

**DANCING THE RICE:
ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IS THE COMMUNITY
RECLAIMING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL VALUES**

**"MNOOMINI-GAAWIN: NISHINAABE GIMMAAWIN NA DANIDAAPINAAWAA
NISHINAABE OODENOO"**

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I give thanks to the Grandfathers and Grandmothers for my beloved mother Elizabeth Crowe who began her journey to their land on December 25, 1993. Her faith, encouragement and support has become *"the wind beneath my wings"*. It is to her love of family and community that this thesis is dedicated.

ABSTRACT

DANCING THE RICE: ABORIGINAL SELF-GOVERNMENT IS THE COMMUNITY RECLAIMING TRADITIONAL CULTURAL VALUES

***MNOOMINI-GAAWIN: NISHINAABE GIMAAWIN NA**

DANI-DAAPINAAWAA NISHINAABE OODENOO*

Art Beaver

The objective of this thesis is to examine the transition of a culturally integrated traditional Ojibwa community in southeastern Ontario, through a period of cultural disintegration and partial assimilation, into the contemporary Ojibwa First Nation of Alderville, characterized by a resurgence of cultural values which form the basis for its pursuit of self-government.

The researcher is a Native person from Alderville who has employed a questionnaire and interviews to draw out the ideas of fellow community members, comparing and contrasting these with the theories and memory expressed in the historical record. Although the administration of the questionnaire proved problematic, the qualitative comments by respondents shaped the interview questions.

The idea of self-government has not been adequately defined in the literature and remains fundamentally a theoretical or value notion. This case study moves the discussion of self-government forward. What emerged from the research was a clear sense that the community had begun a process of retraditionalization, substantiating a claim that cultural revitalization promotes the articulation of Aboriginal self-governance.

Introduction

The Ojibwa community of Alderville has a historical connection to the Methodist Missionary Society beginning in the early 1800's. The community was founded at its present day site in the township of Alnwick, county of Northumberland in 1837 following a move from the Grape Island Mission in the Bay of Quinte near Kingston, Ontario. Alderville is situated on approximately 3,000 acres located about 120 km east of Toronto and 35 km north of Cobourg on the south shore of Rice Lake.

Grape Island was a traditional fishery for the Mississauga Ojibwa and for the missionaries it was the logical place to establish a mission. However, a traditional fishery site was generally occupied for a short duration in the spring and summer and with the approach of winter the families moved inland to their traditional hunting areas. Since the Ojibwa traditional economy was characterized by seasonal migration, the missionaries had to encourage them to settle into a more sedentary way of life and to pursue agriculture rather than hunting and fishing. If the missionaries were to succeed in their proselytization efforts, it was necessary to have the Ojibwa settle in one place. The Christian Guardian indicates that because the island was about 6 acres, it was necessary to pasture the cattle on nearby Big Island and to go by canoe twice a day to do the milking. The area around Kingston began to experience an influx of United Empire Loyalists who took up most of the available agricultural land. As there was no land available in the immediate area and the Methodists were concerned about the Indians being exposed to alcohol and other unacceptable behaviour from the white settlers, the

missionaries actively pursued a land grant from Upper Canada and moved the mission to Alnwick township.

Despite the connection to Methodism (now the United Church of Canada) through the conversion of their ancestors to Christianity, the present day young people have made a concerted effort to revitalize the traditional culture of the Anishinabe. Revitalization of culture is not an easy task. There are thoughts among some community members that the traditional culture has been lost. But, if a tradition can be remembered after generations of being "lost," then it was not lost. It was merely silenced.

The history of Alderville has generally been narrated through the Methodist Missionary records. There is no intent to contradict the fact that the Methodists were successful in achieving some Christian conversions. However, the historical record should not glorify their efforts as being the model of measuring missionary proselytization among the Mississauga Ojibwa. Such measure discounts the vitality of the traditional culture, thereby continuing the notion that it is evil and a pagan belief system.

The political relationship between the people of Alderville and the dominant society is characterized by a series of cultural and political transactions, not all-or-nothing conversions or resistances. The Mississauga Ojibwa of Alderville lived and acted between cultures, formulating a series of reactionary decisions in the attempt to alleviate the pressures of the moment; dispossession, hunger, disease. In the process, the people were forbidden to speak their language and practise their traditional ways, that eventually weakened what had once been a strong cultural identity.

The period of 1826 to 1867 was an enforced cultural revolution conducted by the

missionaries in an attempt to develop acceptable Christian conditions. Native culture was discarded as habits and artifacts were devalued and deemed pagan. The traditional social order that had been based on hunting and gathering no longer held cultural support and the community entered into a cultural silence, somewhat like the dark ages that descended over Europe.

Following Confederation, the policy of assimilation practised by the British Colonial Government continued unabated with efforts to make the Indians give up their traditional economy. Christianization was viewed as having the same goal, therefore, the government continued with the efforts that the Methodist missionaries had set in motion.

The period in history following the move to Alderville is distinguished by missionary activity and their desire to promote the new site as a model community that glorified their efforts of Christianization. Traditional Anishinabe cultural values had been passed from generation to generation orally and it was the orators who were the highly respected historians. History, values and other aspects of education were woven into the elders' teachings. Tradition was interrupted by the European method of teaching which forbade the young people from speaking the language. The Manual Labour School was an effort to further disconnect the young people from the elders. More boys than girls were sent away to schools and were "patriarchally dominated," consequently, there is scant historical record or reference to the role and activities of the women from the community. The *Indian Act* promoted men as leaders and decision makers. Furthermore, this promotion of men was perpetuated by the conversion to Christianity that systemically subjugated women.

Once the generation connection was disrupted through religious conversion and an alien education system, the young people lost their values, cut off from elders and traditional teachers. The English system of education failed to capture the people's vision and commitment, all of which created a situation where the people felt they had no alternative but to set their own direction. The turn of the century marked the move toward a wage labour economy and the move from agricultural civilization efforts of the missionary.

The 1969 White Paper brought about a Native Cultural Renaissance. It marked the period when the silence was broken and when a renewed desire to develop a cultural identity would begin. For the next decade and a half, the Chiefs and Councils strived to bring about economic and social stability within the community. But the young people continued their restlessness as the convictions of the American Indian Movement and "Red Power" became a part of their developing political outlook. For the young women, they remained bound to wage labour as housekeepers, domestic cleaners and paper hangers and painters in the private homes of individuals. They grew discontented with this type of menial work.

When the Department of Indian Affairs began to actively promote economic development on reserves, the women approached Chief and Council and demanded economic development programs that would provide training and employment for women. They chose to recreate the traditional craft work of the Mississauga Ojibwa. This choice was not new for the women of Alderville, correspondence in the records makes reference to the women returning to their "traditional pursuit of basket weaving" during the 1860's.

As the women expanded their knowledge of the traditional design through the teachings of traditional elder women from nearby reserves, they began to practise the women's traditional ceremonies. Through the traditional teachings the women experienced a sense of empowerment that culminated in the community electing their first woman chief in 1987. Ojibwa prophesies relating to women such as that referred to by Marge Beaver, an elder woman from Alderville, say "that the women would be the one..start to revive our culture."¹

A number of young women were appointed to key positions in the band administration. Positions in education, social services, health, and economic development are often described as having a nurturing aspect and as the traditional role of women is described as being the nurturers of the society, it is not surprising the community began to experience community development. The White Paper was responsible for spawning a sense of self-determination which developed into the notion of self-government. As the idea of self-government began to develop, Alderville entered the negotiations with the United Indian Councils.

The community held a series of discussions and workshops on the topic of self-government. There did not seem to be a clear consensus about what self-government was to achieve. Although, Wayne Beaver has some notion of what self-government has to address:

Self-government has to be on our terms; we have to be able to see it as something that is going to have a pragmatic effect on the future of our people. Not some idealistic thing that you talk about. It has to address real problems. It has

¹Marge Beaver, Personal Interview, May 3. 1996.

address...all the social problems...We have to find a answer to it [self-government].²

When I was a member of the self-government committee, we become aware that the community was questioning their cultural identity and were looking to the past to try to make sense about how self-government would help the community overcome its concerns about social dysfunction. It became apparent that the community was discussing how to achieve self-determination and how to reconstruct the cultural values that once functioned as agents of social order. During an election debate among the contestants for the position of Chief, Wayne Beaver recalls a statement made by one contestant: "Karen's brother, when he was running for Chief, he didn't make it, but when somebody asked him what self-government was he said, self-determination".³

Following the failure of the constitutional talks to entrench the inherent right to self-government, the notion of self-determination did not cease. What emerged from the community's discussions was that self-government was the process of the community reclaiming its traditional cultural values. The people wanted a participatory-consensual form of decision-making that reflected a spiritual element in the governing elements. They wanted Chief and Council to be accountable to the people as they had been in the traditional period rather than to Indian and Northern Affairs as dictated by the federal government.

²Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

³Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

Methodology

As the Alderville First Nation began to examine self-government, there was uncertainty as to what self-governance entailed and how it was perceived. The questions were: what is self-governance? And how did the community govern itself traditionally?

To determine what self-governance might mean, a survey of existing literature and review of political theories as to how Aboriginal self-government was being perceived was undertaken and to develop an understanding of how the community governed itself, an examination of historical sources, national archives, and the Department of Indian Affairs Record Group 10 Papers was conducted.

It was decided that in order to confirm the findings in the historical sources a case study would be undertaken. An introductory questionnaire was administered and followed by structured interviews with selected individuals from the community. Individuals were selected by their having experience in community politics, on the basis of being considered an elder, community social involvement, and if they were aware of culture.

There was difficulty experienced when I began to administer the questionnaire. When asked to answer the questions, a woman responded, "not another f__king questionnaire!" This was the third questionnaire that was being administered within a two month period which resulted in the N being small. The responses can be found in Chapter 3. The interviews were analyzed and integrated into the introduction and the body of the thesis particularly in the section What the Voices Say. There is no anonymity maintained since it is a small community and individuals were selected on the basis of

their experience. The raw data of the original transcripts are found in the appendix so the reader can see the full discussions of the community members.

This study is different. I am a member of the community and the questions have emerged from the community and are answered by the community. My voice will not be hidden as I engage community members and question the sources. As a member of the Self-Government Committee, I was in the community as they identified the problem and participated with them in the search of a solution.

Chapter 1

Self-Government: Issues and Ideas

A survey of the academic literature that relates to Aboriginal governance concludes that there are virtually no comprehensive studies of how Aboriginal society, particularly Ojibwa society, develops a view of governance. There is an abundance of literature which discusses the topic of self-government and presents the views held by the Aboriginal leadership and academics who attempt to define Aboriginal self-government and to explain how it will or should co-exist within the Canadian state.

This thesis will examine the transition of a culturally integrated traditional Ojibwa community through a period of cultural disintegration and partial assimilation into a relatively recent phase in which the resurgence of traditional cultural values form the basis for the pursuit of self-government within the contemporary Ojibwa First Nation community of Alderville. The Alderville First Nation is currently examining self-governance for the community; however, there is uncertainty as to what self-governance entails and how it is perceived. Also, there is uncertainty about how the community traditionally governed itself. This study will show that the community, in its shift toward Aboriginal self-government, is experiencing a retraditionalization process which adapts traditional cultural values in an effort to validate them for application to a contemporary concept of Aboriginal governance.

The process of retraditionalization, at the Alderville First Nation, gained momentum following an empowerment movement established by some of the young

Aboriginal women of the community who wanted the chief and council to initiate economic development programs. In order to facilitate initiatives, they established a Native Craft Co-operative to market locally produced crafts. As part of their marketing strategy, they decided that the crafts had to reflect "traditional" Ojibwa designs; therefore, in order to maintain this decision, the women held workshops that concentrated on traditional cultural teachings which inform the basis of traditional design. As their cultural awareness developed, the women initiated the women's full moon ceremony, which helped them look into the past to rediscover the elements of culture that were left behind. At the same time, the ceremony became a process of "self-identification" for them as Native women. Consequently, self-identification became the motivating force behind the empowerment that prompted the women to become active in community politics, eventually resulting in the election of the first women chief in 1987.

Nora Bothwell, a former Chief, expressed this thought about women's empowerment:

I think one of the main strengths of the community is the women. And I'm not saying that because I'm a woman. In our community you know there has been a revitalization [of] the cultural values and it is the women that have encouraged and brought those back and are incorporating that into the daily lives of their children. That was the whole purpose of the daycare; to try and bring that element...the four gifts that the Creator gave us.¹

The ancestors of the Alderville First Nation were not always located in this present place. In 1837, the community was moved from Grape Island in the Bay of Quinte, to Alnwick Township. The water surrounding Grape Island was the site of a

¹Nora Bothwell, Taped Interview, Apr. 1996.

critical spring and fall fishery that was part of the community's traditional economy, as such, the island was seen by the Methodist missionaries as a place to initiate Christian conversion of the Mississauga Indians. To accomplish the goals of converting members of a hunting and gathering society to Christianity, it was necessary to change their traditional economy and to persuade them to settle in a permanent location and to pursue "civilized" economies. To this end, Grape Island was chosen as the site to establish an agricultural mission. Through conversion to Christianity by the Church and through assimilation practices by both the Church and the government, the traditional society of the Grape Island Mississaugas was disrupted: "The Indian was to exchange the bow and arrow for the carpenter's bench, the war-club for the blacksmith's hammer, the net and canoe for the plough."² A letter dated January 12, 1830, written by J.B. Benham to the Methodist publication Christian Guardian, suggests that Grape Island was a traditional fishery for the Mississauga Ojibwa: "the fish at times throng around the island and when they [the Mississaugas] need meat they seldom go out for a few days but they return with good fat deer".³ Since areas of traditional fishing were often summer gathering places, it is logical that Grape Island was the obvious choice of the Methodist missionaries to establish a mission site.

Through the Christian Guardian reports on the conversion efforts and strategies of the missionaries at Grape Island, there is the indication that conversion focused on

²Peter S. Schmalz, The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario, (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991) 185.

³Benham, J.B. Letter. The Christian Guardian 30 January 1830: 83.

Christian instruction, the establishment of fixed housing and agricultural training with emphasis on the children. In 1837, the mission required further agricultural lands and moved to Alnwick township which was outside the Band's traditional economic area. Christian missionization was never a total success. In 1830, the Guardian commented that the Ojibwa were still like newly hatched quail running around with the shells on their heads. The reference suggests that while the new converts were being submitted to a new social, economic and spiritual environment, parts of the traditional culture were still carried. To expedite assimilation and control of Indian communities and federal government passed the *Indian Act*.

Government legislation, through the *Indian Act*, instituted a band electoral system that imposed a set of liberal-democratic political institutions on the Indian people which has worked against traditional political participatory democratic forms and creates a dilemma for them as they now attempt to use self-government as a vehicle for community development.

The observations of phenomena of retraditionalization in this community begins with the assumption that this Native community, which has the appearance of an assimilated community, would be content with constituting a western style of government; but, the analysis of an initial questionnaire, relating to Aboriginal self-government, revealed that there was a desire to constitute a blending of western and traditional forms of government (see appendix A for questionnaire). Furthermore, the community began to look into the past to find out what the Ojibwa cultural practices were. As a member of the United Indian Councils, Alderville endorsed the self-government negotiations sub-

agreement which relates to socio-cultural matters and states:

whereas the First Nations of the United Indian Councils: i) consider the preservation of their customary practices with respect to family, spirituality and way of life to be an inherent aboriginal right; ii) aspire to develop their indigenous language, culture, history and traditions in order to reinforce their distinct status and identity as a people; and, iii) view their cultural survival as a fundamental goal of Indian self-government.

The debate in the community has shifted from Indian self-government toward the conceptualization of Aboriginal self-political governance in an effort to ensure that the constitution of Aboriginal government will reflect cultural values.

Native women were especially disempowered by the *Indian Act*. But, the efforts of the Native women, in Alderville, to develop cultural awareness has resulted in their political empowerment and, through an examination of their efforts, it becomes possible to develop a conceptual understanding of the recent aspirations in this Aboriginal society. There is a developing sense of need for Aboriginal governance as a reference point to cope with the complexity, dynamics and diversity of the contemporary Aboriginal community as they negotiate with the federal and provincial governments to establish self-determination. Self-determination has become a uniting ideology for Aboriginal people in Canada.

The *Indian Act* not only instituted an electoral system that was a foreign method of identifying leaders, it legitimized foreign policy development and enforcement ideas. In "*Traditional Indian Government: Of the People, by the People, for the People,*" Marie Smallface Marule charges the Canadian government with disrupting Aboriginal society by enforcing policies that are formulated upon individualism and materialism both of which have induced the formation of an élitist class within First Nations. These elites

attempt to manipulate band affairs to promote their self-interests. Policies have undermined the traditional Aboriginal consensual political system, the kinship system, the communal ownership system and the collective economic system. She suggests that these policies continue to hinder Aboriginal communities in their efforts to revitalize traditional cultural values. Marule contends that "the coercive imposition by the Canadian government of an elected form of government on Indians is in direct conflict with traditional forms of government."⁴ However, she points out that Indians have not:

fully accepted the Canadian model of political, economic, and social administration and management...[there is] still a chance to shape [Aboriginal] institutions so they will conform to traditional philosophies and ideologies and to adapt these to contemporary times so they will be as useful as they were previously.⁵

Because they have not fully accepted the Canadian model, Aboriginal people are looking to the past to retrieve cultural values and adapting them to the contemporary reality. In particular, it has been the young women of the community who looked to the past to retrieve cultural values as part of their ceremonial rituals.

From the analysis of the initial/exploratory questionnaire, it appears that the community of Alderville has not completely accepted the *Indian Act* model as there is an expressed desire to constitute a blend of a western style government with a traditional style. Nora Bothwell responded to the notion of the councils using a culturally based system:

⁴Marie Smallface Marule, "Traditional Indian Government: Of the People, by the People, for the People," Pathways to Self-Determination, ed. Leroy Little Bear, Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984) 36.

⁵Marule 44.

I think that would be ideal but being on many Boards and Tribal Councils and things that I've been involved in, I don't think that's realistically okay. I remember in my leadership I tried as much as possible...but it's not always possible.⁶

Wayne Beaver expressed the thought of blended style of government:

Well, it's my own personal feeling, I'm not sure that we can go back to a system that we've had a hundred years ago. Not that it was a bad system, it worked, but if you have, let's say, a hereditary chief system - that would be almost impossible to start up now - it worked because young men knew that they were going to be Chief and were groomed for it; they knew that they would, eventually, be leaders and they were taught and groomed for leadership. That's one aspect of it. The other is that we were a different people; that's when there was no European influence and our people placed great emphasis on spirituality. Much greater emphasis than is placed today. Although, there is a renaissance that is recognized by, most, Indian people - that we are going through a renaissance period right now but we're still in the developing stage, at this point. So, it worked in the old days because our people were following a totally different way of life without the European influence. European influence has sort of flew in the face of our traditions...Consensus as a decision-making process? Much to my surprise, I found out that it does work...with Elders anyway...Elders aren't the government. They're not elected...[they're] older and, hopefully, a little bit wiser [and] learn to compromise in life for the common good...So, it does work.⁷

Menno Boldt, in "*Surviving as Indians: The Challenge of Self-Government*," states, "Indian communities have before them a complex challenge: that is to choose the philosophies and structures under which they will live and govern themselves."⁸ He discusses Indian self-government by evaluating some of the themes of self-government such as sovereignty, strategies, authority structures, communalism, individual rights, and indigenous constitutions.

⁶Nora Bothwell, Taped Interview, Apr. 1996.

⁷Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

⁸Menno Boldt, Surviving as Indians: The Challenge of Self-Government, (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993) 132.

The United Indian Councils sub-agreement No. 13, relating to socio-cultural matters, is a philosophical statement which will help to shape the structures under which the community will govern themselves. A Vision Statement developed by the Alderville community reflects the philosophical content of the sub-agreement.

Boldt's (1993) discussion of Indian self-government suggests that from the time Aboriginal leaders began to negotiate the inherent right of self-government, they have been reluctant to articulate the operational features of self-government as to jurisdiction, functions, and structures. Likewise, Sally Weaver indicates, in "*Indian Government: A Concept in Need of a Definition*," that "the notion of Indian government at the moment remains essentially at the level of a 'value notion.' It is as yet an unarticulated, vaguely conceptualized ideology or philosophy."⁹ Hence there is a tendency to generalize in terms of sovereignty, retention of culture, land claims and so on. However, this tendency would seem to indicate that there is an attempt to establish a connection to cultural values and philosophies to reconstruct an Aboriginal reality that has a sense of social order.

Boldt presents a strong position that First Nations citizens need to revitalize traditional philosophies and principles to develop a clear direction and consensus about who they want to be, culturally. It was the cultural values which functioned as agencies of social order within the communities and the *Indian Act* is, in part, responsible for cultural erosion that has resulted in a breakdown of the social order. To regain some

⁹Sally Weaver, "Indian Government: A Concept in Need of a Definition," Pathways to Self-Determination, ed. Leroy Little Bear, Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984) 65.

degree of social order, Aboriginal people will have to revitalize their traditional culture by focusing on the adaption and development of traditional cultural norms such as communalism, kinship, sharing, mutual aid, equality, and decision by consensus. The challenge begins with developing a concept of governance that is founded on Ojibwa cultural values.

There is a cultural reality being developed by the community that is based on traditional Anishinabe cultural values despite the difficulty in authenticating these concepts as being true reflections of the traditional values that were once held by this community. There is a growing belief in the Alderville community that an Aboriginal reality exists. The women's desire to express traditional cultural values in their craft work indicates the attempt to develop concepts based on past knowledge. Since the development process constructs an Aboriginal reality based on reconstructed knowledge, presented by Anishinabe teachers who are deemed to possess traditional knowledge, a question of legitimation might occur. It is possible to legitimate the knowledge using the oral and documented histories.

However, there may be little relevance in doing so. Whether the traditional values, identified by the Alderville community are reconstructed Anishinabe values or are appropriations from other Aboriginal cultures (pan-Indianism) is of little significance. What is significant, is that the people believe there is a relevance between the traditional and the contemporary periods that validates the retraditionalization process taking place in the community. It is through the retraditionalization process that the people begin to develop a concept of Aboriginal governance.

With reference to a statement by Eric Hobsbawm in "*The Invention of Tradition*," it is possible that the cultural values considered relevant to contemporary Alderville may be seen as "a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past."¹⁰

The vital challenge facing the band council will be to create a participatory democracy that is based on cultural values. Ultimately, it will be the members of Aboriginal communities who will have to reach a decision on the form of government they wish to constitute. They will be called on to interpret traditional forms of government and to envision a contemporary application to determine what are the desirable aspects of government and those aspects that are unacceptable within cultural norms. At the Alderville First Nation, the community will assume the responsibility of ensuring that any form of government will take into consideration their Vision Statement as expressed on April 26, 1995:

Our Vision...Our Future. The Alderville First Nation community is committed to the continued nurturing of a unified, balanced way of life through traditional Anishnabek values. This vision will be realized through the development and enhancement of the economic, social, health, and environmental resources of our community.¹¹

The Alderville Vision Statement supports the idea that self-government is a process of

¹⁰Eric Hobsbawm, ed., The Invention of Tradition (Cambridge: UP Cambridge, 1983) 1.

¹¹The vision statement was outlined in the April 1995 newsletter of the Alderville First Nation.

cultural retraditionalization for the community.

Frank Cassidy produced an article "*Aboriginal Governments in Canada: An Emerging Field of Study*" in which he "attempts to bring together many of the diverse strands which should be joined if Canadians - Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal - are to understand Aboriginal government as a comprehensive and developing phenomenon."¹² He suggests that, to undertake the study of Aboriginal governments, Aboriginal people must be clearly involved in the discussions. Cassidy's position suggests that the community has to involve its members to articulate its vision of self-government.

At the Alderville First Nation, the Chief and Council endorsed the formation of the United Indian Council, a self-government negotiating body of which it is a member. The mandate of the UIC was to develop community awareness of self-government. To assist in carrying out the UIC mandate, community consultation workers were employed to establish self-government committees in the community that involved members of the community in the self-government discussions; however, by the fall of 1994 the budget for the consultation workers salaries was depleted.

Cassidy offers a conceptual framework for understanding the character and form of Aboriginal self-government which recognizes a dominant theme:

this theme is that aboriginal governments are first and foremost created and re-created by aboriginal people themselves. Aboriginal governments cannot be understood primarily as "creatures" of federal policies and programmes; nor can they be projected as achievements of constitutional reform. To the contrary, if aboriginal governments are to be understood, they can be understood most usefully as products of aboriginal peoples living and working to form the political

¹²Frank Cassidy, "Aboriginal Governments in Canada: An Emerging Field of Study," Canadian Journal of Political Science 23.1 (1990): 73.

structures they require to meet the challenges...for aboriginal peoples, the 'self' in self-government means much more than delivering programmes and administering policies...It means defining through the practice of government, how aboriginal governments can be used to come to terms with important problems and objectives in aboriginal communities.¹³

He says that self-government is the effort of Aboriginal people to gain control of their own affairs in their own ways and that it can take many forms. There are varying arguments which he points to regarding the establishment of self-government, one of which is that self-government can only happen once full constitutional reform recognizes the inherent right of Aboriginal self-government. On the other hand there is the feeling that self-government can occur within the present constitutional structure, that "it can be a matter of degree and not just a fundamental state of being."¹⁴ Cassidy points out that another view maintains that self-government is an existing reality and that it is emerging as Aboriginal people continue to exercise that reality; however, this reality has yet to be fully recognized in the Canadian constitutional order. It appears that the reality is based on the "self" in relation to the community and the connection to a developing concept of governance.

Cassidy's conceptual framework revolves around three points: 1) Aboriginal communities and their governments, 2) the components of governance and 3) the policy environment with each having a set of focus interests. First, a focus on Aboriginal communities should deal with five areas of interest: social and cultural trends, economic development, the land question, history and tradition, and the political decision-making

¹³Cassidy 84-85.

¹⁴Cassidy 85.

patterns in the communities. Cassidy emphasizes that "these areas of interest strongly influence the shape of aboriginal governments. They produce many of the critical issues and challenges facing governments. They determine, to a significant extent, what political decisions have to be made and by whom."¹⁵

A focus on governance itself: the structural forms of Aboriginal self-government, policy-making and administration, service and program development and delivery, the financial basis and responsibility that includes accountability patterns. These determine where governments will be formed and how they will be organized and financed. It will "point to the fact that aboriginal governments, like all governments, are created to meet people's needs by providing public goods...how people can maintain control over their governments."¹⁶

Cassidy feels that the third focus involves the wider policy environment of Aboriginal self-governments:

here such matters as citizenship and aboriginal rights issues, the legal/constitutional basis of aboriginal governments, intergovernmental relations and aboriginal government as an international phenomenon predominate. These themes relate to larger contextual matters, including the nature of aboriginal citizenship and rights in the Canadian political order, the legal/constitutional setting for aboriginal governments in the Canadian federal system, the relations of aboriginal governments with other governments, be they federal, provincial, or municipal, and the international dimensions of the efforts of indigenous peoples to confront and live with modern nation-states.¹⁷

This presents the idea of what where Aboriginal self-government will exist its relationship

¹⁵Cassidy 86.

¹⁶Cassidy 86.

¹⁷Cassidy 86.

to the Canadian state and the concept that Aboriginal self-government will form a third order of government with specific jurisdiction.

It is important to keep in mind the diversity which exists among Aboriginal communities. It is for this reason that the focus of this study centres on the Ojibwa society of a particular First Nation whose intellectuals are the women of the community. This diversity will become more evident as the movement toward Aboriginal self-government becomes more prominent. It will become more apparent when Aboriginal people begin to express themselves politically and culturally about who they are and who they want to be: "Such diversity does not yield easy generalization and generalization is one of the building blocks in any field of study. Nevertheless, diversity and respect for diversity are at the core of aboriginal self-government."¹⁸ Cassidy is adamant that self-government cannot be imposed. It has to be asserted and nurtured by those who will govern themselves and that it will reflect appropriate cultural values.

While diversity exists among Aboriginal communities, the leaders are emphatic about Aboriginal society being a distinct society with inherent sovereignty. From a cultural perspective, there appears to be little or no opposing viewpoint, and Aboriginal people are beginning to revitalize traditional cultural values and philosophies. Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long co-authored an article, "*Tribal Traditions and European-Western Political Ideologies: The Dilemma of Canada's Native Indians*" in which they address the question of how the European-western idea of sovereignty fits into traditional tribal Indian customs, values, institutions and social organizations. Boldt and

¹⁸Cassidy 99.

Long begin their article with the following observation:

In their quest for political and cultural self-determination, Indian leaders in Canada have adopted the concept of sovereignty as the cornerstone of their aspirations. They have advanced claims to inherent sovereignty in order to establish the legal, moral, and political authority that will allow them to nurture and develop their traditional tribal customs, values, institutions, and social organization. The concept of sovereignty represents for the current generation of Indian leaders a means to an end rather than an end in itself.¹⁹

In their article they explore the implications and pitfalls of sovereignty for traditional Indian customs, values, and institutions. As well, they propose other means of securing political and cultural self-determination and expand on a comment made by James Youngblood Henderson that "sovereignty, for Indians, is an emotional not an intellectual concept."²⁰ This comment would seem to support Sally Weaver's statement that the idea of Indian Government has not been fully articulated but, remains as a "value notion".

To move beyond the value notion, a case study of self-government being a process of cultural retraditionalization for the Alderville First Nation will substantiate the claim that the revitalization of traditional cultural values promotes the articulation of Aboriginal self-government. Through a case study, the reference to an "emotional concept" and to why the idea "remains as a value notion" ought to suggest that there is a possibility of a conflict in comprehension between the Aboriginal leaders and non-Aboriginal people in terms of the terminology used to express the political objectives of self-government.

¹⁹Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long, "Tribal Traditions and European-Western Political Ideologies: The Dilemma of Canada's Native Indians," The Quest for Justice, ed. Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1985) 333.

²⁰Boldt and Long 334.

What is the a connection between the idea of political and cultural self-determination and the concept of sovereignty? And how does the European-western idea of "sovereignty" fit into traditional tribal Indian customs, values, institutions, and social organizations?

Boldt and Long "contend that it implies more than a linguistic or semantic analysis; it goes to the very heart of Indian culture"²¹ and that "the concept of 'authority' is critical to any analysis of how the European-western doctrine of sovereignty can function in the context of indigenous North American forms of the 'band,' 'tribe,' or 'nation.'"²² A more thorough analysis and extensive research to construct Aboriginal political thought is beyond the scope of this thesis. But it is important to clarify the need for First Nation leaders to be concise in the articulation of their political objectives and for them to know that limits in western liberal-democratic thought can generate a different view.

Boldt and Long maintain that the Aboriginal leaders use the term "sovereignty" to express their objection to the intrusion of outside authority and power into their social and political structures and jurisdiction. The term, sovereignty, is used as a strategy to block intrusions into their society and results in a disregard for the manner in which this orders internal authority and power relationships:

Indian leaders have ignored the latent peril that the idea of sovereignty may hold for their traditional tribal customs, values, institutions, and social organizations. If they are going to advocate sovereignty as the foundation of their contemporary and future goals, they must consider its implications for the central values of their tribal traditions--the very values they seek to protect. These values will not be

²¹Boldt and Long 333.

²²Boldt and Long 335.

preserved if the concept of sovereignty is inconsistent with their cultural legacy.²³ They continue with the analysis of how the idea of sovereignty functions within the Aboriginal concept of 'First Nation,' 'band,' or 'tribe' by evaluating the term in the framework of some of the fundamental concepts of European-western doctrines of sovereignty that refer to authority, hierarchy, and a ruling entity and the notions of statehood and territoriality.

Boldt and Long point out that the French philosopher Jean Bodin (1530-96) and the English philosopher and Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679) wrote of sovereignty as being equal to absolute and constant authority that originated from either God or the people: but for the philosophers John Locke (1632-1704) and Jean-Jacques Rousseau (1712-78), sovereignty came about from the absolute authority that resulted from the voluntary agreement of independent wills that delegated authority to the government. What is common to both positions is the principle of authority defined as the supreme, absolute and inherent power of the ruling entity to make decisions and to enforce them. What is closely associated with the principle of authority is the idea of a hierarchy of power relationships--a hierarchy of authority relationships cloaked in traditional European doctrines of sovereignty, which implies a ruling entity.

The authors explain that the history and experience of European societies and of the indigenous peoples of North America are different. The European-western idea of a hierarchy of authority had its origins in the feudal system, which had a belief in the inherent inequality of men, whereas the indigenous peoples did not experience a feudal

²³Boldt and Long 335.

system and they believed in the equality of men: "In the Hobbesian doctrine of sovereignty, authority was deemed necessary to protect society against rampant individual self-interest; however, in Indian tribal society individual self-interest was intertwined with tribal interests."²⁴

Aboriginal societies were communally based on a spiritual compact rather than a social contract as expressed by Rousseau; likewise, a fundamental spiritual principle was expressed in the value of sharing and co-operation while European thought promoted private property ownership and individual competition. With this difference, the need for a sovereign authority in the European doctrine is evident to guard against individual self-interest. It follows that the concept of a sovereign authority is inconceivable in Aboriginal traditional beliefs and values because the political and social experiences that would construct that concept simply did not exist.

The idea of the inequality of men expressed in the European doctrine is also inconceivable in Aboriginal thought. All members of the traditional communities shared equally in privileges and responsibilities. Equality was given by the Creator, which ensured the survival of all. A male-oriented hierarchical authority promoted through the *Indian Act* disrupted the social order of the community.

