

As if the above situation were not sufficiently lacking in cohesion, it should be added that many of the school districts which consider themselves most progressive permit the local school and even the individual teacher still further discretion in selecting curricula.

In all fairness, it is necessary to add a word about the resulting quality of American schools. It will be obvious that there is greater variation in quality than one would expect to find in the more regulated system in the Canadian provinces. The best schools are very good indeed, and the worst schools tend to fall below the standard of the lowest quality found in Canada. However, it is my opinion that the Canadian myth that American schools are generally inferior to Canadian schools is nothing more than a myth. I believe that the average quality of American schools is higher than the average quality of Canadian schools, if only because of the much higher teacher qualifications in most states. This observation is endorsed by Canadians I consulted, who compared the schooling their children were receiving in a below-average American system with the same children's earlier schooling in a Canadian school system of good reputation. The general opinion was that the American schools were well ahead in their teaching of mathematics, science, music and (of all things) French. True, there were some reservations about the teaching of English literature and composition but, in fairness, the same could be said about many Canadian classes. Every expatriate Canadian I consulted believed that, in general, the standards in this American system were much higher than those in Canada.

While the foregoing is not meant to be conclusive proof, it is hoped that it will at least tend to temper this myth of the generally superior quality of Canadian schools -- a myth which probably originated as a defensive reaction arising out of our remarkable national inferiority complex.