Aboriginal Self-Interpretation in Heritage Presentation

by

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Abstract

EuroCanadians unquestioningly exercise the voice of self-expression but the extent of the denial of this privilege to the First Peoples can only be seen by examining the social and cultural history of Aboriginal education. Because interpretation is the basis of heritage representation, Aboriginal self-expression must begin with an understanding and articulation of indigenous histories as various First Peoples. What has been available to the public has too often been the commodified versions produced from the exploitation of colonized peoples, and from the assumption that only what is written is truth, whereas the unwritten, such as the oral histories of indigenous people, is fallacy.

Education is vital in the process of Native self-interpretation because of the significant amount of activity required for Aboriginal historic regeneration. Heritage interpretive programs developed and delivered specifically for and by Aboriginal people will help inculcate appropriate and respectful Native representation within a national Canadian identity.

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Preface

This writing explores the issue of the need for Aboriginal self-interpretation in all aspects of heritage presentation in Canada. It recognizes the role that educational and political influences have played in the misrepresentation or invisibility of the First Peoples in widely accepted historic portrayals. As well, it acknowledges the influence of different worldviews in the various conceptions of historical interpretation and the thought that, as worldviews themselves change, parallel reflections in heritage representation will result. Contemporary times are showing, partially because of persistent and effective lobbying efforts and a growing awareness of the lack of Native voices being heard, that positive and significant changes are beginning to take place. For example, the 1997 Supreme Court decision regarding the *Delgamuukw* case finally deemed oral histories valid and credible enough for admission into the Canadian court system; this noteworthy decision will undoubtedly initiate an increase in Native self-expression throughout the country.

The recent Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples report is acknowledged to be extremely helpful in paving the way for attitudinal changes in the Canadian populace regarding Native self-interpretation. As well, it supports new and constructive ways for Native people to authenticate their realities through education. Aboriginal heritage interpretive programs that recognize contemporary technologies in the heritage field need to be developed and delivered in ways congruent to traditional Aboriginal ways of learning. This can only take place when Native people themselves define the curriculum and identify suitable delivery methodologies which rightfully belong within the overall educational system.

The format of the Thesis requires some explanation in that it encompasses several different ideas which fit together to form a central thought: the necessity of Aboriginal self-interpretation in heritage presentation. ***Chapter One*** acknowledges different historical conceptions held by different peoples, and highlights the resulting variety of conclusions about history and of heritage

expression. The Thesis does not ascribe a "rightness" or "wrongness" to various interpretations, but it does recognize the effect of the intellectual and physical devastation, in the case of European and Aboriginal contact, that in many ways accounts for the dismal *status quo* of the First Peoples in Canada today. *Chapter Two* examines the historic motivations of the particularly negative interpretation of the Aboriginal peoples by the newly-arrived Europeans. This aspect of the study is to help readers understand the political and economic ambitions which inspired the activity that has led to such far-reaching consequences with such relentless force. *Chapter Three* specifically examines the education systems that served to re-interpret Native people for the purpose of supporting those colonialist motivations. It details the result of these imposed systems on the self-image of Native people as a whole, for education (particularly *religious* education) is a powerful way of inculcating given standards onto others. The First Peoples, however, firmly did believe in education -- but not the type that the Europeans brought over with them; *Chapter Four* is an examination of this aspect of the Thesis. *Chapter Five* is devoted to contemporary Native education in general, and then specifically to Aboriginal interpretive programming. It summarizes some ways that individual instructors can improve student-teacher interactions so that Aboriginal students can take full advantage of their educational opportunities while at the same time improving their self-image either as individuals or as communities by learning about their cultures and heritage. As well, the crux of the Thesis appears in this chapter, for it describes an *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* that can help Native students deal with historic and heritage issues in a contemporary society. Its conclusion is that many more Aboriginal heritage practitioners are needed to help fill the void in Native representation in Canadian heritage today.

Finally, this writing reflects a colloquialism in that homogeneous groups such as Elders, students, teachers, readers and Aboriginal people are referred to in a generic masculine sense. It is in no way meant to minimize the significant non-masculine input, acknowledged to be at least 50%, of those groups so referred.

1. The Many Conceptions of Historical Presentation

There are many examples that demonstrate the reality that heritage[1] interpretation and its subsequent presentation can be neither easily accomplished nor necessarily trustworthy. Nor can it can ever be exact and concise because it is those in some form of authority, such as political or social, or active lobbyists for any number of causes who determine the outcome of heritage interpretation. In Canada, most recordings of the European - Aboriginal relationships have been preserved, presented and accepted according to the values, perceptions and general life philosophies of the prevailing EuroCanadian society. Even within the relatively short span of that society, historiography[2] points out an interesting phenomenon: that narrations over time are recorded, shaped and fixed according to prevailing societal attitudes. Paralleling any change in the view of the present is a change in the view of the past.

Simply, historians' inherent biases and prejudices, such as politically- or culturally-influenced ones, surface in their written recordings. As humans first and as historians second, they are subjective beings, and their works mirror their own sentiments and record their objective digressions. Further, only select topics which in some way reflect their interests, are those that survive the erosion of time while everything else has been chosen, advertently or inadvertently, for omission, and are being denied to future generations. Historical arguments are, necessarily, based on "facts"; problems arise, however, as "facts" are identified and articulated through the eyes and thoughts of writers and are based on whichever side of controversies or social structures they may by chance find themselves, or on their own personal motivations or agendas. There is more than one view on any topic, and as truthfully as documentation can support one version, there is always another truthful interpretation which can reflect a very different view. "Definitive history", for example, is meant to tell the true story of the way events happened.

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[1] This writing often reflects an on-going controversy regarding the relationship between *history* and *heritage*. One's historical perspective is generally accepted as having been derived from the communal cultural values of the group to which one belongs. Sometimes history is seen as conjectural and heritage as tangible. Because of this closeness and ambiguity in specific meaning, the terms are sometimes used interchangeably.

[2] Historiography is the study of how historical interpretations change.

But, one can very legitimately ask, *For whom did these things happen? Did it happen the same way for all those involved in these events?* One historian has stated that, "There can never be such a thing as *definitive history*; it's simply an impossibility" (Dickason, pers. comm., 1998). Another, an ethnohistorian, made the following observation:

> What we call "history" is a recitation of events selected from the past, which in its most literal sense is all that has preceded the present: whether it be a rock that fell, a dog that barked, an infant who cried, a woman who coughed, a prince who was enthroned king. All historians -- and on occasion each of us is a historian -- select from this infinity of events those we deem worth telling. The basis of that selection provided the built-in bias of history. History, more than being a debate about the past, is an argument about the present and future. It often tells us less about what was and more about who we are. It is a tool used by all of us either as we now perceive it to be or as we think it ought to be. The past is immutable, but history, a battleground for the public mind, is ever changing (Fontana, 1994, xi).

There are, further, many pitfalls in certain so-called historical works. Chief Seattle's renowned and widely-respected speech, "All Things are Connected", is interesting because it is a classic example of this. Here, the errors begin early. Chief Seattle[3], after whom the city of Seattle was named, was really called *Seal'th*; the name *Seattle* was interpreted as such by the Europeans of his era (late eighteenth to mid-nineteenth century) who could not properly pronounce the deep guttural enunciations of the Lushotseed language and to this day, that city bears Seal'th's misinterpreted name and the error is perpetuated to this day. The following excerpt is the best-known part of this talk:

> The air is precious to the red man. For all things share the same breath -- the beast, the trees, the man, they all share the same breath . . . What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from a great loneliness of spirit. For whatsoever befalls the beasts, soon befalls the man. All things are connected . . . Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth (Knudtson & Suzuki, 1992, xvi)

The eloquent speech itself has long been viewed by many, both scholars and non-academics, as a

[3] He was the chief of the Suquamish and Duwamish people of the Northwest coast in the present-day state of Washington, U.S.A.

rich and moving narrative that more than amply demonstrates the love and affinity of the old Chief for his land, his people and his culture. In Europe, where interest in traditional Native customs is ardent, it has been identified as the "most-quoted" commentary by any Aboriginal North American. The text, in fact, has been proven to be entirely fraudulent in that Seal'th did not speak one word of it; further, it was by chance that a contemporary writer found legitimate cause for questioning its authenticity. "This text does not represent the mind of the old Chief, but the mind of a sensitive EuroAmerican, worried about our ecological situation and the general dualism in our culture", asserted the German researcher, Rudolf Kaiser (Knudtson & Suzuki, 1992, xvi). This revelation was particularly appalling to both non- and Aboriginal people who cherished this speech because of its "Native" connotation. Undoubtedly, Kaiser had good intentions for he was serving a given morally-defined purpose, but the underlying principle of legitimacy of voice had been broken. Appropriation of voice is as much theft as robbers stealing the property of another. The entire issue of attributing authorship, including subsequent distortions of text over the years, rises to the surface for these are ethical concerns.

To question and probe what is commonly accepted as authentic or "Native", as this case aptly demonstrates, can be problematic with far-reaching consequences. It means that the origin of any text and its paths throughout the decades with consideration to the prevailing attitudes that may have unwittingly contributed to the shaping of the contained ideals should be thoroughly examined as well. Undoubtedly, much convoluted historiographical influences will emerge from such a process and there will always be those who disagree with the outcomes. It is generally understood, however, that the discovery of fallacy in single texts such as "Seattle's Speech" need not be a serious contradiction to the real outlook that Seal'th and his Aboriginal contemporaries had towards life and the Creator, and this can be substantiated in many other ways. However, this example demonstrates the need to process interrogatory thought and examine those cliches which are deemed to espouse the concepts of certain groups of people, for as well as for ethical reasons, there is the capacity to establish, reinforce or debunk stereotypical

images.

Different kinds of history and heritage presentations, then, have many serious limitations. They have been, and still are, used as tools for propaganda to encourage inspiration and mould thought into a predetermined form. The "battleground for the public mind" has had, and will continue to have, many different fronts. These could be for settling controversies about cultural landmark identifications, religious argument, legal diversions in any field, political manipulations, establishing criteria for export-readiness in heritage presentations, or any number of other motivations. For example, much of the early history of Canadian education was written with the motive to inculcate prospective and practising teachers with the belief that theirs was a worthy and noble occupation and to ultimately nourish and enforce a strong sense of professional purpose within their vocational group. Teachers were to see themselves as foundational influences in a new and upright society and encouraged to believe that they could achieve high status by inculcating accepted societal values and truths onto those they taught. One can now, however, interpret and recognize that particular writing style and presentation as a cover-up of the harsh and isolated conditions that teachers most often encountered in both the rural and urban classrooms of early Canada. As well, it cannot be argued but that this was a most expedient way in which to disseminate the accepted traditions of an upcoming society throughout the general populace.

Another serious limitation of heritage and historical interpretations is that there are always gaps in the information provided by historians. One can question whether or not educated guesses -- or not-so-educated guesses, for that matter -- have been made in the conclusions established by interpreters. For instance, after the Ruthenian School Revolt just prior to World War I, all the Galician[4] teachers were replaced, but why? They could not possibly all have been poor teachers; a more plausible, but educated, guess is that the Minister of Education, Mr. Boyle, was simply

[4] Galicians are Ukrainians. The Ruthenian School Revolt broke out in 1915 in Manitoba.

supporting his own political and personal platform. This itself is an interpretation, but some may conclude from examining the facts that the firings had been organized to support a predetermined interpretation of earlier events -- one that conveniently suited Minister Boyle's own agenda of working against the Ruthenian immigrants. This example also reveals the relationship of those in power over the powerless and how it has been recorded in Canadian history. Other historical recordings adequately demonstrate the fact that collusion was directed not only at the Ruthenians, but also at the Aboriginal people. In essence, historical text has been written to support a particular point of view, the methodology of which includes deliberate omission of any information which could change what historians would want their readers to conclude.

The subject of most Canadian historians' writings, also, have had an effect on the interpretation that Aboriginal peoples did not figure prominently in significant events which non-Native Canadians define as being vital to their own heritage. For example, in the area of European imperialism or Canadian immigration, very few historians identify Native personalities as being central figures. As a result, mainstream heritage literature tends to present only the views founded on EuroCanadian beliefs while neglecting or ignoring the very different concepts that the Aboriginal people had on such topics; this tendency has sometimes been labelled "unthinking Eurocentrism" (Shohat & Stam, 1994, 1). So prevalent is this impression that it may not ordinarily be understood that Aboriginal people even had views on immigration and imperialism, let alone having them articulated in the pages of history. When, and if, other ways of viewing important events or trends in the unfolding of Canadian experiences are acknowledged to exist, they are often deemed, by definition, to be faulty and invalid. This can be attributed to the extremely Eurocentric attitudes of the prevailing Canadian population; further, such attitudes are difficult to identify because they are taken so largely for granted, being so subjective and well-ingrained into the overall Canadian consciousness. Readers would do well to understand that other views on history and heritage, such as those of the Aboriginal peoples, though not voiced in the historical record, are just as valid and as credible as those of other Canadians.

The astute reader can recognize that some subjects themselves simply do not easily lend themselves to include the First Peoples, except perhaps in passing. This does not, however, justify ignoring the First Peoples' roles in these and in other more significant Canadian events. An absence of any historical presentation has caused many Aboriginal people, particularly the Metis[5], to see themselves as having been invisible to or infamous in the rest of Canada. Most Canadians have heard of Louis Riel or Gabriel Dumont, but usually in an unfavourable light. The common view was that these leaders were traitors fighting against the "real" Canadian government, when in fact, it was just forming in Western Canada in those days and Riel was the leader of that government. It is not general Canadian knowledge that the Metis heritage includes powerful personalities who were physicians, folk poets, judges, lawyers, a Manitoba premier[6], and many others of very respectable professions. Today, the Metis suffer from false interpretations by outsiders in the presentations of some historically significant sites which are being developed without their input, and there are inappropriate displays which are contradictory and disrespectful to the Metis themselves. This, for example, is evidenced by the paraphernalia used in the hanging death in 1885 of Louis Riel which are on display at Casa Loma in Toronto. These items include the handcuffs and the death hood in which he was hanged, moccasins he was wearing at the time, some hair taken from his dead body and, the coroner's death certificate (Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 4, 243). It was only several years ago that a sample of the rope which was used to hang him had been on display in Regina at the RCMP museum -- a place where all RCMP officers receive their basic training. One cannot help but wonder how this subliminal but nonetheless extremely powerful message affected all officers in training, and how this shaped their views and especially their actions towards Metis people whom they would later encounter in their role as policemen. It is such insensitive and biased showings that reinforce the predominant EuroCanadian image of Riel as criminal and traitor, whereas the reality of the Metis people is diametrically opposite -- a hero and a champion of their cause. No one who is afforded

[5] The Metis people emerged after the Europeans' arrival. They are identified in the *Constitution Act, 1982* as being one of the three Aboriginal peoples in Canada.

[6] This was John Norquay who held one of the longest terms as Premier in early Manitoba history.

the truth of history, even those of strong EuroCanadian belief, can deny that Louis Riel was the founder of the province of Manitoba even though there is little interpretation which authenticates this truth to the rest of Canada.

Instructors are a group which should be specifically educated to the reality that history and heritage presentations depend a great deal on the interpretations of its writers; they are ideally positioned to pass that knowledge onto others -- their students. This, though, does not seem to be happening on any large scale in the presentation of EuroCanadian - Aboriginal history and in most heritage presentations in this country. There are also those in other professions who can make a difference as well, and these include museologists, curators, parks/nature interpreters, historians, speech-writers and researchers.

It is clear that a great deal of historical research is needed to revise serious written distortions and to acknowledge different historical interpretations. Proper and accurate presentations of the heritage of Aboriginal people need to be founded on more objective and unbiased research, preferably conducted and adjudicated by Aboriginal peoples themselves who have been educated to the awareness of the fallacies, due partly to subjectivity which EuroCanadian historians have propagated. Even though some would argue that true objectivity cannot exist, and while this may be true, writings and teachings could be prefaced by identifying authors and their perspectives in all information. This way, the trends of calumny to which the First Peoples of Canada have been subjected can eventually be eradicated. Little-known historical truths, as well, can be lifted from their present archival homes and made available to many by new curricula for secondary and, particularly, for post-secondary educational systems. This can help pave the way for massive and long-term institutional changes that would positively affect Aboriginal people in all aspects of Canadian life.

As well, there is a dominant European-based belief, adopted by the general Canadian public and

generated by its formal academic institutions, that histories are necessarily true by virtue of being physically documented according to western scientific thought and scholarly research. An accompanying assumption is that writers, using common sense and without prompting, seek objectivity by first recognizing, then avoiding, their own cultural biases. Heritage interpretations and historical records are thereby founded on what commonly comes to be known as solid and well-grounded authorities; therefore end products often remain unquestioned and validity is often asserted as the *status quo* because it reflects the viewpoint of writers who are accepted as experts in their field. Oral traditions, on the other hand, such as those of Aboriginal historical/heritage recordings, are seen as informal, unreliable and somehow tainted and thus inferior and very much open to question. These different approaches and methodologies of historical gleanings are rooted in diametrically opposite cultural foundations, so it becomes inevitable that the two interpretations of the same history/heritage will be radically different from the other.

2. Origins of the EuroCanadian Interpretation of Aboriginal Heritage

The underlying history of Native Canadians had its roots in a "missing history", for Europeans around the times of the "Age of Exploration" generally assumed that earlier peoples, which is how they labelled Aboriginal people, would eventually end up in the same state as they themselves. All humanity was considered to have the same basic human nature, so the history of the First Peoples in their "progression toward civilization" was anticipated to correspond to that which had already taken place with the Europeans. Such reasoning provided a framework or reference, hypothetical as it was, for how Aboriginal people would develop in the following centuries. This frame of reference predicted both natural and anomalic changes, and so early European philosophers began to derive the rules of behaviour that would guide them in measuring the state of others' civilization. Historical writings during these eras used Aboriginal peoples' lifestyles to exemplify and describe these steps, and the original state of nature or pre-civilization came to be equated with the everyday life of pre- and early Contact indigenous peoples. An English professor in 1767 wrote: "It is in their present condition that we are to behold, as in a mirror, the features of our own progenitors" (Burrow, 1966, 12). Common thought was that all humankind passes through savagery because of the Biblical "fall of man" (Rom. 5: 12 - 14; Isa. 43: 27) in order to reach civilization.

From these concepts arose the divisions of human progression into epochs or distinct periods of "growth" such as the Stone, Bronze and Iron Ages. There were several different measuring sticks used to gauge this, such as intelligence or division of labour; different European countries used different scales, but, predictably, all positioned themselves at the highest levels. Aboriginal people always ranked low and their outcome in historical development was predetermined as continually being behind that of the Europeans. These convictions became fertile ground for the newer philosophies in the upcoming nineteenth century -- ones on which a significant doctrine would be founded -- that of *evolution* which itself would become the basis of the differentiated and specific scientific disciplines seen today.

Primitivism or the "noble savage" presentation as it referred to indigenous people needs mention, however, for this powerful belief was dichotomous to evolutionary thought. This particular flavour of outside interpretation saw Aboriginal people in a romantic light; it was based on the notion that it was indeed possible to have paradise on earth, in contrast to the grossly imperfect society of the day (which was the sixteenth century; this tradition reached its zenith in the mid- to late-eighteenth). Those who were lucky enough to live in such happy and faraway lands possessed traits seen as sadly lacking in European society: egalitarianism, moral strength, peacefulness among the nations, profound spirituality, physical strength and endurance, and, generally, uncomplicated and modest lifestyles that were congruous with the cycles of nature. Some even equated these to the Biblical Garden of Eden (Gen. 1 - 3) which was commonly thought to be in the western unexplored areas of the world. Columbus' writings reflect the notion that he had landed in a primitivistic society: he noted their communal property, peace-like dispositions, congeniality and impressive physiques. He and others named places such as "Paradise Valley" and "The Fountain of Youth" (Stanford, 1961, Chpt. 3 - 4). In general, this view saw indigenous people as living in a "Golden Age" and as "children of nature" away from the corruption of historical complexities and social proprieties such as those which saddled the Europeans and from which they could not seem to extricate themselves.

The primitivistic interpretation, however, served a purpose for those who espoused them, and these included philosophers such as Rousseau and Voltaire and economists such as Locke and Hobbes who furthered these views for their own purposes. They used it as a means of attacking the ills of European institutions by putting the "noble savage" on a pedestal to be emulated while denouncing by comparison the flagrant shortcomings of their own society. In other words, they used this imagery to champion causes for social and political reform by accentuating a model of what all men ought to be like, and what they really could be. Supporters of European institutions, such as the church, state and influential social leaders, however, retaliated by attacking the *bon sauvage* and began to highlight what they labelled as the Aboriginal peoples'

wretched existence, traits of uncivilization, and basic lack of refinement. The clash over these interpretations ended with the revolutions in France and the United States for they ushered in new social orders. In North America, new European societies, free from "back home" thinking, began to spring up and there was less reason to propagate a "noble savage" image, for there were no corresponding causes to push (Fairchild, 1928, 328 - 328). Thus, while this portrayal continued for a time in arts and literary circles, it was soon dispelled by the ensuing societal dynamics and by the polemics of academics, intellectuals and political reformers who looked to newer and more sophisticated ways to make the world a better place for themselves.

2.1 Social/Cultural Darwinism

The concept of *worldview* consists of any number of suppositions about humankind's role within the universe and the resulting exchanges of humans with other living and non-living creation. As well, a worldview holds a perception about how time passes and its bearing on all relationships. Another important element includes a concept of the essence of human nature; this assigns fundamental motives to the way humans should, and do, behave. These, in turn, shape and uphold a people's ideology which is their belief in what constitutes perfect or ideal human interchange with one another and with nature. As such and within these parameters, various worldviews are constructed and social realities are founded and fashioned in many different ways with many different outcomes. Languages are representative of basic worldview variations in that different people express their understandings about their environment in different ways -- a language provides a way of sharing similar universal concepts among those who use it (Farb, 1968, 224).

With the advent of Christianity, Europeans tended to think of human nature in different phases, the optimal and final being divinity -- life in heaven, mankind's after-death and final utopian destiny. These beliefs are Biblically founded: man was born in sin (Ps. 51:5)[1]; it was only

[1] "Surely I have been a sinner from birth, sinful from the time my mother conceived me."

through conversion and subsequent salvation that man was "to be made new in the attitude of your minds; and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness" (Eph. 4: 22- 23). Christian religious rites, some taking place as early as birth, ensured that people would be ready for heaven's gates at their time of physical death. Common understanding was that most of the European masses were already in this category, for salvation was assumed to be systemic, built into the cultural network -- as long as one worked loyally, faithfully and obediently within that system -- and it was assumed that nearly everyone did so.

During the "Age of Exploration", as Europeans began making inroads into other parts of the world, they identified the indigenous peoples whom they encountered as "non-Christian" or pagan, although they acknowledged them as having the *potential* of being Christian. Along the same vein, they viewed them as being *potentially* European[2]. The newcomers viewed themselves, from what they interpreted as divine instruction, as being the instigators and perpetrators of both Christianity and the re-making into Europeans of indigenous inhabitants. As they undertook these efforts while they were simultaneously furthering imperialistic policies to expand their land bases, Europeans became aware of the reality that their everyday thought was being subjected to and influenced by the diverse values of foreign cultures. A new and heightened awareness combined with recent doubt regarding the validity of the notion of *divine creation* caused many Europeans to begin questioning the fundamental assumptions associated with their own worldview. The founding pinnacles of European ideology began to falter, including the concept that all humankind possessed a universal nature. The need quickly arose, in the throes of British Victorianism, for a certainty that the people would accept and "for ethical premises which should not be arbitrary and recommendations which should be more than tentative and piecemeal" (Burrow, 59). This is the background from which Darwinism arose; it was a biological speculation about the emergence of new species and the reasons for the extinction of present ones; it was a speculation whose basic essence was ***change***.

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2 It was from an extension of this thought that the lands of Aboriginal peoples came to be known by the foreign names of the explorers' mother countries: New England, New France, New Spain.

Darwin called this process "natural selection" and wrote that it "is daily and hourly scrutinizing, throughout the world, the slightest variations; rejecting those that are bad, preserving and adding up all that are good" (Darwin, 1897, 103). He talked about there being only one general law by which all organisms would reproduce with some variations and "let the strongest live and the weakest die" (365). He explained his belief that both upcoming species and the variations within them came about from advantages they had over others that competed for the same living spaces and materials; he said that, "the consequent extinction of less favoured forms almost inevitably follows" (323).