Since traditional Aboriginal society in North America did not accommodate a hierarchical authority, it would be difficult for the concept of a ruling entity to develop: "The people ruled collectively, exercising authority as one body with undivided power,

²⁴Boldt and Long 336.

performing all functions of government."²⁵ It was the cultural values which functioned as agencies of social order within the communities: "Any arrangement that would separate the people from their fundamental, natural, and inalienable right to govern themselves directly was deemed illegitimate."²⁶

While the authors provide a thorough discussion regarding the difference in the concept of sovereignty in European and North American Aboriginal thought, their discussion of alternative means of securing political and cultural self-determination is shallow and limited in its scope. They cite Vernon Van Dyke's "Theory of Rights" and Kenneth McRae's analysis of pluralism as alternative models of self-determination. Pluralism, they maintain, "theoretically could accommodate the essential requisites of both the Indians and the Canadian government, but it is unacceptable to Indians because of its emphasis on rule by the elites."²⁷ Van Dyke advocates a model that would allow both collective and individual rights, both legal and moral, to co-exist. Boldt and Long suggest that Van Dyke's model fits the historical and contemporary status of Indian tribes because:

prior to colonization Indian tribes operated as independent stateless nations in their own right--not a derived, delegated, or transferred right, but one that came into existence with the group itself. Under the Indian Act and by historical convention Indian tribes in Canada have retained their special group-based status and rights.²⁸

²⁵Boldt and Long 337.

²⁶Boldt and Long 337.

²⁷Boldt and Long 343.

²⁸Boldt and Long 344.

Boldt and Long present their argument regarding the pitfalls that the Aboriginal leadership would experience when adopting the concept of sovereignty as the cornerstone of their aspirations. It appears that the leaders are avoiding the use of this concept, but have focused on the use of the term "inherent Aboriginal rights" to communicate their aspirations. The article provides the basis for the argument of using the best choice of terminology to articulate Aboriginal self-government and of the need to be aware of the manner in which European-western thought might conceive those terms. The objections of the Canadian government are directed at Indian claims to European-western-style sovereign statehood, not at the principle of self-government.

While the Canadian government objects to the claim of sovereignty, there is also a fundamental difference that Boldt and Long raise in their discussion concerning individual self-interest. In the article "*Tribal Philosophies and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms*," they state that "in the western-liberal tradition the dominant conception of society is that of an aggregate of individuals, each with his own self-interest."²⁹ The individual is considered first before the group but with an obligation to the state. Individuals act for themselves, not as members of any collectivity.

For North American Aboriginal people the individual is subordinate to the whole.

Their conception is that:

society was conceived of as being cosmocentric rather than homocentric....their reference point was not the individual but the whole....This conception was derived from their experience of the interrelatedness of all life (human, animal, plants, and objects) and the

²⁹Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long, "Tribal Philosophies and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms," *The Quest for Justice*, ed. Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1985) 165.

need for harmony among all parts. The whole and the parts can survive only if each part fulfils its role....Social interaction occurred between human beings and other-than-human 'persons' involving reciprocal relations and mutual obligations....Within this encompassing web of social relations the individual is characterized as the repository of responsibilities rather than as a claimant of rights....In such a society there is no concept of inherent individual claims to inalienable rights.³⁰

In traditional Aboriginal thought, the self-interest of the individual merges with the survival of the community. The common good is identical to the individual good. Boldt and Long cite Michael Melody, who proposes that "western-liberal philosophies define man in terms of individualism, competition, and self-interest; whereas, traditional Indian philosophies define man in terms of spiritual unity, consensus, co-operation, and self-denial."³¹ They are two different theories.

Boldt and Long conclude that the imposition of the Charter's provisions would be the same as having imposed the *Indian Act* on Aboriginal people: "Ethnocentrism is evident also in the government's contention that its version of human rights is the morally correct and best version for Indian people."³² While this conclusion may be valid philosophically, it ignores the concerns of the Native Women's Association of Canada, (NWAC) who claim that the politics, in some First Nations, are male-dominated, and that women are victims of abuse and violence and may have their rights violated. Also, there is the claim that nepotism exists in some communities which could pose a threat to

³⁰Boldt and Long 166.

³¹Boldt and Long 167.

³²Boldt and Long 174.

individual rights.³³

Ethnocentrism has been a characteristic of government policies which have focused on assimilating Aboriginal people into Canadian society; hence, Aboriginal people have strong resentments against these types of policies. The concept of an inherent Aboriginal right to self-government is the peak expression of the desire to be self-determining. Patricia A. Bowles in the article "*Cultural Renewal: First Nations and the Challenge of State Superiority*" states that "First Nations Peoples must continue to speak of what they know to be self-direction or self-determination because only they can speak with authority on their collective vision of the world."³⁴

Bowles criticizes some of the previous historical and legal analysts as being "isolated by their own privilege and trapped inside their own cognitive schemata [so that] they are unable to view liberal democratic theory critically."³⁵ She feels that unless western academics and legal scholars are able to understand another thought process and way of life they will not comprehend the notion of co-existence, and therefore, oppression will continue. The premise of her article is:

³³It is not the intent in this thesis to prove or disprove the claims made by NWAC. They have been raised, merely, to acknowledge that a dichotomy exists within the Aboriginal community concerning the application of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms and to recognize that there is a basis for the argument of developing an Aboriginal Charter. The need for the development of this Charter could form part of the self-government negotiation process.

³⁴Patricia A. Bowles, "Cultural Renewal: First Nations and the Challenge to State Superiority," Co-existence? Studies in Ontario-First Nations Relations, ed. Bruce W. Hodgins, Shawn Heard, John S. Milloy (Peterborough: Frost Centre for Canadian Heritage and Development Studies, 1992) 132.

³⁵Bowles 132-3.

that it is dangerous and potentially destructive for First Nations Peoples to negotiate with [the dominant] society until Anglo-Europeans diffuse their fears by de-constructing their institutions and by questioning their liberal democratic values which are rooted in notions of private property.³⁶

The foregoing is the ideal. It is unrealistic to discontinue negotiations until there is a change in European-western thought. The Native leadership and their constituents want a better relationship with the Canadian state.

Bowles suggests that the solution to the "Indian problem" must start with the exposure of the defects of Western institutions. It is not necessary to abandon the goals of liberal democracy: however, there is a need to "re-evaluate its dependence on a limitless individualism and to recognize that in a healthy society which is capable of supporting a healthy world the rights which society is built on can only exist in conjunction with associated responsibilities."³⁷ The responsibilities that she refers to are responsibility to the land, to one another and to other peoples. She concludes the article by stating:

There is no excuse for one group of people controlling the destiny of another and it can no longer be tolerated in the name of representational democracy. Cultural collectivities must be recognized as political and legal entities with the power to direct their own internal affairs and to interact with other collectivities, both larger and smaller, as equals.³⁸

This article supports the views of Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long concerning the limits of western-liberal democracy and provides a prescription for change for the dominant society to follow that will lead to an understanding of Aboriginal political

³⁶Bowles 133.

³⁷Bowles 147.

³⁸Bowles 147.

objectives.

With Bowles offering a prescription for change, the question of whether or not governments can or will change becomes the primary concern. It seems that provincial governments are beginning to support the notion that the socio-economic needs of Aboriginal peoples can be met through the expansion of self-determination. "*Indian Self-Government: A Legal Analysis*" by John D. Whyte examines the decision of the provincial governments of:

meeting treaty commitments concerning land, developing hunting policies that are clear and that recognize Indian rights, funding economic development, establishing native staffed criminal-justice programs, and creating responsive and constitutionally appropriate systems for delivering educational and social services.³⁹

The federal government, depending on which political party forms the government, sometimes seems to signal that its intentions are to grant increased political rights to Aboriginal people and their band governments. But, Whyte appears to be sceptical that this was the government's intention by the inclusion of part II, "Rights of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada" in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, "since the style of the section is declaratory and tautological. However, we expect that part II will have the effect of increased judicial recognition and enforcement of Indian and native rights."⁴⁰

Since the research is focused on the Alderville First Nation located in Ontario, it will be relevant to review the article by Wallis Smith, "*Ontario's Approach to*

³⁹John D. Whyte, "Indian Self-Government: A Legal Analysis," Pathways to Self-Determination, ed. Leroy Little Bear, Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984) 101.

⁴⁰Whyte 101.

Aboriginal Self-Government," which outlines the policy of this province. Smith's opening statement, "Ontario's approach to Aboriginal affairs was, from the beginning, founded on the notion of self-government--and this has been part of the problem,"⁴¹ demands an explanation and elicits the comment, "What is the problem, isn't that what Aboriginal people want?" Smith shows that in order for Ontario to improve conditions on reserves, it had to amend legislation, approve funding, develop policy and make services available for delivery. Indian bands were treated like municipalities. It was assumed that Indian communities would become like other communities. Band governments were to be considered self-governing in the same way as municipal governments. While honest efforts were being made to meet the needs of Aboriginal communities, the initiatives of Ontario were similar in their structure and to the means used by the federal governments to implement its policy of assimilation.⁴²

Smith discusses the four elements that Ontario prefers to address in relation to Aboriginal self-government. The time frame in which Smith summarizes the elements is following the election of the New Democratic Party in 1990s:

1. **Instruments**

The Ontario New Democratic Party believed that Aboriginal Peoples have a right to be self-governing and while in government the NDP initiated a process of negotiating

⁴¹Wallis Smith, "Ontario's Approach to Aboriginal Self-Government," Co-existence? Studies in Ontario-First Nations Relations, ed. Bruce Hodgins, Shawn Heard, John S. Milloy (Peterborough: Frost Centre for Canadian Heritage and Development Studies, 1992) 50.

⁴²Smith 50.

with The Chiefs of Ontario through a "Statement of Political Relationship". Also, the provincial government was willing to work with Metis and Non-Status groups to develop a framework for implementing self-government for off-reserve Aboriginal peoples.

There was a problem that the province had to try to work through. It concerned the question of who exercises the right of self-government? Is it Nations? Tribal Councils? Local communities? Regional Associations? Service Agencies? The province took the position that the right inheres to some larger group other than single communities; however, the lead would have to begin with the federal government who should negotiate self-government with single communities.

Ontario intended to proceed with self-government negotiations and to create enabling legislation which would allow Aboriginal communities to exercise self-government powers.⁴³ The Province was actively pursuing the self-government proposals of the United Indian Councils of the Mississauga and Chippewa Nations of which the Alderville First Nation is a member. Ontario's corporate policy on Native Affairs was to work with Aboriginal communities to design programs that would increase local control and autonomy and to develop arrangements so that local communities could manage their own services.

⁴³Bob Rae, "The Road to Self-Determination," Aboriginal Self-Determination, ed. Frank Cassidy (Lantzville, BC: The Institute for Research on Public Policy and Oolichan Books, 1991) 150-155. At a Self-Determination Symposium held September 30 to October 3, 1990, the Premier of Ontario, Bob Rae, stated clearly his position relating to the issue of self-determination and to the term of sovereignty: "Indians were here first with organized societies that were very sophisticated and had a highly developed culture and system of law...The hangup about sovereignty is something we have to deal with."

2. Community Concerns, Aspirations, Needs

To create a relationship that was based on equality and fairness, the communities expressed a number of components which would make for a fair agreement, (a) rights of access to land and natural resources, (b) co-management agreements over natural resources, (c) jurisdiction and tenure over a larger land base, (d) sources of secure funding, (e) legitimation of the powers of Aboriginal governments, (f) settlements funds accruing from land claims, and (g) the assurance of the continuance of provincial transfers. There was some progress being made in these areas and the parties were committed to working through the proposals.

3. General Institutions of Governance

Canada has restricted its local self-government policy to reserves while the province of Ontario was concerned about relationships between Aboriginal forms of self-government and the broader provincial system. The province was faced with the challenge of reforming a number of its general institutions. Smith provides the following example:

The Wendaban Stewardship Authority announced by the Teme-Augama Anishnabai and Ontario is a decision-making body with equal numbers of representatives appointed by the two parties. If it is to be expanded to incorporate the whole land claim area, as the Teme-Augama Anishnabai propose, the issue of democratic right of non-Teme-Augama Anishnabai members to be involved in decision-making must be addressed. Further, an expanded, locally accountable Authority changes the nature of Ontario's management of land and natural resources. The direct responsibility of Queen's Park will be reduced. How, then, will the interests of Ontarians in areas outside of Temagami be represented?...If Aboriginal communities, because of the rights they enjoy, are able to generate revenues from gaming and tobacco how will the impact on non-Aboriginal communities around them be managed?...if this becomes the situation, it is almost a certainty that commissions will be established at the local or regional level to

regulate potential inequities among communities.”⁴⁴

The concern by the province was that it could potentially lose direct control over an activity that it has historically considered to be a provincial corporate authority. Because of the impact on third parties, the province was committed to third party consultations during negotiations which would have meant that the public would be involved in at least some of the structures of governance arising from Aboriginal self-governance negotiations.

4. Federal/Provincial Relations

The line between provincial and federal responsibilities was not clearly defined. Although Ontario was committed to provide services, it would not duplicate services or expend any dollars in areas that were clearly the responsibility of the federal government. Ontario was intent on building good working relations with the federal government.⁴⁵

Smith does not make reference to the Aboriginal partner in this last section; but, it is imperative that the province continue tripartite negotiations with the federal government and Aboriginal Associations to keep the spirit of consultation alive. The architects of Aboriginal self-government are the Aboriginal people themselves not the federal or provincial governments, therefore, without consultation the structures of governance would be determined outside the perimeters of what the members of the community deem important. However, the election of Conservative Party in 1995 brought a change in provincial policy. The "Statement of Political Relation" was

⁴⁴Smith 56.

⁴⁵Smith 52-57.

replaced by "The Aboriginal Policy Framework" which has effectively removed the Aboriginal people as the architects of Aboriginal self-government. The Policy Framework is clear:

The Provincial commitment to economic development for all Ontarians, and the reduction of social tensions through the equal treatment of all residents requires that Aboriginal matters be addressed differently than they were in the past. The Province is committed to the need for public involvement in land claims and perhaps most importantly, to the need to support increased Aboriginal self-reliance by promoting Aboriginal economic development. Accordingly, **the Province will encourage and assist Aboriginal economic and community development to reduce dependence on transfer payments and to facilitate greater self-reliance and responsibility for community well-being.** This will foster a climate of balance and stability between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal interests in Ontario.⁴⁶

In his opinion, Wallis Smith believes that the present Provincial government is committed to the "equality of governance" for all Ontario residents. While it is not articulated within the Aboriginal policy, the province is committed to the notion that municipalities are the same as individuals in exercising their powers.⁴⁷ This ideology is contrary to Aboriginal thought which views collective rights that guarantees the rights of the individual. Furthermore, the language of the policy suggests that it is regressive in nature and will set the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people back twenty years.

With the recent changes in the governing parties, at both the federal and provincial levels there is an atmosphere of apprehension for First Nation communities in Ontario.

⁴⁶Ontario Legislative Assembly. The Aboriginal Policy Framework Toronto: Government of Ontario, March 1996.

⁴⁷Wallis Smith, Telephone Interview, 15 April 1997.

Mike Harris, the leader of the Ontario Conservative party, has indicated that Indians ought to be assimilated into Canadian society. The Principle of Equality stated in Ontario's Aboriginal Policy Framework says that "the government is committed to the equal treatment of Ontario residents" and the Principle of Stability emphasizes that "the government is committed to social harmony and minimizing actions that could destabilize relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities."⁴⁸ These views are contrary to the August 10, 1995 announcement made by the Ron Irwin, the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, that the Government of Canada recognizes the inherent right of self-government as an existing right within section 35 of the Constitution Act.⁴⁹

A response prepared by Jennifer Arnott, Policy Analyst, for The Union of Ontario Indians states that the federal announcement is positive in its confirmation of the inherent right as an existing right, not one that needs to be added to or defined in a lengthy Constitutional negotiation. On the other hand, The Union feels that the discussions and information provided with the announcement indicate that the federal proposal is willing to negotiate First Nation control only over existing programs and services and says little about a full expression of jurisdiction which would acknowledge the inherent right. Furthermore, to establish First Nation jurisdiction will require the settlement of land

⁴⁸Ontario Legislative Assembly. The Aboriginal Policy Framework Toronto: Government of Ontario, March 1996.

⁴⁹Cate McCready et al. Government Launches Process for Negotiating Aboriginal Self-Government. Ottawa: Minister's Office, Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development, 1995. 1-9520.html.

claims, the full implementation of treaties, including compensation for past negligence and capacity building for First Nations to re-assert traditional values and laws to develop effective policies and procedures for self-governance.⁵⁰

The position of the Chiefs of Ontario office is that this new policy is more regressive than the *Indian Act* in that Provincial consent will be required even though First Nations have by-law making powers in certain areas which are within the scope of the *Indian Act* but the policy suggests that by-law making will be contingent on federal and provincial consent, whereas previously only the federal Minister's approval was necessary. Furthermore, the scope of authority will be limited to matters internal and integral to Aboriginal cultures, and the inherent right does not include the right to sovereignty in the international sense. Also, the inherent right will operate within the Canadian Constitutional Framework and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms will apply. Perhaps most disturbing is that the policy states that it will provide municipalities and other third parties with a meaningful opportunity to have input into self-government negotiations.⁵¹

It is the opinion of the Union of Ontario Indians that the General Framework Agreement signed by the United Indians Councils in 1992 is still the legitimate negotiating body for the communities which include the Alderville First Nation. It

⁵⁰Jennifer Arnott. Personal telephone facsimile of the Union of Ontario Indians response Government Launches Process for Negotiating Self-Government: Anishinabek Analysis. 21 Aug. 1995.

⁵¹Andrea Chrisjohn. Personal telephone facsimile Chiefs of Ontario Bulletin: Federal Inherent Right Policy Assessed. 24 August 1995.

appears that it is imperative for UIC communities to move forward in their pursuit of self-government under the existing framework agreement since failure to do so may result in the community having to accept new terms that will limit the development of culturally appropriate concepts of governance.

Although dated, "*Thorns in the Bed of Roses: A Socio-political View of the Problems of Indian Government* " by J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbins points to some of these pertinent problems that have to be addressed. The problem they articulate can be placed into the context of the UIC discussions.

The authors suggest that there will be a multiplicity of demands made on Indian government by its constituents. This is possible because, at the present time, some demands that are being made are difficult to resolve due to the restrictive nature of the *Indian Act*. However, this may not occur because some communities, such as Alderville, want their members to take an active role in constituting their concept of government.

An important consideration will be the manner in which governance will occur. Should the governing body be constituted at levels above the community, it is possible that tensions between bands could develop as a result of the method used for the redistribution of wealth, how budget allocations will be made and the method of service delivery. This situation may bring into bold view the elitist class that Marie Smallface Marule makes reference to in her article. The manner in which decision-making takes place will require clarification. At the present time there are some UIC First Nations expressing this concern. It is important to keep in mind that First Nations across Canada are diverse communities; the same is true for Aboriginal communities within the same

region and within the UIC. Canada has repeatedly tried to superimpose on Aboriginal peoples its idea of governance but has not considered the problem of encompassing rival clans, status-non-status [and Bill C-31] distinctions, provincial associations that encompass long standing rivalries and administrative districts.⁵²

It is assumed that First Nations' citizens will constitute Aboriginal self-government. Ponting and Gibbins raise the issue of the rights and duties for off-reserve band members, an issue that poses a serious problem. A Federal Court of Canada Trial Division decision in **Corbiere vs Canada** found that off-reserve residents had the right to vote in band elections. Even though the case is under appeal, the case raises some concerns as it would be difficult to carry out the mandate of that decision because some UIC First Nations have tracked their off-reserve residents while others have not. As a result some First Nations are able to include off-reserve members in the discussions of self-government and keep these members informed, while those First Nations who do not have a record of their off-reserve members will experience a problem. There is no clarification of who will be legitimately responsible to represent off-reserve members but the Aboriginal Peoples Congress, formerly the Native Council of Canada, has assumed that responsibility even though Alderville has kept a record and keeps its members informed.

The Alderville First Nation is a member of the United Indian Councils which has substantial experience in developing the concept of self-government. Despite the

⁵²J. Rick Ponting and Roger Gibbins, "Thorns in the Bed of Roses: A Socio-political View of the Problem of Indian Government," Pathways to Self-Determination, ed. Leroy Little Bear, Menno Boldt and J. Anthony Long (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1984) 128.

problems associated with the development of Aboriginal self-government, it will become a reality. How the model of self-government will be developed depends on whether or not it will be based on a western structure, a traditional structure or some combination of both but at Alderville it appears that Aboriginal self-government has come to be a process of the community reclaiming traditional cultural values to find out what the traditional forms of governance were.

Failure of the first ministers' conferences and the Charlottetown Accord to constitutionally entrench Aboriginal self-government has resulted in the return to the federal government's non-constitutional policy initiative to provide for a limited degree of Aboriginal self-government within the current constitutional arrangement. The United Indian Councils signed a general framework agreement in 1990 allowing them to proceed with substantive negotiations over the future structure and authority of self-government. This initiative for negotiations would be framed in community-based self-government. How the federal announcement, recognizing the inherent right as an existing right, will impact on the UIC general framework agreement has yet to be played out. Whatever the outcome, it is clear that the development of self-government has resulted in the Alderville community looking to its traditional cultural values to find guidance and to make sense of a contemporary issue.

The interest expressed by many Aboriginal leaders in the federal community-based self-government initiative appears to be based on two considerations. In the article, *"Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Indian Societies,"* J. Anthony Long states that:

The first is a pragmatic recognition that this approach presents an opportunity to acquire a degree of autonomy for Indian governments not possible under the Indian Act...The second consideration...is related to the federal government's promise to allow the incorporation of "customary or traditional structures" where desired into reconstructed Indian governments. The desire to restructure their governments to conform to the traditional governing practices of their respective communities is reflected in nearly every demand by Indian leadership for self-government. This desire is grounded in their belief that Indians, as culturally and politically unique peoples possessing inherent sovereignty, should be allowed to restore governing practices within their communities that are congruent with their cultural distinctiveness.⁵³

Long explores the difficulties confronting Indian leaders in their attempts to revitalize traditional governing practices within their respective communities. He questions whether the present Indian government, an elective system, imposed by the *Indian Act* has become institutionalized in communities. If institutionalization has occurred, then a return to traditional governing practices, he argues, is effectively checked. If strong traditionalist orientations remain within communities then there is an opportunity for political revitalization and it maybe possible, for the citizens of the Alderville First Nation to develop a strong link to cultural traditions for political revitalization to occur.

Indian societies in Canada have been subjected to directed cultural change: "In the case of Indians, the historical objective of the Canadian state has been their eventual assimilation into the dominant society, including acceptance of an active participation by Indian peoples in the dominant society's governmental organizations."⁵⁴ In the case of the Alderville First Nation, the community was founded in 1837 by the Methodist

⁵³J. Anthony Long, "Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Societies," Canadian Journal of Political Science 23.4 (1990): 752-3.

⁵⁴Long 755.

Missionaries, who were instrumental in obtaining a grant of land from Upper Canada to move the people to Alnwick township from Grape Island in the Bay of Quinte, which was undergoing a rapid influx of white settlers. Assimilation was impending as the British Colonial government left the churches with the responsibility for education, which was viewed as a means of encouraging the Indians to participate in a European lifestyle. In this case, the Methodist Church was responsible for directing cultural change within the Mississaugas of Alderville.

Two aspects of governance begin the focus on traditional forms of government: leadership selection and decision-making. Traditional leadership selection incorporated three factors: merit, function and the clan. Leadership was bestowed on an individual with demonstrated abilities as a hunter, warrior, or peace-maker and who showed a willingness to be a servant to the people rather than their master. At times leadership could be described as being a burden, never a reward. An ambitious character was restrained by the belief that a leader must be prepared to become impoverished, if need be. Also, a leader was chosen for no fixed period but for the skills that he possessed to meet a specific task or need. Once the goal or situation passed he reverted back to being an ordinary clan member. A leader was a leader so long as someone chose to follow him.⁵⁵

Contemporary leadership has evolved away from the traditional function and merit-based system. Long refers to three significant factors that have influenced the evolution of leadership selection: the imposition of the *Indian Act* band council elective

⁵⁵Long 759-60.

system, the transformation of the clan system away from the basic political group, and the failure to reach an adequate level of economic development. The band elective system is based on western political values, which regularize, the leadership selection process for a specific time period. Rather than merit-based selection, it develops a self-selected process that creates accountability to a certain segment of the group, generally to the kin group, not to the whole group or clan group as the traditional process had prescribed. The interesting factor that Long points out is the failure to reach an adequate level of economic development. He says that "within the contemporary leadership selection process is economic egoism in the form of employment and financial gain for the individual and kin group"⁵⁶ an idea which is directly opposite the leader's being prepared to become impoverished if need be to serve his community and does not reflect the cultural value of sharing.

The second aspect of governance is decision-making. Traditional decision-making can be said to be based on the concept of equality. Historically, plains Indians did not accept that anyone had the right to govern others, except for short periods of time. Long quotes Morton H. Fried, who argues that "this type of authority consists of 'the ability to channel the behaviour of others in the absence of the threat or use of sanctions.' This type of authority should be distinguished from 'power,' which involves the ability to direct others by threat or use of sanctions."⁵⁷ Since no one had the right to rule another or the ability to delegate the authority which was thought to have been, originally,

⁵⁶Long 763.

⁵⁷Long 764.

derived from the Creator, the people ruled collectively, exercising authority as one body.

In plains Indian societies, elders served as the repository for tribal customs and traditional practices. According to Long's analysis:

Every member or every clan had the right to be involved in the making of decisions that affected them, both individually and collectively. The consensual nature of decision-making required that process to be carried out by way of "deliberation, negotiation, cooperation and patience rather than that of confrontation, aggressiveness, impatience and of the 'adversary method.'"...If a decision could not be reached by consensus, then it was temporarily abandoned...those not consenting to a decision were not bound by it and could ignore it if they wished. Custom was the instrument that served to ensure that order did not break down through a failure to achieve consensus.⁵⁸

In plains communities the contemporary decision-making occurs within a system of government that resembles municipal governments, based on the same political values of local democracy. Long continues his analysis with a description of the institutionalization of a band bureaucracy which further hinders decision-making within the hierarchy of band government. Long concludes that the band government imposed by the *Indian Act* now forms the basis for nearly all tribal activities. With reference to the Grape Island Mississauga-Ojibwa, the traditional method of decision-making and leadership selection will be examined in the historical record to help inform the revitalization process.

Aboriginal people have a right to make decisions about issues that will affect their lives and that of their children. Peter Kulchyski states in *Unjust Relations: Aboriginal Rights in Canadian Courts*:

Aboriginal self-government means the right to make decisions that are important to self-constitution. Aboriginal people have the right to be self-determining, to make decisions for themselves, in the forms that are appropriate to their cultural

⁵⁸Long 765.

values. This latter point is particularly important. Regardless of the level of power provided to Aboriginal governments, every decision that is made following the dominant logic, in accordance with the hierarchial and bureaucratic structures of the established order, will take Aboriginal peoples further away from their own culture.⁵⁹

Even though contemporary concepts of self-government held by some members of the community might reflect Euro-Canadian ideals and practices, the development of institutions that exhibit traditional ideals are being considered and, if adopted, will promote effective First Nations' governance.

Euro-Canadian ideals and practices have distorted the cultural concepts as Indian societies have been subjected to directed cultural change. Specifically, for the Alderville First Nation, their ancestors were converted to Christianity at Grape Island in the early 1800's by Methodist Missionaries. In the historical section of this thesis the theory of directed cultural change will be examined to determine the relevance of the cultural values now being revitalized by the community, an approach in keeping with the idea that Aboriginal self-government is the community reclaiming traditional cultural values.

Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. established a theory of directed cultural change in *Salvation and the Savage* which suggests that the examination of acculturation of the Grape Island Mississaugas should take into consideration two sets of variables: "the nature of the two cultures in contact, and the conditions under which contact takes place. But the relationship between the two sets of variables depends upon whether contact was directed or not,....but the....customs "borrowed" must be examined in Indian terms in

⁵⁹Peter Kulchyski, ed., Unjust Relations: Aboriginal Rights in the Canadian Courts (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1994) 12.

the end."⁶⁰ In the case of the Grape Island Mississaugas once the missionaries were able to exercise effective control, according to Berkhofer's theory, the nature of the contact became "directed" or "forced," and the customs "borrowed" served as alternatives to alleviate the stress from the increasing white population into the areas of their traditional resource base.

The directed acculturation of the Grape Island Mississaugas distorted certain concepts of governance such as the clan system, the decision-making process, leadership selection and the political role of women. It was the *Indian Act* which subsequently formalized European methods of decision-making and leadership selection. It legally changed the nature of society by totally subjugating women and disrupting the clan system.

Knowledge of the clan system or *dodaem* is vital for Anishinabe people as a source of identity and association. According to Basil Johnston and Shirley Williams, the term "dodaem" has the same root word as *dodosh*, which means breast from which milk or food is drawn. The word best translated as "that from which I know my purpose and being." Each *dodaem* is represented by an animal which illustrates the connection of man with the natural world. In an unpublished article, Jennifer Arnott states, "within each *dodaem*, there was a structure and specific function. The leadership and final authority of the *dodaem* rested with its eldest member as it was felt that experience provided the

⁶⁰Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., Salvation and the Savage, (Kentucky UP, 1965) xi.

greatest possible wisdom. Very often, this position was filled by a woman."⁶¹ Since the *dodaem* dictated the function of all the members, it is safe to say that all people participated in decisions, and the enfranchisement of women and children was never questioned.

At the present time women are taking an active part in community politics and are making an effort to develop an original government system. According to Flora Tabobodung, former Chief of Wasauksing, "women must be involved in their communities and as Chief because women bring a different perspective, they understand the needs of families and are naturally able to bring caring and sharing to the role."⁶² For the Alderville First Nation, it was not until 1987 that the women established a determining role in community politics with the election of the first woman chief, although there were isolated instances which saw a woman being elected to band council.

Osennotion and Skonaganleh:rá, two Mohawk women express the importance of clarifying the perception of Aboriginal women who, unlike European women who demand recognition in equality with men, want to re-assert their traditions and re-gain the respect of women that is essential to their culture, to realize their past: "...frankly, I don't want equality. I want to go back to where women, in Aboriginal communities were complete, where they were beautiful, where they were treated as more than equal -

⁶¹Arnott, Jennifer. "In the Presence of Women: Re-emerging Indigenous Structures and the Re-assertion of the Essential Role of Women." Article. Doubleday: Toronto, 1995.

⁶²Jennifer Arnott.

where man was helper and woman was the centre of that environment, that community."⁶³ Melody Crowe stated that women are reaching out to reclaim culture which helps men. She says,

Our women are really standing up and speaking and paving the way for everybody to feel that they can speak. It's nice because some of the men started to stand up and speak and, I think, it's been because so many of our women have been standing up - not just this year but in the past - it's always been the women...taking the lead in that regard.⁶⁴

Elders such as Art Solomon in his poetry and teaching sessions speak of the importance of women in Anishinabe society and their spiritual connections to Mother Earth as being the bearers of life. It is this connection that places women in high regard. The missionaries did not pay particular attention, in their accounts, to the traditional role of women. Even in accounts developed by Ojibwa missionaries, the references to women were scant.

In *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* by George Copway there is little reference to women, although, he does present a sketch about the form of government.

Reverend Peter Jones in his writings on the *History of the Ojibway Indians*, presents a short chapter about courtship and marriage but it treats the topic with how Ojibwa women fulfilled the role of wife. The role of women as wives is given emphasis by the Methodists who felt that the husband should be the head of the family. There are relevant chapters: 1) Mode of Life, which describes the practice of subsistence, 2)

⁶³Osennotion and Skonaganleh:rá, "Our World," Canadian Women Studies, Summer/Fall 1989 (Volume 10, Numbers 2 & 3), 15.

⁶⁴Meloday Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

Councils, which describes general and common councils, choosing a chief and the type of government and, 3) Opinion of the Indians respecting the Sovereign and People of Great Britain, which clearly indicates the thought that the Indians considered themselves allies with the British nation and not subjects. Jones comments on the manner in which the Indians were "compelled to surrender their territories."⁶⁵ From this work, it is evident that the missionaries' promoted patriarchal society based on European thought where men are expected to be the leaders. There is extensive political direction for men but women's role is domestic.

While the reference to women by Jones and Copway may be meagre, their historical accounts are useful in examining the relevancy of traditional governance for contemporary application; therefore, consideration of the representation of women in developing community governance is clearly connected with the idea that Aboriginal self-government is the community reclaiming traditional cultural values. This is confirmed by Marge Beaver: "a lot of the strengths, I think, are coming from the women. At least I've noticed it, anyway. I don't know maybe it's just my opinion but...I've noticed quite an improvement since I've been living here, from when I first moved [back] here."⁶⁶

⁶⁵Peter Jones, History of the Ojebway Indians, (London: Houlston and Wright, Paternoster Row, 1861) 217.

⁶⁶Marge Beaver, Personal Interview, May 3, 1996.

Chapter 2

Burning the Mill Alderville: History of Resistance to Cultural Renewal

A cursory study of the historical development of the Alderville First Nation leads to the assumption that there was a steady movement away from traditional Native culture toward western cultural ideals. Such an assumption presumes that individuals who identified themselves as being Canadian and practised a "civilized" lifestyle and those who were coerced into enfranchising gave up a strong claim to tribal political integrity. Contrary to this assumption, Alderville has survived as a living tribe and culture from the pre-contact period to the present day. The historical record often contradicts this claim, and the assertion of traditional culture being continuous is rendered meaningless in the contemporary Canadian concept of political history.

