ABORIGINAL TEACHINGS IN NATIVE LITERATURE

by

Ruby V. M. Farrell

Graduate Program
in
Educational Studies

Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Graduate Studies
The University of Western Ontario
London, Ontario
August, 2003

Your file Votre référence
ISBN: 0-612-96752-2
Our file Notre référence
ISBN: 0-612-96752-2

UWO Licenses

And

Certificate of Examinations

are kept on file at

The University of Western Ontario

In

The Faculty of Graduate Studies

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the presence of traditional Ojibwa ethics and values in the myths and legends of northwestern Ontario, and where and how they appear in two culture-based novels of that region.

The contents of the myths and legends were examined and some common traditional teachings and values were identified. The categories of ethics and rules of social behaviour from Brant's (1990) research, were then matched to the teachings and values. Examples of these ethics and values were then located in two natal-based cultural novels from the same region.

In the process of this study, examples of Aboriginal epistemology, traditional practical knowledge, ecological knowledge, and the sense of time and place provided better understanding of the ways in which they occurred in the traditional Ojibwa society. The myths and legends, the research, and the novels were carefully selected for their authenticity and locality. However, these categories are by no means exhaustive, nor are they meant to be, as that would be quite impossible. They are also not meant to be used for universal application but are provided only as a sample in a study.

The resulting information will prove useful in a variety of cultural and formal educational settings for a better understanding of the Ojibwa culture. When other culture-based books become available from the same region, they can be compared for consistency and changes identified in this study. Other First Nations may also wish to examine the contents of their own traditional stories for embedded ethics and values that may be present in their own literature.

This study proved to be a gruelling exercise to say the least, but it sets a cultural grounding from whence the discussion of Aboriginal research methodology and theory can begin.

Keywords: Native Literature, Myths and Legends, Aboriginal Epistemology, Ecological Knowledge, Traditional Knowledge, Aboriginal Research.

Dedicated to Anishinawbe Students and Faculty

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my husband Patrick, for his ongoing support and patience during my years of study. My thanks also to our daughters, Rosanna, Amy, and Lindsay, for their tolerance and understanding for the hours I spent on the family computer.

I would also like to convey my deepest appreciation to my Supervisor, Dr. Cornelia Hoogland, for her patience and for 'going beyond the call of duty' on the editing as we wrestled with my translation of Ojibwa teachings into the English language. I am truly grateful to my Advisors, Dr. Janice Wallace and Dr. John Novak, for their valuable suggestions and insights. To my whole Committee, I express my heartfelt thanks, for all their unfailing support and guidance.

To the source of the knowledge that informed my study, I thank the following:

ᒥ·ᖻ ᓂᑎᓇᑲ ᑲᑭᓇ ᐊ·ᐃᖅᑲ ᑲᑭᐱ ᑭᑭᓄᐦᐊᒪ·ᐃᔅ·ᐊᒡ ᖻᓂᓲ ᒥᓂᑯ ᑲᑭ ᑕᔅᖻᖅᓲ ·ᐁᖽᑲᓵ ᓂᐸᑯᖽᑕᒡ ᑭ·ᐃᓲᑕᒪ·ᐊ·ᑲ ᓂᑭᐦᑭᖅᒪᑲ ᑲ·ᐃᓲ ᖻᑯᓲ ᐁᑭ ᐅᓂᖻᓱᖅᓲ ᒥᓂᑯ ᑲᑭ ᐃᔅ ᓄᓲᑕᒪᓲ ᑲᑭᐱᓄᒪ·ᐃᓇᓲᓰ ᒥᐃ·ᐁ ᐊᓂᓵ ᓄᓲᑯᒡ ᑲᑕᔅᑕᒪᓲ ᐅ·ᐁ ᑲᑭ ᐅᔅᐱᐊᒪᓲ ᐊ·ᐃᖅᑲ ᐊᓵ·ᐊ ᐅᖽᑭ ᐱᒪᑎᓱᑲ ᑭᐅᓲᑭ ᓂᓱᐢᑐᑕᐊᒡᓰ ᖻᑭᐱᓂᑎᓱᐊᓇᓲᓰ ᒥᐃ·ᐁ ᐊᓂᓵ ᑲᑭᐱᓂᑎᓱᐊᓇᓲᓰ ᐊᓂᓵ ᐃᔅᓂᓵᑎᓱᐊᓇᓲᓰ ᐁᐅᖽᑭ ᐅᓂᖻᓱᖅᒪᐸᓲᓰ ᒥᐃᓲᑭ ᐃᔅᓂᓵᑎᓱᐊᓇᓲᓰ ᐁᐅᖽᑭ ᐅᓂᖻᓱᓵᒥᓲᓰ

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

1 Introduction

Personal Background

I feel that I am well qualified to attempt this study because of my knowledge and personal background. I was born and raised in the land of my ancestors. I grew up in a traditional culture whose teachings and discipline had been passed down from generations past. My family was very much attuned to the spiritual nature of life and of the environment. Oral story-telling was an important part of this life and now, as an educator, an artist and an author, I wish to bring these aspects together and show how these cultural ethics and values can be taught in today's society.

The Ojibwa or Anishinawbeg are famous for their totem clan system which is traced back from the male lineage (Rogers & Smith, 1994, p. 279). The word 'totem' is actually "dodaim" and people with the same dodaim were considered brother and sister. Therefore, marriage was forbidden between people of the same dodaim although they may not have been blood relations at all. A breech of this law was punishable by death (Warren, 1984, p. 42-45). Upon meeting someone for the first time, it was proper to determine the totem of the person first and then find out whom they were (Johnston, 1976, p. 59). Johnston (1976) also explains that "the term "dodaem" comes from the same root as do "dodum" and "dodosh." "Dodum" means to do or fulfil, while "Dodosh," literally means breast, that from which milk, or food, or sustenance is drawn. Dodaem may mean 'that from which I draw my purpose, meaning, and being'" (p. 61). There was the crane, hawk, eagle, seagull, loon, goose, bear, marten, moose, caribou, wolf, lynx, pike, sturgeon, frog, catfish, and many other dodaem clans. They were all

responsible for the five major needs of a community - leadership, defense, sustenance, learning, and medicine but, any person could receive the 'calling' to be a Medicine man or woman. Accordingly, a dodaem had responsibility under one of the above categories as either Chiefs, warriors, hunters, teachers or healers (Johnston, 1976, p. 61). In my case, my mother's dodaem was the loon and the loon clan carried the responsibility of leadership along with nine other dodaem clans. My father's dodaem was the sturgeon and the sturgeon clan was responsible for learning along with four other dodaem clans. In contemporary terms, my dodaem clan responsibility would be leadership in teaching and learning.

It was into this family that I was born on the night of Christmas Eve in 1952. My grandfather Patahoo (my mother's father) was a well known Medicine man and his sons were Shamans in their own right. With this family lineage, my mother possessed a wealth of traditional healing knowledge and hence was well respected in our community.

We were all born and raised at our father's trapline at Whitewater Lake, situated approximately half way between Thunder Bay and James Bay. That was our ancestral land and my grand parents are buried there along with other relatives. I was the sixth of seven children and therefore had babysitters at hand to look after me when I was young.

At that time, the Indian Affairs airplane would land at all the trap-lines across the north in the fall, collecting children headed for the Residential Schools. The parents were threatened by Indian Affairs that if they did not let their children go, they would be thrown in jail and never see their children again. My older siblings who were taken from the trap-line in the fall were returned in the summer and we would meet them at the

nearest train station. Every fall, the cycle would repeat.

By the time I became of age to attend school, Indian Affairs ordered all families off the trap-lines to move to the nearest railway community where an Indian Day School was being built. Our family moved to a community called Collins, Ontario. We belonged to the Fort Hope Indian Reserve (which is now called the Eabametoong First Nation) only because that was the nearest Treaty location from our traditional lands when that treaty was signed in 1949. We had never lived on the Reserve in which we were registered. When I was about six years old, my father passed away and we stayed at the cabin that he had built in Collins, where we attended the Indian Day School. However, the school only went up to grade 5, at which point we were sent to Residential School.

The Residential Schools were originally set up to implement the assimilation process of educating the 'Indianness' out of Native children. We were strapped for speaking our Native language and we were supposed to forget everything we were before entering the Residential School. I endured the time I spent there, with the knowledge that no one could ever change who I was on the inside. When I was distraught, I would gaze into the mirror and there I'd see my mother's eyes, looking back at me. My mother did not speak English and I was not allowed to write to her in syllabics and I was not permitted to speak to her on the phone, since that would necessitate me speaking Ojibwa. When I returned home, I learned that she had also sent money that I never received.

The Native children who attended these residential schools between 1950 and 1970 are referred to in some literature as the "in-between" (Crowe, 1991, p. 198) people, not fitting into the life of the non-Native person and not fitting to the life as a Native,

since that had been systemically, physically and/or mentally, beaten out of him/her by the people who ran the schools. Right up to 1968, "fewer than twenty Indians attended university" in Ontario (Rogers & Smith, 1994, p. 391).

When the Residential Schools began closing across Canada, we were then sent to the nearest city to attend High School. Each summer when we arrived home, my mother was already packed and ready to head out to the bush. Right after we got off the train, all we had time to do was to change our clothes and away we went. It was years later that I realized that it was her only time to reclaim us and re-instill and reinforce the knowledge and teachings of our culture. But, as a teenager, I longed to hang out with teens my age and oh, how I craved pop and chips! From July to the end of August, she had us back in the bush at our old trap-line. Just like learning how to tie my shoelaces, I never forgot how to make a fishnet and do all the arts and crafts for which my mother was famous. Along with the hands-on knowledge, she also always made a point of going through our family history at every point of land that we passed. "This is where so and so was born, where so and so is buried; this is where your uncle so and so first learned to walk; this is called so and so because . . . " it went on and on, as we paddled along the shorelines. Every evening before bed, she would tell us the legends over and over again so that we would never forget. I followed at her heels whenever she went into the woods to collect plants and herbs that she used for medicinal purposes. I'd sit beside her as we cleaned the fish, ducks, or prepared moose meat. In all that time, her voice was constant, refreshing my memory of all the teachings that went with each activity throughout the day.