At first Darwin did not speak of his theories applying to human evolution, but he eventually did, stating that humankind's gradual emergence came from non-humans and that humanity had a common ancestry with apes. He stated that those who believed otherwise were only biased towards and unduly influenced by Christianity which is inculcated in the belief of the divine destiny of humankind. He emphasized the similarities shared by humans and animals; any differences, he claimed, were quantitative and pertained to such characteristics as reasoning capacity, creativity, morality and language. Human body variations were explained as having originated from the same laws and general causes as those to which the "lower" animals were subjected. Earlier and present forms of humanity, Darwin believed, were hierarchical in their closeness to animals; the most civilized peoples needed far less of a "struggle for survival"[3] than the uncivilized societies (Burkhardt in Kohn, ed., 1985, 325 -365). It was only inevitable, accordingly, that the civilized would exterminate "the savage races throughout the world as well as the anthropomorphous apes" (Darwin, 241 - 242). Any nation, by virtue of what Darwin called "civilization", would have achieved the heights of natural selection.

[3] This means that, according to Darwin, early humankind's populations fluctuated because its ways and means of meeting basic livelihood needs were not always successful and that there were times of extreme hardship just to survive. Some died and some survived, but this was according to the "rigid law of natural selection".

Darwin, as well, pondered the reasons for the extremely large land masses in the New World[4] that were being wasted by what he viewed as "the wandering savages' lack of agriculturalization". He concluded that the "struggle for existence" had probably not been sufficiently intense because this particular species of humankind was obviously still in existence (219). This implies that he surmised a time when circumstances would be severe enough that their existence would cease entirely.

As Darwinism began to take deep root in Europe, the prevailing worldview there began to alter in a number of ways because the aspects of time, nature, humanity and its nature were being elucidated in ways very different from the traditional Christian ones. As many variations of Darwinism began to spring up, the serious questioning of the concept of "universality in the nature of man" came to have far-reaching effects for there were those who advocated Darwin's theories who also came to influence the colonization of indigenous peoples in many parts of the world. One of these was Patrick Matthew[5] who came from an agricultural background, and wrote about nature's copiousness and stated that:

> As the field of existence is limited and preoccupied, it is only the hardier, more robust, better suited to circumstance individuals, who are able to struggle forward to maturity, these inhabiting only the situations to which they have superior adaptation and greater power of occupancy than any other kind; the weaker, less circumstance-suited, being prematurely destroyed (In Dempster, 1983, 107 - 108).

These observations applied to societal systems, and the "weaker" were the poor in England and Scotland, Matthew believed. By the existence of relief programs, he saw the English laws as encouraging poverty and idleness among the unemployed, whereas in Scotland[6], the absence of

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4 Of course, these lands were not new -- it was an old land that had been inhabited by Aboriginal people since time immemorial. However, the predominant EuroCanadian view has been that, as Europeans were undoubtedly the first Caucasians to set foot on these regions previously unknown to them, these lands were "new", and thus being "discovered". As the year 2000 approaches, it is hoped that such archaic and antiquated concepts will be eradicated.

5 Actually, there is still debate whether or not Matthew preceded Darwin in the "law of natural selection" theories. Matthew lived from 1790 to 1874 and wrote *Naval Timber & Aboriculture* and referred to his belief as "the law universal in nature".

6 Matthew himself was Scots.

such worked to cultivate self-sufficiency and financial freedom. By extension of these thoughts, Matthew encouraged the emigration of the poor because it would naturally place the strong and competent into "their natural positions as leaders". As for the weaker ones, which he termed the "more improvident varieties" (102), they would fall by the wayside, meaning that they would not survive. His motivations were colonially inspired, too, for they were the basis of his work on naval timber -- ocean-going vessels had been ensuring the strength of British overseas power for some time. His views on war were significant, too. He wished to see a more cohesive European family and believed that war should be expended only upon non-Europeans for the purposes of acquiring lands for occupation by the strong and hardy emigrants who had shown their superior humanity by their survival.

As these ideas deepened in the European community, they found fertile soil for vivid and rampant speculation. Academics, philosophers and other enthusiasts took Darwinian principles and began applying them to many different areas: race, gender, class, social structure, religion, war, peace and labour divisions. Race and conflict were one of the most popular areas of discussion. German geologist Freidrich Rolle, for example, wrote about space [land was seen as space] struggles between different races of people; the group which eliminated the "weaker" race showed progression and development (Hawkins, 1997, 62), rather than genocidal practice, or what is known today as "ethnic cleansing".

Another noteworthy contributor to Darwinian racial and moral thought was Charles Brace, an American who lived from 1826 to 1890[7]. He used Darwinism to account for the common origins of all humanity. He was troubled by the slavery of black people in the south for he surmised that their origin could be traced back to perhaps the white, brown or even some other coloured man; he believed that races were not species but merely varieties of the same stock. He rejected hierarchical categorization among the races, for as there were no real races but one, there could

[7] These years saw the height of the American Civil War and slavery issues were rampant.

be no inferiority - superiority aspects among men (Brace, 1863, 375 - 395). Brace's theories are radical and important because they contradicted the prevailing attitude that southern black slavery was normal and natural due to the blacks' extreme and obvious inferiority. One of the main proponents of this latter thought was J.H. van Evrie who is attributed by Dr. Hawkins as concluding:

> . . . racial crossings were violations of nature and hence abominations, while slavery was the natural condition of negroes. To grant them independence was akin to forcing ten-year-old children to fend for themselves: the result would be the extermination of the negroes in America (201).

Unlike Brace, another prominent American thinker, J. Le Conte[8], used Darwinism extensively to protect the status quo of American black slavery during these years (1823 - 1901). He used hierarchical structuring to categorize the evolutionary development of different races. He determined that blacks were at an early state of evolution -- this meant that their being submissive, manageable and alterable made their slavery fitting and correct, all the while overlooking the fact that these qualities were enforced rather than natural. Concerning the First Peoples, Le Conte judged their progress as having become more specialized and therefore more rigid; this meant that their "extermination is unavoidable" (Le Conte, 1892, 359 - 361). Le Conte and many other similar thinkers of his time incongruously believed in creationism in that they interpreted the laws of nature, including "natural selection" and "survival of the fittest" as the laws of God. Overall, the theories of Charles Darwin validated the structuring of racial hierarchies and through the conduit of the principle of "struggle for survival", legitimized grounds for predicating the ill-treatment of and uncivilized behaviour towards both the Aboriginal and African American peoples.

As Europeans gained a foothold in the New World, they continually promoted the credibility of their own systems of materialism while at the same time debasing the native and African

[8] He was also the president of the American Association for the Advancement of Science.

American value systems. Academic racial theories, rooted in Darwinism and influenced by other European intellectuals, reduced the great nations of First Peoples of North and South America into a biologically inferior and savage red race which needed the patronage of Caucasian immigrants to redeem and protect them. Outright imperialism was supported by doctrines that denied the essential humanity of the inhabitants of the Americas. This type of thinking was encouraged to facilitate the conquest of the First Peoples[9] and to confiscate their traditional homelands; sufficiently indoctrinated European eyes saw this as a justifiable means to a worthy end.

There were those, though, who spoke out about injustices against indigenous peoples. An early European jurist and theologian who discussed some of these issues was Francisco de Vitoria, a professor of theology. He gave two famous lectures on aboriginal rights entitled *De Indiis II* (1537 - 8) and *De Jure Belli* [10] (1538 - 9). He argued that the First Peoples were the rightful owners and controllers of their own lives including their traditional territories. In his reply to four arguments raised against aboriginal title and in support of the basic humanity of Native peoples, he arrived at these conclusions:

- The first argument stated that the First Nations people could not own land because they were heathens and did not belong to the Catholic faith. De Vitoria said this was not a valid denial because heretics in Europe were not deprived of their property merely because they were heretics, and the same rules should be applied to all indigenous people (Hamilton, 1963, 120).

- A second argument was that native people were inferior beings and rightfully deprived of their lands (Darwinian principles were directly founded on these older thoughts). De

9 Conquest applies to present-day United States of America, and not Canada.

10 This was also known as *De Indiis II*.

Vitoria argued that they were at least as intelligent as Spanish peasants and thus equally fit to have legal rights that included land ownership (121).

- A third argument was that the Pope had granted the New World to Spain. De Vitoria stated that the Pope was a spiritual emperor who had no temporal or worldly power over native territories and therefore any grant issuing from him on this question was invalid (122).

- A fourth argument was that Spain could claim the lands because it had discovered them. De Vitoria dismissed this argument on the grounds that one could claim lands through discovery only when the lands were uninhabited, or "terra nullius", and that this was obviously not true in the Americas where indigenous peoples were "in the peaceful possessions of rightful owners" (123).

Five years later, Pope Paul III, in the papal edict of 1537, stated that the New World inhabitants were sufficiently human to be capable of receiving Christianity and being equal to other Europeans in this sense only (McGrane, 1989, 15). In part, he stated:

> " . . . Indians are truly men . . . they may and should, freely and legitimately, enjoy their liberty and the possessions of their property; nor should they be in any way enslaved; should the contrary happen, it shall be null and of no effect."

During the colonization of America, a letter of instruction from the Massachusetts Bay company to Captain John Endicott in 1629, reads:

> "Above all, we pray you to be careful that there be none in our precincts permitted to do injury in the least kind to the heathen people; and if any offend in that way, they themselves receive due correction . . . if any of the savages pretend right of inheritance to all or any part of the lands granted in our patent, we pray you endeavour to purchase their title, that we may avoid the least scruple of intrusion."

The reality is that the early recognition of First Nations' rights *to their own territories* was a

result of the European need for Native co-operation in terms of survival and trade, for war against other European and Native rivals, and for protecting the territorial scope of their own claims against other foreign competitors. As this need subsided, so did the willingness of Europeans to recognize that the First Peoples had any rights at all to their own lands, let alone their cultural traditions, and so began the process by foreigners to abrogate Native cultural, physical, intellectual and spiritual domination. Darwinism's major role was that it laid the foundational thinking that validated all such activity; it was the pillar upon which rested much of the European methodology in developing policies that directly subverted the Aboriginal peoples.

2.2. Eurocentrism

Non-Native Canadian heritage interpretation infers that humans are the nucleus of all worthwhile and universal activity, and never at its periphery or fringes. Anthropocentrism, as this perspective is known, is a direct reflection of the cosmology of the Old World. Founded on older enlightenment beliefs in days long past, these ideals are strongly influenced by a long-standing interpretation of the Old Testament which was energized and reinforced by the advent of Christianity. Specifically, the first book, Genesis, portrays mankind as being such a special creation of God and so highly esteemed that he is "formed in his image" (1:12) and elevated above all other life types. The predominant Christian doctrine that establishes this anthropocentric perception is the narrative of Jesus Christ, the son of the God of all things. According to the Biblical account, Christ experienced physical birth for the sole purpose of dying so that all humans, having been identified in an entirety as having lived in a manner that warrants eternal death, could be redeemed from certain and final destruction (Rom. 3:25). Accordingly, the status of humankind is so highly esteemed by God that he allowed his only son to be sacrificed as an offering of eternal life to all humans into a Utopian state.

There is, in Native spirituality, the same sense of an omnipotent Being at its heart, but this Being, translated into English as the *Creator* (not *God*), is much more inclusive of all creation

whether animate or inanimate. Traditional Native belief is not anthropocentric. The following is an excerpt from Black Elk, a spiritual advisor of the Oglala Lakota, speaking from his cosmological perspective:

> You have noticed that everything an Indian does is in a circle, and that is because the Power of the world always works in circles and everything tries to be round. In the old days, when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came to us from the sacred hoop of the nation and so long as the hoop was unbroken, the people flourished. The flowering tree was the living centre of the hoop and the circle of the four quarters nourished us. The East gave peace and light, the South gave warmth, the West gave rain and the North, with its cold and mighty wind, gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the outer world with our religion. Everything the Power of the World does, is done in a circle. The sky is round and I have heard the earth is round like a ball and so are the stars. The Wind, in its greatest power, whirls. *Birds make their nests in circles, for theirs is the same religion as ours.* The sun comes forth and goes down again a circle. The moon does the same and both are round. Even the seasons form a great circle in their changing and always come back again to where they were. The life of man is a circle from childhood to childhood and so it is in everything where power moves. Our teepees were round like the nests of birds and these were always set in a circle, the nations hoop, a nest of many nests where the Great Spirit meant for us to hatch our children (Black Elk, 1961, 198 - 200) (Emphasis mine).

This passage shows the belief in the interrelationship of humankind with all global entities, both human and non-human, living and non-living; this link was symbolically expressed in Aboriginal rituals and ceremonies, the primary vehicles of deep religious expression. According to Black Elk and other spiritual leaders, the fundamental focus of all earthly and universal activity was not particularly identified as humankind, but rather as Mother Earth and the Great Spirit who gave humankind the responsibility of stewardship of the land and creation. In fulfilling this duty, Native people knew that the land and creation would take care of them and meet all their needs. Even today, many Native children are taught that they are not on levels above, or are more significant than the insects of the meadows, the trees on the mountainsides or the rocks in the field. Rather, they are instructed in the belief that all are equal; some elders teach that these things are on greater levels than humans and have more magnitude in the realm of the Great

Spirit. Teachings always emphasize the need for each person to seek and explore the great ways of the four directions[11] so that he can gain a thorough understanding of his own nature in relation to the earth, the resources and the Creator.

European belief is adamant in the concept that humanity is so meaningful to God that nature itself was given for his domination: " . . . let them have dominion over the fish in the sea, the birds in the air and over every creature that creepeth upon the face of the earth . . . subdue it (1: 26, 28). This doctrine was so powerfully ingrained in the consciousness of newly-arrived Europeans that without question they began to appropriate the natural resources and, later, even different parts of the environment itself. They felt justified in taking the earth's raw resources for the production of tangible goods in Europe to help alleviate the depressed economy there. Landscapes in the New World, too, such as the ancient living forests, were deemed a "wilderness" to be battled, and tamed so they could resemble, as much as possible, the terrain and landscape of the countryside back home (Mason, 1980, 191). Nowadays, there are many such landscapes in Canada that have resulted from this ideology; they are copies of denuded heritage landscapes in far-away places. As time passes, though, they have become the heritage landscapes of the contemporary descendants of those first Europeans who arrived on New World shores many centuries ago. The seeds of the notion to dominate nature have blossomed to this very day as immigrants to New World civilizations have continued over time to cultivate, groom and manipulate the countrysides according to older European homeland models.

Included in the EuroCanadian cosmology are concepts of social or cultural Darwinism, societal evolution and the "march of progress". This is evident in writings even to this day, and the portrayal of the First Peoples by the Europeans make this concept clear: that the Aboriginal people were living at a very primitive stage from which the European societies back home had already long since advanced -- this was according to progression along Darwin's evolutionary

[11] These are east, west, north and south.

ladder (Mander, 1991, 210). A strong element of "superiority and inferiority" was deeply embedded in this thought, and certainly, from the EuroCanadian perspective, the Aboriginal cultures and traditions were not worthy of being conserved in everyday life, although it was acknowledged that they would do well reposing in the artificial surroundings of quaint country museums. This type of heritage interpretation and subsequent conservation undergoes a process of preservation that includes mummification, which for all intents and purposes, means that what is being institutionalized is dead. EuroCanadians fully believed that this process would indeed happen and that the Native cultures and traditions would quickly die; in 1868, they enforced federal legislation, the *Indian Act*, to propel this belief.

This particular aspect of EuroCanadian cosmology presented a total portrayal of Native people in a negative light. The interpretation, a farce, was full of inaccuracies and misinformation. This understanding is vitally important because the First Peoples "must endure a history that shames them, destroys their confidence and causes them to reject their heritage" (Adams, 1975, 41). Evidence of mass misinterpretation from the instrument of social Darwinism is still on-going, but several older examples deserve mention and some examination, for certain trends from the past have never disappeared but continue to thrive unabated in contemporary times.

From the very beginning of European entry into the New World, there was awareness of the differences among the First Peoples. The lifestyle variations among the Inuit and those of the more southern climes, for example, were well-noted by both the French and English. Even though the knowledge of such differences began to increase and be amassed, the general term "Indian" to describe indigenous peoples remained fairly constant. This usage served to generalize all the First Peoples so they could be seen as a collective. This, in turn, spawned a collective self-identification among Europeans so that as there were now "others", there was also now "us". Differences amongst fellow Europeans, in this light, became blurred as they began to distinguish themselves more and more from the New World inhabitants. Prior to this

time, for example, self-reference had been "Christendom", not "Europe" as it came to be in later times (Berkhofer, 1978, 23). The concept of "continent" also began to rise in a geographical sense of self-reference; Europe was one continent and then there were "other" continents in spite of Europe really being only a peninsula of the Eurasian land masses. New images of Europe began to replace older ones, and these reflected a superior position over the "other" continents. The conceptualizations of the "other" people lacked the power, higher learning, prestige, domination, influence and overall vitality that representations of Europe were beginning to display. Some continents, those which the Europeans knew relatively well, such as Asia, were far less eloquently portrayed than Europe which was personified as a wealthy queen, but the unknown New World and Africa were represented by nakedness in figure or by wild animals (Hay, 1957, 95, 120). Eurocentrism, then, became entrenched in European thought; this arose from their own self-definitions and self-conceptions of being civilized and superior while, at the same time, all others and their corresponding continents fell beneath in some descending order.

Prosaic word usage describing Aboriginal people, such as "infidel", "Indian", "barbarian" "pagan", and "wild", show a criteria of Eurocentric judgment and substantiated the collective descriptive terminology applied to all First Peoples. As the Europeans' foothold in the New World increased, so did "proof" of their superiority and the classification of others according to a European-based measuring stick that became more inculcated in Eurocentric thought. It was not an anomaly that Europeans correlated nationalities with certain moral and/or intellectual attributes, for the English show a liberal deluge of this even in Shakespearean literature (Clark, 1932). That they should initiate stereotypes of the New World inhabitants was customary to and consistent with their thought, behaviour, culture and literary traditions.

There is another factor, though, that needs recognition: the categorizations in analysis of culture, nation, biology and race were at that pre-colonial time all blended together, not segregated as they are now in common Western study. For example, nations and races were seen as being

interchangeable; individuals within either grouping were not deemed as separate beings, but specific members of that larger community. Individuals, often without exception, though perhaps in varying degrees, were assigned characteristics that the "parent" grouping were deemed to possess. They were not seen as separate persons who could possibly have other qualities than those attributed to their main group. Only a small leap from this thought was required to attribute what have become stereotypical characteristics of different peoples.

The use of the word "Indian" to describe Aboriginal people is an interesting one because its use arose from this type of categorization and subsequent stereotyping, and continued, even in a legal Canadian context to this day, centuries after it was discovered that these were not Indians at all. However, as Columbus thought he had landed his ships on the Asian subcontinent, he labelled the people who found him as *los Indios.* The word "India" in his day meant "all Asia east of the Indus River", and as he was out to claim all of what he considered to be newly-found land for his home kingdom, Spain, it is likely he would have used the same term *los Indios* to describe any indigenous inhabitants east of his own home territory (Morison, 1974, 26n, 30) as this was the direction he thought had had gone. The word became an all-encompassing word to describe Aboriginal people in the New World, particularly when the Spanish continued its use to describe the inhabitants who encountered them in what has become Central and South America[12]. Further, the meaning of names of either races or nations were provided by what was seen as their moral characteristics complete with connotations of their cultural traditions -- the name itself was an exegesis of how they were judged by Europeans. It is necessary, however, to first articulate the European practise, since Contact, of interpreting indigenous lifestyles in ways that were deficiencies of their own. Interpretations were not objective and not sourced from within the structure of the particular culture being discussed, but rather always compared to the reference point of European culture being superior. This painted an especially damaging picture of the First Peoples because it often meant depictions of a severe lack of possessions --

[12] Other Europeans called Aboriginal people *Indien* (French), *Indianer* (German), and *Indian* (English).

this told a big story, a misinterpreted one, because the First Peoples were minimalists *whose values were to acquire many spiritual possessions, not physical ones*. It was from this *modus operandi* -- of emphasizing by "deficiencies" -- that moral judgments began to take the meaning of the name given to the Peoples, or that the name "Indian" with previously-ascribed attributes, was given. It put the Europeans in a self-appointed position of judging other peoples' morality in light of their own "perfect" character.

It was only much later, well into the 1900's, that this type of categorization, negative prototyping, began to undergo change. Sociologists and anthropologists now, of course, work to be objective and quite readily accept the ideas of cultural pluralism. Rare, however, were the academics who accepted ethnography with its overriding theme of moral relativism even at the beginning of this century. Prior to those times, expressions of moral "findings" according to such lay intellectuals as settlers and explorers were rampant in descriptions of the indigenous inhabitants. Such findings often subsequently became "scientific" -- this is according to the adage that, over time, "*preconceptions* become *conceptions* which become *fact*". For those who never had face-to-face meetings with Aboriginal people and could therefore not arrive at their own "findings", the best interpretations they could ever hope to derive were full of stereotypes and one-sided moral conjectures. These referred to all areas of Native life -- marriage and family customs, child-rearing practices, gender roles, labour divisions, government styles, clothing traditions, social niceties (everyday manners and more formal protocol), economic bases, spirituality, and others. As recently as the Second Vatican Council in the mid-1960's, the Roman Catholic Church, with an estimated membership of as much as a quarter of the global population and whose work over the centuries had a significant impact on First Peoples worldwide, acknowledged: that people can lead a moral life without knowing the Christian God. The same Council being represented by John Paul II speaks of a "secret presence of God" among people of other religious traditions (John Paul II, 1994, 125-127). The First Peoples, however, did not need a Pope to tell them who the Creator was, and who placed them on the face of the earth. They

never doubted that other people knew these things, too -- albeit in their own, often incomprehensible, ways.

As well, the practise of viewing others using "negatives" was common in pre- and mid-twentieth century times. This involves using projection -- the act of externalizing or objectifying what is primarily subjective (Webster, 1967,681) -- to prove or disprove something about oneself or of one's cultural practices. Some religious groups, for example, attribute their own demonic thoughts onto others whom they have labelled or named as possessing those very characteristics which would activate such thoughts. If those people to whom the projection were directed would cease to be, then a cleansing of those abominations would occur and the religious group itself would become purified. A purging of others, often incapable of self-defense, becomes necessary to enable the "core group" to justify itself before its God. Under this guise of religion, there were times in history that the First Peoples of North America were eliminated or removed.

The observer in times past, although it is well to remember that the residue of such thought still exists, viewed Aboriginal people as being either "good" or "bad". He had the power to express these views as an authority by virtue of his own race and because he happened to have had some form of contact with an Aboriginal person or group, even from afar or from heresay evidence. The "researcher"'s judgment often depended on the rationale behind his writing. For example, the Jesuits in Canada were known to write especially heinous descriptions of Aboriginal people, not only because of their own moral and religious biases, but also because they were seeking further funding from their home clergy. They knew the harsher the picture they painted of indigenous people, the more money the Church back home would send so that the word of God could go forth to ease the plight of Aboriginal people.

Certain conclusions were drawn from the pictures of Native people being either "good" or "bad" and these are liberally sprinkled throughout literature derived from early observations. "Good

Indians" were hospitable, handsome, statuesque, noble, strong and with great prowess, whereas "bad Indians" were indolent, sexually lax, petty, unclean, cruel and vengeful. As well, there was a general timelessness associated with Native people in that their lifestyles and cultures were interpreted as static as opposed to dynamic. The thinking that indigenous cultures constantly influenced one another and that these cultures were living, thriving and ever-evolving (without the European connotation of this word to imply progression from worse to better) did not enter into this train of earlier thought. Even the wrenching changes made by Europeans to the landscapes, the traditional homelands of the Aboriginal peoples, seems not to have had any influence on the depictions of the "real" way Native people lived -- the element of time was simply suspended or jettisoned in many interpretations. The marginalization of the First Peoples in colourful and vivid imagery, for example, is still not often depicted in native heritage presentations. In the past, it was even less so. Early times of Contact were portrayed and gave lasting impressions to many, and in far too many history books, the First Peoples are entirely absent after European settlement.

