The Garden Gateway to Canada.* Windsor, Ontario; Herald Press Limited. 1954, 264.

[5] Morrison, 264.

[6] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, January 20, 1930.

[7] Young and Machinski.

[8] Ibid.

[9] Ibid.

[10] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, April 17, 1930.

[11] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, May, 29, 1930.

[12] Windsor Municipal By-law no. 4015. August 25, 1930. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library, RG9 AIII – V125.

[13] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, October, 1930.

[14] Neil F. Morrison. *The Garden Gateway to Canada.* Windsor, Ontario; Herald Press Limited. 1954, 280.

[15] "Bankruptcy Action Threatens Windsor," *Detroit Free Press*, December 29, 1931, 3.

[16] Ibid.

[17] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, January 27, 1932.

[18] Legal notes and files from the City of Windsor in anticipation of the amalgamation in 1935. Municipal Archives, Windsor Public Library. RG9 AIII-V125.

[19] BJS MacDonald, City Solicitor, City of Windsor Legal Department. Windsor Walkerville Technical School vs County and East Windsor. October 10, 1933.

[20] A hand written notation about attendance on the Suggested Salary Schedule. Archives of Ontario, RG19-33, Windsor Walkerville Technical School, B444041.

[21] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, March 17, 1930.

[22] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, January 27, 1932.

[23] Ibid.

[24] Ibid.

[25] As quoted by Stamp. *The Schools of Ontario*, 145.

[26] Ibid, 145.

[27] Gary Douglas. "W.D. Lowe Secondary School, 1923-1983." Informally re-published manuscript for the 90th reunion, May 17, 2013.

[28] Windsor Walkerville Technical School Board Minutes, April 16, 1934.

[29] Morrison. *Garden Gateway to Canada*, 281.

[30] From 1935 on, the term vocational is used to refer to the school because it was renamed after amalgamation, changing the word technical to vocational.

[31] Windsor Schools. Annual Report. 1937.

[32] An Act Respecting Vocational Education, Assented April 3, 1930. Ontario Statutes, Chapter 64, S.4, 302.

[33] An Act for the Promotion of Vocational Education in Canada. Assented August 3, 1931. Canadian Statutes, Chapter 59, S.5, 431. The primary focus of the legislation was to get money to the provinces for vocational education but it was repealed later due to a lack of funds.

[34] John Seath seemed to favour the term "industrial" and used it interchangeably with technical. This may have been due in part to his extensive travels investigating education in the United States and England. His influence on legislation in 1911 is reflected in the title of the legislation he helped to enact: The Industrial Education Act. The term industrial within Ontario between the late 1800s to the 20s is often associated to reform schools.

[35] This point is confirmed in the next chapter, when the effects of the Technical and Vocational Training and Assistance Act and the Robarts Plan are discussed. These two policies brought together to create social status distinctions between "vocational" and "technical". The distinction does not appear to exist in Ontario prior to their implementation.

[36] Windsor Schools. Annual Report. 1937.

[37] These statistics were compiled from the monthly attendance reports provided in the Technical School Board Minutes and principal's reports.

[38] The word vocational seemed to be used more often to refer to the school, rather than technical, this may reflect the fact that the new amalgamated school board formally changed the school's name to Windsor Walkerville Vocational School in 1935 according to the 60th anniversary reunion booklet. Gary Douglas. The WD Lowe 60th Anniversary Booklet. 1983. Privately published for the WD Lowe School Reunion.

[39] Roy Noble, Business Administrator, Secretary Treasurer. Letter from the Windsor Board of Education to the City Solicitor, B.J.S. MacDonald. Windsor Ontario: November 12, 1936. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library. RG9AIII-2/125.

[40] B.J.S. MacDonald, City Solicitor. Letter from the City Solicitor to T. Roy Noble, Secretary Treasurer of Windsor Board of Education. Windsor Ontario: November 13, 1936. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library. RG9AIII-1/125.

[41] Report of the Royal Commission on Border Cities Amalgamation, April, 1935. Province of Ontario, Department of Municipal Affairs. Toronto Ontario: T.E. Bowman Printer to the King's Most Excellent Majesty. https://ia600608.us.archive.org/6/items/amalgamationcomm00onta/amalgamationcomm00onta.pdf

[42] Minutes from the regular meeting of the Board of Education in Windsor, Ontario, March 14, 1935. Board Minutes. January 1, 1934 to June 30, 1935.

[43] Robert Stamp. The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976. (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 144.

[44] Report of the Technical Director. Minutes from the regular meeting of the Board of Education in Windsor, Ontario, February 19, 1934. Board Minutes. January 1, 1934 to June 30, 1935.

[45] The local newspaper changed its name from *The Border Cities Star* to *The Windsor Daily Star* to reflect the city's name change during amalgamation in 1935.

[46] Robert Stamp. The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976. Toronto, Ontario; University of Toronto Press, 1982, 143.

[47] Ibid, 144.

[48] Hal Miller. "Enhancing Chances of Border Students," *The Windsor Star*, March 16, 1935, 23.

[49] The Detroit Institute of Technology advertised in the yearbook and scholarships were also announced in the yearbook.

[50] Trevor Price & Larry Kulisek, Windsor, 1892-1992: A Centennial Celebration. Windsor, Ontario. A centennial project sponsored by the Windsor District Chamber of Commerce, 1992, 100.

[51] Robert Stamp. The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976. Toronto, Ontario; University of Toronto Press, 1982, 143.

[52] Dominion Bureau of Statistics. Canada's Investment in Schools. A Fact a Day about Canada. No. 32, Tuesday October 29, 1935, 17.

[53] J.E. Benson. Windsor Public Schools. *Inspector's Annual Report*, 1935.

[54] Young and Machinski, *An Historical Survey*.

[55] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[56] Open house nights, or C.H. Smith Department Store nights was a tradition that began in the 30s and lasted several decades according to Gary Douglas. The WD Lowe 60th Anniversary Booklet. 1983. Unpublished manuscript for the WD Lowe School Reunion.

[57] W.D. Lowe. Vocational Days. Pamphlet. November 17, 1939. Reprinted in the W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary Booklet. 1983.

[58] "Open House Big Event," *The Windsor Star*, Saturday March 20, 1948, 7.

[59] These open houses began in the 30s and lasted into the late 40s according to year books and news articles covering the events.

[60] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[61] Ibid.

[62] Army Cadet History (website) http://www.armycadethistory.com/Trophies/medals_LordStratMedal.htm

[63] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[64] Saturday Night Post. "War Comes to the Classroom" (Sept. 25, 1945): 9. This is an article refers to a "Ford of Canada Trade School" in Windsor.

[65] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[66] Ibid.

[67] Ibid.

[68] Ibid.

[69] Ibid.

[70] Alpha Kai Omega Fraternity. Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AKO_Fraternity. accessed on 17/07/2010.

[71] The local park was named Rossini Park located on 4270 Alice Road in Windsor Ontario. In 1961, the neighbourhood centre was constructed as the first facility in Windsor designed specifically as a community centre. In 2007, the centre was renamed the Constable John Atkinson Memorial Community Centre, in honour of Constable John Atkinson, Windsor Police Services, who was killed in the line of duty. The amenities include: Community Centre, Football/Soccer Field, Baseball Diamonds, Play Unit, and Spray Pad.

[72] The Canadian Football Hall of Fame Museum is located in Hamilton Ontario. http://www.cfhof.ca/page/contacthall

[73] Alpha Kai Omega Fraternity. Wikipedia. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/AKO_Fraternity. accessed on 17/07/2010.

[74] This legislation helped to then give structure to the Rand Formula which ensured union dues from all workers after the 1945 Ford Strike, in Windsor.

[75] Herb Colling. Ninety-Nine days: The Ford Strike in Windsor, 1945. (Toronto, Ontario: NC Press Limited. 1995).

[76] Robert Stamp. The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976. (Toronto, Ontario; University of Toronto Press, 1982), 147.

[77] The 1945 Windsor Ford Strike is important to labour history because the outcome of the strike established the Rand Formula which guaranteed union security and hencemany subsequent union victories that followed. For a detailed discussion on the 1945 Ford Strike in Windsor, read, "Ninety-Nine Days: The Ford Strike in Windsor, 1945" by Herb Colling, (Toronto Ontario: NC Press Limited, 1995).

[78] Collegiate Students 'strike', So Board Declares Holiday. *The Windsor Star*, Tuesday October 3, 1944.

[79] Ibid.

[80] Minutes from the regular meeting of the Board of Education in Windsor, Ontario, October 18, 1944. Board Minutes. January 6, 1943 to December 22, 1944.

[81] "Gavin is Stricken," *The Windsor Star*, October 3, 1944, 2.

[82] "W.D. Lowe is Stricken," *The Windsor Star*, June 27, 1945, 3.

[83] Ibid.

[84] Ibid.

[85] "Dedication," The Towers, (1946-1947). *W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook*, 5. Municipal Archives Windsor public library.

[86] Myra Plawucki. "Re-Naming of the School," The Towers. (1947-1948). *W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook,* 63. Municipal Archives Windsor public library.

[87] "W.D. Lowe's Memory Honored at Ceremony," *Windsor Star*, March 13, 1947.

[88] Ibid.

[89] "W.D. Lowe," The Towers, (1927-1928). *Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[90] Ray Bennett. "Lowe Memories Flow at Party." *The Windsor Star*. June 30, 1973, 4.

[91] Paul Axelrod. No Longer a 'last resort': The End of Corporal Punishment in the Schools of Toronto. *Historical Review*, 91, 2, June 2010, 261-285. DOI: 10.1353/can.0.0313

[92] Vayla Conosevitch Campbell. Goodbye Lowe Tech; thanks for the memories. Address made at the 25th reunion, printed in the 25th Anniversary Edition of The Towers. 1948.

[93] William D. Lowe, "On Heroism," The Towers, (1928-1929). *Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor public library.

[94] George Vandoorne, "In Memoriam," The Towers, (1946-1947). *Windsor Walkerville Technical School Yearbook*, 4. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[95] An original poem written by a grade 12 technical student identified only as C.A. of T4A. In viewing the Plaque of W.D. Lowe. The Towers. (1946-1947). *W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook*, 4. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[96] In the third stanza of the poem on Lowe's memorial plaque, reference is made to his dedication to the Institute for the Blind and the Windsor Goodfellows.

Chapter 4: From Chaos to Closure: W.D. Lowe Technical School, 1947 – 1973

> *Specific techniques such as separating children from the protective confines of their peer group, utilizing racial and class-based prejudices, and drawing on traditional attitudes toward gender...produce compliant and obedient students.*[1] -Mona Gleason, 2001



Figure 13: W.D. Lowe School, 2010. Courtesy of Author.

On February 10, 1972, *The Windsor Star* announced that W.D. Lowe would be closing its doors as a technical school the following year. This action was part of a larger reorganization of high school programs that included merging J.C. Patterson Collegiate and W.D. Lowe Technical School to create a composite high school that would take the name of W.D. Lowe Secondary School.[2] In this reorganization of schools, technical programs were introduced at W.F. Herman High School and J. L. Forster Secondary School to add to their newly established commercial programs. All of these changes were based on a school board decision that "wherever possible composite schools should be developed rather than separate academic and technical schools."[3] It could be assumed that this decision was no doubt made in reaction to the mounting criticisms of social segregation in public secondary schools; however no mention was made of separate vocational schools which were left in place, separate, and most certainly unequal. Was it that at some point the once-proudly-established technical school, cutting edge in its

design, and full of opportunities and possibility, had become an educational blight, or was it that technical students were offered a way out of the growing stigma in the wake of increasing stand-alone vocational schools?

This chapter will analyze the factors which led to the decision to close W.D. Lowe as a technical school, beginning with the internal changes at the school, such as frequent turnover in administrative and teaching staff, and increasing student enrolment at WDLVS. The analysis will then turn to technological changes during the 1950s that directly impacted the local tool, die, and mould making industries and the establishment of a technical college in Windsor. These changes made WDLTS vulnerable to further changes that the Technical Vocational Training Assistance Act and the Robarts Plan would bring to secondary schools in Windsor in the early 1960s. The student strike in 1968 is a telling factor which highlights the broader social changes of the 1960s, and indicated that the traditional authoritarian approach to teaching that had made WDLTS a success in the past was no longer effective. Finally, WDLTS was closed as a technical school, a casualty of the perfect storm of social, institutional and ideological changes that simply surrounded the school, leaving it a relic of educational times past, with little value in the new context.

Leadership Change, 1946 to 1959

A teacher during this time recalled the period of 1946 to 1959 as a turning point in the school's history.[4] WDLVS was described by Gary Douglas, a previous teacher, as "destabilized," due to two main factors: the loss and subsequent rapid turnover of administration and staff, and the loss of the commercial department and hence most of the female students, who went to Harry E. Guppy Commercial High School in the late 1950s.[5]

Leadership at the school changed with relative frequency in the wake of William Duff Lowe's death. In the span of 12 years the school had four principals.[6] The brief principalships of the 1950s were a far cry from the 23-year stretch William Duff Lowe spent as principal of the school. After he died in 1945, the first principal to take over leadership was S.R. Ross, who left in 1951. For the next three years, Joseph Ord served as principal, moving on to the role of superintendent of high schools in 1954. Mr. Dean was principal from September 1954 to June 1959.[7] Two more principals who will be discussed

later in the chapter are, Mr. McGee, who served as principal from 1959-1971, and Eugene Durocher, who was principal from 1971-73.

Each principal had to deal with different challenges. For instance, Ross had to deal with high teacher turnover rates. As a previous department head, Ross served as a familiar face on staff, as other long-time staff retired en masse. After Joseph Ord's short three-year term as principal from 1951 to 1954, he moved on as superintendant of high schools and played a primary role in future decisions about the school, including putting forward the motion to merge J.C. Patterson Collegiate and WDLTS. Principal Dean faced technological and educational change and increasing enrollment that would lead to the opening of a commercial school, drastically shifting the gender balance at the school. Principal McGee, discussed later in this chapter along with the last principal, Mr. Durocher, faced the reality of social change and the implications it had for student political expression at school.

Ross, who had previously served as a technical teacher and director, held the principalship for 6 years. This continuity provided some stability in an otherwise unstable time for the school. The 1946 year began with S.R. Ross accepting the resignation of R.J. Parent, a teacher who, upon returning from military duty, had decided to pursue a vocation other than teaching.[8] Retirements and resignations would be the trend for the next few years. When original teaching staff began to retire in large numbers, the school swiftly lost the people who had established the traditions, culture, and climate of the school. Yearbooks throughout the 1950s commonly include heartfelt and reflective pages that wish retirees well. Miss Fritz, who had been the commercial teacher since the school opened, retired in 1951.[9] Miss Taylor, who had taught in the commercial department for 20 years also retired that year.[10] Mr. Harman, who had taught math and science since the school opened in 1923, also retired in 1951.[11] A two-page farewell, including the official school song was printed in the 1953 yearbook for the song's author, Mr. Percy Bennett, who had taught mathematics and music at WDLVS since the day it opened.[12] An ode was given in the 1951 yearbook to one of the original staff that remained at the school, Jack Johnson, a caretaker whom the students called "Pop."[13] Once a construction worker who helped to lay the foundation of the school, Johnson liked the place so much that he left his construction job and stayed on as caretaker – and the author of the ode, Margaret Muller,

spoke for WDLVS when she declared how happy everyone was to have Johnson there.[14] These examples were testaments to the contributions made by original staff members and the loss of continuity that students were experiencing.

When new teachers appeared in the classrooms at WDLVS, they did not make the same longstanding commitments to the school that their predecessors had. For instance, Mr. Cook came to the school in 1947 and Mr. Durocher in 1951; both teachers left the school in 1957 to take teaching positions at W.F. Herman Secondary School.[15] This type of teacher migration and transiency was new to WDLVS. From 1950 to 1955, there was a turnover of more than one hundred teachers.[16] The average age of staff members was 30 years old.[17]

There seemed to be a loss of mutual respect between students, staff, and the community. Ross was present at the school board meeting on Nov. 28, 1946, when a motion was passed to install a vault and alarm system in WDLVS in reaction to a break-in that had caused extensive damage and costs from theft. Anger also showed itself during the school day, according to a critique of teachers published in the 1951 yearbook. The author of this critique, a grade 11 commercial student, declared that some teachers' attitudes toward students were "irritating" and that the tradition of walking around during tests and exams was "annoying to students and disrupted their concentration." This same student also accused teachers of trying to get out of the day's lessons by telling personal stories, prompting tempers to flare when students did not understand their homework. This student concluded that all of these negative attributes make students "feel hostile toward teachers and cause them to fail their courses."[18] The fact that a critique of this nature was even submitted to the yearbook speaks to the shift that had occurred, but that it was actually published makes an even bolder statement. Without a doubt, a scathing review of teachers at WDLVS would never have been published while Principal Lowe was head of the school.

Student's deteriorating confidence in their teachers may be explained by the chaotic state of the staff, but it may also be due to principals transferring failing students to WDLVS at increasing rates. Records of a principal's meeting in September 1950 make it evident that Ross, then principal of WDLVS, tackled some of the first attempts at devaluing the school when he challenged the practice of transferring students to WDLVS

who were failing.[19] Mr. Ross felt that students who failed grade nine should repeat that grade at their original school and only be allowed to transfer as successful students. Other principals argued students should be allowed to attend a vocational school if they desired and not be denied the privilege of doing so. Although a final decision was not provided in the minutes, it appeared that Mr. Ross was in the minority in his opinion.[20] No motion was made, and it appears from the discussion and later records that the practice of transferring failing students to WDLVS continued.[21] This practice most certainly had the effect of devaluing the students and the school in the eyes of the community. This must have been a blow for Ross, who had been a technical teacher and then technical director since the school had opened before becoming the first principal after William D. Lowe.[22] Ross not only left the school a year later, but left education altogether to return to civil engineering.[23]

From Mr. Dean's first principal's message in 1955, there was evidence of the positivity and excitement he felt about technological and economic change and he made direct connections between those changes and new hopes and possibilities for vocational students. However, this exciting time created a catch-22 for technical secondary students: the new Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology were set up to prepare students for the changing skill set brought on by new technology, perhaps the excitement of the world outside the school was a draw to many students, as indicated by the continued problem of dropouts. Principal Dean noted in the 1954/55 yearbook that graduating classes were much smaller when compared to the size of their cohort in grade nine.

