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“Where Love Prevails”: Student Resilience and Resistance in Precarious Spaces

Cristall Ferne

Susan Rodger

Kathy Hibbert

Western University, khibbert@uwo.ca

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“Where Love Prevails” – Student Resilience and Resistance in Precarious Spaces

Cristall, F., Rodger, S., & Hibbert, K.

Introduction

Amidst growing concerns about mental health, resilience and school-based mental health (SBMH) in Canada, attention is understandably expanding from problematizing youth mental health, to focusing on how policy-makers and educators can promote the development of mental health competencies for students. At the same time there has been the emergence of a discourse of community and citizenship that challenges educators to achieve “an active, bottom-up citizenship in which people can take a self-governing role in the many divergent communities of their lives” (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009, p. 172). However, in the rural context the ability to engage as a community of citizens is often thwarted by policies that privilege economic interests over wellness (Witten, McCreanor, Kearns & Ramasubramanian, 2001). In rural districts where community is part of the fabric of the curriculum itself (Miller, 1995), school closures limit opportunities for youth to be seen and heard and limit a community’s ability to build the “mental health” capital – or *resilience* - needed to sustain its inhabitants. Arguably, “changes to place” – especially in geographic spaces with declining school enrolments – may well be contributing to mental health vulnerability and reduction in well-being (Fraser et al., 2005; Murphy et al., 1988).

In response to news their high school was being closed due to declining enrolment the *Raiders in Action*, students engaged in resistance to protest decisions made for them (and not about them) formed human chains, marched, staged silent protests and more. As they came

together in action and brought together a group of people who shared a sense of place and a vision for equity and inclusion, they did not stay stuck in their discontent, but worked for change. Resilience, after all, not a trait to be nurtured independently or without support but rather is developed and shared in community and relationship.

A recent study employed Ball's (1993) policy analysis framework (text, context, and consequence) to examine SBMH policies as they intersect with student and teacher resiliency across Canada (Ott, Hibbert, Rodger & Leschied, 2017). Recommendations called for more support to:

(a) work with educators to develop communities of practice on school mental health around the notion of resiliency; (b) consider the structural and material factors that affect people's ability to be resilient at school, and (c) extend the current focus on promoting student wellness to include teacher wellness. (p.1)

We are three scholars (two educators and one counseling psychologist) who believe that significant community participation is critical to building resilience. When community is disrupted, and engagement in it is silenced, the consequences include a decline in wellness for all involved. In this chapter, mindful of the recommendations of Ott et al.'s (2017) recent study, we examine the experiences of a rural community with declining school enrolment facing the closure of a school. We adopt Jean Baker Miller's (1976) *Relational Cultural Theory* (RCT), in which she holds that to be human is to be in community:

to be connected to one another in mutual, growth-fostering relationships. This mutuality is embodied in being authentic, showing empathy, giving and receiving support, and

sharing power, and those who are engaged in growth-fostering relationships will experience energy, clarity, an increased knowledge of oneself and others, an increased sense of worth and a desire for more connection. (Rodger, Hibbert & Gilpin, 2017, p. 65)

Originally Miller developed RCT as a model for therapy, but in the educational context, “it provides a very useful and practical way to think about, teach, and live in community as a teacher, a student, a family, a community and a team” (p. 65). It provides a framework for understanding the primacy of connection and the ways in which we will disconnect when it no longer feels safe to be who we are, a particularly salient concept with the students’ experiences described here.

The notion of a connection between RCT to *Critically Compassionate Intellectualism* (critical pedagogy, authentic caring and social-justice oriented curriculum) has been advanced by education scholars such as Rector-Aranda (2018) and Theobald (2006, 1997). In this framework both teachers and students are active agents in a social justice-oriented education mission and as an equity-oriented approach to understanding human experience, in context of a complex and disruptive political landscape and event (a school closure), RCT can provide a lens through which power, authenticity, silence and growth can be understood.

To start, borrowing a phrase from Corbett and Tinkham (2014), we consider the “wicked policy problem” that rural communities pose to successful governance.