The idea that the First Peoples lack any sort of history rose directly from these early interpretive thoughts. Because of negative prototyping, the identification of the two societal structures had to be mirror-images and thus opposite of one another, with the Native assigned to be the negative. European society was "civilized" and Native society "uncivilized". One of the major criteria of what constituted "civilization" in European eyes is history and heritage presentation. By a short extension of this reasoning, Aboriginal people lacked history and therefore by default, a "real" heritage -- this is why they were (and too often, are) presented in a permanent and static time warp -- into those early or pre-Contact days.

European societies were/are endlessly portrayed in various eras and epochs from previous countless centuries; written, and audio-visual demonstrations still "prove" that *theirs* is a real history and that this is simply not open to question. A study of the non- and Aboriginal

relationships during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries continued to "prove" that the ways of the two groups were still dissimilar. The possibility that perhaps it was by choice that the Aboriginal peoples strongly desired to retain their old ways of life as much as possible, even though they foresaw days of great change in the lives of their progeny, never appeared to enter into the realm of what could be true.

The concept of the "vanishing race" became rampant during and preceding the days of the disease epidemics. In particular, the American history of open warfare included premeditated disease pathogen dissemination amongst the indigenous peoples. Death by diseases previously unknown to the Aboriginal people was seen for centuries as doctrinal justification and as racial "superiority" of the European people. This concept was backed by their own implementation of a racial pecking order that put them at the top and indigenous people at the bottom. Darwin made the observation that death pursued the Aboriginal peoples whenever the Europeans arrived, but does not note that while the Chinese were technologically capable of arriving on the New World's shores, it was only their Ming emperor who banned further ocean travel and who thus prevented similar devastation of the Aboriginal communities by the Chinese. Now, the concept of "metahistory" which is to tell the "real history of the human race" (Dyer, 1998, D4), so recent that it has yet to be written, sees the death of Native people by new diseases as being simply for "geographic reasons", not due to superiority of one race over another. The image of the "vanishing race" emerged in romantic, lofty and ethereal imagery when the threat of Aboriginal people as significant military enemies began to diminish.

A current picture of Native people emerged in the early and mid-twentieth century times: he is one representation of the "bad Indian". This image is the Native person who rejects the saint and instead accepts the sinning of "civilized" life. He becomes the stereotype of imperfection where nothing of the past Indian nobleness or any other redeeming characteristics exist. He is what is informally called the "reserve Indian" or, in American terms, the "reservation Indian": a

disdained, ridiculed, drunken, dishevelled non-person with no moral or ethical traits at all, a totally transparent individual. He is a person who is quite incapable of "making it" in either the non- or the classic Aboriginal world and for all intents and purposes, an outcast from humanity itself -- a cull (although there are deemed to be varying degrees of belonging even within this category).

Assimilation or integration by choice into the mixed broader society by Aboriginal people or their incorporating change and making it their own was seen as the cessation of what constituted being an "Indian" because of how the Europeans defined and used these terms. Coupled with this thought came the notion that any change towards "civilization" made an indigenous person less indigenous, and that this could progress to the point that being indigenous could stop altogether, even though it was recognized that few ever attained this elevated outcome. This process was seen as ultimate proof that civilization was indeed godly and, inevitably, victory over the "bad" and "uncivilized" was the goal. This is why assimilation in most circles was seen as good and positive and was high on the EuroCanadian agenda. Norwegians, for example, who emigrated to Canada were not thought to be less Nordic in their ways because of adapting to Canadian custom -- they were not thought to be adapting to civilization at all for they were already labelled as being "civilized". This illustrates the inconsistency of EuroCanadian interpretation of different peoples. Many irrational, illogical and bizarre notions are attributed to Aboriginal people, and these are derived according to a European-based standard and pre-existent conventional patterns of thought.

3. Colonialist Interpretation & Its Influences

3.1 The Motivations & Aspirations of Colonialism

Early French and British colonial interpretations of the First Peoples persist in Canadian society to this day and, overtly and covertly, these have an impact on the relationship between non- and Aboriginal peoples. This is a good reason for exhuming this buried past history, for the histories of all peoples are rooted in their heritage and must be interpreted before any presentation at all. In Canada, the shared history of the EuroCanadians and the First Peoples is particularly complex in its interpretation because of both the cross-cultural and social aspects as well as the inferior-superior perspective of one group over the other. The dominant presentation of Aboriginal history/heritage has been further complicated by their type of Contact[1] which is known as "collision". In this instance, the term means *colonialism*, although there are other types of collision as well[2] (Dickason, 1992, 87). Collision causes an entire loss, or at the very least, a deterioration of the self-interpretation of the victimized group; the First Peoples of Canada are victims, there is no exception to this.

Imperialism[3] invariably arises from collisions, and unequal relationships between the colonizers and the colonized are sure to result. There are wide implications regarding prosperity, prestige, power, grandeur and national dignity for the colonizing nations, and because many in Europe were suffering from a depletion of resources, imperialism was seen as a remedy for regional and other problems. Colonialism is often viewed as the method by which imperialistic policies were implemented; an extension of this thought is that oppression of the indigenous peoples in

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[1] In this writing,"Contact" refers to the initial relationship between the Native people and the Europeans when the latter first arrived in the territory later known as "Canada". It does not mean 1492 which is the more generic meaning of the word.

[2] Other types of collisions include war, conquest, enslavement, terrorism and the transmission of disease from one group to another.

[3] Nadel and Curtis define this term as, "the extension of sovereignty or control, direct or indirect, political or economic, with one government, nation or society over another, together with the ideas justifying or opposing this process" (1964 ,1).

colonized lands and the pillage of resources are inevitable and necessary outcomes.

England encouraged colonialism more than France during its years of imperialistic activity because its population was exploding; this combined with a rapidly dwindling supply of raw materials within the country (Nadel, 17). France, on the other hand, feared a mass exodus of its population, particularly its elite, into "New France" (Jaenen, 1992, 47). Its own population was stable, if not experiencing a decline; expansion was generally thought of as an unnecessary expense. However, not wishing to lose any ground it gained from earlier discoveries such as Cartier's, France started setting up policies to protect its interests. In essence, all French colonies were meant to achieve autonomy while simultaneously contributing to their mother country's maintenance as quickly as possible (Nadel, 17). Ideally, as well, indigenous peoples within new lands were to fall under colonial subordination as efficiently as possible and governors were encouraged to procure the Native people for labour, particularly the menial type, for the colony's upkeep. Direction from King Louis XVI to intendant Jean Talon in Canada in 1671 stated that:

> . . . through instruction in the matters of our religion and in our ways they might compose with the inhabitants of Canada a single people and by that means also fortify the colony (Public Archives of Canada, Series B, III).

Competition for colonies by the European countries began to increase and so France dropped her reticence and joined in with a vengeance; her acquisitions by 1870, besides Canada, included Algeria, Madagascar, Cambodia, parts of China and New Caledonia. Her arch rival was England, whose eyes were much earlier cast on Canada, for the English knew that capturing Canada was of tremendous strategic value. Other colonial powers were Germany, Spain, Portugal, the Netherlands and Belgium. All had ambitious plans to capture and exploit the bounties of their colonies for economic reasons. Religious bodies[4] were identified as the vehicle by which the initial front-line relationships with indigenous peoples would be established and this as a matter

[4] Some would call these religious groups "busy-bodies", so the terms may be seen as interchangeable.

of urgent policy. Christianizing was convenient, too, for it was the excuse needed by France to make inroads into the "New World", as a Papal Bull had already allocated it to Spain.

Later, as colonies became entrenched on Aboriginal lands, both the French and British presented Native people as "defenders of Canada". This was not to last very long, however, for by the Treaty of Paris, England won its global competition against France for New World territories. This British victory marked the beginning of the end of the Native peoples being employed as key military allies and as equals with full cultural attributes. Pre-settlement history shows that by 1814, Aboriginal people were no longer needed in either helping settle the altercations between the European powers for control of the continent (Upton in Francis & Smith, eds., 1994, 375), or as allies against other Native powers which opposed European migration into traditional homelands. By 1850, the Fur Trade, which had moved from the east into the west, was experiencing a serious decline. Further, labour on the new settlers'[5] farms was not conducive to employing Aboriginal people because settlement was established in patterns of the family unit which was able to maintain most of the required work.

On the religious front, the Catholic nations of Europe underwent a counter-Reformation just after the Protestant Reformation of the fourteenth century. This significantly increased the zeal of the Catholic Church and the era was characterized by a strong push of re-dedication to the "original works" of intense prayer, strict obedience and devout Godliness; in short, back to true Catholicism[6]. Manifestation of these goals was gauged by good works and this could happen quickly, as seen by the example of two religious orders initiated in rapid succession: in 1535, the Company of St. Ursula (the *Ursulines* or the *Grey Nuns*), and in 1540, the Society of Jesus (commonly known as the *Jesuits*) (Martin, 1987, 26). Both of these religious groups were to play an integral role in Christianizing and re-interpreting the Aboriginal peoples in Canada. It

[5] Some, like the writer, argue that these were not settlers at all, but squatters on Aboriginal land.

[6] According to E.J. Pratt, "The winds of God were blowing over France" (Graham, 1990, 26).

became apparent that it was indeed possible to "kill two birds with one stone" -- to evangelize the people and to exploit the land of its many resources. As a general conclusion, the basic colonial interpretation of the First Peoples came from the political, religious and social attitudes of those who were instrumental in attempting to correct the stagnating economies back home in Europe. It determined the actions of the colonizers whose attitudes were strongly rooted in the unquestioned assumption of their own global superiority and who were also diligently working to fulfil their own self-interests as well as their coffers.

Colonial activity was significantly influenced by a clergy which played a political role as well as a religious one. For example, during the early seventeenth century when skirmishes between important Native nations drew in the French, the priests played a mediator's role. The Wendat[7] had come to negotiate treaty terms with their Iroquois enemies only when priests were involved as witnesses. There were instances when treaties, about to be made independently of the clergy, were averted because of interference that was deliberately employed by colonial governors through the priests. For example, in 1624, Samuel Champlain, an early French governor, sent Catholic Fathers Sagard and le Caron to one such gathering. The priests were specifically instructed to break up the negotiations, even though, according to Sagard's own writings, it was against his personal desires and only because of formal instruction did he acquiesce. Champlain's rationale for this edict was that if peace between the Native nations were to ensue, the Wendat's trade in furs would be diverted to the Dutch, another of their ever-present European exploiters of New World resources. Priests also served as diplomats to ensure a free-flowing French-Native fur trade liaison and actively meddled in Native political agendas.

Some priests went even further, for they were willing vehicles for instigating intertribal warfare. Honour was bestowed on the clergymen who were particularly knowledgeable and adept in the

[7] The Wendat came to be commonly known as the Huron.

art of politics. In the new French society, trading posts and missions were located in the same place so they could best serve each other. This symbiotic arrangement was seen as ideal, according to Jesuit Ragueneau: "it is necessary for the maintenance of the Faith in all these regions, for the good of the French colonies and for the support of New France" (Hunt, 1940, 69 - 71) -- nowhere does he state that it was good for the Aboriginal nations who readily saw the differences between what was being said and what was happening in their traditional homelands.

As the strategic importance of the First Peoples diminished, they were pushed further and further into the background and onto reserves, which were common by the 1830's, to make way for the endless surge of immigrant settlers that would soon swamp the entire continent. In 1867, the Dominion had become a reality. A one-sided paternalistic relationship with the Aboriginal people, its roots in colonialism, was quickly becoming a reality. Legal protection was established to justify fully an accompanying erroneous presentation of the Aboriginal people -- Section 91 (24) of the *British North America Act* was enacted to identify and label them as "wards of the Crown"[8]. The independent self-sufficient people they always were was enacted away.

Countless examples of colonialism throughout the history of humankind can be used to illustrate the negative cultural changes experienced by subjugated peoples. As well, there is a consistent truth regarding those who perpetrate a collision, including the Europeans who came to Canada: they attempt to impose their own perceptions and worldviews onto those they oppress, and coerce them, in any number of ways including by religious persuasion, to depart from traditional cultural thought and presentation. Early Canadians, either as a government or as a people, rarely expended time or energy in learning about the spirituality or other ways of the First Peoples, particularly as time went on and as their marginalization increased. Eventually, the Native people were forced to take on both outside languages and educational systems and were being significantly influenced by foreign religions. Imposition and domination in these crucial areas are

[8] The federal Crown only.

meant to dishonour and humiliate, for as these things define the world according to societal norms and thereby shape and influence worldviews, they are the basis of the cultural orientation of any people (Leavitt in Battiste et al, 1986, 126).

As part of the earlier more successful Fur Trade relationship, in both the French and British societies, education became a vital part of the colonial subordination process because it was identified as "the primary vehicle in the civilization and advancement of the Indian race" (Department of Indian Affairs, 1876, 6). Education, the dictionary definition being "the action of developing mentally and academically, mainly by instruction", came to the First Peoples from the Europeans with strong political and religious influences which, in its process, served to re-interpret them both to themselves and to others. Its undercurrent was assimilation and acculturation which were derived from the old colonial mentality towards indigenous people.

3.2 Colonial Interpretations in Education

3.2.1 The French System: Contact - 1769

After Contact and during their settlement, the French made concerted efforts to educate the Native people with whom they had cultivated a basically favourable relationship during the Fur Trade years. However, as the demand for furs in Europe diminished and as the colonizers' vision of land settlement strengthened, the balance of power began to shift away from the Aboriginal peoples. So, as one of the first permanent European colonizers in what they called New France, it is not surprising that the French were also one of the first to establish a formal education system on these lands. To them, it was justifiable, under the guise of following God's commands, to use education as a tool to fashion their own ideas of colonial bliss. Their basic goals fell into three objectives and these, directed towards the Native people, were to integrate, assimilate and francize[9]. These colonizers envisioned a time in the near future when the First Nations people would become citizens of the new and upcoming French society; they

[9] This word literally means,"to make French".

were dedicated to this cause and certain that their society would soon take root in these fertile new lands. The belief that education should be a strong force in Christianizing the Native people to meet their three basic objectives "dominated much of the thinking about education over the next 400 years" (Daniels, 1973, 146). As well, education during these times would serve as a means of social control and indoctrination, for " ... no aspect of culture is more vital to its integrity than its means of education ... " (Hampton, 1995, 7).

The initial French educational efforts concentrated on the Algonkian and Iroquoian peoples of the central and eastern parts of what is now Quebec, from approximately 1600 to 1760. Two sets of dynamic players were prevalent during these times: one was the missionaries who believed that by teaching Christianity to the Native people, they were accomplishing God's holy work. The other was the force behind these teachers, the ones spearheading those efforts (Nadel, 22). Doubtless there were humanitarian motives in these people as well, but they were secular, being the government or central political figures from back home in "Old France". From these stemmed the economic and colonial-expansionist policies which were smouldering behind the scenes and by which the First Peoples were to become severely effected.

The general attitude of the French towards the Native people is shown by the many pejorative references made in reference to them. Words such as "poor barbarians", "unbelievers", "lost souls", "savages", "barbarians", "lazy", and "wretches" are sprinkled liberally throughout the literature of the day, particularly that originating from the missionary element. This interpretation was undoubtedly initiated and spawned by Jacques Cartier[10], who would be credited with rediscovering Canada[11]. Cartier's actions during his second expedition in the years 1535 and 1536 confirmed his attitude towards the Aboriginal people: he was disrespectful and arrogant.

10 This is not to imply that Cartier originated such interpretation; he merely happened to be the first Frenchman to find himself in a position of reflecting European attitudes about indigenous people.

11 Derivation of the word "Canada" is generally understood to mean "village", or *ka-na-ta* in the Iroquoian language. Other valid interpretations exist, though, such as *ka-na-dun* meaning "clean land" in the Innu language -- these people were actually, unlike the Iroquois, one of the first to trade with the French.

For example, he ignored their traditions by sailing up the St. Lawrence River; this was a serious infraction for the Stadacona people exercised the monopolistic right of all traffic going in that direction. As well, before he departed from these territories, he kidnapped several important people from the tribe including a chieftain and took them back to France. Cartier's complete disregard for the Iroquoian people would set the standard for all Frenchmen who came along in later years.

One of France's major objectives in educating the Native people was to counter their own basic self-interpretation. They set out to francize, meaning to: " . . . affect with French characteristics, as in manners, tastes and expression . . ." (Jaenen in Battiste et al, 1986, 45). Their cause was to civilize them according to French standards, and this was very important because it was also seen, particularly by the policy-makers back home, as the path to a united and solid colony. Civilization, accordingly, meant converting to Catholicism, adopting French decorum, and particularly speaking the French language. As well, it meant changing to a sedentary lifestyle and pledging loyalty to the French crown. Economic motivations ran deep, for there was much wealth to be gained from the seemingly endless resources of New France. Religious and moral ones were far from insignificant, too, for in Catholic eyes, primitive people, as the Native nations were perceived, were ungodly and inferior. Sedentarism was actively encouraged for many reasons, but a major one was so that the people could attend Mass each Sunday -- and how could anyone do this if he was forever wandering in the woods? This was vital to Church doctrine because attending Mass each Sunday was the same as paving the way into heaven for the afterlife. As well, perhaps the missionaries projected outcomes from Biblical tales such as the Old Testament chronicle of Moses and the entire nation of Israel wandering for forty years in the wilderness; wilderness symbolized a life of sin or disobedience to God which prevented the Israelites from ever entering the Promised Land (Num. 14: 26 - 40).

Some particularly pejorative sentiments are expressed by a Recollet[12] missionary in the following passage:

> Formerly it employed all my Thoughts, as well as those of other Missionaries among the Iroquois, to civilize these Savages, to make them capable of Laws and Civil Policy, and to put a stop to their brutal Sallies as much as possible. I have done my utmost to disable (?)[13] them and shew them the folly of their vain Superstitions; and so I prepared the way of our Lord to the Utmost of my power. But it must be confessed the Harvest was little; those People are as Savage as ever (Hennepin in Thwaite, ed., 1698, 581).

Education with strong religious themes was implemented as quickly as possible, so that the Catholics could correct all these concerns, for they were French patriots as well as teachers. Missionaries and assorted lay people under their control would spend the next 150 years using various educational modalities in their attempts to "civilize" their Native students; very few of these would have any resemblance at all to the way that Native people educated themselves in their own societies. From a chronological view, many of these educational activities actually overlapped, but they fell into four major groupings: education in the mission field; education of the Native elite; the use of mission reserves[14]; and, the implementation of boarding schools (Jaenen, 47 - 48).

Educational efforts were initially taken to the people, rather than vice versa; this became what was known as "educating in the mission field". The French set about achieving this by living and travelling with the Native tribes, but this was not easy for them as newcomers. They found the living conditions difficult and there was a fundamental difference between the way Native people related to their children (which was labelled "permissive" and "non-authoritarian"), and how the religious folk related to them. Missionaries saw children as needing to be controlled,

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12 A specialized order of the Catholic clergy which were originally called the Franciscans.

13 Some Old Modern English words are difficult to decipher.

14 These were different from the 20th-century definition of reserves.

disciplined and regimented; this was according to their particular interpretations of the Bible including, "Do not withhold discipline from a child; if you punish him with the rod, he will not die. Punish him with the rod and save his soul from death" (Proverbs 23:14-15). Other pertinent scriptures include: "Folly is bound up in the heart of a child, but the rod of discipline will drive it far from him" (Proverbs 22:15, 23:14-15), and "The Lord disciplines those he loves, as a father the son he delights in" (Prov. 3:12). These writings demonstrate the vast chasm of difference between the two groups' interpretation of what constituted correct child-rearing practice. The missionaries had never before encountered a group who so highly valued their children, and they found this confusing. This educational strategy therefore was doomed to failure because the missionaries were not permitted to control the children who played such an integral part in tribal society; as well, the Native adults were unwilling to be either educated or converted because of the different ideals being purported -- both religiously and academically.

This pedagogical saga ended in failure, as well, because it was impossible to follow up on sequential instruction[15] which the Jesuits had come to use to a greater degree. Because the tribes were migratory, gathering the bounties according to the various seasons, the Jesuits could never be informed ahead of time about either the routes which would be taken or their expected time of arrival at any given spot. So they prepared to simply follow along the way, texts and slates in hand, instructing at every pit stop in the journey. The missionaries could never find their students on a regular basis, and when they did manage to locate and gather two or three in one spot, which was often by chance, it was too frequently impossible to find their various places in the curriculum. To add to the inconvenience, the entire tribe was hindered by having the children receive lessons when it wished to eat, rest or perform other essential daily activities such as engaging in spiritual communications with the Creator. It quickly became such a "hodge-podge" of who was where in academic progression that the teachers became frustrated and this activity lost its impetus (Wrong, 1939, 133).

15 This type of curriculum delivery was individualized to each student, in contrast to group instruction.

The next educational attempt was implemented in the hopes that the Native people would come to evangelize amongst themselves. So the French Fathers proceeded to extricate what was to become a Native elite -- those who showed the most promise -- and send them off to Quebec and even to France for further refinement in the most highly esteemed environments possible. Many students did not survive this experiment, however, for they died from diseases, new to them, which they encountered in these foreign settings. Those who did return were caught between two worlds -- being neither completely Native in tradition, thought and spirituality, nor having been completely francized (Thwaites, 1959, 5, 107 - 13). So the concept of an "elite" was not fulfilled and this effort was abandoned for two reasons: its high costs (for the missions in France were far from wealthy), and the low survival rate of the student participants.

Mission reserves were the next educational system to be implemented. "The reserve of the French regime was not a move to relocate Native peoples in order to make way for a white settlement ...[16]", rather, "the relocation consisted of attracting [Native] peoples with a view of francizing and holding them to the Catholic religion and French allegiance ... " (Jaenen, 53). Viewed initially as a place of integration, reserves quickly became places of segregation as non-Native religious instructors attempted to shelter Native people from pernicious outside French influence. They were hard put to combat the differences between what they were teaching, i.e., the pureness of the Gospel and what the Native people were seeing in French behaviour, particularly the reckless and licentious behaviour of some of the *couriers des bois*, whiskey traders and fur agents who were increasingly becoming a part of everyday life.

Reserve instruction took the form of day schooling and actually became a way of preserving Native culture because of the close contact the students (both adults and children) had with each other, and because interaction was not permitted with non-Native people other than the missionaries. But the mission reserve system backfired because the removal of Native people

16 Making land available for new settlers was not an issue in these earlier times of Contact.

from their traditional communities had quickly fostered dependency on the European economy resulting again in high costs to the Jesuit order. As well, this approach had a negative impact on the Native psyche -- they became dispirited and demoralized for they were experiencing deculturalization and their own self-interpretation was rapidly becoming weakened and disordered.

Finally, the French used boarding schools, which was an attempt to educate children in a totally-controlled environment. In 1639, the Recollets had formed such a school near Huronia (Hunt, 1940, 46) and in 1635, the Jesuits established a college near Quebec City (Jaenen, 52). These were costly efforts with little results; Native parents were naturally unwilling to part with their children who, in turn, suffered from the separation. The foreign discipline and the complete disregard for their traditional modes of being educated (i.e., through play, storytelling) was also difficult for them. This effort was eventually abandoned as financial resources dwindled.

It is important to note that the various Roman Catholic orders, the Recollets, Sulpicians, Capuchins, Oblates, Spiritans, Ursulines, and Jesuits attributed the Native peoples' problems of francization to cultural reasons, not to intellectual ones (Thwaites, 16,179). This means that they at least recognized, if to no one else but themselves, the intelligence of the Native people whom they were attempting to re-interpret. More than any other group at this time, the Jesuits served as excellent foot soldiers not only for God, but for their home country, France. They understood the importance of Native traditions such as what they saw as superstition -- including game-playing -- and used it to further their own causes. They were one of few groups historically who voluntarily learned fluency in local Aboriginal languages but this was done to improve their own religious and education efforts (Parkman, 1927, 300), as well as, some say, to permit them to act as intermediaries and interpreters in the economic world (Hunt, 55, 153 n12) , not to help preserve traditional Aboriginal ways.

The French began to realize that the Aboriginal cultures they encountered were strong and well-rooted and that the motive of Native interaction with them was to enjoy the good parts of it, such as to utilize some of the obviously superior technological advances which Contact with the French had brought them. However, these motives for interaction did not parallel the French motivations, so they set out to counter this situation in their own way while advancing their own aspirations. The French firmly believed that the inferiority of the Native groups would bring forth the results they wanted and that with God on their side, they would surely succeed.