James Clifford cites an unprecedented court case in 1976 involving the Mashpee Wampanoag Tribal Council to illustrate the debate surrounding the validity of the literate and oral forms of knowledge. The case attempted to determine whether the group calling itself the Mashpee Tribe was a legitimate Indian tribe in U.S. law. Through the use of the oral tradition the tribe argued that there was a continuous cultural base. In the end the court gave more weight to the written archive than the evidence of oral tradition.

Clifford says that this bias toward the literate form of knowledge "keeps us from seeing how collective structures, tribal or cultural, reproduce themselves historically by risking themselves in novel conditions. Their wholeness is as much a matter of

reinvention and encounter as it is of continuity and survival."¹ It is logical that if a tradition is considered "lost" and if it can be remembered, even generations later, then it is not lost. It was merely moved underground. Until recently the "history" of Alderville has always been a Western history narrated by the Methodist Missionary records. With the advent of self-government, the history of the community ought to reflect a perspective that supports the development of the political and cultural tradition of the community.

The Alderville experience "uncovers" people who are sometimes separate and "Indian," sometimes assimilated and "Canadian." Their history is a series of cultural and political transactions, not all-or-nothing conversions or resistances. The Mississauga Ojibwa of Alderville lived and acted between cultures formulating a series of reactionary decisions in the attempt to alleviate the pressures of the moment. These pressures were external and directed by forces intent on changing the political and cultural integrity of the community.² John Loukes confirms the notion of reactionary decisions:

we didn't choose to lose our culture. It was forced upon us by lack of space to maintain our original way of living. Wasn't a choice for economic survival - the old pioneers did the same thing; they changed from the oxen and the plough - we've changed from the bow and arrow to the common way of life because our original way...we couldn't survive.³

There is no intent to contradict the fact that the Methodists were successful in achieving some Christian conversions. However, the historical record should not glorify

¹James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture (Cambridge: Harvard College, 1988) 341.

²Clifford 341-3.

³John Loukes, Personal Interview, Apr. 11, 1996.

their efforts as being the model of measuring missionary proselytization among the Ojibwa. Such measure discounts the vitality of traditional culture, thereby continuing the notion that it is evil and a pagan belief system. It must be recognized that the Mississauga Ojibwa did not accept the social and cultural changes that were being enforced and committed acts of resistance.

The work of James C. Scott, in *Weapons of the Weak*, contributes to the issue of resistance among powerless groups. Even though he draws his conclusions from the Third World class struggle, there is a valid basis for comparison in developing thought surrounding Aboriginal resistance activities. Scott states:

It [seems] more important to understand what we might call everyday forms of peasant resistance--the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labour, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them. Most forms of this struggle stop well short of outright collective defiance. Here I have in mind the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups: foot dragging, dissimulation, desertion, false compliance, pilfering, feigned ignorance, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on. These...forms of class struggle have certain features in common. They require little or no coordination or planning; they make use of implicit understandings and informal networks; they often represent a form of individual self-help; they typically avoid any direct, symbolic confrontation with authority.⁴

Also, he suggests that there is a struggle over how the past and present should be understood and labelled. He proposes that there is a contentious effort to give a meaning to local history and that this meaning is often biased. Such has been the case for the Alderville history.

Pre-Confederation 1826 - 1866

⁴James C. Scott, *Weapons of the Weak* (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985) xvi.

Following the initial European-Indian contact, the fur trade was established but ultimately the demand for North American fur began to decline and, when it did, the vast expanse of land was seen as a commodity to be exploited. However, there was a problem which had to be cleared away before occupation could take place. King George III of England recognized Aboriginal title to the land in the Royal Proclamation of 1763, which provided a provision to cede these lands to the Crown; however, the difficulty was the question of what to do with the Indians after the land was no longer theirs.

From 1763 to 1867, tremendous changes occurred in the social structure and culture of the Indian people in Canada, particularly among the Ojibwa of southern Ontario. They changed from being self-reliant hunting and gathering peoples to poor farmers who had little choice when faced with starvation as a result of the depletion of their traditional food supply. They settled in reserve communities and borrowed the customs of the Europeans in an effort to alleviate the stress from the encroaching white population and as a means to survive as a distinct society.

Reports written by Rev. William Case, who was transferred by the Methodist Episcopal Church to the Bay of Quinte District, indicate that up to 1826 there had been no efforts to bring Christianity to the Ojibwa people. They were a hunting and gathering society who alternated, seasonally, between their winter hunting camps and their lake and river fishing camps. As a migratory society, they had no permanent dwellings and lived in shelters constructed from the bark of trees and animal skins. The fact that the people moved, in family groups, from place to place in their hunting territories explains the late efforts of Christianization and it meant that the Mississauga Ojibwa had to be encouraged

to give up their nomadic way of life and to settle in permanent communities. Encouragement was promoted through directed cultural change, which ultimately disordered the political dimensions in Ojibwa society.

Cultural change to Indian communities in southern Ontario was directed by Christian missionaries whose goal was "civilize" the Indian as well as to teach them about Christianity, European technology, customs and the advantages of "civilized" society.

According to Elizabeth Graham:

this dual goal, missionaries acted not only as ministers of religion, but tried to assume authority in those spheres of cultural and social life into which they could introduce civilization; subsistence and technology, politics and government, education and morality, and health. Missionaries, therefore, played direct roles as ministers of religion, farmers and artisans, politicians and administrators, schoolteachers, doctors and social workers, and were important agents of social change.⁵

Historical and anthropological studies indicate that southern Ontario was inhabited by the Hurons who eventually disappeared as a result of disease and conflicts with the Iroquois. This left the area open for the Ojibwa to migrate from their north-western territory around Lake Superior and establish a permanent presence in the regions of Lake Ontario. The Ojibwa nation was comprised of several tribes who were politically independent of each other and who were accustomed to possessing their own hunting territories. A sub-tribe of the Ojibwa nation, who were known as the Mississaugas, took up habitation in the areas bordering on Lake Ontario and continued their traditional economy.

Beyond family and communal needs, during the hunting and gathering phase of

⁵Elizabeth Graham, Medicine Man to Missionary (Toronto: Peter Martin Associates Limited, 1975) 1.

their economy, the Mississaugas had no need to accumulate any surplus to support institutions for defence or for the control of social behaviour. Unlike European society, there was no need for such institutions since Anishinabe society was based on family and clan structures in which the cultural values acted as agents which controlled social behaviour. Defence strategies were developed when needed and in other circumstances leaders were selected for their specific knowledge so that when their skill was no longer needed they resumed their common role within the tribe.

Following the American revolution, southern Ontario became a haven for British Loyalists and Indians who were British allies. The land became a valuable commodity and the Ojibwa were persuaded to sell most of their land to the Crown including some land along the St. Clair River, the Credit River, the Grand River and around the Bay of Quinte in Lake Ontario which was re-granted to the Mohawks who remained loyal to the British Crown.

Shoreline areas were locations of prime land that the white immigrants most desired. To isolate the Grape Island Mississaugas of the Bay of Quinte from the white population, the Methodist Missionaries petitioned the Governor General of Upper Canada for more land to carry out their goal of civilization through agriculture because the island was too small to sustain continued agricultural growth and not all of the Mississaugas' agricultural activities could be concentrated on one small island. From 1824 to 1829, the mission at Grape Island grew to a point where more land was needed to expand the agricultural base but most of the available land around the Bay of Quinte had been granted to the United Empire Loyalists after surveys and townships were quickly set up

by Simcoe after 1791 and to the European immigrants of the Great Migration in 1815.

In *Medicine Man to Missionary*, Elizabeth Graham cites the *Christian Guardian*, in which a Superintendent of Methodist Missions stated that he was impressed with the Grape Island settlement, in particular their "well-built little cottages, their highly cultivated gardens, their comfortable and neat clothing, and, above all, their peaceable and truly devotional religious exercises."⁶ Grape Island was reported to be a model Christian community reflecting the success of the Methodists' in civilizing the Ojibwa Indians, which added support to the Methodist's petition for a tract of land to continue their effort of civilizing the Indians by altering their mode of subsistence. Eventually, the Governor General agreed to the grant and the community was moved, in 1837, to Aldersville in Alnwick township. The community was named after Rev. George Alder, General Secretary, of the Methodist Missionary Society. Even though the move resulted in the community having to sacrifice its blacksmith and carpenter shops, the 3,400 acres which were assigned for the new settlement seemed to be worth the concession.

A publication by Richard Boehme, *Mission on Grape Island*, provides an early description of the new site by Peter Jones an Ojibwa missionary:

It seems fitting to end this brief history of the Grape Island Mission with a visit from an old and true friend. On the morning of September 3, 1837, Peter Jones arrived at Aldersville in time to have breakfast with the Case family. This was Peter's assessment for the New Mission: 'the settlement at Alnwick bids fair to be a prosperous one. The Indians in General are very industrious and ambitious to get along in their civilization. The arrangement of this Mission is the best I have seen in all the Indian settlements.'⁷

⁶Graham 31.

⁷Richard Boehme, *Mission on Grape Island* ([Ontario]: 7th Town Historical Society, 1987) 28.

The new settlement was separated by a road with 50 acre lots on each side. A number of the lots had new log houses constructed in an ordered fashion facing the road. It was evident that much clearing, tilling and construction of buildings had been completed prior to the final move in the spring of 1837.

However, the relocation disrupted the Methodists' agricultural system for "civilizing" the Mississauga people, and by 1839 the missionaries decided to build a manual labour school to continue their civilizing efforts through a system of education which instructed the male students in agriculture and the female students in home economics. The early results of the school were deemed to be a success until 1856 when the school had to be closed for a year because of a typhus outbreak. After reopening, the future of the school was threatened when the students either returned home or ran away. By 1859 the missionaries reluctantly decided the school would have to close due to lack of funds as the Indians took exception to supporting the school from their annuity payments.⁸

Speculation regarding the closure of the school suggests that the directed cultural change by the missionaries was beginning to lose impact: "reports from the missionaries and the chiefs were discouraging, particularly about the generation gap. The young people preferred hunting to farming, and would not accept the authority of the council."⁹

A band council resolution dated January 1st, 1859 states:

At a meeting of the Chiefs and Warriors of the Band of Indians residing in the Township of Alnwick, the following resolutions were unanimously adopted. viz.-

⁸Graham 79.

⁹Graham 31.

1st. That it is resolved in council and has been determined with the view of promoting the future welfare of these Indians and to induce them to cultivate the soil and prevent them from indulging in the use of intoxicating liquors. that, if any member of this band shall continue to indulge in drinking spirituous liquors, it is hereby agreed in council to deprive him of receiving his annuity and interest money for six months in case of habitual drunkenness.

2nd. That it is agreed that each individual will stand his trial for three months after which he shall be brought before the Council and then reported to the Indian Department according.¹⁰

Perhaps, the young people were beginning to react to the social restrictions which Christianity placed on people. Farming was labour intensive with unpredictable yields in a climate that was unpredictable. If there was any surplus produce to sell, it was subject to the market value. Also, the refusal to participate in the agricultural economy can be seen as a form of resistance to the enforced change.

In comparison to farming, the traditional economy of hunting and fishing was considered to be more affluent. According to Marshall Sahlins, in *Stone Age Economics*, "an affluent society is one in which all the people's material wants are easily satisfied."¹¹ An additional factor, to which Sahlins makes reference, is the amount of time expended in food-connected activities. He concludes that hunters and gatherers do not work hard and that the subsistence activities were not a continuous activity therefore there was plenty of leisure time. Scouting reports by the young men, who identified Alnwick as the preferred tract of land for a new village site, indicated that there was

¹⁰RG10, vol. 414, Central (Toronto) Superintendency, 1836-1883. Correspondence, 1845-1879. Letters received at the Toronto office of the Central Superintendency, 1845-1877. "Band Council Resolution, 1 January 1859."

¹¹Marshall Sahlins, Stone Age Economics (Chicago: Aldin-Atherton, Inc., 1972) 1.

plenty of game and fish available to supplement the farming effort. The Alnwick area was unlike the Bay of Quinte territory which had been inundated by white settlements that decimated the traditional economy. Unfortunately, the missionaries associated the intermittent pursuit of acquiring traditional food with having spare time and it was spare time that contributed to the development of unacceptable social behaviour.

In 1867 the saw mill at Warkworth was set on fire by the Mississaugas of Alderville. It has been speculated that the Indians tried to destroy the accounting records to avoid paying their debts. A local narrative states, "the mill was completely burned down by Indians in 1867 following a disputed account, and a four storey mill was then built".¹² Another speculation is that the Indians felt they were not receiving a fair return for the amount of timber that was being cut by the mill.¹³ In any case, the act of arson can be described as an act of resistance. It can argued that the people were dissatisfied with government and missionary efforts to bring about change in their lifestyle and expressed their frustrations through acts of resistance and civil disobedience. The political unrest evidenced by acts of resistance supports the view that the political relationship between the people of Alderville and the dominant society was characterized by a series of cultural and political transactions, not all-or-nothing conversions or resistances. It must be remembered that the Indian did not have a long political history with the European powers to inform them how to deal with governments that were

¹²Sandra Elaine Allanson-Kelly, Heritage Properties: Township of Percy (Percy Township, ON: 1991) n.pag.

¹³Bill Bowen. Telephone Interview. 15 October 1995. Mr. Bowen is a descendent of the family who owned the mill.

determined to "civilize" by enforcing cultural change and implementing European social structures.

Considering that the enforcement of social behaviour and manipulation of the Anishinabe social system was contrary to traditional thought, there is little doubt that the attempt to enforce precise behaviour was also a contributing factor for dissension among the young people. Traditional thought credits the cultural values with dictating acceptable social behaviour; however, with cultural change being directed or enforced, Indians were not permitted to modify their traditional social systems to adapt to the new conditions and needs that were being created. Instead, their traditional social systems were systematically destroyed, thereby causing frustration.

Forms of resistance are methods that the people used to relieve frustration. According to the examples provided by James C. Scott, the refusal to practise agriculture and desire to return to the "thrill of the chase" indicate a sense of foot dragging. It is possible to argue that the excessive use of alcohol, while being symptomatic of culture loss, is a form of sabotage directed against the perceived élites of the community. Drinking lowers inhibitions and creates an attitude to express anger. While the open expression of anger is deemed unacceptable social behaviour in western society, it is also contrary to traditional Anishinabe cultural values. Anger is often expressed through ridicule, shunning or through the use of gossip.

Traditional Anishinabe cultural values were passed from generation to generation through oral histories. The traditional method was interrupted by the European method of teaching, which forbade the students to speak their language, and at the same time

there was a conscious effort to disconnect the young people from their communities. This position is supported by James Axtell in the chapter, *The Little Red School*, from his book *The Invasion Within*:

the goal of the English missions was to convert the Indians from a traditional to a totally new way of life and thought...Throughout the colonial period, missionaries tried to reach Indian children and adults at the same time. But when the English became frustrated in their attempts to convert native adults, their emphasis shifted perceptibly toward the young...conversion was essentially a form of education--reeducation--and education was something that transpired largely in formal institutions of learning...The best way, then, to reduce Indian children, primarily boys, to civility was to send them to English schools and colleges--sexually segregated, morally guarded, classically oriented, rigorously disciplined, patriarchally dominated, and until the eighteenth century, located in English territory, far from the contagion of traditional habit, families, and friends. ¹⁴

Once the connection between generations was disrupted through religious conversion and an alien education system, the young people were cut off from the elders and traditional teachers. Also, the English system of education failed to capture the vision and commitment of the Indians, all of which created a situation in which the people felt they had no alternative but to set their own direction. The indication that it was primarily the boys who were sent away to schools and that they were "patriarchally dominated" suggests why there is a lack, in the historical record, of references to the role and activities of women. The promotion of men as leaders and decision makers was perpetuated by the conversion to Christianity and by the *Indian Act* left the women systemically subjugated.

In a letter signed by John Sunday, John Simpson, John Pigeon, Joseph Skunk and

¹⁴James Axtell, *The Invasion Within* (New York: Oxford UP, 1985) 179.

Thomas Fraser dated July 14, 1858, the Chief and Council state:

at present the greater part of our people are falling back in regards to farming operations, too much in pursuit of hunting and we feel you will have no hesitation to check this evil, as we the Chiefs and Councillors have very little influence over them, and we pray, that you and the Government will assist us to encourage those who wish to become farmers, during the Administration of Sir John Colborne, Sir George Arthur, Lord Metcalf, Lord Elgin, and the Superintendent Colonel Bruce, Colonel Jarvis, Lord Bury, the Indians were progressing in the arts of civilizations and we sincerely hope we shall revive again in following the farming pursuits...¹⁵

The growing rift between the chief and council and the people continued into the 1870's. Some of those elected to band council were Christian converts including Chief John Sunday, who was a Methodist exhorter, who promoted Christian values and civilization through a process of developing an agriculture work ethic. Along with a reluctance to surrender to a Christian agriculture work ethic, the people undoubtedly reacted negatively toward nepotism and élitism that appear to have encouraged and resulted in the development of community factionalism that is still present in contemporary community politics.

Further evidence of élitism is exhibited through my own analysis of the holdings and agricultural activities from the 1864 Agriculture Census at Alderville. From 1850 to 1900, there are 14 individuals referred to in the RG10 Records as being chiefs, councillors, church sextons or who held principal positions within the governing structure of the band. These individuals represented 6% of the population who held 48% of the land, 89% of the livestock, produced 97% of the crop yields and owned 100% of the farm implements that were supplied by the department (see Tables 1-4 in the appendix

¹⁵RG10, vol. 414.

section). These figures could suggest that agriculture was seen to be an élitist activity.¹⁶

John Sunday, whose Ojibwa name was Shawundais, meaning "sultry heat such as the sun gives out in summer just before a refreshing rain....once commanded the respect of his community but had lost it through his heavy drinking", regained a position of respect following his conversion to Christianity on May 31, 1826.¹⁷ He travelled extensively in Upper Canada preaching the gospel to the Ojibwa and went on a missionary tour of Britain to raise money for the Methodist Missionary Society to strengthen the Methodist connection. A copy of an archival letter dated May 1834 by S. Hurlburt, a Methodist missionary, refers to Shawundais as a principal Chief of the Indians of Grape Island¹⁸ and in another archival letter dated July 19, 1869 by Commissioner W.R. Bartlett, stated that John Sunday was the first Chief to be nominated by the band;¹⁹ although Chief John Sunday and councillors Jacob Storm, William Crow and Thomas Fraser claim in a copy of an archival letter of January 14, 1870 to be able to trace their line of chiefs back more than sixty years and could substantiate their claim by living witnesses,²⁰ suggesting that there were principal headmen or chiefs prior to the

¹⁶RG10, vol. 306, Correspondence Deputy Superintendent General's Office, 1864.

¹⁷Donald B. Smith, Sacred Feathers. (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1987) 92-3.

¹⁸RG10, vol. 315, Correspondence Deputy Superintendent General's Office, 1862-1924.

¹⁹RG 10, vol. 313, Correspondence Deputy Superintendent General's Office, 1862-1924.

²⁰RG10, vol. 314, Correspondence Deputy Superintendent General's Office, 1862-1924.

Grape Island period.

As the Alnwick mission was being established in 1837, the Methodists were experiencing a division between the British and Canadian conferences, and at the same time there was also division developing amongst the Ojibwa bands, who were under the guardianship of the Methodist missionaries. Some of the bands were convinced that they would be better off giving up their southern Ontario reserve lands and moving further north while others were concerned that the Indians must keep their lands and that they should unite together in a general uprising. Sir Francis Bond Head developed his removal policy based on his perception that the Indians would never adapt to agriculture and a settled lifestyle regardless of what was done for them. He believed that the answer to the "Indian problem" of what to do with them after the land was no longer theirs was to remove the remaining Indians to Manitoulin Island where they would face extinction, which would leave the land free for white settlers²¹. His policy angered the Methodists who had made some small progress in their civilization efforts, the Alnwick mission being one example.

The decision to fight the removal policy brought some unity to the Canadian conference. In 1838 a mission led by Peter Jones, an Ojibwa Methodist missionary, set out for Britain to seek the assistance of the colonial secretary, Lord Glenelg, in fighting the removal policy. Lord Glenelg, who had always believed the Indians could be converted and civilized, promised to work to secure proper title deeds for the Christian Indians, which would remove the constant threat of having their lands taken away.

²¹Donald B. Smith, Sacred Feathers (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1987) 162.

However, there was little need for Lord Glenelg to intervene as Sir Francis Bond Head resigned as lieutenant governor following the Mackenzie rebellion in Upper Canada²².

The period of 1826-1867 is characterized by directed social and cultural change that is an enforced cultural revolution directed by the missionaries. They attempted to develop subjective conditions that were acceptable to Christianity, involving the breaking down of habits and artifacts of Native culture. This deprived the traditional social order of its economic support based on hunting and gathering.

During this phase the traditional political structure was reduced to reflect a western liberal-democratic concept in which the warriors and the head men were given the power to make decisions. The historical documents indicate that it was only the Chief, the warriors and the male members who were consulted and held the right to vote on issues. References to the role of women are lacking and appear only when connected to the male members for the purpose of the census and annuity payments that were paid to the widow (eg the widow John Sunday). They were not referred to by a given name. It was during this phase that the image of the community changed from that which once reflected traditional ideals to one where European "civilization" ideals were seemingly being practised as an effort to survive as a community and as a people.

Cultural Repression 1867 - 1951

Chief John Sunday died in 1875 after serving for over 40 years as the principal Chief of the Mississaugas at both Grape Island and Alderville. His chieftainship is

²²Smith 164-166.

marked by a period that underwent tumultuous social and cultural change during which the Mississauga Ojibwa endured a drastic change to their traditional economy and were coerced into living a sedentary lifestyle and then having to move to a new village site to further endure civilization efforts in the pursuit of agriculture. This period in the history of the community is distinguished by the missionaries' desire to promote the new site as a model Indian community that glorified their efforts of Christianization. The period that followed the death of Chief John Sunday marked the move toward a wage labour economy and the move from the agricultural civilization of the missionary efforts.

Following Confederation the policy goal of the government was to assimilate the Indian people into Canadian society. Chief John Sunday represented the work of the Methodist Missionary Society in its attempt to bring "civilization" to the Ojibwa. After his death the community structure that was developed began to break down and the people began to experience hardship. As the government was anxious to meet its policy goal there was little or no assistance granted to the band. By 1873, in a letter dated March 19th to the Indian Affairs Department, Commissioner W.R. Bartlett stated, "it was a great relief to the Indians [to distribute the timber rights monies], many of whom were very badly off and being needy."²³ It appears that the agricultural effort was not able to adequately provide for the needs of the community and to provide a self-sufficient supply of food accounts for the necessity of reverting to the traditional economy as the majority of community members did not have the means to carry out farming.

²³RG10, vol. 1887, file 1306, Alnwick Reserve - W.R. Bartlett advising that he has distributed the October, 1872 payment to the Indians. "letter, 19 March 1873."

This seemingly necessary action should not be confused with a conscious resurgence of cultural practise by the young people but it should be noted that the ceremonial rituals associated with the hunt are grounded in cultural values and a spiritual connection to the natural resources, which in turn, reinforce the Anishinabe world view that consequently led to an effort of revitalizing cultural values that inform a concept of self-government. The confusion regarding the return to traditional cultural practises arises through a perception held by the missionaries. This perception is obvious in a metaphor used by a missionary that the Mississauga Ojibwa have not "entirely lost the shell from their heads,"²⁴ referring to newly hatched quails which will run off to the bush to hide with a piece of the shell still on their heads suggests that the Mississauga had not entirely given up their attachment to their wilderness life-style and that it was difficult to change their world view as they were not completely reborn into Christianity and a new society.

Since Aboriginal thought is considered to be holistic, it is difficult to be sure that the people held a conscious notion of the traditional economy being spiritually connected to their world view. They hunted and gathered and shared their bounty with the community. Women, children and the elders of the community had a role in the traditional economy. It was a time for feasting, dancing and teaching. A major endeavour for Alderville was the wild rice harvest on Rice Lake. However, from 1897 to 1933 there was a dispute between the Indians of Rice and Mud Lakes and Alderville

²⁴This metaphor is used in a letter of November 27, 1830, written by Philander Smith, to the Editor of the Christian Guardian.

over the right to harvest the rice. A letter of September 10, 1920 written by F.M. Field, K.C. to Duncan Campbell Scott, Deputy Superintendent General, Indian Affairs refers to the harvesting of wild rice which was an annual event and the fact that it been held for a long period of time: "all they ask and claim is that which for generations they have enjoyed, namely, the participation in the harvest to the extent that they are able to do with their diminished numbers".²⁵

Field's letter presents a rich description of the community effort and role of each member:

It has been usual now for a good many years for the Indians of the Alderville Band to harvest the rice and winnow it in their primitive methods on Sugar Island...Some years ago I went out for the purpose of becoming at first hand acquainted with the methods of harvesting this crop, and as a result of my visit I wrote for the Canadian Courier...and it does seem to me most strange that any question should now be raised as to their rights respecting the wild rice harvest...You are probably familiar with the process, which consists of the Indians and their wives and daughters uniting in this work by going forth in their canoes and beating the grain into the canoes with paddles until the canoe is so laden that they make for the shores of Sugar Island where they camp in tents and then parch it in large kettles and winnow it by hand without the use of fanning mills. To my knowledge at this season of the year these operations at Sugar Island have been made a festive occasion by the Indians... who camp there in tents taking all their families, big and little, and live there for a period of two or three weeks...You will understand that this wild rice does not grow by reason of its being planted by the hand of man, but has been there from time immemorial, planted by the Creator...it is an important matter financially...Last year they tell me they got forty and fifty cents a pound for what they were able to spare because they have made it a rule to retain considerable quantities of it for their own uses, and it is

²⁵RG10, vol. 2898, file 183,727, Alnwick Agency - Correspondence and memoranda regarding the dispute between the Indians of Rice and Mud Lakes and the Alnwick and Alderville Bands relating to the wild rice on Rice Lake. Date 1897-1933.

indeed a staple article of diet.²⁶

The letter highlights a number of particulars regarding the idea of resistance and class struggle. The letter indicates that the Mississaugas of Alderville sought legal counsel, which is a form of resistance, since the federal government discouraged this type of action by disallowing Indians from retaining lawyers. They were concerned about the loss of a right that had been practised for a long time. Harvesting wild rice was a community effort and a festival that had a spiritual connection directly to the Creator.

It was traditional knowledge that had been passed down through the generations. The harvest or the "time of the wild rice moon" was watched by elders Alfred Simpson, James Bigwin and Zachariah Smoke, who determined the readiness of the crop and set the day for the harvest to begin. After the rice was gathered it was spread to dry in the sun. Then it was put into a large cauldron over an open fire and stirred with a paddle to parch the rice so that the chaff would be loosened from the grain. After removing the cauldron from the fire, the next step was a responsibility that was taught to the young boys because they were light in weight and would not break the rice. They were told to put on their moccasins and step into the cauldron to "dance the rice." Finally, the rice was placed on a tarp or blanket and tossed into the air to winnow the chaff from the grain.²⁷

²⁶RG10, vol. 2898, file 183,727, "A letter written by F.M. Field to Deputy Superintendent Duncan Campbell Scott, 10 September 1920."

²⁷Elizabeth Crowe, Minnie Beaver and Maria Bigwin, my mother and grandmothers, told and retold the stories of camping at Sugar Island in Rice Lake for the wild rice harvest. They recounted what was expected of them as well as the fun that the children had fishing and swimming and of the work involved in the catching and

The Indians of Hiawatha and Curve Lake (Rice and Mud Lakes) took action to protect a traditional resource. A 1905 document indicates that the government of Ontario leased the rice beds for 21 years, which deprived the Indians of trapping, shooting and gathering wild rice. This prevented the Indians from accessing a very large source of their living.²⁸ To the Mississaugas of Alderville the ban on gathering the rice was deemed to be an infringement on a right that was given to them by the Creator.

A letter written by F.M. Field, K.C. to Sir James A. Lougheed, K.C., Superintendent General of Indians Affairs dated September 30, 1920 encloses a statement of facts prepared by Miss Charlotte Crowe, daughter of the late Chief Peter Crowe, provides insight into the extent that the dispute affected the community and the rising class society that was developing as a result of external influence:

the Chiefs and other Indians having influence from Hiawatha (or Rice lake) went down to the Bay of Quinte and gave them [Mississauga Ojibwa] a very pressing invitation to come up and share all the privileges that they had here...the invitation came from pure love that the old chiefs had for one another all owing to the preaching of "Gods Word"...(It is extremely lamentable to say, the rising generation of Rice Lake reserve don't know anything of the word of God they never go near the Church)...there were no papers drew only verbal understanding which was all that was required in those days...they would go to our Indians at Bay of Quinte and tell them the rice is ready to gather...now, here we are objects of contempt by them. Almost threatening our very existence if we go on the lake much more so if we make an attempt to gather the rice...Just to acquaint you how rebellious the Rice Leake [Lake] Indians are. A much respected young Rice Leake [Lake] gentleman of English descent drove to Rice Lake

smoking fish for the camp feast. As recent as 1954, I watched the process and was asked to "dance the rice." It was a moment of pride. In 1987, I assisted in the process by taking an active part and directing a young boy how to "dance the rice."

²⁸RG10, vol. 2898, file 183,727.

Reserve to call on a young Lady who also was White. One of the young Indians went and watched this young man in a very lonely woods...from "Pure Jealousy" and would of likely left him more dead than alive only he got away from them by the help of Providence. So you see the savagery is in them still. I regret extremely that we are compelled to bring this matter under your notice...We have so many young people that has intermarried on both reserves it will certainly make it very disagreeable for both sides. We do not ask anything unreasonable only what we having been use to getting this eighty years. I was reading the life of the "Prime Minister" Mr. Meighan in the "Christian Guardian" and as I looked at his photo in the Guardian I said to myself can it be possible this and our "never failing friend Mr. Field" are the chosen ones by our loving "friend that sticketh closer than a brother" (in whom we trust) to bring this trouble to a satisfactory conclusion.²⁹

The statement represents more than the class struggle that invaded Aboriginal society. It shows "a struggle to identify causes and assess blame...entailing backbiting, gossip, character assassination...what is remarkable about this aspect is it requires a shared world view."³⁰ In this case, the blame for the dispute is the "savagery" that is still present in Rice Lake Indians who have "forgotten" the old ways and have not continued going to Church to keep in mind the new way taught by Christianity.

Likewise, the statement is an indication that the Mississauga Ojibwa of Alderville lived and acted between cultures, thereby exerting shrewd methods to alleviate the pressures of the moment. Furthermore, this statement demonstrates the attempt to reconcile Christian values with the traditional values of sharing and caring. It was a shrewd attempt to appeal to those who were deemed to hold power by displaying an

²⁹RG10, vol. 2898, file 183,727, Statement by Miss Charlotte Crowe enclosed in a "letter written by F.M. Field to Sir James A. Lougheed, 30 September 1920."

³⁰James C. Scott, Weapons of the Weak (New Haven: Yale UP, 1985) xvii.

acceptance of Christianity which might entice the government "officials" to be more responsive to the position of Alderville.

The goal of the government was to assimilate the Indian into society and to give up the practise of a traditional economy. Christianization was viewed as having the same goal, and therefore, the government supported the efforts of the missionary. Since the government policy was set on assimilation, any assistance that was granted to the band was partially to meet its goal and favoured those who could help them achieve it.

Evidence of partiality to Methodist converts is found in the 1872 and 1873 pay and pension lists from the Department of Indian Affairs which indicate that Chief John Sunday was in receipt of an annual salary of \$112.00 while other non-Methodist chiefs in the Central Superintendency region were receiving \$48.00 to \$50.00 per year.³¹ Also, the 1872 Return of Indian Schools indicates that John Sunday Jr. was a teacher in receipt of \$200.00 per year supported by the Wesleyan Missionary Society,³² while at the same time he was the band secretary earning an annual salary of \$48.00. These documents, along with others, suggest that a situation was encouraged by the department that created the perception of nepotism and elitism. It is clear that the missionary activities were partially responsible for creating this perception and the class struggle.

³¹RG10, vol. 1865, file 433, Requisition for Salaries and Pensions for reserves in the Toronto Superintendency and vol. 1916, file 2736, Superintendent William Plumber, Report of Pensions for Employees in Central Superintendency.

³²RG10, vol. 1888, file 1431, W.R. Bartlett, Commissioner of the Central (Toronto) Superintendency sends the School Return for the year 1872.

New Politics 1945 - 1969

This period is marked by the World Wars in which a significant number of the men from Alderville enlisted in the armed forces to serve overseas. Many lost their lives. The Wars had a significant impact on the world view held by members of the community. As a result of the influence from the Grand Council between the Ojibwas and the Iroquois, a sense of self-determination began to be expressed. From the great wars there is a notion of an Indian nationalism that can be seen to emerge when the men returned home. The Native political associations become more prominent after World War II and reacted to government legislation and policy; however, they did not offer any protection to Indian women, who lost their Indian status when they married non-Indian men despite the obvious consequence that this policy would have on the future of Indian culture and society.

There were a significant number of men who enlisted and served overseas. The women replaced men in the factories, some of which were converted to meet the war effort, such as the munitions factories at Campbellford and Lakefield. During the war, the daily activity of the women was not disrupted to any great extent. Some found employment in wage labour as domestics, fruit farm workers and factory workers in the local canning and tanning factories that were located in the nearby town of Cobourg and the village of Hastings.³³ Traditionally women, out of necessity because of death,

³³Ivan Beaver who had enlisted in the service told me about how he and his brothers saw their mother and sisters cope with the effects of the war. My mother, Elizabeth Crowe, worked as a domestic, fruit farm worker in Clarkson, Ontario and in the local canning factories.

desertion or illness of their male partner, performed men's tasks.^{34 35}

Following World War II, a Special Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee on Indian Affairs was convened to investigate the Indian Act. Presentations made before the committee indicate that Alderville did not take the opportunity to voice any concerns, let alone oppose, gender discrimination. Many of the band councils and Native organizations that made submissions did not refer to issues of gender discrimination. There were indications that "many band councils and Native organizations wanted to retain the gender discrimination sections of the Indian Act....the patriarchal nature of the band councils may have stemmed from the fact that all of the band councils were exclusively male."³⁶ Therefore, it is logical that Alderville did not make any submissions because of the Methodist influence and the Indian Act having established a patriarchal order for over 120 years, which decimated the matriarchal cultural component. Clearly the archival documents have shown the dominance of the "principal men" and "warriors."