Do Rural Schools Present a ‘Wicked Policy Problem’?

A key role for educators across all school districts in Ontario, Canada, is to meet the needs of

their students in ways reflecting the standards articulated in the provincial curriculum (Seasons, Irwin & Rappolt, 2017). At the same time, educators must attend to the strengths and the needs of their local community; they must ensure that students become prepared to participate fully in the life of that community – to take on civic responsibility (New London Group, 1996, p. 60). However, to date, policies and standardized curricula are underpinned by an imperative of ‘access’ to all rather than ‘appropriateness’ (White & Corbett, 2014). Studies have documented for example, that the closure of schools in struggling rural communities can have a damaging effect on their “long-term vitality, resilience, and overall well-being” (Seasons, Irwin & Rappolt, 2017, p. 18). Since the rural community may be more dependent upon its limited infrastructure, the community may live in more interdependent ways than its urban counterparts. Yet school boards are often positioned as adversaries with communities from the outset. The conundrum – and this is the basis of the “wicked policy problem” – is that “small school activists ... [are] focused on maintaining infrastructure and even community survival” while “school boards are mandated to focus on the efficient provision of educational services across wider geographies” (Corbett & Tinkaham, 2014, p. 691).

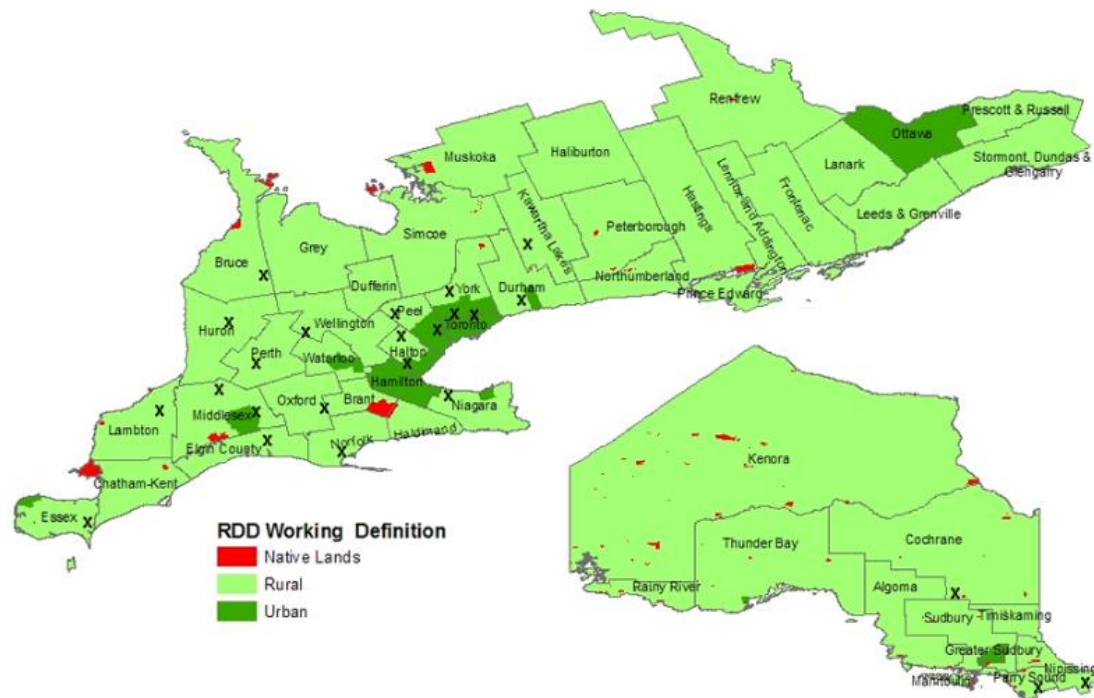
The neoliberal logic applied to the human enterprise of the education system fails to meet the needs of rural communities (Cuervo, 2016), reducing the connection afforded through complex relationships between people and places to a supply and demand chain based on population density. Like the economic management system it is modeled after, the model has limited interest in all the various links of the chain:

School boards are charged with the responsibility of allocating resources in a fair way across the geography of governance. For local activists though, the problem is framed

differently. Here, the view is that school boards dismiss or ignore the quality of the local school; they overlook its importance to the community and essentially cut off the potential for future growth on the strength of evidence that is either incorrect or irrelevant. (Corbett & Tinkham, 2014, p. 698)

What do we mean by 'rural'? Rurality is more than geography or population density, although these two are most often cited for their role in policy development. In such examples, population sparsity or communities formed at non-commutable distances from urban centers determined how 'remote' a community was, and what supports might be required (Deavers, 1992). However, we argue that rurality also refers to a way of being in the world. When communities in rural areas first formed, they did so around family, church, and school (Budge, 2006) and these networks formed the core of their ability to survive and thrive. Functioning in rural spaces often calls for reciprocal relationships between families, neighbours, and friends in ways that build community while fostering practices of self-governance and sustainability. Peterborough, situated in Eastern Ontario, and the site of this study, officially became a town in 1850 having grown to a population of 2000 people. Based on the growth of its population (now 80,000) it is considered a city.

But who lives in this city? It is interesting to note that Peterborough is often described in terms of its surrounding area – the “Kawarthas” - a chain of lakes in the Trent Severn Waterway. A map produced by the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs (see Figure 1), categorizes the entire area as rural. Where cities have formed, they are located within, surrounded by,



Map adapted and used with permission of the Economic Development and Policy Branch, Ontario Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs

Figure 1 (Rural Ontario, Hibbert, 2013)

emerging from the surrounding rural ‘roots’. The Rural Ontario Medical Program¹ includes Peterborough as one of the rural communities in their rotation of training for physicians. Rurality is more than a geographic *place* or number of people, who live in a place. Rurality must also include the who the people are who inhabit those places: their beliefs; their histories and their values. In an effort to unpack the reductionist definitions of rurality, Provorse (1996) found that alternative factors such as rural influence or heritage lead people to hold a ‘rural mindset’ (p. 101). He concluded that “rural people live in urban places, and there are even some urban people living in rural spaces” (112). In other words, rurality is more about where we have come from, than where we are currently living.

¹ <https://romponline.com/partners/communities/>

As educators and mental health professions seeking to support those living in rural contexts, we must be mindful of the complexities and histories of place. Understanding the diversity of the rural leads to responses aimed at first working with communities to collectively build a response that accounts for their unique histories and needs. As Green (2013) articulates, “pursu[ing] opportunities and creat[ing] public policies and economic opportunities needed to sustain rural communities” (p. 17) (Hibbert, Rodger & Gilpin, 2017). Ineffective and insensitive policies result from an inability to see rural communities as “evolving spaces” with a “multitude of social, cultural and political structures of power relationships” (Brann-Barrett, 2014, p. 170). As a result, policies tend to override actors who have a personal stake in the community, assuming that rural dwellers are “authors of their own misfortune” in part through their “unwillingness to take appropriate educational opportunity” (Corbett, 2017, p. 3). Rather, Corbett and Tinkham (2014) argue, “ordinary citizens desire talk across boundaries, difference and modes of existence to share governance ... [and they] want assistance with the navigation of collective wicked problems ... to talk seriously with one another across difference” (p. 692). Rural areas often have limited access to specialized services, difficulty recruiting teachers (especially with particular specialization in the maths and sciences) and experienced administrators. Declining enrollment and the closure of small schools mark the consequences of globalization, youth ‘out-migration’, and the decline in families working their own land. Economically, this shift reduced the property taxes in rural areas, which saw a parallel decline in funded social services.

Policies that reflect the ideas of local and regional policy makers can afford opportunities for the authentic voices and experiences of students, or they can silence them. According to Relational-Cultural Theory we grow with and through connections and when we feel it is not safe to be our authentic selves we employ strategies of disconnection that are designed to restore safety, namely withdrawing and protecting the self, attempting to become the self that others want us to be, or fighting for the survival of our authentic self. The fight for survival and the sequelae are described here. Let's look at how these ideas played out in the context of a rural school closure.