3.2.2 Education under the British: 1769 - 1945

After France lost the war to Britain on the Plains of Abraham, the Treaty of Paris[17] was signed in 1763 ceding the northern territories of the New World to the British[18]. Now they were the ones with whom the Native people had to contend, this being particularly complex because of the Aboriginal perspective that these lands were no one else's but the Creator's and could not be handed back and forth according to the will or whim of any group of people. Ultimately, though, the British ignored these interpretations and traditions as much as the French did. They did not appear to learn from any of the French efforts, for they proceeded to mismanage Native relations, including those pertaining to religion and education, and to repeat many of the same violations. The results were much more widespread, however, and at a greater detrimental cost to the First Peoples. For the British would be aided in their efforts by the vast number of Aboriginal people who were devastated by the disease frontiers; from 50% - 90% of the entire population was taken (Price, 1990, 85).

The British had set up a system of monopoly companies, the largest being the Hudson Bay Company (H.B.C.), established in 1670. The H.B.C.'s main trade was in furs and the Native people were useful suppliers of this valuable commodity. The Company actively discouraged

[17] The question is still asked in contemporary times if this Treaty had the authority to make such a ruling.

[18] The British held power in the Atlantic from 1713 onwards through the Treaty of Utrecht.

colonization in that it would interfere with their business, for settlers would certainly disrupt animal life patterns as well as adding to administrative costs[19] (Newman, 1886, 16). Not until 1806 would the H.B.C. send for teachers from Britain as it began to accede to the demands of its company officers who wished to have an education available for their (Metis) children. Until 1806, the H.B.C. had refused to acknowledge any educational responsibility towards the Native children in the huge territory known as Rupert's Land. However, the Napoleonic Wars in Europe were making worker recruitment to the New World difficult, so as an incentive, the H.B.C. offered tracts of land around the Red River area (present-day Winnipeg) to those who had served at least three years with them. Schools for the youngsters became an added inducement for those wishing to get on board with the H.B.C. during these years (Newman, 88 - 91).

Thus began the momentum for European settlement. Two other factors were also pressing on the H.B.C. to increase educational services in Rupert's Land: *i.* Protestant evangelical voices wafting over from Britain, accusing the H.B.C. of not doing enough work towards soul-saving in the Native communities, and *ii.* increasing violence between settlers and the Native people (for example, the "Massacre at Seven Oaks" in Manitoba -- the H.B.C. had hoped for missionary presence to help control this incident). Yielding to these pressures, the H.B.C. began, by the 1840's, doing more to support missionary work, its main activity being that of Native education.

Many missionaries, particularly of Protestant ilk, came from Ontario into the west. Because of the lack of formal governance within the huge tract of land now called the North-West Territories, missionaries/educators acted in many capacities and would have significant impact on the way the west was developed (Dickason, 1992, 276). Some, like John McDougall, would act as translators and/or interpreters for the government, particularly at Treaty time[20]. Some suggest

19 The only exception to this was the anomaly of the Red River Settlement which resulted from the efforts of altruist and philanthropist Lord Selkirk in the years around 1812. Its location was the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers where modern-day Winnipeg is now located.

20 This 52-year span is identified as being from 1871 to 1923.

that they acted as a buffer for the Native people between the government and the settlers (Dr. Kerr, Lecture, 1995) -- this would appear to be true if one looks at what became of the Beothuk in Newfoundland -- they had no protective missionary voices on their side and were hunted for bounty to extinction[21]. Protestant missionaries shared a common educational philosophy with their French predecessors: they wanted to Christianize, educate and civilize, except that it would be according to British standards with their own interpretations of what was "correct" and to establish a society as it "should be". They were diligent in their other duties, too, even to the point of accepting none other than God's authorization to begin laying the foundations for what would shortly become the *Dominion of Canada* which would stretch from the Atlantic to the Arctic to the Pacific, or from "sea to sea" (Psalm 72:8).

Educationally, there was a shift away from day schools which were seen as ineffective because the children would return home, only to be re-educated by their "uncivilized" parents. New emphasis was then placed on industrial schooling, and then on residential or boarding schools[22]. The question to examine at this point was: to what end were the Native people being educated? To survive and thrive with immigration, and to secure a place in the newly-forming society? Or, to be removed as obstacles to immigration, i.e., to be assimilated? Levaque (1990) would say that it was to survive the immigration process, but others disagree. For at the same time, despite the humanitarian impulses of some of the missionary educators, there was a government motive behind having missionaries act as assimilationist forces (Satzewich & Mahood, 1995, 54). This was to make Native education financially feasible because the federal government was adamant about providing only some capital funding, while the mission would have to absorb day-to-day or operational costs. Missions only managed to do this by passing the labour aspect on to their students; this, naturally, took away from their academic and tutoring time.

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21 This is not to imply that missionaries were the only reason for the prevention of the annihilation of Native nations; it is plain, though, that their presence contributed to any lack of activity in this direction.

22 Industrial schools were located away from reserves, and boarding schools were closer to the reserves for the younger children (Barman et al, 6).

In 1884, the federal *Indian Act* committed Native children under 16 years of age to industrial schools *without parental consent.* By putting the force of government legislation behind the educational impetus, assimilationist policy was enhanced and non-Native education became " . . . cultural, spiritual and psychological genocide ... " (Hampton, 1995, 7). Industrial schools were meant to prepare Native children for Canadian society at the lower, manual-labour levels. These types of schools, though, were expensive to maintain, and as mentioned, the labour of the children was necessary to keep them operating. In many cases, this superseded the educational component, much to the detriment of the children and the anxiety of their parents. For the Native parents, they kept up traditional educational practices the best they could, as they had come to view the new education systems in a pragmatic light in that it would be advantageous to their children in having to adjust to a different society.

The attitude of superiority portrayed by D.C. Scott, Deputy Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, seems to have been typical of the government of that time. As he acted for the federal Crown during Treaty negotiations, his voice and opinion was a powerful one and it was under his authority that the segregationist policy of educating Native people to fit into their own reserve life, and not into that of general society, was initiated. One of his poems even speaks about the differences between the non-Native and Native languages and reveals his cultural prejudice:

> . . . Joined with sonorous vowels in the noble Latin,
> Now are married with the long-drawn Ojibwaa,
> Uncouth and mournful ... (Morrison, 1988, 7)

Despite centuries of educating for assimilation into British religion and tradition, complete with its miserable track record, Scott simply stoked the fire although this time it was with imperialistic British Victorian overtones. He expedited the meaning of education and Protestantism as being synonymous with overcoming First Nations traditions; at the same time he aimed to improve EuroCanadian civic harmony and he had his contemporaries to help him along in these goals.

Because of high costs, boarding and industrial schools were eventually merged, becoming

residential schools. In 1923, the Department of Indian Affairs (D.I.A.) officially abolished the category of industrial schools. These forms of schooling closely parallel those in the French period of colonial management. The last residential school closed as late as 1988, but this entire period of Native education created long-lasting ill-effects on the Native people. Some even see the schools as having been genocidal in both intent and nature. Statistics estimate that only about one in six children attended these schools (Lascelles, 1992, 8); reality, however, shows that the psychological devastation this type of education created in these students was then externalized so that the entire family and community keenly felt its negative impacts (Haig-Brown, 1988, 7 - 10).

There are those, however, who went through this type of schooling and say they did benefit in some way. That evidence cannot be ignored. One of these is author Basil Johnston, and a particular passage of *Indian School Days* is particularly striking:

> You can't live the way your ancestors did; you have to organize your time, your work, if you're going to get anywhere. You can no longer just move in together and live as husband and wife; ... you can no longer ... you can no longer ... you can no longer ... From now on, you must do things the civilized way, the moral, Christian way (1988, 128).

The passage indicates that what was being taught was against the students' cultural norms. In spite of this, though, many who were thus educated have gone on to become their people's leaders and have articulated the cultural destruction from outside interpretations in foreign education systems. Without this education, would they have done so? This question is impossible to answer, and beyond the scope of this writing. Overall, though, residential schools led to cultural and individual alienation and to the despair and family dysfunction commonly labelled "Mission School Syndrome" (Haig-Brown, 26).

3.2.3 Paradigm Changes: Post-World War II

A new social consciousness in the mid- to late 1940's finally caused changes in public attitude regarding Native-related problems. One cause of this shift came from the disproportionately high

number of Aboriginal people who enlisted in the War efforts even though they were not Canadian citizens. When these veterans returned home, they found their reserve lives extremely restricting and vastly unequal to that of other Canadians. Further, they realized that at least one vital component of their heritage was being eroded by the government policy of transferring their traplines to non-Native trappers during the years of their absence. They therefore consolidated their concerns by launching a campaign which eventually established the Joint Senate and House of Commons Committee; this body investigated the *Indian Act* on an in-depth level unknown since its inception.

From subsequent Committee discussions on education which were held during the years from 1946 to 1948, and because of the known high costs of residential schooling, the government moved to integrate all Native children into regular public provincially-funded classrooms. Meant to be a diversion from overt assimilation, the Committee initiated this action which was then implemented in 1951[23]. By 1961, close to 10,000 youngsters were enrolled provincially and the number of post-Grade Six students had doubled. In 1967, the Hawthorn Report which endorsed integration and moved to end the support of denominational education, such as that implemented by the Oblates, was published. This Report also articulated the failure of all levels of government across the country in establishing effective practises towards fulfilling the educational goals of Aboriginal people and identified the First Peoples not only as Canadian citizens, but as Canadians *plus*.

In 1969, the infamous "White Paper" policy was released by Prime Minister Trudeau; it was meant to remove the special status of Native people as a way of making them full and equal Canadian citizens. Not surprisingly, it was rejected by Native people throughout the country for it was seen as a dismissal of their treaty rights into the convenient and blissful mists of amnesia. The "Citizens Plus" report, more commonly known as the "Red Paper policy", was produced by

[23] This year saw other changes to the *Indian Act* as well.

the Alberta Indian Association as an official response. A short time later, the National Indian Brotherhood[24] published a report called "Indian Control of Indian Education". The latter landmark document was accepted into policy in 1972. It identified and addressed two key points: that Native people should have local control of their own education, and that Native parents are both responsible for, and have the right to determine the education of their own children. The latter conclusion is appalling in that it reveals that Native parents had not been sharing this seemingly fundamental right with the rest of Canadian parents.

During these years, too, many Native educators and parents were seeing the advantages of having their own separate school systems. This was not a new sentiment; Dickason (1997, 313) states:

> . . . such voices had been raised since late in the 19th century. One of these was that of Anglican missionary-educator Edward F. Wilson (1844 - 1915); why, he asked, should Amerindians be denied independent communities? 'Would it not be pleasanter, and even safer for us, to have living in our midst a contented, well-to-do, self-respecting, thriving community of Indians, rather than a set of dependent, dissatisfied, half-educated and half-Anglicized paupers?' Three-quarters of a century later, Jacques Rousseau (1905 - 70), raised a similar point in Quebec when he argues against trying to transform Inuit into French Canadians.

The number of schools being operated within native communities reflected some positive changes; by 1985, 450 of the 577 First Nations bands in Canada were in control of their own education to some degree (313). Problems had been constant with the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development (DIAND) which purported to support these schools but which in reality did not adjust its funding policy even to match the levels in other provincially-run schools. There are still problems, such as the reticence of the federal government to transfer educational authority to a band level and the emerging provincial-federal jurisdictional stand-offs. One solution has been special agreements; these, however, are often the exception, not the rule.

[24] This was later to become the Assembly of First Nations (A.F.N.).

A breakthrough for Aboriginal people on a national scale occurred with the release of the five-volume report from the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). This fact-finding mission originated with a promise made by then Prime Minister Mulroney when he was faced with the increasing threat of the demise of the proposed constitutional changes in the Meech Lake Accord of 1990. Its mandate is as follows:

> The Commission of Inquiry should investigate the evolution of the relationship among Aboriginal peoples, the Canadian government, and Canadian society as a whole. It should propose specific solutions, rooted in domestic and international experience, to the problems which have plagued those relationships and which confront Aboriginal peoples today. The Commission should examine all issues which it deems to be relevant to any or all of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada . . . (RCAP, 1, 2).

While Royal Commissions cannot make laws, they can inform and make recommendations based on their findings; this Commission conducted nearly 100 intensive face-to-face meetings with Aboriginal people between the years 1991 and 1995. The resulting 1996 report found that, in reference to the Aboriginal people, the EuroCanadian society "sought to obliterate their cultural . . . institutions" and that the process of how this happened "is not a history of which most Canadians are aware" (1, xxiv, xxv). It acknowledges that the exclusion of the First Peoples' participation in the makings of national institutions such as education did not benefit either the Aboriginal peoples or the EuroCanadians. It therefore made an overall recommendation to the federal government that all upcoming policy adhere strictly to an overriding principle of participation that includes the First Peoples. There were, as well, other areas of Native life that the Commission pursued, and these include historical/heritage interpretation, cultural identity and self-expression, and inter-cultural relationships.

There were many specific recommendations made by RCAP regarding education, and these include:

- a prompt to all levels of government to acknowledge that education is core to the goal of Aboriginal self-government and to co-operate with Aboriginal education authorities;

- to establish comprehensive educational strategies in Aboriginal communities that include Aboriginal appointments to boards of governors and Aboriginal councils as institutional advisors;
- to implement language instruction to help retain Aboriginal worldviews;
- to ensure cross-cultural sensitivity training for non-Native faculty and staff;
- to develop appropriate and culturally-relevant curriculum at all levels of formal education;
- to implement or enhance Aboriginal studies and programs in regular offerings and to recruit qualified Aboriginal faculty;
- to increase teacher-training for effective curriculum delivery and for positive role-model motives;
- to ladder between non- and Aboriginal programs, including program or faculty admission policies that encourage access by Aboriginal applicants;
- to implement effective early childhood education services;
- to encourage Aboriginal parental control and involvement in grade-school settings;
- to help empower youth through support programs, sports and recreational training, student exchange systems, leadership skills development and healing programs that are specially designed for them;
- to promote educational achievement for those adults who did not complete secondary schooling;
- to de-institutionalize older Aboriginal adults who experienced residential schooling; and,
- to provide adequate funding for required training needs, part of which can be accomplished by the federal government's fulfilling its treaty obligations to the First Nations and through scholarship funding (3, 434 - 584).

These suggestions, gleaned from a thorough consultative process, address Aboriginal education issues from the stages of early childhood to the elderly. It is clear from these conclusions that human resources development is a priority for the overall Native community, and that there is

finally recognition from the higher government levels that education is one sure way of effecting positive changes in the lifestyle of Aboriginal people. Arising directly from the RCAP documentation is the 1998 federal government policy called *Gathering Strength* which specifically calls for building appropriate partnerships between non- and Aboriginal people. One of its main ways of accomplishing this is "a public education campaign to increase the understanding of all Canadians about Aboriginal culture and history" (Stewart, Public Address, 1998).

These recent developments reflect that, as the twenty-first century begins, it is a time of self-definition, self-determination and potential foment. It is a goal for Native educators to look with hope on present-day efforts while still remembering what happened in the past. And, despite " ... the unsystematic and haphazard way in which local control of Indian education has been implemented ... " (Mabindisa, 1989, 109), it seems apparent that after years of overt and covert assimilationist tactics, Native education and therefore Native culture will eventually achieve its place in Canadian culture. Though there may have been altruistic humanitarian motives behind some of those involved in the history of Native education in Canada, their effort was combined with strong Eurocentric notions of the superiority of their own cultures. These now are the days that all Canadians must realize that Aboriginal people need to formulate provisions that respond to their own distinctive educational needs in their own unique circumstances, and that work in this area is already beginning.

4.0 Education: An Effective Approach to Aboriginal Self-Interpretation

Aboriginal people were presented by imposed colonial-inspired education systems in many pejorative images that were manifested to the rest of the world. Because of the injurious effect of this type of education and its resulting misrepresentation on the First Peoples as a whole, changes, particularly in the post-World War II era, include a dramatic increase in Native restoration of their own educational systems, although in a very different environment. Native people, however, have always valued education for their future generations. Effective education, according to one source, "looks in two directions at the same time: to the future for which it must equip the student; and to the past whose treasures it must preserve and make accessible" (RCAP, 4, 237). This seems to parallel the thoughts of Native leaders about education during the past centuries and including the present time: that unless an education provides teaching on how to survive in the present and that unless it uses its past and heritage in this process, it is little better than dead.

Because the motive of most teachers had been to civilize and assimilate their Native students into positions of no more than the lower echelons of Canadian society, the results over the centuries have been devastating to Native communities (Goddard, 1993, 163). These intentions, though, were founded on obviously biased and therefore very erroneous interpretations of the First Peoples and their cultures. The effects of this cycle, of which there are still repercussions to this day, were so powerful that the paradigm quickly developed that "common knowledge" dictated that only Europeans (and later, the EuroCanadians) would ever be in a position of teaching Native students, even in the area of their own history and the understandings of their own cultural heritage. The concept that Aboriginal people could teach or educate other Aboriginal people was unthinkable. This is only one glaring and negative example which can arise from what is essentially the exploitation by outsiders when they place themselves in a position to interpret and present another group of people to the rest of the world.

From very early times, Native people had been skeptical of European-based education systems because of their own views about the purpose of education. For example, as early as 1784, the Chief of the Iroquois Confederacy was offered the gift of having six of his sons educated at Williamsburg, a highly-prestigious educational facility in the EuroAmerican society, and his reply was:

> We are convinced ... that you mean to do us good by your proposal and thank you heartily, but you, who are wise, must know that different nations have different conceptions of things; and you will not therefore take it amiss if our ideas of this kind of education happened not to be the same with yours. We have had some experience of it; several of our young people were formerly brought up at the colleges of the northern provinces; they were instructed in all your sciences; but, when they came back to us, they were bad runners, ignorant of every means of living in the woods, unable to bear either cold or hunger, knew neither how to build a cabin, take a deer, nor kill an enemy, spoke our language imperfectly, were therefore neither fit for hunters, warriors, nor counsellors; they were totally good for nothing (Daniels, 148).

This passage shows that Native people valued an education which prepared them to take an active and constructive part in their societies. Most of this is now commonly referred to as "traditional knowledge" and is based on relationships amongst all living things including with other humans, and with the natural environment. Transmitting this knowledge was accomplished in every-day living situations through the tribal culture (Sheridan & Parezo, 1996, xxvi); the teachers were parents, other adults, and of most importance, the elders. This powerful system, educational in nature, was almost destroyed by colonization although its remnants have been preserved mostly through the oral means which was predominant in Aboriginal knowledge transmission. Thankfully, it is now experiencing a renaissance, for its long-standing value is being recovered and recent expressions from Native leaders include the following similar sentiments:

- Education is a life-long continuum ... a holistic process.

- Elders need to be involved in our schools to reconnect us with who we are[1].
- Technology must change but the basic principles must not.
- We need to provide our children with a "worldview of who we are" and teach them our philosophies in relation to "spirituality and our traditions".
- In the past, we had no curriculum documenting our own histories, geography or beliefs. We became isolated in our own country. The de-colonization of our minds will ensure the future of our children and their children. This means . . . language, cultural beliefs and traditions; without these, our children will be disadvantaged wherever they will be.
- Undertake lobby efforts and establish political alliances to protect and advance First nations education efforts.
- Define what treaty right to education is.
- Develop an Education Act to reflect First Nations' aspirations and set minimum education standards. Translate this Education Act into our Aboriginal languages. (AFN Conference Report, 1996, 8 - 13).

The overall and recurring theme in all these comments is that Native community leaders see a solution to their historic ills as being based on education for Native people by Native people. They see the significance of having the means and resources for self-interpretation which would thereby become the foundation of this type of education: "We need to overcome our oppressive history. *Our students need to have their own identity and idea about their heritage . . . we have our own homeland, education and history* (11) (Emphasis mine).

The attempts at educating Native people by both the French and English colonial powers were abject failures because the underlying foundation of their interpretation was itself drastically flawed. There has been no greater success by later government efforts since World War II

[1] This is a vital concept because a solid identity emerges with a sense of self that is both constructive and acceptable to oneself and to the rest of society. Failure in this area results in confused individuals who may withdraw into themselves or who are so much a part of the crowd that they cannot function effectively on an individual level (Santrock, 1992, 50).

either, and for the same reason. Instead of encouraging Aboriginal people to enhance their own lives by self-interpretation within their own homes to their own families and in their own wider communities, education in all areas served only to marginalize them further. Self-expression within the framework of positive self-interpretation strengthens a people's communal self-concept and identity as significant peoples; this would have prepared Aboriginal people for greater and more meaningful participation in the general Canadian society, but history shows that this did not happen.

There were many serious violations made by non-Native teachers who based their educational philosophies on their own interpretations of their students' lives. The following list is incomplete, but it consists of some of the more significant of these for they have become major issues that Native educators now need to address in an attempt to eradicate or minimalize the destructive effects from that outdated educational system:

- the imposed goals were not pure in spirit; they were meant to convert, civilize and assimilate students into the standards of the new and growing European-based society and were motivated by the educators' own ambitions, schemes and aspirations, either on personal or nationalistic levels;

- while some of the the familiar learning modalities were used (e.g., rote memory training which was common in the Iroquoian Confederacy), it was to a foreign end, that determined by the teachers who were total strangers to the Aboriginal cultures;

- trivialization of traditional modes of learning, e.g., *storytelling* was reduced to an idle pastime, used in passing time with silly nonsense tales; *legends* (what were once solid meaningful descriptions of what had been determined worthy of learning) were reduced to fantasy, myth and fabrication, becoming meaningless, shallow and vacant and devoid of their

original intent;

- there was no emphasis on developing the total human being -- those concepts which comprised the backbone of traditional Aboriginal heritage: the intellectual/mental, physical, spiritual and emotional facets of all persons; rather, an outside spirituality became a significant focus for teachings and mostly, other aspects were simply ignored because they were not understood;

- religious indoctrination consequently reigned supreme; the spiritual beliefs of the Native people were openly denounced and Native students were forced either to practise their own religious traditions in secret, or submit to strict punishment;

- internalized racism and teaching to hate one's own self, language and culture; for example, *The Book of Mormon* is quoted, "... after they [the Native people] had dwindled in unbelief, they became a dark, and loathsome, and a filthy people, full of idleness and all manner of abominations"; when Native people accept Mormonism, however, " ... many generations shall not pass away among them, save they shall be a white and delightsome people"; this means that accepting Mormonism means turning white which equates to being good and godly;

- cultural clashes resulted -- the cultures of the teachers and those of the students were incompatible and probably could not mix (Mander, 220); outside interpretation rarely took the cultural differences into account -- a simple but destructive "solution" was to impose or "bull-doze" as much of the European culture as possible onto the Native students who were expected to accept them blindly and willingly;

- education was expected to happen within set time and location parameters -- this ran contrary to the students' internal workings; the clock and the calendar in the European system

determined the hours of the day and the days of the week when education should occur; it was not according to the pattern followed for æons by the indigenous peoples and was dichotomous to the belief that educating should occur at any time or place or within any context;

- education separated learners by their ages; this interrupted and sometimes destroyed the intergenerational approach of Aboriginal peda- and andragogy -- where anyone of any age could learn and teach;

- the forcible removal of children from their parents' homes and lives diminished the youngsters' desire and abilities to participate in the overall Canadian society; as well, it served to inculcate them with EuroCanadian religious, economic, personal and societal values at the expense of retaining and cherishing their own cultural and heritage-based ideals;

- introducing competitiveness into the school setting -- it was encouraged, and winning was rewarded; these principles were anathema to the internally co-operative and collectively-oriented mechanisms of Native society;

- the overall ethnocentric notion of European superiority and Native inferiority was a dominant theme throughout and ingrained within all curricula;

- irrelevant curriculum provided for a mechanical and liberal foundation for Native students [see Appendix 1, page 125, for a sample of the francizational approach to pedagogy] -- this proved almost useless to the students when they graduated; those who were diligent and finished often had forgotten their own languages and ways; they came to be viewed as strangers by their own blood relatives and often died in either mental or physical isolation;

and, lastly, but one of the most important,

- the almost total lack of Native teachers for Native students, and the continuing reality that most Aboriginal students will spend the majority of their schooling time being taught by non-Native teachers (RCAP, 3, 498).

Teachers are essential to any educational system for they are the medium through which students can most readily learn to incorporate previously-unknown information into their own knowledge base -- although there is common recognition that some material is self-taught, or self-incorporated (Lefrancois, 1994, 11). In Aboriginal societies, teachers held a highly-esteemed and honourable place in society but there are still too few Native teachers now, and the profession itself is not seen as a particularly prestigious one in Canadian society. In recent times, because of a severe lack of employment and other types of career-related opportunities, growing numbers of First Nations people are migrating into urban centres and the number of Aboriginal students in these areas is increasing. The need is greater now than ever for an educational system that conforms to their cultural values and perspectives; one immediate way to start accomplishing this is by increasing the number of Aboriginal teachers in the school system.