It is generally accepted that the World Wars played a significant part in the development of new technology, particularly in communications. Communications advancement removed national boundaries and unsettled political ideologies. Native

³⁴Ruth Landes, The Ojibwa Woman (New York: W. W. Norton & Company Inc., 1938) 136.

³⁵Kathleen Taylor from Curve Lake talked about women who could "set traps just as good as any man."

³⁶Gurpreet Kaur Sodhi, "Ignored are the Wives and Children: Voices from Band Councils and Native Organizations during the Special Joint Committee of 1946-1948 and The Standing Committee on Bill C-31," M.A. thesis, Trent U, 1996, 53

people began to question their relationships with the non-Native world. The role of the church began to decline. At Alderville there was a brief surge in church attendance during the 1960's but which began to decline toward the end of that decade. A phenomenon referred to as "pan-Indianism" began to stir within Canadian Indian reservations. Pan-Indianism is described as a political process which raises Indian consciousness that attempts to fill the void created by government assimilationist tactics and the growing desire to interact with other tribal members through the sharing of cultural expressions.

The American Indian Movement "was founded in 1968 in Minneapolis in an effort to halt police mistreatment of Indians in the city."³⁷ Eventually, its philosophy spilled over into Canada. That philosophy characterizes a political process. It did not take long before the waving of the clenched fist and the eagle feather became symbols of "being Indian" for the Alderville young people. News of AIM and Native civil disobedience disquieted the older members of the community. Civil disobedience was to become a weapon of resistance for the Native activists and the eagle feather a symbol of strength and unity found in traditional culture. Eventually, a choice would have to be made between western and traditional ideals. Community factionalism was inevitable regardless of the choice made.

³⁷Stephen Cornell, The Return of the Native (New York: Oxford UP, 1988) 189.

The Community 1970 - 1995

In Canadian Aboriginal society, the 1970's could be described as the decade in which traditional culture began to experience a renaissance despite the federal government's 1969 White Paper on Indian Policy which continued the policy of assimilation. 1970 marks the end of the colonial period for Alderville. The historical documents that relate to the community do not specifically give descriptions of traditional culture or allude to any effort on the part of the Indians to retain a sense of culture through practise or speaking their language. It was not until the mid 1980's that an Ojibwa language program was offered to the community. Through the program, a young woman developed a limited ability to speak the language. This encouraged the chief and council to press the Northumberland and Newcastle Board of Education to implement an Ojibwa language course at the Roseneath Centennial School. This school is attended by students from Alderville.

The chief and council were aware of the value of language in the revitalization of culture as well as the importance of developing language in an effort to reclaim traditional cultural values which help to express self-determination and support the re-emergence of Ojibwa culture and the notion that Aboriginal self-government is the process of the community reclaiming traditional cultural values.

The resurgence of culture is depicted in various forms of expression. Menno Boldt in *Surviving As Indians: The Challenge of Self-Government* suggests that cultural revival has "focused primarily on the expressive-ritualistic aspects of their traditional cultures, that is, ceremonies, songs, dances, art, traditional legends, art works

and so on."³⁸ He notes that there are some individuals who are taking an interest in sacred societies and ceremonies such as the Ojibwa Midewiwin Society, participating in sweet grass and sweat-lodge ceremonies. However, it is his opinion that such expressive-ritualistic activities, while important elements of culture, do nothing to promote traditional values and norms that direct a way of life and that maintain an acceptable social behaviour. His opinion has some validity; however, what he fails to realize is that some of the ceremonies are conducted in a manner which acknowledges the traditional teachings as being essential components of ceremony participation. The point is that the traditional teachings and the traditional values and norms are connected. As members of the community develop cultural awareness, their world view is eventually redefined, stressing the significant values of sharing, equality, and consensual decision-making as a means of building and maintaining a healthy community.

The First Minister's Conferences of the 1980's did not result in the implementation of Aboriginal self-government. Aboriginal self-government was not defined. Since Aboriginal self-government remained a value notion, some First Nations, including Alderville, began to express the preference of using culturally-based models of governance and economic development to articulate their concept of self-government. In their demand, for chief and council to implement economic development programs to provide training for women, the women effectively established a cultural revitalization movement that would adapt the traditional cultural values to the contemporary social structures. As a result self-determination would be expressed in economic development

³⁸Menno Boldt, Surviving as Indians: The Challenge of Self-government (U of Toronto P, 1993) 176.

initiatives and reflect community aspirations. Community services have begun to reflect self-determination expressions, which some members of the community are resisting. Their resistance is indicative of the factionalism and the need for healing that many Native communities are experiencing.

Recent Community Wellness Conferences have promoted personal, family, and community healing within a framework based on traditional cultural values. A significant aim of the conferences has been to employ an holistic approach that focuses on the health of Native women who would likely return to their communities with a renewed sense of empowerment. This renewed sense leads to the promotion of community health as the well-being of the community is seen to be a traditional role of the women. Resolution has to come from the community; solutions can not be imposed by outsiders.³⁹ Notably, these conferences grew out of the discussions on Aboriginal self-government held in the communities, and the traditional teachings were the central point upon which the conferences were structured. This emphasizes the notion that Aboriginal self-government is a process of the community reclaiming traditional cultural values.

During the 1990's, the community began to actively reclaim traditional culture. For the most part, from 1987 to 1995, community politics were under the influence of the women; the first woman was elected chief in 1987. Once again the young people began to question their world view in an attempt to adapt and to reflect traditional culture as a community reality. The women decided that traditional knowledge through language

³⁹This statement was made time and again at *Working Together: The Action Agenda for Self-government Conference* hosted by the First Nations House of Learning, University of British Columbia 1994.

programs and traditional teachings and stories should be brought into the community. Traditional peoples such as Paul and Lily Bourgeois, Shirley Williams, Bubbles Knott, Doug Williams and other Elders were invited to bring that knowledge. As traditional knowledge was uncovered a resurgence in Native spirituality soon became evident. The women began to hold full moon ceremonies, fire keepers received teachings and traditional dance regalia was brought together.

Paul Bourgeois from Trent University presents the teachings of the 7 Fire Prophecies which foretell the reappearance of wild rice in Rice Lake. The prophecies say that when the rice reappears in the lake so too will the traditions regain their strength. Alderville has taken the lead in developing a reseeding program developed through the Indian Agriculture Program of Ontario. It seems ironic that Alderville has taken an active role after being the subject of the rice dispute in the early 1900's. While the Methodist history might suggest that the community is solidly entrenched in western thought, Jeff Beaver, the agricultural program coordinator feels that the commitment made by the community to sustainable development reflects an effort to reclaim those traditional values that honour a relationship with Mother Earth.⁴⁰

During the 1990 Oka crisis, Alderville supported the Quebec Mohawks by erecting a blockade on highway #45, which traverses the reserve. This act of civil disobedience also signified resistance to Government's assimilation tactics. The symbols of being Indian were obvious, and in particular the Ojibwa cultural value of non-violence was an observable feature. Many members of the community supported the activists by

⁴⁰Jeff Beaver, Personal Interview, 19 July 1993.

providing food, drumming, and singing.⁴¹ Although some community members held different opinions about the blockade, it is clear that some had chosen to seek direction from a cultural perspective of self-determination, which was an active pursuit of reclaiming traditional cultural values.

It was March 12, 1994 that an historical event took place at Alderville during a Family Wellness Week. The first traditional social of feasting and dancing in over 150 years was hosted at its territory. It was a gathering of Aboriginal people with representatives from the Northwest Territories, Six Nations and other nearby First Nations. Members of the community who lived in the United States made the trip home to attend the historic evening. Ron Waukegejik, a medicine man from Wikwemikong, gave traditional teachings and offered thanks to the Creator for the reawakening of traditional culture at this community. The social began with the grand entrance, which was emotionally charged as the lead dancers and staff carrier led in the dancers who were from the community of Alderville.

Eventually, on April 26, 1995 the Alderville First Nation issued a vision statement. It stated that Alderville was committed to the continued nurturing of a unified, balanced way of life through traditional Anishinabe values.⁴² It is felt that "more attention should be given to policy changes which aim to increase Native economic and

⁴¹The blockade was erected at the side of my own driveway and my house was the only house on the reserve that was located behind the barrier. I therefore have primary knowledge of this event from observation and participation.

⁴²This vision statement appeared in the April 1995 edition of the Alderville First Nation newsletter.

political power....[present policies] only create local fragmentation, internal conflict, and further loss of resources for the Native community."⁴³ It is clear that the idea of self-government will proceed toward cultural retraditionalization.

A new multi-purpose community centre was opened in 1995. The architecture and subtle designs present a Native quality. Community fund raising and matching grants provided a significant contribution toward the building cost; however, the balance was financed through band funds, which ensures that there is a collective responsibility since the community as a whole will benefit from the centre.

Up to this point the federal government had dictated the design of band buildings, applying the same design on reserves across Canada without consideration for local expression. As a result, Ottawa was able to continue a subtle process of assimilation. The architectural style was International Modernism, which was a conscious rejection of history based on a belief in linear progress, absolute truths and the rational planning of ideal social orders. The multi-purpose design rejected government building plans and Indian Affairs-imposed homogeneity and articulated a more meaningful cultural expression.⁴⁴

Connected to the community centre is the Alderville First Nation Day Care Centre. The day care incorporates an holistic approach which stimulates development in the four domains: physical, intellectual, psycho-social and spiritual. Staff must have

⁴³Edward J. Hedican, Understanding Aboriginal Issues (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1995) 189-90.

⁴⁴Christopher Earl Reading, "Kehewin School: The Architecture of Native Self-Determination," M.A. thesis, U of Alberta, 1996, 4-5.

knowledge of Native communities and culture, with Native ancestry being an asset (see tables and appendices for Job Postings Alderville First Nation Day Care Centre). This statement clearly indicates that Chief and Council make the final decision, which suggests that they will govern the direction that the day care is to take.

In June 1995, the band elected an all male Chief and Council at a time when federal government financial cutbacks posed a serious threat to Native communities. Henry Lickers from Akwesasne suggests that, traditionally, the men have been the protectors of Native society. In times of crisis the male leaders will rise up, and once the crisis passes the women will again take over when community needs drive politics.

In 1870, Chief John Sunday and councillors Jacob Storm, William Crow and Thomas Fraser stated that they could trace the line of chiefs back over 60 years, which suggests that there was a specific method of choosing their leaders even though leadership selection was not conducted through the elected method. The challenge facing any future band government will be to develop Aboriginal institutions and reclaim traditional cultural values that reflect a participatory democracy-building community consensus.

The most recent expression of resistance came in December 1995. Seven communities, including Alderville, that were signatories to the 1923 Williams Treaty declared that the 1923 Williams Treaty was no longer valid and that they were no longer bound by the treaty. This action was a direct retaliation and resistance to the "Common Sense Revolution" undertaken by the Ontario Conservative government which cancelled the harvesting agreements signed with the previous Ontario government.

The Supreme Court of Canada heard the appeal of the Howard Case and upheld

the "basket clause" contained in the 1923 Williams Treaty. Ontario interprets the "basket clause" to extinguish hunting and fishing rights. It is difficult to conceive that the Indians would agree to the extinguishment of hunting and fishing rights in 1923 as the right to hunt and fish was entrenched into their world view over a long period of time. Such deep rooted philosophical thought does not change within one generation. A letter written by Chief Peter Crowe formed one of the supporting documents which F.M. Field forwarded to Sir James A. Lougheed in 1920 with regard to the rice dispute in Rice Lake also confirms that it was their understanding that hunting and fishing would always be their right as long as grass grows and water runs and the "government wanted the land" and had no intention to interfere with hunting and fishing.

The following is the letter that Peter Crowe, the Chief of Alderville, wrote on June 15th, 1919:

This note contains an article bearing on Indian matters touching on the right of hunting game of all kinds for their own use. This privilege was reserved when this whole country was sold to the British Crown in the year 1763 when King George sent out Simco as his representative to govern Canada. He made the reservation on Indian rights of the natural products of the country such as deer and all other wild animals and wild fowls from which the natives obtain their living. It is to be regarded that many of our Canadians as well as in the old country entertain a very unfavourable opinion on the right of the soil upon which they were found inhabiting. As a rule those evil dispositioned persons have a wide influence with the government.

The following memorandum copied of the books at the Indian office Ottawa when King George the third sent out Simco to represent him to govern Canada. He made a treaty with the Indians at the Bay of Quinte called the Gun shot treaty. Thousands of Indians were present including all the principal chiefs of the different tribes. The governor stated although the government wanted the land, it was not intended that the fish or game rights be interfered with, as these belonged to the Indians who derived their living from them. These promises were to hold good as long as grass grows and water runs, on those lines very many people entertain a very strong objectionable feeling. A select committee appointed to look into the matter and report the matter in the British House of Commons in

the year 1833 on the native rights of the soil and natural products of the country. Therefore this fundamental principle world wide in its application was embodied in the Proclamation issued by King George the 3rd in the year 1763 to which that King recognized the titles of Indian tribes of Canada and guaranteed that they and their rights would be protected. The commissioners appointed by the legislatures of the Province of Canada in the year of 1856 from which the following words are quoted, by the Proclamation of 1763, the territorial rights [akin?] to those asserted by sovereign Princes are recognized as belongs to the Indians, that none of these rights can be alienated save by treaty between them and the Crown.⁴⁵

Peter Crowe recognized that there were "evil dispositioned persons" who had influence on the government. It was the intention of the government to assimilate the Indian or move the Indians to isolated areas to get rid of the "Indian problem." This mentality was evident in 1836 through the effort of Sir Frances Bond Head to move the Indians to Manitoulin Island.

The idea that hunting and fishing were no longer being practised persisted in the minds of the government who were fixated on assimilation. In 1846 W.H. Smith, who compiled the first Canadian Gazette, spent two years gathering statistical information on both Indian and white communities and reported that the Mississaugas of Alderville were no longer hunting and fishing. His report was supported by agriculture statistical figures similar to those in Tables 1-4. He concluded that an experimental farm was the focus of the reserve.⁴⁶ What his statistics could not indicate was the reactions that people were developing toward a perceived élitist class that agriculture was seeming to create and favour. By the 1850's the young people began to resist missionary agricultural activity

⁴⁵RG10, vol. 2898, file 183,727, "A letter written by F.M. Field to Sir James A. Lougheed, Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, Ottawa re: Wild Rice on Rice Lake, 30 September 1920."

⁴⁶Peter S. Schmalz, The Ojibwa of Southern Ontario (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1991) 176.

and were returning to hunting and fishing to supplement their livelihood. Furthermore, his conclusion was premature because from 1837 to 1846 the agriculture effort and the Manual Labour School were deemed to be a Methodist success story in civilizing the Indian since the community had been established for a mere nine years.

The Mississauga Ojibwa of Alderville were subjugated by missionary activity and by British imperial policy that Canada assumed in 1867. Canada continued with an assimilationist Indian policy development powered by section 91(24) of the British North America Act. Federal legislation subordinated Indian people, who eventually felt they had no choice but to challenge the oppressive structure. During the historical periods up to 1970, the federal government actively suppressed reforms that would increase the political power of Indians. Beginning in 1970 there was a new phase in the political relationship between Indians and the federal government with economic development motivating both Native and non-Native interest groups. It was Indian resources, not Indians themselves, that were the underlying interest of the larger society. As the Indians became aware of the demand to exploit natural resources, Native politics began to articulate a concept of self-determination.

Discussions concerning Aboriginal self-government developed by the United Indian Council began to reflect the idea that the community of Alderville is reclaiming traditional cultural values while pursuing self-government. The momentum instituted by the women in their desire to initiate economic development created a political force that will continue so long as the respect for women is maintained. Respect for women is central in traditional cultural values.

With respect to the role of women in community politics, Nora Bothwell believes that council ought to reflect a balance between men and women:

we have men all in Council and there's not that balance. Maybe there should be a rule or something that says you have to have half and half...There needs to be a balance...I think that's important. Women are sort of involved in politics anyway...like behind...the scenes...traditionally...They're the ones that let the men know what's going on...I think that's what we learned that traditionally and I think maybe in some way they still do that.⁴⁷

⁴⁷Nora Bothwell, Taped Interview, Apr. 1996.

Chapter 3

The Voices: They Say

Within Native culture is the basis of history, traditions and the spirit of the Anishinabe, all of which preserve their collective experiences and emotions from one generation to another. There are a number of factors in Aboriginal politics which are often distinguished by traditional cultural values. To order them is so sensitive that such politics requires reconciliation of differing community interests and temperaments. Aboriginal politics is not like western politics, which is distinguished by liberal thought. Consensus is more difficult to build, while at the same time tolerance and a sense of community are maintained. Frank MacKinnon holds the view that "new African states facing numerous practical problems seek to bolster their nationhood with revivals of their ancient tribal culture."¹ Similarly, the framework for Aboriginal aspirations of self-determination is beginning to be conceptualized through tribal customs.

As the Alderville First Nation began to deliberate on self-government, it soon became apparent that Aboriginal self-government is a process of the community reclaiming traditional cultural values. The community began a process of cultural revival. There are a number of Native people who perceive self-government as an alternative to being governed by the *Indian Act*. There are others who feel that self-determination has to come first before self-government. Self-determination is the ability of the community to make decisions, without outside influence, to solve problems that

¹Frank MacKinnon, Postures and Politics Some Observations on Participatory Democracy (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1973) 226.

it has identified. Self-determination asserts the right of the community to decide its own political arrangement if it is to form governance structures that represent its members. A collective sense of self-determination is held at a personal level that places control with the community while the control of the Aboriginal self-government agenda remains with the government of Canada through the *Indian Act*. Some Native leaders argue that Aboriginal self-government policy initiatives are the continuation of the Canadian government's attempt to assimilate Indian people. This concept creates a dilemma for the band council in determining a course for the future of the community. The *Indian Act* is seen as a tool of genocide by Wayne Beaver. He says:

Alderville is being phased out by the *Indian Act* and because we have the tools to change that, to determine our own citizenship - who belongs to this reserve - and they're [the leadership] not doing it, or we haven't done it up to this point, we are, in effect phasing ourselves out. I've referred to this a "self-inflicted genocide" because we don't use the tools that we have to change this...[if] it isn't going to happen then Alderville will be phased out eventually.²

While the band council is challenged with creating knowledge of participatory democracy, the community will have to construct a concept of governance and self-determination which will inform the band council. Some community members have expressed a desire for a traditional system of government or a blending with a western system of government. Another possible choice might be the retention of the present *Indian Act* system even though this system would perpetuate the oppression of traditional values and dictate the jurisdictional powers of the band council. In either case it is vital to create knowledge of concepts that some members of the community may not have

²Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

previously found necessary to comprehend. The initial stage will be to determine how they perceive self-governance and how important Anishinabe cultural norms are in forming their perceptions. It will be their perceptions upon which an informed choice will be made. Throughout the process the band council will need to continually reconcile differing community interests and make a concerted effort to maintain tolerance and a sense of community while consensus is being sought.

In 1993 a questionnaire was administered in an effort to gain information about the concepts held by members of Aboriginal communities toward Aboriginal self-government. The United Indian Councils through the Alderville self-government committee wanted to gain insight into the concept of self-government that members of the community held (see appendix A). A random selection of the eligible voters was chosen. Random sampling was chosen because most community members were annoyed at the number of other questionnaires that had been circulated during that period. The random ratio selected was 10% of the on-reserve population (10% of 250). Twenty-three respondents completed the questionnaire.

Support for Self-government (graph on page 93)

- (a) 64% support the idea,
- (b) 32% possibly would support the idea if they had more information and,
- (c) 4% do not support self-government.

Have a preferred system of government (graph on page 94)

- (a) 78% prefer a combination of a traditional and western system of government,
- (b) 11% are satisfied with the present *Indian Act* system,
- (c) 7% are not sure and,
- (d) 4% prefer a traditional system.

Feel the term of office for council should be extended to four years (graph on page 95)

- (a) 61% support an extended term,
- (b) 22% do not support an extended term and,
- (c) 16% did not answer.

The elections for Chief and Council should be staggered (graph on page 96)

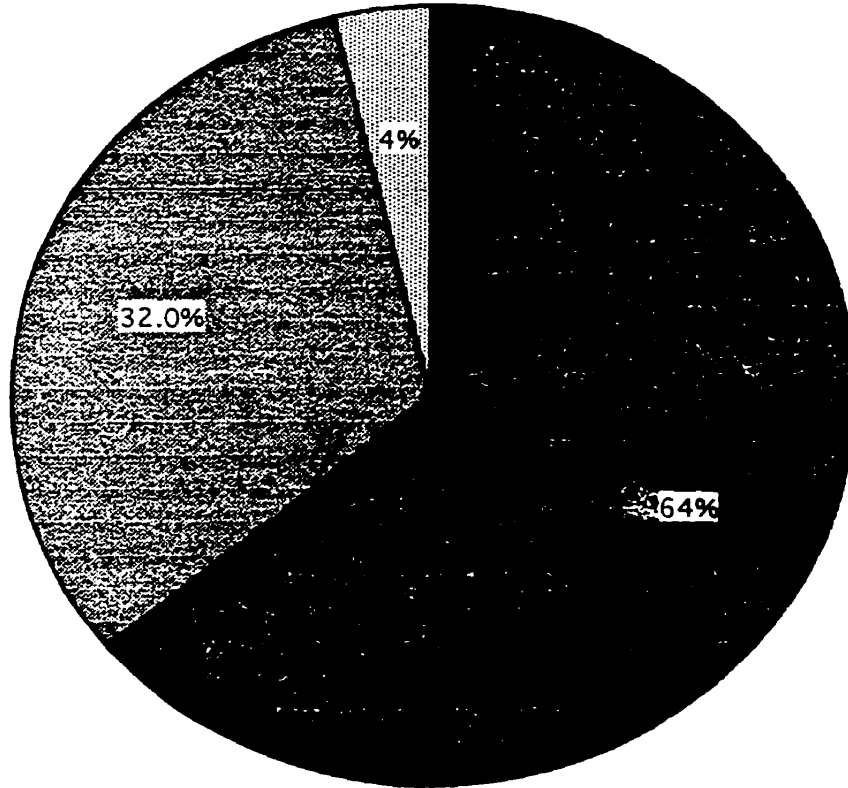
- (a) 44% support staggered elections,
- (b) 27% do not support staggered elections,
- (c) 22% did not answer and,
- (d) 5% are not sure.

Since a desire for a preferred system of government and interest in traditional culture were indicated, it would be prudent of the band council to acknowledge that these responses exist; otherwise, community fragmentation will continue. Eventually, the choice may well be between self-governance or self-destruction. To make an informed choice, it is the inherent responsibility of the Chief and Council to inform the community of the consequences their choices may have.

The problem for most communities is that they have had no experience in institutional development to ensure their future survival as a people. External institutional models were developed by the Department of Indian Affairs according to the Department's vision of the future and were designed to control Indian people. Almost 30 years ago, H.B. Hawthorn in the *Hawthorn Report* stated that "the problem, simply defined, is the relative lack of formal self-governing institutions in Indian communities....Most Indian communities have only the most rudimentary control over their own collective futures."³ Wayne Beaver says, "we don't have the power. We can't

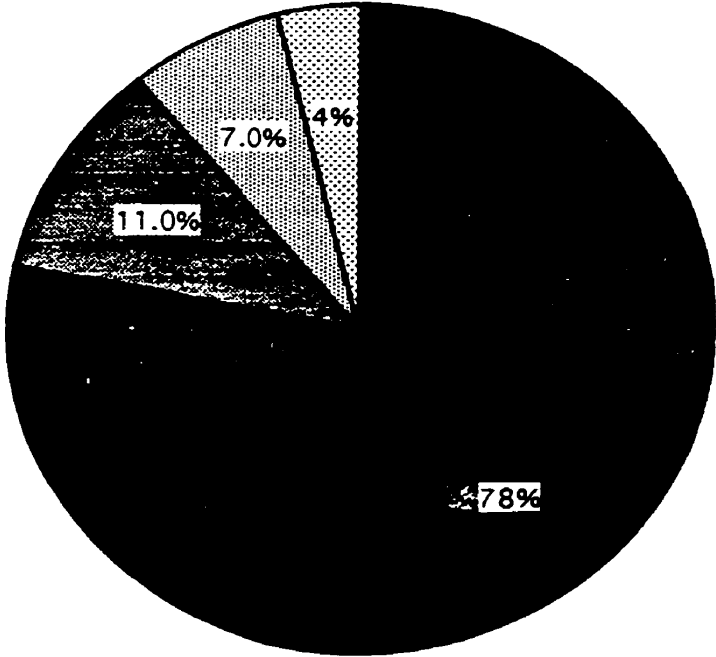
³Indian and Northern Development. A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada. A Report on Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies, Volume 1. Ed. H.B. Hawthorn.

Community Support for Self-government



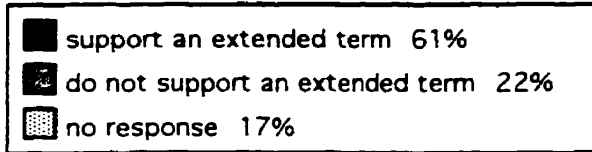
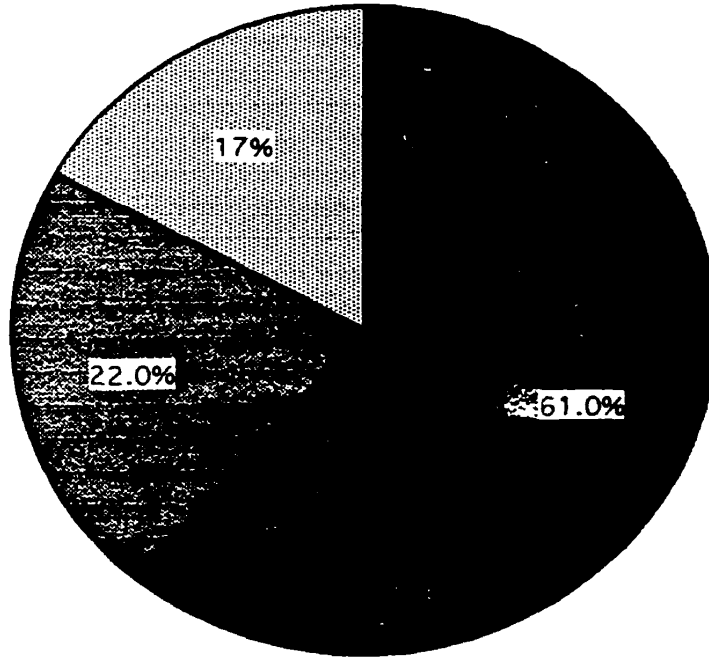
- support the idea of self-government 64%
- ▨ would support the idea of self-government with more info 32%
- ▩ do not support the idea of self-government 4%

Have a preferred system of government

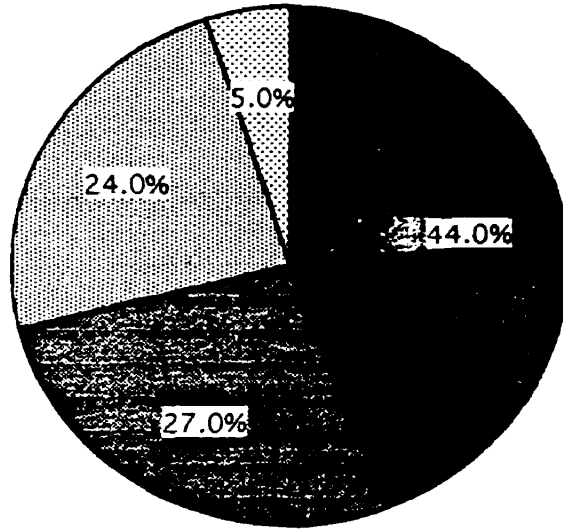


- prefer a combination of traditional and western systems of government 78%
- ▨ are satisfied with present Indian Act system 11%
- ▧ not sure 7%
- ▩ prefer a traditional system 4%

Feel the term of office for council should be extended to 4 years



The elections of chief and council should be staggered



- support staggered elections 44%
- do not support staggered elections 27%
- no response 24%
- are not sure 5%

Qualitative Comments by the respondents to issues of self-government part 1

- **it is time we made our own choices**
- **there is insufficient information about self-government**
- **develop own model of self government**
- **own fault for not attending self-government meetings**
- **the present election system is okay**
- **Aboriginal self-government is the federal government's last chance to wipe out Indians**
- **off-reserve residents should be able to vote; but on-reserve residents know best what is needed**
- **more education needed for self-government**
- **need to start paying taxes to pay our own way**
- **taxes should be paid; but, only when Indians know more about it and if the system is well organized to benefit all**
- **the tax system is not understood**
- **Indians should never pay taxes**
- **self-government is a new idea and people do not understand it because they have always had things done for them**
- **need more education and training for people who would become Chief and Council**
- **Alderville is too small to take responsibility for self-government**
- **the community has to be administered responsibly and in a peaceful way so that incidents like the community center budget fiasco does not happen again**
- **there is no community togetherness, need for more community development**

**Qualitative Comments by the respondents to issues of self-government
part 2**

- there should be a combination of a traditional and western systems of government with a council of elders to respond to decisions made by council
- stop listening to outside influences and listen to teachings from the elders
- First Nation laws should be based upon respect
- would like to see Alderville as a self-sufficient First Nation in full control of own destiny
- give tax breaks to allow for outside industries to locate on First Nation lands
- non-native spouses should be allowed to vote
- traditions are based on respect
- if self-government is planned now, we will be ready sooner; but, people have to work together
- people need to be informed, educated in the role and responsibility of Chief and Council. Chief and Council have to be educated and business-minded if their are to lead the community
- Chief and Council should not keep quiet about negative divisions because people get the idea that it is okay to have negative attitude
- self-government needs a strong economic base in order to work
- self-government will need good leadership
- the present DIA structure is not working, we have no political freedom
- need to increase cultural awareness
- the Indian way of life is based on family and making life better for the community as a whole rather than being centered on individual gain

pass a dog by-law without have approval from Ottawa."⁴ Since then there have been only isolated achievements made by Indians toward limited control of local autonomy through a federal policy of devolution.

It is becoming obvious that federal policies cannot serve to meet a national aspiration of self-determination because there is no national collective sense. Ron Irwin, Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs, indicated that the federal government has developed the view that each community has its own collective sense of the future and will make choices that reflect that sense: "almost every community will require its own mix of municipal, provincial and federal powers. Each deal will have to be negotiated. No community will be forced into any deal before the community is ready."⁵

To examine how the idea of self-determination is expressed at Alderville, the next phase of research was qualitative in nature. Key informants who were seen to represent the youth, young women, homemakers, elders, and community leaders were interviewed. Of particular importance are the youth and young women representatives who will eventually face future consequences of decisions made during the present period. Informants were asked to comment on aspects of culture, self-government, Bill C-31, and community development (see Questions for Informants Appendix B). The interviews were conducted in the year following the election of an all male chief and council.

(Ottawa: Indian Affairs Branch, October 1966) 263.

⁴Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

⁵"The National," News, CBC, Ottawa, 10 August 1995.

What the Voices Say

It appears that it is becoming increasingly important, in academic work, for authors to situate themselves within their study. In terms of studies conducted in Native communities, too often these studies have been conducted by non-community members using questions generated outside the community and consequently are of little relevance to the community.

This study is different. I am a member of the community and the questions have emerged from the community and are answered by the community. In that sense, this study is community-based, with the community having identified the research problem and participated in answering the question.

Conventional social science methods have been typically insensitive to the culture and the norms of the community. This method, by being community-based, has been flexible and responsive to community ethics. The customary method of gathering data by administering a questionnaire was rejected by the community; therefore, a structured interview process was used to develop insight into the questions. The rejected questionnaire was used as a preliminary method to develop questions for the interview process from which the analysis could be drawn.

As a member of the community conducting the research, I have found it difficult to avoid empirical observation. It was necessary to monitor the methodologies used in conducting the inquiries. The existing literature is sorely lacking in comprehensive descriptions of community-based research with exception of those articles and treatises written by researchers who have studied issues in Native communities. There is no

comprehensive scholarly textbook for reference.

In this case empirical observation contributes to the development of the story presented by those who were interviewed. At such times the researcher is able to offer valid insight. Throughout the analysis of the interviews, empirical observation clarifies the aspirations of the people. Some community members feel that some of the council's decisions do not respond to those who are in most need of adequate housing and neither do they reflect the wishes of the people. The idea of "impeaching" the council had begun to take form. Even though this idea may be pointless, as the *Indian Act* makes no provision to force the accountability of the band council to the community electorate, the expression ought to send a clear message to Chief and Council that there is need to reconcile the differing community interests and temperaments. Clearly, the leadership ought to heed the community's disgruntlement to ensure that any future constituted self-government will reflect the aspirations of the people. The interviews clearly indicate that consensus building is a community aspiration. This is further evidenced by the lack of action on the part of the council to bring the community together to discuss common concerns. Some of the community members took the action of calling a community meeting which has been alluded to in the interviews that are reviewed below. This action supports the analysis of J. Anthony Long in *"Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Indian Societies"* that "every member or every clan had the right to be involved in the making of decisions that affected them, both individually and collectively."⁶

⁶J. Anthony Long, "Political Revitalization in Canadian Native Societies," Canadian Journal of Political Science 23.4 (1990): 765.