When I graduated from highschool in 1972, I wanted to attend University but

after a loud laugh at my suggestion, the Indian Affairs counsellor informed me that 'Indian girls did not attend University.' Bowles and Gintis (1976) would have said that this counsellor was only following the invisible order of "integrating new generations into the social order" (p. 102). So, at the counsellor's suggestion, I went to work at an office as a secretary. By then, my mother had done such a tremendous job at instilling the homing instinct, that every summer no matter where I was in the country, I always returned home to my mother for the summer months.

I mention my background under the Indian Affairs education policy only because my experience was the norm for all Aboriginal children. Many of my classmates were not as fortunate as I. Many did not live long enough to tell their children what life was like under the Native education policies of the Canadian government.

Unfortunately, Indian Affairs wasn't finished with me yet. Since the Indian Act in 1876, Native women who married non-Native men automatically lost their Indian Status and Native men who married non-Native women automatically transferred their status to their wives and the wives became instant Status Indians. When I married my non-Native husband, I was stripped of my status. This affected the possibility of any further education that I may have aspired to at that time. In 1985, after years of protest, Native women were given the right to regain their status under Bill C31 and the non-Native wives of Native men no longer gained status. I was reinstated to Band Status but was given the code under Bill C31 which did not give me the complete status and rights that I had before.

In 1972, the National Indian Brotherhood issued a position paper calling for

"Indian control of Indian education" (Barman, Hebert, & McCaskill, 1992, p. 15), which was accepted by the federal government. Soon after, the provincial government began sponsoring the training of Native teachers for Native children, and also published the resource guides called *People of Native Ancestry.* Native studies programs and departments also began appearing at Colleges and Universities across the country (Rogers & Smith, 1994, p. 394).

Since the 1970's, Native people have been making their way into the government system and creating changes in their children's education. By the 1980's, 450 of the 577 Indian bands in Canada had taken control over their own administration of Reserve schools (Barman et.al., 1992, p. 16). In some places now, children at an early age are instructed in their Native language first and more have their own Native teachers in the classroom. There have been so many changes in the Aboriginal communities that there is greater demand for teacher access to Aboriginal cultural resources. However, it is not only the cultural content of curricula materials, but the Aboriginal teachings, ethics and values, that lie embedded in the content, that is crucial. It is this that I am attempting to address in this study.

Formal Education and Writing

I eventually made my way to the University where I now spend my time educating the new generation. I am a certified teacher and a tenured professor, and as such, it gives me greater flexibility in articulating how these two cultures of learning - the mainstream and Aboriginal can and do work together in weaving a fabric of continued existence of living and learning in both cultures.

I am also a writer and in my first novel, *Honour the Sun*, published in 1987, I created a story of a little girl within her own cultural home setting. I allowed the reader to experience all the cultural ethics, values, beliefs, and everyday life within this world as I knew it from experience. Several years later, in 1989, a study was released entitled "Native Ethics and Rules of Behaviour" by Clare Brant, a Canadian Aboriginal Psychiatrist. In the study were descriptors about which he stated, "the following is an attempt to identify and analyse certain of the North American Native ethics, values, and rules of behaviour which persist in disguised form as carryovers from the Aboriginal culture and which strongly influence Native thinking and action even today" (1990, p. 534). I found that much of what he had to say was familiar, and apart from a few more ethics and values in *Honour the Sun* that may be particular to my own culture, I found every single example from his list of ethics and values within the covers of *Honour the Sun*. These nine descriptors will form the connections between the legends and my novels in this study.

In my second book, *Silent Words*, 1992, I set about creating a novel that would convey the teachings and wisdom from the Creation stories. The character of the little boy in the story provided a bridge of understanding for the reader. *Silent Words* became my vehicle in which I challenged myself to see if I could sustain the 'oral story-telling' mode into a written novel format. I will also provide examples and explanations where the Creation stories connect with the story in the novel and how the knowledge is given and received in this proper cultural context. I found it interesting that Abram (1996) presents a mode of awareness to the sensuous world in this way, saying "for such an oral

awareness, to *explain* is not to present a set of finished reasons, but to tell a story" (p. 265).

Another novel was published in 2000, *Weesquachak and the Lost Ones,* that provided examples of the cultural differences of city life and Aboriginal community life in the lives of a young woman (in the city) and her traditionally betrothed husband-to-be (trapper from an Aboriginal community). Their mis-communication caused perceived personal slights, rudeness, disrespect, and the resulting reaction from the offended party was also mis-understood by the other. Thrust into this chaos was the trickster character from the old legends, Weesquachak, who was known to cause mischief as many times as he created positive outcomes. He provided an understanding of the connection from the past to the present, and why these two characters perceived things so differently.

Little Voice, 2001, dealt with teaching and learning in an urban environment and in an Aboriginal community. Both cultural settings approach teaching and learning quite differently and the essence of the Aboriginal epistemology and learning was described and provided some examples of how these actually occur.

I used to write and illustrate children's stories for my children when they were small. These little stories always had a moral value or some sort of teaching that we would discuss afterwards. When they were in highschool, they read my novels and I was grateful that they could read something that instilled in them some sense of cultural identity. In my novels, I could take them to the places I had been as a child but to which I could never physically take them now. Although my mother has been gone many years now, I still hear her voice in the printed words and my children can understand what she

would have said.

I am also a visual artist, and in my paintings, it is not just the scenery that I see. I also hear the voices and laughter behind me that would have been present at such a location in the painting. It is much the same in my writing. There are not merely words on the pages, there is also the living cultural context in which the story is embedded. With the use of my novels, I hope to shed some light on how the traditional cultural teachings can be taught through Native literature.

First Nations Education

In the last few decades, there have been an increasing number of young First Nations people who have not had access to traditional teachings. The elders and First Nations educators know that it is very important that First Nations children know their culture and its teachings.

In our historical and ethnographic study on First Nations arts and crafts (Irwin & Farrell, 1996), many of the interviewees were Residential School survivors who had no knowledge of what they should have passed down to their children and grandchildren. However, several of the elders stated that they had had a firm grounding in their traditional knowledge before they attended mainstream education and that it distressed them greatly to see that so many of the youth of today know nothing of their culture.

There have been studies indicating that if First Nations children are grounded in their culture through the school and community, they would have better success in the mainstream education system (Whitbeck, Hoyt, Stubben, & LaFromboise, 2001; James, Chavez, Beauvais, Edwards, & Oetting, 1995). A student who is grounded in his or her cultural beliefs and value system is less likely to drop-out or be absent, test scores are higher and students have a greater chance of achieving higher education (Coggins, Williams, & Radin, 1997). These young First Nations people are also more likely to return to the community where their knowledge and expertise is badly needed (Van Hamme, 1996; James et al., 1995).

In some First Nations communities, Aboriginal teachers in their own communities

do not have access to documented traditional teachings that they can incorporate into their curriculum. One way of dealing with this problem is to identify the First Nations' traditional teachings of ethics and values that are embedded in the old Aboriginal myths and legends. In Friesen's (1999) abstract, he states that "Based on a unique metaphysical perspective, it was the First Nations who through reliance on the oral tradition developed the first effective means of transferring valued cultural knowledge to succeeding generations in North America" (p. 305).

Although the myths and legends may no longer be taught in the home, the Aboriginal ethics and values that are embedded in them are still present in contemporary Native literature. One cannot assume that the same teachings exist in other First Nations across the country. Therefore, this study presents one way in which some of the major teachings of the Ojibwa First Nations culture can be taught through the use of Native literature that is based on that particular natal culture. Since this is my study of my culture, I have used my novels to illustrate where and how these teachings appear, as there are no other novels or writers from my Nation at the present time. This example should enable another First Nation to follow the same methodology and begin to examine the teachings of their own myths and legends. They can then find examples of those teachings in their Nation's contemporary literature that is based on their particular natal culture. As awkward as this process may be, in the academic sense, this traditional cultural knowledge should be researched and published as it is today for the next generation of learners.

Just as the old traditional legends were recorded for posterity, so should our

traditional knowledge, ethics and values be recorded as we recognize and experience them today. Had the particular legends that I am using in this study not been recorded and translated back in the early 1950's, I would not have the privilege of comparing succeeding versions within the last half century to determine how one particular legend has remained very much the same as well as determining where the changes occurred.

I am not aware that any study of this type has been attempted. This is unique in that I am a fluent speaker and writer of my Aboriginal language and possess the traditional cultural knowledge of my Nation and I am also a faculty member of a university. Therefore, I proceed with extreme awareness and caution in the use of often conflicting paradigms and philosophies between traditional Aboriginal and European theories of knowledge and research methodologies.

This study will be of great value to other First Nations in the quest for their own traditional teachings, ethics and values that can be taught in contemporary educational settings. It should also prove to be an excellent discussion tool among Aboriginal academics on methodology and Indigenous knowledge paradigms, and an important source of information to mainstream communities and education centres.

Rationale for Selection of Stories and Research

Over the years, the traditional oral stories of the Anishinawbeg have remained very important to the people. Not only are these stories still being told in the old traditional method, they have also been translated and printed by the people themselves for preservation purposes and also to share with a wider audience.

Only the traditional stories that were told by First Nations people, transcribed into

syllabics, then into the Roman orthography, then translated to English, by the First Nations people themselves and edited by Native language linguists are used in this paper. Also included are some booklets that only contain the syllabic and English translation of stories told and published by the First Nations people.

The old traditional stories selected are only representative samples from north and northwestern Ontario. The selection of these myths and legends are also based on their authentic narration, transcription and careful translation. The interpretations of their meaning, unless stated by the original storyteller in the transcription, in no way provides a complete or truly accurate interpretation of a legend because by its very nature, there can be none.

First introduced to the Cree by the missionary James Evan in 1839, the syllabic system has been in use by the Ojibwa in northern Ontario for over 100 years. Roman orthography is usually included in the books for the convenience of those who do not use syllabic orthography.