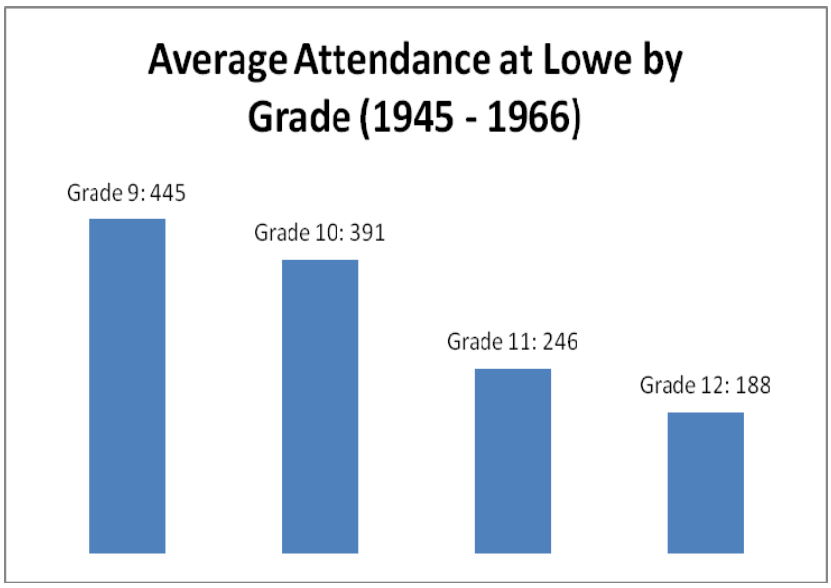


Table 6: The statistics in this table were compiled using Annual Reports of the Minister of Education from 1945 – 1966 to provide the reader with the phenomenon being described by Principal Dean.[24]

Principal Dean's message in the 1955/56 yearbook acknowledged the new need to graduate in the changing technological and economic context that students of WDLVS would face, and it also indicated the new role of the technical secondary school in that changing context:

> You are graduating at the most exciting and challenging period in history. The world is just entering the age of automation – an age which scientists have predicted will affect the daily lives of each of us to a greater extent than the industrial revolution affected the lives of people of its day...and skilled technicians will be needed to maintain this equipment. We are confident that many of you will accept the challenge and continue your studies at college, and be prepared to play an important role in Canada's future progress.[25]

This message indicates the new role that technical colleges had in the hierarchy of industrial labour and the lives of technical secondary students – a college education was a new standard for jobs with new technology that needed workers to "maintain this equipment." As Principal Dean indicated, the age of automation would have a lasting effect on the lives of people, especially those people whose skill set would be devalued by automation. A prime example was the industry that had been the lifeblood of craftsmanship, innovation, and creativity in the auto industry – specialized parts manufacturing. "Some argue forcefully that as a result of the use [of] new advanced

manufacturing technology brought about by automation, knowledge that was previously gained through hands on experience and served as the basis for skilled work, gradually became codified within automated machines leading to a diminution in the innovation and problem-solving capacity of mould and tool makers."[26] "The craftsmanship is being diluted. Troubleshooting, and the concept of machining – how things need to be done. They know how to do it mechanically – program this in, this file goes in. But if something happens, what do they do next?"[27] What appeared to Principal Dean as a new opportunity for work for technical students was retrospectively viewed as a historical turning point in the devaluation of tool, die, and mould workers in Windsor's economy. Since the specialized automotive parts manufacturing sector had historically been one of the driving supports of technical education in Windsor, the impact of automation and the emergence of technical colleges to prepare students for the new positions opening up would directly impact the purpose of WDLVS. While these external factors wreaked havoc on WDLVS, the disintegration of respect within and for the school created an even greater vulnerability. The one positive that stands out in the memories of students and staff seems to be the social relations between students.

Extra-curricular Activities & the Loss of Commercial Studies

Throughout the 1950s, extra-curricular activities would be the one constant that students could look to in a context otherwise consumed by change. The opening of a separate commercial high school would disrupt this one source of pleasure by removing most of the girls from WDLVS in 1959. Throughout the 1950s, social activities served as a constant at a school otherwise in flux, its aging teaching staff retiring in large numbers and its administration frequently changing. The balance of gender contributed greatly to the social culture and events held at WDLVS. Fred Phipps recalled that even though the "tech school" was considered second rate to academic schools, the morale of students was high.[28] Phipps also commented that he considered the diversity at the school as the best education. That diversity included gender. The all-girl typing team won provincial championships during the 50s.[29] The rifle team, which occasionally had girls as part of its membership, and co-ed gymnastics teams were also popular groups.[30] One male student who attended WDLVS from 1950-1954 recalls that extra-curricular activities were a highlight of the school and contributed to maintaining good morale. In particular,

football, basketball, soccer, track & field, helping with the year book, serving on graduation committees, and participating in cadets contributed to his experience.[31] Cadet parades were particularly inspiring, drawing more than 2000 participants.[32] Cadets in full uniform paraded up Erie Street, Ottawa Street, and through Lanspeary Park with rifles, Jeeps, and first-aid units.[33]

Student who had attended WDLVS prior to the mid 1950s often returned to participate in school activities after graduating. The alumni of WDLVS helped to organize commencement exercises and even attended dances and other social events in large numbers.[34] The alumni also played an important role in fund raising for scholarships and bursaries and even purchased an electric scoreboard for the school by holding benefit basketball games.[35]

In some cases, the students went into the community on what were called "career days," which allowed students to experience workplaces of interest. Other times, the talent of students was showcased in community venues, such as stage shows for patients in local hospitals.[36] In still other cases, the community came to the school in the form of guest speakers. Such a guest inspired Fred Phipps to pursue a career other than the one he had attended WDLVS for, automotive mechanics. Phipps stated that in an automotive town, it was just expected that you would work in the auto industry. While Phipps was at Lowe, world renowned photographer, Yousuf Karsh, paid a visit to WDLVS while he was in town to photograph auto workers at Ford Canada Motor Company.[37] After meeting Karsh, Phipps was inspired to attend Ryerson to study photography. This career brought Phipps across Canada and "halfway across the world" as a photo journalist with Canadian Broadcasting Corporation. Just before leaving CBC, Phipps was invited to Karsh's studio to do his portrait, an experience which Phipps consider to be the highlight of his career – and it began with one experience offered at WDLVS outside of the shop and classroom walls.

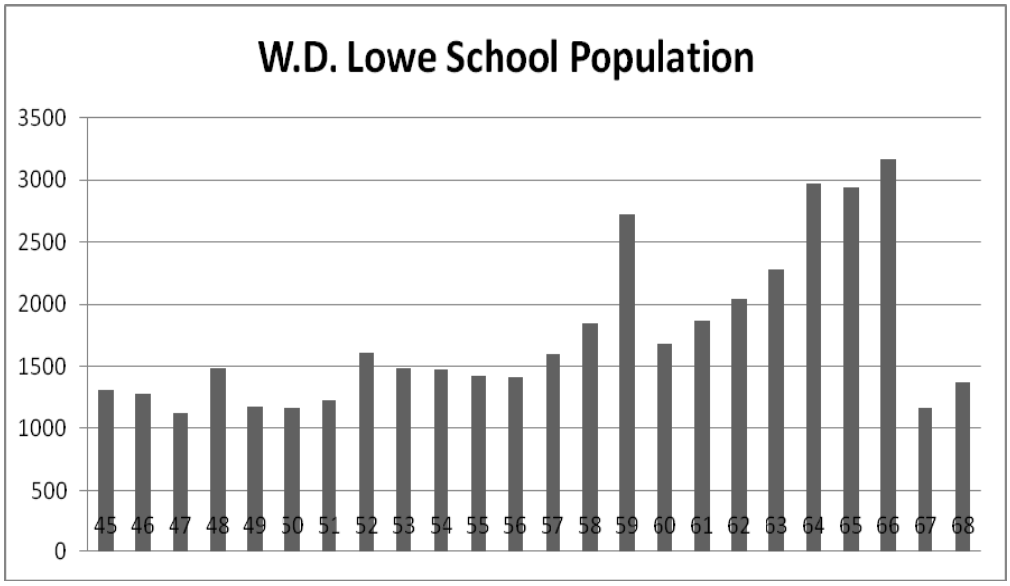


Table 7: This table reflects raw data reported in the annual reports of the minister of education from 1945 to 1968.[38](the year listed on the bar indicates ending date for that school year)

As the population of WDLVS steadily increased, so did the number and prominence of young women at the school. From 1955 to 1959, girls were increasing in numbers; class photographs and the coverage of social activities in the yearbook reflect this. After 1955, many of the predominantly female commercial classes were larger than the traditionally male technical classes, although the commercial classes themselves were fewer in number.[39] Yearbook photographs reflect the central role girls held in extra-curricular activities: a choir comprised of all girls, a female valedictorian, and an all-girl debate team. In 1959/60—just after the commercial program was relocated—the cheerleading squad was all-male and pictured right above another all-male group – the rifle team.[40] It was likely the only cheerleading team in the school's history that included a plaid shirt in their team photograph.



Figure 14: A page from the 1959-60 WDLTS yearbook depicting the cheerleaders and rifle team.

Prior to 1959/60 many groups were co-ed, such as the camera club, the square dancing club, the badminton club, and the social committee.[41] Throughout the 1950s, the cheerleaders usually had a gender balance in their membership.

As enrollment increased in the late 50s, the gender gap grew and boys began to outnumber girls by almost a 2:1 ratio. In 1956, due to increasing enrollment, the technical program required more space, so the Windsor School Board applied to the Ministry of Education to have two new classrooms added to WDLVS.[42] The additions included space for two new classrooms, both adjoined to two new metal shops, at a cost of $75,000. The plans were approved immediately by city council, but a letter from the Ministry of Education indicated that as an expansion, the project did not qualify for grants under the then-current legislation. Funding was granted by the city council, and the technical program at WDLVS was expanded as planned.[43] Enrollment in the technical program continued to steadily increase.

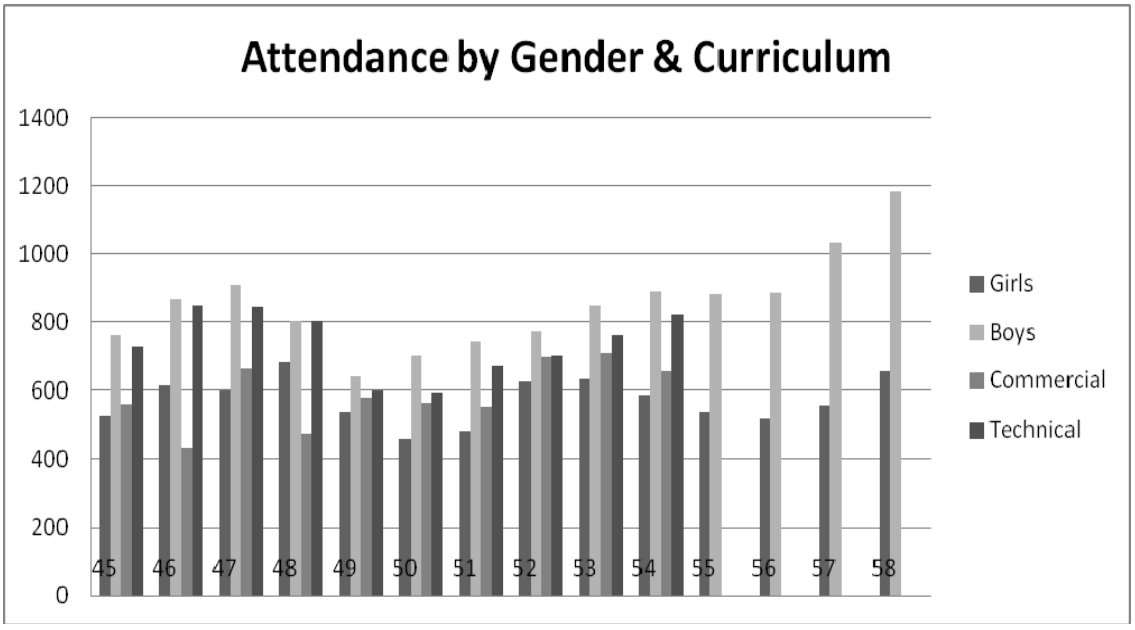


Table 8: Attendance by Gender & Curriculum presents the raw data, or actual numbers of avarage student attendance at WDLVS from 1945 to 1958. The attendance statistics for commercial and technical programs at the school were not published in the annual reports from 1955 to 1958.[44]

The increased number of technical students, and ease of relocating commercial students, supported the opening of Harry E. Guppy Commercial High School beginning

in 1959.[45] The majority of the students in the commercial program were young women, so the decision to move the program was also a decision that drastically changed the gender balance of WDLVS and hence the social dynamic and culture of the school. Gary Douglas, a teacher at WDLVS at the time of the division, remembered that the loss of the girls had a devastating effect on school morale. Douglas laments, "Young women had been an integral part of our school community since its inception, and although a better educational circumstance was developed for commercial students, W.D. Lowe Technical School paid a severe price in the next decade for this decision; yes, the ladies' loss was a great one – ask any student of the time."[46]



Figure 15: A political cartoon published in The Towers yearbook, 1960s[47]

The new commercial high school would be one of many specialized stand-alone schools in Windsor that, by default of the curriculum often associated to gender, segregated students along the same lines. In the absence of many of WDLTS's longstanding leaders and defenders, there was no one to advocate for alternatives. Technological changes occurring in the economy and the presence of technical colleges would also contribute to devaluing the role of stand-alone technical schools.

Technical Changes in the Economy & Education

In the early twentieth-century, specialized, automotive parts manufacturers, such as tool, die, and mould makers, helped to extend a culture of craftsmanship in the Border Cities region and to create a supportive environment for an elite[48], stand-alone technical school. But economic changes beginning in the 1950s brought that to an end. Just as

unprecedented commitments to technical education were taking place, negative public opinion of stand-alone technical and vocational secondary schools was gaining traction; the changes at WDLVS were both symptomatic of, and contributing factors to, the view that technical and vocational programs were, as one student stated, "second rate to academic schools."[49] Three changes were occurring in the local economy beginning in the 1950s: The number of tool, die, and mould shops was reaching a peak just as automation and other technologies were challenging traditional skills in the industry;[50] the new technology served to codify what was previously tacit knowledge used for creative innovation in the industry; and the new codified knowledge could be easily gained in new programs offered at technical colleges, shifting relevance away from traditional curriculum in technical secondary programs and on the shop floor. The changes in Windsor's local economy contributed to the context that led to WDLTS's closure as a technical school and its amalgamation with J.C. Patterson Collegiate Institute as a composite high school.

As automobile assembly took root in Windsor at the beginning of the twentieth-century, parts manufacturers also established themselves as an integral part of the local and national economy. In 1922 there were five tooling companies in Windsor, and several more were established within a decade. The tooling industry rapidly expanded as a result of WWII wartime production, and, at the same time, plastic mould injections emerged as a new industry. Early plastic mould producers, like Windsor Tool & Die made toys. This is where Peter Hedgwick, one of the earliest innovators in plastic mould making, got his start. After graduating from WDLTS in 1936, Hedgewick worked briefly at several shops.[51] He gained hands-on experience working with plastics at Windsor Tool & Die, knowledge that he wanted to put to work in other applications.[52] In 1944, he left Windsor Tool & Die and revamped his two-car garage to start his own shop—International Tool Ltd. (ITL)—working on a patent for plastic safety lids for use by pharmaceutical companies. Over the next 40 years, ITL grew to become "the largest independent tool shop in the world,"[53] employing over 800 people and producing moulds and tools primarily for the automotive industry. A recent study which traced the roots of the tool, die, and mould shops in Windsor estimated that as many as 80% of the mould shops that exist in Windsor trace their roots back directly or indirectly to ITL.[54] There is a

considerable difference, however, between Hedgewick's experience and those companies attempted start-up after the 1950s. When Hedgewick ventured out on his own, start-up costs were relatively cheap, and Hedgewick had the fortunate circumstance of patenting his work. Automation made experiences like Hedgewick's less accessible. As automated design and manufacturing took hold, the equipment that was required for starting up a production site suddenly became very expensive and created the necessity, even amongst many established shops, to share equipment and knowledge.

Recent research on Windsor's tool, die, and mould industry has summarized the situation. The Windsor-Essex tool, die, and mould-making industry has grown over the last forty years into a tightly knit network of over 150 small to medium-sized firms.[55] There is little formal cooperation or information sharing among these highly competitive firms, there nevertheless appears to be significant informal knowledge flow between shops through the movement of skilled workers and through social and family networks.[56] The relationship between shops was never adversarial. It was to everyone's advantage to advance technology by pooling resources rather than investing in a wide range of expensive tools and materials for each specialized shop. Because of the shared nature of the innovation, technological advances went unacknowledged and were at times exploited making patents like Hedgewick's less likely. Customers of mould makers in this situation could easily use local expertise to design and engineer moulds, then hand over their intellectual property to other companies overseas who were willing to produce the product more cheaply.[57] Such practices threatened the creative lifeblood of the industry—as one local manufacturer pointed out, "when you cut the main artery it is not going to be long before there is no more flow there"—but the overcapacity in the local economy means that individual firms are not in a strong bargaining position.[58] The local overcapacity was created by spin-off firms from ITL amidst automation, and the establishment of Western Ontario Institute of Technology. In particular, the Western Ontario Institute of Technology (later called St. Clair College of Applied Arts & Technology) will be discussed below for its influence.

A Post-Secondary Technical College

To many Windsorites, establishing a technical college was the answer to accessing jobs involving new and rapidly changing technology.[59] After some petitioning by local

citizens, a technical college, the Western Ontario Institute of Technology (now called St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology) opened in 1958 and proved to be a welcome addition to the educational landscape in Windsor.[60] Under federal and provincial initiatives, more than a hundred technical institutes were established in the early 1950s across Ontario.[61]

The college offered three-year diplomas in chemical, electronic, and mechanical technology, as well as business administration. The Western Ontario Institute of Technology expanded and changed its name to the St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) in 1967.[62] After the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act[63] (TVTAA) expired that same year, new federal policy would focus its support on establishing new post-secondary colleges or expanding existing ones across the province, while withdrawing all support from secondary technical and vocational education.[64]

The announcement to withdraw federal funding from secondary technical and vocational education came as a surprise to many. In a government publication entitled, *Technical and Vocational Education in Canada,* Prime Minister Lester B. Pearson and the Minister of Manpower and Immigration, Jean Marchand, provided an explanation. Pearson stated that the withdrawal of the federal government from cost sharing agreements would

> "serve the interest of serving higher education in Canada" [and] "assist the provinces in discharging their constitutional responsibilities; they properly express our responsibility and concern for manpower training; they avoid the confusion which would result from continuing federal involvement in parts of the school system; they are equitable in their impact on the inevitably different interests and viewpoints of the provinces."[65]

Marchand further explained that post-secondary and adult training were likely to increase and made the following commitment, "We propose to take 100% financial responsibility for the adult, for the person who has left school and earned his living and now needs retraining or further training."[66] F.P. Gavin would have taken issue with this decision which directly opposed the reasons why WDLTS was established. In the face of rapidly changing technology, industry was barely able to keep up; so it goes without saying that the prospect of completely retooling secondary technical programs was the last straw that would finally bring to an end to federal funding.

Greater access to funds from the federal government as well as student fees allowed technical colleges to keep up with the rapid pace of changing technology. Within three decades, the curriculum leading to designing positions in the tool, die, and mould making industry went from simple pencil-and-paper drawings, to two-dimensional designs using computer programs, to computer-aided three-dimensional modelling.[67] Computer-aided design and manufacturing now dominate an industry that was once completely reliant on physical craftsmanship. In much the same way that machines and mass production threatened craftsmanship during the industrial revolution, computers and automation in the late twentieth-century further threatened any remaining craftsmanship. The reaction in education in the 50s and 60s was much the same as it was in 1923 – to aid workers and potential workers to adapt to and make the best of technological changes. But technical education was beginning to directly reflect the new hierarchy in industrial labour: secondary vocational and technical education would inform students about skills without actually providing enough experience to master specific skills; Institutes of Technology would provide skills enough to maintain and run machines for specific purposes; and only engineering programs in universities would prepare students for designing, creating and manufacturing new machines.[68]

In light of this hierarchy, a factor that may have struck at the heart of WDLTS specifically was the very term *technology.* In the late 1950s and early 1960s, changes in technology created divisions between new *high technology* and older, more manual technology, considered by default *low*. This was an extremely unfortunate coincidence for a school whose shortened name was "Lowe Tech."[69] The absence of a place for a technical secondary school in the changed economy and education system was directly reflected in the name of the school – Lowe Tech, a name intended to be representative of a proud tradition created by a principal whose name the school bears and who worked tirelessly to create and maintain positive ties between the school and the local economy. Although it may seem trivial, linguistic distinction between high and low technology had very real presence in the lives of students and staff. Even as early as 1951, statements like the one made by Mr. Harman upon his retirement acknowledged this hierarchy. Mr. Harman's parting words to WDLVS graduates were, "There will always be work for the students who know how, but he'll be found working for the man who knows why."[70] The

acknowledgement of this new hierarchy is important to note—there was room in this hierarchy for special vocational secondary schools that would prepare students for work or new technical college programs, but not technical secondary schools. In this new set-up, technical secondary students needed to have access to regular academic courses to enter university programs that would prepare them to be the new innovators of high technology.