Ever since the document "Indian Control of Indian Education" was published[2] in 1972, significant but slow strides have been made in the field of Native education. The initial government response was to begin transferring the administration of educational funding to the different reserve communities; this has also been according to the wishes of Native leaders who have been encouraging Native bands to take over as much control in this area as possible although the area of financing for educational purposes is only one of many in which to be taking control. RCAP describes the importance of Aboriginal teachers in the overall process of making positive changes for Aboriginal students in the school system:

[2] This was published by the National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) which is now known as the Assembly of First Nations (AFN).

> It has been recognized for decades that *having Aboriginal teachers in the classroom represents the first line of change in the education of Aboriginal children and youth.* The Hawthorn Report of 1966 talked about the importance of Aboriginal teachers and non-Aboriginal teachers with cross-cultural sensitivity. The training of Aboriginal teachers has been a top priority for Aboriginal people since the 1960's when they began to lobby for programs that would bring Aboriginal teachers into the classroom (3, 490 - 1) (Emphasis mine).

Even though progress in this direction is on the upswing, it is still far behind that of non-Aboriginal Canadians. The following information (Figure 1) was derived from the Statistics Canada *1991 Aboriginal Peoples Survey*:

	Number of Teachers*	Number of Schoolchildren**	Ratio of Teachers to Schoolchildren
Aboriginal	8,075	148, 135	1:18
non-Aboriginal	612,415	3,637,150	1:6

Figure 1 **includes those in related occupations* ***age 5 to 14 years*

Another 24,000 more Aboriginal teachers have to be hired in the different school systems in order to equalize the two ratios. This is about 3 times as many Aboriginal teaching professionals as there are now, and at the rate of about 3,600 new Aboriginal teachers per decade (which has been the rate for the decade between 1981 and 1991)[3] , it will take over 65 years to catch up to the non-Aboriginal Canadian average. Encouragingly, though, it may not take that long, for among Aboriginal women attending post-secondary education, 22% enter into the field of

[3] K. Kerr, Siggner, J.P. Bourdeau, "Canada's Aboriginal Population, 1981 - 1991", research study prepared for RCAP, 1995, states that in 1981 about 4,490 Aboriginal people were teaching and in related professions and that in 1991, the number had increased to 8,075.

Education, the single most popular field of those itemized[4] -- among Aboriginal men, the statistic is fairly low -- 12%, mid-range in those itemized[5]. There are now about 34 Aboriginal teacher education programs in Canada, and these began in the mid-1960's (3, 491).

The majority of Native students, however, are still not instructed by Aboriginal teachers; this is apparent in elementary schools. But the situation is acute at the secondary schooling stage because most Aboriginal teachers have been trained for teaching at the elementary levels. Nearly 40% of reserve youngsters drop out of school in the secondary years (LeClair & Associates, 1997), and an increased Aboriginal teacher population in these grades would almost certainly improve the student retention rate. Competent teachers are invaluable for fostering a one-on-one development of confidence and sense of accomplishment in their students; this leads directly to positive self-images and strong life skills capabilities -- strengths that are especially important in giving youth a firm grounding that will last their lifetimes. The lack of Aboriginal teachers for these years also has an indirect negative affect on youngsters -- the powerful but subtle influence that role models play is simply not there.

Because of the low Native-teacher-to-Native-student proportion, it is imperative that non-Aboriginal teachers prepare through professional development and cross-cultural training to interact effectively in Aboriginal environs and with Aboriginal students. Non-Native teachers, whether on- or off-reserves, often experience difficulty in teaching Aboriginal students; many of the problems they encounter originate from the reaction to the long and well-documented history of *mis*-education within this group of people. It was not until the 1970's and '80's, during the emergence of ethnography in the study of history, that much of this information had been uncovered -- that the long-term and negative effects arising from having been exposed to different

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[4] The top professions itemized for females, *after* Education, are: Secretarial, Liberal Arts, Commerce, Health, and Trades.

[5] The top professions itemized for males are: Trades, Liberal Arts, Education, Commerce, Science and Engineering, and Health.

dysfunctional educational systems has had a drastic and negative effect that continues right to this day (Erickson & Mohatt, in Spindler, ed., 1982, 166 - 167). At that same time, a consciousness in the educational community was emerging about the dynamics of teaching ethnic minorities, especially if the teacher was not a member of that group.

Certain attitudes and mindsets are necessary for effective non-Native instructing of Native students. Mostly, this is because of the different prevailing culture, and culture plays too vital a role in any educational system to be ignored (Warren, in Spindler, ed., 1982, 383 - 384). Not acknowledging that there is a difference, and especially not sensitizing oneself to it (perhaps because of not knowing how) leads to miscommunication between teacher and student and contributes to the high rate of academic failure in many Aboriginal student bodies. Many other teachers do not even recognize the cultural differences, but simply subconsciously attribute the Native lifestyle variances which they encounter as a "backward" or "undeveloped" version of the dominant Western culture and one which, given enough time and education, will progress to that level[6].

The general problem area is that unrecognized and unaddressed cultural differences between those who teach and those being taught often affect such essential concepts as the students' self-image, self-concept, self-esteem, understanding of Native/non-Native interaction, and eventually, chances of graduation -- in a pejorative way. Any educator who sees education as non-cultural, particularly in an Aboriginal setting, is like the spouse of an alcoholic who denies that alcoholism is affecting life so greatly. Denial "works" because it takes the view that there is no problem. Spillovers from the very real problem, though, keep appearing and re-appearing, negatively permeating the atmosphere. There are some workable solutions to these problems, but first they have to be articulated and meditated upon; they rarely come easily to anyone. Additional information from the school itself, networking with competent education professionals

6 This is undoubtedly a carry-over of the older "social and/or cultural Darwinism" thought.

(not only instructors), and participating in various workshops and conferences can be extremely valuable for those in a cross-cultural teaching and/or learning situation.

Within the last generation, Native people have been working hard to take back control of their own educational systems; the basis of these efforts is the concept of appropriate self-interpretation. Essentially, Aboriginal groups in Canada have been struggling to maintain their own cultural identities while still trying to fit in some constructive way into the dominant culture. The exertion for some form of significant identity has become the driving force in the founding of self-interpretation within an effective educational system. These efforts are also in response to mis- and non-interpretation[7] which has shackled the Aboriginal people into marginalization within their own territories, and they see that concrete procedures must be set in place to advance and guarantee their cultural self-expressions as distinct peoples. While non-Native Canadians did benefit from the effects of Aboriginal misinterpretation, the day is long over when those with European-based values -- outsiders -- should continue doing this. It is apparent that it is now an absolute necessity for Native people themselves to provide their own interpretations, for heritage and its related concepts are very personal, and these are the places from which any people derive their strength and identity.

[7] Invisibility in historic and other relevant records.

5. Realities of Native Heritage Interpretative Education

5.1 Defining the Interpretive Program

Contemporary Aboriginal tradition, of course, has changed over time, particularly since 1876 when the federal *Indian Act* was legislated. The First Peoples have been persevering in the face of a new society which deliberately excluded them, but they are more than simply surviving. One of the greatest challenges is to emerge from the negative interpretation they bear as minorities in a dominant culture, one which has been perpetuated for centuries. This obstacle is being overcome by a strengthening sense of identity which is resulting from taking ownership and control of education. Progress is also taking place through partnerships with non-Aboriginal institutions/individuals. In the area of museology, the Task Force on Museums, a joint venture between the First Peoples and the Canadian Museums Association (C.M.A.), knew that the process of change towards Aboriginal self-interpretation would not be easy. Then- President Flewweling of the C.M.A. stated that:

> It *[the partnership]* had its roots in controversy, protest and accusation. Out of this has grown a healthy dialogue and a remarkable report. Such success is due to the Task Force undertaking its work based on the guiding principles of respect, friendship and understanding (Letter, 1992, Task Force Report).

It is readily acknowledged by many that a co-operative attitude is essential for success in this area, and that non-Aboriginal people, both those involved in heritage and its interpretation and the "average" Canadian, need to be educated about the European-based interpretations of Aboriginal peoples because these are so often taken for granted as "fact". How this can be specifically accomplished through education for non-Aboriginal Canadians, however, is not within the scope of this writing. The following Aboriginal self-interpretation program is proposed to help Aboriginal students understand their own very significant role in helping to change public attitude. First, Aboriginal students need to see the necessity of increasing their knowledge about their own history and heritage before they can start addressing the causes of their negative image or complete absence in Canadian historical writings and presentation. The Mission

Statement of the "Task Force Report on Museums and First Peoples" is being adopted as part of the guiding principles in the courses that have been established and chosen for this program. This statement reads:

> "to develop an ethical framework and strategies for Aboriginal Nations to represent their history and culture in concert with cultural institutions" (n.p.).

Another prevailing motive of all curriculum and instruction is to build positive bridges of communication between the dominant culture and Aboriginal peoples -- not to further alienate each from the other. Instructors will have to be screened for their own individual teaching philosophies and abilities regarding this. For example, in the study of a heritage site, its history must be discussed from the perspectives of both the Europeans and the First Peoples; differences in motives will be acknowledged without necessarily making judgment, although discussion will be initiated as to the long-term effects of actualized decisions. Students will be encouraged to conclude that repeating the mistakes of history will still incur disastrous results, even if several hundreds of years have passed. Creativity in thought towards a more informed and understanding society will be advocated.

The reality that most Aboriginal students will be instructed by non-Native instructors is a pertinent issue which requires some discussion for so much in education is dependent not only on curriculum itself, but on its delivery.

5.1.1 Instruction for Aboriginal Learners

5.1.1.1 Realities of Teaching Native Students

The different needs including the distinct learning styles of Native people[1] have to be addressed if their education is to be properly and appropriately established (Wilson, 1997). Their implicit ways of ordering, perceiving and understanding nature and the universe has not been well known;

[1] These are influenced by the cultural personality of any people.

when, historically, these things were realized to the small extent that they were, they were not given validity or taken seriously except in terms of being part of an "uncivilized" culture. Both the reaction to their cultural differences and the differences themselves have tended to alienate Native students from the overall Canadian educational system. An innovative approach in both delivery and content of instructional material needs to be implemented in order for students *to begin taking ownership of their education.* Anything new must include the development of culturally-relevant programs with appropriate accompanying materials (Leavitt, 1995, 126).

As well as developing curricula that reflects the values and history of a culture, educators need to consider teaching strategies as they relate to learning styles. Wholistic learning in which all aspects of the individual are developed is not new among the First Peoples; it was an integral part of both teaching and socialization in pre- and early Contact times. It was a natural outcome of living close to nature and according to its cycles. This style of learning directly contrasts with teaching approaches in Western societies. Instead of birth to death[2], 24-hours-a-day learning, non-Native education is scheduled in highly specific circumstances -- it is not a "learn as you go" approach; rather, it is when entering a classroom, particularly the moment when instructors start speaking, that students are expected to start learning. In traditional Native contexts, every situation was a learning opportunity, and youngsters were expected to use these opportunities to the fullest.

The goals of traditional Native education were different, too. Self-knowledge was primarily important; so was seeking an understanding about the creative processes of life, becoming more aware of and sensitive to the natural world, and knowing how to preserve it for as far into the future as the next seven generations. Students were expected to know about and take responsibility for their own roles in the social order of the community, and to be properly receptive to the spiritual aspects of the earth and the entire body of living and non-living things.

2 It is here acknowledged, though, that the term and meaning of "life-long learning" is rapidly entering into the reality of adult education in Canada, even on a community level.

Skills were required to know how to listen, observe, speak and use one's physical senses to the fullest in meeting these goals (Kerr). While changes have occurred over the years since Contact, vestiges of these teaching/learning styles are still found to some extent in most Aboriginal communities. Non-Aboriginal teachers must recognize and address these issues in their Native student groups.

Very few non-Aboriginal teachers coming into their new jobs are ever properly prepared either in a formal or non-formal way for the part of their jobs that concerns teaching Native students (Kirkness, 1997). Cross-cultural awareness training is not compulsory in most school boards, yet this is essential, particularly in areas like the Northwest Territories and the Yukon where Aboriginal people constitute the majority of the population and courses are attended by a predominantly Aboriginal student body, or even where the subject matter has a predominantly Aboriginal theme. Assistance and direction regarding what is culturally-appropriate teaching material and further, how to effectively present it to Aboriginal students, are other areas which need to be communicated more to non-Aboriginal teachers (Wilson). As well, most school administrators in Aboriginal communities have only vague conceptions about the role they want teachers to play (other than the obvious one of teaching) in both inside and outside the school setting; as a result, many teachers lack the confidence to decide how to fit in, or to know even if they should fit into Aboriginal community life. Many education graduates teach on reserves or Aboriginal communities as a first job because "it's the only job I can get" (itself showing a disparaging attitude about Native education systems); they have little previous experience (except for mandatory practica) and the role they are about to play is *too rarely discussed with potential employers*. One of the worst scenarios for non-Native teachers is to let chance and circumstance develop their place in reserve or Aboriginal community teaching, although in more urban settings such as a community college or university, Aboriginal students are still rare enough that non-Aboriginal instructors simply overlook them. At the least, instructors in this case can encompass what they do know about indigenous worldviews within their content of

expertise, or acknowledge that other worldviews do exist that are just as valid as their own. Specifically, teachers can find strong but perhaps more well-known examples within their subject areas and relate these to the class; in these situations, it may help both them and their students if they articulate the recognition that perhaps their full understanding in these areas is incomplete.

Culture shock is one of the first problems that confronts non-Native teachers in several different teaching contexts: when they start full-time work on reserve schools and are expected to live there, or in teaching classes with predominantly Aboriginal students, or when, usually at a community-college level, they are hired part-time to teach specific classes in a Native community without having to live there. It may even pertain with single or small groups of Native students and perhaps even in a regular classroom setting where Native students are a minority (which is very often the case). The resulting reaction known as *culture shock* occurs when people find themselves in an unfamiliar environment and cannot access the means to react appropriately to those new surroundings because of their outright foreignness (Hall, 1976, 56). All people, including teachers, bring their previous life experiences with them into any new venture; some will be advantageous and some will not. Some individuals react to new settings with such apprehension that even trying to adapt becomes difficult and debilitating; this tends to reduce normal communication skills and strained relationships can easily develop. A teacher's culture shock will be shared by his student(s) who will then react in some way, so it is important that teachers be prepared to address this issue beforehand rather than attempting to "wing it" or will it away or deny it (which are common but ineffective ways of trying to cope).

John Taylor, a non-Native teacher, dared to write on the topic that many simply lack the courage to discuss, let alone acknowledge as being a real and tangible problem (in Battiste & Barman, eds., 1995, 224 - 241). His observations about the processes and the content of Native students' thought patterns have been given wide credibility in the Native community (Kirkness).

In writing of his specific experiences on a reserve, Taylor noted in himself and observed in other teachers with whom he had close contact, the following four reactions to culture shock. The principle in each can be taken out and applied in any of those teaching contexts previously mentioned:

i. escape -- this means avoiding contact and involvement with the Native community; it can mean spending off-hours socializing with other other non-Native teachers, or if the reserve is close to a major city-centre, consciously and deliberately spending time and visiting friends and family there, rather than making any concerted efforts at making new friends on the reserve

This is the most common coping mechanism in attempting to deal with culture shock. It is doing things which most closely resemble those things from "back home" and while, in themselves, are not objectionable, nor should they necessarily be abandoned, quality time should be spent in getting to know the community and finding socially compatible ways of fitting in.

ii. confrontation -- fighting against Native culture and/or willing oneself to succeed in spite of it; this results when non-Native teachers insist on maintaining their ethnocentrism and includes propping up the notion, in any number of ways, of the superiority of their culture over the other, of adhering to the outside European-based interpretations of Aboriginal culture

This is doing things which maintain and confirm the familiar reality of the way things were before being on the reserve or by simply ignoring the culture of Native students. Complaining and criticizing in conversation with other non-Native teachers is a common expression of this, for it reiterates by constant articulation, one's own norms and conventions. It also serves to confirm superiority and dominance in an obviously imperfect community.

iii. encapsulation -- this is creating a "culture bubble", a simulation which attempts to bring

back what is "ordinary and natural"; it often welcomes other non-Native teachers for they are a part of "how things should be"; it serves to save mental energy and reduce stress, especially in getting to know people across what seems like an unfathomable cultural chasm

Encapsulation confirms to oneself and the group of its power to recreate home; it is a haven of old comforts (again, these things are not undesirable in themselves -- it is the way in which they are used, as a front against the community, which is undesirable). Taylor describes a common reaction from Native community members to those who encapsulate themselves: they are deliberately rude and nasty to them, but in the long run, they do stop this behaviour. Sometimes these interactions actually end up eventually being a form of friendship -- it is as if the newcomer has to be initiated and pass a test. Taylor gives advice to those who encounter this kind of treatment: have no fear and do not take it personally; just be sure not to avoid or ignore it -- or it may escalate beyond everyone's comfort level. Be brave, and expend energy in trying to understand why others do these things and above all, do not place blame.

iv. integration -- meaning to "fit together", this is the most useful of the four, and involves making a conscious effort to take a constructive part in Aboriginal life, but realizing that one cannot, nor should wish to, become Native oneself (this can happen in extreme situations); of all these reactions, this is the only one which is done fully consciously and is an attempt to cope with a new situation about which the teacher is aware he knows very little.

Integration is a positive endeavour towards becoming involved in the community life, of taking time to begin learning about the history of the reserve and the heritage of its people. This tends to strengthen one's own cultural identity because while learning about the others', conscious or subconscious comparisons with one's own is always taking place -- the colonialist mentality did this to an extremely negative end, but instructors must remember that this can be a very positive mental exercise because it probes the intricacies of the concept of *worldview*. It may be difficult

for new teachers in new environments for it requires much effort, but its outcome is mostly always positive so it is well worth the effort. Integration does not always rely on other non-Native people for stability and a sense of place, so it can definitely be accomplished on one's own.

In the context of an urban classroom, instructors can enhance communication, bridge cross-cultural barriers and effectively react to culture shock by being prepared to teach their Aboriginal students who see themselves as Aboriginal people first and foremost, and then secondly, as their students. Some teachers simply ignore this issue entirely for a variety reasons: lack of understanding usually stemming from ethnocentrism; a displaced feeling of defensiveness; a view of "confrontation" and of being too "personal" and therefore not relating to their jobs; inability to priorize this as being important; an attitude that "it's way over there, and I'm way over here" (denial); and because of simply not caring. While the solutions to these conundrums are not simple, for they are often deep-rooted in the individual, instructors can go far by nonetheless acknowledging the realities of these problems, and determining how solutions can creatively and effectively compliment their own individual teaching style while at the time remaining optimistic and expecting positive results.

Taylor states that when non-Native teachers go into reserve schools, they must at least be aware that many things will be quite different, that their "norms" will probably be challenged in some way, and that having at least these preparatory thoughts will help (226). In a non-reserve setting, Aboriginal students often challenge expressed ideas, but do not verbalize these thoughts except to their Aboriginal peers, and there are different reasons for this. They understand that their non-Aboriginal peers' have different perspectives which probably parallel those of the instructor, and because they know from experience that many teachers react differently to them than their non-Aboriginal counterparts. These reactions are impediments to communication and can cause students to close up and become non-communicative -- which is often seen by the

student as a better alternative than having to justify responses or comments. Teachers, though, should be aware that natural shyness can cause non-participation, and not push any of their students into verbal feedback, particularly when all other classmates are non-Aboriginal. Taylor makes some very useful suggestions for non-Native teachers, particularly if they are experiencing any degree of culture shock[3]. They are included below, and although they particularly refer to a reserve school setting, the underlying principle is applicable to any urban post-secondary. school:

An Exegesis of Tips for Non-Native Teachers

- The Native educational community, including Native students, have to get to know non-Native teachers, at least in their own institution so that two-way trust, which is essential for effective teaching, can begin to be developed. Trust is the basis for the most successful human relationships, regardless of their depth. It may be surprising to non-Native instructors to discover how quickly a positive reputation in the Native education community can spread; often such teachers find more and more Aboriginal students in their classrooms and this is simply because of word-of-mouth "advertising" because these students can relate to and therefore learn more quickly and easily from culturally-sensitive and -caring teachers.

- Non-Native teachers must be aware of cultural differences and try to enter into discussions with Native students with an open mind and an attitude of acceptance -- this is the road to positive involvement in the Aboriginal education community.

- Most non-Native teachers relate to, and are familiar with low-context communication patterns (that is, having a high amount of verbal content); therefore they often experience teaching difficulties when trying to relate to high-context communication patterns (where much information is implicit and unspoken), such as those found in Native cultures.

- Students who reach out should never be denied by their teachers; old boundaries of teacher/student relationships will often not apply in teaching Native students.

- It is vitally important to find culturally-appropriate teaching materials because this strengthens student/teacher relationships; students do understand when their teachers are at least attempting to teach them according to their norms. Instructors should also be aware of presentations on a course-length basis -- that Native people are presented in

[3] Taylor acknowledges that culture shock does not always happen, for there are individuals who adapt easily to very different situations.

many different scenarios that include successful ones[4].

- Teachers must decide to take a specific personal stance on alcohol consumption when they go to reserve communities and to be prepared to act as a role model in this area, even if it means readjusting their normal drinking habits. This point probably will not affect instructors in an urban setting.

- Non-Native teachers should constantly analyze and re-evaluate their perceptions about their roles as teachers of Native students, preferably with supervisors, school administrators or colleagues who have more experience than they do. This can be approached academically or culturally, whichever makes the teacher more comfortable in expressing his thoughts, queries or comments. In a reserve school, administrators should help non-Native teachers feel free to speak about how they can best adjust to their new environments; those teachers can then make full use of such opportunities.

- Non-Native teachers should inform themselves and participate in as many workshops as feasible about Native history and traditions and about how these relate to their particular subject matter so they can be realistic about possible changes in their future teaching style, and so fit into new educational student/teacher relationships more effectively and easily.

Source: First Nations Education in Canada: The Circle Unfolds, 224 - 241.

5.1.1.2 Developing Effective Classroom Strategies

There is no magic formula or recipe for teaching Native students. There are misconceptions and misunderstandings, but a basic principle is that good teaching practice is essential; caring and sensitive teachers do find positive ways of dealing with students as individuals. The subject of how communication takes place between Native and non-Native groups is a vital and interesting one, and constantly affects the student-teacher interaction.

It is considered to be more difficult to adjust to a high context (HC) culture if one is coming from a low context (LC) one, than vice versa (Taylor, 233). A major difference between the two is that

[4] One example is that, in a recent university class (graduate level), video clippings were shown throughout the year long course. In only one setting did Native people appear -- in a discussion about an urban skid-row social problem in which, needless to say, alcoholism and drug abuse were rampant. By the end of the year, it was plain that there was no other showing of Native people in business, political or other successful social settings. Only those students, usually Aboriginal in origin, would notice this very obvious omission, and comprehend its tremendous impact on non- and Native student/teacher relations, and how this typifies and negatively reinforces the general Canadian attitude towards its indigenous people.

HC cultures are communicated not so much through conversation as through nuances and other implicit coding expressions. The exact opposite is true of LC cultures which are highly dependent on explicit verbal articulation; in these cultures, conversation is the primary form of communication. Inevitably, non-Native (Euro- or EuroCanadian) teachers, coming from a LC culture, experience instructional difficulties. For example, they often complain that Aboriginal students give one-word or one-line answers, when the "correct" answer is multi-phrased and multi-lined. The student in this situation is often hard put to be so detailed, and constantly having to be so in order to get good grades is seen by Aboriginal students as tedious and a needless expense of time and effort.

As well, when teachers use questioning as an instructional technique, it is often interpreted as a sign by Native students that the teacher does not know the answer and so he is asking the question. The styles of interaction are vastly different, too, between the two contextual groups. Native students often see their non-Native teachers and fellow classmates as being excessively interruptive and speaking too loudly and quickly; these are considered rude in an HC culture but are normal conversational interaction in the dominant Canadian society (Hall, 34 - 38). Usually the way teachers find out about these thoughts, personal though they may be, is by implementing journal-writing for their students. Armed with this type of information, teachers can then adjust their own teaching styles to make them more compatible with the learning styles of their students. The goals and objectives journal-writing, however, should be discussed with students as some have strong adverse feelings about this particular exercise; instructors can find options for these students, although if the goal is to improve students' written English, it would perhaps be best to retain it.