To demonstrate how cohesive and stable the legends are in their rendering by oral story tellers spanning many generations, the Legend of Iyas will be examined to highlight the changes, omissions, and/or almost word-for-word repetition from four storytellers. One is a woman and the other three are men and they are all from different generations, in different geographical locations, and speak different dialects and languages and were recorded at various times from 1950s to the 1990s.

This legend appears in four published sources. One is a book called *I Can Hear It* (Sugarhead, 1996) which was published as a linguistics reader and was written first in the

Ojibwa syllabic writing system by an Ojibwa woman, then in collaboration with the editor, the stories were written into the Roman orthography, then translated into English. The last half of the book contains editorial notes, an Ojibwe-English Glossary, and an English Index to the Glossary.

The other is *Talking Animals* (Beardy & Wolfart, 1988) and the stories were told by a Native person, transcribed by Native people and reviewed by Native language teachers, then edited and translated into English by H. C. Wolfart. It is also written in syllabics, Roman orthography, and English with a Cree-English Glossary and English Index to the Glossary at the end. The dialectical differences in words written in Roman orthography are marked with a tilde or an acute accent which follows no distinction in the syllabic system. False starts and word changes by the speaker on tape, is also recorded on paper, along with voice pitch and volume that signals paragraphing and the timbre on voice play for each character in the story. The Cree-English Glossary lists all the Cree words used in the book exactly as they appear in the texts. The English Index to the Glossary lists the English translations of Cree stems (p. viii, x, xv, xvi, xviii).

Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay (Ellis, 1995) includes editorial notes, translated and edited with a glossary by C. Douglas Ellis. Transcribers and translators into English were Native people from the area. Simeon Scott's narrative was tape recorded, text set in Roman orthography and translated into English. The editor lists certain problematic areas in translation and editing. The recorded narratives included "stage whispers for eerie situations, onomatopoeia and outright imitations of animal sounds, child language, snatches of Ojibwa, etc. - and in

certain cases the extreme contraction of a highly colloquial style. It has been attempted to represent all this in the transcription" (Ellis, 1995, p. xiv). Ellis (1995) states,

> much of the artistry is difficult to sustain in translation; and the connotative meaning embedded in archaic terms such as ehepik 'spider', or the full effect of Ojibwa usage attributed to the lynx are inevitably reduced for the non-Cree reader/ hearer of the story. . . . As is often the case with oral literature, the form of the discourse is not verbally fixed in every detail. It is rather the theme and sequence which remain constant. (p.xxvi)

Another source used in my study was important research conducted and published by Brant (1990), an Aboriginal psychiatrist whose list of Native ethics and rules of behaviour is particularly relevant to this study because the tribal groups covered in Brant's research are those noted here. As with any research of this type, in order to prevent stereotyping, Brant cautions "against any indiscriminant or universal application" (p. 534) to the following categories on all First Nations communities. In his introductory comments, Brant explains that "in order to survive as a group, individuals, living cheek by jowl throughout their lives, had to be continuously cooperative (14) and friendly" (p. 535).

The Native ethics and rules of behaviour as they were taught in the traditional oral stories form the basis of the teachings in the novels *Honour the Sun* and *Silent Words.* It should be noted that Brant's research was not published before the publication of *Honour the Sun*, yet, all of Brant's categories are present in both novels. It is important that these teachings be recognized as they exist in these novels and in other First Nations literature.

Brant's article highlights some of these teachings of which examples will be provided from relevant traditional stories, the two novels mentioned above, and other Native literature. For the purposes of this study, and being mindful of the length of the paper, only my first two novels will be used in finding examples of these teachings.

It is to be understood of course, that not *all* ethics and rules of behaviour are noted by Brant as that would be quite an impossible task. However, there are several other categories that I have added as they are relevant to the literature mentioned. Once the explication of cultural teachings from the stories, legends and the novels is complete, it should be clear that culture-based Native books are directly connected to their traditional natal oral stories.

Leslie Marmon Silko's work has already demonstrated that oral tradition from the community can be used in contemporary literature. Her writing reflects the life and surroundings of her natal community of Laguna, New Mexico and her book *Ceremony*, (1977) "is based on a circular time: fragmentation results in a structure that is based on a series of events that depend on the solar year and on things with a reality different from Western understanding of time and events" (Grant, 1986, p. 68). In his interviews with Canadian Native writers, Lutz (1991) observed that:

> In Canada at least three Native languages, Cree, Inuktitut, and Ojibwa, are going strong, and many others are likewise spoken on a daily basis. The ties of modern Native literature to the oral tradition seem far stronger in these areas, and the languages, in turn, are tied to the land (as Maria Campbell, Ruby Slipperjack, Tomson Highway, and others stress in their interviews). How can Western

literary criticism accommodate this relationship?. (p. 7)

The relationship referred to, of course, is the connection of today's Aboriginal literature to the oral traditional stories of generations past. The land still talks and the wind still whispers to our souls.

A Review of a Legend

Due to the consistent reinforcement of cultural teachings throughout the generations, the stories of the people have remained relatively the same. Although the Cree and Ojibwa language may differ, both cultures are similar in their beliefs, rituals, and stories. The *Legend of Ayas* was written by four different people, who are from four different places and their stories were recorded and printed at four different periods of time. As the dialects vary, the titles are also spelled differently and as Ellis (1995) said of legends that appear elsewhere, "In each account the main theme appears to be followed closely though not verbatim by different storytellers, even though certain formulae recur with a surprising level of exact repetition" (p. xxx). A reference from King (1986) also states "The evidence available from folklore scholarship suggests that there is remarkable stability in oral narratives. Myths and tales re-collected from the same culture show considerable similarity in structural pattern and detail despite the fact that the myth and tales are from different informants who are perhaps separated by many generations" (p. 74). To illustrate this point, the sequence of the story will be compared with all four versions.

The first version of this particular legend is titled *The Legend of Ayas* told by Simeon Scott, a Swampy Cree of West Coast James Bay in 1955-57 (Ellis, 1995, p. 44 -

59). The second version is *The Plight of Iyas* told by an elder and translated by Carl Ray of the Sandy Lake Cree in 1971 (Stevens, 1971, p. 112 - 120). The third is *The Legend of Aayaahsh* told by Cecilia Sugarhead, a Northern Ontario Ojibwa in 1996 (Sugarhead, 1996, p. 70 - 91). The fourth is *The Story of Iyashees* told by Thomas Rupert of the Fort George, James Bay Cree in 1973 (Bauer, 1973, p. 1 - 9). (Refer to the map on the next page for story-teller's location.)

Henceforth, the name of the boy and year of narration / publication will be used to distinguish which version is under discussion. To note the similarities and differences, each paragraph summarizes an episode from each of the four versions.

The plot of the story goes that having been abandoned on an island and left to die by his step-father, a young boy makes his way back home to his mother with the help of his spiritual relatives who provide guidance and medicine to keep him from harm.

The introduction to *Ayas* (1955-57) states that he is the son of an abusive father and Ayas frequently objects to the beating of his mother which prompts the father to do away with his son. *Iyas* (1971) however, is the step-son of a strong bad medicine man who has two wives, the oldest of which is Iyas' mother with whom Iyas spends 'many happy hours.' *Aayaahsh* (1996) is described as a very handsome young man who is well mannered, and a good hunter. He is the step-son of a man who has two wives. The man lives with his younger wife while Aayaahsh lives with his mother, the older wife, whom he loves very much. *Iyashees* (1973) is said to be the son of a man with two wives, one young wife and the older one who is Iyashees' mother. Both Iyashees and his mother are badly mistreated by the man.

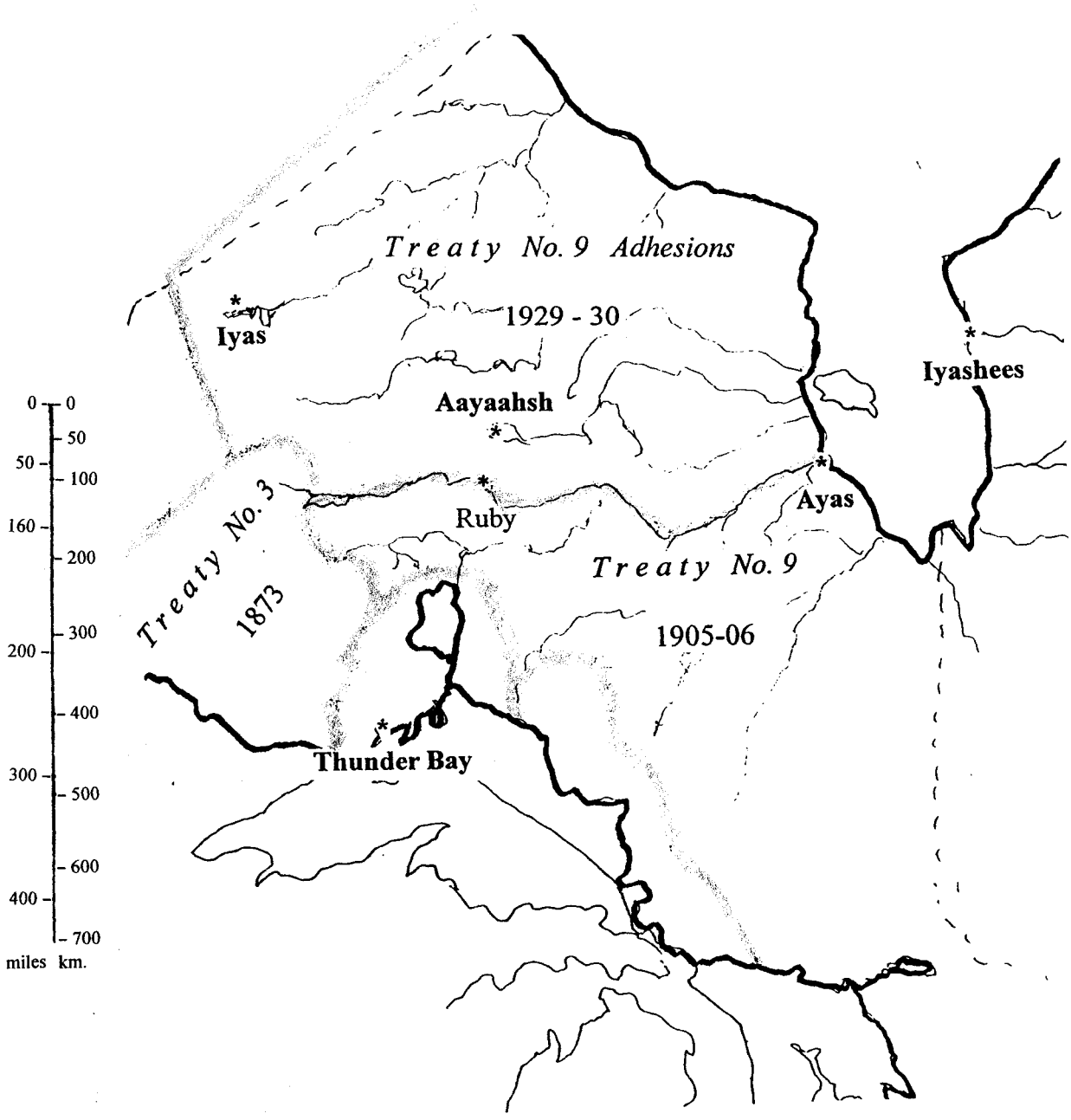


Figure 1
Location of Legend Storyteller by Character
Treaty 3 and Treaty 9 boundaries of northern/northwestern Ontario