Further, the senior programs being offered in technical and commercial schools were disappearing and reappearing in colleges that were better able to provide the new and changing technology found in the workplace due to their greater access to funding. When courses at CAAT and technical schools overlapped, evidence suggests that the secondary school would drop that course offering. For example, the special commercial program offered at the Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce was discontinued because there were similar course offerings at the technical college.[71] So not only were the presence of new programs geared to training technicians for automated manufacturing contributing to overcapacity in the local economy, but the new programs and institutions were also taking up courses and programs which had previously been the most valued and attractive programs at WDLTS and the High School of Commerce. These factors, along with the internal elements at work within WDLVS in the 50s, all served to weaken what had previously been a popular, well respected, and well-supported school—that students chose to attend, and that, as a result, was the largest secondary school in Windsor. In its weakened state, it was no match for the massive restructuring brought about by the combination of the 1919 Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act, and the Robarts Plan.

The TVTAA & Robarts Plan

A brief historical overview is helpful for understanding the underlying factors that amplified the negative effects that both the Robarts Plan and the Technical Vocational Training Assistance Act had on schools like WDLTS. A brief outline of the progressive commitment Ontario made to technical education sets the stage for understanding the broader educational context. After some unavoidable setbacks, federal funding was put in place in 1919, and Ontario's urban centres began heavily investing in technical education. Of the ten million dollars offered by the federal government to all the provinces, Ontario

took almost one third of the funds, claiming $3,178,608.97.[72] The funds offered through The Technical Education Act, 1919, expired in 1927, and the Great Depression yet again deferred any further substantial investment in expanding or even maintaining technical schools and programs. The advent of WWII insured some federal funding to technical schools, as they were expected to aid in the war effort. Mr. Ross, who was vice-principal of WDLVS in 1940, expressed regret that it took a world war to determine the need and importance of technical education.[73] The survival of technical education during the Great Depression and increased awareness of the economic need for technical education during WWII solidified this form of education as an accepted and necessary part of public secondary education in Ontario. The prosperity of the post-WWII era saw the commitment to technical education continue.[74] The economic boom that occurred in the three decades that followed WWII, set off by the discovery of oil and natural gas in the west, allowed personal real incomes across Canada to triple.[75] Economic growth ensured that public services like education drew from an ever-growing tax base, which also fueled a construction boom that rebuilt Ontario's infrastructure. This had a two-fold effect on vocational education: first, more money was available to fund vocational education, and second, the building and rebuilding of pipelines, roads, bridges, and the modernization of rural infrastructure with paving and electrification – projects physically obvious in communities – made manifest the economic and social value of vocational education. Technical advancement in the 1950s also led to an increasing demand for more advanced technical education beyond secondary school.

The Canadian Education Association sponsored research on practical education, and the committee concluded in their 1951 report that basic skills, such as character training and citizenship, rather than specialized vocational skills, should be emphasized at the secondary level to overcome grave deficiencies.[76] Perhaps this report reflects the trend that emerged from 1950 to 1970, of more basic education in vocational schools and advanced technical education in newly emerging post-secondary technical institutes such as Western Ontario Institute of Technology. Thus, even as vocational education expanded, its most advanced work moved from secondary schools to colleges.

With educational opportunities poised for expansion, Ontario was also trying to understand and contend with the persistent problem of dropouts. In 1948, approximately

54% of all students dropped out by age 16.[77] In the late 1940s, fewer than 40% of all 15 to 19 year olds were in school.[78] Dropout rates decreased throughout the 50s and 60s, but the differences in dropout rates between academic programs and vocational programs were noticeable. One assessment of dropout rates under the Robarts Plan, whose structure of programming seemed to highlight difference amongst the student population, found that within four and five-year technical programs there was a 62% dropout rate. Amongst students in the two-year, and three-year vocational programs, 79% dropped out of school before completing their program.

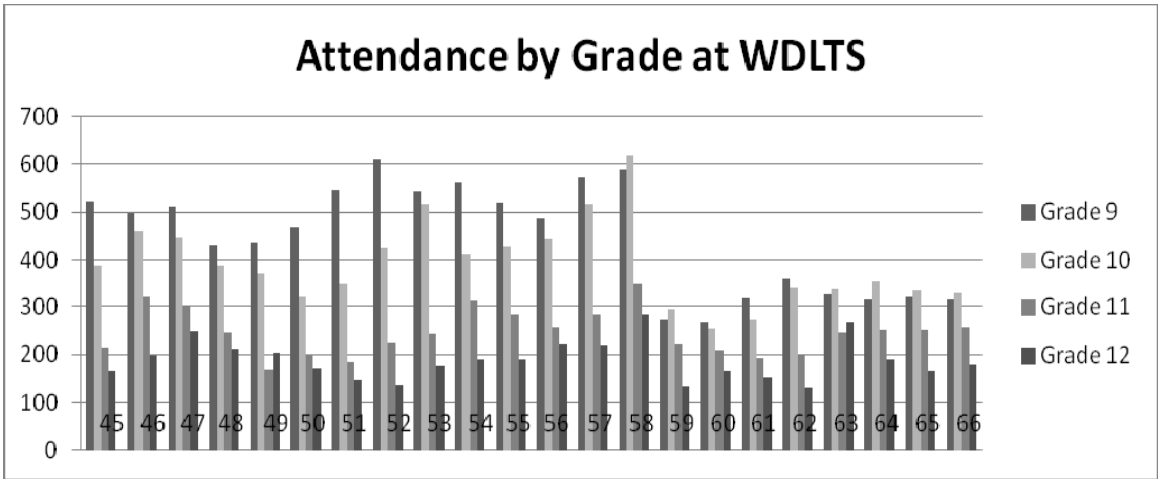


Table 9: The statistics in this table were compiled using Annual Reports of the Ontario Minister of Education from 1945-1965. The drop in population seen in 1959 reflects the relocation of the commercial program to the Harry Guppy High School of Commerce.[79]

Compare this to academic programs in Ontario which boasted that 88% of students who started the program graduated.[80] The ongoing concerns about shortages of skilled labour drew attention to this divide.

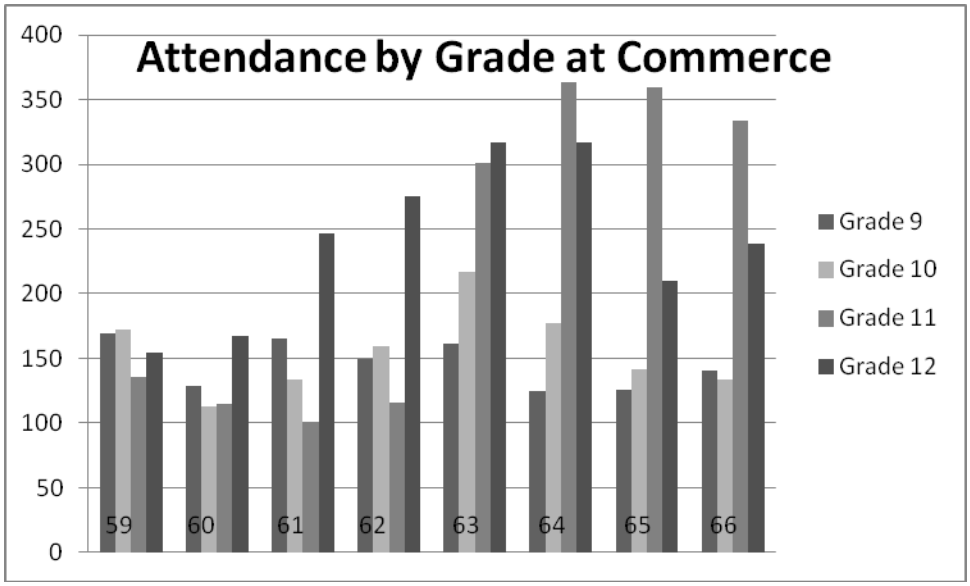


Table 10: The statistics in this table for Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce were compiled using Annual Reports of the Ontario Minister of Education from 1959-1966.

The enrolment rates by gender for 1965 at the High School of Commerce indicate that there were 15 boys in grade nine, 15 boys in grade 10, 77 in grade 11, and 44 in grade 12, matching the pattern of female students as shown in table 10, above. These statistics may reflect a recognized phenomenon of special commercial courses catering to students who have returned for study after completing other courses and programs, even university on occasion[81]—a phenomenon which no doubt contributes to the removal of senior special programs for secondary education and reestablishing the same courses in colleges. One of the survey respondents for the study indicated that he had returned to the commercial program after completing his technical program which led to positions in management for small manufacturers, as well as sales and promotions for the products made in local shops.[82] This experience indicates that at least some of the statistics may reflect movement between programs rather than simply technical students dropping out of school all together.

The dropout problem in technical schools was also considered an economic problem, which justified further federal support of technical education that otherwise would not have fallen under its jurisdiction. For this reason, vocational education at the secondary level received a boost even when short-lived recessions occurred in Ontario, as was the case from 1957 to 1960, under the notion that investing in vocational education was a direct investment in the economy. This idea stemmed from human capital theory,

which was a descendent of earlier arguments that youth were a resource to the nation. In this revised argument, "investment in human capital was just as important as investments made in other forms of capital, or even more so."[83] And even though this reasoning was the subject of some criticism within economics, it was quickly adopted by media and some politicians.[84] In the context of popular applications of human capital theory to education, school dropouts became a direct reflection of a wasted pool of potential talent in an economy where specialized skills and knowledge were in increasing demand.[85] Hence, from 1960 to 1967, the federal government invested unprecedented amounts of funding to support a massive expansion of technical schools and programs to create more accessibility, and Ontario was in receipt of much of these funds.[86] In Ontario, however, negative social consequences resulted from the combination of the Technical Vocational Training Assistance Act, 1960, with the Robarts Plan, implemented in 1962, particularly for students in technical schools like WDLTS, which historically had strong support and positive reputation in the local community.

The new Reorganized Programme of Studies introduced under the 1962 Robarts Plan included three branches of study within the secondary schools – Arts & Science, which was made up of general and academic courses in various areas; Business & Commerce; and Science Technology & Trades. Within the latter two branches, students could be enrolled in a three, four, or five year program.[87] The three-year program would give students a certificate to move on to a workplace or an apprenticeship. The four-year program would prepare students for further, more specialized study at Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology (CAAT) set up by the provincial government in 1966. The five-year programs would prepare students for further study at university, which was initially a welcome addition to commercial and vocational schools, as it expanded the opportunities of students attending these schools.[88] According to the Robarts Plan, once students completed grade nine, they would be streamed into one of these three branches. The new model provided a grid of programming, weaving parallel streams of progress towards predefined destinations associated with specific skills and knowledge. The five-year technical program was intended to bring an air of equality across the streams, with all three branches ideally offered within a single school to allow a greater variety of opportunity. However, the then-current building spree of vocational high schools in urban

areas, made irresistible by the offer of federal money, ensured that any urban area that could sustain a stand-alone vocational school accepted the funding for building or expansion, segregating vocational courses from the academic programs to varying degrees.

The 1960 Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act (TVTAA) was a federal initiative that supported the building of new vocational schools as a way to foster national economic development. It offered a cost-sharing programme: 75% of costs taken up by Ottawa and 25% left to the provinces. The need for new school construction was evident as the baby boomers began entering high school. While the federal legislation did not explicitly require that stand-alone schools be built, the sheer number of incoming students justified stand-alone vocational schools as a practical solution in the context of funding that was more than adequate.

In 1960, a formal announcement of the new TVTAA funding planned for technical education stated, "[w]ithin a period of two years, 435 new schools or additions to schools are being constructed, doubling the capacity of these schools in Canada. Federal expenditures alone for capital projects will exceed $267,000,000, ten times the federal aid offered to school building during the previous sixteen years."[89] In Ontario, one year after the federal-provincial agreements were put in place for building technical schools, 124 new vocational or composite high schools were approved, as well as 52 additions to existing schools, costing approximately $230 million.[90] When the TVTAA expired in 1967, Ontario had 335 new school facilities and 83 school additions adding up to $806 million.[91] "Over the life of the agreements signed by Ottawa and the provinces between 1961 and 1967 nearly 1.5 billion dollars were spent on capital projects, with Ottawa supplying more than half this amount. All told, 635 vocational wings and composite high schools and full vocational schools were built, nearly 60% of them in Ontario."[92]

To further complicate the various degrees of segregation between programs, departmental examinations—a traditional academic rite of passage—were eliminated by 1968. In a 1983 WDLTS reunion pamphlet, the 1967 grade 13 departmental examinations were remembered as a highlight of the decade because WDLTS had the best average in the city, in addition to having two Ontario Scholars.[93] This loss of traditional

opportunities to display academic success, combined with the new grid of programming, produced unintended social consequences. Without traditional opportunities like departmental examinations, other identity markers like class and gender became more rigidly associated with particular skills and knowledge than ever before. The presence of special vocational schools—devoted to less academically rigorous two-year programs—highlighted the emerging trend.

In Windsor alone, there were six stand-alone vocational schools.[94] Windsor is by no means a large city, but it was certainly a city that once believed in the value of technical secondary schools and capitalized on the offer of funds earmarked for vocational education. Gidney explains the combined effect of the Robarts Plan and the TVTAA in urban areas:

> In larger cities...social segregation was amplified: in some cases special 'vocational' schools were built exclusively to house the two-year programs; in others, the academic high schools maintained a student population predominantly enrolled in the five year arts and commercial programs while the old technical school inherited the four and two year programs with only a modest, mostly commercial and technical five year stream, or none at all.[95]

The social effects were indeed amplified in Windsor, and WDLTS felt those effects directly. In addition to having both a technical and commercial school, Windsor also had four special vocational schools that were opened in the late 1960s and early 1970s. It was noted at a meeting of secondary school principals on September 15, 1967, that Windsor had conformed to the Ontario Department of Education's requirement that two-year vocational schools include the word "special" in their names, and so Windsor opened William Hands Special Vocational School, King George Special Vocational School, and Alicia L. Mason Special Vocational School.[96] WDLVS reverted to being purely a technical school in 1959, when the commercial program was moved to H.E. Guppy Commercial High School.[97] King George and Alicia Mason School were approved in 1962 and construction began in 1964.[98] William Hands Special Vocational School opened in 1966.[99] Shawnee Secondary School was also a stand-alone vocational school and opened in 1971, offering two, three, and four-year programs.

Based on the renaming of several schools, it would appear that the use of the term *special vocational school* brought new meaning to the term *vocational*. Previously, the

term *vocational* was an umbrella term for many practical programs of study, such as domestic science and commercial or technical education.[100] Once associated with special education, the term *vocational* became associated with the two-year programs, and the term *technical* remained associated with the three, four, and five-year programs.[101]

New associations with special education were then drawn into previous associations with gender and class; for example, automotive and machine shops traditionally attracted boys, whereas commercial studies in the '40s and '50s began attracting more girls. Domestic art programs also attracted more girls. In addition to curriculum associated with gender, level of education was also associated with social class. Schools that exclusively offered two-year programs brought with them associations with the working class and the poor. As segregation along the lines of gender and class became more visible, voices of dissent began questioning the effects of streaming on students. The criticisms were particularly harsh for stand-alone commercial, vocational, and technical schools and their position under the Robarts Plan. Concerns about equality and segregation were raised by a myriad of stakeholders, including working class and minority students and their parents, but also by public media, some educators, and politicians. One study undertaken by the Toronto School Board in 1969 found that children of the city's working and unemployed poor were twenty times as likely to be found in the "lowest streams" of the school system as their counterparts from families of professional and managerial occupations.[102] Harry Smaller also cites several examples of such criticism:

> One inner-city mother, quoted in the Toronto Star, compared the Robarts Plan to "the same sort of separate-but-equal education offered to Negroes in the United States" (*Toronto Star* 3/3/1968). In a talk given to city high school teachers, reported in the daily press, an educational researcher stated that the "clash of middle-class and working-class attitudes is one of the most serious problems in schools" where students were divided into separate programs on the basis of their school achievement levels (*Toronto Telegram* 2/4/1968). As the decade progressed, these concerns began to be voiced in the provincial legislature. In July of 1968, for example, the education critic of the New Democratic Party declared that "millions of dollars were poured into the provincial system [but] ... there was no one who made any philosophic decision as to the effect this would have on the educational experience of the children of the province" (Stamp 1982, 204). By 1970 the criticism had become shrill indeed, with articles and editorials appearing in the daily press, under

> such headlines as "Charges of racial, economic bias in Toronto's education system" (*Globe and Mail* 31/1/1970). One article, entitled "Why should the poor be denied education?" pinpointed the cause of the problems succinctly. Number statistics show the two and four year courses are swollen with children of the poor and the immigrants; the five-year course is overloaded with children of the well-to-do" (Toronto Telegram 4/3/1970).[103]

Regardless of the intentions, the damage had been done, and between 1960 and 1967 Ontario had already spent millions on capital building costs under the federal-provincial spending agreements via the Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act, which provided structural support for the very educational outcomes that were being criticized.

The underlying problem was the slow implementation of federal legislation surrounding technical education. Over the four decades of its implementation, the ideological framework behind the funding initiative had not kept pace with changing attitudes about the role of social justice in education. The massive influx of funds to build vocational schools had solidified Ontario's long-term commitment to stand-alone technical schools; when combined with the implementation of the Robarts Plan, though, the potential for social segregation had been amplified. In a town like Windsor, with avid support for technical schools based on previous positive experiences, this created the perfect storm of heavy investment, and hence, commitment, combined with the eroded image of stand-alone vocational and technical schools. On top of this conflict among local experience, educational policy, and changed social attitudes, WDLVS was also faced with a myriad of local economic changes that contributed to the eventual demise of its reputation as an elite technical school, beginning in the 1950s. As its reputation eroded, students jockeyed for a position on the emerging hierarchy that had been created.

Attempts at Student Power & Pride in Stand-Alone Schools in Windsor

Since the commercial program was no longer at the school, the title of technical school was proudly reclaimed. L.F. McGee announced the new change in curriculum and name, from *vocational* back to *technical*, in his principal's message in the 1959/60 yearbook: "This edition of *The Towers* is the first produced by the W.D. Lowe Technical School as an all-male student body. The absence of the staff and students of the Commercial Department is reflected in the content of this yearbook as in all aspects of

our school life."[104] One notable change was the new presence of a director of academics: Previously there had been only directors of vocational programs.[105]

The emphasis on academics distinguished WDLTS from other new schools and programs. The change of name was also accompanied by an expansion of technical courses to accommodate the new five-year program. A new technical wing was built in 1962,[106] funded by the TVTAA which also supported capital costs for starting new vocational schools.[107] King George, for boys, and Alicia Mason, for girls, were both opened as junior vocational schools in 1964. They offered curriculum for introducing students to general work practices that would prepare students for work immediately after completing the program. The exclusively male population at Lowe was ensured not only by Alicia Mason and Harry E. Guppy Commercial School but also by J.C. Patterson Collegiate Institute. Although this school was small and overcrowded, it offered a unique bilingual commercial curriculum that was known to be highly academically rigorous.[108] It is worth noting at this point that Patterson Collegiate—the same school where technical education began in Windsor—was experiencing changes that would play a major role in the closure of WDLTS as a technical school. Understanding those changes requires a brief history of Patterson Collegiate, the school that hosted the beginning of secondary education in Essex County.