Another problem is that the correctly-worded, strongly-stated and sometimes lengthy arguments of a non-Native student and/or professional is often seen as the suitable solution to the problem being discussed. This is most easily seen in mixed classroom dynamics where non-Native

students tend to be more verbose, more opinionated and generally more confident in expressing themselves, for they are used to being asked as dominant society members for their thoughts and opinions. Comparatively, it is rare for Native students to be asked the same thing. What is really happening here is that those with the essentialist voice are being rewarded, whereas for Native students, the aspect of not having the "essentialist voice" is simply another thing with which to have to contend and generally reinforces verbal non-participation. Native people, then, tend to state their positions simply and with what outsiders would consider inadequate explanations. The realities of HC and LC cultures differ vastly and unless both sides understand some of the underlying characteristics of the other, miscommunication is likely to occur.

The following strategies will help in some of the more common concerns that are expressed by non-Native instructors when they teach either on reserve schools or with Aboriginal students:

i. **Respectful communication.** Open communication is essential with the students, their children (or their parents if the student is a younger adult) and the community at large, even within the university community itself. Students should be encouraged to become involved and to take as much responsibility for their own education as possible -- for those who live with their parents, an initial step is to make the parents feel welcome in the school environment. Taking part in Native-oriented lunches or events can certainly enhance relationships as students will become familiar with seeing their non-Native instructors around campus and not necessarily only in the classroom. To establish a relationship with the student and his family, and to visit his home at an opportune time can be very helpful; parents of younger students like small talk from teachers who have to remember to make visits without being bearers of bad news. Teachers should feel comfortable in giving the student their home phone number if they are asked for it and when circumstances warrant it; this is particularly true of adult students. Finally, the concept of home visits with school colleagues to exchange ideas is helpful.

For non-Native teachers to see their school lives as belonging only in the classroom is natural because back when they were students, there was probably very little social and non-academic interaction with their teachers, so this is one of their "norms" (Leavitt, in Battiste & Barman, eds., 125 - 126). First Nations people, however, had their teachers with them all the time: they sat with them, played with them and worked with them at possibly all hours of the night and day. This difference is the reason why, when non-Native teachers do not participate in the community's activities, Native students see rejection and quickly mistrust those teachers. Lack of trust is not conducive to learning, and non-trusting students do not tend to work well for a teacher whom they have rejected, though they may well put up with him. Mutual trust, on the other hand, is crucial to the learning process, and students within trusting environs often expend themselves academically with little or no coercion from others.

ii. **Awareness of students' potential.** While teachers must expect high standards from all their students, they have to help them understand that making mistakes and failing happens to everyone -- that individuals are not anomalies when they fail an exam or even a course. Students find it very important, though, that their teachers know that failure is not a part of being Native. With younger adult students, one way of subtle encouragement is to find positive role models for them and discuss the character traits of these people which made them successful; ideally, the role model will be related in some way to that student's career, or desired career -- this can even be done in a classroom setting as a full discussion or lesson. Instructors need to know that while traditional educational practices have not existed for some time now because of societal changes due to Contact, contemporary Aboriginal students are undoubtedly aware of them and respond in an ideal way when such methods are used. To fulfil the goal of educating learners to fit meaningfully into community life, for example, a teacher can use the classroom and perhaps the entire school or university as a micro-community that represents the broader society; this can be useful to students in learning how to participate, especially if the school setting is a mixed one.

iii. **Flexibility.** Different learning processes need to be allowed within the classroom, and given the necessary space to occur. Teachers must be adaptable in terms of teaching style, testing and evaluation. Trying to do something should not be emphasized because, in a Native context, students observe until they have mastered a skill, and then they perform it. Teachers who emphasize trying are (probably unknowingly) negatively reinforcing their students (Cronin, 1982, 13). Students can also be given the option of re-testing, for results usually end up about the same, but it instils confidence and introduces the element of trust when students are allowed a re-test. Awareness of other learning strategies is very helpful for non-Native teachers. Learning by trial and error is too costly in terms of their students' confidence. Teachers would do well to remember that even though students may all be of First Nations descent, they may not necessarily learn by the same method. Teachers should feel free to discuss their students' optimum learning methods with them, preferably at the beginning of the school year -- adult students are receptive to this type of discussion.

Many teachers who were expected to learn by straight lecture-type instruction, i.e., "the sage on the stage" method, continue to use this method with their students. Unfortunately, this mode can confirm the belief that learning does not take place if there is laughing, or working in groups, or otherwise networking with other classmates. This, however, is not entirely the case, for while there are "sole learners" (and even they may be surprised at how much they learn in a focus group setting), many are group learners (Kirkness).

It is important for educators to recognize the changing economic modes in Aboriginal communities -- from a subsistence to a wage economy. Where applicable and within such a framework, students should be taught the attitudes, skills and knowledge necessary to achieve success in both types of economies. Certainly, it ought to be acknowledged that this is only one type of change with which the Aboriginal population has had to contend and make adjustments, and there will undoubtedly be many more to follow.

iv. **Adequate preparation.** Learning beforehand about the culture in which one will be working is very constructive and will achieve far-reaching positive results. Teachers can prepare themselves by learning as much as possible about the history and heritage of their Native students, and most relevant to study the general history of First Nations education in Canada. It is a mistake, however, to make assumptions based on past knowledge or generalizations, for the First Nations, particularly in British Columbia, are as diverse from one another as the different countries of Europe. Teachers must consider their own assumptions, perceptions and past conditioning as they delve into this study, and realize that the interpretation of history is culturally biased.

The study of more than one time period is advisable, for just as European history spans over different æons, so does Native history. It is inconsiderate to talk about Native people only as they lived in the past -- as if they were caught in a perpetual time warp. Future teachers also need to know that there are many different indigenous groups and that each has a distinct name, history, language and diverse cultural practices, so as it pertains to what is being taught, studies can be made into class projects where everyone learns, although teachers should always be prepared so that their teaching is at a level above their students (Piaget, 1967, 89).

v. **Fair evaluation of material.** Classroom materials need to be analyzed, particularly books written prior to 1970, for Native authorship of culturally-appropriate educational literature was just beginning to emerge around that time. There are high-quality resources but good practise is to watch for errors in fact, interpretation, and stereotyping. If materials demean, stereotype, or patronize Native people, they should not be used unless as deliberate examples of these things, or to deliberately date and discuss the thinking of those particular times. History, especially, needs to be presented in as balanced a perspective as possible; students have to be shown that all history is skewed from a certain perspective, and that all people have their own interpretation of events. All sides of an issue need to be explored -- not just one. Certain words

subtly carry bias; for example, "massacre" vs. "kill", so teachers need to be aware of the imagery that these words portray. Questioning and challenging television and movie portrayals of Native people in class is appropriate, particularly if it relates to the subject matter being discussed, and needs to be encouraged.

Native students need something that is relevant about their history, language and culture to which they can relate (Leavitt, 133 - 136). Many of the First Peoples have not read about their involvement in Canada's history, and of their many positive contributions to its development because most textbooks simply omit this information, even though there are gradual positive changes in this area. Past historical content is rife with negative information about the First Peoples who are portrayed as "hostile", "traitors", "complaining", "elusive", or being involved in what are labelled "treacherous acts" [See Appendix 2, pg. 125 for an example in earlier textbooks]. Instructors need to be alert and sensitive to the repercussions of this kind of interpretation to young and impressionable minds and to both the collective and individual effect on self-perception.

vi. **Effectiveness.** Teachers should be familiar with various positive classroom techniques. Whenever possible, they should demonstrate first, and then explain (Bain, Lecture, 1996). Storytelling and small group work fit in with Native tradition and are also good general teaching techniques. Storytelling should be an integral part of the educational process, for most people of all ages remember more from stories than from lectures. It is an art that needs to be fostered; perhaps some students have a special talent in this area which their teachers can help develop -- also, it can be disguised as making a presentation, especially early in the year. Teachers themselves can consider developing storytelling as a part of their teaching repertoire. They can also introduce a Native storyteller or elder to the students, if the teacher is knowledgeable about appropriate protocol when inviting these guest speakers.

Elders had always played an integral part in traditional Aboriginal education for they were the keepers and teachers of ancient wisdoms. They were never invited, however, to be a part of post-Contact historical Native education. Even today, they are not seen enough outside Native-specific schools, although there is more and more recognition for their validity in the general school environment. Elders can provide leadership and direction in situations where youngsters, reared in one set of values but educated in another, consequently begin to doubt and become confused. For example, a student taught in the home to value group needs over personal ones but attending a class "which not only exalts Anglo values, but sets the individual in opposition to the group, will feel the conflict between being Indian and being educated" (Hampton, 1993, 286); elders can help resolve such inner turmoil. As an authority with spiritual leadership, an elder is in a position to provide leadership and vision for the school to lessen the impact of contradictions which arise from different cultural experiences. As well, he can provide pragmatic guidelines for students so that they come to recognize the differences and cope without having to compromise their own personal principles. Akan, a writer who recorded an elder's thoughts about his perspective on education, wrote:

> An Elder is regarded as someone who knows what is important in life and applies that knowledge to his or her life ... the reliability of the Elder's discourse can be tested in the context of time, when it lasts; values and attitudes that outlast conflict and contradictions are reflective of a peace-oriented paradigm that pervades the essence of "good talks" (Akan, 1992, 120).

With cognizance of those age-old traditions and in emulating the leadership of the Elders, Aboriginal educational professionals, including teachers within their own classroom settings, have the potential to make significant contributions to their students. The importance of high-quality school systems under some tutelage from Elders to adequately serve the needs of Native students cannot be underestimated. In such a system, Elders who are teachers by definition and a priceless resource in the indigenous cultures, can help fill the educational gap that they so clearly recognize: the necessity, particularly in this time of history when Aboriginal people are striving to gain a rightful and dignified place in society, of having Native teachers for Native

youngsters [See Appendix 3, page 131, for one Elder's perspective of his people's historical path in education].

In a modern urban setting, many First Nations students who have no contact with Elders lack the setting to practise even what they do know about the land, its proper keep, maintenance and relationship with humankind according to traditional teachings. In this type of artificial environment -- concrete buildings, liberal dousings of television programming, video games and movies -- the traditional reality of Native lifestyles is far removed. Younger adults generally find it harder to understand and connect with nature than the older generations (and yet that connection is not nearly as strong as that of *their* parents). Urbanity can often exclude a true sense of community, particularly the sense of an Elder-led community. Often this type of community is often a formal and scheduled arrangement, rather than an integral part of everyday life. Teachers are in a position to help balance this situation by networking with Elders for their students' benefit.

In post- and secondary schools, students can be exposed to tangible Native art such as dances, artwork and crafts, but these have to be explored within a specified context so that some understanding can be gleaned in addition to the entertainment aspects. For example, colour, form, origins and meanings in artforms can be creatively incorporated into core subjects. Students appreciate the excellent crafting of the "real thing", rather than just paper or cardboard replicas and this can be achieved by inviting Native craftspeople to come into the classroom (Cronin, 13).

Small group work should be encouraged for it promotes "group success" without isolating any individual and allows students to share ideas openly in a non-competitive atmosphere. This is foundational to traditional Aboriginal education.

vii. **Sensitivity.** In a younger student body, teachers need to understand the historic reasons for the frequent lack of Native parental involvement in the school lives of their children. If teachers do not research these reasons, they can readily blame the youngsters themselves for this and inadvertently and indirectly cause the youngster to blame his parents for not participating. Such a negative cycle erodes many images: the self-image of the student, the image he has of his parents, and the one he has of the community at large. Because most parents have not been encouraged to be a part of school functions and administration, they tend to see the entire school system as foreign and isolated, even scary -- particularly if they themselves lived through an unhappy residential school experience. Even though these are often subconscious, the messages are still heard clearly by the youngsters (Hesch, 1992, 445).

Teachers would do well to empathize more with their students regarding the pressures they face. These include: a general lack of educational resources; lack of parental support; a lack of sense of belonging; and, a large teacher turnover and social/political/community problems. Because of the poor economic conditions in which many Native people live, social settings tend to be inferior to those of other Canadians. Many Aboriginal students, living in substandard conditions, lack proper nutrition which consequently affects their learning in a negative way. Adequate nutrition is a relevant factor in learning because the cost of fresh foods, especially fruits and vegetables, in remote communities is high. Even in urban centres, students tend to consume too many sugars and starches because they are easy to keep and cheaper to buy than high-protein and other important foods; this causes sluggishness in their performance and their ability to learn suffers. This is just one of the many aspects of the lifestyle of the average Aboriginal person that is not conducive to optimum learning.

Social problems such as teen pregnancy and drug and substance abuse also hinder the academic performance of Native students in school. Too often, negative peer pressure overtakes what youngsters really know to be right, and this just shows that right values have to be pushed more

strongly -- by teachers, parents, Elders, other community-members and by peers. Positive pressures have to be encouraged so they can overtake the negative ones.

viii. **Optimism.** Teachers are required to accept Native cultures and ways of life for their own worth and help their Native students feel pride in these things through reinforcement and encouragement. In everyday life, teachers can help students feel that they can become competent, and help build self-esteem in all aspects of their lives, not just in education. Students need to hear that their traditional way of doing things is valid and worthy so that they can be cultivating the kind of pride, self-esteem and confidence that will endure throughout their lifetimes.

Encouraging awareness of the historical contribution of Native people is a worthy vocation for both teachers and students. Native philosophy and ways-of-life are relevant in today's life; for example, respect for the earth and living in harmony with nature is important for humanity's ecological survival. A part of traditional Native philosophy is that one does not take from the earth without putting something back to replace it.

ix. **Bridge-building.** Seeking commonalities rather than differences is a positive undertaking for all teachers. Rather than emphasizing differences, it is more productive to concentrate on the human experiences in which everyone shares: birth, kinship, friendship, learning, celebrating, gift-giving, and laughing, as well as hardships and grief.

x. **Patience.** It takes time to build trust and understanding. True educational success is determined by the extent to which education accomplishes the fulfilment of Native cultural identity, the quality of the leaders it produces, the numbers of effective administrators in Native education, and the degree of life relevance established for the students within the educational system itself.

Knowledge and implementation of the preceding strategies can be more easily effected if they are addressed by teacher education institutions, band education directors or by groups of teachers themselves. In summary, instructors who are exposed to and precipitate specific ways of improving teacher-student interactions in any Native student body will undoubtedly be improving the academic success rates within those groups. Such instructors are ideal for delivering programs in all academic areas, but of particular importance when dealing with heritage interpretation in Aboriginal communities. The following section examines a non- site-specific heritage interpretive program in light of some of the issues discussed.

5.1.2 Program Description

The following curriculum for an Aboriginal heritage interpretation program is designed for pragmatic use by, and immediate relevance to, Aboriginal students. Its delivery, proposed to be in a culturally-acceptable manner by instructors who are aware of Native - non-Native communication patterns, would make it appropriate to both heritage instructors and students. This particular academic environment is congruous to the heritage field because these teachers are in an ideal position of acknowledging their students' heritage by working with them according to their specific culturally-founded learning styles.

The Program is structured as a certificate- or program-year in length, and the proper articulation agreements with regional colleges or universities can transfer it into the second year of an Arts degree program in such fields as Archaeology, Anthropology, Native Studies, and Tourism. Two courses, *Heritage Interpretation* and *Tour Guide Training*, have been developed to meet certification standards endorsed by the Canadian Tourism Human Resources Council; these are useful for employment in the tourism industry. The Program is invaluable to those with career aspirations in archival fields and heritage and cultural settings, and particularly to those who wish to enhance their Aboriginal group's heritage representation in Canada.

The Program is designed so students can express the philosophical ideals of their own indigenous cultures in a practical, measurable and manageable form. It examines the issues of heritage interpretation from their historic roots, and moves into areas that learners can use and that are directly relevant to Aboriginal self-interpretation. It takes the perspective that only with a thorough understanding of the problems can effective and lasting solutions be implemented, and all interpretive programming reflect a conciliatory position. All courses should be approved in principle with the professional standards of the Canadian heritage industry, and pathways within the Program for meaningful communication between students and heritage stakeholders should be emphasized.

The courses are divided into two areas: those that familiarize learners with a broader knowledge base of the heritage industry, and the other with specific skills that are required for heritage interpretation. The first category consists of *Heritage & Heritage Interpretation*, *A History of the Indigenous Peoples in Canada*, *Geography*, *Cultural Resources Management*, and *Cultural & Heritage Tourism*. The second area are the skill-based courses: *Advanced Communications Skills*, *Research & Planning Skills*, *Curatorial Practices*, *Tour Guide Training*, and a Practicum Placement. The order of presentation of the courses is, ideally, as listed although this could vary according to the Program co-ordinator, the partnership arrangements with outside institutions, or the availability of instructors. The courses themselves may be modified to accommodate a specific Aboriginal cultural group although more general themes help students transfer skills and knowledge to any part of the country, or to any First Nation.

i. Heritage & Heritage Interpretation

Description:

Readings by known authorities[5] in the field are required as a basic foundation for this course.

[5] These include but are not limited to the following authors: Michael Gross, Michael Caduto, Freeman Tildem, Thom Henely, Russell Grater and some Aboriginal authors who have written about interpretation such as Dickason and Beardy.

Students will be exposed to the differing views on heritage-related concepts that are held by non- and Aboriginal peoples and will analyze how these variances lead to different interpretations. Learners will examine some of the existing interpretive strategies implemented at Aboriginal cultural/heritage sites and have the opportunity of developing their ability to integrate different perspectives into personal or site-specific interpretive programs.

Objectives:

- to evaluate the existing perspectives regarding interpretation
- to identify and assess the goals of interpretation by both the First Peoples and EuroCanadians
- to assess the inter-relationships among the various aspects of interpretation (audience, programming, goals, objectives, etc.)
- to recognize the importance of a thorough knowledge of the interpreted subject
- to master skills in integrating diverse audience perspectives into interpretative programming
- to formulate strategic planning methods and guidelines for Aboriginal interpretation with special consideration of its delivery
- to examine the necessity of program evaluation

Topics:

- basic principles and the different types of interpretation
- cross-cultural differences on the view of *heritage* and *heritage presentation*
- content and materials for an interesting interpretive program: programming for an Aboriginal site
- assessing an audience and cross-cultural communication strategies as part of the program delivery
- building professionalism into interpretative showings

ii. A History of the Indigenous Peoples in Canada

Description:

This course traces the political, social and economic traditions of the First Peoples beginning in pre-Contact times. It examines the changes to traditional lifestyle brought about by the Europeans, their policies of colonialism and its effect on Aboriginal self-image. It addresses colonial identity as it impacted on the sense of Native identity and the resulting long-term relationships seen in contemporary times. Finally, it includes historiography in Canada and how this has affected both the external and internal conceptions of Aboriginal people.

Objectives:

- to become knowledgeable about the EuroCanadian interpretations of the First Peoples
- to analyze the images portrayed of the indigenous people in accepted literary productions
- to increase awareness on how such interpretations impacted the Aboriginal peoples
- to become knowledgeable about Aboriginal histories by Aboriginal peoples
- to trace the contemporary relationships between non- and Aboriginal people to historic roots

Topics:

- oral vs. written history; different perspectives in historical recordings
- the goals of colonialism; colonialism in other parts of the world
- general EuroCanadian history; general Aboriginal history
- EuroCanadian interpretations of the First Peoples: the impact of Darwinism
- government policy regarding the First Peoples: the *Indian Act*, treaties, land title and Aboriginal rights
- the roles of the different churches and foreign education on Native culture
- recent historic events

iii. Geography

Description:

To derive an accurate physical perspective of the First Peoples of North America (with a focus on Canada), students require knowledge about where they live and have lived. Included are the locations of the different language groupings, specific reserve placements, the topography of the land and how it impacted the traditional lifestyles of its inhabitants. Course work provides a basic foundation to help students develop an appreciation and respect for both the similarities and differences among the diverse indigenous cultures in the "New World". Settlement patterns of both the Aboriginal peoples and the Europeans are also studied. This course as well traces the routes of the European powers as they colonized different indigenous peoples globally.

Objectives:

- to examine the relationships between indigenous traditions and the physical environment
- to increase knowledge about the heritage dimensions of landscapes and Aboriginal peoples
- to gain an understanding of the geographical impact of European colonizing powers on indigenous heritage today
- to become familiar with the Geographic Information System (GIS) on inventories, mapping and management

Topics:

- basic physical geography -- names and locations of regions, oceans, rivers, mountains, (etc.)
- specific Native groups: their traditional territories and basic lifestyle patterns
- natural ecology: its relevance and impact on traditional Aboriginal lifestyles
- following the tracks of the European colonizing powers
- immigration settlement in Canada and subsequent relocation of Native people

iv. **Cultural Resources Management**

Description:

This course explores effective identification, upkeep, conservation, management and interpretation of Aboriginal cultural heritage resources. An examination is made of the technical skills and professional theories used in managing cultural landscapes and objects. Reference will be made to topics in fields such as archaeology, history and anthropology and includes field trips, special guest speakers and individualized projects.

Objectives:

- to become knowledgeable about goals, ethics and professionalism in resources management
- to become familiar with legislative activity regarding heritage resources, specifically the principles, practices and activities of the Department of Canadian Heritage, Parks Canada
- to examine public attitude and societal values as they relate to cultural resources
- to discover Aboriginal concepts of heritage/cultural resources
- custody, ownership, stewardship and repatriation issues of indigenous artifacts, remains and landscapes

Topics:

- identifying historical and cultural objects/landscapes
- research and evaluation methods
- cross-cultural heritage management or co-management practices
- heritage conservation/restoration (in landscapes and built sites)
- an overview of the scientific techniques for materials preservation and technical examination methods
- networking in the web of cultural organizations: heritage departments in federal, provincial, territorial and municipal governments, heritage-protecting organizations, other interested lobby groups
- communicating with Elders regarding guidelines in protecting Aboriginal heritage

resources

v. **Cultural & Heritage Tourism**

Description:

Tourism is one way that communities can gain economic benefits from cultural and/or heritage resources. This course examines different definitions of "Cultural Heritage Tourism" and various approaches for development. It provides thorough analysis of the potential advantages and disadvantages of a Native cultural tourism venture and addresses such issues as authenticity, sustainability, co-management and local vs. outside control. Case studies and small-group activity are used to complement this course.

Objectives:

- to describe heritage tourism trends and recent changes as they pertain to Native people
- to increase awareness of the significance of Aboriginal involvement in identifying, planning, operating and managing heritage/cultural sites for tourist presentation
- to develop skills in differentiating between the cultural aspects which may or may not be shared with outsiders
- to examine the concept of heritage tourism being a way where non- and Native society can meet in an open exchange of values, beliefs and traditions for the benefit of all
- to support, where applicable, controlled tourism at identified sites in a culturally-appropriate manner
- to develop a strategic community management framework for desired heritage tourism activity

Topics:

- the benefits and drawbacks of tourism (economic, environmental, social, cultural)
- introduction to the tourism industry (the industry sectors and their interrelationship)
- domestic and international Aboriginal tourism initiatives
- the issues of identifying resources and developing for heritage tourism purposes

- minimizing or eradicating adverse tourist impacts -- developing a "Code of Ethics" for protection from heritage tourism
- working with Native and outside heritage- and culturally-oriented organizations on sensitive issues

vi. Advanced Communication Skills

Description:

Increasing written and oral communication is the goal of this course. Because public presentations are a major component of heritage interpretation, it emphasizes delivery of various programs, some of which students themselves will develop. Activities include informal introductions, voicing personal opinions, role-playing, reading written material (which is then video-taped), and learning to derive support from the audience (classmembers).

Objectives:

- to cultivate the ability to appropriately and effectively present interpretive programs to multi-cultural audiences
- to present effectively in both Native and non-Native settings and to respond appropriately to questions from the audience

Topics:

- effective written English -- reports, essays, journals, history-writing exercises, (etc.)
- presentation skills: public speaking, intercultural communications and familiarity with different styles and principles, making good impressions at meetings
- leadership: evaluating group dynamics, team-building (improving working relationships, minimizing interpersonal conflict, getting ideas across in an easy but professional manner, fostering a co-operative learning environment)
- developing positive self-esteem: identifying common manifestations of low self-esteem and pragmatic ways to correct this, increasing professional image and credibility

vii. Research & Planning Skills

Description:

This course is designed to help students develop their research skills in different areas, particularly in Aboriginal interpretive programming and historic analysis. It gives "going to the library" a whole new and added meaning as in-depth methods of finding secondary research information are explored. How to effectively procure primary research material (such as from focus group tabulations, from elders, community members, industry and government departments) is also taught. Some field trips are required for this course.