The individuals who were chosen to participate in the interviews represent a cross section of the community. They represent the youth, the women, the elders, former council members and chiefs. From an empirical perspective their comments mirror similar comments made by other community members.

They have expressed similar points of view about a concept of community, community politics, community issues and needs, community development and self-government, the role of women in community politics and cultural revitalization. Some of these points of view form the basis of the analysis and, to some extent, empirical observation.

Concept of Community

Each individual has some concept of what the community is or what it ought to be. One individual may represent one faction of the community while another may represent an opposing faction and someone else from another competing faction. The people need to "[stick] closer together...which is community-based, sticking together...as a group". By "sticking together" the community is able to moderate some of the factional forces and create dialogue with "narrow minded" individuals. To bring the community together requires the band government to be proactive in reconciling the differing community interests and temperaments. An informant said, "we need good leaders".

As a result of the agitation created by competing factions, there is a perception held by the members that the Chief and Council dismiss the intelligence of the community. As one person who was interviewed stated, "if the Chief and Council had respect for its own people; the combined communal wisdom...the community would be

a much better place to live". As it is, "people don't want to take responsibility as a community member" and if there was a good sense of community pride many of the social ills would simply become non-issues.

Most recently the community has experienced vandalism, incidents of break-ins, public mischief and personally degrading comments. While there has been an Elders' Council established, the knowledge of the traditional role of elders has yet to be revitalized. Many feel that it is possible to revitalize the traditional cultural values; however, there are some who feel that culture has been lost. James Clifford's argument in *The Predicament of Culture* that "if a tradition is considered 'lost' and if it can be remembered, even generations later, then it is not lost"⁷ gives credence to those who feel that culture of the Mississauga Ojibwa can be revived.

While the community hosts an annual pow-wow and holds talking and healing circles and some individuals participate in sweet grass, sweat-lodge and other ceremonies, there is some validity to the argument put forth by Menno Boldt that these are expressive-ritualistic elements of culture. They "serve only a segmented function as a basis for spiritual identity".⁸ However, the community support for the annual pow-wow is a form of mutual aid. As well the sense of community that develops at adult language classes opens the value of communalism as do the traditional health teachings that are held on a regular basis. Community feasts develop a sense of sharing and equality. The teaching

⁷James Clifford, *The Predicament of Culture* (Cambridge: Harvard College, 1988) 341.

⁸Menno Boldt, *Surviving as Indians: The Challenge of Self-Government*, (Toronto: U of Toronto P, 1993) 176-7.

of drumming and singing brings together a sense of spiritual belief and teachings. These events assist in the revitalization and re-establish the relevance of the traditional values, norms and customs, and if practised long enough will become legitimate. There appears to be a misconception that the revitalization of traditional culture will mean an attempt to live a lifestyle that is based on a hunting and gathering economy and a lifestyle without modern conveniences. Cultural revitalization is not the return to living a past lifestyle. It is the process of retrieving traditional values, norms and customs that helped to maintain social order within communities. They are relevant to the concept of self-determination.

Community Problems

Identifying problems that affect a community is complicated because of varying perceptions held by individuals. There are problems that are internal and those that are external to the community. Those that are external are perceived to be problems because of the negative impact on the community. They create or allow an environment in which situations grow into dilemmas. A discussion begins with those problems that are perceived to be internal to the community and have been identified by the community leaders and responded to through program development.

The abuse of alcohol and drugs is an internal problem and is a major concern for the community because of the social disorders such as property theft and destruction, family breakdown, community disharmony, lack of respect, physical and mental illnesses and accidental death. In an effort to combat this growing social affliction, the community holds "dry" dances and sponsors awareness events. More recently, the community health

program encourages healing and talking circles and involvement of elders at community workshops and supports the teaching of traditional dancing, drumming and singing. These initiatives are grounded in the revitalization of traditional cultural values.

Alderville has responded to a community need found in many of the communities of the United Indian Councils. There has been a family shelter established which provides secondary housing for victims of family violence. The design for the house reflects the community rather than that dictated by Indian Affairs. The shelter will provide service to First Nations. The basis for providing service is within the cultural values of sharing and meeting communal needs.

High unemployment throughout Canada is magnified in Native communities due to the marginalization of Indian people and racism in Canadian society. This problem has both internal and external aspects. Previous "make work" projects have provided short term relief, and recent provincial cuts to welfare programs that focus on "work for welfare" will leave some people trapped between the federal/provincial and band bureaucracies. Because of intrusive government guidelines, Welfare Administrators have to determine who is deemed "unemployable." For example, the Administrator has to determine if alcoholism is a disease or a lack of will power. Even though Native communities are described as regions of economic disparity, urban Natives form the majority of those unemployed in other parts of the country. Canadian Employment Equity guidelines designates Aboriginal people as one of the four designated groups. In Canada, these four groups are under represented in the work place and in senior management positions.

A Learning Centre has been established in Alderville which assists people to prepare for job interviews, resume writing, computer training and upgrading. This type of community response recognizes that education will provide some long-range solutions. Education can assist the community in accomplishing some economic development objectives through entrepreneurial efforts. The federal government no longer provides funding for economic development.

Financial constraints and cutbacks imposed by the federal government are a major external problem. The capping of post-secondary education has meant that the band cannot provide adequate education allowances or meet the demand for student funding. As a result many cannot afford the cost of education beyond the high-school level. Many community members and post-secondary students feel that this is the direct fault of the Chief and Council because the leadership has not made post-secondary funding a priority on their political agenda. To some extent there may be some truth to this since many Native people feel that Native leaders display a general apathy regarding the need for post-secondary education.

Health concerns such as diabetes are being addressed through community workshops with traditional medicine men like Ron Waukegheesig from Manitoulin Island who gave talks about the traditional method of diabetes control.

One of biggest problems facing the community is the lack of community development: "people don't want to take responsibility as a community member." The members of the community wait for Council to act. They "sit back and say oh, well if I was in Council I'd do this," or "I think Council should do that," or "they're [Council]

not doing a very good job, boy! wait until election time." To overcome this scepticism the community has to develop a sense of unity. Many feel that what is important is "whatever's in it is for me." There is the need to consider the future generations.

Community Politics

Aboriginal community politics is not like western politics. The political culture of Aboriginal people is comprised of a number of community factions with differing interests and temperaments complicated by intrusive federal policy based on an antiquated *Indian Act*. Use of the term "community" can be applied to the various levels of Indian government from the local band to the national echelon. The leaders are chosen by the western method of election as outlined in the *Indian Act*. There is no reference made to support consensus building, which is a traditional method of reconciling differing interests and temperaments.

To some degree, local community politics attempts to address problems of unemployment and drug and alcohol abuse, particularly among the youth. Since the women were elected to form the band government there has been an effort to bring the community together for general meetings on a regular basis and to seek consensus despite the lack of provision for doing so in the *Indian Act*.

More recently, there has been the perception that community politics do not address the problems and that there is a need to consider those who are in most need. Community factions are becoming more evident. People need to "stick together instead of all this bickering" and "to bring issues out and talk about them."

There is no evidence that community politics addresses problems. People are

more concerned about gaining material possessions than planning for the future. One person stated, "it's a really, really a big thing...well, how is this going to affect my great grandchildren".

Aboriginal self-government is the ability "to control your own destiny; you wouldn't be relying on the government for this and that...it would mean a lot, too, for our cultural identity...traditional values...I think that's important." It has to be "handled in the right way." This statement indicates that self-government is being thought of in terms of self-determination which is the ability to control one's own destiny. Self-determination is determined by ones' cultural identity and maintains the integrity of the values held by the community. Having the right to control one's destiny is a fundamental right that ought to be, no less, for Aboriginal people who "have the right to be self-determining, to make decision for themselves, in the forms that are appropriate to their cultural values."⁹ Decisions made otherwise dislocate Aboriginal people from their cultural values.

Community Development

To achieve the aspirations of a community, it is the individuals who provide the momentum. To initiate the momentum there needs to be a "point of departure" and for Alderville that was created when traditional knowledge was sought by the Native women.

Nora Bothwell explains:

I think one of the main strengths of the community is the women. And I'm not saying that because I'm a woman. In our community...there has been a revitalization of the cultural values and it is the women that have encouraged and

⁹Peter Kulchyski, ed., Unjust Relations: Aboriginal Rights in the Canadian Courts (Toronto: Oxford UP, 1994) 12.

brought those back and are incorporating that into the daily lives of their children....I think that's the foundation on what our community is going to be able to build on. And then, in the long run, community politics won't be able to address this. I think it will be that strength of the women who are bringing back the cultural teachings....That, I think, is what is going to keep our community together when the time comes to where we're going to have to do something.¹⁰

When asked if the politics of the community or the people in the community address the problems, Melody Crowe commented:

Yes, the community....and that's one of the things that is shining through in all of that....and I guess that's always one of the things, even in a bad situation, something good always comes out of it. And I think it is the power of the people and the sense of community. I think the strengths are the fact that we are getting back into tradition and culture. Our culture is growing strong again and for too many generations our people had to lose the language and the culture....We have strong women here and I think that's been a key point because it's been the women who have reached out; reclaiming of that culture and that traditional way....so this is there for the men for the children for all of us. So, the strength of our women is something Alderville needs to be proud of. Even in these issues we're facing around housing, education, employment and so on, it's our women who are really standing up and speaking and paving the way for every body to feel that they can speak. It's nice because some of the men started to stand up and speak....reclaiming of culture and language and the strength of our women - that just opens the door for many more things to come through.¹¹

Community development utilizes the strengths found in the community and joins them together with a common purpose. Those who formed a faction around the reclamation of traditional cultural values have provided momentum toward self-determination based upon traditional culture. Regardless of how reluctant council may be about developing participatory decision-making, at some point the community will demand accountability.

The Role of Women

Of those interviewed, without exception, all indicated that there was a role for

¹⁰Nora Bothwell, Personal Interview, Apr. 1996.

¹¹Melody Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

women in community politics despite that fact that the *Indian Act* had no provision for women to assume an elected position on council. Unlike the *Great Law* of the Haudenosaunee, which recognizes the power of the clan mothers, the Anishinabe have no significant "oral document" to refer to. The Anishinabe Elder historians and teachers, such as Arthur Solomon, speak about the power of women to produce life and their role as nurturers and teachers and their ability to bring balance.

In Alderville prior to 1985, there was no significant traditional knowledge that offered guidance regarding the role of women. Through the efforts of the women to seek traditional knowledge, their sense of power was restored. Once the women proved their ability to govern, the community began to embrace the notion of revitalizing traditional culture. This direction was new for the community because up to this point community politics had been founded on Methodist and Western ideals that promoted men. The balance of power between the men and women was weighted by factions with differing interests and temperaments. Some of the factions were supported by men, and the balance of power tipped in favour of a male-dominated council; however, the community has made significant progress toward reclaiming traditional cultural values. An institution has been established - an Elders' Council to which the members of the community look for advice and guidance. For Alderville to establish a functioning elders' council is a significant demonstration of the appreciation that the community is placing on the traditional Ojibwa customs of governance. Furthermore, this is contrary to the objectives of social manipulation espoused by the missionaries and the government. Karen Beaver feels that traditional cultural values were misunderstood and that "traditional" became a

bad word.¹²

Is the Culture Lost?

There are those who believe that the culture has been lost and there are those who are working diligently to reclaim culture. Karen Beaver explains, "I don't know that it is but learning about our past values...our cultural things...the medicines...the drum...the dancing...the singing...and the spiritual part...Those things were lost. Alderville didn't have them for a long time." These things are beginning to make a reappearance. She continues, "I believe that they are being revitalized by the people that are going to receive those teachings." There are young people who attend community events and participate in the expression of culture. They feel confident that the culture can be revitalized. Karen is adamant, " I was always proud to be a Native woman, well I'm even more proud now...I'm a Native woman - an Anishnaabekwe - because I'm learning about those spiritual bodies that were lost to me."¹³

Can these values be revitalized? Wayne Beaver emphatically answers this question, "we're in the Seventh Fire. It was prophesied that everything that is happening now, would happen; there would be a rebirth, of going back to our traditional values, traditional ways of looking at things...it can't be reversed."¹⁴ Even though the balance of power has tipped in favour of a male-dominated council, Alderville has moved toward reclaiming traditional cultural values and has established an Elders' Council which will

¹²Karen Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996

¹³Karen Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

¹⁴Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

scrutinize the reclamation process, and it will be difficult to reverse the momentum.

The oppression of culture can result in the practise of culture being forced "underground" i.e. the potlatch ceremonies or the sun dance. As Nora Bothwell states, "I never, ever considered them being lost. I considered them to be...covered...or put aside...or misunderstood."¹⁵ Respect for the past and the ancestors is culturally based, there is an "ancient feeling of sacredness. And I think, that in itself, is a value. That is something that we have as Native people. Sometimes we don't understand but we have it inside us."¹⁶

A measure of cultural growth can be observed in the activities of children. Even the practising of ritualistic-expression by children is an indication that the culture has vitality. "The children in recent years they've really...they want it...they've been just so enthusiastic about the culture and everything."¹⁷

The strength of culture is generally reflected in community action. The following statement made by Melody Crowe refers to this action, "I think Alderville is being revitalized...I believe there's enough people here now that are a part of that revitalization and breathing that life back into our traditions and culture and our language...Language is the key...they all go hand in hand, together...We have our children learning it, we have elders learning it, we have our teenagers learning it."¹⁸

¹⁵Noral Bothwell, Taped Interview, Apr. 1996.

¹⁶Nora Bothwell, Tape Interview, Apr. 1996.

¹⁷Marge Beaver, Personal Interview, May 3, 1996.

¹⁸Melody Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

Are dancing, singing, pow-wows and ceremonies simply a ritualistic-expression of culture and as such incapable of transmitting any value notion? Melody Crowe feels that these expressions do transmit culture:

I think the dancing is really important because it's the drum and it's the heartbeat and dancing to the drum. With the drum coming to Alderville that's so symbolic...that's the heartbeat of our Mother Earth. When you get into the dancing it has so much meaning and is very symbolic of tradition. We have healing dances. You're right you can have things that are symbolic of the culture like the fluffs and feathers but the thing is it's there on a deeper level...it has to be in your heart, and it has to be in your spirit. When you start to make a commitment to dancing around that circle..you can't just go around that circle and not feel anything because when that drum goes, that is the heartbeat. There's respect involved. There's the honour... That's what joins us to our ancestors. It's not the fluffs and it's not the feathers and it's not the braids and how dark our skin is, it's what's in the heart and the spirit and the soul.¹⁹

The greatest value that the culture has to offer is respect. A young dancer, Adam Crowe, has "learned to respect a lot of things...how we lost the language and our culture is coming back...respect for all animals."²⁰ Animals provide parts such as hawk's feet or the fur for the dancer's regalia. With an understanding of respect there is a new sense of pride. "I used to be embarrassed but I wear my hair tied back sometimes [his hair is long]. I did speeches about my Native dancing...so that makes me feel good at school."²¹ When youth feel good about themselves, they are generally have a strong sense of community. Wayne Beaver says, ' it's important for a young person to know who they are; to be able to identify with a community.'²²

¹⁹Meloday Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

²⁰Adam Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

²¹Adam Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

²²Wayne Beaver, Personal Interview, Apr. 12, 1996.

Most people have an association with a community and possess some concept of community. They look to the community to seek support, guidance, a sense of well-being, assistance during economic trouble and to gain an insight into who they are as individuals. The community provides a cultural identity. These attributes should not be expected to be received without obligation. Community membership requires that its members must be prepared to take responsibility in preserving the common good.

Even though there is a renaissance of Native culture, the community is still in the developing stage. It is developing because European philosophy overshadowed Native culture, and as a result of the revitalization of Native culture the community is able to re-emerge based on Native perspectives.

Conclusion

There is little argument that the Methodist missionaries had a tremendous impact on the societal development at the missions of Grape Island and Alwick. The purpose of this thesis is not to present an argument either for or against their efforts of conversion or their "civilizing" tactics; neither is there any intention of basing the contemporary problems on an historical framework. It is intended to create dialogue by articulating the transition from the developing concept of self-government to self-determination and the process of reclaiming of traditional cultural values that had been initiated by the Native women. Their empowerment followed the revitalization of the women's full moon ceremonies and their pursuit of traditional knowledge to inform traditional craft designs. It is no surprise that empowerment would eventually lead to involvement in community politics.

Like many Native communities, Alderville has begun to define itself in terms of its nativeness. This is reflected in a statement made by Melody Crowe, "I think Alderville is being revitalized. I fell really proud to say that because I really believe that I believe there's enough people here now that are apart of that revitalization and breathing that life back into our traditions and culture and our language."²³ The process of the community reclaiming traditional cultural values is the assertion of its members exercising their inherent right. Defining themselves is the precedent to the establishment of Aboriginal self-government. The process will inform the type of cultural foundation upon which the institutions of governance will be grounded. Nora Bothwell provides an eloquent confirmation:

if you keep those basic teachings and build that foundation from the community and bring those cultural values back - which we are doing here with the children - when you go to our socials and see our little kids up there and jingling with those jingle dresses and grass dancing...I'm tell you, I feel so proud! Hey, these kids are our next Chiefs, our next councils.. our next individuals in the community who are going to make things happen here. That's what self-government is...that's self-control.²⁴

It is the process of reclaiming traditional cultural values which asserts the inherent right of self-determination.

In Canada the process of cultural reclamation was initiated by the 1969 White Paper, and in Alderville the process gained momentum when the young Native women became empowered and demanded that the chief and council establish economic development programs. The women asserted their traditional role as nurturers and as the

²³Melody Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

²⁴Nora Bothwell, Taped Interview, Apr. 1996.

political intellectuals of the Mississauga Ojibwa.

It is not possible to arrive at a definitive conclusion regarding the political role of women. To do so would appropriate women's voices. As a result of my research, it became clear that men alone cannot define the role of Native women in the community. Research conducted by men can create the space for women to speak for themselves.

A passage from Arthur Solomon's book Songs for the People: Teachings on the Natural Way offers some insight about the power of women and the need for the community to define the role of women as part of their move toward self-determination:

A woman's power is...a spiritual power, an intellectual power, a moral power too and it is many undefinable things...if our women are sick and weak then their men and children will be sick and weak, and very troubled too...The role of women, or as I prefer to call it, the work of the women in this Creation must not be defined by men alone as it has been for centuries past. And it can not be done by women alone. It can only realistically be done by women who call their men to sit and counsel with them after they have carefully tried to understand it among themselves first...This is why in the past I have asked our women to consider the idea of forming a women's council so that they would make their own council fire and there think about life and its meanings for us as a people. Because it's only when we begin to put these things together in a right way again that life will begin to assume its true meaning for us once more.²⁵

As Alderville moves into the 21st Century, the community must be certain about how they will define themselves and how they want to govern themselves. What is most important, the community as a whole must participate in the decision-making process: "We must make a conscious decision which side we are going to be on. There are only two roads and we can only walk on one of them. The great river of life rushes on and

²⁵Arthur Solomon, Songs for the People: Teachings on the Natural Way. ed. Michael Posluns (Toronto: NC Press Limited, 1990) 82.

there is so little time left."²⁶

For too long, the *Indian Act* dictated how the community would be governed and who would govern it. It promoted a band electoral system that imposed a set of liberal-democratic political institutions that oppressed the traditional political participatory democratic processes of Mississauga Ojibwa society. As a result of a Native Renaissance, members of the community are not satisfied with the present style of band government. To ensure the survival of the people as an Ojibwa community will be the challenge facing Chief and Council. Fortunately, the women revived the culture. It was not lost and it is conceivable that revitalization offers guidance to achieve self-determination. A young woman who has experienced the richness of the culture and the strength which comes from knowing the language aptly concludes:

There's policies for this and policies for that and grievances for this and all that - that you can get away from the cultural aspect and that's what we need to hang on to and get back to, is more decision making around the culture. That goes back to, trying to keep focused on the fact, remember back in history how our ancestors might have made those decisions and use that as a focus. We need to hang on to ourselves as Native people and not let the government and everybody else wipe us out, to be just another non-Native community so to speak. So, making those decisions around culture and tradition needs to be brought back in...I believe.²⁷

Clearly, the time has come for the Chief and Council to listen to the people and to make an effort to reconcile the differing interests and temperaments through consensus building.

²⁶Solomon 92.

²⁷Meloday Crowe, Personal Interview, May 13, 1996.

TABLES
and
APPENDICES

Alderville Agriculture Census 1864						
Comparison of Land Holdings and Farm Buildings held by the Head Men to the Band						
Held by	Acres of Land	Acres Cleared	Percentage Cultivated	Barns	Frame Houses	Log Houses
John Sunday	42	25	25%	1	1	
Joseph Skunk	18	15	10%	1	1	
John Simpson	50	15	25%	1	1	
Thomas Fraser	25	15	10%			
Jacob Storm	50	25				
John Storm	18	9	2%			
James Indian	25	13	½%			
William Comego	18	14	8%			
Thomas Marsden	100	75	75%			
Francis Beaver	18	8	8%			
William Blaker	18	12	12%			
Michael Chubb	50	40	40%			
Robert Franklin	50	20	10%			
John Rice	70	48	40%			
Held by Head Men	534	334	--	3	3	0
Held by Band	579	273	--	0	0	0
Total Held Pop. 225	1113	207	39%	3	3	0

Source: RG 10, Volume 306

Table 1

Alderville Agriculture Census 1864 Comparison of Livestock Holdings by the Head Men to the Band						
Held by	Horses	Oxen	Cows	Sheep	Pigs	Young Stock
John Sunday	3	2	3		6	1
Joseph Skunk						
John Simpson	1	2	2	12	2	
Thomas Fraser		2			2	
Jacob Storm		2				
John Storm			1			
James Indian						
Wm. Comego						
Tho. Marsden						
Francis Beaver						
Wm. Blaker						
Michael Chubb			1			
Robt. Franklin						
John Rice		3	2		2	
Held by Head Men	4	11	9	12	12	1
Held by Band Members	0	5	1	0	0	0
Total Livestock	4	16	10	12	12	1

Source: RG 10, Volume 306

Table 2

Alderville Agriculture Census 1864
Comparison of Farm Implements held by the Head Men to the Band

Held By	Ploughs	Harrows	Wagons	Wood Sleighs	Cutters	Buggies	Fanning Mills	Hand Tools
John Sunday	4	2	2	1	1	1		7
Joseph Skunk								
John Simpson	2	1	1	1				
Thomas Fraser	1	1						1
Jacob Storm								
John Storm								
James Indian								
William Comego								
Thomas Marsden								
Francis Beaver								
William Blaker								
Michael Chubb								
Robert Franklin								
John Rice	1	1		1				
Held by Head Men	8	5	3	3	1	1	0	8
Held by Band	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Total Implements	8	5	3	3	1	1	1	8

Source: RG 10, Volume 306

Table 3

Alderville Agriculture Census 1864
Comparison of Crop Yields (bushels) by the Head Men to the Band

Produced by	Corn	Wheat	Rye	Barley	Oats	Peas	Buckwheat	Potatoes	Hay Tons
John Sunday	6	40			50	20		25	4
Joseph Skunk	10							20	2
John Simpson		20			60			30	2
Thomas Fraser	6	10						30	
Jacob Storm	5							20	
John Storm	5							5	
James Indian									
William Comego									
Thomas Marsden									
Francis Beaver									
William Blaker	12	50							
Michael Chubb		90			20				1½
Robert Franklin									
John Rice									
Yield by Head Men	44	210	0	0	130	20	0	130	9½
Yield by Band	0	0	0	0	10	0	0	5	0
Total Yield	44	210	0	0	140	20	0	135	9½

Source: RG 10, Volume 306

Table 4

Representative Respondents

Table 5

Female/Male Respondents

Female											
Age						Status			Education		
under 18	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	over 65	reg	not reg	C-31	elem	sec	post sec
	8	6	4	5		5				3	3

Note:

Seven of twenty-three respondents completed full questionnaires. Of the seven, two respondents did not indicate either their status or level of education, for one in the status category she noted "I am a North American Indian/Anishinaabwe"

The self-government committee changed the format of the questionnaire using a version which did not include status or level of education categories

Male											
Age						Status			Education		
under 18	18 to 24	25 to 34	35 to 49	50 to 64	over 65	reg	not reg	C-31	elem	sec.	post sec
			5			1		2			3

Note:

Three of five respondents completed full questionnaires

Two did not indicate their status or level of education

The self-government committee changed the format of the questionnaire using a version which did not include status or level of education categories

**ALDERVILLE FIRST NATION
SELF-GOVERNMENT QUESTIONNAIRE**

Male Female Age Group: Under 15 16-25 26-35 36-45 45 & over

1. Have you ever heard of Aboriginal self-government? Yes No
2. Do you support the idea of self-government? Yes No If no, why? _____

both neg + positive. if I can't find it

3. Have you heard of the United Indian Councils? Yes No
- a) If yes, please give a brief description of what you think it is. _____

Have been together to discuss there is self-govt

4. Do you think that self-government would be a benefit to our people? Yes No Not sure
- a) Please give a brief explanation of your answer. _____

The direction that we are heading towards is membership

8. Do you feel that you have had enough information to fully understand the meaning of aboriginal self-government? Yes No If no, why? _____

Attending enough meetings

6. Would you like to receive more information on self-government issues? Yes No

7. Do you attend the community self-government or other community meetings? Yes No If not, what are your reasons? _____

will make time

8. Which of the following models of Indian government do you think is best suited for Alderville? (Check more than one category if you feel a combination is better suited.)
- local band government (as per Indian Act - such as we have now)
 - tribal council
 - provincial Indian government
 - federal Indian government
 - United Indian Councils

other (specify) _____

not certain

What is the reason for your answer? need to share information

9. Under your preferred model of Indian government, would Indians living off-reserve be eligible to vote in the elections for Indian government?

yes

no

not certain

What is the reason for your answer? because they are members
living near place of employment

10. What would you like Alderville to be like in the future? self-sufficient
own bank. money generated to provide
services without depending on Gov't.

a) What are some of the problems you see in Alderville? need to develop
trust in themselves. Need to know when the business
is successful

b) What would you suggest as a way to solve these problems? develop business
and workshops educate themselves. Reorganize
business. Have some small business to provide
employment more activities

11. What should be the future of the provincial Indian associations when Indian self-government is fully achieved?

disappear

continue functioning in the present role

function as a "level of Indian government" (eg. equivalent to provincial government)

not certain

State the reason for your answer _____

12. How should Indians govern themselves? Should they use existing administrative structures, or develop new types of structures more along the line of traditional Indian government?

- existing structures (an elected chief and council as set out in the Indian Act)
- traditional structures (hereditary chiefs, council of elders)
- combination of traditional and existing structures (as defined by the residents of Alderville)
- other (specify) _____
- not certain

Give a reason for your answer Chief needs to be aggressive and has
vision

13. How important were the following issues and events in causing you to become interested in political concerns?

(a) concern for treaty and aboriginal rights

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

(b) discrimination and prejudice

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

(c) concern that Indians were not being treated democratically or equally

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

(d) interest in party politics (eg. Liberal, Conservative, NDP)

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

(e) desire for Indian self-government

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

(f) interest in band/community politics

very important quite moderately hardly unimportant

14. Do you think the election system is best suited for Indian people? Yes , No Not sure What is your reason? nomination are sometimes personal

a) should the terms of office be extended from two to four years, be more municipal-like?

Yes No with a review

b) should the election for chief and councillors be staggered? Yes No

15. Do you think that Native people should retain their distinct cultural identity?

yes

no

not certain

Explain _____

16. Do you see Indians as being ready for self-government now?

yes

no

not certain

If not, why not?

need more educated in self govt. and guidance and leadership

17. Are Indians ready to pay taxes to a First Nation government? Yes No Why? _____

we don't want to pay taxes

18. Does a First Nation have the authority to charge user fees and/or a system of taxation?

Yes No Explain maybe we can own some

in some services

19. Do you think that Alderville is ready to accept the responsibility of self-government?

Yes No Explain maybe some but with more

takeover

20. If you answered no for the last question, what would have to be done before self-government could be set in motion? _____

need education

21. Do you think your views on how self-government should work will be listened to?
Yes ___ No

22. Is the Howard Case:

a) a land claim ___

b) a treaty claim ___

c) a case for self-government ___

d) an appeal of a court case regarding the right to fish ___

not known

23. Do you think that Indians should be able to hunt and fish for food, even though members do not depend on hunting and fishing to feed their families? Yes No ___

with no abuse.

24. Comments _____

suggestion for a trap trap area

APPENDIX B

Questions for Informants

1. What are some of the problems that the community is facing?
2. Does community politics address the problems?
3. What are the strengths of the community?
4. What does the community need? Are you or have you been involved in community politics? Explain.
5. Do women have a role in community politics?
6. Should council approach issues using a culturally based system, for example, consensus in decision-making?
7. How do you feel about Alderville's relationship with the provincial government? With the federal government? How does Alderville practice self-determination? How can these relationships be improved, if needed?
8. Has Alderville lost Native cultural values? If so, can they be revitalized?
9. Before Bill-C-31, were non-status considered to be Anishinabe? What does it mean to be Anishinabe?
10. Think about self-government as a process which the community could use to reclaim traditional cultural values. Using this frame, can you begin to define what self-government means to you?

**JOB POSTING
ALDERVILLE FIRST NATION DAY CARE CENTRE**

DAY CARE ADMINISTRATOR/SUPERVISOR

The Alderville First Nation Day Care Centre is searching for an experienced, enthusiastic and hardworking individual to fill the position of Administrator/Supervisor.

The Administrator/Supervisor will be responsible for the overall management and operation of the Day Care Centre; financial budgetting, planning and forecasting; identifying training needs; reporting, liaison and monitoring day-to-day activities of the Day Care.

BASIC REQUIREMENTS:

Graduate diploma of Early Childhood Education through a recognized college or equivalent.
Minimum of 2 years experience working in the child care field.
Have own transportation and a valid driver's licence.
Must have basic computer skills.
Valid certification in CPR and First-Aid.
Native ancestry an asset.

RATED REQUIREMENTS:

Proven skills in supervision and administration.
Knowledge of relevant legislation and policies relating to the operation of a day care facility.
Knowledge of appropriate service agencies.
Knowledge and sensitivity to Native culture and communities.
Proven communication skills.

PERSONAL SUITABILITY:

Ability to provide sound direction and supervision to staff.
Ability to maintain confidentiality.
Ability to initiate programs and work in a team environment.

SALARY RANGE:

Based on qualifications

THREE (3) REFERENCES MUST BE PROVIDED

For a full job description, please contact the Alderville Administration office. Please submit a covering letter and resume to:

Alderville First Nation
P.O. Box 46
Roseneath, Ontario
K0K 2X0

**DEADLINE FOR RESUMES IS MONDAY, FEBRUARY 19, 1996 AT 4:30 P.M. -
RESUMES RECEIVED AFTER THIS DEADLINE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED - FAXED
RESUMES WILL BE ACCEPTED**

**EFFECTIVELY APRIL 1, 1995, ALL APPLICANTS MUST BE SUBJECT TO A
CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECK**

CHIEF AND COUNCIL WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION

ALDERVILLE DAYCARE CENTRE

EARLY CHILDHOOD EDUCATOR (1 POSITION)

The Alderville First Nation is looking for an experienced and hardworking individual to fill the position of Early Childhood Educator. Under the direct supervision of the Day Care Administrator/Supervisor, the ECE Program Staff will plan and implement programming to encourage growth and development in planned activities to stimulate development in the four domains: Physical, Intellectual, Psycho-Social and Spiritual.

QUALIFICATIONS:

ECE Graduation Diploma or equivalent (as defined in the Day Nurseries Act)
Valid certification in C.P.R. and First Aid
Own transportation and valid driver's license
Demonstrated ability to function in a Day Care Centre
Native ancestry an asset

RATED REQUIREMENTS:

Demonstrated ability to work in a team environment
Demonstrated organizational skills
Demonstrated communication skills
Knowledge of Native communities and culture

DUTIES:

Develop and deliver daily activities for children
Guide and assist children in their development
Observe and assess children's individual development
Co-ordinate the activities of ECE Assistant
Attend staff meetings and offer ideas for effective programming for healthy child development
Promote the Day Care Centre in a positive manner

For a full job description, please contact the Alderville Administration Office. Please submit covering letter and resumé to:

Alderville First Nation
P.O. Box 46
Roseneath, Ontario
K0K 2X0

DEADLINE FOR RESUMES IS FEBRUARY 19, 1996 AT 4:30 P.M. - FAXED RESUMES WILL BE ACCEPTED, HOWEVER, RESUMES RECEIVED AFTER THIS DEADLINE WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

**EFFECTIVE APRIL 1, 1995, A CRIMINAL REFERENCE CHECK MUST BE CONDUCTED ON ALL POTENTIAL EMPLOYEES, VOLUNTEERS, STUDENTS AND AGENTS WHO WILL BE WORKING IN CHILD CARE CENTRES
THREE (3) REFERENCES MUST BE PROVIDED**

CHIEF AND COUNCIL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION

Interviews

Interview #1

John Loukes is a retired educator and member of the Alderville First Nation. For most of his career, he taught in the reserve school until it was phased out. After leaving the school, he was employed as an education counsellor for the Department of Indian & Northern Affairs until he retired. Following his retirement, he returned to the community where he is looked upon as one of the community elders and sits on the Elders' Council.

Art: John what are some of the problems that the community is facing now?

John: At the present time, I do believe, the thing that needs our real attention is the problem of drugs and alcohol. This is not particular to Alderville but also the surrounding area. Another one, to a degree, its struggle we should cooperate with drug and alcohol groups: regular information meetings; dry dances help a bit, they only provide entertainment without instruction.