Secondary education in Windsor began in 1854 with a one-room grammar school in Sandwich that served all of Essex County.[109] In 1857 this school was moved from Sandwich to Windsor to accommodate the growing population.[110] In 1871 the grammar school became Windsor High School in a permanent home on the southeast corner of Goyeau Avenue and Park Street. Later, in 1888, the school received collegiate status. F.P. Gavin became principal in 1903, and a technical department was opened soon after. Commercial classes were already present, even at this early stage.[111] Windsor Collegiate was a small school, and Windsor quickly outgrew its accommodations. When overcrowding became an issue, the commercial students were moved to Walkerville Collegiate School, where they stayed until Windsor Walkerville Technical School (later called WDLVS & WDLTS) opened in 1923. In 1930, Windsor Collegiate was renamed after the Hon. J.C. Patterson, a local MPP, who had died in 1928.[112]

J.C. Patterson Collegiate fell into disrepair by the end of the 1950s. The Windsor School Board attempted to make all necessary repairs to bring the school up to safety standards in 1961.[113] Reinstating commercial classes to the school allowed the school board to make use of available federal funding. This time, however, there was a twist—French was incorporated into the program, making it distinctive from all other commercial and vocational programs in Windsor. In 1970, the school was still considered to be in disrepair and, to bring it up to standards, would have cost $1,500,000; so the Windsor School Board decided to close Patterson Collegiate and amalgamate it with Harry E. Guppy Commercial School and WDLTS. The merger was set for the fall of 1973. The plan was to relocate the commercial program to Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce, disperse the technical shops and equipment between both WDLTS and W.F. Herman High School, and send the academic program to WDLTS. The bilingual commercial program made Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce the first French language commercial school in Ontario; the academic program made WDLTS a composite high school.[114]

As distinctive, and exclusive as WDLTS tried to be in the 1960s, girls kept finding their way back into the school. The all-boys atmosphere didn't last long; by 1963, girls began to appear in the class photographs again: there were six girls, all grouped together, in one grade 10 class. In the 1964/65 school year, nine girls are depicted in the photos dispersed among three grade levels, but always grouped together within the individual class photographs.[115] All the girls who attended Lowe during the years 1962-1964, attended for art courses. In 1965, there were eight to ten girls in attendance. Again, all girls appeared to be attending the school for art.[116] In the year 1965/66, thirteen girls appeared in the yearbook. Apparently this represented a critical mass: these girls were not given special positioning in the photos, but dispersed throughout the pictures of classes and clubs.[117] In 1968, there were only four girls at the school, and none of those girls were depicted in technical department photos; one girl was in a technical department photo the following year for a technical art course.[118] It was the art department, then, that seemed to keep the doors of WDLTS open to girls.

Domestic science was part of the technical education curriculum and as such always remained at WWTS, WDLVS, and WDLTS through the course of its history.

When the term *domestic science* fell out of favour, the program was called *domestic arts*. Even when girls did not attend the school, boys learned upholstery, sign making, sketching, and lettering. In the 1951/52 yearbook, a history of the domestic arts program was provided by a fourth-year student. The program was begun in 1926 by Miss Emily Leboeuf, who also taught French. She taught girls for their half day of technical studies. When industrial art was introduced into the curriculum by Mr. Knight in 1937, its popularity exploded. Night classes opened up and four other teachers were hired to accommodate the demand for the new courses. Classes also included advertising, decorating, and interior design. There were three areas of specialization in the art department: commercial art, general art, and household arts. In the commercial art program, students practiced figure drawing and the elements of commercial design, including lettering, colour, and sign making. The general art program introduced grade nine students to basic drawing and crafts, which led into more specialized study such as drafting, printing, or carpentry. Household arts—a curriculum that was dropped at WDLTS after 1960—included homemaking, dressmaking, even and fashion design for girls who showed particular talent and interest.

The domestic and industrial art program was expanded under the direction of Mr. R.S. McMullen, who "took charge" of the art department.[119] Miss LeBoeuf continued as an additional teacher until her retirement in 1948. Mr. McMullen was a well-known artist and developed the program so successfully that it required a move to a larger area in the school. Upon Mr. McMullen's retirement, though, the domestic art program fell into disarray for a period of time, with three teachers, including McMullen's own daughter, taking over the program. In the 1960s the domestic art program saw a resurgence,[120] and it was this program that allowed girls to attend WDLTS again, albeit in much smaller numbers than when the commercial program was present at the school. Girls resisted their exclusion from WDLTS in subtle ways, but more pronounced resistance and oppositional student voices grew as the decade of the 1960s wore on.

The Strike

In the face of so much change and upheaval, WDLTS needed a principal with a more longstanding commitment to the success of the school. McGee's efforts indicate that keeping committed teaching staff was still an ongoing issue, as evident in a request

he made at a principals' meeting on October 14, 1966: "Mr. McGee reported that for six or seven years his requests for repairs and resurfacing of the back campus have been ignored. The campus is so full of glass and rocks, and cinders that it is unsafe for physical education. The poor conditions of physical education facilities at the school [were] an important reason why it has been difficult to keep physical education teachers on his staff for more than a few years."[121] McGee also struggled with keeping students in line. The low point of this struggle was the student strike that happened in 1968.

At a principals' meeting on August 28, 1968, and a school board meeting on December 18, 1968, the topic of "student power" came up.[122] It was noted in the minutes at the principals' meeting that principals were asked to continue to give thought to this movement exerting pressure on the schools and on how "it should be dealt with."[123] The budding discussion using the term "student power" indicates administration's awareness of a growing student movement and perhaps even of student organization in the local community, though principals seemed not to take it very seriously. This mention foreshadowed a student strike at WDLTS, but the discussion did not progress fast enough to prepare administration for the beginning of the 1968 school year.

On Monday, September 30, 1968, hundreds of disgruntled students voiced their opinions in a school assembly where 14 students had been slated to deliver campaign speeches in preparation for the 1968 school council elections.[124] Six students were missing from the podium because they had been declared ineligible for election by a staff committee. One student who was declared ineligible was a popular grade 12 student thought to be a shoo-in for the presidency and who had seemed to live up to the criteria for eligibility for running in the election.[125] The campaign manager for the ineligible presidential candidate made an unsuccessful attempt to talk with Principal McGee. With no answers forthcoming, distrust and anger grew, and hundreds of students disrupted the assembly with the chant, "We want [disqualified grade 12 candidate's name]," over and over again.[126] Students were sent back to class, but at lunch the protests continued with many students stomping their feet in unison. It was during this lunch period that discussions amongst the students turned into a walk out. According to one student leader, about 600 students, 90% of the students in the cafeteria, did walk out.[127] Mr. McGee was eating lunch at his desk when he first heard, and then saw, the large crowd of striking

students come around the corner shouting.[128] Mr. McGee did not react. From McGee's perspective the crowd looked well organized, and in that organization had defied all authority by leaving school grounds during lunch time. From the students' perspective, though, this failure to respond was another refusal to talk, another disregard of student needs. With the perception that they had no other recourse, students went to the University of Windsor, where they met a representative of the Student Advisory Council, Joe Comartin,[129] who was a friend of one of the strike organizers. Comartin offered the organization's full cooperation, as well as their printing resources, which the students used to plan a meeting the following morning at Lanspeary Park. [130]

On October 1, 1968, 300 students met in Lanspeary Park shortly before 9am and decided as a group to march around WDLTS, protesting their lack of power to elect a student leader of their choosing.[131] The *Windsor Star* reported later that day that a grade 12 student who wanted to run for council president was declared ineligible by Principal McGee, who refused to discuss the matter.[132] McGee defended the actions of the committee by explaining that the criteria for eligibility had been set by a student council several years ago. McGee stated generally that the eligibility required students to be in good academic standing, cooperative with fellow students and teachers, with a good personal record.[133] However, students later told the *Windsor Star* that the teacher committee had complete control over candidates via a veto power that was written into the constitution.[134]

The student strike immediately came to a stalemate as McGee refused to leave the school to talk to the "small minority" of students who walked out (300 out of 1,175 students were present at the park, but many more were simply absent from school that day), and the students refused to return until Principal McGee discussed the issues with them. The student strike lasted a week, and was closely monitored by the *Windsor Star*. McGee immediately postponed the elections, which were originally scheduled for Friday, October 4, 1968. On the first day, students quietly marched around the school with signs. On the second day of the strike, Wednesday, October 2, 1968, the number of striking students had allegedly dropped to 150. This smaller group of students met in Lanspeary Park before the school day began, where they were informed by an unnamed person that the United Auto Workers had offered them space where university students had

volunteered to teach their classes while they were away from school.[135] This turn of events gave way to questions in the media as to who was really organizing the student strike. University student leaders replied that they were completely surprised by what had happened at WDLTS, and were only offering their help after the fact. Striking students held classes at the UAW hall as planned.[136]

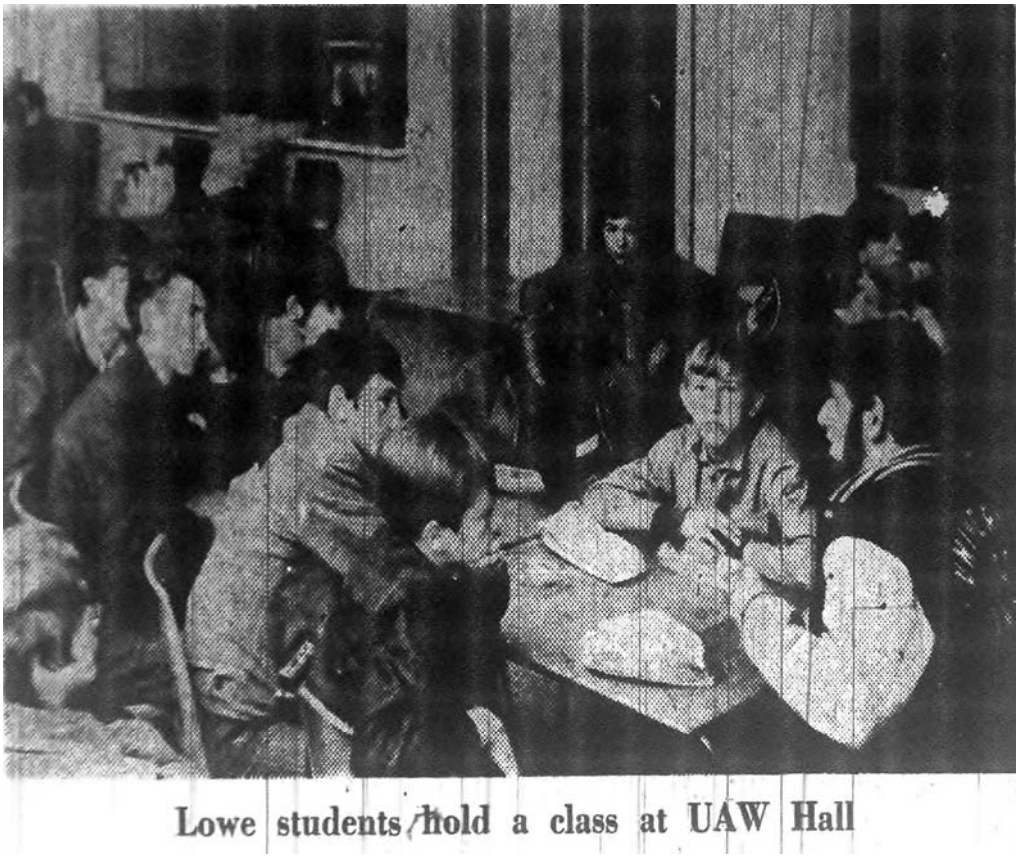


Figure 16: A photograph that appeared in the Windsor Star of student in class at UAW hall.

Thursday morning, October 3, the group of striking students shrank once again to 60. These remaining students strikers created information pamphlets that they distributed to surrounding schools to gather support for their cause.[137] There was some interest expressed by students at King George Vocational School; when students returned to the union hall in the afternoon, more WDLTS students had turned out, and the numbers were at 300 once again. Principal McGee indefinitely postponed the planned elections, but had not yet made any public comment about repercussions for the striking students. That afternoon, the students were informed in their afternoon classes at the UAW hall that

students under 16 could be charged with truancy and students 16 years and older could be dropped from the rolls. By the end of the afternoon, two student protestors met with Principal McGee, bringing three requests: a new student committee be allowed to investigate the criteria of eligibility for presidential candidates; future staff advisors to the committee be chosen by students; and the principal attend monthly council meetings. McGee would not consent to the first request and talks broke off. The UAW offered the students a professional negotiator to continue talks with McGee. The strike was expected to continue on Monday morning.

On Saturday, October 5, 1968, *The Windsor Star* explicitly stated that outside agitation from students at the University of Windsor was partly responsible for the student strike at WDLTS. The Ontario Union of Students had allegedly pledged to support secondary school student activists. The Ontario Union of Students was also said to be involved in a strike at a high school in Toronto, where it was said that university students were urging high school students to stay out of classes.[138] The *Windsor Star* also reported that the Toronto School Board had also considered pressing charges for truancy and trespassing to resolve the issue. In Windsor, however, school board officials met with two students from WDLTS to try and settle their differences.[139]Although the strike actions had been without exception orderly and calm, several police cars were called to the board office to "keep an eye on developments," but things continued to go smoothly.[140] In the meeting, the superintendent emphasized that the student strikers represented a small minority of the school, and that the majority of the students on strike were in grade nine and had attended the school for less than 20 days, had no experience or knowledge of how the council worked, and had made no effort to have discussions with administration prior to walking out. Further, school officials agreed with the *Windsor Star* and pointed the finger at outside agitators, claiming that this issue could have been easily resolved if it were not for "active agitation and support from outside organizations."[141] McGee also instructed the two student leaders on what should have happened the previous Tuesday, saying that the vote should have been carried out as planned and the new council should have gone through the proper channels to negotiate future rules and regulations for voting procedures.[142]

The following Monday, all students from WDLTS and King George Special Vocational School returned to class.[143] The students who participated in the strike were given temporary admittance until individual interviews were completed over a few days to determine possible action.[144] The student council elections were held Monday morning as well. McGee said that no more information about the actions taken would be provided to media since it was an issue between the school and the students. The strike was discussed extensively at the next principals' meeting on October 11, 1968. The minutes reflected the concerns of the day:

> It is imperative that in each school there be a "climate" in which good education can take place. There is a very fine line between freedom and license. Teachers must listen to the students, and respect them as individuals, agree where possible, but they must not allow students to assume authority delegated by law to teachers. A principal can delegate some of his duties, but he cannot delegate his responsibilities and authority which he derives from the Board of Education. When a principal finds it necessary to suspend a student he must be able to point to the law and regulations that justify this action. Teachers should be made aware that a principal cannot simply exert his own will, but must act within the laws and regulations.[145]

Principals were advised by the superintendent to use their vice-principals and department heads as type of cabinet to keep them well informed about all matters in the school, to provide advice, and to give support to plans and policies without delegating their responsibility and authority. It was also suggested that, in the future, the Board of Education would produce a formal public statement of their actions and the purposes behind those actions when incidents occurred that captured the attention of the media.

At this meeting the principals also wanted to gain consensus on the issue of student council constitutions. The superintendent suggested that the constitution of each student council be available to all students and teachers. The constitution should be included in every student handbook. In the case where a constitution needed revision, a committee should be set up to make recommendations. It was noted at this meeting that a trustee had expressed concern that academic requirements were still being used as criteria to hold office on student council after

the same criteria had been removed from the list of criteria for participation on sports teams in the last board meeting.

In the case of persons from outside organizations trespassing on school property, principals were directed to call the police to have the person expelled, but the principal would have to press charges. If university students or other people were distributing newspapers or other material without a license to do so, and were off school property, this was a matter for the police. Principals in attendance at this meeting expressed frustration at the amount of freedom senior students wished to have. One principal warned that "there is danger of sudden pressure from a minority group of students who wish to have the right to defy authority."[146] Principals at this meeting also felt limited by their inability to speak to the press about student matters, while students could provide statements to the press at will and their words were accepted as truth without proof. It was noted in school board minutes that throughout the strike there was extensive damage caused by vandalism at the school, an aspect of the strike not captured in the news coverage. It was recorded at a school board meeting on October 8, 1969, that a fire hose on the third floor of the school had been turned on, causing extensive damage which was being assessed by insurance adjustors. In addition to the water damage, the "supervisory staff who were engaged in helping with the clean-up during the strike" had sugar put in the gas tanks of their vehicles, had valve chords removed from their tires, roofing nails put into tires, and ignition wires ripped from their engines, etc.[147] It was clear from the meeting that "student power" was viewed as a value held by a small segment of the student population invested in challenging authority structures in schools, rather than a growing shift in attitudes within the general culture about social justice in schools.

The *Windsor Star* editorials that followed the events of the week presented a different view from those the principals presented at the meeting. In the days that followed, a three-part feature series about the student strike appeared in *The Windsor Star*. Written by Ken Caunce, the articles were based on interviews with students involved in the strike and contradicted some of the information that the paper had published earlier that week. In this three-part series, Caunce tried to correct what he saw as the problem from the start at WDLTS and in the press—disregarding student voices and not giving students credit for being capable of organizing a strike. In conclusion,

Counce accused the school of handling the strike by using the "big strap rule," a metaphor for an authoritarian style of behaviour management epitomized by corporal punishment, and pointed out that this passé approach did not work. In the context of ever-growing awareness of civil rights, and in a university town dominated by unionized labour, the "big strap" approach—though it might have worked in the past—would have been discordant with changing times; student actions in this case indicated as much. However, other methods of controlling students were evident. In Counce's last interaction with one of the student strike leaders, the student said he was thankful the business was all over and not anxious to lead another uprising. He was bothered by the false accusations of "subversion" and declared defensively, "I'm not a communist." He just wanted to catch up on school work.[148]

When all was said and done, student strikers found sympathy in the press, but it was their school they had to return to. It was not the threats of legal or physical repercussions that swayed students back into the classroom, but the fear of being seen as outsiders, as communists. Technologies for disciplining students had changed. Paul Axelrod sums up this time of change in education nicely:

> "Democracy" in the postwar period [was] an omnibus term that was employed in different ways by those with competing political and educational ideas. For some it meant vigorously opposing communism; for others it spoke to the importance of enhancing and extending educational opportunities. A third perspective stressed democracy's role in cultivating loyalty, civic engagement, and personal responsibility, while a fourth pointed to the failure of traditional schooling to respond adequately to the needs and interests of students as individuals. The uniformity and flexibility of the classroom experience, the continuous high attrition and dropout rates, and the over emphasis pedagogically on good behaviour (including the use of the strap) meant, from this perspective, that too many students were deprived of the "democratic" possibilities and choices that schools ought to offer. The huge baby boom demographic itself was an increasingly visible and assertive presence, and helped to fuel a cultural and political movement focused on school reform.[149]

In a technical high school in particular, these varied positions on the democratic role of schools held shifting relevance depending on the stakeholder. Traditionally, and under the guidance of W.D. Lowe, WWTS identified solidly with the third perspective; the general cultural acceptability of the use of corporal punishment made the role of

school and student—for better or worse—simple and clear-cut. Throughout the 1950s, as school administration, technology and the industrial workplace hierarchies changed, the role of the technical secondary school was changing too. As early as 1951, Principal Ross discussed communism in his principal's message, declaring that "Those who would sell us communism are so clever in disguising the real character of their arguments and presentation that we require a great deal of wisdom to tell the evil from the good."[150] It was no longer good enough for students to follow the rules or pay a physical price. Students were now expected to navigate the often confusing concepts of the Cold War. Even in school yearbooks, messages from unions, potential workplaces, and administration pulled students in different directions.