Objectives:

- to identify resources needed for developing interpretive strategies and programs
- to conduct research into natural and/or cultural collections
- to become familiar with research tools, techniques and methods using CD-ROMs, archival material, periodicals, Internet, articles, government documentation, journals (etc.)
- to prepare and deliver a brief training presentation

Topics:

- developing research skills involving primary and secondary evidence
- examining the modern system of information storage
- electronic research: knowledge of Internet, e-mail communication, database searching
- locating content for public interpretive programming
- locating historic recordings

viii. Curatorial Practices

Description:

Curators are the backbone of museology which is a vital way of presenting an historical past. Curating involves maintaining Aboriginal artifacts, and students become familiar with how this is done. Also essential is knowledge of the philosophical framework in which acquiring, documenting, preserving and presenting these artifacts for the public is done, so that students

can ascertain whether or not these are appropriate for Aboriginal heritage presentation. The issues associated with these activities is relevant and they are discussed, for they are often contentious with the descendants of those from whom the artifacts originated, and for ethical reasons. Curators' specialized knowledge in the subject matter and how to develop exhibits are also examined.

Objectives:

- to become knowledgeable about the history, principles, philosophy and practices (collections documentation, use and development) of EuroCanadian museology, including its overall standards and ethics
- to become knowledgeable about traditional Aboriginal stewardship practices and philosophy as they pertain to heritage and specific artifacts
- to develop and implement solutions to Aboriginal-specific collections management issues
- to develop a working knowledge of exhibit development that is consistent with Aboriginal tradition and/or contemporary thought
- to develop governing guidelines, regulations, policies accordingly

Topics:

- the foundational ideology, history and organization of archives and museums
- EuroCanadian concepts of curatorial authority, collections-gathering, preservation, care, maintenance
- indigenous views of curatorship, heritage conservation and artifacts
- critical Aboriginal-relevant issues in contemporary museology
- guiding principles of culturally-appropriate exhibit development
- the interpretive process in museums
- gaining support for exhibitions and communicating with the public through showings
- familiarization with contemporary Aboriginal museums in Canada
- the significance of visitor research and exhibit/program evaluation
- relationship between artifact and ritual

ix. Tour Guide Training

Description:

This course examines the importance of being an efficient interpretive tour guide and includes practical hands-on experience. Students are taken to several cultural sites that they have researched and given an opportunity to practise their skills. Front-line customer services training enhances their earlier exposure to *Communications Skills*. It also familiarizes learners with legislation applicable to this profession, and how to comply with it.

Objectives:

- to outline guidelines for a tour guide, an "ambassador" in Native cultural tourism
- to maintain professionalism and sensitivity in cross-cultural communications with visitors
- to identify the components of non-verbal communication and how to respond appropriately
- to research, formulate and render effective interpretive material to guests
- to prepare for and manage all logistics of a tour

Topics:

- front-line customer services training (learning to use active listening skills to reduce misunderstanding, avoiding common mistakes in everyday communication, establishing rapport with guests, coping effectively with different and/or difficult people/situations, responding to criticism by visitors, "reading" nonverbal communications)
- understanding the processes of cross-cultural coping and adaptation
- preparing, adapting and delivering commentary to different audiences
- how to manage the clerical details of a tour (including liability)
- knowing the visitors' profiles and conducting the tour

x. Practicum Placement

This experiential work placement gives students an opportunity to match their academic training with pragmatic involvement in settings that offer interpretation in some form. Such institutions

may include: museums, cultural centres, heritage agencies such as Parks Canada, various parks services, public archives, arts centres, tour guide companies, collections management agencies, and private practices. These two 2-week practica in the Program (one in each semester or semester-equivalent) engage students in a heritage environment, help establish future employment associations, and integrate employment histories, career aspirations and individual preferences for workplace-based learning opportunities.

5.2 Impact of Program on Heritage Presentation

Aboriginal Canadians do not enjoy equality with their fellow Canadians in the area of heritage self-expression. Through education, specifically a Heritage Interpretation Program with an overall theme of strengthening Aboriginal cultural identity, this disparity can begin to be corrected. In a pragmatic way of action to support cultural expression, students can understand their historical past and how it has led into the *status quo* so they can then actually take meaningful steps towards restoring a fundamentally inaccurate heritage representation -- one derived by outsiders. Students must examine their traditional culture in its older context of intimate relationships with the rest of the universe and equip themselves by delving into those traditions for the philosophy and principles to effectively fulfil these responsibilities in a contemporary society.

The Program has adopted formal readings from RCAP documentation, specifically the "Arts and Heritage" and "The Relationship in Historical Perspective" sections, although readings are also taken from other topic-related parts, such as that on education. This in-depth and very recent documentation, vital for students' knowledge about the circumstances of their people nationally, provides a strong foundation for their studies. As in the past, contemporary students need the tools to continually incorporate new concepts and ways into traditional social and philosophical

structures, for this is a key to cultural survival[6]. The First Peoples, as an enduring peoples, in spite of the many changes in their landscape, language and lifestyle, have had to acknowledge inevitable changes and consciously adapt to them. The sense of their being a people has been kept alive through rituals, symbols and ceremonies which remind them of their own identity that sets them apart from everyone else.

Almost all Aboriginal people have been or will be exposed to some school curricula and are at least somewhat familiar with an academic environment. The *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* is vitally important because it reflects positive images of the First Peoples and their cultures in both the material and delivery. This is in direct contrast to the EuroCanadian education to which most Aboriginal people have been subjected, and this is why students require programming from which they can derive a constructive sense of their own worthiness and an assurance that their subsequent employment will be a significant overall contribution both to their own people and to the broader community. It is only by elevating the esteem levels of those in "cultural stress" that they can begin to participate as responsible and dynamic community members. The Program, for example, raises awareness by exposing students to the critical roles played by colonialism in Canada, the First Peoples' rightful place in Canadian history and the EuroCanadian distortion in the popular representation of the First Nations, and provides a way of helping to escape the pitfalls of this legacy. It becomes a part of the means of communication that is sorely needed to free Aboriginal people to pursue their own telling of historical recordings and to authenticate heritage presentations as they see fit.

The Program's curriculum emphasizes recognition of the differences between the perspectives of the two groups regarding heritage. For example, traditional Native views link heritage and heritage conservation with all other life areas. The opposite is true of non-Native Canadians for

6 This view sees culture as a living, thriving and dynamic entity with a life of its own and subject to constant change. It is neither staid nor forever "etched-in-stone".

theirs is segregated, like a single compartment separated from all other life compartments. When one, in this sense, accepts the option of being a part of *heritage* and *heritage conservation*, learning about these things is to learn more and more about less and less. In the Native world, these things are an unavoidable part of everyday life, those in which everyone, young and old, participates and which are learned daily from the beginning to the end of life. Students in the Program are taught these differences, not so they can lay blame for serious omissions or transgressions in their heritage representation, but so they can understand the ways of different people, help dislodge old conceptions about their own people and contribute to positive cross-cultural understanding. This is much more true now in an age when Canada has become more of a mosaic culture than ever before -- more recent immigrations include non-Europeans, such as those from India, Pakistan, the Orient, and African countries. Learners will be taught that there is no such thing as wishing away another's contradictory perspective and that it is only through hard work and mutual effort that *win-win* situations in Canadian heritage representations can begin to be achieved. They will also be reminded that it is up to them, as individuals or as groups, to put these teachings into practise to further a better society. The words in 1963 of former U.S. President Kennedy are appropriate in describing the overall thrust of the Program:

> Before we can set out on the road to success, we have to know where we are going, and before we can know that, we must determine where we have been in the past . . . It seems a basic requirement to study the history of our[7] Indian people. America has much to learn about the heritage of our American Indians. Only through this study can we as a nation do what must be done if our treatment of the American Indian is not be marked down for all time as a national disgrace (Twiss, 13, 14, from Russell).

The *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program*, for example, accentuates the importance of lands and their sculptings in Aboriginal tradition, and ensures that students become familiar with at least some of those of special significance, not only for the regions' geographical or physical

[7] This passage implies that the Americans, including Kennedy, owned the First Peoples within the U.S. boundaries, but they really did not.

attributes, but also for their deeper spiritual meanings. These sites include old burial spots and places such as the Stein Valley where ancient traditions, customs and practises of the old people go on, much as they have in æons past. There are many of these in Canada that include both recent historical events such as the Treaty 1 signing at Lower Fort Garry (LFG) in 1871, and the much older sites of Kay-Nah Chi-Wah-Nung Manitou Mounds in Northern Ontario. There are areas that are remnants of old disputes between nations, of wampum belts that spell out peace treaties, and on the barren Arctic horizons, timeless inukshuks that tell their own tales. Students also need to know about sites that are in danger of being destroyed for technological reasons such as dam construction for increasing hydroelectric power, or dredging out river bottoms for any number of economic-related reasons and which can easily collapse historically-significant riverbanks.

Students need to become familiar with the mechanisms of heritage site protection boards and be able to identify specifically how and why these boards sometimes cannot intervene in the face of development. They need to know the *status quo* of heritage preservation/protection agencies and their methodologies in fulfilling their mandates. Without this knowledge, students cannot address the many difficulties that such agencies encounter, and forward their own rationale with the input of significant others to bring about positive changes which could thereby begin to stop the breakdown of Aboriginal culturally-significant sites/objects. The Federal Archaeological Office, a Division of National Historic Sites (Parks Canada, Department of Canadian Heritage), for example, describes three obvious challenges it faces when trying to manoeuvre "natural sacred sites" into pre-established systems of identification, evaluation, designation, preservation and presentation:

> • to develop approaches to identifying, categorizing and evaluating the significance of "natural sacred sites" in an appropriate comparative context while respecting wholistic cultural perspectives and values;
>
> • to find ways of protecting these sites in a context of limited legal mechanisms for protected areas, which often artificially separate natural and cultural values; and,

- to find ways to manage these sites to protect and present the cultural values which led to the sites being designated, while still providing for continuing traditional uses. (Lee, International Symposium address, 1998).

These problems have been specifically articulated, and they require a solution. Because of the sensitivity of these issues and the very distinct perspectives regarding them, it can only be those with specific and formal training in this area, by those who belong to the culture being affected, that are in a position to offer pragmatic, culturally-sensitive and appropriate solutions. It is acknowledged, too, that a common problem regarding the declaration of a site for protection is that "the process in itself may be alien to an Aboriginal group's way of operating," and that ". . . elders find it difficult to select specific sites for special consideration -- as all the land is considered sacred" (Lee). These statements verify the reality in a very specific way of the different worldviews of the non- and Aboriginal heritage stakeholders. It is an expected learning outcome in at least one of the Program courses that new perspectives and skills from the Aboriginal students themselves and their sources be implemented to effect change in Native cultural management practices.

Ways are needed to avoid conflict with officials of Parks Services, archaeologists and tourists on what is known as "Crown land" or park areas. Often, the wishes of paying tourists at a site supersede those of Native people who want to enter the land for a variety of reasons: gathering herbs and medicines at harvest-times, conducting ceremonies, berry-picking, vision-questing, or simply treading on the land for any number of personal reasons. The incessant search for ancient artifacts has many times led to the disturbance of human remains at old burial sites. This is particularly appalling and especially repulsive to Native people in general who wish to have such grounds remain undisturbed for consideration of the dead and for the desire that burial grounds be officially designated as their collective property. Provincial heritage sites officials, however, act according to Eurocentric declarations. For example:

> Since 1967, found human remains have been *owned by the Province and their custody has rested with the Province* . . . a Policy Concerning

> the Reporting, Exhumation, and Reburial of Found Human Remains which details the procedures to be followed by persons who discover human remains, how these remains and any associated items buried with the person(s) are only to be removed by qualified personnel authorized to do the work, what analyses shall take place, and *when the appropriate cultural groups shall be consulted* (Manitoba Culture, Heritage and Citizenship, 1996, 8) (Emphasis mine).

These statements make it clear that official ownership of ancient Aboriginal people belongs to the provincial government; policy-makers probably never think in terms of these arrangements being reciprocated and to consider the appropriateness (or otherwise) of such policy: i.e., if indigenous nations were to find old Caucasian remains, that they would belong[8] to the indigenous nation which found them. It might do government policy-makers well to reflect on a New Testament teaching, one to which their culture gives such credence that it is commonly called *The Golden Rule*: Do onto others as you would have them do onto you (Mat. 6:12, Lk. 6:31). The latter emphasis shows that information-hoarding (which can equate to power-hoarding) is suitable -- that it could be years, perhaps even never, that such pertinent information is released to the appropriate Aboriginal nation. As well, it goes almost without saying that none of the "qualified personnel" who are touching, handling and examining these remains is Aboriginal, a major reason being that Aboriginal tradition is dichotomous to these practices, another being the general exclusion of Aboriginal people in culturally-significant findings and in policies regarding these findings. Regarding any type of excavation, RCAP states that, "Generally, however, no consistent policies or laws are in place to ensure that Aboriginal people control this central element of their heritage" (3, 590).

Students of the *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* can involve themselves in efforts that include Aboriginal people in the approach, methodology and means by which government heritage agencies function. The Heritage Conservation Branch (H.C.B.), a regulatory body

[8] This hypothetical situation has a serious flaw: indigenous people do not consider they "own" dead people; like the land, air and trees, the bodies of the "dead:", for they have moved into a spirit world, are considered to belong only to the Creator.

within the British Columbia government, for example, stipulates the appraisal of archaeological resources according to values in four different areas. These are:

i. the depth of public interest;

ii. as an historic base of information (this is understood to apply to EuroCanadian, and not to Aboriginal history, for this history, because it is oral and unwritten, is neither "accredited" nor credible);

iii. ethnic value by a specific group of people (this generally excludes EuroCanadians because they comprise the "reference" group and thus see themselves as lacking ethnicity; this criterium is directed towards managing Aboriginal, and other visible minority groups' heritage); and,

iv. that generated by the scientific community.

These criteria are established to provide a basis by which recommendations can be made as to whether to develop a specific site, or to leave it alone. As well, they serve as a means of determining which sites are in danger of being either destroyed or enhanced by development (Ministry of Forests, 1984). For example, if logging, which has been identified as one method of development, in the culturally-significant Stein Valley were found to have only a minimal impact on the general public interest, it would be allowed to proceed and bids would be accepted from various logging companies to start achieving this end.

As a formal and supposedly neutral assessment by which the province's heritage (or potential heritage) sites can be evaluated, the H.C.B.'s rating system contains serious flaws. Each of the items, having been given equal weighting in a "To Develop" or "Not to Develop" matrix, do not really have equal consequences if development proceeds. A site that has been thus deemed can bring severe and irretrievable loss to the cultural identity of a group of Aboriginal people, even though that site may have attained a high overall score in favour of development. To most Native communities, this would be a serious matter for their cultural traditions are in a highly-delicate

state of regeneration and they can ill afford a drastic loss. Many First Nations equate heritage to history and this includes all the variations in cultural traditions that have occurred over the ages, including those since the time of Contact. Archaeological sites with high merit for development according to the H.C.B.'s criteria can readily bring about irreparable and lasting cultural loss to those of that cultural group (Corner, 1968, 33).

Further, the archaeological approach itself is often highly damaging to the spiritual values of those Native groups with significant artifact resources. Experts in this area of digging and who actively encourage students and other interested parties to participate, tend to isolate an entire site from its geographic and environmental setting. Resulting interventions tend to revolve around extraction of the resources which are eventually placed either in the institutionalized and staid setting of a museum, or sold and fall into the hands of interested "art" collectors. This process produces a high degree of loss to the effective and spiritual dimensions of the resource while retaining only those of the cognitive; this outcome is contrary to the holistic life concepts of indigenous people who value contextual settings very highly. The H.C.B., though, concludes that if a heritage site is destroyed while the artifacts are being preserved, then the heritage value of the entire site and collection is indeed intact and has not been destroyed (Stein Basin Study Committee, 1976, 12). Building or other forms of development would then be encouraged right in those very sites, particularly if monetary gains are ascertained to be high.

Most Aboriginal groups would share neither these definitions of development nor such conclusions -- the entire process and consequences would be seen as outright heritage theft and destruction. They view the physical setting of their significant sites as integral to and inseparable from its value. The setting, which is not just the land itself, but also the scenery and landscape surrounding it, describes at least one story about the Aboriginal peoples. Oral depictions convey the reasons for these places being cherished, the people's role in history as it flows to the present day, and most significantly, about the place's spiritual magnitude including

its role as a source of strength for the people. As the environmental aspects of a site are intrinsic to themselves, a place is considered special because of its attributes and characteristics. These are understood to remain as long as the land and its setting exist. It is in all these areas that so much work by informed Aboriginal people needs to be accomplished; of course, they cannot work in a vacuum, and co-operation from Canadian heritage professionals is essential.

Potential practitioners in the Aboriginal heritage field are introduced through the *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* to these and other significant problems to which Native heritage is being subjected. There are many genuine cases to be used as case studies for discussion to derive solutions that are inclusive of Native people and compatible with their traditions. The area of professional ethics, for another example, is one in which serious endeavours need to be expended. While professionals are undoubtedly trained according to the term "professional ethics", their training has often not included the people themselves, for in North America, all archaeological findings known as "pre-historic" (this term reflects a Eurocentric attitude: that indigenous people had no history at all until Contact) are indigenous in origin. Additional efforts are required for promoting an awareness of Aboriginal peoples' concerns which then need a response within formal professional ethics standards. Undoubtedly, there has been progress in this area, but much more inclusivity of the First Peoples' interests is necessary. While a *Statement of Principles for Ethical Conduct Pertaining to Aboriginal Peoples* has been developed, they are only general, and not all First Nations endorse them. While one reason for this is a myriad of regional differences in a country as large and as geographically diverse as Canada, many are from nation-specific unresolved issues on which the First Nations citizens have not been consulted.

The area of ethics can lead students to delve into the problems associated with consultation. Many professionals think they have consulted meaningfully with relevant First Peoples, but those with whom they have supposedly consulted often think otherwise. Professionals can have

specific conclusions in mind, and communicate in ways that lead to pre-determined goals; they conduct interviews in ways that lead to the desired outcome. This approach leaves behind the real views and wishes of those being interviewed, unless they happen, infrequently and by chance, to coincide with the ascertained results. Often, as well, consultations take place with those whose personal or political agendas help the professionals' goals, while those whose views are known to be different are ignored; this does not help community cohesiveness at all and, in fact, can cause irreparable fissure to unity and wellness. Learners in the *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* are given an opportunity to study dynamics such as these, and to help out with constructive solutions that involve the voice of the Elders. They can be very helpful in the area of spiritual matters which is difficult and often impossible for outsiders to discuss with Aboriginal people, and rightfully so, for these are usually culturally-private.

Other related areas in which students can involve themselves is in helping associations such as the Canadian Archaeology Association work out effective guidelines for individual First Nations, rather than for a national generic Aboriginal collective. This thought by many culturally-oriented associations can, at least partially, be attributed to an age-old amalgamation of various and often erroneous understandings of Native people. One of the most obvious of these is the tenacious practice of thrusting generalizations from one tribe's society and culture onto that of others. A glaring example of this is the inclusion of several tipis on the grounds of LFG in Manitoba where Treaty 1 was signed, when in fact, they are not indigenous to this area at all[9]. It would rarely rise into the consciousness of tourists, both Canadian and foreign, to question this simple presentation of what, in some unidentified context, has been depicted as "Aboriginal culture" particularly in the absence of any type of explanation regarding these tipis. This example shows the power of interpretation even when mis-representation is subconsciously being presented as "fact". Undoubtedly, the underlying assumption is that all First Nations possess the same qualities, cultures, beliefs, and thought systems. Even though "culture specialists" remain on

9 In this area, the First Peoples lived in wigwam-type dwellings.

LFG staff supposedly to ensure purity in presentation, there remains continued representation that all Aboriginal people are interchangeable for the purposes of description, fundamental cultural dynamics and social organization. This actually adds to the abstraction of Aboriginal people in modern Canadian times, and reinforces pejorative stereotypes. This in turn reinforces the correctness and validity of EuroCanadian stereotype images in historical accounts -- this includes, but is not limited to imagery such as "brave pioneers", "the development of the Canadian West", "the grand Canadian adventure", "the untrammelled Canadian West is a haven for the downtrodden of Eastern Europe", and "the search for Utopia, the promise of a Promised Land" (Burton, 1984, <1, 1). Although students have much work in which to engage themselves in obliterating such misinterpretations, they also have much to do in formulating guideline policies that would prevent similar blatant examples of the foreignness to truth.

Much as Western thought is steeped in the notion that humankind is progressing closely towards the brink of solving world problems and that archaic thought is being eradicated, Native heritage interpretation in Canada still encounters many serious problems even as the year 2000 approaches. Learners in the Program are taught the background information to understand that this is very much true in the area of historical recordings and subsequent assumptions needing to be corrected. Again using the example of LFG, as recently as 1996 research was being conducted at that site so that Aboriginal interpretation of the treaty signing and for which there is little commemoration except for a standard Parks Canada plaque[10], could be identified and approved by the affected Treaty 1 nations[11] themselves. Students are cognizant of this treaty's vital significance, even in contemporary times for both non- and Aboriginal people in Canada, for they will have studied the fact that it is the nation-to-nation treaties which are the foundational documents by which Canada was to formally acquire its land base. They know, as well, that it is

10 Parks Canada is responsible for the surviving historic resources and landbase at LFG and for its administration, particularly as LFG is one of the major attractions to visitors in the system of Canadian historic sites.

11 The seven Treaty 1 signatories are Brokenhead, Long Plain, Peguis, Rousseau River, Sagkeeng, Sandy Bay and Swan Lake.

only the Native people who completely fulfilled their part of Treaty 1 while the Crown has yet to fulfil all its obligations. They understand why non-Aboriginal Canadians never expound charges of being denied their treaty rights[12] -- such complaints, legitimate in nature, come only from Aboriginal Canadians. All too well, Aboriginal people in Canada know that many non-Native Canadians today are unaware of both the Aboriginal reality of those earlier days and that they now dwell safely in this country because of historic treaty rights they enjoy from agreements made between the First Nations and the federal government. They encounter the perspective all the time that treaties within Canada are irrelevant, but they also recognize that the obliviousness by many non-Aboriginal Canadians to the vital importance of treaties in both EuroCanadian history and contemporary times does not alter their extreme significance. The learners of the Program who exercise an obedience to the inclination of re-writing history have ample opportunity to do so.

The Program's inclusion of heritage/cultural tourism will appeal to a sizable number of students. This is basically an unexplored area, and those who wish to pursue it from a business perspective are advised to enrol in formal entrepreneurial training (which is not included in the Program). Learners, from studying some of the better-known Canadian heritage sites, are aware that facts significant in Canadian history are those being presented while those deemed of lesser significance, such as those involving the Aboriginal people, are hardly being interpreted in any way at all, and that their historic activity is not high-lighted in the same way as those of non-Aboriginal people. Students can involve themselves in primary research (which they are taught in the Program) in the form of person-to-person interviews with the present-day chiefs or stakeholders in the individual First Nations, or by other constructive means. They become familiar with products that are congruous to the Canadian Tourism Commission's (CTC) publication, "*Challenges for Canada's Tourism Industry*" which identifies the importance of

12 These have all been realized; many, perhaps most, non-Aboriginal Canadians are even completely ignorant of the fact that they themselves have treaty rights.

animating a heritage product. CTC makes the following statements which are relevant to Native heritage tourism development:

> Without tourism, many communities will find their ability to preserve [our] heritage and environment reduced. By definition, heritage tourism includes a variety of experiences focused on natural , cultural and historic resources . . . Heritage tourism focuses on the experience of visiting a place with genuine historic, cultural or natural significance. The quality and integrity of the setting, whether natural or cultural, is most important to someone wishing to experience their own heritage or that of another's country. Heritage sites are not designed for tourism -- they are a "road" to discovery and a way to learn about Canada's land, people, cultural and history (1997, 15).

Students can help communities determine if animating historical events is appropriate, or if other means are more efficacious.