The Case of Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School (PCVS)

Peterborough Collegiate and Vocational School (PCVS), nestled downtown on the main street, just north of the business section, was known for its historic beauty, inclusivity, social justice activism, artsy atmosphere, and diversity. This safe, inner-city school was a haven for many who had felt “othered”: LGBTQ, Arts, and English as a Second Language students. PCVS – the place – is a major player in this story of student trauma amidst a school board steeped in neoliberal policy – a story of rural school closure, youth resistance, and resilience. In July 2012 the school board closed PCVS down. According to the school board, the move was necessary because of declining enrolment in the city's high schools. Following the closure, displaced students were relocated. Many were shifted to the newer, much bigger, sportier, and science-oriented Thomas A. Stewart Secondary School in the suburbs.

Almost two years earlier, the news had flown through its halls of the school that one of four Peterborough schools was destined to be closed. PCVS did not go quietly. Although school staff members were silenced and threatened with disciplinary action from the school board if

they spoke negatively about the situation, the students were free to respond. They formed a group called Raiders in Action. A large group of them quickly – but thoughtfully and respectfully – mounted a loud, strategic campaign to save their school. Over the next two years, *Raiders in Action* worked creatively and tirelessly to keep the school off the closing list, ultimately without success. Some five years after the closure, fourteen of the activists agreed to be interviewed to talk about how this experience had influenced their lives.

Although the study had no intention of focusing on questions of mental health, half of the participants raised the issues of trauma experienced during the campaign against the closure.

Growth of Student Resistance

The Raiders’ approach to organizing, was humanistic and intensely, thoughtfully ethical. Student well-being was an issue. All of their meetings started with a “check-in”; a caring approach to see how members were coping. Their political activism was as much about protecting as protesting.

One of the organizers, Matthew, explained:

We made it part of our mandate . . . that the campaign was never based on throwing hate to someone else or throwing somebody else under the bus. If you notice, in all our quotes, we never say, ‘Close this school or close that school’ or ‘you should be fighting with them.’ It’s more us trying to promote the idea that there are alternatives.

Former PCVS student activist Collin Chepeka (2016) was adamant about the group’s priorities. Given that PCVS was “a safe space,” he said, “We just wanted to keep that going in any shape or form.”

As a part of their campaign, *Raiders in Action* organized walkouts. They formed a human chain stretching five city blocks from the school to downtown to demonstrate both their resolve and their support for local businesses (See *Figures 2 -4*). And on Hallowe'en they creatively marched again, suggesting downtown would be a ghost town without PCVS. (See *Figure 4*.) They protested blind-folded at a school-board meeting. They garnered support from well-known Canadian alumni such as singer Serena Ryder and comedian Sean Cullen. They raised \$52,000 for the *Spread the Net* charity (aimed at reducing malaria in Africa) and found a friend in its co-founder, comedian Rick Mercer (See *Figure 6*). They were sometimes strategically silent; duct-taping their mouths shut and scrawling teachers' names on the tape in bold letters to protest the board's decisions and stand in solidarity with their silenced teachers (See *Figures 7 – 8*). They engaged in protests at Queen's Park (the location of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario) that led to their plight being discussed in the legislature (See *Figures 9 – 10*). They were creatively, subversively strategic – when they had been silenced at a school board meeting of the trustees, they “took over” the camera (See *Figure 11*). But they were never violent.



Figures 2-4. Human chain protest down George St., Peterborough, Ont., Sept. 28, 2011. Photos by Scott Michael Walling.



Figure 5. Raiders in Action's Hallowe'en protest. Figure 5. Rick Mercer with students after PCVS won the Spread the Net Challenge on March 20, 2012. Photos by Scott Michael Walling.



Figures 7-8. Day of Silence in support of teaching staff, Nov. 6, 2011. Photo on the right was exhibited in the Spark Photographic Festival, 2013. Photos by Scott Michael Walling.



Figure – 9-10. Over three hundred call for stop to their school's closure at Queen's Park, Toronto, Dec. 5, 2011. Photos by Scott Michael Walling.