Only Iyas (1971) and Aayaahsh (1996) speak of the younger wife making sexual advances toward Iyas/Aayaahsh who, in turn, reject her, prompting her revenge by lying to the father that his son had tried to rape her. The punishment for this crime is the abandonment of the son on an isolated island far off from shore. There are slight variations of the actions taking place on the way to and the old man's return from the island. These versions are told just as they had been passed down through the generations without censorship of content.

Invited to go hunting by his father, Ayas (1955-57) quite innocently accompanies his father and is taken to an island, tricked into getting off, and is left there without a backward glance despite his calls to his father. Iyas (1971) and Aayaahsh (1996) have similar plots. The reason for abandonment in Iyashees (1973) and Ayas (1955-57) appears to be the old man's desire to rid himself of his son who is increasingly objecting to the treatment of his mother.

Iyashees (1973) has a longer story of the trip to the island and his abandonment. Ayas (1955-57) does not mention the next episode, but Iyas (1971) manages to save himself from being torn to bits by the giant seagulls when he reminds them that through his dreams, they were his spiritual protectors. Aayaahsh (1996) also saves himself from being killed by the giant seagulls by reminding them that he had dreams where they were his protectors. These two versions closely follow the traditional versions that include the Aboriginal spiritual element that is missing in the other versions that have been obviously edited for content. Iyashees (1973), on the other hand, finds pity from the giant seagulls and they shelter him beneath their wings for the night since they did not have the strength

to fly him that far to the mainland, but they suggest that in the morning he is to go to the other side of the island where he would find help.

Only Iyas (1971) and Aayaahsh (1996) tell of the birds flying them around above the old man as he lay in the bottom of his canoe singing, and they let go a load of excrement which falls right on the old man's face. This is a good example where editing for content becomes apparent, when the sequence of the story is omitted for publication for educational purposes as in Ellis, 1995 and for religious reasons as in Bauer, 1973. The story of Iyashees (1973) is included in the *Tales from the Cree* with a note on the copyright page stating "Proceeds from the sale of this book will be given to The Bishop of Moosonee for Indian Mission work in the Diocese."

The Stevens (1971) and Sugarhead (1996) versions are told as they were passed down through the generations without content omission, and it is interesting to note that a sentence in English said differently each time, translates the same in Ojibwa. In the Stevens (1971) version, when the old man assumes that the seagulls had had a meal of a human boy, he thinks, "Those seagulls can certainly make manure from a human meal in a short time." The Sugarhead (1996) version states, "They really are starting to have human excrement because they've been eating people." Both sentences translate back to the same words in the Ojibwa language.

Only Iyas (Stevens, 1971) and Aayaahsh (Sugarhead, 1996) speak of the fast they undertake in order to gain spiritual strength and guidance from the spirit world. In his dream Iyas foresees seven perils and all that is to come in his journey ahead and Aayaahsh dreams of six perils and also foresees all that is to come in his journey home.

The solution to the boy's immediate problem of getting off the island is offered in several scenarios. Ayas (1955-57) speaks of a water creature with horns who offers to swim him across to the mainland. Iyas (1971) sees a mighty green-horned serpent that calls him 'Grandson' and offers to swim him to shore. Aayaahsh (1996) also sees a giant green serpent who calls him 'my grandson' and tells him to sit on top of his back while he swims him across. But Iyashees (1973), finds two giant catfish on the other side of the island as he had been instructed by the seagulls. They too call him 'grandson' and decide to take him to the mainland providing that there are no dark clouds coming. Note that the religious publication Iyashees (1973), replaces the horned water serpent with two giant catfish. The area north of, as well as on the shores of Lake Superior contain many pictographic images of horned serpents in water. The myths and legends of this creature abound in this region. Then again, perhaps the creature didn't reside as far up north where Iyashees lived.

In exchange for his transportation, there are specific requests given to the boy. While Ayas (1955-57) is sitting on the head of the creature, he is asked to tell the creature if he hears thunder coming. Iyas (1971) is to hit the horns of the serpent with a stick if he sees any black clouds coming. Aayaahsh (1996) was also to hit the serpent's horn should he see thunder coming, and Iyashees (1973) is told to sit on the catfish's heads so he can be above water and with a flat stone, hit them on the head with it right away should he see black clouds coming. As any child comes to know when he/she does not listen, there are consequences.

Wanting to get to the mainland, Ayas (1955-57) does not alert the creature when

he sees the clouds and thunder approaching. When the creature hears something, he asks Ayas what the sound is, but Ayas says that it is only the sounds of his horns whistling. Iyas (1971) also tells the serpent that it is only the serpent's stomach growling and urges him to go faster. As the thunder and lightening get closer, Aayaahsh (1996) tells the serpent that it is only the sound of the serpent's stomach growling. Iyashees (1973), on the other hand, tells the catfish that at the speed they are traveling, the noise is only the swishing wake of the water. He makes it to shore just as the lightning strikes all around them and the catfish dives safely underwater.

The creature tells Ayas (1955-57) to get off him and walk on top the froth on the water until he reaches dry land and then the lightning strikes the creature. Ayas makes it to dry land and pieces of the creature rain down on him and one blood-clot speaks to him saying that this is how it looks now because Ayas did not do as he was instructed. Ayas was sorry that he had thought only of himself. Iyas's (1971) serpent is also struck by lightning and a drop of blood falls on his hand and speaks to him, saying that to return the favour, he must retrieve the serpent's skin hanging from a branch on the tree, put some tobacco into it and throw it into the water. He does as he is instructed and the serpent comes to life again and he sees the tail as it dives deep into the water. Aayaahsh's (1996) serpent also comes to life after being struck by lightning. He sees blood everywhere and it instructs him to retrieve its skin hanging from a tree branch, put tobacco in it, blow on it and throw it into the water. As he does so, the serpent lives again and with its tail momentarily visible to the surface, it dives deep into the water. Again, the religious publication Bauer (1973), omits this spiritual ritual.

Once on land, the journey of the boy begins. Ayas (1955-57) comes across a small wigwam where his grandmother is waiting for him. She warns him that there are many dangers where he must pass on his travel home. She then fixes a meal for him in a very small kettle saying that if he eats all the contents, he will survive the journey, and if not, he will die and never reach home. He eats and eats, but the content remains full, and just when he thinks he will die after all, the small kettle becomes empty. Now his grandmother gives him medicine to ward off evil, but she does not list all the perils he will encounter as do the others. Ayas also does not have the guardian angel fox to watch over him.

Iyas (1971) follows fox tracks leading to a wigwam where he meets a mother fox who invites him into her lodge where he sleeps. The next morning, she fixes him a meal in 'a small cooking pot about the size of a man's finger' and he eats and eats. When he is just about to give up, his stomach expands into the size of a wolf's stomach and he eats more. Then it expands once more into the size of a small lake before he finishes all the contents in the small pot. He feels very strong and courageous now that the food has given him 'every power of all the gods.' Now he is ready to begin his journey.

Aayaahsh (1996) also sees a fox track and follows it to the fox's home where Fox invites him inside and feeds him stew in a small cooking pot, and he is instructed to keep his eyes closed and not to look as he is eating. He eats and eats and then realizes that the pot is expanding as he is eating and he is becoming stronger and stronger until he tells the fox that he is now ready to go where his mother is.

Iyashees (1973) also sees fox tracks and follows them to a tent where fox invites

him inside and she turns out to be his grandmother. Warning him that his father is watching him every step of the way with his magic power, she instructs him to eat all of the stew in a small pail. He eats and eats along with a cup of gravy that he drinks and drinks, until he finally finishes it all. Since Granny Fox is to accompany him and protect him through all his perils, there is no need for her to give him medicine.

In each of the four versions, the boy is given 'medicine' or things that will help him overcome the dangers and perils that await him in his travel back to his mother. The danger comes from the father who is a powerful medicine man and as he perceives the travels of his son, he sends obstacles and turns ordinary people into ones with means to kill the boy. The boy manages to avoid the pitfalls, outwits the obstacles and heals the afflicted people who had been changed to do him harm by his father. From here on, the stories describe how each of the medicinal objects are used in turn to keep the boy from harm.

All of the stories speak of time as passing years between each encounter and the next three or four episodes are in various order of sequence until the scene goes back to the mother and how her life has been during the boy's absence. From there, the rest of the journey home is told in more or less the same detail.

In Iyas (1971), boy meets mother fox, small kettle, medicine bundle, traveling together, big leg, hooks from the sky, dog, woman with three daughters, two old blind women with sharp elbows, gets home to mother, bird, baby, no pelts, fire, safe zone, and metamorphosis.

In Iyashees (1973), boy and grandmother fox, little kettle, fox travels with boy so

there is no need for medicine bundle, woman with big leg, strange rattles, fish hooks above and below the water, there is no woman with three daughters, two old women with sharp elbows, dogs, home to mother, bird, no baby, pelts, fire, safe zone, and metamorphosis.