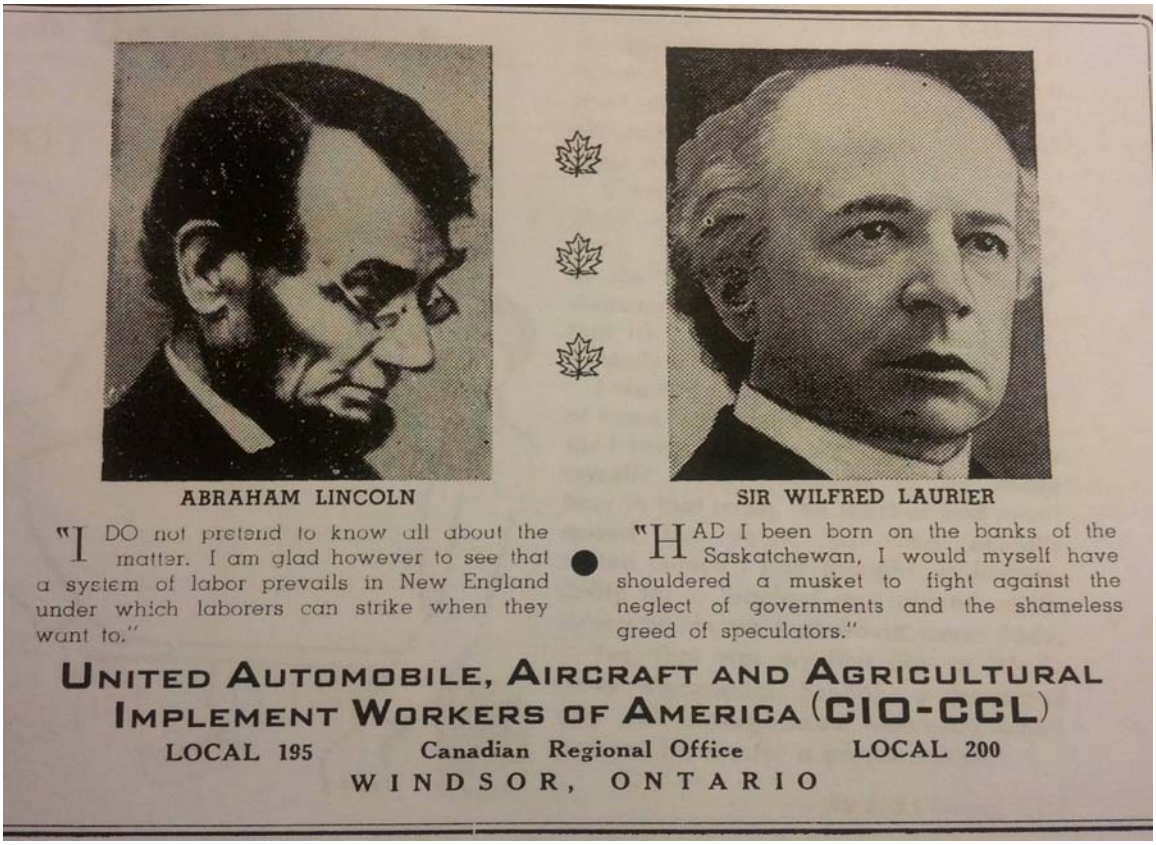


Figure 17: Paid advertisement in The Towers, 1947/48. Post World War II, the growing presence of unions was evident even in the school yearbooks. This advertisement represents the longstanding voice that unions had at the school. Recall that there was a strike at the school in 1944 as well.

Due to the local economy and the curriculum at the school, unions—a strong presence in Windsor—were interested in what went on at WDLTS. The 1968 strike may have been a factor in students' attempts to start a union of their own. Students organized

the Windsor District Federation of Secondary School Students and officially requested recognition by the school board, but at their regular meeting on February 9, 1972, the school board refused. Such intransigence in the face of students needs may have been a factor in WDLTS's demise.

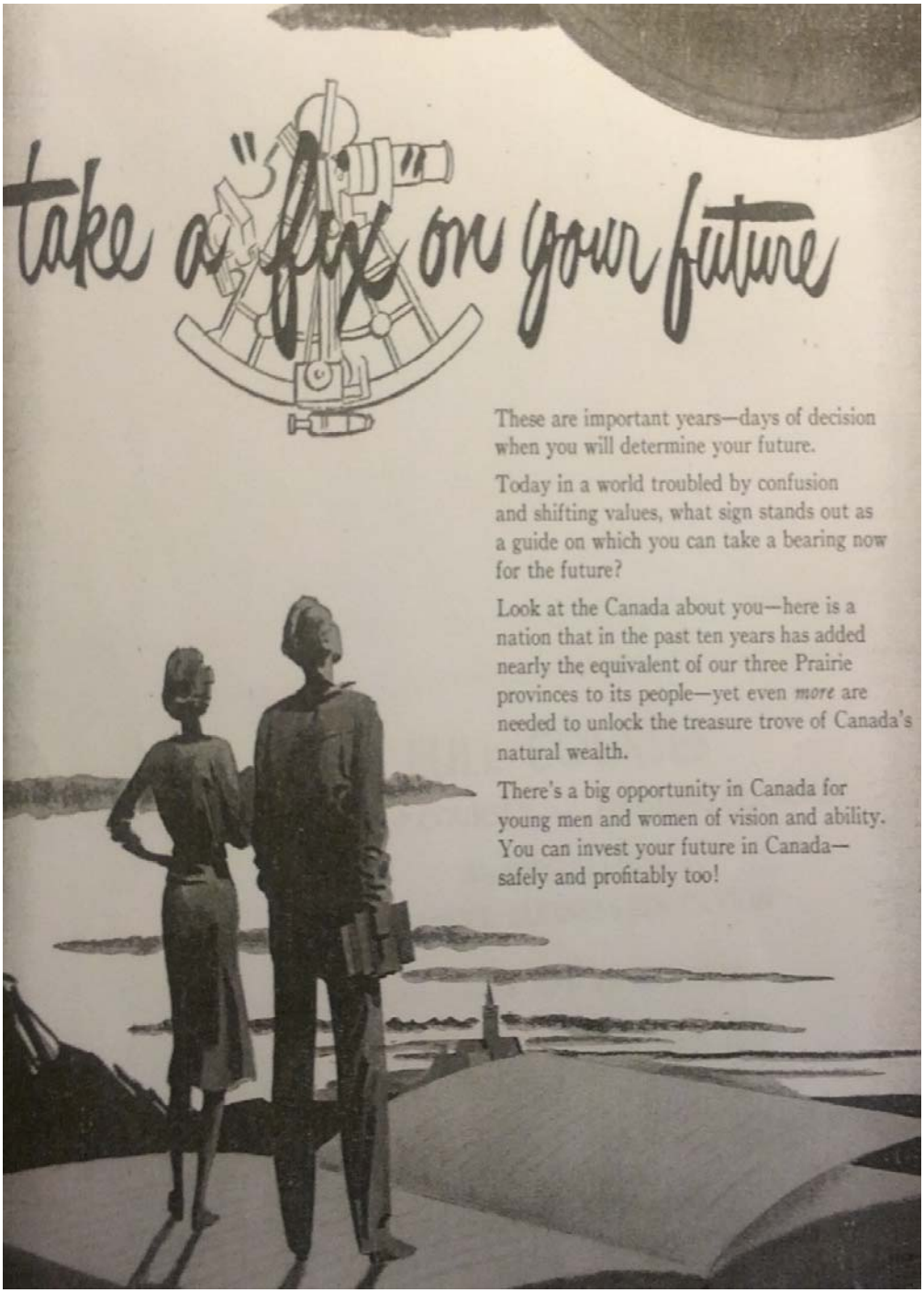


Figure 18: Paid advertisement by the Ford Motor Company of Canada in The Towers, 1951/52. Another longstanding presence in the school was Ford Motor Company

whose advertisement alongside the union advertisement in Figure 17, illustrates the considerations students were faced with entering industrial jobs. The changing economy in the 1950s stressed the excitement of new opportunities now and in the future. This advertisement is also a marked change from the wartime depictions of strength and valour on the job. Changes in technology and automation placed new value on information and knowledge in industry.

These varied objectives and purposes held special relevance for vocational and technical students, destined as they were for a variety of positions in the new industrial hierarchy. But even if the school had tried to shield students from such competing social agendas, the days of traditionally simple classroom management were numbered. Veteran teachers at WDLTS hung onto "the big strap rule" as long as possible at WDLTS even if it was only a threat; Al Roach, a local author and previous staff member at WDLTS, [151] wrote that

> An edict from on high called for teachers to surrender their classroom straps. Nearly 100 per cent did. Nearly. A Board of Education mogul appeared at the class room door of Pat McManus, who taught at Lowe for [36] years, to demand that he surrender his strap."Take it away from me," replied six-foot, three-inch Pat. The strap stayed.[152]

It was evident, though, from the response of the press and actions of the students during the 1968 strike that strategies for dealing with "gangs of hooligans" had changed.[153] Further, the technical secondary school of the 60s was being replaced by the post-secondary College of Applied Arts and Technology, and the new role of "special vocational" schools was most certainly *not* to turn out "captains and generals of the industrial army." Indeed, if captains and generals were to emerge in the 1960s and 1970s, it was less and less likely that they would come from a school like WDLTS. As the socio-political context changed, WDLTS was losing its place as an elite technical school. As the elements that had allowed WDLTS to work in the past gradually vanished, perhaps the closure of WDLTS as a stand-alone technical school was inevitable. WDLTS had remained while the historical moment which gave rise to an elite stand-alone technical school had passed. Eugene Durocher, the last principal of WDLTS, is quoted in the 1972 yearbook as having "become keenly sensitive to the expressions of pride and loyalty which the name W.D. Lowe evokes. This of course is not surprising since so many Lowe graduates hold key positions in the industrial and commercial life of Windsor"[154]

—a point made by many Windsorites.[155] Fred Phipps, student from 1950-1954, stated it best: at the height of automotive manufacturing, "Lowe needed Windsor and Windsor needed Lowe."[156]

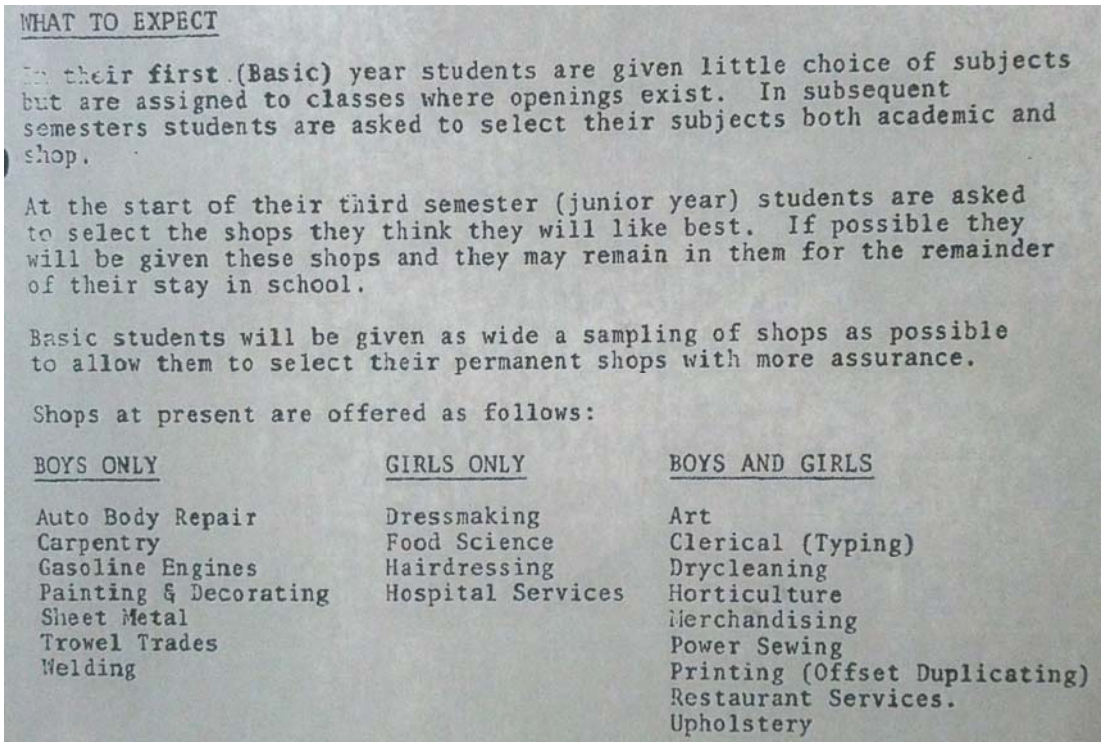
The Combined Effect of Local and Broader Changes: WDLTS Closes as a Technical School

While the broader educational context had without a doubt set the stage for eliminating Windsor's elite technical secondary school, local economic changes in Windsor's specialized automotive parts industry also contributed to its demise. It must be recognized, then, that WDLTS—and the positive support and reputation it enjoyed—thrived in a small window of opportunity between 1923 and 1945. After WWII, the changing social, economic, and political context offered less and less space for a school to live up to the vision and ideals of its founders, F.P. Gavin and W.D. Lowe. The school's yearbook for 1970 was dedicated to the principal of the past 12 years, L.F. McGee, and marked yet another beginning with an all-male student body.[157] WDLTS remained all-male until it ceased to be solely a technical school in 1973, a gesture that leaves the story of WDLTS with a clear sense of the particular role it had for serving working-class boys. The school's original role, though, had come to an end, and these last three years were merely a romantic echo of an educational time now past.

Once WDLTS amalgamated with J.C. Patterson Collegiate Institute, it became a composite high school.[158] This amalgamation changed the status of WDLTS from a technical school to a secondary school with a technical department. In an editorial on the closing of Patterson Collegiate, "school board officials" referred to a school board decision that "wherever possible, composite schools should be developed rather than separate academic and technical schools."[159] It was further noted by the columnist that "with the closing of Patterson, therefore, all students in the core area of the city will be attending composite schools."[160] The two school mergers could be interpreted as adaptations to the growing associations of stand-alone technical schools with academic failure. The stand-alone vocational schools that were left in place and continued to be built were the devalued two- and three-year schools; keeping these while dissolving elite schools and programs speaks louder than "heartfelt" sentiments about reducing separation of students "wherever possible." The continued existence of stand-alone vocational

schools begs for a more critical reading of the decision to change once-elite programs into composite schools, while less prestigious stand-alone vocational schools, such as William Hands,[161] Shawnee,[162] and the more recently opened Western Secondary School[163], remained intact.

A female former student at William Hands Vocational School remembers how preconceived notions of gender and work affected her own life choices, stating, "I was shipped off to William Hands when it was first built. Every day subjects [were] a mix of boys and girls. The shops were limited [to] boys only [or] girls only. I tried to get into a boys' shop class because it was something I wanted to learn, but it was not allowed."[164] A pamphlet printed for prospective students at William Hands Vocational School confirms this student's experience. The pamphlet states the school's purpose: to provide one or more years of practical training at the secondary level for students who were not considered likely to benefit from the heavily academic programme. The school's students were selected not by their own choice, but by elementary school principals, inspectors, and teachers. The ratio of boys to girls was 2:1. The pamphlet's third page lays out information about courses, including shop classes:



WHAT TO EXPECT

In their first (Basic) year students are given little choice of subjects but are assigned to classes where openings exist. In subsequent semesters students are asked to select their subjects both academic and shop.

At the start of their third semester (junior year) students are asked to select the shops they think they will like best. If possible they will be given these shops and they may remain in them for the remainder of their stay in school.

Basic students will be given as wide a sampling of shops as possible to allow them to select their permanent shops with more assurance.

Shops at present are offered as follows:

BOYS ONLY	GIRLS ONLY	BOYS AND GIRLS
Auto Body Repair	Dressmaking	Art
Carpentry	Food Science	Clerical (Typing)
Gasoline Engines	Hairdressing	Drycleaning
Painting & Decorating	Hospital Services	Horticulture
Sheet Metal		Merchandising
Trowel Trades		Power Sewing
Welding		Printing (Offset Duplicating)
		Restaurant Services.
		Upholstery

Figure 19: Excerpt from William Hands Vocational School Pamphlet.[165]

The changes described in this chapter transformed a once-elite technical school into a school where principals sent failing students. Vocational schools appear to have continued on that downward spiral. Stand-alone vocational schools in their purpose and function are a shadow of the former vision set forth by Gavin and Lowe. What made W.D. Lowe school different from the newer stand-alone vocational schools that emerged under the Robarts Plan and the TVTAA was the tradition of high expectations for students, opportunities to meet them, and the pride that came with living up to those expectations. The students who did well at Lowe, did well in life. The skills offered at the school prior to 1946 were well suited to opportunities in the community. A combination of changes, however, shifted the function, purpose, and value of skills learned in vocational programs. The skills associated with working-class labour became associated with special education and the stigma it carries. The strike in 1968 was a clear indication that students at Lowe wanted to be treated fairly and equitably. If making schools composite was deemed the right thing to do "wherever possible," what made it possible at WDLTS was the combination of high expectations that had been in place from its inception. What had come to an end was technical secondary education—it was taken up by CAAT. What was left was vocational education which provided working class skills as special education. The TVTAA combined with the Robarts Plan to provide the lowest expectations for the population least likely to resist and demand change.

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[1] Mona Gleason. Disciplining the Student Body: Schooling and the Construction of Canadian Children's Bodies, 1930-1960. *History of Education Quarterly*, 41, no.2 (2001) 189-215.

[2] Minutes of a special meeting of the Windsor Board of Education. February 15, 1958.

[3] "City's Oldest High School: Patterson—16 months to go," *Windsor Star*, February 10, 1972. Education Scrapbook held in the main branch of the Windsor Public Library. R971.331 H62. Vol.5.

[4] Gary Douglas. "W.D. Lowe Secondary School, 1923-1983." Informally re-published manuscript for the 90th reunion, May 17, 2013.

[5] Ibid.

[6] Ibid.

[7] Ibid.

[8] Minutes of the Windsor Board of Education. January 16, 1946. Archives of the Greater Essex County District School Board.

[9] "Retiring Teachers" *The Towers*. W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 1951-1952, 17.

[10] Ibid, 17.

[11] Ibid, 18.

[12] The Towers. W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 1953-1954, 6.

[13] The Towers. W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 1950-1951, 53.

[14] Ibid, 53.

[15] "Staff Changes" *The Towers*. W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 1957-1958, 41.

[16] Douglas.

[17] Ibid.

[18] Donna Shaw. "Teachers and Students" *The Towers*, W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 1950-1951, 46.