There are many different conceptions of heritage tourism that need exploring beyond the scope of the Program course; undoubtedly many students will find these sufficiently intriguing to pursue. Broader political questions of values, interests and control is one example of an area that is pertinent to individual Native nations. There are other issues such as the derivation of power and how it is relevant to understanding the politics of heritage management -- such as analyses of government participation and individualized studies on heritage conservation/tourism agencies/consultants which supposedly determine ways of effecting more workable and positive strategies. The political nature of heritage management and representation involves many different associations or individuals: interest or lobby groups, Aboriginal people, government at various levels, consultants, and other private organizations. The politics of heritage tourism has to do with the question of control over what is seen as the money-making capacity of a site versus the cultural value of the heritage resources; it is about the domination of one group over another, and how indigenous people can nicely remove the ever-present threat of government control. Although these issues can be seen in almost any type of heritage tourism, it is particularly relevant in Aboriginal heritage tourism sites, for the political control of their heritage has never been formally resolved.

RCAP's results of national consultations regarding heritage interpretations states that:

> The consultations demonstrated that museums and cultural institutions are well aware of the necessity and the value of working as equal partners with First Peoples. There is a strong consensus that partnerships should be guided by moral, ethical and professional principles and not limited to areas of rights and interests specified by law. The many case studies of collaborative efforts indicate that partnerships have been underway for some time in many cultural institutions across the country (3, 652).

The desire to work together has been stated by non-Aboriginal heritage specialists, practitioners, professionals and institutions; the First Nations have also stated on many occasions their willingness to partner with outside agencies. Partnerships are essential at this particular time in history, too, because many Aboriginal agencies lack the physical facilities and human resources development to take more control of heritage-specific concerns, although Aboriginal leaders see a time in the future when these circumstances will change.

Specifically, RCAP concluded with the following advice, and it is in these areas that Program participants can consider for additional ways of involvement:

- as stewards of cultural collections, outside institutions such as museums are ideally positioned to enhance public education about Aboriginal culture and the contributions of Native people to the broader community;
- that museums provide, through exhibitions, the affiliation and link between post-Contact history and the *status quo* of Canadian Aboriginal people and that they facilitate Aboriginal-related discussion;
- that access by the Native people to all types of collections (research material, artworks, archival property, artifacts, etc.) be greatly improved, and that inventories of these by outside institutions be made available to them;
- that human remains and associated materials and other artifacts be repatriated to the appropriate First Nation, and that where applicable, the retaining institution and the Nation work together to preserve them;

- that training regarding Aboriginal heritage in mainstream cultural/heritage institutions be greatly improved;
- that indigenous cultural centres require support in helping to establish and maintain a positive identity;
- that funding be made available to Aboriginal-owned or Aboriginal-themed exhibitions;
- that international collections be retrieved with the help of the Canadian government (3, 652 - 655).

All these recommendations require the co-operation of both Native and non-Native heritage communities. Students can seriously reflect on how these can be implemented primarily as practicum set-ups because some institutions may not have ready employment or house-specific training available at the time. This is why networking liaisons are encouraged and fostered between the class (either as a group or individually) and outside heritage agencies -- to help meet these and other identified needs in ways that are compatible with Native interest groups. Linkages are also valuable to the students in that they provide a reasonable and legitimate way into an agency, ideally for subsequent employment. For the agency, its managers can get to know students in a more informal way, and while it does not do away with a formal interview, they can get to know, to some extent, the students as people, and determining their interests and strengths beforehand can be very helpful.

The time, then, is right to begin building partnerships for appropriate heritage presentation in Canada. The federal government document, *Agenda to Action with First Nations*, specifies as an initiative under Language, Heritage and Culture: " . . . other measures to preserve and protect First Nations languages, heritage and culture". One of these measures is the Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program which educates its students as to why heritage-related changes need to be effected and why co-operative and respectful liaisons are essential in this process. It is a way that collective solutions can be derived by non- and Aboriginal Canadians and a way in

which space, time and energy can be administered for a rightful and authentic Aboriginal heritage representation.

6. Conclusion

Clearly, Canadian heritage must include self-interpreted Aboriginal presentation. The First Peoples' distinct voices in redefining a new Canada in which they are included in a positive living light must be heard, and the standardized depictions of staid "long-ago" Native cultures that were seldom appropriate must be replaced in all forms of heritage presentations. Indigenous truth, for there are many truths, needs to be communicated to all Canadians in Native representation of their worldviews in showings such as history books, formal and informal government activities, museum exhibits, travelling exhibitions, architecture, educational institutions, political establishments, etc. Openness to replacing historical inaccuracies in a spirit of "out with the old, in with the new" is becoming more evident as the millennium rapidly approaches. Included in the "new" is the vital understanding that historic, political and cultural domination of the First Nations has significantly depreciated their traditions, worldviews and insights. No longer should room be made available for the kind of cultural bigotry that sees Aboriginal thought as being unsophisticated, undeveloped, and simply unapplicable in a contemporary global society. Because the "Fathers of Confederation" deliberately excluded Aboriginal people from the nation-building process, there is now a crucial need to restore the First Peoples to their honourable and rightful places, and to recognize them for their continuing contributing presence in Canadian life.

Because historical interpretation is vital in any heritage-restructuring process, the recognition of culturally-dictated differences in the approach to history is even more so. Because there are no "correct" or "incorrect" cultures, there are no overall "correct" or "incorrect" approaches to historical and heritage presentation. One cultural anthropologist describes the dangers of closed thinking in cross-societal relationships:

> So long as socio-cultural expression is approached cross culturally, it can be recognized as truth as well. The moment truth is wed to one cultural expression, there is high potential for "falsehood" in any other culture. More seriously, since any given culture is in the process of change, there is even higher potential for falsehood with the culture that locks truth into one expression (Mayers, 1988, 257).

Cultural norms, however, must be followed in all heritage presentations and a key word in both the process and outcome must be *respect*. In order to persuade non-Native Canadians to forgo their long tradition of dishonouring this key concept in their presentation of the First Peoples, they must first recognize its negative effects in marginalizing the once-strong and self-sufficient people who belonged to the land before Contact. Disrespect was directed to both the People and to the natural environment; these are only two significant areas towards which respectful changes need to be directed. It must be understood that systemic changes in many areas, such as education and political structure, need to be made which include and consider the Aboriginal peoples' ways and means of self-interpretation. While there have recently been many positive changes, many more are required. For example, in 1982, a constitutional amendment recognized and affirmed Aboriginal and treaty rights; this was a significant and constructive change which ushered indigenous people into a standing Canadian institution. Because systemic reform in modern Western society tends to be a long process, the exact interpretation and subsequent implementation of the constitutional change, however, will probably still take many more years.

The presentation of Aboriginal peoples in pre- and Canadian history throughout the centuries has ranged anywhere in a spectrum from the *good Rousseauian Indian*[1] to the *savage brute of Darwinism*. These are all outside and totally unacceptable interpretations. Internal interpretations by the First Peoples to the rest of Canada are historically rare, and this lack illustrates the need for choice and flexibility in cultural self-expression which recognizes the diversity among the different nations. The motives of interpretation must be self-defined by the First Peoples themselves; foreigners with their own "axes to grind" must no longer be allowed to determine these motivations. Just as any European country interprets itself differently from its neighbour, so too the interpretation developed by one Aboriginal nation may not necessarily be

[1] This imagery arose from counter-Enlightenment thought which opposed the notion of "scientific progress".

right for any other. Each group, and there are just over 50 cultural groups in Canada[2], must have the opportunity of showing itself to the outside world in ways that it prefers.

History shows that stereotypical images were serving a purpose for those who endorsed them. The overall opinion of the first Europeans was cautiously optimistic for they relied on the First Peoples for all their basic livelihood needs. They acknowledged that even though these "primitive" peoples needed civilizing, they were fully confident that this could be accomplished through educational processes which they themselves would predicate. Times changed as the true imperialist ambitions of the colonialist powers began to emerge, and the fairly balanced relationship crumbled. This gave birth to the interpretation of Aboriginal people as being wretched, barbaric, even demonic; many history and children's books of this century have been written based on this imagery. Settlement in the "wild west" increased, but not at the invitation of the First Nations for they were finding themselves, after decimation from foreign diseases, increasingly on the fringes of their own traditional territories. These times saw rampant theories of Native racial inferiority for it rationalized to the Europeans their taking of "Indian" lands. The newcomers willingly listened to academics who predicted the disappearance of the entire indigenous peoples as God's way of using nature to weed out an inferior group in favour of a superior one. In the meantime, the First Peoples were being further marginalized into the undesired Canadian hinterlands and their suffering, unknown to most, was increasing. Then, two world wars in the twentieth century precipitated changes within Canadian social dynamics and many previously-unquestioned convictions began to be scrutinized. "Average Canadians" gradually became conscious of the inequality and marginalization of the indigenous peoples within their own country. This realization was initiated by adamant Native leaders and their supporters who had been setting the stage for lobbying against the causes that were bringing about the deplorable *status quo* among their people. As well, the laws forbidding Native people to advocate for their rights had been lifted in 1951.

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2 According to DIAND statistics, there are 608 "Indian Bands" and more than 50 language groupings (http://www.inac.gc.ca/strength/demogr.html).

From the impetus of a growing Native outcry and a rising social consciousness, attitudinal changes began to occur, particularly in the area of Native education. By the mid-1970's, it was proven beyond any doubts at all through the *Hawthorne Report* that Aboriginal parents were far from experiencing the same rights as other Canadian parents regarding their children's education. In post-Contact years, this vital system had been sequestered by European powers which moulded and interpreted the Aboriginal peoples for their own self-serving purposes. Native leaders, though, had seen education as the fundamental way of sustaining their cultural traditions, and this was no less true then as it is now, even though the traditional modes of education, having been nearly destroyed, have had to be and are being re-established.

The core of Native education has traditionally been of "spiritual totality", which is educating the whole person: mentally, physically, emotionally and spiritually. The specific role of spiritual values and the connection to a greater universal power or influence has always been vital in the process of Native learning and teaching; this was the reason why Aboriginal religious expression was so rigorously targetted by the Europeans for eradication. Even now, though, the link to spiritual principles establishes a method for discovering and building personal identity which becomes the foundation of all learning experiences. Because EuroCanadians differ radically in their concepts of education in these areas and because of their history of attempted religious/educational genocide of the Native nations, creative Aboriginal-specific educational programs in all areas, specifically including heritage interpretation and conservation, are an irrefutable necessity.

First Nations education utilizes a hands-on experiential approach with activity-oriented objectives so that students have the opportunity of internalizing the information being taught. Non-Native teachers need to be aware of this particular learning aspect of Native teaching, which in many instances has to be re-learned by Aboriginal students, and of other culturally-related learning specifics as well. For example, active participation in the cultural aspects of heritage

interpretation and presentation needs to be encouraged. Eventually, some students who graduate from the *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretation Program* can re-teach different courses[3], thereby regenerating new activities first in the classroom and then in the community. This longer-term goal is particularly applicable in the present time when the most common classroom setting is non-Native teachers teaching Native students.

Successful and responsible heritage interpretive programs for and by Aboriginal people provide students with opportunities for self-expression in a culturally-friendly and spiritually-receptive environment. The belief that human attitudes, motives and feelings are an integral part of the components and processes of the larger universe is a part of an æons-old Aboriginal tradition which needs to be incorporated into the overall theme of such programming. Native languages, for example, are compliant and accommodating towards nature and the environment, and students, coming from their own individual First Nation, can be cognizant of the differences in language nuances as they pertain to heritage interpretation and worldview expression. The strong affiliation between the ancient spiritual values and the method by which heritage-related knowledge and skills are effectively related to Aboriginal learners cannot be understated in any Native-oriented program. Contemporary teaching must therefore take place in a cultural context and non-Native teachers must learn how to initiate and foster such a learning environment.

The issue of ownership of heritage resources deals with an economically-significant activity which can generate employment in Native-controlled enterprises, so it is imperative to resolve this problem with all levels of government. While this is a major endeavour, heritage-specific education for Aboriginal people is a first step towards establishing nation-wide and provincially-corresponding policies and practices. As well, Native heritage interpretive activities hold a key for supporting and enhancing cultural undertakings in appropriate environments, as taught in the *Aboriginal Heritage Interpretive Program*. In terms of expressing Aboriginal heritage,

3 Additional adult teaching courses with "train-the-trainer" instruction for very specific areas are strongly recommended for those who wish to perpetuate what they learn.

entrepreneurial initiatives which must include adequate and up-to-date business training, contribute to economic self-sufficiency because they are so heavily dependent on the human resources skills and development which are embodied within the Program.

An educational process for heritage interpretive restructuring in Canada can turn out well-qualified Aboriginal students with new understandings of how inclusive and appropriate presentation changes can be implemented across the country. Graduates are the beginning of positive changes in the education of non-Aboriginal Canadians regarding true Native heritage, some of which must begin on a very basic level[4]. Mainstream heritage literature now supports a dominant EuroCanadian view with little acknowledgement of that shared within Aboriginal circles. The result of this is that the Aboriginal perspective remains either virtually unheard of, or at best, obscure. The understanding that different people live under different cosmological umbrellas is often ignored, sometimes because of convenience but also because of a lack of awareness.

It may be difficult to understand that people can see only through the eyes of their own particular reality, and not from those of any other. Different life realities, such as those encompassing socio-economic status, political landscape, social class structure including division of labour, gender roles and ethnicity, vary radically within the country, so the learning objects and modes by which professionals, students and "everyday Canadians" are able to relate and find relevance will also vary. Unquestionably, the world itself is full of different versions of life realities, and people have to be reached at whatever theirs happens to be. In fact, it is impossible, as well as unethical, to attempt to force another reality onto students than that which they already have. Information which has been incorporated and absorbed into individual realities is in accord with the parameters of various personal or communal societal/cultural structures; this is true of all

4 For example, even the well-known names of many Aboriginal peoples are a reflection of foreign worldviews, not a statement or name of a group's own self-identity. "Navajo" is a Spanish-based name that means "thieves", and "Sioux" is a corrupted French-Ojibwaa version of almost the same meaning. Traditional names denote original habitation by a sovereign people with a true political identity, those who were created in the image of their Maker, not in an image accorded by European standards.

people, whether Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal. Those in heritage conservation need not generate the same self-expressions; authentic cultural representation cannot follow patterns derived from a homogeneous melting pot or from externally-enforced or artificially-created sources.

The decade of the 1990's has shown an increased willingness by Aboriginal people to partner in many ways with non-Aboriginal Canadians who, in turn, have expressed a general desire to reciprocate. On a government level, the *Gathering Strength* policy which resulted as a response to the recent report on the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, shows that new efforts through a federal action plan need to be expended so that the relationships between non- and Aboriginal Canadians can progress. Awareness and a willingness for cultural accommodation by both the general public and the government are ideal conditions for augmenting meaningful participation by the the First Peoples in heritage presentations. First, there are changes that have to take place, and some of these are already underway to some degree -- education by and of the First Peoples should have utmost priority. Specifically, training and self-knowledge regarding indigenous heritage and how it can be authenticated appropriately and respectfully as a minority group's expression to a larger outside culture is an absolute necessity. Only in this way can Aboriginal voices, so long suppressed, begin to assert positive influences on the Canada of the twenty-first century, and full measures of true Aboriginal self-representation begin to take place in Canadian institutional settings. Non-Native Canadians, including the economic sector and the resource industry, can be assured that they will lose nothing, but have everything to gain.

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8. Appendices

1. Principles of the *Jesuit Code*

- Place more value on the professor's explanation than on private study; hence never absent yourself, unless forced to do so, even for a day.
- To sleep in class, to talk, to trifle, or to disturb the professor is wholly unbecoming a student.
- Unless engaged in reading the text or in writing, keep your eyes, ears and mind concentrated on your teacher.
- Moreover, accept with docility, the whole of his teaching, without seeking to impose your own interpretations.
- Strive to imitate in words and speech, the manner of your professor and of the authors explained to you in class.
- Ask your professor to solve doubtful problems.
- Private study will help your understanding of the lessons; but above all, read and re-read explanations given in class.
- Interrupt long and difficult study with some healthy recreation.
- Love and obey your professor as you would your parents.

Source: The Jesuit Relations & Allied Documents

ONTARIO PUBLIC SCHOOL HISTORY OF CANADA

AUTHORIZED BY
THE MINISTER OF EDUCATION FOR ONTARIO

TORONTO
THE MACMILLAN COMPANY OF CANADA, LIMITED
1912

HISTORY OF CANADA

CHAPTER I

THE INDIANS

1. **The Indians.**—The sight which met the eyes of the first Europeans who sailed up the St. Lawrence was a striking one, but very different from that which is seen to-day. Instead of fields covered by abundant harvests, there was almost impenetrable forest; instead of prosperous towns were seen single wigwams or a collection of smoky huts; instead of railways were narrow, winding trails, leading through the dense forest growth; instead of palatial steamers was seen an occasional bark canoe creeping silently along the shore. The changes of the last four hundred years have been marvellous. The story of these changes is unfolded in the pages that follow.

When European explorers first came to America they found the country occupied by a race of copper-coloured, black-haired people whom they called Indians. The two great families of Indians with which the story of Canada deals were the Algonquins and Huron-Iroquois. The Algonquins were widely scattered and known by many names. To this family belonged the Abenakis of Maine, the Micmacs of Acadia, the Montagnais above the St. Lawrence, the Ojibways to the north of Lake Superior, and the Crees of the far West. Of the other family the Hurons dwelt south of the Georgian Bay, and the Iroquois south of Lake Ontario. The Iroquois were sometimes called the "Five Nations," because they consisted of five tribes—Mohawks, Oneidas, Onondagas, Cayugas, and Senecas.

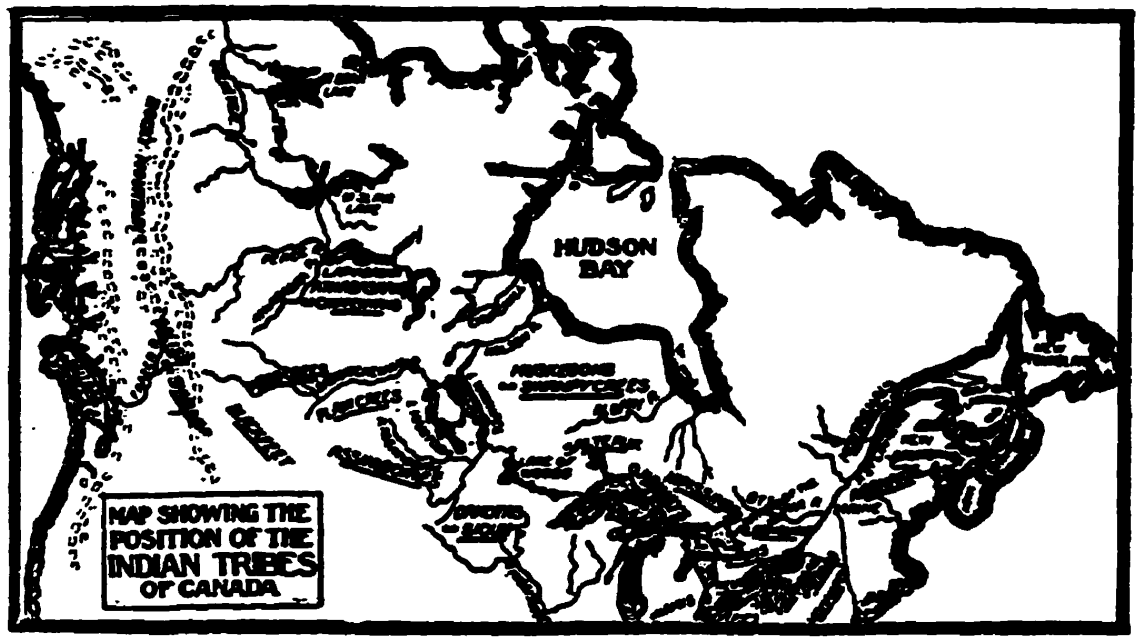
Later, after they had been joined by the Tuscaroras, the confederacy was known as the "Six Nations." West of Lake Superior dwelt a tribe called the Sioux, so like the Iroquois that they were known as the "Little Iroquois of the West."

2. **The strength of the Indian nations.**—The Indian population of Canada was not, considering the size of the country, very great. By far the most numerous were the Algonquins, of whom there were about ninety thousand men, women, and children. The thirty-two villages of the Hurons contained twenty thousand. The Iroquois, powerful though they were in war, at no time mustered more than three thousand fighting men. The strength of the Five Nations, reduced by continual warfare, was recruited by a peculiar custom. When a warrior was slain, his relatives might adopt into their family one of the prisoners brought in by the war parties. The newly adopted, grateful for being saved from torture and death, became one with his captors and later fought with them even against his former kinsmen. So white men, both French and English, in this way became members of an Indian tribe, and, delighting in the freedom of forest life, refused to return to civilization, even when they had a chance to do so

3. **Description of Indian life.**—The Algonquins were hunters, ever on the move: the Hurons and Iroquois were more settled. The former lived on game, the latter grew corn. Where the Indians settled in villages, they made many useful articles, such as earthen pots, mats woven from rushes, twine, stone axes, flint spear and arrow-heads, and bone fish-hooks. The most remarkable material, common to many tribes, was *wampum*, made at first of coloured shells, later of beads obtained from the white men. From *wampum* were made all kinds of ornaments—necklaces, collars, belts, and bracelets. *Wampum* was also used as money.

In most of the tribes the women, once they passed the period of youth, became drudges. To their lot fell the gathering of firewood, sowing, tilling, harvesting, smoking fish, dressing skins, making clothing, preparing food, and

carrying burdens. In summer and autumn the men were busy hunting, fishing, or waging war. During the remainder of the season, once their houses were built and their weapons and canoes made, they were idle. The New Year was the season of festivals. Then the warriors were idle and even the squaws had some leisure. To the village feasts the guests brought their own dishes and spoons. Seated about a huge kettle slung over the fire in the centre of the dwelling they would continue to eat often throughout a whole day. With most Indians gambling was a passion. One game of chance they played with plum stones, black on one



side and white on the other, which they tossed in a wooden bowl, betting upon the "turn-up."

All Indians were very superstitious, having strange ideas about nature. They thought that birds, beasts, and reptiles were like men. Thus an Indian has been known to make a long speech of apology to a wounded bear. They thought, too, that in lakes, rivers, and water falls dwelt the spirits of living beings, and they strove to win the favour of these by means of gifts. Dreams played an important part in the life of the Indian. They told him the cure of diseases, taught him the position and plans of his enemy, or the haunts of game. The Indian's idea of a Supreme Being

was not a high one. When he tried to think of the One who made the world, he brought Him down to the level of a man. The Indian had no one word to express the idea of God; the word *Manitou* meant anything which he thought of as having more than human power.

Such were the people whom the pioneers of our own race found lording it over the North American continent. In his dealings with these intruders the Indian displayed two very marked characteristics: a love of freedom and a spirit of revenge. This untamed savage of the forest could not bring himself to submit to the restraints of European life; so, as the newcomers pushed inland from the Atlantic, he withdrew farther and farther west rather than part with his beloved freedom. In the treatment of the Indians the settler was not always just, and his injustice drew down upon him the vengeful enmity of a foe that never forgot an injury. Thus we find the early pages of Canadian history filled with the records of Indian warfare with all its horrors.

INDIAN WITH TOMAHAWK AND PIPE

SUMMARY

When European explorers first came to America they found the country occupied by two great families of Indians, the Algonquins and Huron-Iroquois. The Algonquins were roaming hunters: the Hurons and Iroquois were more settled in their habits. The newcomers found the Indians very superstitious, fond of their freedom, and vengeful.

3.

Education

by Chief A. Solomon

The traditional way of education
was by storytelling and example
and then by experience.

The first principle involved was total respect
and acceptance of the one being taught.
And that learning was a continuous process
from birth to death.

It was a total continuity without interruption.
Its nature was like a fountain
that gives many colours and flavours of water
and that whoever chose could drink as much or as little
as they wanted to and whenever they wished.

The teaching strictly adhered
to the sacredness of life, whether of
humans, animals or plants.

But in the course of history, there came
A Disruption.
And then education became
"compulsory miseducation"
for another purpose,
and the circle of life was broken
and the continuity ended.

Source: Solomon, Arthur. (1990). ***Songs for the People: Teachings on the Natural Way.*** Toronto: N.C. Press.