In Aayaahsh (1996), boy meets fox, little kettle, medicine bundle, man with the big leg, fox goes home and boy travels alone, woman with three daughters, dogs, two old women with no faces try to kill him with their sharp elbows, home to mother, bird, baby, pelts, fire, safe zone, and metamorphosis.

In Ayas (1955-57), grandmother, little kettle, medicine bundle, boy travels alone, no mention of hooks in Ayas' story, no woman with three daughters, two old blind women with the sharp elbows, shoulder blades hanging to set up a rattle, vicious dog, man with the big leg, mother, baby, pelts, fire, safe zone - symbolic representations of characters in the natural environment, and metamorphosis.

Toward the end of the story, there is a fierce struggle between the evil father and the honourable son as they pit their powers against each other. There is no reference to any physical violence or abusive verbal exchange, rather, it is a spiritual power struggle. Of course, the good son wins and manages to protect the rest of the family and animals from harm as he sends fire raging to cleanse any remnants of evil left by his father.

In Ayas (1955-57), as a reminder of what happens to people who abuse their partners, it is said that as his flesh burned, the old man was reduced to represent the hollow yellow things on the ground that emit a puff of yellow smoke when stepped on. As old Simeon Scott says "'Ghost-smokes' as they are called, that one that steams, that's

the old man" (Ellis, 1995, p. 59). The rock with mud and white moss on it is the old woman, the tamarack tree standing tall in the lagoon is Ayas, the best of wood for snow-shoe frames that is to be used for many generations. The point of land that juts out into the lake is the clothing of his mother. This story told by Simeon Scott ends with, "That is the length of the account, the legend about Ayas" (Ellis, 1995, p. 59).

Iyas (1971) concludes that after the fire razed the earth and when all things had regrown, Iyas realizes that he and his mother were now redundant entities. So, he puts his hands on his mother's shoulders, telling her that from then on, she would fly about the world, singing and praying for Native people and turns her into a robin. Then he changes himself into a toad. "We still find charcoal in the ground today that came from the great fire. The robins, of course, are sacred birds. Indians never kill them because they know the spirit of Iyas's mother lives in their bodies" (Stevens, p. 120). So ends Stevens' version.

Aayaahsh (1996) gathers the bones of the old man, his wife, and their baby and throws them into the water and they turn into "bufflehead" ducks swimming around. Then he turns his mother into a robin saying "You will just sing for the people. You won't suffer any hardships" (Sugarhead, 1996, p. 91), then he too disappears. Sugarhead ends with "This is as much as I can remember the way the legend is told about Aayaahsh" (p. 91).

Iyashees (1973) in Bauer's (1973) book, decides to change them all when the earth had finished burning and all that was left was Iyashees, his mother and his brothers and sisters. He changes his mother into a robin, his brothers and sisters into sparrows, and

says "The people will make songs when they expect you back to their lands each spring so happy will they be to see you. You will bring joy to their lives" (p. 9). He then changes himself into a penguin saying that he will live "in a part of the world that people will never see. I'll live at the end of the earth" (p. 9).

And so, the stories come to an end. As to what can be gleaned from each story and to what extent the teachings and meanings can be attributed to each scenario, is all dependent on the reader. The significance of each action and object in the story can also be highly metaphorical as a statement about life and the stages of growth that a person experiences in his or her entire lifetime. But, suffice it to say that for this study, it is another story of how good overcame evil.

The varying differences and similarities noted among versions are consistent with all the other stories in print. Some are told almost word for word by different storytellers, and some authors skip over scenes that they may have deemed inappropriate at the time. Another example where some editing was done is in a story called "Weesakechahk Carries Around His Song Bag" told by Xavier Sutherland in *Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay* (Ellis, 1995, p. 125) where he pauses with "While he was sleeping . . . " then continues, "At last Weesakechahk awakened with a start" (p. 125). The whole section that is missing at that exact point in the story is told in full by Sophie Gunner in her story called "Weesahkwechahk and the birds, and why the trees have scabs" in *Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay* (Ellis, 1995, p. 311) where she tells the well-known version of the trickster's argument with his rear end and his eventual punishment of it by burning it; hence the scabs. The

same story in Stevens (1971, p. 44) also includes the same version of the trickster's rear end who was supposed to be on watch duty but inadvertently raises false alarms much like the saying 'crying wolf too many times.' So, he sits on red hot rocks to punish it.

In summary, Ellis (1995) states that "The storyteller works within the context of well-defined motifs and a commonly accepted framework, but clearly there is ample scope for individual artistic expression in the smooth sequencing of events, the lively representation of dialogue and situational context, and the rousing of sympathetic response through the rehearsal of familiar themes with the appeal which traditional stories have everywhere" (p. xxxii). The experience of listening to a visually descriptive story teller is like watching a movie.

3 Methodological Considerations

Methodology and Theories

Due to the nature of this study, I have not incorporated the traditional literature review section but have used theories as they support, advance or challenge my work. The method I have followed includes the selection of authentic myths and legends as they have been told by the Aboriginal people. I discuss the teachings gleaned from these stories and their presence in Aboriginal communities and how these, in turn, appear in natal-based Aboriginal literature. I have lived in Aboriginal communities where my stories take place, and I have an intimate knowledge of the community's more subtle forms of communication systems - both verbal and non-verbal, and I have walked the land that I speak of.

I am not by any means the first First Nations woman to have my cultural background inform my work. In Jahner's (Jaskowski,1998) interview with Leslie Marmon Silko, she quotes Silko as saying, "The oral tradition with its cycles of stories creates whole experiences too, a foundation of experience on which to build. It presents all these different possibilities that affect how we see the structure of things . . . the cycles of stories in the oral tradition were like a novel. I just continue the old storytelling traditions" (p. 120). Silko's work incorporates the traditional beliefs and reverence for the natural world, her people, the land, and her community. In Grant's (1986) discussion of Silko's *Ceremony*, she states that "The ancient stories are incorporated as an integral part of the plot; and without the hero's belief in the traditional healing powers, he could not have been cured" (p. 68). The colour representations in Silko's writing also stem

from the teachings of the traditions stories, as in the reference to the colour yellow and Yellow Woman from the myths (Jaskoski, 1998, p. 34). Jaskoski (1998) also states that Silko has "articulated a strongly developed theory of her writing, its backgrounds, and the dynamic of written and oral verbal arts that she sees in her writing and in the life of her birth community . . ." (p. 91). If you are writing from within your culture, quite naturally, your culture will appear in your writing. In this study, I am taking this one step further, by describing what each of the cultural elements are and connecting them to their mythological origins and illustrating their presence in contemporary literature.

This section hopes to explain the lack of the traditional literature review, methodology and theory as is normally the accepted format of a dissertation. The holistic means of Aboriginal teaching and learning know no boundaries and can accommodate shifting, as well as concrete paradigms. Hall and duGay (1996) speak of this as a "reconceptualization - thinking it in its new, displaced or decentered position within the paradigm" (p. 2). This allows for what is termed *standpoint epistemology* by Nielson (1990) and it is basically the idea that those in disadvantaged positions will have a clearer picture of reality and that,

> this awareness gives them the potential for what Annas (1978) called "double vision" or double consciousness—a knowledge, awareness of, and sensitivity to both the dominant world view of the society and their own minority (for example, female, black, poor) perspective. For example, given that blacks in our culture are exposed to dominant white culture in school and through mass media as well as in interaction with whites, we can see how it is possible that blacks could know both

white and black culture while whites know only their own. (p.10)

Preston (2000) also says that "value biases are often invisible to all those that share them. Only from the outside can an adequate critique be made" (p. 212). As an outsider, value biases would not become evident unless you recognized their presence, but as an outsider, you would not recognize them to identify them because you would not know what they look like. As an insider, you would be too close to realize that they are present. In my case, I am a member of a marginalized group but also a fully functioning member of an outside or mainstream research group. In this position, I think that I do possess the "double vision" in that I see clearly the things that are present from within the culture and I am aware by inside knowledge, the things that others from the outside would not. In this way, value biases or any other subtle forms become clearly evident.

In the context of Aboriginal researchers, having the experience of working and studying in the urban setting would also mean that Native people as a minority Nation would have the knowledge to see and understand the cultures of non-Natives, as well as their own, while everyone else knows only their own. Therefore, the methodology and the theories that this study draws on include the use of cultural studies and others that value my situatedness as a researcher. On the topic of feminist epistemology, DeVault (1999) states that the,

> notion that some positions provide a "better view" of social organization or a preferred site from which to "start thought" (Harding 1991) seems to accord some knowers an "epistemic privilege" associated with their identities. However, critics point out that identity is not automatically associated with superior insight,

> and the sociological literature on insider-outsider dynamics certainly calls into question any easy assumption about the consequences for research of particular identities, which are always relative, crosscut by other differences, and often situational and contingent. (p. 39)

The fact remains that whatever methodology is used in this study, it will have some drawbacks because it will not 'fit' or adhere seamlessly to its new foreign host being the topic and structure of this study. For example, Duran (1991) claims that the work of "feminist epistemology or theory of knowledge . . . have given birth to material that purports to spell out for us what a feminist account of knowledge entails, or what is implied by the way of knowing that pertains to women" (p. xi). The language of feminist researchers on their research methodologies and epistemology, suggests that it would not be such a giant leap to visualize the words 'women' replaced by the word 'Aboriginal' and assume that it could work in the Aboriginal context. However, upon closer examination, it appears that by its very nature, Aboriginal epistemology runs contrary to Feminist epistemology and it follows that its theory of knowledge would be similarly affected. In her discussion on feminism, Ouellette (2002) states that "Aboriginal women cannot fit neatly into the feminists' conceptions of human nature because of different cultural values and beliefs, in other words, because of conflicting worldviews" (p. 26). For example, in Alaimo's (2000) *Undomesticated Ground: Recasting Nature and Feminist Space*, her discussion on the nature of feminist theory is replete with very strange images of feminism on the land and nature, such as "Mother earth, earth mothers, natural women, wild women, fertile fields, barren grounds, virgin lands, raped earths,

. . ." (p. 2). Coupled with the images above is the European notion that nature is inferior and subordinate to that of the human being. These are very foreign concepts to the Aboriginal world view. Given the fact that there is no word for male or female in the Aboriginal language and that earth is an inanimate object, there can be no human attributes to the images presented above. As Grant (1986) explains in her article on Native literature in the curriculum,

> the *equality* of all beings, animate or inanimate, is difficult for the non-Native mind to comprehend. Nature cannot be personified because it has being and power equal to that of mankind. Human beings are not the focus of attention at the centre of the universe. One cannot adopt a condescending attitude toward animals if animals are one's equal. An awareness of this view of nature, the sacredness of the word, the identification with the land, and the importance of ceremony, ritual and community, creates an understanding of the characteristics that make contemporary Native literature unique. (p. 65, 66)

There is also no such thing as 'wilderness' rather, the earth is home for us all. This view of life is demonstrated in the old traditional legends or stories as well as in contemporary literature and is an Aboriginal epistemological view of the world and all that is therein.