[19] Grade IX Failures. Secondary School Principals' Meeting Minutes. Monday, September 11, 1950, 3:00pm. Windsor Board of Education.

[20] Ibid.

[21] "Windsor—Schools," *Scrapbook Collection*, R 370. Windsor Public Library.

[22] Margaret Muller. "Mr. Ross," The Towers, (1951-1952) W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 15. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[23] Ibid, 15.

[24] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1945-1966) Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

[25] G.F. Dean. A Message from the Principal. The Towers, 1955-1956, 4.

[26] John Holmes, Tom Rutherford and Susan Fitzgibbon. "Innovation in the Automotive Parts Industry: A Case Study of the Windsor-Essex Region." Paper presented at the 6th Annual National Conference of the Innovation Systems Research Network, Harbour Centre, Simon Fraser University, Vancouver BC, May 13-15, 2004. http://www.utoronto.ca/isrn/publications/WorkingPapers/Working04/Holmes04_Automotive.pdf

[27] Ibid.

[28] Fred Phipps. Student from 1950-1954.

[29] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[30] Ibid.

[31] Survey completed anonymously. 1950-1954.

[32] Ibid.

[33] Ibid.

[34] The Towers Yearbooks, 1950-1954.

[35] Douglas." W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary Reunion."

[36] Ibid.

[37] http://www.karsh.org/#/the_man/biography lists the well known works of Karsh including portraits of many Canadian prime ministers, Winston Churchill, Franklin D. Roosevelt, John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King to name a few.

[38] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1945-1968) Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

[39] The 1958-1959 yearbook is particularly striking.

[40] The Towers, (1958-1959) W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[41] The Towers, (1950-1954) W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[42] Record of Approvals. RG2-400, File: Windsor Board of Education, Windsor Vocational School, W.D. Lowe, B712246.
Ontario Archives.

[43] Ibid.

[44] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1945-1968) Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

[45] Minutes of the Windsor Board of Education. Provisions for Expansion of Technical and Commercial Courses. March 12, 1958.

[46] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[47] Reprinted in Gary Douglas. "W.D. Lowe Secondary School, 1923-1983." Informally re-published manuscript for the 90th reunion, May 17, 2013.

[48] By elite I mean a school that produced recognized Ontario scholars, leaders and innovators in the tool, die, and mold industry, students that were given preferential hiring treatment at Ford Motor Company, annual scholarships for the Detroit Institute of Technology were regularly announced in year books.

[49] Fred Phipps. Student from 1950-1954. The same time that other principals began sending failing students to the school, see page 97.

[50] Holmes, Rutherford and Fitzgibbon. "Innovation in the Automotive."

[51] John Halberstadt. *In Business*. 1996, 17. Windsor Public Library.

[52] Physical experience working with and manipulating materials leads to an understanding of the work that can only be described as tacit, or as a type of physical procedural knowledge that is not easily understood by someone who does not have the same physical experiences.

[53] Clare E. Winterbottom, *Made in Windsor: The Anchor Lamina Way* (Windsor, Ontario: Walkerville Publishing, 2006), 24.

[54] Holmes, Rutherford and Fitzgibbon. "Innovation in the Automotive Parts Industry."

[55] Ibid.

[56] Ibid.

[57] Ibid.

[58] Ibid.

[59] Polytechnical Institute. Minutes of the Education Council of Windsor. December 1956, 7.

[60] Some students from WWVS would receive scholarships to the Detroit Technical Institute but there were only a few scholarships offered to each graduating class and education across the border may have also led to employment across the border after graduation.

[61] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1923-1968) Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

[62] Trevor Price and Larry Kulisek, *Windsor: A Centennial Celebration, 1892-1992* (Windsor Ontario: Border Press Inc. 1992), 100.

[63] A federal commitment to fund capital building costs and maintenance of technical and vocational secondary schools that lasted six years.

[64] Department of Labour. Technical and Vocational Training Branch. Technical and Vocational Education in Canada, 1960, vol. 1, no 2, 8.

[65] Government to Withdraw from Cost-shared Education Programs. *Technical and Vocational Education in Canada*, Issue 10, Fall & Winter, 1966/67. 33.

[66] Ibid, 34.

[67] Valiant Corporation. *Valiant, Many Hands One Vision*. (Windsor, Ontario: Walkerville Publishing, 2009).

[68] Cynthia Cockburn, *Machinery of Dominance: Women, Men and Technical Know-How*. (London, England: Pluto Press, 1984).

[69] In addition to common local usage a local Writer, Al Roach, title his article on the school in a local history book, "Lowe Tech – Knuckle Sandwiches and Scoffed Textbooks", In *All Our Memories: Being a Fond Look Back at our Yesteryears along this Detroit River Border* (Windsor, Ontario: Herald Press Ltd., 1981), 86.

[70] "Retiring Teachers," The Towers (1951-1952). *W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook*, 18. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[71] Minutes for the regular meeting on November 27, 1968 at 5:30pm. Board of Education for the City of Windsor. September 25, 1968 – April 9, 1969.

[72] D.R. Young & A.V. Machinski. "An Historical Survey of Vocational Education in Canada" (1971) Ottawa Ontario: Reprinted with the permission of the Canadian Vocational Association.

[73] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary," 5.

[74] There were several pieces of federal legislation in place to fund vocational education and apprenticeship from 1945 - 1960. A summary of the funding efforts can be found in; D.R. Young & A.V. Machinski. "An Historical Survey of Vocational Education in Canada" (1971) Ottawa Ontario: Reprinted with the permission of the Canadian Vocational Association, 11.

[75] R.D. Gidney, *From Hope to Harris* (Toronto Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1999), 25.

[76] George Tompkins. *A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum* (Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc. 1986), 297.

[77] Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 13.

[78] Ibid, 13.

[79] Report of the Minister of Education, Province of Ontario (1945-1965) Legislative Assembly of Ontario.

[80] Alan King and J. Hughes. *Secondary School to Work: A Difficult Transition*. Toronto: Ontario Secondary School Teachers' Federation, 1985.

[81] R.D. Gidney & W.P.J. Millar, *How Schools Worked. Public Education in English Canada, 1900-1940.* Carleton Library Series 224. (Montreal, Quebec: McGill Queen's University Press. 2012), 168-169.

[82] Anonymous Survey Respondent. Student of mechanical drafting from 1950-1954, returned to take commercial class afterward.

[83] Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*, 38.

[84] Ibid, 38.

[85] For a more complete and detailed discussion on human capital theory and the evolution of its application to education in Ontario, see: Alison Taylor, "'Re-culturing' students and selling futures: school-to-work policy in Ontario," *Journal of Education and Work* 18, no. 3 (2005): 321-340. DOI: 10.1080/13639080500200567

[86] D.R. Young & A.V. Machinski. "An Historical Survey of Vocational Education in Canada" (Ottawa Ontario: Reprinted with the permission of the Canadian Vocational Association, 1971).

[87] Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*.

[88] Frank Quinlan. Equal to Collegiate Quality: New 5-Year Course Set for Lowe, Guppy. *Windsor Daily Star*, May 3, 1962.

[89] Michael Starr, "Introducing a New Technical Education Publication," *Technical & Vocational Education in Canada* 1, no. 1 (1960).

[90] Robert Stamp. *The Schools of Ontario, 1876-1976*. (Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto Press, 1982), 204.

[91] Ibid.

[92] George Tompkins. A Common Countenance: Stability and Change in the Canadian Curriculum. Scarborough, Ontario: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc. 1986. 299.

[93] Douglas. "W.D. Lowe 60th Anniversary."

[94] Vocational is being used here as the umbrella term: commercial, technical and junior/special vocational.

[95] Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*.

[96] Minutes of the Secondary School Principals Meeting, September 15, 1967. Vol. August 1966 - December 1967.

[97] Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce. Windsor-Schools. Local History Archive at the Main Branch of the Windsor Public Library. Pamplet #87. R370, 9.

[98] Record of Approvals. Correspondence letters with Ontario's Department of Education. Provincial Archives. RG-2-400 File, Windsor Board of Education, King George (Junior, Vocational School) BF12246.

[99] William H. Hands Special Vocational School. Windsor-Schools. Local History Archive at the Main Branch of the Windsor Public Library. Pamplet #87. R370, 10-13.

[100] An Act for the promotion of Technical Education in Canada, 1919. Ch. 193, 2c, 3933.

[101] Gidney, *From Hope to Harris*.

[102] Harry Smaller. Vocational Education in Ontario's Secondary Schools: Past, Present and Future? Labour Education and Training Research Network, York University. Centre for Research on Work and Society. 2000. http://www.yorku.ca/crws/network/english/Smaller.pdf

[103] Ibid, 15-16.

[104] L.F. Mcgee. The Principal's Message. The Towers. 1959-1960, 2.

[105] The Towers, (1959-1960). *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*, 3. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[106] The Towers, (1961-1962). *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[107] Robert C. Bryce "The Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act of 1961-1967: An Historical Survey and Documentary Analysis." PhD diss., University of Alberta, 1970. (CIM 6850); Stephen Avray. "The Role of Intra-Capitalist Class Conflict in the Development of Education in Canada, 1955-1962." PhD diss., York University, 1984. (ISBN: 0315169486).

[108] Christine Muscedere. Survey Participant. Attended J.C. Patterson Collegiate in 1972, and WDLHS in 1973.

[109] Evelyn Garrett. "A Hundred Years of High School History," The Partrician, (1854-1954). *Centennial Edition Yearbook*, 10. Windsor Public Library

[110] Ibid.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Ibid.

[113] Ibid.

[114] Commerce. *The Harry E. Guppy High School of Commerce Yearbooks*. Windsor Schools, R370. Windsor Public Library.

[115] The Towers, (1962-1963). *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[116] The Towers, (1964-1965). *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[117] The Towers, (1965-1966). *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[118] The Towers, (1967-1968) *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library; The Towers, (1968-1969) *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[119] Margaret Carnegie and Marion Mclean. "The Art Department," The Towers, (1951-1952) W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook, 29. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[120] Ibid.

[121] Minutes of the Secondary School Principals Meeting, October 14, 1966. Vol. August 1966 - December 1967.

[122] Minutes of the Secondary School Principal's Meeting, August 28, 1968. Vol. Jan. – Dec. 1968; Minutes of the Board of Education for the City of Windsor, December 18, 1968. September 25, 1968-April 9, 1969.

[123] Minutes of the Secondary School Principal's Meeting, August 28, 1968. Vol. Jan. – Dec. 1968.

[124] "The Lowe walkout: How the student protest began," *The Windsor Star*, October 11, 1968. 3.

[125] Ibid.

[126] Ibid.

[127] Ibid.

[128] Ibid.

[129] Joe Comartin is a Windsor MP (2014), representing the NDP. He was elected Member of Parliament for Windsor—Tecumseh (previously Windsor-St. Clair) in 2000. Re-elected in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2011.

[130] "The Lowe walkout: How the student protest began," *The Windsor Star*, October 11, 1968. 3.

[131]"Lowe, Students fail to resolve differences," *The Windsor Star*, October 1, 1968. 5.

[132] Ibid.

[133] Ibid.

[134] "Outside forces involved in Lowe student strike," *The Windsor Star*, October 5, 1968. 3.

[135] "Protesting students holding own classes," *The Windsor Star*, October 2, 1968. 6.

[136] Ibid.

[137] "Striking Lowe students campaigning for support," *The Windsor Star*, October 3, 1968. 3.

[138] "School board may charge Toronto student activists," *The Windsor Star*, October 5, 1968. 3.

[139] "Protest Reps meet school board officials," *The Windsor Star*, October 5, 1968. 3.

[140] Ibid.

[141] "Lowe student Strike," *The Windsor Star*, October 5, 1968. 6.

[142] Ibid.

[143] "Striking Lowe students going back to class," *The Windsor Star*, October 7, 1968. 1.

[144] Ibid.

[145] Minutes of the Secondary School Principal's Meeting, October 11, 1968. Vol. Jan.–Dec. 1968.

[146] Ibid.

[147] Minutes, October 8, 1969, Board of Education for the City of Windsor, April 23, 1969 – December 10, 1969.

[148] "The Lowe walkout: How the student protest began," *The Windsor Star*, October 11, 1968. 3.

[149] Paul Axelrod. No Longer a 'Last Resort': The End of Corporal Punishment in the Schools of Toronto. *The Canadian Historical Review*, 91, 2, (2010): 272. Doi: IO.3I38/chr.91.2.261

[150] Joseph Ord. The Towers (1951-1952) *W.D. Lowe Vocational School Yearbook*, 3. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library

[151] Al Roach is listed as a staff member at WDLTS in Minutes of the Board of Education for the City of Windsor, September 25th, 1968-April 9, 1969.

[152] Al Roach, *All Our Memories: Being a Fond Look Back at Our Yesteryears Along This Detroit River Border*. (Windsor, Ontario: Herald Press Limited. First Printing, 1981), 88.

[153] For a detailed discussion on changed technologies of discipline see, Mona Gleason, "Disciplining the Student Body," 204.

[154] L. F. McGee, "Principal's Message", The Towers (1972-1973) *W.D. Lowe technical School Yearbook*, 22. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[155] Survey results.

[156] Fred Phipps. Automotive Mechanic Student at WDLVS. 1950-1954.

[157] Without sources that directly state why the decision was made to make WDLTS an exclusively male school, the context provides some clues. Under the Hall-Dennis report which produced the Living and Learning guidelines for K-12 education in May 1968 (see R.D. Gidney, 71), a more flexible learning environments combined with a renewed focus on vocational training provided a welcoming atmosphere for all-boy programs or courses. Christopher Greig (see "boy-only classrooms," 2011) suggests that

experimentation common in the time period may explain the appearance of all-boy classes. It may also be possible though that the flexible classroom environments also reinforced the practice of transferring students to vocational schools as a way to resolve classroom management issues that some students may have posed.

[158] The Towers (1972-1973) *W.D. Lowe Technical School Yearbook*. Municipal Archives Windsor Public Library.

[159] "City's Oldest High School: Patterson – 16 months to go," *The Windsor Star*, February 10, 1972. Education Scrapbook held in the main branch of the Windsor Public Library. R971.331 H62. Vol.5.

[160] Ibid.

[161] This school was later named Century S.S. and was closed as a stand-alone vocational school in June, 2014.

[162] Closed in June, 1992.

[163] Remains open with no plans for closure as of June, 2014.

[164] Entry on an open history blog, "*International Metropolis*" by Laura on January 5, 2013 at 4:15 pm. Accessed on January 19, 2014. http://www.internationalmetropolis.com/2006/03/12/more-windsor-mid-century/

[165] Windsor—Schools, R 370. Windsor Public library.

Chapter 5: The Rise and Fall of "Lowe Tech"

> *While there has been, over the past three or four decades, some general improvement in secondary school graduation rates, these improvements have not benefited all students equally. A great many students from the working class and specific minority groups continue to suffer from the discriminatory streaming practices that remain powerfully in place.*[1] - Harry Smaller, 2014

F.P. Gavin's experiences teaching adults inspired him to found a technical day school in Windsor, Ontario. Gavin proposed that adult education was symptomatic of a system that did not serve "motor-minded boys." According to Gavin, these boys left school too early, before completing elementary school, and returned to night school as adults in search of the skills demanded by a changing economy. Gradually, the technical school did attract the very target audience Gavin described, so much so that the commercial program was relocated in 1959 to make room for the growing number of technical students. In 1969, WDLTS was officially declared an all-boys school.

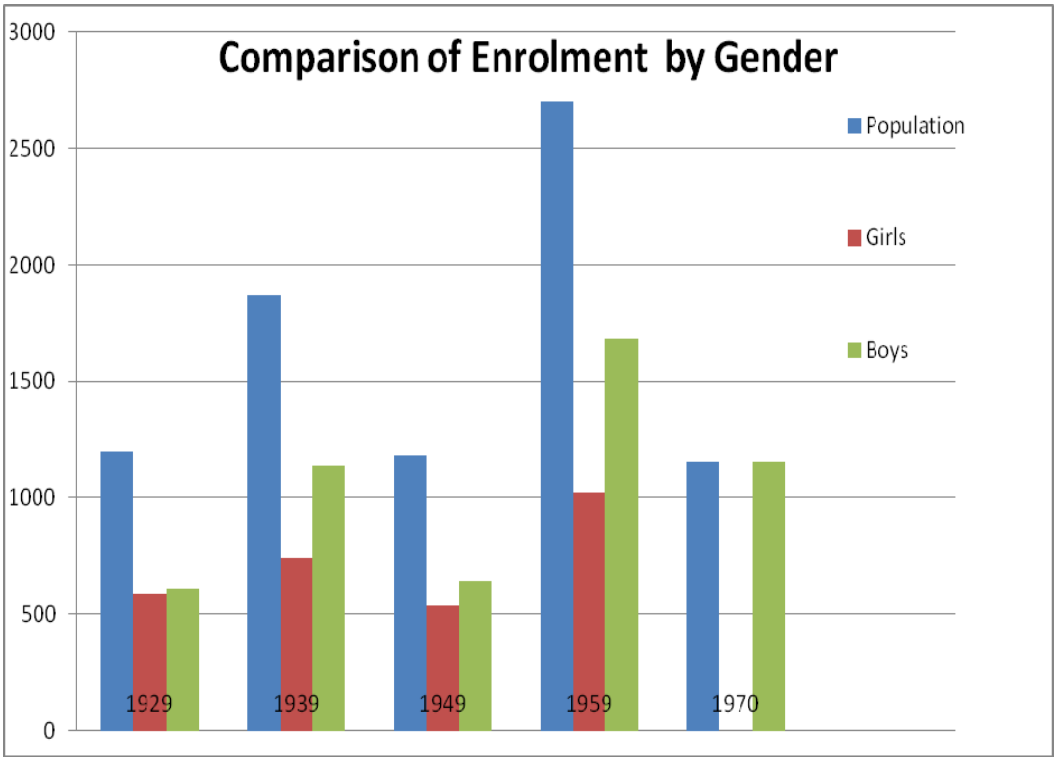


Table 11: This long-term comparison indicates the overall pattern of gender attendance at WDLTS. The availabiltiy of jobs post world war II had an impact on

attendance,as did mandatory attendance and the increasing number of special vocational schools all of which affected the population profile of the school. The common denominator was the movement of the junior vocational and commercial programs in and out of the school to accommodate the technical program within the school.

By 1972, however, the school board had come to the conclusion that technical schools should be made into composite schools wherever possible. The federal funding that supported stand-alone technical secondary schools had ceased in 1967. Instead, the federal government took on 100% of the financial responsibility for the adult "who has left school and earned his living and now needs retraining or further training."[2] This was a complete reversal of the reasoning that established a stand-alone technical secondary school. A shift in perspective had taken place at all levels, from the local school board to the federal government, but what happened in this fifty-year period to cause such a changed view of who was responsible for educating whom?

Gender, class, and curriculum at one stand-alone technical and vocational school in Windsor morphed and shifted, sometimes reflecting and sometimes counter-balancing external influences throughout its fifty-year history. The significant points of change reveal how gender and class work in and through the school. Generally speaking, policy, legislation, and social and economic forces that shaped Windsor's stand-alone technical school primed it for success prior to 1950 and for decline thereafter. This final chapter offers an overview of pivotal moments to provide insight into how and why that reversal of reasoning took place and what effect it had on students and stand-alone schools. This study began by asking four guiding questions:

1. What factors explain both the establishment of the Windsor-Walkerville Technical School in 1923 and the demise of W.D. Lowe Technical School as a stand-alone, elite technical school in 1973?