Art: In these type of problems that the community is facing, does community politics address those particular problems?

John: To a degree they do. They are trying to provide meaningful employment for young people. I do believe, though, more should be done to make the young people aware of the sources of help. Those that are familiar with the drug and alcohol abuse programs should contact definite institutions where they can get information and have regular classes to inform the students; they could have regular meetings. They would, then, know what to do if they had the desire to drink and maybe accelerate the effects with medical prescriptions, as well as illegal drugs; make them fully aware before they ever sample it... what the effects will be and the nature of addiction.

Art: Are there any other problems, just off of the top of your head that are facing the community... not necessarily drug and alcohol.

John: Oh yes, we have other things too. We're in the process of learning and that will correct certain things. I believe the staff in Alderville are in the process of learning how to grapple with the challenges of the community; to tackle all kinds of problems. We have regular information meetings, as I've mentioned, but the next thing is how to run a business. I feel that this self-government as applied to our particular community should have experts working with them. They may, themselves, take courses on how to handle certain things like management of money... getting money and doing this with a degree of wisdom. Some of them have already taking courses and are well prepared to function in their work: Band administrator, I believe, and someone teaching Native language and so on; they have taken courses. It isn't always knowing, it's knowing how to impart it.

What we call pedagogy. And once they get that, they can impart this to the persons who are seeking knowledge.

Art: That makes me think of the strengths of the community. What do you think Alderville has as strength?

John: We have many great strengths, particularly location. We are not isolated as some reserves are. The further you are away and the larger the community, the more you will hang on to your culture, especially in the language and other functions. When the lines of communication are clear intercourse between the Native people and the outside community becomes greater and they eventually, as Alderville has done, lost much of their culture but it does have a positive effect because we learn how to function in a non-Native community and become friends with our communities; we make friends and they help us.

Art: In looking at the community, is there anything, that you can see, that Alderville needs to try to reach its goals?

John: First of all background information and then information by doing. It requires patience. Indian Affairs, when they were in full control, made the mistake of assuming, sometimes, that any new ideas that come in should be implemented immediately. And that, I think, is one of the greatest mistakes it made. The changes that are needed for survival should be measured... the yardstick of measurement should be the generation rather than a shorter period of time.

Art: Over the years when you were teaching here and then you worked in education away from the community for awhile, I know that you hadn't had any chance to become involved in community politics and until recently, what is your involvement in the community now in a political or social way?

John: Number one I think that each individual in the community is an example for people to learn that Native people are human. Sometimes, especially if they've had little contact with non-Natives groups, they look at them as almost foreigners or look at them as heathens or pagans or whatever, until they know them. Once they get to know them, they find that they are the same as anybody else; it helps to break down the barriers. Now when I was going to school I was very much aware that not only did the local communities, as well as Alderville, had a lack of knowledge, the background of each, and that built barriers between them. When I went out I played ball with the other communities. I had my kids involved with games with other communities in the area and I went to social functions - in say Roseneath - without any apparent discrimination. It's up to each individual to break down that barrier of discrimination; it's a two-way street. I've heard people say some weird things about Alderville that weren't so! Lack of knowing them.

Art: I know you've been involved in the present Elders' Council. How do you see your role in that? Is there a role of the Elders' Council in politics?

John: Very much so. What we were trying to do, initially, was to make people aware of what we did. First of all we don't tell the Council what to do. We try to impart to them the general pulse of the neighbourhood by confidential feedbacks to us. And then monthly we report to the Council suggesting that they may take a second look at something... that there were complaints... or invite the people in and ask them to impart to them if they wish, in confidence, what they had told us. If they want us to do it, we will do it.

Art: Would I be correct in trying to describe the Elders' Council in a manner that - a lot of non-Native people don't understand, the political organization of Native communities - would I be correct in trying to describe the Elders' Council as being a body of sober second thoughts similar to the Canadian senate?

John: We've discussed that many times. We've discussed how similar we are to a Senate. You put it, "silver second thought," that's about as concisely as you can describe it and you would be free to pass this information on to anyone - the function of the Elders' Council.

Art: Sometimes the senators aren't too sober themselves.

John: That's true! (laughter) We try to earn a degree of respect so that they know that we will function properly. This is probably conducive to looking at things more realistically and presenting it diplomatically in that light to the Council.

Art: So I guess there won't be any fighting or jumping over desks?

John: I don't think so but there are things that do happen sometimes. We try to keep our Elders' Council flexible enough to not set rigid ages or any other rigid requirements; we don't want to exclude someone who is eager to help but they should be old enough and knowledgeable to think rationally. And knowledge enough of the community. One person might represent one face of the community, another a another, as they see it but if they do it we get a broader picture of the whole thing.

Art: In the politics of the community I guess it was around mid '80s that the first woman Chief was elected by the community, what's the perception, now, of the role of women in community politics?

John: Locally, this is strictly from Alderville's point of view, I don't think that it makes any difference; that eventually it will come down. I don't think it was a recognized barrier but the men were, as in all communities, were the dominant people. You look at other local townships, they had no women in there at one time. It's the same all around. I, personally, don't give a second thought.

Art: Do you think maybe the Indian Act itself was the first influence on putting men into the dominant position?

John: You mean from the Native point of view?

Art: Yeah.

John: Well there were little clauses in the Indian Act which gave the men the dominant roles and some were such that if a woman married a non-Native they were excluded and to that extent I think it had some side effect.

Art: When you mentioned the direction given to the elected chief and council, do you think the Council might start to use culturally based systems to reach decisions or to administrate the community? Do you think culturally based programs would help in that?

John: It may, some things that were practised in the past are no longer applicable. We didn't choose to lose our culture. It was forced upon us by lack of space to maintain our original way of living. Wasn't a choice for economic survival - the old pioneers did the same thing; they changed from the oxen and the plough - we've changed from the bow and arrow to the common way of life because our original way... we couldn't survive.

Art: What do you think and feel about Alderville's relationship with the Provincial government, is it good? And then the relationship with the Federal government, as well. What do you think of these relationships?

John: Not very good. First of all the Federal government has been handling these things - made treaties and everything - and they are trying to pass some of this off to the Provincial government who has never been involved with Native culture, Native laws and so on. I know that many places I go, they don't feel pleased that the province is handling this today. In the ole days they made treaties that is difficult for the provincial government to recognize - or don't want to recognize - because even to the highest court of appeal they see if it's legally written and legally correct, they totally disregard the context under which these treaties were signed.

Art: Does Alderville - and does it - practise self-determination? Meaning that Alderville has the ability to set its future goals and objectives.

John: They're trying to initiate that. Only time will tell if these goals that they have set for the Native people to try in their own way - it may work, it may not - it depends on how its presented, what strings are attached to it. Also we can always go to business people or employer people who are involved in employment, to get information. Sometimes, there has been one little thing that is in Native culture that is eroding somehow - during the past they were nomadic, in this area, and they didn't take well to work that is repetitive and was a kind of drudgery - their land was a sharing thing with

them rather than a particular ownership and we didn't realize how much we were losing when we surrendered all that land. And those that wanted to live that way could have moved out there, done quite well. We sold, in the Williams Treaty, less than half a cent an acre.

Art: You mentioned about Alderville maybe having lost its cultural values. Do you think we've got a chance of revitalizing those values that are presumed to be lost?

John: At the moment, what we are doing is reminding them and making them knowledgeable about their past culture. In some areas, isolated areas especially, they can maintain that culture for a long time but we can't. For instance, I think it's important that they teach them the rudiments of the Native language; not lucid but... like any minority groups, eventually, they will lose it and if we don't have records and if people aren't exposed to it, it will be lost completely because we have things that were very valuable to any race - our spirituality, for instance, they told us we were pagans and heathens and all that stuff and now we're finding out that most Native people are more in-tuned to nature than the non-Native society; much more.

Art: The thing about women... before Bill C-31 those people that lost their status, how did the community think about them? Did they consider them to be Indian or did they give up their right to be Indians?

John: I always felt that people who came here, or lived here, that were non-Native, who didn't have Native blood in them, and also some of them... you were speaking of if they had their status? Marriage, is that what you're thinking?

Art: No, if a women lost her status, was she then considered not an Indian?

John: Legally she would be, of course, but not if somebody lived in the community - and there have been people who lived here with no status - they were treated the same as everybody else and a part of the old Native culture.

Art: What do you think it means to be an Anishnaabe, to be Indian?

John: Well it has advantages. I have a broader advantage of choice. I never had to live the Native way - if I did anything it was just for getting out and learning from other people - but I was brought up on a farm. My father was a farmer. My grandfather started the farm and then he became a post-master and although he was brought up in the old Native way, he didn't pursue it. So, I never felt that being status was a disadvantage but I often had a little fun with people who knew very little about the Native people, but I didn't mind telling them what we thought. And they were just as ignorant about us as we were about them. They often committed, what we would call, down right ill manners. They come and look at you and ask you all kinds of crazy questions, so you feed them with crazy answers and they leave you alone. (chuckles)

Art: I've heard that phrase that you've used - the old Native way, or the old way - what does that mean, living the old way?

John: The old way, since they were nomadic, they were used to freedom. They could travel for - and they speak about lazy Indian but by golly if the people that think they were lazy, followed them one day when they were fox hunting, or travelling miles and miles in a day in search of something to bring home - it was there only source of food you know - or enough money to have a descent Christmas; if you came home empty handed they didn't have much - but they did enjoy that freedom and it just doesn't wear-off over night. You see they had the kind of life - like any evolutionary process with humans - they had built, in their genes, a great skill and a great likeness for the chase.

Art: Good point. In 1859 the Chief and Council at Alderville were upset because they couldn't get the young people to settle down and farm. They asked Indian Affairs for help. They were upset because the young people returned to hunting and fishing. Is that what you're talking about? The feeling of freedom and the thrill of the chase?

John: Yes, and that was their means of living; it was encoded in them, you see. And to suddenly drop that and adopt the drudgery of farming, it was attracted to them at all. Only the older people - maybe too old to hunt, I don't know - but there were about five or six farms on the reserves when I was a boy; some of them were successful and some of them... when they died the farm died with them.

Art: In those successful farms, were they successful because they were self sufficient, that they could provide their own foods?

John: That was the basic concept of farming, then, was self sufficiency. If they got enough to eat and if they had a farm they would have cows... and they'd always have milk and chickens and a few things like that. They didn't do it for money. They didn't get great big farms and measure out what income and everything. Money was something that was comparatively new to them as a part of the old culture because they didn't have money. Indian Affairs thought money settled everything. To the Native people money was to spend and the living in the 'now' you see; that's the way they were.

Art: So money represents the present?

John: Yes, we had an expert at that - he was sampling people all over. He wanted to know... he said now I have this, very valuable... candy cane or something... now I'll give each of you one of these for today but if you wait 'til next week... but if you wait for a week and I'll give you five; most of them took the one now. (chuckles)

Art: There's one last formal question. If you think about self-government as a process which the community could use to reclaim traditional cultural values - to use that frame of thought - can you begin to define what self-government means to you?

John: I look at it this way, if they could reclaim some of the lands which were legally correct but morally wrong... either you had a legal justice or a moral justice... it's like selling your birth-right and I feel, as one man that's lived among the Native people in the North for a long time - if those who don't want to live the way we down here live, give them the opportunity to go out and live like they used to if they want to. They had that choice. The choices are getting very limited, now, to the desecration of the land, air, and the water and everything. So, it's a limited choice now. If they were given the ability to do certain things, like trapping - which some of them do as a holiday - then as long as they cover their expenses and make a little bit of money that's all they want.

Art: The young people, here, that go out and hunt and trap and spend time away from their home and go live in the trapping shack, so that, to them, is a holiday?

John: Yes and they also know that's the way their ancestors lived and they got a great deal of enjoyment to return to that as an experience, not as a monetary reward.

Art: Part of reclaiming our traditional cultural values, I think hear you saying, that in order to do that we re-connect to the land and we re-connect the spiritual connection to that land in order to develop our sense of our culture.

John: Yes and I've heard people say that. They go out in the canoe or some-place and go out to some-place where they feel it's special to them. They have a special feeling...their more spiritually connected by exposing themselves to nature in the raw; free. I've heard more than one mention that and then they are compared to others who have had the same experience in the same place. Rice Lake is supposed to be a sacred place, or was. It supplied everything they needed, almost, you know, that's why they followed the waters. I feel that there's still left a desire for nature encoded in our genes to easily relate to that, you see, and it's not completely eroded but we should have the chance to experience these feelings once in awhile as we wish. (someone at the door).

Art: So in a definition of self-government, it seems to me that you're taking a look... or beginning that definition with developing of the person themselves before they're moving on towards understanding, or trying to define self-government.

John: Yes, self-government is a learning process and, of course, we learn by doing. I felt, at the beginning, that each of the members of the staff of the self-government building, they should have been exposed - and some of them were - to experience training in some kind of courses where it could possibly be but the ideal thing would be to have an expert work with them in some complicated jobs for a whole year. But sometimes a person with that kind of qualification wouldn't want to spend a year doing that, it's a draw back, but I always felt that one of the big problem with the Native people was their concept of money. As you know money is getting out of hand; it's the God of our present generation with many people. It's ruining sports too

and a lot of other things; man is doing things for money. I feel a little relieved, sometimes, when I read the obituaries, people burnt out at fifty, forty, thirty because it consumes them, their burnt out with pressures and so on. Eventually something will happen to curtail that because our environment won't support it. But there's always been that big gap between the very rich and the very poor and it usually ends up where - look at the French revolution and the industrial revolution - the Mexican, now, objecting to being exploited... there are controlling factors that come in there when it gets severe enough.

Art: In our move towards self-government is it - and should it be - the right of the community to say what their problems are? And to say that they have the way of solving those problems without having the federal government or any other outside source coming in to say, "this is your problem, this is how you solve it"?

John: Well there always has been, ever since I can remember, that the person that pays the piper calls the tune. I've heard that reported many times and as long as we have a dependence on Indian Affairs for money - many people look at it - I look at it as rent for the country until they get established and they haven't much choice now but they can't go back to their old Native ways except in extreme isolated areas. And we have to function this way. We're part of it. We can make the changes we can but as long as we have to get money through Ottawa we will have to depend on that and they will not commit to us that promise that when they're going to withdraw this because it has to go through parliament. And it has to be politically presented so it justifies the budget. Then it comes over to the Provincial government and then they can, maybe, impose a few restrictions that isn't compatible with the best feelings of the Native people. But they're getting used to that all the time. The bands that are favourable and accept the responsibility then they're experiencing things. But they've got to learn how to handle money according to the wishes of the people. Then, you see, we have the Elders' Council... we can, hopefully, insert a little bit of wisdom in there that will let them realize how they could, maybe, do something that is not to our best interest. One Band, that I know, they just spent their money... just let it go and never accounted for anything... I learned that at a meeting once. That's what we've got to learn. And tap the people that are financially successful and draw from them. Whether they have high academics or not... how do you handle your money?

Art: Alderville has started to have traditional socials, evenings of drumming, dancing and feasting and an Elders Conference... there was a Pow-Wow last year... what is your feeling about this? Is this moving towards finding out who we were as an Anishnaabe people? What do you think the outcome of this type of thing will be for the community?

John: Three things. You see, I was exposed to Walpole Island at one time and I saw it but I viewed it from the outlook of an outsider. Now when they had them here, it does one thing - they come from other Native communities... that unites them, you

see. We get contact through Tyandanaga and Curve Lake and sometimes from Hiawatha and other places... and they come from way out West some of them... at the last one we had I thought it was pretty good. It encouraged those that are artistic to make their own costumes... boy they've improved from years back you know... and they learn from each other... share. I think it's a good thing. It gives us a feeling of unity and knowledge about each other and it also, as they increase skills, they enjoy each other... I think other people, if they can afford it, invite somebody else to come in and enjoy it with them. There was a lot of people there that weren't Elders or anything else, having a great time, of course... there was supper too, you know. I felt good. And the quality of the drumming was better... the first one I heard in the old hall... oh... it was awful... I didn't say so but... your ear drums... (chuckles)... and these are professional drummers and they've learned... the decipal has been somewhat decreased. Elizabeth, she couldn't stand it the first time... it just hurt her ears. This time there was professional drummers from out West some-place and the three of them did a great job and they were in harmony with each other. Each had their own presentation and then the exotic dancers even drew old men out to dance (laughter). And they had Irish entertainment which is good because this area has a great Irish... not only blood but effect on the old Irish traditions. They had Irish clods and step-dancing and fiddle playing. When I was a boy almost everyone of them could play a fiddle from a certain age. There was music on the piano too. That's what I think of those Pow-Wows, is those things. And it's bringing outsiders in, we can learn, also, how others... their dances and things.

Art: In the school in Roseneath they have the language classes; twenty or forty minutes a day. What is the importance of language to the development and understanding of culture?

John: First of all a minority group would have difficulty maintaining their own language because their dealing with the outside people and so on. If it's spoken at home they can learn it and if they have classes down there that will probably brush up their Native language, grammar wise and so on. And their aware of meaning of words so that if they go to other reserves they can function where they would speak little or no English. There aren't too many of them left except in the far North. I've been up there where they couldn't speak the language at all. They would get the little children from the school to be interpreters.

Art: Here, too, I'm finding and hearing that there's a lot of the older people, or the parents, because they see their kids learning language they're now going out to language classes. Is that going to be an improvement do you think?

John: It depends on the interest generated in these classes. What I've said time and time again, if they want to be conversing in the Native language they've got to have a degree of immersion in it. Go to areas where no English is spoken and you have to speak the language and you can learn it quickly, especially the young people. They

can pick up words more quickly; their minds are more plastic than older people. And I see it being lost out here and don't have expectations to how you go to a class and then expect you to come out speaking their language. You might have a base and if you want to go some-place, stay there for awhile until you get a degree of immersion. Once it's set in the young mind, you can hang on to it pretty well.

Art: Well thank you very much.

John: Well I'm pleased to do it. I didn't present it exactly the way I wanted to, maybe better.

Interview #2

John Crowe is the grandson of Chief Peter Crowe who wrote a letter to Sir James A. Lougheed, in 1919, regarding the rice dispute in Rice Lake. John served the community as a councillor, Chief and sits as a member of the Elders' Council.

Art: John what are some of the problems that you see that the Alderville community is facing at the present time?

John: Oh I think some of the main things, I guess, would be enough housing for the people that are coming in; not enough dollars.

Art: Does housing lead to any other problems within the community or contribute to any social problems?

John: I would say so.

Art: Such as... what might you think?

John: Well we're facing a problem right now as far as that goes. People are in a kind of a huff about somebody, an Aboriginal, wanting another house; there's already two houses existing plus a cottage.

Art: Does community politics address these problems?

John: Well, I would say I don't think they address them the way it should be addressed and take into consideration who is needing and whose not needing; this is the whole problem I would say. It should be more a family [who] holds preference over a single person; they should be first on the list. If you have to look after young children you can't put them out on the road.

Art: What could the community do to solve that problem?

John: Well, I think if they stuck closer together instead of all this bickering... this is the big thing of... is be community based and bring those issues and talk them out instead of talking amongst themselves. You've got to bring it to a head, you know, and be able to speak to the existing government that's operating now.

Art: Having said that... those are some of the weaknesses in the community and generally a lot of Native communities are experiencing that type of problem, it's not only new for Alderville. What are some of the strengths that Alderville has as a community... what are its strengths?

John: Some of the strengths would be that they have this here Elders' Council now and after the people have addressed the Chief and Council they'll come back and ask us questions.. where they should go from there. But then we were told that... we were kind of muzzled in that way too they said... they try and hold us down to that point... you know?

Art: what does the community need to overcome that?

John: Well sticking together... this is the big thing. Sticking together as a group and not branching off single handedly in trying to address the problem with... and voice their opinion and get together and form committees, I think that would be the thing.

Art: I think by your answer that you're a member of the Elders' Council?

John: Yeah I'm a member of the Elders' Council.

Art: You've been in community politics before?

John: Yeah.

Art: What role did you play?

John: I was Chief.

Art: As the community started to evolve in the past few years, with Alderville and some of the other communities, the women have begun to take a prominent role in community politics. Do you see that as a thing that should be continued; should the women being more involved in politics?

John: I would say they should be. Women should, also, have a stong voice in there too just as well as the men.

Art: What's your basis for saying that? Why do you feel that?

John: Well, when it's all male dominated, if it's a Council put in by all males, they figure that they've lost a hold some place; that they've lost grip. Which they should never think that but they should make them more stronger and bring their issues in and fight for those issues.

Art: There's been a number of communities across the country, and Alderville is no exception, there's a want by the community and a want by the people to return to culturally based political systems that really address who the community is, who we are as a people and some communities feel that Councils should be approaching issues that are facing the community in a culturally based manner and that means by using the cultural values, not the Pow-Wows, not the dancing, not the production of crafts, but the value of respect, the value of honouring our women, all those cultural values that are very prevalent almost the same thing that they teachings have been in the Christian model - those values are the same - do you think and does the Elders' Council use that as their basis to inform council?

John: Yeah we have a liason - and Jack Louckes is our liason to speak on our behalf to the Council and bring back his report to us. And I think Jack has done a fairly good job in that... what he's faced with.

Art: How do you reach decisions in your Elders' Council?

John: It's on a consensus basis.

Art: How do you feel about Alderville's relationship with the Provincial government? What do you think it's like?

John: Well I don't know. It's built on a.... it's a province by province... who determines who is going to get the most money and that's, I think, the way it has always been. I think for Natives, though, they've always come up with the short end of the stick as far as money problems go.

Art: What about the relationship with the Federal government?

John: Well, I would say it would be pretty close, also, with the both party politics. That's what I would determine from my own views having talked to both provincial and federal.

Art: How does Alderville practise self-determination in trying to find the solutions to problems? Or do you think Alderville has self-determination?

John: Well this is what they figure... they're fighting for self-determination but I don't

think it brought right _____ at this point. There needs to be a lot more consultation amongst the First Nations themselves. There needs to be more meetings and bring everybody abreast as to what is actually happening on everyday current events with the Council that is operating right now.

Art: Do you think the people themselves, of Alderville, understand the difference between...

John: It would be sixty-fourty I would say. Yeah and not known what is actually facing them or what they could do if they were brought abreast by the present Chief and Council.

Art: So sixty percent of the people don't really understand?

John: Yeah I would say sixty percent, yeah.

Art: If the people understood what all this means, self-government and self-determination, do you think that would improve the relationships between the Federal and the Provincial government?

John: I think it would make them sit up and take notice. All these issues that are brought before them... I think they would sit up and take notice and be more willing to work on what is put before them, I would say.

Art: When we talk about cultural values, as I've mentioned, it's all those values that are contained in the culture that is based on respect, based on the respect for women, based on sharing and caring, and equality amongst members of the community - do you think Alderville has lost those cultural values?

John: To a point, I would say, I think they've lost some of that. What we need is more sticking together on a lot of these issues and fighting for those issues, both male and female. But I think we need the women in there. They're doing pretty good, I would say, doing very good as far as that goes to bring culture back. So I would say they're doing a good job as far as that goes, it just needs the men folk to stick together too.

Art: I think what you're saying is all the past years what culture that is starting to come back is starting to have a positive impact on the community in starting to create that little bit of unification there?

John: Yeah, I would say so.

Art: So I think what you're saying then... or are you saying that you believe that it can be revitalized?

John: Well I would say so, yeah.

Art: Now before Bill C-31 came into being, a lot of those people who were non-status, or considered to be non-status, or had lost their status - do you think they were always considered to be an Anishnaabe? Were they always considered to be members of the community?

John: I don't think so. No, a lot of people didn't figure... when they lived away for so long and they were living in cities... they didn't know the whole aspect of the issue and what was meant by being a full status... they weren't status until some of them came back in. It depends on the marriage aspect of it.

Art: So in that term, then, the person who lost their status ceased to be an Indian?

John: Yeah.

Art: So what does it mean to an Anishnaabe or to be an Indian?

John: I think it means the whole nine yards... you have all your rights and you're able to practise your rights as being an Anishnaabe.

Art: The question of rights is kind of a complex issue. Aboriginal rights are said to be given to the Anishnaabe people by the Creator, not by the government.

John: No, that's for sure.

Art: And so Treaty rights have been given to Indians by the governments - so there is a difference you say?

John: Yeah, there's a difference there, yeah.

Art: Thinking about self-government as a process which the community could use to reclaim traditional cultural values, if you think about that, can you begin to define what self-government would mean to you?

John: You mean that's only one thing, that you would have to go back and you're going to make money for your self support. You have to reach every point even if it gets down to... tax your own people for the land that they sit on... that's the only way that their going to make money because otherwise, in Alderville, they don't have land base. So, it's land base they're lacking and if it's going to self-government they couldn't work on that land base alone.

Art: So, part of this then is you see the time coming that there is going to be taxes on people who are living on the reserve in order to carry out some of the services that are

being given? Such as garbage... sewage.

John: Yeah garbage,... sewage... you have the whole gambit, yeah. It would be just like an any province in Ontario, that's how it would have to be run.

Art: And so self-government, then, is making those decisions for the community, by the community?

John: Yeah, they gotta make those decisions and they gotta bring it to the forefront and explain to each individual just what's lying before them and not beat it around the bush; tell them straight out what's going to happen and then there's where your 'determination' comes from. But you can't do that if you haven't got land base.

Art: Now you said explain to each individual, what do you mean by that? How would they do that? What might they do?

John: They might.... they'd have to call up meetings and make sure that everybody was there and they'd each have to be sent out a letter, even if it had to be registered to make sure that everybody got one. Some might say, "no I didn't get it," but if it's registered they'd have to get it.

Art: And then what about... do you think that going around knocking on doors actually visiting...

John: Well, you could drop off paper work, too, explaining each... whatever tax they say is going to be taxed... or your house is going to be taxed, or your land is going to be taxed, or your sewage, or the garbage... like that... all written down in plain English. So, that would make the people decide, then, which way they want to go.

Art: There's one thing though, when you say about taxes, some Indian people say no, Indians should never be taxed?

John: No, you should never be taxed but I don't know how else they're ever going to make money... or run self-government if they didn't do that. Nobody wants to see taxes.

Art: Do you think people meant Indians shouldn't tax Indians or that it should be not White people?

John: Well, it's in both ways. Indians shouldn't be taxing another Indian. No, I think that's what [will] shoot the whole thing down right there.

Art: But in future we are going to have to pay our... pay those things for ourselves. A users fee is really another term for tax.

John: Yeah, certainly that's right.

Art: Okay, thanks a lot.

John: You're welcome.

Interview #3

Karen and Wayne Beaver are husband and wife and members of the Alderville First Nation. They are both Bill C-31 members. Karen served as councillor and is involved in cultural activities learning ceremonial rituals.

Wayne is the son of Jack Beaver, a former Chief of Alderville. Wayne is an entrepreneur with businesses located on the reserve. He serves as the Self-Government Community Consultation Worker and sits as a member of the Elders' Council.

Art: I'm going to ask the both of you questions, then maybe have Karen go first, then you can follow along. You can help one another in forming your answers. We'll start and see where it goes. What are some of the problems that you think the community is facing in this time?

Karen: Right at this moment I think it's trust and faith and our leadership. I'm worried about the community; I really am. I guess I'm not good at answering interview questions. I guess I'm worried about where all the _____ is going; if it's going to go anywhere. You know like we need good leaders that want to keep... not just to _____ ... well, you know, over trivial things that... right now it could be... you know I believe that _____ Council, that if they had a good leader that was showing and teaching us. Teaching us. Taking me out to meetings... you know, and I'd go to meetings and I could see what was going on and I could see what she was doing because... ah.. it's amazing about her... you know, like a lot of people trusted her. A lot of people had confidence after Nora; helped us with resolution or something... gee... so, I really admired that in her. And I admired how she could get things going, I guess. I don't see that right now. I see things dropping off, like self-government, negotiations, the Williams Treaty - I don't know where that's going - and are we going to lose out on a lot of these things, you know? A lot of... they should be in there with the other people that are fighting for these things; and right now nothing is happening, that I know of. I don't know, I guess I'm not ready go carrying on because I might pick up more things, you know. That's all.

Wayne: Well, one of our main problems facing the community right now is extinction; that has to be at the top of the list. Alderville is being phased out by the Indian Act and because we have the tools to change that; to determine our own citizenship - who belongs to this reserve - and they're not doing it, or we haven't done it up to this point, we are,

in effect, phasing ourselves out. I've referred to this as "self inflicted genocide" because we don't use the tools that we have to change this, then, it isn't going to happen then Alderville will be phased out eventually. This might happen - not happen immediately - but we do see the effects of it now - where Native people have not been able to pass on their rights to the off-spring. We have father and sons living in the same household - the father is Native and the son is not Native, or the daughter is non-Native; they've lost their rights, they've been cut off by the Indian Act. And we have the power to change that and we do have this in place now, so we're working on it but it's an up-hill battle because it requires that we explain to the people what has to be done, what has to be put into place. The solution is simple but convincing people that this is a proper solution is more difficult because of lack of vision and narrow-mindedness; people that just can't see what's happening even though it's happening before their very eyes. This always amazed me. So, the main problem is that we're fazing ourselves out and we have to stop that. We have other problems. We have an inefficient land-base to handle the people that have come back onto the reserve and into the Band Membership; as a result of Bill C-31. And if we put a proper membership Code in place there would be more people coming in, which to my way of thinking, is a good thing because the larger the community, the more pull we're going to have with the government and more funding they're going to receive. I feel that these two things go hand in hand. We have to address that problem and we have to do it quickly; we're losing members everyday. So, we have the land-base problem - it's not sufficient - and the other problem is self-government. We haven't gotten anywhere over the past century or so, and the present set-up and it's not working. Millions and millions of dollars, literally, have been poured in to address this problem. And the problem has, if anything, increased. So, we have to put a stop to that somehow. So, the Williams Treaty is a key item... we have to pursue the Williams Treaty and we have to get more land but we also have to get compensations for the land that was already taken; we realize that we can't get all our land back, 30,000 square miles of land - we're not going to get that back and we know it - but we should get some land to take care of the population that we're going to envision. That's important that we do that but I see these things as all tying in together: membership; self-government; and the Williams Treaty, they all go hand-in-hand because they'll all, eventually, compliment one another. We have to get self-government, not just for the sake of self-government or some sort of pseudo self-government, hoisted upon us - we have to have real self-government; self-determination is the key and we can do it. We have the human resources in Alderville. We have all sorts of people, now, that are educated. People who can speak eloquently, as we found out at our recent General Meeting at a community. Young people that are able to speak up and get at the heart of the problem and able to express themselves. We've always had that but now that people are being educated they have a more intimate knowledge of the problems and are able to address them in a more pragmatic way. I think those are the key issues. We have to make use of our human resources in our community and we have to have the funding to do it; I mean, these things all have to be fought for. We have to have self-government that we know will work and do what we want it to do for our people.

Art: Good. You've eluded, probably, to the next few questions being does community politics address those problems? Has Chief and Council been able to address them?

Karen: Not that I can see but in the newsletters that come out you don't see anything in there that is addressing any of these problems. Getting back to the first question there, when Wayne was mentioning the narrow-mindedness and the... I think a lot of it has to do with being comfortable about the way things are going right now and... some people are just happy with what they have right now and they don't think about the future generations. That's part of the things that I'm concerned about. Like I'm comfortable but I still think about my grandchildren, my great-grandchildren.

Art: So, in thinking about that would you say you're thinking of about that value that we say that we consider the seven generations?

Karen: Yeah, something like that. I didn't name that but it is. Like now, Wayne was saying there's more people being educated and learning about everything, now, way back when our fore-fathers signed the Treaties they didn't speak English, they didn't know what they were signing away or what they were giving up; all that kind of stuff. Well, now we know. We know now.... it's a really, really big thing... well, how is this going to effect how my great-grandchildren... I want to be able to say... I want my future descendants to be able to say my great, great grandparents, they really cared about me.... they were in there fighting to make sure these things were happening, that I was going to be a Band member, here in Alderville, when I came along. I don't know about those types of things; whether they're not being encouraged anyway... you don't feel encouraged to be able to get a membership committee... membership code for Alderville. Those things are so important. The strength of the community.... we do have a lot of strength. As Wayne said there's young people coming along and I'm so proud of our young people. I see them working to get this Pow Wow Committee going and it's only a few of them but they're going to have a Pow Wow this weekend coming and it's taken a lot of work of those few people. I see a lot of strength there and that's where the strength comes from, I think, because the youth.... I don't know... I just believe that we do need the leadership... I think that's a lot of where it comes from... and for the leadership to listen... to listen to the people. This community is strength if we all get together and we all... you know... if we're unified... if we're not, then, we're in danger of losing what we didn't have I think.