Appropriate methodologies and theories have recently been the topic of discussion and publication by other Aboriginal academics and researchers. Simpson (2000) states that a "number of Aboriginal intellectuals in a variety of disciplines are calling for the recognition and employment of Aboriginal world views, theories of knowledge and methods indigenous to Aboriginal cultures in intellectual endeavors" (p. 167). If an

Aboriginal language is so hard to accurately translate into the English language, it is even more difficult to align Aboriginal epistemology and its own theories of knowledge to the traditional European methodologies and theories that such research is conducted.

Simpson (2000) goes on to say that "increasingly, Aboriginal academics are engaging in research with Aboriginal communities and this inevitably raises the conscious desire to conduct research that is rooted in our own world views in order to ensure the accurate construction of Aboriginal perspectives" (p. 167). As research methodologies and theories are currently applied in academe, by necessity, the Aboriginal component must conform to the dictates of a European model. This compromises and corrupts the original state of the Aboriginal object of study.

Simpson (2000) implores that "one of our responsibilities as Aboriginal academics is to use our privileged formal education to reinforce Aboriginal traditional social structures, world views and ways of knowing within the walls of academe" (p. 169). However, I must also comment on Simpson's (2000) statement: "I challenge others to consider why we are developing Indigenous paradigms and methods when the very concept of a paradigm and methods are western in nature. Do we hear our Elders talk about paradigms and methods?" (p. 170). Perhaps, had she been born and raised in an Aboriginal culture and knew her traditional language, she would understand that there is such a thing. Just as we translate from an Aboriginal language to English, we can also translate paradigms and methods. As an example, we can use the patterns of the seasons as a model to illustrate our view of the world which becomes the basis of our theory and methodology. Therefore, yes, our Elders talk about paradigms and methods, but in the

context of the Aboriginal language. It will, by its very nature, have its own structures, just as literal translation of an Aboriginal language into English is not always possible. Where no comparable word exists in one language, one describes the concept in the other language. This is precisely what I am doing in this study. Being that 'Aboriginal epistemology', 'traditional knowledge', 'ways of knowing', 'traditional environmental/ecological knowledge' and 'traditional practical knowledge,' are such puzzling terms for some people, I will provide some examples from the novels where and how this cultural knowledge becomes evident in the Ojibwa society.

Aboriginal Epistemology

Aboriginal epistemology, according to Ermine (1995), is "grounded in the self, the spirit, the unknown. Understanding the universe must be grounded in the spirit . . . Aboriginal epistemology speaks of pondering great mysteries that lie no further than the self" (p. 108). Aboriginal Epistemology is "the study of the nature and attainment of knowledge, and which much of the literature describes as holistic, encompassing the intellectual, emotional, physical and spiritual realms" (Hanohano, 1999, p. 211). It is the philosophical view of life as well as the natural world around us. It is also a holistic view that is intrinsically embedded in the Aboriginal language and this understanding of the world is directly connected with the traditional cultural stories of the people. Therefore, Aboriginal epistemology, as has been defined by Aboriginal researchers will serve as the theoretical foundation in this path to identifying some of the major cultural teachings of the Ojibwa Nation.

Traditional Knowledge

Yup'ik Ways of Knowing according to Kawagley (1990), include the "interbeing mobility, intuitions, visions and dreams, and (most importantly spiritual interaction)" (p. 5). LaRocque (2001) states that "Native knowledge is informed by an ethical and spiritual basis which is intimately linked with Aboriginal people's relationship with each other, and with the land and its resources" (p. 67). Barnhardt (1991) expresses this idea accordingly, "Less tangible than the role of language, but of equal and growing importance to indigenous higher education institutions, are the traditional ways of constructing, organizing, and using knowledge - an indigenous epistemology, or ways of knowing" (p. 227).

Since Kawagley's (1990) article on the subject of *Yup'ik Ways of Knowing*, there is still no explicit literature that deals with how this traditional knowledge is in fact, directly connected to the traditional cultural stories of the people. Although some Aboriginal academics (Cordero, 1995; Couture, 1996; Hanohano, 1999; Lightning, 1992; Ermine, 1995) have alluded to the connection of the myths and legends of the people in their discussion on Aboriginal epistemology, a direct link has never been established. The importance of this knowledge is considerable in light of the state of decline in the natal language and traditional lifestyle of Aboriginal people in some areas of the country today.

LaRocque (2001) states that Traditional knowledge is "'holistic' land-based knowledge transmitted by the elders through oral language and praxis . . . built on observation, experience and reflection, while its teachings are grounded in the natural

world" (p. 63). As such, Aboriginal epistemology and traditional knowledge form the foundation of an Aboriginal culture's stories and are thus, inherent in Aboriginal literature that is based in its natal culture. Therefore, my methodology and theoretical framework will remain entrenched in its own cultural foundation but will draw on other theories of similar research wherever possible.

Sioui (1992), quotes the Sioux holy man Hehaka Sapa, in his chapter 'The Sacred Circle of Life' that,

> everything done by an Indian is done in a circular fashion, because the power of the universe always acts according to circles and all things tend to be round: In the old days, when we were a strong and happy people, all our power came from the sacred circle of the nation and as long as the circle remained whole, the people flourished. The blossoming tree was the living centre of the circle and the circle of the four quarters nourished it. The east gave peace and light, the south gave warmth, from the west came rain, and the north, with its cold and powerful wind, gave strength and endurance. This knowledge came to us from the external world (the transcending world, the universe) and with it, our religion. Everything done by the power of the universe is made in the form of a circle. The sky is circular and I have heard that the Earth is round as a ball and the stars too are round. The wind whirls, at the height of its power. The birds build their nests in a circular way, for they have the same religion as us. . . . Our teepees (tents) were circular like the nests of the birds, and were always laid in a circle - the circle of the nation, a nest made of many nests, where the Great Spirit willed us to brood our

children. (p. 8)

This view is consistent with the teachings of northern Ontario and elsewhere in North America that include the Medicine Wheel. The instructional binder, "Teachings of the Medicine Wheel" (Buswa & Shawana, 1992), states that "A study of the teachings within the Circle of Life can revitalize the traditional teachings of the Native people. These units will provide language teachers, some language materials and resources for Anishnaabec First Nations, relating to the culture, traditions, values and philosophy" (p. 3). The next section in the unit explains how these teachings are divided into instructional units and exercises. The first two paragraphs are stated as follows:

> In the traditional way, the whole curriculum is taught the Anishnaabe Way - Circle of Life - Medicine Wheel Way. The aspiration of the Medicine Wheel teachings brings together the wholistic approach of the language including the life cycle. This brings the Native Language as being a culturally based program. Everything of Creation is represented in the Medicine Wheel. In all of Creation there is a cause and effect. The Medicine Wheel depicts how these things of Creation interact. (p. 4)

There are a number of these instructional units that were developed by First Nations educators. The eighty-four page booklet explanation of the teachings of the Medicine Wheel in *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al.,1988) ends with "to be continued." The definition reads as follows:

> This is an ancient symbol used by almost all the Native people of North and South America. There are many different ways that this symbol is used: the four

> grandfathers, the four winds, the four directions, the four stages of life and many other things that can be talked about in sets of four . . . (p. 11). All things are interrelated. Everything in the universe is a part of a single whole. Everything is connected in some way to everything else. We can understand something only if we can understand how it is connected to everything else . . . (p. 28). The medicine wheel is an ancient and powerful symbol of the universe. It is a silent teacher about reality. It shows the many different ways in which all things are connected. It shows things that are and also things that could be. (p. 34)

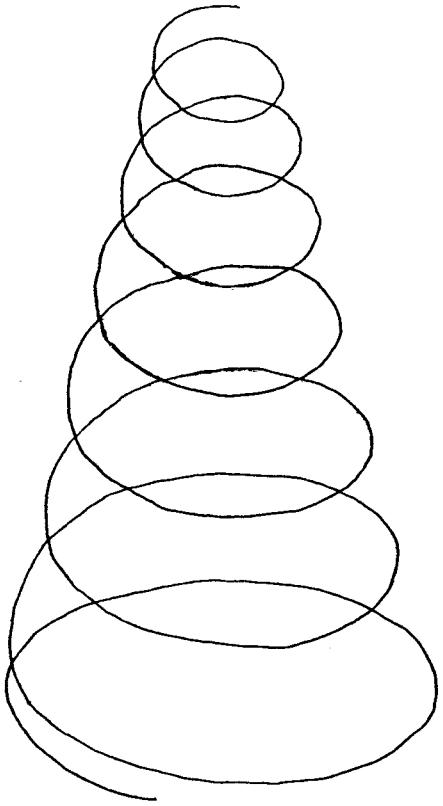
The teachings of the Ojibwa tell us that the drum being round, surrounds the earth with its vibration and the words of its drummer tell of feet walking the circular hemisphere of our world. This knowledge is not acquired in one session but is rather the totality of Aboriginal existence from the endless past, the present, and the future. As Native people, we know that the Eternal Spiral has no beginning and it has no end. It is everything that there is and everything that is not. It could be thought of as the half of one and the half of its other in order to keep the balance of its spiral energy.