2. What political, social, and cultural factors contributed to changing curriculum at WWTS/WDLTS from 1923 to 1973?

3. In what ways did the local political, social, and cultural context influence the formal and extra-curricular programs at WWTS/WDLTS?

4. How did prevailing attitudes and assumptions about gender affect the evolution of WWTS/WDLTS?

As the research progressed, it became apparent that a rise-and-fall narrative formed the central arc of WDLTS's story. In light of this arc, it seems fitting to reframe the answers to all of the research questions in relation to the establishment and closing of WDLTS, with particular attention given to the causes and consequences of that rise and fall. By doing this, the political, social, and cultural influences and their effects will be addressed.

The four most crucial elements in the rise and fall of W. D. Lowe Vocational School were funding and the local economy, which functioned as underlying causes, as well as more immediate causes such as leadership and the recruitment and makeup of the student population. Each of these four interconnected elements provides a narrative that goes some way towards explaining why Lowe was an excellent school prior to 1950 and then rapidly declined.

	WWTS, 1923-WWVS/WDLVS, 1949	**WDLVS, 1950-WDLTS, 1973**
Local Economy	1922-*Ford Motor Company* requests tool makers. - Apprenticeship and hiring preferences given to WWTS students at Ford. -Specialized automotive parts manufacturing creates a lucrative job market.	1950-Automation changed the way cars were manufactured as well as parts production and manufacturing.
Funding & Legislation	1911-Industrial Education Act (Ont.) 1919-Technical Education Act (Canada) 1935 - Municipal amalgamation & elimination of technical school board. -School board is more bureaucratic.	1958-Technical College Opens with some overlapping curriculum 1960/2-TVTAA & Robarts Plan 1967-TVTAA expires and will not be extended 1968-Elimination of departmental exams 1973-Amalgamation of Patterson & WDLTS
Local Leadership	1913 to 1919 - F.P. Gavin, head of the technical education advisory committee, then assistant superintendant of technical education for Ontario 1922 to 1945 - W.D. Lowe, Principal 1945-1951- Ross -Teachers spent their whole careers at WWTS	1945 to 1955-rapid teacher retirement and turnover 1951 to 1954-Principal Ord 1954 to 1959-Principal Dean 1959 to 1971-Principal McGee 1971 to 1973- Principal Durocher 1972-School Board declares in *Windsor Star*: Composite schools to be developed wherever possible.

Student Population	-Popular Commercial program at Walkerville Collegiate ensures enough enrolment for a technical school -More girls than boys -Extra-curricular activities very community orientated -Corporal punishment -Growing population of junior vocational 1944-Student Strike -Baby-Boom = Population growth, the need for more space & the mobility of commercial program made the creation of more stand alone schools appealing.	1950-The practice of transferring failing students addressed by Ross 1959 - Commercial Students moved to Guppy 1963 to 1969 -Girls gradually return through the art program 1968-Student Strike -Waning of corporal punishment 1970 to 1973 - Officially declared all-boys

Table 12: Underlying and Immediate Causes of the Rise and Fall of "Lowe Tech"

The Rise of WWTS/WWVS

Explaining the opening and closing of Windsor, Ontario's, stand-alone technical secondary school requires attention to underlying causes rooted in the historical context. The call for educational change in Ontario first emerged in urban centres where rapid population growth and a flourishing industrial economy warranted educational accommodation. Labour groups as well as manufacturers lobbied the municipal and provincial governments for technical education. Lobbying efforts also targeted the federal government for two reasons: (1) the start-up costs for technical education were more than most towns could afford, and (2) since this type of education was viewed as an investment in the economy—a federal responsibility—there was enormous pressure from municipal and provincial governments as well as from industry and labour to fund the new form of secondary education.

As described in Chapter 2, Windsor's evolving automobile industry set the stage for strong support for a new technical school. Ford Motor Company Canada had expressed concern over the desperate need for skilled tool makers. Starting and maintaining an excellent technical school was very expensive, particularly for smaller towns and cities, so Windsor took full advantage of funds available from all levels of government. In Ontario, the Industrial Education Act, 1911, confirmed the province's commitment to technical education. In addition to providing funds to start new programs, there was also support for school boards to establish technical advisory boards whose purpose was to institute and develop technical classes.[3] Like many other towns in

Ontario, Windsor and Walkerville waited until federal funding was in place before committing to a stand-alone technical school. The provincial funding was enough support to start a technical department at Windsor Collegiate and to offer night classes in technical education and domestic science. Walkerville Collegiate already had a highly successful Commercial Program. Passionate campaigning by F.P. Gavin, head of Windsor's technical advisory committee, prepared the region to support a day school when federal legislation finally made it possible. The Technical Education Act, 1919, provided for the expensive start-up costs and maintenance required for a fully equipped technical school. The Great Depression was the only era when federal funding for technical education was reduced to the same amount as for regular academic subjects.

These underlying factors, which associated formal education with specific job options in the local economy, also influenced the ideological underpinnings of technical education. Windsor's technical education champion, F.P. Gavin, was driven by his conviction that technical education was a solution to social, economic and educational problems. Technical education, as it was envisioned by F.P. Gavin, began with particular concern for working-class boys, the very population that attended the school in the last three years it functioned as a technical school before it was amalgamated with a collegiate school. The initial vision for technical education set the stage for curriculum offered at the school. The idea that there were, as Gavin put it, "motor-minded" boys not being served well by current curriculum offerings suggests that he accepted a dichotomous notion of the body/brain divide. In the context of the "new education movement," this conceptualization has been described as a move to expand education to reflect classical Greek educational ideals, which strived to serve both the body and mind.[4] Stand-alone schools built upon this conceptual basis were supported by

> theories of intelligence that define entire social groups as "hand-minded" and others as "abstract-minded." Combined with these theories was the belief that the purpose of schooling was to create an efficient school system to guide people into their likely positions in the social order.[5]

The first principal, W.D. Lowe, appeared to have different expectations for a technical school. Lowe went to great lengths to emphasize that WWTS offered a well-rounded education on a par to that of other high schools and collegiate institutes. As long as

academic standards were high and the theories behind the physical work were sound—that is, as long as William Lowe was principal—technical education was not perceived as second rate. Lowe's understanding of the hand/brain divide was not unique.[6] The understanding that the hand and brain brought together for students in their learning had also served domestic science well. The very term *domestic science* reflected a conscious effort to keep a body/brain balance intact. But even as legislation changed names—for instance, domestic science to domestic art—local control of curriculum and decision-making was in the hands of the local technical school board. Although Gavin's concept of technical education seems to support some negative stereotypes of technical schools, Lowe as principal of the school and the budding industrial economy in the Border Cities did not in any way devalue technical education.



Figure 20: Honour Role Pins & Metal Bookends made by Karl Barnard, 1953. Prominent on these bookends is the, two "W"s for Windsor-Walkerville, lamp of learning, the caption "Knowledge is Power" and tools.

The first blow to the efforts to maintain a stand-alone technical school that served the community and students well was the elimination of the technical school board in 1935, as part of the municipal amalgamation. As a result, local decision making by persons who actually spent their days inside the school came to an end. The school still had a committed and purposeful leader in W.D. Lowe, but he now answered to a school board whose jurisdiction was larger than it had ever been. With amalgamation also came a larger population from which to draw students; hence, WWVS grew into the largest secondary school in the community. As part of a larger and much more bureaucratic institution, the technical school slowly began losing its community feel. But strong extra-curricular programs created traditions and cultures that worked towards keeping the school's student culture vibrant, and William Lowe was able—with his expertise and long history in the community—to keep WWVS's tradition of high standards alive.

With a curriculum closely tied to the local economy, William Lowe made a concerted effort to provide students with educational experiences outside the classroom with the aid of many community partners. These partners included the Ford Motor Company, along with numerous other automobile and parts manufacturers that took on apprentices. Commercial students also gained valuable experience in local businesses, such as the open house events which allowed students to take complete charge of H.S. Smith department store. The cadets were also a longstanding and proud tradition at WDLVS, with multiple units that included both boys and girls. Students were able to experience practical applications of the skills they were learning in the school. WDLVS boasted the largest cadet corps, the most ceremonious parades, and the first female recruit on a rifle team in Canada. The majority of girls in cadets were enrolled in the Red Cross's medic, first aid, and nurse's training. Not only did students seek experiences outside the classroom, but alumni of WDLVS actively participated in most extra-curricular social and sporting events, such as basketball fundraisers, dances, and ceremonies of all types. Students also went on to be leaders in community activities, such as the founding of the fraternity Alpha Kai Omega (AKO), still in existence today.

Student organizations and community connections took on more significance as the school felt the full effect of bureaucratization: the school, and the school board, grew larger, the student population began to outgrow the school, and decision making was

removed from the daily activities. The student strike of 1944 was both a culmination of the changes that had occurred since the municipal amalgamation, and a glimpse of things to come. The strike of 1944 was notable for cooperation on the part of students and teachers and for the civility in negotiations between the school board and the strikers. But, even at the most tumultuous of times, there was still a great sense of trust and security between students and educational workers. In a school known for its strict discipline, perhaps this is no surprise. William Lowe was remembered as a strict but fair disciplinarian, trusted by both students and administration. The loss of Lowe as a principal in 1945 marks a turning point for WDLVS – the beginning of the end for the technical school.

The Fall of WDLVS/WDLTS, 1945-1973

Beginning in the late 1940s and early 1950s, the economy, school funding and educational legislation drastically shifted, creating a different historical context for stand-alone technical schools, contributing to their increasingly devalued status, which ultimately led to the closing of WDLTS. As at the establishment of the school, economic changes during the 1950s and 1960s were fundamental to how the skills offered at technical schools were valued. Automation in the local economy had waged a massive assault on any remaining craftsmanship and skilled work done in the specialized parts manufacturing sector. Conservative ideological climates that resulted from the fear of communist threats, combined with heavy reliance on union and labour organization to navigate massive technological changes, informed the student's learning atmosphere. The strike that occurred at WDLTS in 1968 was evidence of the insecurity felt at the time. In a school with a reputation for being tough, the waning use of corporal punishment along with rising student discontent, lent itself to the feeling of insecurity, a student strike signalled to the school board, the need for swift change. Responding to the administrator's demands that students present their grievances in a more acceptable way, students created a union, but the school board refused to recognize it. The closing of WDLTS brought an end to a school whose student body had cried out through their coordinated walkout for fairness and a sense of control in their destinies at the school. Perhaps it was the same fear of "gangs of hooligans" that led to the opening of the school

which also led to its doors closing. The official reason provided was that composite schools should be created wherever possible, but in light of the fact that other stand-alone vocational schools were left in place, perhaps there was more to the closing of WDLTS.

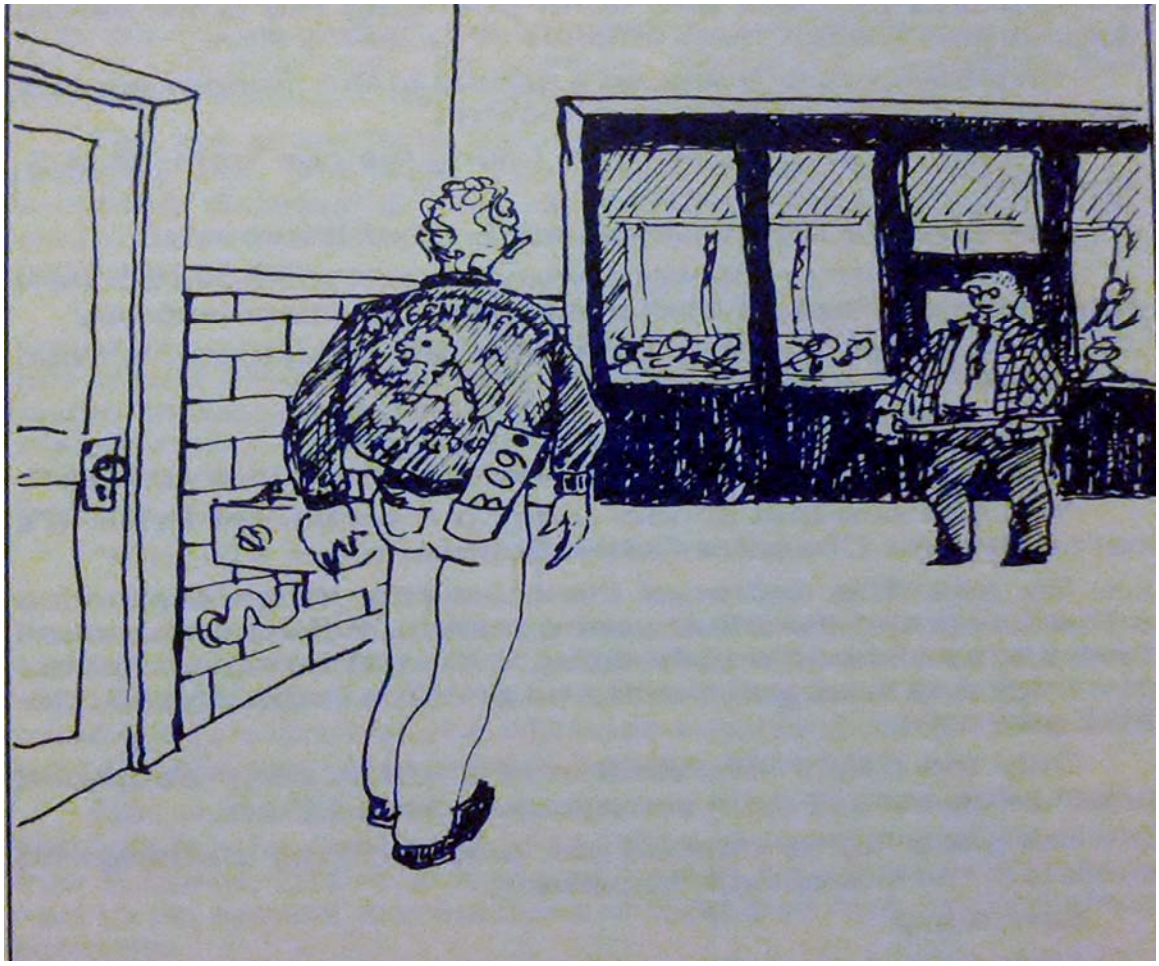


Figure 21: A drawing by Burt Weir (a previous art teacher at WDLTS) captures the reputation of WDLTS as a school with tough boys (hence the Queen's Men motorcycle club jacket) who required strict discipline (a teacher or administrator supervising the halls with a paddle/stick).

The first of many factors which morphed WDLVS/WDLTS into a separate and unequal, devalued space was the practice of transferring failing students to the school. Other factors such as the overlapping curriculum at the technical college, and the rapid deskilling of specialized automotive parts manufacturing's traditionally skilled labour served to compound the devaluation of technical secondary education. The elimination of province wide departmental exams also removed a source of evidence that had

contradicted social stereotypes. Finally, the proliferation of new stand-alone schools and special vocational schools institutionalized stereotypes of gender and social class.

The practice of transferring failing students to the technical school began after the death of W.D. Lowe. Initially, students who felt they were at risk of dropping out before completing elementary school could apply to the technical school's junior vocational program, but Principal Lowe was given sole discretionary power and was able to approve or deny registration at the school on a case-by-case basis. The high number of commercial students created an atmosphere in which the school was never in need of students. Lowe played a key role in creating a supportive environment in which students lived up to the high expectations set. After the amalgamation of the Border Cities in 1935, the technical school board was eliminated, to make way for a larger, more efficient, but also more bureaucratic, school board. Eliminating the technical school board essentially removed the local decision making powers from WWVS. Between 1935 and 1945, there was no evidence to indicate that W.D. Lowe's decisions were overly scrutinized or challenged by the school board. After Lowe's death, however, decisions to transfer students seemed to fall into the hands of principals and the school board. A plea from Lowe's successor, Principal Ross, to stop the practice of transferring failing students to the school fell on deaf ears. This single practice by itself would have been enough to place a once proud school into a category that Harry Smaller calls the "losing track" in a two-track system of education;[7] it stripped away any semblance of pride and achievement at the school.

Outside of the school, other factors were working in concert which would also have a direct negative impact on the school. The advent of automation, which drastically transformed the specialized automotive parts industry, had the effect of making innovation and small shop start-ups less and less accessible to graduates of WDLVS. Not only was retooling out of reach for many small shops, but rapid retooling of technical shop classrooms and curriculum was even more unrealistic. The most advanced courses and programs were taken over by the local technical college, leaving WDLVS with more rudimentary courses. The prospects of accessing the kind of success that previous graduates had achieved, was slim in the face of the high cost of starting up a shop that would be competitive in a new, technological age. In fact, when faced with demands to

upgrade equipment and retool, shops simply became more cooperative, sharing specialized equipment, as a matter of survival, which made patenting innovation and change, extremely difficult due to shared work.[8] The lack of patenting and sharing of work and contracts led to skilled work in the specialized automotive parts industry becoming exploited.[9] The same local economy which gave rise to an elite technical school was shaken to the core by the need to survive in the face of technical and educational change.

Even after several years of failing students being sent to WDLTS and crumbling prospects upon graduation, students took pride in demonstrating their academic ability in departmental examinations. In a school reunion booklet, the fact that WDLTS had ranked highest in departmental exams in 1966 and produced two Ontario scholars was a point of pride. In 1967, WDLTS again ranked highest in the city on departmental examinations. The reunion pamphlets of 1984 printed the scores and noted the lasting effect it had on the students' sense of pride and achievement. They also lamented the fact that the departmental examinations were discontinued by the province in 1968. As if to mourn the only remaining measure of success in their grasp, the alumni of WDLTS highlighted their success by including the achievement in a 50th anniversary pamphlet (reprinted again for the 90th reunion). In a context that was changing the very meaning behind the name "Lowe Tech."—a context of lowered expectations, both while in attendance at the school and after graduation—the academic success of some of the students is remarkable indeed!

The most devastating factor that lead to a devaluation of WDLTS was the proliferation of stand-alone schools under the pressure to accommodate the population of baby boomers approaching high school age. Special vocational schools emerged in 1966 to offer one or more programs for students considered to be unable to complete their education in a regular secondary school. Special vocational schools absorbed many of the failing students who would have otherwise have been sent to WDLTS, promoting a more academic climate, but at the same time contributing to more general negative association with stand-alone schools. The rapidly rising student population was used as an opportunity to build and offer more specialized programs and more specialized schools. The TVTAA offered money for the capital cost and expenses required for building and furnishing vocational and technical schools, combined with a curriculum proposed by the

Robarts Plan. One possible explanation offered to explain the choice to expand specialized programs is that the local educational climate in the 1960s challenged longstanding beliefs and was willing to try change, and as such "privileged new ideas and experimentation...and the desire to innovate."[10] Unfortunately, specialized programs to serve identifiable social groups ultimately reinforced stereotypes about those groups. For example, building stand-alone special vocational schools that associated intellectual limitations with working-class outcomes served to institutionalize what had previously only been prejudice. "A very particular set of cultural baggage goes along with stupid. Not merely a description of how well someone thinks, stupid has become a cultural concept with a particular code and set of signifiers that describe working-class people as the middle and upper classes perceive and construct us."[11] It was the last factor to fall into place, officially making stand-alone schools a form of segregation rather than an equal opportunity or an option for the student. While WDLTS laid claim to that portion of the Robarts Plan that included four-year programs in science and technology, the erosion of the academic markers that represented in no uncertain terms the academic ability of the students at WDLTS had been removed. The socioeconomic stigmatization of stand-alone technical and vocational schools, made gender, a more salient, and accessible source of social value within these school. The gender segregation that began to occur formally with the official declaration of WDLTS as an all-boys school in 1969, and Hands Vocational School's boys-only shop classes in the late 1960s was not present in earlier decades. Gender at school initially reflected existing social divisions in labour, without formal or prescribed distinctions. The commercial schools and programs used French language as a source for academic and social prestige, but there was no similar opportunity for girls in stand-alone vocational schools. Already stigmatized by social class, and associations between masculinity and technical shops in vocational schools, girls existed on the margins of the margins. Technical and vocational schools were products of a school system that not only, reflected social inequality, but actively took steps to participate in maintaining and reproducing inequalities. Michael Katz asserted in 1976, "It should be no surprise that inequality has been preserved. Schools have failed most vividly in their efforts at social reform. They have not eradicated crime, poverty, and immorality. And they could not realistically have been expected to do so."[12] Katz

goes on to suggest that we stop relying on schools for social reform. Social problems will not be eliminated or even seriously alleviated in schools, cannot be expected to do more than reflect the social structure in which they exist. In the 1960s, Windsor's stand-alone technical schools moved from passive reflectors to active agents of inequality. That change took place as multiple elements in a highly bureaucratic system came together to change the structure and meaning of WDLTS. It was only when positive immediate causal factors such as the technical school board, and direct positive connections to the local economy were in place, did the separate spaces created in stand-alone schools offer some students diversity of opportunity.