Wayne: Well, I don't think the community politics addresses the problem 'cause we don't have the power. We can't pass a dog by-law without having approval from Ottawa. We have what we call Band Council Resolution; the Chief and Council agree on something and then they have to send to Ottawa for approval. A lot of times it's the case of rubber-stamping but the point is that the government could refuse to accept that by-law no matter how trivial. So, we don't really have the power to make the changes that are necessary to make the community a better place for our younger people. And we do have a responsibility for the next seven generations; and this is a real responsibility; it's

part of our culture; it is accepted by our forefathers and now to be accepted by us. We have to give young people hope. Unemployment on this reserve is more than two times the national average. That has to be unacceptable to everybody. Not only us but to the mainstream of Canadians. And that is a problem that we have to address; we have to have the tools to do it. Right now, under our present set-up we just don't have the power to make those changes. I think I've already dealt with strength of the community. Our greatest strength is our human resources. One thing we have to be careful about is allowing our own fear to control our decision-making process. We can't allow people to tell us things like we're not going to have sufficient funding or handle all our people. We can't allow people to tell us that this is something that we can't deal with when the time comes. The funding will be there, when we need it, and our numbers are going to control the amount of funding we get; it always has. Health and Welfare doesn't drop their budget without going to Indian Affairs to find out how many Indians are on a particular reserve. So, if we get a membership code in place - again these things are tied together - then we tell the government who are members are; how many people we have on our reserve, how many people are living on the reserve and how many people are living off of the reserve and the funding will take care of itself. So, we can't allow fear of anything to control our decision-making process. We have to take decisions that are fair, reasonable, and honest, and get the community involved so we make the right decisions. We have to have respect for the community. The leaders have to respect the wisdom, the combined wisdom of its people, and we've seen this through a couple of the decisions that have been made, very recently, that this isn't happening and the people made our government, here, accountable. They got together - they banded together - and they said, no, we've accepted decisions in the past, but some decisions you're making now... we can no longer tolerate these types of decisions and we're ___ on getting them reversed. Those decisions would never have been made if the Chief and Council had respect for its own people; the combined communal wisdom... it's there! If you recognize it and act accordingly, then, the community will be in a much better place to live in, I think.

Art: What does the community need? I know that, Karen, you've been on Council, Wayne you're presently sitting on the Elders' Council... as community members, what do you think that the community needs?

Karen: We need something that's going to get people work.... you know, not just a few people but people that really want to work... you know. 'Cause it's so hard for Native people to go off-reserve and get a job. Need something here. I've been in Council and... I think.... when I was Council I believed things were happening because we had a good Chief in place. Like I've never been College educated or anything... or university educated... I was there because I cared. I believe that, when you decide that you're going to try to get elected to Council, for myself anyway, I have to think if I take this then I have to be a certain way, I have to speak up when I don't agree with some things... because I was never like that, I just sat back and let people make decisions, and maybe be mad and not say anything and I had to make up my mind that I was going to

do those things; I was going to speak up if I didn't like something or... I just had to speak up when I was on Council and I believe I did... I believe I.... I had a mind of my own and I could speak when there was something come up that I could take part in as a specialist and I feel very fortunate that I was on Council with Nora because she did teach me a lot. I learned a lot. I think that's pretty well all I could say about that, I guess. I know there's a lot of needs in the community, I just don't know how to go about stating them. I guess I'll just leave it at that.

Wayne: Well certainly the community needs jobs; we've already covered that in previous questions. In talking, mostly of our young people, they have to have hope. They have to have hope that when they educate themselves that they're going to have something to come back to. They have to feel that there's purpose in their life. It's important for a young person to know who they are; to be able to identify with a community. We saw evidence of this in the failed Meech Lake Accord where Elijah Harper, under tremendous pressure from his own colleagues, was able to "no" repeatedly, time and time again. You can only imagine the pressures that he was under to just say that one simple word "yes." But he knew who he was and that gave him the strength, along with the spiritual guidance from respected Elders, to do what had to be done. Whether you believe he did the right thing or not is immaterial; he believed he was doing the right thing and he had the courage of his convictions, you might say - he did what he thought he had to do based on his own best judgement. But in order to make those kinds of decisions it's important that you know who you are; your identity. So, we need to instill that in our young people. We have to make sure that they are proud of their heritage. We can't make somebody proud of their heritage but we can inform them of where they came from and the sense of identity that goes along with that, once they know who they are they can only be proud of it. I know that I was always brought up to be proud of my heritage; it never occurred to me to be anything other than that. I was blessed with parents that knew this and passed it on to their children. So, it never occurred, not to be, proud of my heritage and if we can instill this into our young people then we'll see all sorts of magical things start to happen that we thought were impossible before. Once young people know that they are part of the decision-making process and that their views matter, then, you'll no longer have angry young men and women, you'll have positive thinking young men and women who will be able to do it real good for their community. If we can do anything that's what we should be trying to do. I always talk about young people because that's our future. So, I think that has to be the key; we have to give them hope.

Art: What do you think about the women's role in community politics?

Karen: I think it's important [laughs]. I think we need women on Council because it's a balance for one thing... God... a bunch of men out there... [laughs]. I just think woman... I sit on Council, they need women in there because they have opinions and they... you know... they can see things... like, they care for issues. For example, they've brought up their families; they know how important it is to have a daycare,

family shelters, abuse and all that kind of stuff. They can get going. Like, Nora seen that she had an opportunity that we could get a family shelter, here, "we'll take it," she said. She got back to them. Now there's a building going up here for a family shelter. You know, there's things that maybe men just don't see the same as women and that's why I believe that there should be women and have the role in what goes on in politics. I just don't know what more to say about that but I know it's really important. Because I'm a mother, wife, and a sister and I think we have a side that should be heard.

Art: And a grandmother.

Karen: And a grandmother.

Art: Wayne what is your thoughts?

Wayne: Well, I think it goes without saying that women have a role in the community politics. In this enlightened days we realize that women have something to say. There's a woman whose responsible for getting Bill C-31 passed into law. A woman that saw her rights and decided to do something about it. Eventually took it to the _____ Council to the United Nations...

Wayne:... and because it was such a basic human right and there was such obvious discrimination against our Native women that the law had to be changed. Canada was forced into changing the law. So, the women have a role; absolutely. In our community, we look at our Band Office... I don't know what the percentage figures are, exactly, but it seems to be that it must be close to ninety percent of the women that are working in the administration of the Band Office and our various programs, are women, and I don't see that as being negative in any way. Although, sometimes, I think it would be good if we had more men working in those roles. Men were encouraged to have their input into the general administration of the Band. Women, traditionally, have always been held in respect and at a recent community meeting I saw evidence twice; from two different quarters, that there was views expressed that were directly against women and I was surprised at that but I was, also, saddened by it. I'll just give you an instance of where one woman felt that she had a right to be given consideration for a house and she pointed out that she was living in a house with no running water and that she was pregnant and going to have a baby. A male member of our reserve stood up and said, "you think you should have a house just because you're pregnant?" I thought that was demeaning to women and showed a total lack of respect. I wasn't the only one there that felt that way; there were other people. So, I don't think that person spoke for the general population of the reserve. But, in another case, our chief told a woman, that had lost her job because she took maternity leave - she came back and her job was no longer there - was told that... in effect... I don't know the exact words... I'm only hearing of this second-hand, this part of it but I heard that she was told that, in effect, it was your own fault because you went out and got yourself pregnant. When a woman chooses to have a child, that used to be a cause for celebration and it ought to, still be, today. We should

have a feast if a woman is going to have a baby; we did in the ole days. So, definitely it shouldn't be looked down upon. So, women do have a role. They have to make sure that discriminating practises, of the past, don't rear their ugly head again. Women do have a role.

Art: In the governing of the community should Council approach the issues using culturally based systems? For example consensus decision-making. You've already mentioned equality in sharing and caring for women and children, what do you think about using a culturally based system? Maybe in the sense of choosing Chief and Council, not by voting for Chief and Council... that's just another thought.

Karen: Just in the past two weeks, I would say, I've heard a lot of talk of going back to those types of government; consensus, clan system, all those things because they might have been fairer or something. I'm not too sure how those things work but just going by our Elders' Council, now, that's done with consensus, in decision-making anyway and that's working. It's working. I think it should be looked into, whether you can do that all of a sudden or not, it probably has to be introduced and talk about it quite a bit, before something like that happens. I think there's a few people in Alderville, right now, who would be open to this kind of thing.

Wayne: Well, it's my own personal feeling, I'm not sure that we can go back to a system that we've had a hundred a years ago. Not that it was a bad system, it worked, but if you have, let's say, a hereditary chief system - that would be almost impossible to start up now - it worked because young men that knew they were going to be Chief were groomed for it; they knew that they would, eventually, be leaders and they were taught and groomed for leadership. That's one aspect of it. The other is that we were a different people; that's when there was no European influence and our people place great emphasis on spirituality. Much greater emphasis than is placed today, although, there is a renaissance that is recognized by, mostly, Indian people - that we are going through a renaissance period right now but we're still in the developing stage, at this point. So, it worked in the old days because our people were following a totally different way of life without the European influence. European influence has sort of flew in the face of our traditions. If you just look at some of the most basic tenants of our heritage... land, how we perceive the land and how we perceived our role in the land... and it'll just be opposite to land ownership type of philosophy that was espoused by the Europeans. Indians would never think of putting a fence around a piece of property and saying "I own this land." He could no more own the land than it could own the head of ____; the land was for the people and you knew its place and that he was placed on this land by the Creator... and these things form the basis of who we are... we're lost... not totally but we're just coming back to them now so I don't think we can jump back into that type of system, over night, because we're just we're just in a form of developing. And I don't think it would work and I may be wrong and certainly think it's an interesting question and something that could be discussed in a public forum, look at the pros and cons of it and see if it's viable but, my own personal views, is that it would be difficult. Consensus as a decision-making process? Much to my surprize, I found out

that it does work. I cautioned our Elders when we got together to form an Elders' Council that my experience in the business community told me that this wouldn't work - I said, "I have attended too many meetings where you would have come out with a consensus, there was always pros and cons that always ended up with a show of hands, and that was the decision, based on the majority." But it does work - with Elders anyway - I'm not sure that it would work in any other forum. Elders aren't the government; they're not elected. It involves a lot of compromise in your views. If you see that a number of people are thinking in a certain way, because you're older and, hopefully, a little bit wiser you learn to compromise in your life for the common good. So, it does work, much to my surprise.

Art: The next question you both have commented, or alluded to it, so that question is how do you feel about Alderville's relationship with the provincial government, with the federal government and how does Alderville practise self-determination, and could these relationships be improved, if needed? Now, I think, probably, what I will do is just ask you if you want to make any further comment that you maybe thought about.

Karen: Not for me.

Wayne: Well, at the present time, I think, our relationship with the Provincial government in particular is at a very low point. To the point that we're talking but just barely. And with the Federal government, not so good. We were recently told that we weren't welcome at the First Minister's Conference and we had every reason to believe that we would be invited there and they would welcome our input. You know, having to leave without discussion, of any kind. We were sent a very trish note to say that we wouldn't be invited this year... to this conference. So, that doesn't dauber too well for the future, I don't think. We do have a system of dealing with the Federal government and the Provincial government that, I think, could be changed in philosophy. If we could convince these governments, these two levels of government, to change this adversarial approach to governing and to discuss them, to arrive at decisions that affect us and look at it together as that "Indian problem." The "Indian problem" has been around for a long time; it's, probably, one of the most discussed problems in Canada and a lot of money, millions and millions of dollars, have been spent on the "Indian problem," and if we could look on it as "let's get together and solve this problem, once and for all," and if they would just listen to us, listen to our leaders, listen to our communities to see what we're trying to say. We feel that we know better than anybody what our problems are and how to address these problems. And it's community-based and it aught to be because that's where the problems are and we can't deal with problems with a bureaucracy that's two hundred miles away - in a lot of cases a lot further than that - it doesn't work so we have to change that way of dealing with things; the philosophy of it and to require something on both sides; it's not just our side, it's not only good for us to say that. We have to convince the government that this might be a better approach to it. Look on it as a common problem, not as "our" problem, or not as Canada's problem, but a problem that we both share. That has been life with failure from the word 'go'. Just witness the

suicides that we have in the Indian community; the high unemployment rate; we die much quicker than non-Natives; we get diseases much quicker; we have all sorts of social problems and this should never be looked on as something that can't be solved but we should, maybe, change the approach to it. So, that's how I think we can improve these relationships; by speaking honestly about them and looking on them, not as their problem, or our problem, but something that we both need to... for the benefit of the whole country. We need to forget about the adversarial approach - us against them - and get together and solve the problem. Once they see that they'll know that we need self-determination; we need self-government and we need the funding to do it. We can't just... leave us adrift, now, after our past history. We have to have the money, the land-base, all these things have to be in place before we can take over our own government; it's really important.

Art: Has Alderville lost Native cultural values? We've mentioned, and then you mentioned spiritual... I think that's part of what this question is getting at... culture and spiritual values - they're very difficult to separate and I don't think that they ought to be - if they're lost, can they be revitalized? Karen what do you feel?

Karen: Well as Wayne mentioned before we're brought up with Native parents and taught a lot of values that our parents taught us. Growing up I never thought of myself as having to tell myself that I should be proud to be an Indian because I've always been proud; it's just something that I am and I'm proud of it but since the ... I hate saying 'traditional' too because it has become a bad word, sometimes, in our community anyway... traditional... I don't know what it is but learning about our past values... our cultural things I guess... the medicines... the drum... the dancing... the singing... and the spiritual part I guess. Those things were lost... Alderville didn't have them for a long time... and just in the past three years... they're coming back and we're learning. We're learning. When I said that I was always proud to be a Native women, well I'm even more proud now... I'm a Native women - an Anishnaabekwe - because I'm learning about those spiritual bodies that were lost to me... were taken away from me and that's probably because pagan worship or whatever. I've heard those things, when I started to learn about the born again Christians... you know... I believe myself... like Kathy when she got going to College, she's the one that taught me about the medicines, about that it was okay... you know... she would talk to me about that when she was going to college... talking to me about using the medicines... I said Kathy you don't need to do that, you can just pray and that would get you help. Well, she still talked to me about them... just like, I just never mentioned that... she'd keep talking... so, one Full Moon Ceremony that started up here, she said come on out. So, I went on out with her and from then on that's where I belong. That's where I get my spiritual teachings... in those circles; I get my strength. I believe that they are being revitalized by the people that are going to receive those teachings, like Kathy... she's brought a lot back here.... it first got started, I believe, that first one by Nora, again. She wanted a Full Moon Ceremony and I didn't go to that first one but I've been going ever since... pretty well ever since... and I really like the drum... that's coming back to Alderville... we haven't got our own...

those types of things. And my grandchildren are learning. They're learning their language. I'm not learning my language... that was lost to me... but I just haven't... got started learning it yet. But they're coming back. They've been gone for so many years, so it's going to take... it's coming back faster, I believe, than we lost it... you know... and it's coming back... really fast, I think, and there's a lot of people... you might come to a social and you see the odd one coming out... people just coming to look but they stay because, like me, I went for one and it's where I belong. I believe that's what people are seeing here.

Wayne: The answer to the first part of the question is yes; we have lost our cultural values. And can these be revitalized? Well, we're in the Seventh Fire. It was prophesized that everything that is happening now, would happen; there would be a re-birth, of going back to our traditional values, traditional ways of looking at things and my personal view is that it has got to the point now where it can't be reversed. There's enough people that are looking into this and promoting this and it's catching on and I don't think we'll ever go back to the way we were before; it'll only get better. And the world, right at this particular time, the planet needs these teachings. So, the most serious problems facing the world today has to do with ecology and destruction of the earth. If everybody had thought and lived the way Indians lived we wouldn't have an ecological problem because we wouldn't have done those things to the earth. So, I think the time has come for Native people; they have something to offer. It's always been there but it's never been recognized and now it's being recognized by... I'm reading a book now called "Wisdom of the Elders" it's co-authored by David Suzuki, a well known environmentalist, scientist and he has a very clear understanding of how important these values are to the world community right now. And so I see it - not an accident that these things are happening - I see what's happening as the fulfilment of a prophesy and I think that it has gained the momentum necessary to carry it through no matter what. So, it's something we can look forward to with hope and conviction; it's going to happen. And I think it's important to self-government that we know who we are. If we learn to govern ourselves that's really important.

Art: The next question is to do with Bill C-31 and how people considered themselves or considered members who had lost their status. Before Bill C-31 came into being were non-status considered to Anishnaabe, the Ojibway, and what does it mean to be an Anishnaabe to you? Start off with Karen.

Karen: I am a Bill C-31. I got my status back as a result of Bill C-31. Here and out there, I was not considered to be, I guess, a band member... I don't know... I considered myself to be Anishnaabe. I didn't care who... or what told me I wasn't... I was and no piece of paper, no government could tell me what I was... and my children. So, after I got my status back and was able to come and live in Alderville I was so happy. Nobody really knows the feeling that I had to be able to come back home and live here. It's not the funding... the finance... it's a feeling. I'll tell you, I lived out there... you know and I felt gee I can't go back home; I can never live at home. I can go back there

and live in a house but I'm not a part of that. To me, it's just a feeling. What does it mean? It's so personal to be an Anishnaabe. There are no _____, that's what I was and that's what I am and that's what I'll be 'til the day I die and so will my children.

Wayne: I don't know whether... I know that Bill C-31... I never considered myself to be anything other than an Anishnaabe, before or after. So, Bill C-31 didn't have that kind of impact on me and non-status, the term itself, who ever dreamed that term up wasn't a very clear thinking person and didn't think too much about what the impact of that would have on young people; to be called non-status... anything. But no, I always considered myself to be an Anishnaabe right, before and after. It's nice to have the rights, there's economic benefits to it and all the rest of it and it's nice to have my name on the band list but that had nothing to do with being an Anishnaabe, to me. I was always Anishnaabe. I was born and I always will be when I die I'll be Anishnaabe. So, this is a government inflicted thing on our people and I chose not to accept it in any way, shape, manner or form. And what does it mean to be an Anishnaabe? I'm still learning that. I hope that I keep learning until the day I die. So much has been lost, or hidden from us, and it's just coming back now, so I think we're all in a learning process. There's very few people, or Anishnaabe, or other Aboriginal people that really can tell us the whole story but there are enough of them around that we can get a pretty good idea of who we are. The things that are going on at Alderville right now are good things and we're teaching our people in the schools now. We weren't given a true message before, in the schools; I've learned a lot more since I left school, about my people and who I was, than I did in all the years that I was in school because the message just wasn't there to get... it was a distorted message, and in a lot of cases, just completely untrue, so it wasn't education in any sense of the word.

Art: The last question that we have here, if we think of self-government as a process whereby the community can use to reclaim cultural values or traditional cultural values - using this frame can you begin to define what self-government means to you? Karen.

Karen: I think I'll pass that one. I did want to add, maybe, something that I was thinking about... well, I know that there's Elders in our community, older than me, and I think they're losing a lot of that... {unintelligible}... well, I'm guilty of not going and talking to people because I know _____ done it, talk to people, and he's gone for hours at a time; very _____. When I was on Council I was at a meeting, way up North somewhere, I think it was Thunder Bay or somewhere up there, well I was talking to this woman who mentioned she had a Council of Elders... I said to her "what a great idea," and so Nora was with me and I mentioned it to her and she thought it was good, so we brought it back to Council and they agreed with us; that it was a good idea. So, we asked Bill, because he was our Elder on Council, to get a Council of Elders together and from there there's been a meeting of Elders. Only they just sort of sitting there, Council doesn't use them, or the community is using the Elders; they come for the Elders. That's part of my vision for having an Elders' Council but I also wanted it for Council because Council has things that, maybe, they can't agree on or something and they can go and just talk to the

Elders, or maybe have a meeting with them once a month, with the Elders. And that's not being done right now. I think they could get so much more direction, I guess, in their decision-making; if they would just go and have a meeting with the Elders because there's some good people on there and they have a lot of wisdom - a lot more than what I might have, although, I sit on that. I just think that there's another strength that I didn't mention, that's very important... along with the youth; I wanted to add that.

Wayne: When I think of self-government I didn't necessarily think of it in terms of something that we could use to return our traditional culture of values. I guess the reason I never thought of it that way is because I don't know what the community wants in terms of retaining our cultural values. I see some evidence that there, appears, to be a growing interest in it and people are starting to participate and I see it as a very positive thing but I'm sure if you took a poll in Alderville, how it would come out; whether people feel that these are values worth retaining or not. When ever I think of leading people in a certain way, I always think of one of our modern... probably one of the most influential person to his country in modern times was Ghandi. I've always found it interesting that he said, "there goes my people, I am their leader I must follow them." If you're a person like me you have a whole lot of views and these are strong views about things and you talk about these to people and you realize, in the course of your discussion, that people don't think the same way you do about certain things. So, I'm not sure that we would... I think a better way of putting it would be, self-government could be used as a process; to give people the right to choose which way they want to go because who am I to say, or a group of people to say, how a community should go. It doesn't matter that I believe strongly in this, that this is the way we should go, I'm only one person. So, you have to find out where the community wants to go before you can lead them there. That's what Ghandi was trying to say and I really see the wisdom in that. He proved that to be right because he caused the sun to set on the British Empire through non-violent means and he should be a role-model for leaders to follow, I think. As fas as defining self-government... I think, we've already talked about it. We had a discussion before the tape recorder went on so I don't know how much got in that [laughs] into the tape but you mentioned self-determination. You're not the first person that's mentioned that. Karen's brother, when he was running for Chief, he didn't make it but when somebody asked him what self-government was and he said, "self-determination." I though, at that time, that he hit the nail right on the head; that's exactly what self-government is. And don't let the government kid you that they don't know what self-government is... you have premiers from out West, not the East Coast so much, but a lot of the Premiers from out West let on that they know what self-government but they know damn well what self-government is and they're afraid of it; they see it as threatening, somehow, that we're going to take over the country. All we're trying to do is look after our people and it's rediculous to think that Canadians think that Native people are going to take over Canada and they don't want to enter into something until it's fully defined. Well, the United States are still defining who they are. They drew up a Constitution, said "we got to start somewhere. We'll put in an amended formula when the need arises." So, they got on about the business of governing the

people and determining their own future; and they're still doing it today. The Constitution hasn't been finished, it can still be amended when ever the need arises. We're growing as a people; we're evolving. The call it an evolutionary process; we're more enlightened today than when we used to burn witches at the stake. So, we're evolving and self-government for Native people, I see as an evolutionary process but you have to start. You have to start. But self-government, to me, just for the sake of self-government, I could never agree with. Self-government has to be on our terms; we have to be able to see it as something that is going to have a pragmatic effect on the future of our people. Not some idealistic thing that you talk about; it has to address real problems; it has to address teen suicide; drug abuse, including alcohol and all the other prescription drugs; glue sniffing; gas sniffing... everything... all the social problems it has to address. We have to find an answer to it and I've heard this problem referred to as a _____ mountain to find a solution. Now, so much here when they're talking about the suicide at Davis Inlet, where they followed the children around to make sure they don't commit suicide; people are assigned to them so they don't kill themselves. This is a deplorable situation! It's so sad! You look in the _____ they're so far removed, they have so economic base, they have a pitiful land-base, they were moved out of their place where they were placed by the Creator, and shifted up to a far distanced place where there was no consultation process what so ever. And then we look at that situation and say, "we have problems happening there." If it wasn't so sad it would be laughable. My son looked at these problems - my son likes to think about a million problems - he has a problem with articulating his views to a group of people but talking one-on-one to him you can find out how he's thinking and he said, "this problem is unsolvable. How can you solve it?" Well, I don't know how you can solve it but Alexander the Great sat at the _____, he just took his sword and chopped them in two and that's the end of the _ _____. It requires _____ solutions, in otherwords, you have to look at the problems and analyse them and find out what we can do and we have to consult the people. We have to consult the Elders of those communities to find out what, they see, as a solution to the problem. They weren't consulted when they were moved. Indians always chose a place to settle that was spiritually right for them. They were just moved out, hundreds of miles away and expected to just take up where they left off. They were put into an impossible situation. They were put into an impossible situation and the government looks at it now and says, "when did that happen?" As I say, if it wasn't so sad, it would be laughable. So, self-government has to start with the people. Has to start with the community and we have to have the courage to do it properly. Many of the things that I see as a big pit-fall is falling into deficit spending; that both governments are guilty of, and have been guilty of for years. And then they have all through out the Western world, right now, you have this mean spirit of the government; if you take the Ontario government, right now. I'm not political... left or right... I don't think... if I'm electing somebody I like to look at the person but this government saw a problem, a huge deficit and said, "how are we going to address the problem?" And their answer was "let's take it from the poorest of the poor people." "Let's cut welfare by twenty percent." Nobody every said what impact that is going to have on people and if they told the truth about it, what impact will it have on the deficit, it would have been so infantaginal (sic) that it would

have been laughable; it has no impact on the deficit to cut welfare spending by twenty percent. So, these new spirited ways of looking at problems of the people, we have to avoid. We have to avoid these things. These are pitfalls that we can see in everyday life and we avoid them; we avoid deficit spending - that's what we have to do. And we have to have enough money to do it. We have to be able to manage that money ourselves so we can put it to the best use. Self-government is self-determination. Look to the United States, or look to Canada for that matter, as a role _____. They didn't have the whole thing over night; they're still defining it today and we'll have all sorts of problems in self-government and we have to solve them. I believe. I have hope. I believe that we have the people to solve these problems. I've seen evidence of it in our young people, but also in our, Karen mentioned, the Elders. I belong to the Elders' Council and these are wonderful people and they have strong views and there's a lot of wisdom, there, to offer the people. Did you ever ask the children? Ever go out to the school and ask our grandchildren what do you think the community should be like? I'm sure you'd get some really insightful answers to that question from the really young. But you get it from all the people; that's where it comes from. You can't be a self-determining people unless you know what the people want; no leader can force this upon the people and say "follow me." You have to be like Ghandi and say, "tell me where you want to go and I'll lead you there." If I think you're right... if you don't think the people are right in the way they want to go, you ought not to be a leader; you shouldn't put yourself up to leadership.

Art: Thank-you very much.

Interview #4

Nora Bothwell is a graduate of Trent University and was the first woman to be elected as Chief of the Alderville First Nation. In between terms, she was employed as Executive Director for the Union of Ontario Indians and is currently the Executive Director for the Ogemawah Tribal Council.

Because of time constraints, this interview was self-conducted by the interviewee.

Hi Arthur.

What are some of the problems that the community is facing?

Well that's pretty open ended. I don't know exactly what you mean by problems because there's internal problems and there's external problems but I think a lot of the problems that the community has is external in the area of... say for instance, land claims and cut backs and funding for all sources, especially in economic development... even education. I think historically when the government wanted to educate Native people they didn't really think that it would work so I think now they're at a problem where they have the

problem that while here is all these Indians learning our way of life and we didn't expect it to work so what are we going to do so we'll cut their funding. I think that's a major issue.

Does the community politics address the problems?

I don't whether it does. I think the community politics is beyond them. What the government is imposing is, "here is just a little amount of money and you have to do with that what you will." So, therefore, the community has to then address the problem through policies and etc... and, of course, that in its self is a problem because it makes the community and the Council - more so the Council - the ones that are in the middle, that have to do these policies that are affecting everyone and naturally everyone gets mad at them. And they have no control because really they're just grabbing at that little care which the government is giving them through a few dollars to education their individuals. I think one of the other major problems that we've had and it's sort of along the line of education is the whole issue of social. I know we've always tried to address it by having a community centre and have things for people to do but whether we like it or not, alcohol and drugs is a major component in the problems that we have in the communities as far as those... you know... high unemployment, naturally, but still there seems to be a searching... or something. I think the people think that alcohol and drugs is the answer and, of course, we know it isn't.

I think one of the other problems, too, would be the problems that community - and it's not just our community, it happens all over the country - people don't want to take responsibility as a community member. That's a big problem, I feel, because it's so easy to sit back and say, "oh well, if I was in Council I'd do this," or "I think Council should that," or "they're not doing a very good job, boy wait until election time." But you never see those individuals out doing that. You never see them out running. You never see them out volunteering. And if they did then they may realize that they're part of the problem by not being united. That's the way it is here and it's too bad. There's individuals that have greed. The all mighty dollar seems to be taking over and they... "what ever's in it is for me," is what is important. It doesn't matter about the future generations, it's what's in it for me, today. And that's really a problem that a lot of communities face. If I think of something else I'll come back to that.

What are the strengths of the community?

I think one of the main strengths of the community is the women. And I'm not saying that because I'm a woman. In our community you know there has been a re-vitalization to the cultural values and it is the women that have encouraged and brought those back and are incorporating that into the daily lives of their children. That was the whole purpose of the daycare; to try and bring that element... the four gifts that the Creator gave us. That's what we're trying to incorporate into the children and, I think that is a very good strength of the community right now. I think that's the foundation on what our community is going to be able to build on. And then, in the long run, community

politics won't be able to address this. I think it will be that strength of the women who are bringing back the cultural teachings and... our pow-wow and everything. That, I think, is what is going to keep our community together when the time comes to where we're going to have to do something... I think that's it.

Have you been involved in the community politics?

Well, of course, you know that I have. Being Chief for six years, I think what the community needs is an all around leader. And I'm not saying that there's anything wrong with a leadership that there's now because everybody has their own style. I just think that it's okay to be a leader that's here in the community and do the things for here but you still have to look on a national and provincial level. And I think what the community needs is a plan. Having a background in economic development and community planning, my whole way of dealing with issues, concerns and the future is planning. It's okay to say well here is what we'll have for today and here's... for the next five years but we've got to think further than that. With these cutbacks and the things that are going on in our communities, we've got to start thinking about what's going to happen in twenty and twenty-five years for our grandchildren when we're not here. What are we planning to do so that they still have a community, still have an Alderville, still have a First Nation and they'll be able to say, "here, we still have a community, this is what my ancestors built for me." I think that's what the community needs.

Do women have a role in community politics?

Oh without a doubt. Like I said being Chief and having women Council, I think there's an element there that's... women are able to incorporate so many things in their daily life; they can run a family, they can organize, they can cook, they can look after the children. They've got so many talents in one hand that they can do many things at once. I think that's what's really wrong right now. Like I mean we have men all in Council and there's not that balance. Maybe there should be a rule or something that says you have to half and half. Well, I don't know. There needs to be a balance. I know that with a lot of the women that work in the office - you think of the majority of the women that work in the office - there needs to be that understanding. I just don't think men really understand like women do. So, I think that's important. Women are sort of involved in politics anyway... like behind the scenes... traditionally. They're the ones that let the men know what's going on; behind the scenes did their thing. I think that's what we learned traditionally and I think maybe in some ways they still do that; Native women though. I think there's a danger there when there's non-Native women. I don't mean that facetiously but non-Native women just don't understand unless you've walked the walk... how can you talk the talk so to speak.

Should Council approach issues using the culturally based system, for example,

consensus and decision making?

I think that would be ideal but being on many Boards and Tribal Councils and things that I've been involved in, I don't think that's realistically okay. I remember in my leadership I tried as much as we can and still now, today, in the work that I do in trying to reach a consensus as much as possible but it's not always possible. But I think the Chiefs today are saying well if the majority says this is how it should be then I'll go along with it. So, I guess in essence that is consensus. There are times when you still have the democratic vote and that doesn't necessarily mean that those people agree; it isn't consensus but that's reality, that's what happens.

How do you feel about Alderville's relationship with the provincial/federal government?

Well, knowing what I know about the Feds and their whole idea of getting out of the... their devolution process, their whole concept of getting out of the role of looking after Indians... they're trying to shove a lot of it on to the province. Whether we like it or not the province seems to be the ones that have taken more responsibility, in my opinion. I don't know, now, whether Alderville's relationship with the province is. I know we do a lot of dealing in the Welfare and the social aspect and I suppose through the '65 Welfare Agreement - we do have that - but the changes that are coming down, even to that is just arbitrarily against what our whole system is all about. That's what they want to do, they want to cut little deals here and there with people. They are, in essence, dividing and conquering us. Even though, when you sit at the table with the Feds and the Province - they're sort of enemies themselves - but the Province seems to be ones who are more in-tuned at the moment; Feds just want to get out of it, pass it over and that's it. But it's the same thing, I think, when you talk about Health Transfers etc.. the Province wants to ship that over to help complete transfer. It's a known fact that the Attorney General said that medical services etc.... or... there's a lot of mis-use of funds. Same thing with Indian Affairs. And they're saying that, "why couldn't... First Nations feel that they could do it," but, of course, they're dangling that carrot again and not giving them enough money. As far as Alderville's relationship with these governments I think in the past we've built a very good relationship as far as the rapore... my relationship, I had built up, was very good because I could call an individual up and say let's go have lunch and talk about this. I think that's important to maintain.

How does Alderville practise self-determination?

Well, I think that even though there's a fear of self-government, self-determination we do it anyway. We started our Band Offices. We're taking over control. Our Tribal Councils are doing that and our First Nations' youth belong to these Tribal Councils, they're utilizing those Tribal Councils... I think Alderville practises self-determination everyday, in the decisions they make. I see... my vision... I guess is that Alderville would be the utmost Centre and townships etc around would utilize ours; I think we could

become that.

Has Alderville lost Native cultural values? If so, can they be revitalized?

I never, ever considered them being lost. I considered them to be... covered... or put aside... or misunderstood... I think we've never really them because if you recall a few years ago when we had this dig on Sugar Island and the people were saying, "let's build over there." There was a lot of people who said, "no," "no," "no, we can't build there; its sacred." They didn't know what 'sacred' was, they don't understand what it means or because a lot of them aren't educated they don't know but it's in their heart; its inside them. They know that it's wrong to build over in Sugar Island, for whatever reason. So, I think that's cultural values. That's the belief... the respect of our ancestors. That was their land and they lived there and... although there wasn't any burials per se... it's that whole ancient feeling of "sacredness". And I think, that - in its self - a value. That is something that we have as Native people. Sometimes we don't understand but we have it inside us.

Growing up I could never understand how come I was fascinated by trees. As I got older I realized that a 'tree' was a strength ... it was a gift from the Creator! You feel protected, you could go under a tree and be protected from the weather. You could go by a tree and get your strength. Even now if I feel like I need something - you could go hug a tree and get something from that. I think we all have that. And that's cultural values. I don't think we've ever lost the cultural values, again, when I go back to the women and bring back the traditions... and you'll see people out at these pow-wows and these socials and when they see the kids, out there, dancing in their regalia, there's a pride inside those individuals, that just brings tears to my eyes... because... hay, they know.... they might not understand why the children wear this outfit, and this outfit but there's something in their hearts; they feel proud...hay, this is us! This is who we are. So, no I could never, ever say we've lost the Native cultural values, I would just say they've been put aside. Elder Fred Wheatley told me that a long, long time ago. Because I could never ever understand.... I think the language is a key. I really feel bad that not more of us don't speak it. I think that's a key... if anything was lost it would be lost to the language... but, I think there's enough inside us that we can live and understand... of who we are as Native people... I don't think that'll ever be lost.