In *The Sacred Tree* (Bopp et al., 1988) there is an image titled "Vision" which is of a circle with a line running vertical and horizontal, dividing the circle into four. It is slightly overlapped by another circle and another distinct circle, with circles gradually fading into the distance tied by an internal connecting cord that stems from the centre + (p. 17). In another section is a design showing the face cross-section of a circle with four-equal designs and its sides are covered, showing only the receding circle halves fading into the distance. This is described as "The mystery of all endings is found in the birth of

new beginnings. There is no ending to the journey of the four directions. The human capacity to develop never stops. The medicine wheel turns forever" (p. 73).

The image that has evolved from the cultural teachings received in my youth and gained in my experience and knowledge in life is that of a revolving spiral, much like the toy 'slinky'. In my writings, this image is projected from different angles. In *Honour the Sun*, the spiral appears in the seasonal format of the novel, allowing the chapters to roll with the seasons and the years as it keeps pace with the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth of the young girl. The space and time between each season is shared in life experience of the character with the reader. We are inside and a part of her culture where we observe the familiar activities, remember with all our senses, and rediscover our world through her eyes. This projects an image of a linear revolution of the spiral, whether it is weaving side-ways, horizontally or vertically, the shape of the mental image really does not matter. It is, however, always in motion, in a circular pattern, turning and coaching all things into its circular mould. In *Silent Words*, the image is inside the circle view, where the spirals recede into smaller ones in a cross-sectional view of space and distance. This space in time and place is knowledge and experience. (See Figure 2a and 2b next page). So, the physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual growth of the young boy is expressed as the cross-section of a tree. In this format, we are coming from the outside, going into the culture with the boy, where we experience and seek to understand the space that forms the interconnected spines of the spiral.

In my attempt to explain this to an English class where I was the guest lecturer, I resorted to illustrations on the chalk-board. The following is the course instructor's



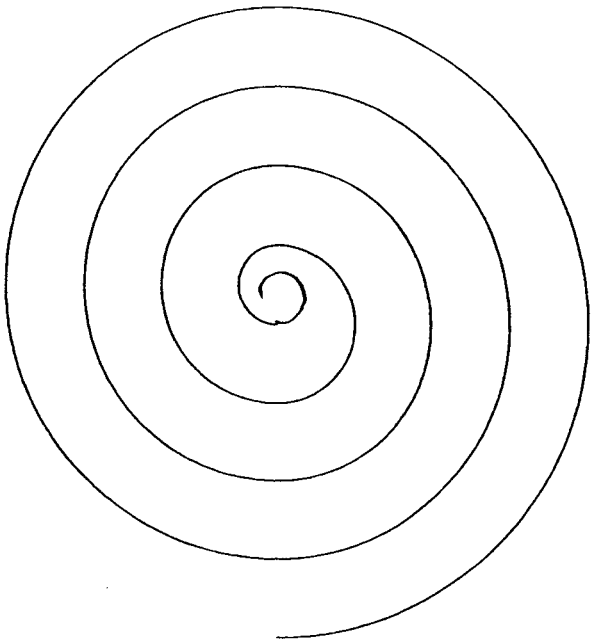


Figure 2
Spiral Image 2a *Honour the Sun*

Spiral Image 2b *Silent Words*

summation of the presentation which appeared in a journal article:

> Ruby Slipperjack's main character in *Silent Words* experiences time as a spacial dimension made up of layers. Although the narrative structure of the novel appears to follow a linear chronological sequence, the boy's intellectual, physical and emotional growth is related to his environment which he encounters and re-encounters in a cyclical quest journey. He sums up his maturing at the end of the novel by evoking the image of a cross-section of a tree that indicates ages by layers added on: You can't escape the silent words of your memory. They grow on you, layer after layer, year after year, documenting you from beginning to end, from the core to the surface. I built my cabin with silent words (Eigenbrod, 1995:89-102).

These words are incongruous with my earlier statement. It is not the time and environment that form the spatial dimension but rather the knowledge and experience gained within a specific space of time and place. Almost as a testament to this particular type of misconstrued understanding, Eigenbrod (1995) goes on to say that,

> It is a challenge for any writer - Aboriginal or not - to express through the inherent fragmentation and linearity of the medium of writing a belief in the holistic construct of a person and beyond that of the total of creation. Integrating the oral in the written means to translate into writing the "multidimensional words" spoken by a storytelling grandmother: "Listening to her was for me to listen to the collective voice of every living thing (Marchessault, 1990:188)." p.100

Traditional Environmental/Ecological Knowledge

Traditional Environmental Knowledge (TEK) is, according to Procter (2000) "usually characterized as holistic, intuitive, practical, orally transmitted, subjective, contextual and embedded in cultural values and spirituality" (p. 151). She also goes on to say that (T.E.K.) is "not an Aboriginal concept and it is non-Aboriginal in origin. . . . It represents traditional environmental knowledge in a political image alienating rather than empowering the Aboriginal people who have shared their traditional knowledge in land use and resource management projects" (p. 152).

Traditional Ecological Knowledge, according to Stevenson's (2001) quotation speaks of an "accumulated body of knowledge that is rooted in the spiritual health, culture, and language of the people and handed down from generation to generation. It is based on intimate knowledge of the land, water, snow, ice, weather, and wildlife, and the relationships between all aspects of the environment" (p. 78). It is also defined as an "experience acquired over thousands of years of direct human contact with the environment" (Petch, 2000, p. 139). Barnaby (2002) says that it is "knowledge that has been acquired by Aboriginal people through direct observation, hands-on experience, and thousands of years of ongoing interaction with the natural environment, their only home. But more than that, TEK is the collective understanding and interpretation of a community that exists in both time and space" (p. 86). Stevenson (2001) and Van Gerwen-Toyne's (2001) articles deal with traditional ecological knowledge and science resource management techniques. By whatever terminology Aboriginal people use to define this knowledge, it comes down to knowledge that is required to live on the land.

However, for others, it lends a slightly different slant. As Preston (2000) says, "the physical environment directly shapes the concepts and categories through which we view the world" (p. 215).

Oral Storytelling

In the introduction to *Tales from the Cree*, Bauer (1973), explains, "The narratives, to paraphrase the old Cree, [George Head] are to him what, to a fully believing Christian, are the Biblical stories of Creation, of the Fall, of the Redemption by Christ's sacrifice on the cross. As our sacred stories live in our ritual, in our morality, as they govern our faith and control our conduct, even so do his stories for the aged nomad hunter of the eastern subarctic" (p. iv). It is clear that the Church understood the importance of these stories to the people of this land. As a quick reference to other Aboriginal peoples, Kowanko (1994), also states that in Australia, "The Dreaming is as important to Aboriginal people as the Christian Bible and the whole ethos of Christian belief is to the devout Christian. The Dreaming is still vitally important to today's Aboriginal people. It gives a social and spiritual base and links them to their cultural heritage" (p. 28). The Aboriginal people of Australia refer to their myths and legends as *The Dreaming* and from whatever country, these Aboriginal stories are by no means just children's literature, they are as powerful and sacred as the Christian teachings in the Bible.

The teachings of the traditional cultural stories which have been passed down from one generation to another are still remembered by some of the older generation. There are also published versions of these stories that have been translated by the First Nations people themselves, and are thus authentic. Keeping in mind that some ethics and values may not hold true to other First Nations in a different location, the people should, nonetheless, realize that they do have an equivalent. By providing a method, or a way to

the traditional teachings, each First Nation should be able to develop a wealth of knowledge based on its own 'ways of knowing.' With this knowledge, First Nations can develop a means of translating and publishing their own Nation's myths and legends without losing the essence of the story.

Native authors in Canada and elsewhere have stated that the essence of the living stories is lost when they are rendered into print form. In the preface of "Write in on Your Heart" edited by Wendy Wickwire as told to her by Harry Robinson, she states: "Ironically, to crystalize Harry's stories either on tape or in book form, also fixes these living stories in time. They will now no longer evolve as they have for hundreds of generations" (Robinson, 1989, p. 23). Eigenbrod (1995) also expresses this as "the mere writing down of stories told, regardless by whom, destroys their essential character because of the inherent contradiction of preserving something that by its very nature is in constant flux and thus defies preservation . . . a written text is perceived as the fixation of nothing less than life itself" (p. 93). By exploring the literature on stories, myths and legends, First Nations novels and other literature by First Nations authors, in Canada, United States, and other countries, it becomes clear that this sense of translation loss from the oral to the written is a common scenario.

The Native myths and legends grow with you as you grow older, keeping pace not only with the physical, mental, spiritual, but emotional growth as well. The teachings offer something relevant, new, and insightful at each phase of a person's growth. The artist and poet Duane Niatum, (1993) offers the following insight:

What the artists have learned for the last 150 years, and modern science confirms,

> is that there is but one fluid circle of connections through which the several planes of being and doing, feeling and thinking, seeing and dreaming, living and dying, are interrelated spokes on the single wheel of experience. (p. 79)
>
> These poets uncover the limitless ways the spirit expresses itself in a people, . . . [and they] have miraculously united the physical and spiritual worlds in the same space and moment in time. This centeredness and integration of opposing opposites, the light and dark planes of reality, continues to be the broadest canvas of their art, and what may prove the soundest link in the sacred ring of their imagination. (p. 80)

It is this constant motion of cycles, circles, that revolve in, around, and through everything, that comprises this holistic sense that cannot be separated into different components to form its own wholes. Nothing is a separate entity unto itself.

Art, music, dance, poetry, visual arts, and all creations of the First Nations people are part of everything else. Archeologists have found evidence of spiral motifs used for millennia by Mississippian and other Woodlands cultures. Berlo and Philips (1998) have found that "The most common form of decoration on the fine pottery . . . was the spiral, a motif whose symbolic meanings may be related to the circular and cyclical concepts of time and sacred and ritual movement . . ." (p. 84). One bowl's spiral designs are described in the following: "Fundamental cosmological beliefs are combined on this bowl: the central circular form of the world and the sun, the four points of the cardinal directions, and the four, activating, spiralling lines that may indicate winds, seasons, or the spinning motion of the cosmos as a whole" (Berlo & Philips, 1998, p. 256). There

are, of course, other cultures around the world that use the image of the spiraling lines according to their own culture. The holistic philosophy, the force of the circular, is an image constantly evoked in the language of the First Nations writers. It is the image of this spiral that frames my first two novels (Figures 2a and 2b).