Figure 11. Raiders conquer the camera at KPR Board meeting, Feb. 23, 2012. Photo by Zan Bilz.

Rather, their approach echoed Freire's (1998) description of an "armed love – the fighting love of those convinced of the right and the duty to fight, to denounce, and to announce" (p. 42). Proud, power-filled, and heartfelt language fuelled their resistance against the school closure.

The Raiders in Action also experienced what could be called a hurting love – a critical kind of pain that was not at all acknowledged by the educational and media institutions that objectified and denied their experience. One of them, Mirka, spoke to this point:

If your arguments are coming from a place of passion or emotion like they were for PCVS, you're not going to be taken as seriously. And that's very frustrating. People assume that something can only be critically examined when they distance themselves from it, and while that's true to a certain extent, sometimes distance causes you to lose sight of the thing's value.

About four years after the school closure, an on-line newspaper article (Tuffin, 2016) similarly diminished the students' efforts. One of the former students, Collin, responded to the paper, citing the contradiction of how *Peterborough This Week* "relished" the amount of news material that the student campaign provided while disparaging the students' actions with its "invasive" coverage. For example, the paper featured "pictures of sobbing students" alongside articles emphasizing "how dramatic" the students had been. Collin criticized the paper's "assuming and invalidating" editorial, while revealing a personal, post-closure experience of being admitted to the adult psychiatric ward at Peterborough Regional Health Centre (PRHC) for attempted suicide. How would the paper "feel to know," Collin asked, "that I have repeatedly self-harmed; that I attribute the development of my severe mental illness with the year the school board treated its own students like cattle?"

Tuck and Yang (2011) explore the idea that “dangerous dignity is the powerful position that youth take up in response to and in anticipation of this ongoing humiliation and hypocrisy” (p. 521). It is also in part this “dangerous dignity” that gave the impetus to the Raiders to sustain and persevere in their fight to keep their school open – both in their internal organization and their public actions.

One former student, Evangeline observed that as the closure neared, the conversations became more focused on wellness:

Alright what are we going to do to keep each other safe when we have to go to new schools? . . . Those meetings were really important ... Everyone who was spearheading those meetings was really [by now], mentally unwell. . . . When you love something so much you can lose your mind.

Kirsten remembered, “I made myself completely approachable. I posted in all the student groups. Here’s my cellphone number or here’s my home number. You can call me anytime . . . and talk to me.” When she heard the other students’ stories she became aware of “how afraid they were for their future,” which, she said, “really pushed me in a way that I might not have been if I hadn’t listened.”

Trauma and Resistance

The interview with Evangeline revealed the depth of despair that circled around the resistance to the closure. The students, Evangeline said, looked at the issue straight on. “Mental health – I think it’s important to talk about.” If the school board was going to talk about “a successful transition,” Evangeline said, “it needs to look closely at how damaged people were because of

that decision . . . People are still struggling with addictions that they developed during that time. A lot.”

In response, fifty-eight local mental health professionals signed a letter to Ontario Premier Dalton McGuinty expressing concern for the impact of closing the downtown school on the number of youth from “lowest income areas, youth who have left home because of abuse ... and youth struggling with ... mental health disorders” (Peterborough Needs PCVS, 2013, p. 180).

Some of the student population had experienced trauma before arriving at PCVS, and the school and its inclusive community and strong relationships had helped them heal. During and after the closure, they were re-visited by grief and loss, and once again, were left feeling diminished, unheard, and undervalued. Evangeline related how high the “safe-place-to-learn” bar was set for disenfranchised youth, and how low the fall was when the school closed:

The PCVS closure made my friendships even more solid ... because we were all queer and we came from working-class backgrounds and from downtown. . . . School was already a little tough . . . but it felt really good to be at school.

Kirsten joked about the emotional sensitivity: “PCVS had a student body and teachers as well who had an interest in processing trauma. Long before the fight started.” With the school closing, all of that would be lost.