Before Bill C-31 were non-Status considered to be Anishnaabe?

I don't really know. No, I guess... it's sort of... half and half... you were and you weren't. I remember being a non-status. I really wasn't accepted in the non-Native community because I was Native and then at home I wasn't really accepted as Native because I was part White - because I married a non-Native - so, really... I guess... it depends on who you talk to. The people in the First Nation... some of them... when you're a Bill C-31 is like... you're one of them! But I think as Anishnaabe people, again, it's in your heart, it's in your being, it's in your soul and it doesn't matter... those

people that come in a marry a Native man, and they're non-Native... I don't care what you say, I'll never be convinced that they will be Anishnaabe people because either you are or you're not.... you are in your heart... you're a Native person... you will never be just because you have a status card. And when I was a Bill C-31... when I was a non-status individual I came back to my community... I wanted to come home no matter how far away I was, it was always home; it was always my roots. And that's what it means to be Anishnaabe; to know who you are inside and proud of who you are. Bill C-31 was great in the essence that it got me back into my community and be accepted by my community. And that's too bad but that's the reality of it. I think when you Anishnaabe you can go all over the country and meet another Anishnaabe person and it's like... hay, we know who we are, we're proud of who we are and meegwetch Creator for allowing us to be Anishnaabe.

Think of self-government as a process which the community could use to re-claim traditional cultural values. Using this frame can you begin to define what self-government means to you?

Well, I guess what I can say, in taking a minute to look at that, self-government means to me, as you mentioned earlier in one of the questions, self-determination... self-growth... self-direction... and it's like building a house, until you have a foundation, which is strong, if you're foundation isn't strong your building isn't going to last very long. And I really feel that even though there are people out there who say, "oh, I don't want this self-government," a lot of it is because they're so Indian Act eyes, I guess you'd call it. They're so used to saying, "oh the government will look after us,".... well, hay man that's not going to happen any more. That's a dead issue so to speak. We as Native people need to take control and that's what self-government means to me. You take a hold of who you are as a Native person; you understand. And you know, it's pretty simple when you think about the gifts the Creator gave us. He gave us those gifts of strength and respect and sharing and caring and if we use those gifts to deal with our individual day-to-day things then things will work out. I know it's hard to work - especially when we work with the townships and that type of individual we work with - it's hard because some of them are so dishonest and we were brought up, as Native people, to be honest and true to ourselves and to our community and to our future generations. But it's sometimes virtually impossible when you deal with these outside people but if you keep those basic teachings and build that foundation from the community and bring those cultural values back - which we are doing here with the children - when you go to our socials and see our little kids up there and jingling with those jingle dresses and grass dancing.... I'm telling you, I feel so proud! Hay, these kids are our next chiefs; our next Councils... our next individuals in the community who are going to make things happen here. That's what self-government is... that's self-control. These children are going to be brought up in a way that they will have those basic traditional values that they will be able to control and they will be able to rule and they will be able to bring things back. And it's too bad that... deep down inside I think there's still that belief that men are the only ones that can rule but I really feel that there

are a lot of strong women and strong children and they can do it. So, I guess basically to answer the question "can you begin to define what self-government means to me," self-government means, to me, and the bottom line... building that foundation, using our traditional cultural teachings and on that foundation build a structure that is second to none. And I really believe that we are doing that as Native people. We can only do that by understanding and believing in who we are and trusting in who we are and knowing that the Creator isn't going to give us anything that we can't handle. He's here to guide us as long as we count on him and I really think that's what self-government means to me.

I guess to summarize everything here, Art, for so long we've been under the thumb of Indian Affairs and even though they realize they can't handle it, their mismanaged funds and everything... and Native communities have had to do with less, to make it go further, maybe that in itself has been the best thing that has ever happened to us because even though we've had to struggle we got stronger and we came out on top. Generations after generations of the government have said, "we're going to assimilate these people and they're going to be apart of mainstream society, then we're not going to have to worry about them." And they're trying their damndest to do that to us but I really think that our people are strong - when it comes down to the crunch - we're going to have to incorporate those membership codes in our communities that don't even look at the blood quantum in our communities; if we've got children who have Native blood in them, for whatever scantiness it may be, we have to allow them to go with that. I also feel that we need to understand that we are a people and that we are strong and no man is ever going to take that away. If you have any more questions, Art, make sure you give me a call. Meegwetch.

Interview #5

Marge Beaver is the former wife of Jack Beaver, a former Chief of Alderville. Following Jack's retirement, they returned to Alderville. Marge is an active member of the community and is looked upon as one of the elder women. She is the fire-keeper for the women's full moon ceremonies.

Art: Marge I was looking for some idea about what the community is doing, lately. Like many communities, now-a-days, there are many problems facing the community, are there any problems that you see in the community, now, that has to be dealt with?

Marge: Well, in our community there has been a little bit dissention, I see a, perhaps, it's just a misunderstanding on someone's part but... the community seems to be... they come to have meetings about it with the Chief and Council. So, it could be that they're coming together, at least, so we just have to see what the future brings.

Art: And then that can probably lead into the next question where it says does community politics address the problem? You said that the community has come together

to talk about it?

Marge: Yeah, they did. They had a meeting... well, more than one meeting, actually, they had two or three meetings, now, where the Chief and Council were present and it gave the people a chance to express their concerns and their views and anything and it got a lot of the things out in the open; things people were concerned about but they just didn't have the courage to... you know... just didn't speak up about them. So, I think that's a start and it gave the Chief and Council... gave them some of the real concerns of the people of community.

Art:: Were the women active in those meetings?

Marge: Yes, the women were quite active in those meetings. In fact the women were actively - mainly the ones that spoke up... you know... and there were some of the men. One of the concerns was about a student that had been turned down in his education process... which the mother, naturally, spoke up for him. So, it got a lot of things out in the open that needed to be said... you know... and the Chief and Council let them.

Art:: What are some of the strength that the community has?

Marge: Strengths? Well Alderville, I think, they've come a long distance... I've been here, I was away from the village for quite awhile, as you know, but I noticed quite a change after I come back and I've been living in the village, now, for a few years and I can see there's a lot of things that have been happening... you know. And a lot of the strengths, I think, are coming from the women. At least I've noticed it, anyway. I don't know maybe it's just my opinion but... and there's been good men spokesmen, too, that are speaking up... and they're very strong people... but I've noticed quite an improvement since I've been living here, from when I first moved here. I don't know in what way did you mean... in strengths?

Art:: I think that's what I was looking for; the strengths of the community is really the people.

Marge: And it's amazing... the children too. The Children! I was just amazed, you know, at some of the children in recent years how they've really... they want it... they've been just so enthusiastic about the culture and everything. It's just a good feeling sort of happened.

Art:: I've noticed that they've started to dance?

Marge: Oh yes! Yes, they're starting to dance and they've started making their own dancing costumes... not costumes but... when they start making their own dancing...

Art:: Regalia.

Marge: ... there was just such excitement and enthusiasm and everyone was happy and they had a good... every night... you know, they'd meet at the community Centre and now it's really something! And it's really something special.

Art: Yeah, that's what I was thinking of. Now, is there anything that the community could do to... what might be some of the needs of the community, if there are any?

Marge: The needs of the community... I think... well they need... the needs of the community... well, I think, if they would come together more often in a good way... you know. I'm sure they've had to voice their concerns when they've had any problems but... I sense that Native culture has come back into the village; we've noticed a big difference in feelings that the people are more closer since this has been happening. I've noticed it and I've noticed it in myself, too, because to me as an individual to have the start of our language classes, and getting back to our ways... you know... and being able to be a part of... instead of just viewing other reserves... you know... like Curve Lake... other reserves that had already been doing these things and it was great to see Alderville coming in that way and I've really had a good feeling about traditions that started, now, and it's been good.

Art: I know that because I know you and you haven't had a place on Council, you haven't had an active... in politics in that way, but I've seen you at community meetings and now I know that, here, we look to you as our Elder, the one that we would come to, and talk to, and find guidance, and find out where we were as a people, as a history of the community - how do you feel about yourself being looked upon as one of the Elders?

Marge: I feel, again, I never thought too much about it. Really, I hadn't! Mind you, I'm still learning myself. I get a teaching whenever I can from some other Elders who are more experienced than I am. In fact, my language teaching was saying... she likes to come down here to have her classes instead of the community Centre, she like to be down here, so... and when people, in the village, want a teaching... be involved and following her. This weekend I asked her to give me a teaching because there's a lot things that I didn't even know... this is all... you know, getting back to our Native culture and everything... because I've travelled around the province... you know, I never had a chance to do those things. I'm still learning myself [laughter]. I'm still learning. So, I'm no expert on... [more laughter].

Art: You give us strength by being here and I think that's really important; it makes me feel good that I can come to and I can talk to somebody about these things. Do you think that women have a role in politics in the community, and should they be taking more of a role than at the present time?

Marge: I think the women in our community are a very, very strong people and I know that... they're just doing very good ... {unintelligible}... and I think they should... well, I heard a teaching once, it was about this area. It was from a _____ prophet and it

mentioned... about the women....{unintelligible}... and I think that's been happening in the last two years; and that prophesy is coming true... or our village is {unintelligible}... It also said that the women would be the ones... start to revive our culture. And it's already started because of... Full Moon Ceremony which we have every month... has been going on for... this is the fifth year now... and I think the women are very important... strength... really important.

Art:: Do you think Council should be using culture as a basis of providing leadership for the community?

Marge: Well, I don't really know too much of the political side of it...I think it's important, especially now... I've been away from cultural ____ for so long, and I think it's a good thing. I know I feel... I am just speaking for myself, but I have I felt so... really good about the culture part; being back in the community and reviving our language - where they have language classes, now, for the children, adults, and anyone who wants to learn - and I know I used to hear my grandfather... I used to hear him... he used to teach us the names of animals and all this but when I was a child, this part of it, was missing and parents were afraid to talk the language for fear that our children would get sent away to the residential schools, so they wouldn't... eventually, they got in habit of not talking our Native language... you know, because... that's why we never learned as children. Only what we learned from our grandparents, or something, when they'd teach us the names of animals and things like that. But as far as speaking the language, they were afraid, if we learned to converse in our own tongue that we might be just taken away to residential school. So, as a result they never spoke in front of us. That's why, now, we have to learn our language as we get older.

Art:: That's a good point; I've never heard that about Alderville. I've always wondered.

Marge: I'd wondered! Well, as children, we'd be out playing and our parents would be talking Native themselves but when we'd come into the house they would revert back to English language. I often wondered why and I never understood that 'til after many years when I'd realize what had happened. Some of the children got taken to schools and...

Art:: How do you think that the relationship between the Provincial government and the Federal government and Alderville... do you have any thoughts as to how, that relationship, might be improved?

Marge: I don't really know. There's been so much.... I don't really know too much about the political side of it. In what ways did you mean?

Art:: One of the things that I remember - well, what I did a couple of years ago - was to have that workshop at the Hall and we talked about self-government and I had people

come from the university, some of the other professors, do you think something like that might help the people understand more about what all this stuff means about self-government and Provincial government, Federal government... do you think that might help people?

Marge: Well, I don't know. Did you find that it helped when you had these people up?

Art:: Well one of the comments, that I had from one of the women that was there, she said, "I never knew this. Never heard all this before," until I came.

Marge: Well, you see, I guess that's part of the problem: lack of communication and... people... I don't know about... I don't even... politics... I don't know; I just can't seem to talk about politics but to me it's when you realize that it's happened in the past... it's something that you... I think it's... well, if both governments would be more aware of the situations of the Native people and what they're going to do in all parts of the country and not just here but Davis Inlet and all those places where they got... I think that you makes you feel, like, why did they do that, you know... just pick them up and... when the Native people used to move, a long time ago, the Elders prayed about this a lot, first, before they made any move to go anywhere; they prayed about it and ask... they'd make sure it was the right thing to do but just to be a taken... a group of Native people... the government take a group of Native people and just plunk them away up in the wilderness somewhere, this is what really upset a lot of Native people. This is what really upsets... to think that the government can do those things... just take a whole community and now look at what's happening to all the younger people up there. They're committing suicide, they're... you know... so many things are happening to those children and that shouldn't have happened. But they have just lost all their hope... you know. And this is just one incident. How many other ones across country have gone through similar things? Maybe in different ways but... just lost hope, you know. So, that's why I don't like talking about political things because it really gets to me when it comes to seeing some of our people _____.

Art:: You had mentioned, before, that the women are taking an active role in revitalizing culture: I think that's a good thing that's happening to Alderville.. do you think the whole movement for Alderville is going to continue to grow; has it got a lot of potential, yet, to go?

Marge: I'm sure it will continue to grow because there's so many young people who are... you know... children that have grown up, becoming more and more aware of who they really are; their culture is so important to them. So, many are taking the Native language, and so many are getting involved in the dancing, in the Circles... I had, even, some children that come down from the Moon Circles and they're just young children and it's just beautiful to have them... you know. More and more, and I think there going to a Circle this weekend from the sound of it... [laughs]... that's really helped the women in our community; helps everyone, I think.

Art: What do you think it means to be an Anishnaabe? What does it mean to be Ojibway?

Marge: I can think as far back as my grandfather, I didn't know any of my great-grandparents but I knew some of my grand... I knew two grandfathers and one grandmother... I didn't know the other one because she had passed by the time.... but it... to me, I had never really thought about... well, of course, when we had moved away from the village, I always wanted to come home; I think it's always a feeling out there, you always like to get back even it's to visit your mom or... just to be back home because this was always home to me no matter where I was; this was my home. And to be a Native person, I think, this is.... it's a part of you and you never... I think it's because Native people are so close to nature and the earth and so close to... I'll always remember beside the water and it was a dream come true... living right beside a lake because... I'm just happy where I am; now, I'm in my own village with my own people and I'm just happy.

Art: Now we're at the last question and there has been a lot of talk about self-government. Now, if you think about self-government as a way of reclaiming traditional cultural values and if the community uses that to get those things back, can you start to define what self-government means to you, then?

Marge: What self-government means to me? I was just talking about that, with Wayne, this morning. We got discussing self-government and really, I think, we were talking mainly about what self-government would mean to the village here. I don't know... I'm sure he could explain it better than I could but... he said we've been doing fine but with self-government you would be able to be in control of your own destiny; you wouldn't have to be relying on the government for this and that... and things like that. I think that's what self-government would mean. And it would mean a lot, too, for our cultural identity... you know... I don't know just how to explain it but, that, to me, would.... traditional cultural values... yeah, that also... I think that's important... well, of course, traditional cultural values is important to me, you probably know by now [chuckles]... but I think self-government would be good if it was accepted in the right way; if it was handled in the right way... you know... that would be for people who are more ___ on it, than I am, I don't know anything... I'm not good in politics or any of that sort of thing... but I don't know... it could be a good thing if it was done in a proper... and that's about all I got to say about that.

Art: Thanks Marge.

Interview #6

Melody Crowe is a young woman who is one of the first youth to become a fluent Ojibwa speaker. Her grandfather, Borden Crowe, served as Chief of the Alderville

community for several terms. Melody is a student at Trent University and is learning the cultural teachings. She has been employed with the Band Administration and has been a language teacher. Melody can be considered one of the women political intellectuals in the community and speaks at open council.

Art: Melody what are some of the problems that are facing Alderville today?

Melody: Some of the problems are issues that, I think, change from government cut-backs to our own government, so to speak, Chief and Council and where we have people agreeing and having problems in regard to housing, and education, unemployment... these kinds of things. {tape disruption} So, I think that those are the kinds of issues we're faced with. Faced with, at times, like having Chief and Council... not really being there for the people. I think sometimes... and it all depends, too, on who you have in there as your representatives as Chief and Council but at this present time for Alderville we are faced with a Chief and Council who seem to have lost sight of the peoples' concerns.

Art: So, in a sense, when you say the formal community politics they wouldn't be addressing the problems that are facing the community. In a sense, then, does the politics of the community or the people in the community, are they prepared to address those problems?

Melody: Yes, the community... and that's one of the things that is shining through in all of that... and I guess that's always one of the things, even in a bad situation, something good always comes out of it. And I think in that is the power of the people and the sense of community, then, when people stand together for their belief.... you know, fighting for their rights and finding their voices and speaking up even to Chief and Council and realizing that we still have another year left with this particular Chief and Council and, I think, in that case that can feel quite scary when you're not feeling satisfied with what's happening in your village, on your reserve. So, it's taken a few people to get together and start to speak with people and realize everybody is feeling concerned, and has issues, and disagreements and are really upset about what's happening and upset for the future, as well. Like the future for the children, for their children and so in that the community pulling together and challenging Chief and Council and trying to have Chief and Council be accountable for what they're doing. So, in that sense, that's very powerful and that's what's coming through.

Art: You had mentioned before we started to talk about the decisions that were made by our ancestors and that we are now living those decisions... can you clear that up a little bit?

Melody: Yeah, I think that's one of the things that hit me really hard in the last few days, was that somebody in our community had brought up the fact that the decisions that we're trying to make today and the issues that we're fighting today... we have to be

strong and stick together on those issues and really fight for what we believe in because of the future generations and the fact that, just like in the history, our ancestors of long ago... decisions that were made by those ancestors... we're living today. An example... I believe very strongly in language and culture and so when you think about the fact that we're fighting so hard trying to keep our language alive and learn every bit of our language because our language had to be let go... and that was, also, something that was imposed upon everything else... at that time, generations ago, but the fact is we're living that today. So, I think that it's a really strong and powerful point that... so here we are in that position, fighting these problems of Alderville today trying to make a difference so that years away our children, and their children, and so on will be able to look back and think how hard we fought or else... say it doesn't go that way, that they're going to face the consequences of possibly living in a White community, you know what I mean? [Art: (agrees)] it's a very strong and powerful point and something that we need to not lose sight of.

Art: What do you think are the strengths that are in the community?

Melody: I think the strengths are the fact that we are getting back into tradition and culture. Our culture is growing strong again and for too many generations our people had to lose the language and the culture and so on because of the first contact with Europeans and Christianity. So much was taken away. I think in that, identity is taken away and so one of the strengths that I see and feel - because I really feel apart of that - is the identity is coming back... that language and culture and traditions. We had our first Pow-Wow last year. We have people who are dancers. We have circles and in all of that we have the key which is the teachings. Common sense teachings that we should never lose sight of like respect, and humility, and truth, and honesty; those are the true teachings. So, that's one of the strengths because there's very strong people in our community that are finding that way. More and more people are following along and that's growing. I think that's one of the main strengths that we have, is that part, because once we have that then we'll have more of a future... we will have a future. So, that's one of the strengths. We have strong women here and I think that's been a key point because it's been the women who have reached out; reclaiming of that culture and that traditional way... so that is there for the men for the children, for all of us. So, the strength of our women is something Alderville needs to be proud of. Even in these issues we're facing around housing, education, employment and so on, it's our women who are really standing up and speaking and paving the way for everybody to feel that they can speak. It's nice because some of the men started to stand up and speak and, I think, it's been because so many of our women have been standing up - not just this year but in the past - it's always been the women... taking the lead in that regard. So, that's another strength and those are really big pieces because when you have those two things - that reclaiming of culture and language and the the strength of our women - that just opens the door for many more things to come through.

Art: What does the community need?

Melody: The community needs to have a Chief and Council that can really hear the concerns. We have an Elders' Council that has been developed where people can go to the Elders and take concerns and such but I think that needs to be respected more - it doesn't have a lot of.... I don't want to say power... but it seems that you can take concerns to them but certain things... like Chief and Council have the right... and the Elders' Council will step out... so I think that needs to change because when you have Elders and respect you can do so much more through respect and just being able to sit and listen and hear. I wish we had a Chief and Council who could do that because Alderville is a really good community and its got a lot going for it. Its got good people, a lot of different programs under-way that are really good. I think we need better direction in terms of our... and better representation as Chief and Council. People in there who really believe in their people, believe in the strength of the people and are there to follow that.

Art: A mutual friend of ours had said you watch Melody, she will make a good Chief or Councillor. Have you ever been involved in community politics?

Melody: Yeah, in a sense I guess. I certainly nominated one particular Chief that I've always believed very strongly in, so in that regard I think I've been active in just the role of supporter but I also think that's an important role. So, I've nominated somebody for Chief. Also I attend the general meetings and usually always speak up. I found my voice and I think that's really good [because] you have to have a voice when it comes to politics. I also write. Sometimes we have had different issues come up and I have written into the paper in a strong political manner. So, I would say I have been involved in some of the politics.

Art: Do women have a role in community politics?

Melody: Yes, definitely. One of the things lacking is the fact that this last election we have no women on that Chief and Council and I think that's one of the downfalls.

Art: The last election, you mean the election that happened in June of 1995?

Melody: Yes, the last election. Prior to that we had a woman Chief and Councillors that were women. I believe that women have so much to offer and like I said in the last question the strength of our women. We have five people in that Chief and Council - a chief and four councillors - and they're all men and there's nothing against men, I just think that women's voices, that role of the woman is so crucial and that's very important. They do have a place and role in politics.

Art: In the past it has always been, generally, men who held positions of Chief or Councillors 'til about 1986, what do you think happened?

Melody: In terms of women coming back in?

Art: Yes.

Melody: I don't know I just think part of the woman's role... being able to oversee so many things... I don't know... I really believe that... I can give an example when we had Chief Bothwell in there. We had, up until that point, always...

Art: Okay, when Chief Bothwell took office?

Melody: Yeah, so when she took office I think we seen tremendous change happen. She had so much knowledge, strength and a voice, and just a concern for the people. Not that the men don't, I just think there's a role that women fulfill that is very much needed.. in being apart of the politics.

Art: Should Council approach issues using a culturally based system? For instance consensus and decision making.

Melody: Yeah, maybe it is that... it's the cultural piece. The government has imposed itself on Native people from the beginning- I learned so much in school in my first year of going back to school about the government in terms of the goal to assimilate Native people... and wanting to eventually wipe them out - so here we are in 1996 when, as a political group, Chief and Council, that they can get away from the culture because you're so in with the government. There's policies for this and policies for that and grievances for this and all that, that you can get away from the cultural aspect and that's what we need to hang on to and get back to, is more decision making around the culture. That goes back to, trying to keep focused on the fact, remember back in history how our ancestors might have made those decisions and use that as a focus. We need to hang on to ourselves as Native people and not let the government and everybody else wipe us out, to be just another non-Native community so to speak. So, making those decisions around culture and tradition needs to be brought back in... I believe.

Art: Now you've probably answered some of the questions here. The next two is: how do you feel about Alderville's relationship with the Provincial and Federal governments; and is Alderville able to precise self-determination? Can these relationships be improved, if needed?

Melody: When I went back to school and learned about some of the things that happened long ago with the government and Native people, it was absolutely appalling; I was just blown away. Because it's like on some level we all know what the government has done and yet when you're studying it, and reading it, it just hits you like a tonne of bricks. It's like... one of the things I kept seeing over and over, that I've seen in my books, about the goal to assimilate. But I mean assimilation has happened, yes but the goal to... not have an Indian problem - it was classed as an Indian problem - through that and through the power of the government and having control over Native people because they control the funding and so on and then given the cut-backs that everybody, non-

Natives as well, experience... but First Nations, I think, are under such... government has control because of the dollars and until Native governments themselves can get to the place of being able to take that control back it's going to be difficult because you have a Council, sitting there, trying to make decisions but being pulled, like puppets on a string, by the government. And the government's goal is certainly not to help us along in terms of... oh well the community is crying because their being torn apart as Native people... that's, what I think, they would ultimately like; for us to destroy ourselves, more or less, so that there's not a problem. That goes way back... how many years... years and years ago where they said they wanted to not have an Indian problem any longer.

Art: Has Alderville lost Native cultural values, if so, can they be revitalized?

Melody: I think Alderville is being revitalized. I feel really proud to say that because I really believe that. I believe there's enough people here now that are apart of that revitalization and breathing that life back into our traditions and culture and our language. I think that's something we need to be apart of. What was the piece about... have we lost it or?

Art: If we have, can it be revitalized and how might that happen?

Melody: Yeah, we've got traditional dancers and we do healing circles - we didn't have that for a long time - so, I think it has come back. We have full moon ceremonies and all kinds of things. We have Elders' gatherings and teachings. So, I do believe that, yes, it is being revitalized.

Art: What about language?

Melody: For me, language is the key. Back in 1991 we lost - I think that's when Bill died - and he was our Elder who had the language... your mother had the language... fluent language... for me, when Bill passed away because I was always interactive with Bill in regard to the language and so much went with Bill and yet some got to stay because of that... even a little bit of language... and I've been sharing the language for five years and as long as we have a couple of people being able to say a few things we still have something to hang to. That is what is the key to our culture and our tradition because they all go hand in hand, together. We have our children learning it, we have Elders learning it, we have our teenagers learning it. I've had a language class where I had somebody as young as eight and I've had grandparents in the class... I have teenagers who have been coming to the class and that's so important; it's crucial. When you have the language you have so much of the culture and as long as we have that it will be there; it is being revitalized. And I believe it's only going to continue to grow.

Art: I read an article in one of our many text books that we have to read, stating that the developing of dances, crafts is just only the indication; it is not culture, it's the fluffs

and feathers sort of thing. But you said the dancers, how important is the dancing to the culture?

Melody: I think the dancing is really important because it's the drum and it's the heartbeat and dancing to the drum. With the drum coming to Alderville that's so symbolic... that's the heartbeat of our Mother Earth. When you get into the dancing it has so much meaning and is very symbolic of tradition. We have healing dances. You're right you can have things that are symbolic of the culture like the fluffs and feathers but the thing is it's there on a deeper level. I think that shows through the dancing; it shows through the language, it shows through the healing circles... it just shows through individuals. Because you can have all the fluffs and feathers that you want but it has to be in your heart, and it has to be in your spirit. When you start to make a commitment to dancing around that circle... you can't just go around that circle and not feel anything because when that drum goes, that's the heartbeat. There's respect involved. There's the honour. There's so many things involved in that and that goes beyond the fluffs and feathers; that's what counts, it's what goes beyond that and touches down much deeper. That's what joins us to our ancestors. It's not the fluffs and it's not the feathers and it's not the braids and how dark our skin is, it's what's in the heart and the spirit and the soul. I believe we have people who are in that place in their life where that's where the tradition and culture and language are and that's what joins us to the ancestors and that's what will keep us; being able to have that connection. So, even as the reserve goes on and continually will be faced with many problems along the way because we're in a world where there's a lot of problems, as long as we have those people who are very grounded to that belief and to that spirituality I believe that we'll be able to stay together as Native people.

Art: Before Bill C-31 do you think the non-status were considered to be an Anishnaabe and what does it mean to be an Anishnaabe?

Melody: In my opinion I always thought that they were just as much native as anybody who was status but in the system they weren't considered to be Native or Anishnaabe or what ever because that was another form of dividing our own people. The day Bill C-31 came through and people could come back was a really good thing because people shouldn't have had to been... I don't believe in any of that, the enfranchisement. So, in my mind I would never have thought they were less Native than they were the day they left. Unfortunately a lot of Native people ended up thinking of them as "not" Native anymore and that was, like I say, the goal to accomplish... to get rid of the Indian people so what better way than to start dividing people up. I think that created a division because then people who have always been status used to talk about the Bill C-31's and so on, when this was our own people we were talking about; they didn't change anything except that they were no longer classed as status. I feel very strong about that... that they were always Anishnaabe people even though, I believe, it created a division. What does it mean to be Anishnaabe... it means you are born with Native ancestry and whether you have status or not doesn't make you an Indian person, it's what in the heart. But

definitely not what's status and what's non-status, enfranchised and so on, that's just politics that has worked against us. Some people who are Native people but have never felt Native sometimes they'll feel like... well, status is the thing to get because then I can get in on all these things... but I don't believe... I mean I'm status so I get some of the benefits with my tax card but it doesn't make me something more than a non-status... or it doesn't make me like oh I got my status card so this is who I am because I'm who my heart is and what my ancestry was. For me, that's my belief. So, those people who had to endure that - a time of losing status through marriage or enfranchisement - I feel a lot that they had to go through that time but I also feel that the time when they got it back and they could come home, that was a really good day.

Art: Now if you think of self-government as a process which the community could use to reclaim traditional cultural values, can you begin to define what self-government might mean to you?

Melody: Well self government, in terms of the culture and traditions, needs to evolve around the traditions and culture, in my mind, because that encompasses the whole. When you think about... on the Medicine Wheel, you have the body, mind, spirit, and emotion and that makes up the whole person. Too much government, as it is, is full of policies and all these procedures, for self-government to be able to work in our community it has to be approached from a totally different way; it needs to be looked at as something that's going to take care and look at the whole. I don't think it'll be successful if it isn't able to, somehow, reach that goal because we already have government in place and look what it's doing to us. Our Chief and Council has procedures that they have to follow then they pass it on. Like there's so much; there's just a never ending cycle in that regard. So, self-government needs to be much more guidance on a day-to-day basis and looking at the whole and taking into consideration all of those aspects. Too many times, when you're dealing with an individual, you're not taking into consideration their whole situation. It's easy to say we have to cut you off, or we can't do this because of our policies and procedures, but you have to be able to look at your community and try to base some of these things on your community as the whole.

Art: What do you mean by the whole?

Melody: Too many times people are left out of the decisions. People are making decisions that affect peoples' lives but those actual people, their voices are never being heard; not that they're not using their voices because people do, and you see it in the White world too. You see all of these protests where people are speaking up but does the government stop to listen? They say, "we're still going to hold true to what we said at our campaign, we're still going to do this" even though peoples' lives are being affected. So, when I [say] looking at the whole, I think what I'm trying to say, it's the people; listening to the people and hearing the peoples' concerns and having the people being involved in that process that is affecting their lives. It's easy to have somebody

up here, above you, telling you what you have to do, or making decisions that affect your life and have absolutely no control over it and in terms of self-government for First Nations people we have to get back to at looking at the whole of the community - the people in the community - and having decisions made based on your people and hearing your people, respecting your people, respecting each other. When we get away from that we get into the White system and we won't be left as a First Nation. A lot of people are scared of self-government and I think that's why. There's reason why they have to be afraid because look at the way it is now; people are very afraid. Self-government as it is now, say if we had to be put into self-government right now I don't know that we would make it because a lot has to change in terms of going back to the people and not losing sight of your people.

Art: Thanks very much Melody.

Melody: Meegwetch.

Interview #7

Adam Crowe is the brother of Melody Crowe who has been an influenced Adam in his pursuit of culture. He has a keen interest in dancing and has designed his own regalia. He is a teenage youth who has not given much thought to community politics. He is aware of the importance of culture and the symbolic meaning of the eagle feather which I presented to him after his decision to let his hair grow.

The questions asked are different because of his age and lack of knowledge about community politics. The questions were designed to appeal to his area of interest.

Art: Adam you started dancing a couple of years ago. You've also been involved in developing craft work; you're making your own ragalia. What do you think dancing does to learning about native cultural and traditional culture, what do you learn... by becoming a doctor?

Adam: I've learned to respect a lot of things. I did before but I've learned a lot... to respect.. how we, like, lost the language and our culture is coming back. We know the language.... and just learning to respect things... about dancing and the culture.

Art: Does it have anything to do with respecting the animals, from where your traditional ragalia comes from?

Adam: Yeah, you learn to respect all animals.

Art: And what is the main parts of your ragalia, there, in the way of animals... what

animals would you use?

Adam: From my outfit?

Art: Mmm [affirmative].

Adam: I have hawk feet that was given to me just recently; I have a quill foot that I got myself and that's about it.

Art: And over, at least the last year that I know of you, you now want to wear your hair in a traditional way.

Adam: Yeah.

Art: What does that mean to you; letting your hair start to grow?

Adam: Well, it feels good because my dad says so; I should have it long.

Art: Have people told you the importance of wearing, and why, you would wear your hair long?

Adam: Well, yeah.

Art: But some of those things you don't talk about?

Adam: No.

Art: And so when you've done that, and when you do your... and put together your outfit, your taught things... people will tell you things... some of the other dancers... do they take time to explain things to you?

Adam: Yeah, sometimes.

Art: Do you take the language now?

Adam: Yeah, I take it with my sister.

Art: How does all this make you feel?

Adam: Great because I'm a dancer and I take the language, I know the language; feels good.

Art: I know you're young but as you get older how do think it'll be for you, having this, when you get older? When you're... say... an old man of about twenty-one or so...

what do you think it will mean to you then?

Adam: It'll know that I was a dancer and that I started out young... I, probably still will be, a dancer.

Art: Since you became involved in this, do you think about your mother and your sister, those women in the community? Do you think about them a little bit differently?

Adam: Yeah, because my sister is a dancer. She's a Jingle-Dress dancer and my mom, she's not a dancer but, she goes to the Pow-Wows and stuff like this.

Art: So she supports you?

Adam: Yeah, she supports me a lot.

Art: Last question that I want to ask you, when you're at school and I know that you're going on to highschool, because you know that you're Native does this give you confidence, now that you know who you are... or does it cause any problems at school?

Adam: No, I used to be embarrassed but I wear my hair tied back sometimes; I did speeches about my Native dancing; yeah, so, that makes me feel good... at school.

Art: And how's your marks?

Adam: Good.

Art: Okay thanks a lot, Adam, meegwetch.

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