

DOUBLE ISSUE INCLUDES WORKING PAPER ON LITERACY AND ICT

LACMF

LITERACY ACROSS THE CURRICULUM MEDIA FOCUS

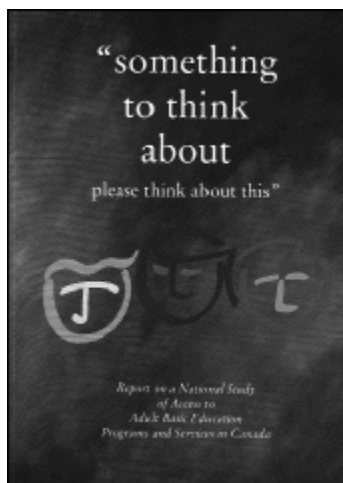
Connecting literacy, media and technology in the schools, community and workplace

Something to think about...

It will not surprise many in the field to learn that adult basic education students have limited access to programs in most parts of Canada. Although most of us know the problems in our own province, some of us continue to believe or hope that it is better elsewhere.

A recent national study on access to ABE entitled *Something to think about: please think about this* puts those hopes to rest.

According to research carried out by Susan Hoddinott and a team of teacher and social policy researchers, provision across this country is almost uniformly dismal. And if it is better in one place or another, it is almost impossible to find out since the data on funding cannot be any more easily accessed than the ABE programs. [See Box, p. 2.]



Hoddinott's team used a research design that focused on the local level of practice where they believe social policy can be best understood. There is a detailed description of the model in one chapter. They felt that the kind of information they were seeking could not be gathered in a single snapshot interview, but needed extended time, and that critical reflection had to be built into the process. They finally settled on four local sites in different provinces which remain unnamed. Teachers and students worked together on questions, journals, and probing reflections over a semester. There is no fingerpointing at any province, but in the end, regardless of the levels of support, a generalized picture of limited access emerges across the country.

Fooling ourselves

This is not to say that there are not exemplary programs scattered everywhere. However, if we were to look systematically at all the programs that have been highlighted in the past decade in books or articles, we would find that very few of them still exist. Yet having them documented in print, we create the impression that this country is a model of good provision.

Two personal experiences speak volumes. At a workplace education conference in the UK last month, a participant asked me about a Canadian workplace literacy program that was written up widely in the first part of the 1990s. (I also heard it referred to in the present tense at a Conference Board of Canada conference two years ago.) But that program died two years after it began. The company

that ran it will not even discuss it today. The power of print, even six years later, creates the impression that this is an ongoing program with sustained company support.

INSIDE

(Mis) Trusting teachers: A return to Hard Times?

.....4

TO PONDER

.....7

Technology and basic skills in the

workplace.....8

Networking in the UK.....11

IN THE CLASSROOM: Health & Literacy

.....13

REVIEWS

Something to think about:.....15

PULL-OUT INSERT

WORKING PAPERS ON LITERACY

Literacy and ICT

REVIEWS

Family Literacy in Canada17

A Community-Based Approach to Literacy Programs18

Learning for our Health19

Empowerment Health Education in Adult Literacy.....20

LOCAL NEWS21

CONFERENCES.....23

Readings on new technologies and media26

ANNOUNCEMENTS28

HAPPENING AT THE CENTRE 29

AVAILABLE AT THE CENTRE 31