It was during the campaign to keep PCVS open that Jess N began to struggle: “This place that had been a home and family for me was just not a thing anymore. And again what about the kids like me? . . . I stepped back from *Raiders in Action* a lot in the second half of Grade 12 because I was feeling very depressed.” After the closure, attending a suburban school, Evangeline was unable “to cope with how othered and unimportant” she felt. “I went from being

a well-liked, involved, passionate, and spirited student to a depressed, exhausted, and uninterested one.”

“After PCVS,” Kirsten said, “I kind of fell apart.” She experienced a nine-month breakdown:

It was ridiculous and finally I started to repair physically and emotionally. I feel completely disenfranchised with government, too, and due process. Democracy doesn’t work right now the way that it is. It’s bullshit. I’ve organized very little since PCVS and I’m still processing a lot of that trauma.

Collin was also still dealing with emotional demons that have limited students’ ability to thrive in the years since the PCVS closure. “I think that was kind of beat over my head during that year – which was, you know there are better things to be doing with your time. Why aren’t you focusing on your studies?” The backlash of the experience, the difficulties of expressing emotions, the contradiction – “There is really no pessimism or optimism in me but I really think I miss optimism” – have been transferred to other parts of Collin’s life. “I feel a fundamental hesitation and real trouble about talking to people about what happened. And I think that just really stems from being told that our emotional experiences were invalid.”

Post-Resistance: Learning from Experience

All of the Raiders in Action participants used words such as “cynical,” “disheartened,” “angry,” “voiceless,” “depressed,” and “politically disenfranchised” to describe the feelings they experienced as the school’s closure neared, and as they realized they were not being listened to or valued by the local board’s trustees and senior administration or by the provincial

government. Yet 100 per cent of them would do it again (fight the closure) “in a heartbeat!” All of the participants were committed to the PCVS community.

Mirka lamented that while she was still trying “to be socially aware,” she was now having trouble acting on her political beliefs. “Maybe that cynicism I inherited from the PCVS process plays into it.” Still, she remained confident. In an admission both harsh and heart-breaking, she said: “I’ve realized it’s important to speak my mind about certain things.” The lesson she learned that just because a school like PCVS is something “special . . . unique and important, that isn’t enough to keep it safe.”

Mirka further applied a gender analysis to her point: She recognized the “very high importance” that the board placed “on rationality and objectivity.” For her, “PCVS represents the emotional, feminine point of view and the trustees represent the ‘objective,’ masculine point of view. She found herself wishing that “people understood that you can be passionate and critical about something at the same time. . . . I wish that the trustees would have recognized our youthful voices and our emotions and realized that we were saying something of value.”

Despite the experience, Matthew remained resilient, explaining instead how they “prevailed” against power:

We prevailed with love. It feels even reflective of the States today with Trump and this oppressive force. I mean patterns repeat themselves from the micros to the macros. . . . PCVS was like a micro; it was huge for me then, but now it’s like a micro that allowed me to see bigger things happening in the world . . . and big systems of oppression. . . . I feel that the PCVS . . . school closure made me realize how important it is to fight for what you believe in. And to fight for what you love. I think, oh right, that’s what I’m supposed

to do with my life, to continue fighting for things that I believe in. We haven't gotten to here without people doing that.

Alex and Jess A also concluded that many of the students came out of the experience with a willingness to speak their minds more freely and forcefully; Hermione initiated a multi-age ukulele community; Ginny committed herself to acting autonomously and without institutional group-think tactics. Collin and Matthew both mentioned their confidence and how they had acquired a certain know-how in organizing protests. Hart talked about the importance of the experience of raising money and social justice awareness for the *Spread the Net* campaign.

“Wicked Policy” Opportunity

The Ontario Ministry of Education's curriculum documents are filled with “accountability jargon,” limited to a measurable set of objective metrics. What is missing from this form of accountability are “relationships” – the basis of caring, communal communities. As Parker (2017) argues, Ontario needs “to recuperate what it means to be responsible for rather than accountable to one another” (p. 44). When we remove opportunities for relationships, communities suffer. Parker recommends that “instead of being a means to secure individual financial gain,” the classroom needs to become “a space for the discovery of our responsibility for the other.” It would become “a place of interaction and meaning-making that is rooted, not in the desire for economic wealth, but in the hope of meeting our responsibilities to listen to one another with humility” (p. 55).