The brief 22-year period (1923-1945) in which Windsor's stand-alone technical school represented an equal or even elite opportunity existed in a historically specific and fleeting moment. It must be recognized that it was not just the leadership that made the school work for a time but also the local economy, attitudes towards discipline, and the novelty of new educational ideas like equality of opportunity and technical education that transformed "hooligans" to "captains and generals of the industrial army" in Windsor, Ontario prior to 1950. The story of technical and vocational education in Windsor is the story of a separate space in education, intended to provide equality of opportunity, that became, instead, a form of segregation and oppression.

A former teacher at WDLTS, Nick Palenchuk, explained the final closing of the school in 1998 as follows: "We had great support when we were an important auto town. As this waned, the support for technical education at W.D. Lowe lessened, till we had very few important programs. [After amalgamation with Patterson] the lobbying and the support lessened as [students] did not have the structure to lobby for the school. More than likely the reason for our closing."[13]

Future Considerations for Research and Policy

The body of literature on the history of technical and vocational education in Ontario and Canada would benefit from more detailed analyses of the shifting dynamics of an entire school board from 1919 to 1967, the time when federal and provincial agreements shaped the emergence of stand-alone vocational schools in conjunction with provincial legislation, policy, and curriculum within differing local contexts and

economies. The results of such analyses would indicate the long-term effects that certain forms of educational reform have had on communities and social groups.

A meta-analysis of fundamental ideological and philosophical concepts in education, such as the hand/brain divide and how it has been understood and implemented over time would be useful for informing future policies and reforms. This study suggests that differing interpretations and applications of the hand/brain divide have affected every level of education. This can be seen in stereotypes about working-class boys, as well as in the attempt to distinguish college programs from university programs. Educators widely accept that even the most theoretical and abstract concepts can be presented and learned in very concrete ways, and that even the most concrete actions can be theorized in the abstract.[14] Yet, interpretations that neatly fit with negative social stereotypes, and defend existing unequal power structures, continue to prevail. The social value of groups of people, and the work that they do, often influences both the weight we place on their intellectual work, as well as the value of the physical aspects of the work that is done. That social currency extends to particular curriculum associated to that work and the value it has in the formal education system.

In an analysis of the campaign for technical education, Robert Stamp proclaimed, "The differentiated high school programs that accompanied agricultural, commercial, and technical education meant a redefinition of the concept of equality of educational opportunity."[15] With the new variety of opportunity, schools would no longer act as a unifying force through their similarity. Stamp was particularly incensed by the view of James Robertson, who, in 1913, interpreted "equality of opportunity" to mean not equal access to a school designed to prepare the leaders of society, but access to schools that would prepare students for a wider variety of occupational outcomes. Stamp took issue with the power this gave teachers, school administration, and school boards to decide for students what their destinations would be in life. To demonstrate this point, Stamp quoted Albert Leake, Ontario's former Director of Technical Education who declared two "castes" in education: "those who are the elect and those who are not, i.e., those who can absorb the printed page and pass the prescribed examinations and those who for both mental and financial reasons are not able to do so."[16] The values underlying Leake's statement are evident to Stamp, who concluded that the new opportunities in education

were nothing more than new opportunities for the school system to uphold the existing social hierarchy and "provide the captains and generals for the twentieth-century society, while the vocational courses would prepare the infantry troops for the industrial army."[17]

More recent analyses of individual stand-alone technical schools suggests that local factors had a more determinant and direct effect on the purpose and functions of stand-alone schools in the lives of the students. The Windsor Walkerville Technical School makes an illuminating case study due to its setting in an industrial town dominated by automobile manufacturing. This context is important for understanding the influence that local context and control can have on whether separate space serves as means to oppress or to afford greater options to students.

The history of WDLTS demonstrates that the impact of stand-alone schools on working-class youth, no matter how well intentioned, was shaped by multiple external and internal forces. Those forces transformed a separate space that initially served working-class boys well into a highly segregated and hierarchical form with working-class girls in stand-alone special vocational schools ranking the lowest of the low. Today's educators' and policy makers' concern for boys' achievement in education, or advocates for schools that cater to particular social groups, have much to learn from the results of this study.

For roughly the last 100 years, the state has gained access to working-class adolescents via stand-alone technical, commercial, and vocational schools. For close to 50 of those years, there has been a public and academic critique of the class and gender segregation that these schools represent. To no avail, stand-alone vocational schools still exist in Ontario, and the Greater Essex County District School Board. As a springboard to imagining what is possible, consider when separate space *does* work to resist and change systemic discrimination. Marilyn Frye contends:

> Feminist separation is, of course, separation of various sorts or modes from men and from institutions, relationships, roles and activities that are male-defined, male-dominated, and operating for the benefit of males and the maintenance of male privilege—this separation being initiated or maintained at will, *by women*. (masculist separatism is the partial segregation of women from men and male domains *at the will of men*. This difference is crucial).

According to Frye, separate spaces must be created by the group needing the space. To apply this to stand-alone schools, it would seem they were doomed to failure from the start being that schools began as institutions with traditional ties to middle-class, white collar work attempting to create space for students who were destined for skilled trades, factory work, or even unpaid labour. It also explains why local control via technical school boards provided possibilities for positive outcomes. Once the technical school board was eliminated and the school existed amongst an array of other high schools and collegiate institutes in a large bureaucratic system, it rapidly deteriorated. Schools, as institutions, fit into Fryes analysis of functional separate spaces:

> ...institutions are humanly designed patterns of access—access to persons and their services. But institutions are artifacts of definition. In the case of intentionally and formally designed institutions, this is very clear, for the relevant definitions are explicitly set forth in by-laws and constitutions, regulations and rules.[18]

The use of schools to enact the human capital theory in combination with misapplications of the so-called hand/brain divide in technical and academic programs are examples of imposing definitions onto working class boys and girls. Later, these ideas would be institutionalized with the creation of specialized vocational schools. In many ways, the strike of 1968 was an indicator that students at WDLTS wanted to share power, and use that influence to invoke change in their school. Frye considers input from the bottom up, as an important ingredient too for separate spaces to function positively.

> there *must* be an aspect of no-saying (which is the beginning of control) in every effective act and strategy, the effective ones being precisely those that shift power...we are able to arrogate definition to ourselves when we re-pattern access. Assuming control of access, we draw new boundaries and create new roles and relationships.

The concession made by students to return to the school after the strike ended and work things out in a more socially acceptable way, eventually led to the creation of a student union only to have it ignored by the school board. Given these circumstances, perhaps the closing of W.D. Lowe as a technical school represents a small victory. In the same token though, leaving vocational schools intact is an even greater insult because this form of segregation is directed at an even more vulnerable population, one not well equipped to contest inequities.

According to Frye, when women separate, that space must allow them to, say no to oppression, control access that oppressors have to them, and define themselves—all fundamental ingredients for power. These are the space where social change can happen, and equitable education can take place.

Whenever a social group is not being served well in schools, and exists on the institutions' margins, it is a reflection of larger problems in society. There are more fundamental social supports needed for this group. Requiring schools to compensate where other areas in our social system have fallen short has set the education system up for failure over and over again. By creating separate spaces, school boards avoid the elephant which has been wandering the hallways of schools for over 100 years: schools are not a solution to crime rates, unemployment, economic change, or militaristic power. The resurgence and recycling of the same educational problems over and over, such as the boy problem, is evidence of this truth. If we are firmly committed to the idea of a public education system, then issues of equity have to be considered as prerequisites of education, not part of a delivery of services. Perhaps we should be looking to education not as the sole solution to society's problems, but as a barometer for where we, as a society, need to be offering more fundamental supports and we should be acting on that information in a broader array of community services. Katz encourages alternatives to traditional schooling:

> None of the large social institutions which dominate our lives today existed in anything more than embryonic form one-hundred and fifty years ago, and at the time of their creation sane, intelligent people believed in alternatives. Those who cannot see beyond the asylum or the bureaucracy have a foreshortened view of history. The timidity of our efforts at reform reflects the narrowness of our imagination, not the limits of the possible.[19]

Just over 40 years ago, the school board in Windsor declared that wherever possible composite schools would be developed, yet even this seemingly minor correction has yet to come to fruition. Are we that limited in our imagination?

I don't think so. So what will it take to bring about change? As institutions, schools reflect the inequality in society. How can we create change without placing the full burden of that change on schools? Policy makers need to consider feminist understandings of segregation, separate space, and power to evoke from our

imaginations what is possible for public secondary education and the broader society in which it occurs.

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[1] Harry Smaller, "Streaming in Ontario Schools," *Our Schools/Our Selves* 23, no. 2 (Winter 2014): 111.

[2] Government to Withdraw from Cost-Shared Education Programs. *Technical and Vocational Education in Canada*, 1966-67, 10.

[3] John M. Gibson. Report of the Department of Education. 1912. Toronto, On: L.K. Cameron, xi.

[4] Paul Axelrod, Paul Anisef and Zeng Lin. Bridging the gap between liberal and applied education. In *Integrating School and Workplace Learning in Canada: Principles and Practices of Alternation Education and Training*. Edited by Hans G. Schuetze and Robert Sweet. Kingston, Ontario: McGill University Press, 2003.

[5] Mike Rose. Intelligence, Knowledge, and the Hand/Brain Divide. *Phi Delta Kappan*. 2008, 89, 9.

[6] There is also evidence that the labour leaders who founded the Toronto Technical School also expected that science would offer the industrial worker knowledge that would add value to working class labour in a changing economy. See K. Sharman. The Establishment of the Toronto Technical School, 1897-1904. University of Windsor: Master's Thesis, 2006.

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Appendix A: W.D. Lowe Technical School Questions

Name:_____ Sex and/or Gender:_____

1) The time frame, in years, you attended W.D. Lowe:_____

2) What program(s) you were enrolled in:_____

3) Did your studies at W.D. Lowe lead to further study or work in that subject area?_____

If yes, please describe the education and work you do/did. (Name of schools, type of job, apprenticeship, trade name, qualifications, etc)_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

4) What role did W.D. Lowe Technical School have in preparing you for your further studies or work? _____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

5) Were there any particular teachers that influenced your studies and work? Why were they influential?_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

6) In the years that you attended W.D. Lowe describe the population of the school._____

_____

a)Cultural mix of students_____

_____

b)Gender balance of students at the school and in particular programs_____

c)Gender balance of staff at the school and in particular programs_____
_____

d)Sub-cultural stereotypes of students at the school, or in particular departments (jocks, nerds)_____
_____

7) How and why was W.D. Lowe School different from other schools in the area?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

8) What factors contributed to W.D. Lowe's reputation in the community (positive or negative)?_____
_____
_____
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_____
_____
_____

9) Were there any changes to programming or policies while you attended the school?_____

If yes, what were the changes and why did they occur? How did they impact the school?_____

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_____

10) What if any extra-curricular activities did you participate in while attending W.D. Lowe?_____
_____
_____

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_____

11) How did your experiences in extra-curricular activities contribute to your experiences or memories of the school?_____

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_____

12) Describe the school spirit of W.D. Lowe?_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

13) W.D. Lowe is often remembered as an all-boy's school. Why do you think this idea persists?_

_____
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_____

14) Did the association with male students influence your experience there? _____
If yes, how so?_____

_____
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_____

15) Did the gender balance at W.D. Lowe influence social events? _____
If yes, how so?_____

_____
_____

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_____

16) Did you attend W.D. Lowe when it was amalgamated with J.C. Patterson in 1973?_____
If yes, what was your experience during the amalgamation? What was the feeling like at the school? How did the school change in your opinion?_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

17) Do you recall any major events that occurred at the school? (Political change, social change, student protests, population change, curriculum change etc.)_____

If yes, describe the event, and its causes and consequences. _____
_____
_____
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_____

18) What factors have contributed to W.D. Lowe's lasting reputation in the community?_____
_____
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_____

19) How do you think the local community supported W. D. Lowe (as a school, programs, or particular students)?_____
_____
_____
_____

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_____

20) Is there anything else you would like to contribute to the research on W.D. Lowe Technical School that was not asked in this questionnaire?_____

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Thank you for your participation in this research project. If you would like a summary of the findings from this research project, please print your name and mailing address below.

Name:_____
Address and Street Name:_____
City:_____Province/state:_____
Postal/zip code:_____
e-mail:_____

If you wish to remain anonymous in the reporting of this study please indicate that wish here.

Appendix B: Information letter included with questions

Gender, Class and Curriculum at W.D. Lowe Technical School, 1923-1973

LETTER OF INFORMATION FOR CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Title of Study: Gender, Class and Curriculum at W.D. Lowe Technical School, 1923-1973

You are asked to participate in a research study conducted by **Kael Sharman and Dr. Larry Glassford**, from the **Faculty of Education** at the University of Windsor **as part of the requirements for a PhD dissertation.**

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact **Dr. Larry Glassford** ***(519)253-3000 x3811***

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

An historical case study of W.D. Lowe Technical School which focuses on gender, class and curriculum would make a contribution to academic literature on the history of technical and vocational education. An analysis of this particular school would contribute and expand the current understanding of an aspect of education that continues to be controversial because of its intended purpose as work preparation for students, segregated status, and association to class. Although gender has been a continuous theme in the literature on technical schools in Ontario, feminist critiques have focused primarily on curriculum that mirrors and perpetuates women's segregated and devalued work and skills. Little attention has been paid to the construction of masculinity in technical schools and how that construction contributes to issues previously identified within feminist critiques. WDLTS offers an opportunity to rectify this gap in the literature due to the continuous efforts made to establish and maintain and all male population. A detailed historical look at a predominantly all male technical high school that had an excellent reputation in its local community can offer valuable insight into current struggles with the nature of gender and class associations to some types of curriculum and work.

PROCEDURES

If you volunteer to participate in this study, you will be asked to:
- Read and sign the letter of information
- Complete the questionnaire (estimated time to complete the questionnaire is 30-60 minutes)
- Indicate on the questionnaire if you want to receive a summary of the results of this study.
- Return the questionnaire using the addressed and stamped envelope
- You can access the results of the study on the research ethics board website, www.uwindsor.ca/reb after April 30, 2014.

POTENTIAL RISKS AND DISCOMFORTS

You are asked to complete a questionnaire asking about your experiences and perceptions about WD Lowe Technical School. You may choose to answer some questions while leaving other questions blank. All personal information and contact information you provide will be held in confidence. If you wish to remain anonymous in the report, please indicate that on the questionnaire. You can withdraw your participation at any time before final reporting occurs. Once the final version of the dissertation has been printed withdrawal from the study will not be possible.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO PARTICIPANTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY

The story of W.D. Lowe Technical School needs to be told. Your contributions to this story, will also be contributing to a local understanding of Windsor as a community, to a deeper understanding of technical and vocational education, and to future policy and practices surrounding stand alone vocational secondary schools.

COMPENSATION FOR PARTICIPATION

There will be no compensation for participation in this research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission. All completed questionnaires will be kept in a locked cabinet until the completion of the study. Once the study is completed the questionnaires will be shredded and disposed of.

PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

Using the contact information provided on this document, the participant can indicate their wish to withdraw from the study at any time before the final version of the dissertation has been published. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

FEEDBACK OF THE RESULTS OF THIS STUDY TO THE PARTICIPANTS

There will be an option to provide contact information on the questionnaire if the participant wishes to receive a summary of the findings from this study.

Web address: www.uwindsor.ca/reb.
Date when results are available: April 30, 2014

SUBSEQUENT USE OF DATA

These data may be used in subsequent studies, in publications and in presentations.

RIGHTS OF RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

If you have questions regarding your rights as a research participant, contact: Research Ethics Coordinator, University of Windsor, Windsor, Ontario N9B 3P4; Telephone: 519-253-3000, ext. 3948; e-mail: ethics@uwindsor.ca

SIGNATURE OF INVESTIGATOR

These are the terms under which I will conduct research.

_____ _____

Signature of Investigator Date

Appendix C: Research and Ethics Board Approval Letter

Today's Date: April 04, 2013
Principal Investigator: Mr. Kael Sharman
REB Number: 28756
Research Project Title: REB# 10-220: Gender, Class and Curriculum at W.D. Lowe Technical School, 1923-1973
Clearance Date:
Project End Date: August 01, 2013
Milestones:
Renewal Due-2012/08/01(Completed)
Renewal Due-2012/01/30(Completed)

This is to inform you that the University of Windsor Research Ethics Board (REB), which is organized and operated according to the Tri-Council Policy Statement and the University of Windsor Guidelines for Research Involving Human Subjects, has granted approval to your research project on the date noted above. This approval is valid only until the Project End Date.

A Progress Report or Final Report is due by the date noted above. The REB may ask for monitoring information at some time during the project approval period.

During the course of the research, no deviations from, or changes to, the protocol or consent form may be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. Minor change(s) in ongoing studies will be considered when submitted on the Request to Revise form.

Investigators must also report promptly to the REB:
a) changes increasing the risk to the participant(s) and/or affecting significantly the conduct of the study;
b) all adverse and unexpected experiences or events that are both serious and unexpected;
c) new information that may adversely affect the safety of the subjects or the conduct of the study.

Forms for submissions, notifications, or changes are available on the REB website: www.uwindsor.ca/reb. If your data is going to be used for another project, it is necessary to submit another application to the REB. We wish you every success in your research.

Dr. Kirk Boulos, Ph.D.
Chair, Research Ethics Board

This is an official document. Please retain the original in your files.

Vita Auctoris

Kael Sharman was born in Windsor, Ontario, in 1969, and was transferred from elementary school in grade 8 to Shawnee Secondary School, a vocational school. At 15 years of age Kael left vocational school in order to complete an apprenticeship while pursing regular academic courses that would lead to earning a secondary diploma. After becoming a certified tradesperson, Kael earned an Honours B.A. in Psychology and Women's Studies at the University of Windsor, and subsequently a Bachelor of Education. Once again in a vocational school, this time as a teacher, Kael felt compelled to research the history of stand-alone vocational schools in Ontario. This study lead to a Master's of Education. Related questions about vocational and technical high schools in Windsor lead to the research in this study.