The PCVS student campaign against the school closure represents not just a case of collective resistance to arbitrary power, but a refusal to ignore that relationships matter and are absolutely crucial to a healthy life. It is also about questions of power.

As Jean Baker Miller (1976) teaches, traditional theories of human development emphasize individualism and independence. Power is too often uncritically *used against* constituents, but can also be harnessed to produce change. However, change requires those with power, to remove the “unfreedoms that leave people with little choice and little opportunity of exercising their reasoned agency ... rather than [positioning them] as passive recipients of dispensed benefits” (Sen, 1999, xii-xiii). Miller’s Relational Cultural Theory (RCT) provides a framework for understanding how relationships matter and are a part of a healthy life. Human development from an RCT perspective is about interdependence, not independence. Relationships and relational opportunity and health are critically important in positioning people to be part of a healthy, engaged, and thriving community. The Raiders’ perspectives on organizing and self-teaching are reminders that the well-being and care for each person’s emotional safety are integral to meeting the needs of the whole student, as well as developing a sense of a communality and building a school community.

People for Education (2017) reports that rural schools in Ontario are disappearing due to government priorities and funding formulas. Cloaked in the rhetoric of democratic procedures, school boards or districts have used the tools of neoliberal policies to make decisions that have often devastated youth and their communities. Perhaps authorities have (incorrectly) assumed that those in rural communities would not resist; perhaps the distance – physical, relational, and

otherwise – has given those in power opportunities to minimize what is happening? School closures also shut down relationships.

But resilience is experienced interdependently within the context of communities. Since the 19th century, starting with the pushback of Indigenous students and parents against unjust educational directives (Paquette & Fallon, 2010; Battiste, 2000), unwanted educational policy has met with resistance (Barrett, 2015, p. 18; Corbett, 2001; Curtis, 1988).

Being voiceless and disenfranchised are the sequelae of a disconnection, according to the RCT framework. As Maureen Walker (2008) notes, “to engage in collaborative conflict is to relinquish any claim on the illusion of victory or power over another human being (p. 139). We need to experience, and learn how to work through conflict, and not be limited by one group needing to have power over another. We need to learn – as government organizations, educators, students and community members – that to “embrace alternative power is to relinquish any fantasies of happy endings” (p. 142). Students’ experiences of disconnection describe the fight for their authentic selves, and the withdrawal and pain as they experienced rejection of both their ideals and themselves.

The students at PCVS show us that “bone-deep participation doesn’t necessarily deliver a new policy, a new regime, a political victory;” however, it “might re/new an epistemology. Sometimes it can deliver a movement” (Tuck & Yang, 2014, p.14). The moment has come to remove the old ‘dominant/subordinate’ power relationships that have thrived in our institutions and communities for too long. We need to take seriously the idea that it is not only possible and responsible but also necessary to take steps towards a new relational culture; one that adopts a “relational view to policy-making”, respects human rights, takes a “relational

approach to decision-making and the implementation of power structures,” (McCauley, 2013, np) and ensures structural changes that can reflect positively on interpersonal relationships across organizations. The students at PCVS have shown courage, and could only hope that those in power would see them, hear them and respectfully include their views in the overall deliberations. That did not happen.

To shift away from this established pattern demands a break with “wicked” neoliberal policies and their top-down power structures. This shift demands education that builds a relational culture. Educators need support to develop communities of practice on school mental health around the notion of resiliency and promote social justice and equity in their pedagogies, curricula, and relationships with students and as advocates for students. Administrators must consider the structural and material factors that affect people’s ability to be resilient at school. Policy-makers, school board administrators, educators and students all need training grounded in a commitment to building and sustaining a relational culture. (Ott et al., 2017). Then, perhaps, in the foreseeable future young people will be able to engage as citizens who can actively challenge and change educational institutions to create more participatory, democratic processes in Ontario’s school system.

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