There are many forms of writing used by First Nations people. The form depends very much on how the authors wish to express themselves and how they would like to have their written work read. In his introduction to *All My Relations*, Thomas King (1990) states:

> Though virtually invisible outside a tribal setting, oral literature remains a strong tradition and is one of the major influences on many Native writers. Harry Robinson's story "An Okanagan Indian Becomes a Captive Circus Showpiece in England," is a fine example of interfusional literature, literature that blends the oral and the written. In a traditional oral story, you have the stories, the gestures, the performance, the music, as well as the storyteller. In a written story, you have only the word on the page. Yet Robinson is able to make the written word become the spoken word by insisting, through his use of rhythms, patterns, syntax, and sounds, that his story be read out loud, and, in so doing, the reader becomes the storyteller. (p.xiii)

In *Honour the Sun* (1987), the story is written in English that can easily and simultaneously be translated back into its original Ojibwa language as it is read, since it was the language in my mind as the author at the creation of the story. While other writers use characters from the myths and legends in their literature, still others use only

the teachings embedded within the oral stories. The words 'from oral to written' can mean so many things to different people. LaRocque (1990) offers the following observation: "We may bring our oratorical backgrounds to our writing and not see it as a weakness. What is at work is the power struggle between the oral and the written, between the Native in us and the English. And even though we know the English language well, we may sometimes pay little attention to its logic" (p. xx). The object to this type of writing then, is to use the English language as a vehicle to transfer or transmit the cultural teachings to the reader. Jacko (1992), a story-teller says that:

> Ojibwa stories and legends are used, as they have been from time immemorial, as teaching tools that help to impart our particular history and practices . . . Ojibwa beliefs, values, customs and traditions are intertwined in such accounts, and are woven into our upbringing to create an understanding of who we are as a distinct people, the Anishnabek (p. 40). This view approaches life with a totally different interpretation and offers unique explanations of our relationship with nature, the animals and the spirit world. (p. 42)

Nabhan's (1994) article also notes that traditional legends are an effective means of transferring cultural values and knowledge about the natural world. "The practical knowledge, the moral patterns and social taboos, and indeed the very language or manner of speech of any nonwriting culture maintain themselves primarily through narrative chants, myths, legends, and trickster tales - that is, through the telling of stories" (p. 181).

The most famous central character of these traditional teachings was Weesquachak or Nanabush of the old myths and legends of this area. This character is

commonly known as The Trickster in the English language. The mere mention of the name elicits a smile and anticipation from the listening audience. Since the Ojibwa language does not possess a gender specific word, to translate a non-gender specific language to English requires gender specific reference that most always acquires a male gender. Therefore, Johnston (1976) describes this he/she/it entity as:

> a supernatural being. As such, he possessed supernatural powers. Of all the powers he possessed, none was more singular than his power of transformation . . . Beings accept and understand only their own kind. . . . Whatever form or shape he assumed, Nanabush had also to accept and endure the limitations of that form and nature . . . he could be generous or miserly; he could be true or he could be false; loving or hating. As an Anishnabe, Nanabush was human, noble and strong, or ignoble and weak. For his attributes, strong and weak, the Anishnabeg came to love and understand Nanabush. They saw in him, themselves. (p. 20)

Ermine (1995) says that it "was the Old Ones, from their position in the community, who guided young people into various realms of knowledge by using the trickster. The Old Ones, above all, knew the character of the trickster and his capacity to assist with self-actualization. The fact that this trickster-transformer continues to intrigue us speaks of our unfinished exploration of the inner space" (p.105). Ermine also refers to the trickster as *he*.

King (1990) offers the following: "The trickster, is an important figure for Native writers for it allows us to create a particular kind of world in which the Judeo-Christian concern with good and evil and order and disorder is replaced with the more Native

concern for balance and harmony" (p. xiii). You will notice that King refers to the trickster as *it*. Another writer of the same opinion has this to say on the subject.

> Also, contemporary writers are constructing characters and plots based on Trickster, who can adopt any guise and is not confined to a specific gender. In addition, unlike the Trickster's Christian counterpart, her/his/its motivation is neither solely altruistic nor virtuous: Trickster manifestations function just as easily doing unkindly, suspicious, and sometimes cruel deeds as she/he/it does doing kind and virtuous deeds. Perhaps the most important aspect of contemporary Indigenous peoples' writing that distinguishes our writing from non-Indigenous peoples is the Trickster who endures all: the survivor. (Acoose, 1993, p. 38)

There are many examples of the use of the trickster character in the works of Native writers. According to King (1990), they "are all part of a long tradition of stories that speak to the nature of the world and the relatedness of all living things" (p. xiii). For Acoose (1993):

> Putting the Trickster back among Indigenous peoples re-establishes harmony and balance to Indigenous peoples' way of being, seeing, and doing. The Trickster, according to Tomson Highway, is an "extraordinary figure" without whom "the core of Indian culture would be gone forever (Drylips, 13)." (p. 37)

Accose (1993) also notes: "This very basic difference distinguishes Indigenous peoples' writing from non-Indigenous peoples' writing: Indigenous peoples' writing primarily grows out of a gynocratic-circular-harmonious way of life while non-Indigenous peoples'

writing in Canada has primarily grown out of a Christian-patriarchal hierarchy" (p. 38).

In contemporary Native literature where the trickster is the central character, or one that visits the scene periodically, *he* (for ease of reference) seems to undergo a metamorphosis as he is created in a different image from one Native author to another. My image of Weesquachak who walks along the shore with his bag of songs over his shoulder now springs at us from a page with an abandon of contemporary modern flair. Since this transformation is no more *his* doing, and definitely not under *his* control, it has changed his character forever into the realm of a science fiction shape-shifter bent to the wills of his creators. The Trickster today, seems to have taken on his own contemporary or modern image as he can be seen on the "Canadian Air computer . . . tap tapping his cane" (Armstrong, 1992, p. 1). Even my Weesquachak managed to join the lives of a contemporary couple in my novel *Weesquachak and the Lost Ones.* But, as always, he teaches, causes chaos and, in the end, eventually succeeds in accomplishing a good deed.

Traditional Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning from the old traditional sense of the words involves the total living experience of a person from early childhood to old age. The teaching methods, therefore, refer to the way children were and are taught, how they come to acquire knowledge within their own cultural environment, and how they are encouraged to take responsibility for their own learning.

The traditional concept of teaching is very much centered around the ethic of not interfering with another person. This allows personal autonomy to the learner to learn at his/her own pace, to understand at a level he/she is capable of at a given time, not to be told or forced to do something, to be respected and to have respect for other people's personal space, to share control and responsibility, and to act by group consensus (Brant, 1990).

The term "traditional practical knowledge" (Farrell, 1993, p. 4) is an attempt to describe the inherent or unconscious cultural knowledge. "Traditional" refers to cultural inherence of practical knowledge and common experience. "Practical knowledge" is derived from the "personal practical knowledge" as defined by Connelly and Clandinin (1988), in which they state that "personal practical knowledge . . . is in the person's past experience, in the person's present mind and body, and in the person's future plans and actions. Knowledge is found not only 'in the mind'. It is 'in the body' and it is seen and found 'in our practices'" (p. 25). We do things in a particular way and we are no longer conscious of the reason why.

Kaulback (1984); Whyte (1986); and More (1989), note that after many generations, Native children still learn by observing and doing, following example and trying when they are ready to take on a task. Most of this learning takes place without verbal instruction since the children are always present beside their elders, parents and siblings. Non-interference in their learning process is crucial and that "grandparents and other elders in the extended family were responsible for much of the teaching of the child" (More, 1989, p. 23).

Silent listening and observing allow the whole body to experience the world around. Philips (1972) mentions "the winter evening events of myth-telling, which provided Indian children with their first explicitly taught moral lessons, involved them as listening participants rather than as speakers" (p. 386). Since listening requires silence and watching requires attention, these are fairly basic lessons on self-control and respect for the environment and those around that the child first learns. Foreman (1991) refers to a West Coast Native grandmother telling her grandson "You have two eyes, two ears, and a mouth and you use them in that order. When you've understood what you've seen, when you've understood what you've heard, then you may speak, but not before. You don't change that order" (p. 78).

Native culture dictates social conformity to ensure individual equality. Meaning that the cultural and social rules of protocol and respect are geared to maintain social conformity so that one is not higher or lower than the others, thereby ensuring equality for all individuals. In the classroom context, this can pose difficulties for Native students.

During the surge of research on Aboriginal students back in the 1970's,

researchers noted some common conducts among the children. One example was when students were called upon by the teacher, they "faced the dilemma of being seen as a show-off if they performed adequately; or, if they made a mistake, being subjected to peer ridicule and student teasing" (Greenbaum & Greenbaum, 1983, p.22. See also Plank, 1994, p. 5). Philips (1972) also stated that "'learning through public mistakes' is not one the Indians share, and this has important implications for our understanding of Indian behaviour in the classroom" (p. 381). Dumont Jr. (1972) also reported that "when they did, their replies could barely be heard or else the word was mouthed. Most often their answers were little more than "Yes," "No," or "I don't know" (p. 345).

This is also the same scenario that would unfold in our one room community school when I was a child. This typical behaviour in a Native classroom can be found in the experiences of the character in *Honour the Sun*, (1987):

> I wouldn't dare talk English in school. I'd be embarrassed and teased to death if I dared to talk English in front of the whole classroom. So the most we ever say is to answer shyly, "Yes" or "No" to the teacher's questions. (p. 77)

Another scene shows the character day-dreaming during roll call. "I recall my kindergarten days when it took me awhile to figure out what "present" meant. All I knew was that it's what you had to say when your name was called. Suddenly, all is quiet. Then I notice all eyes are glued on me. Teacher repeats my name! Startled, I quickly answer, "Present!" Amidst the giggles and twitters, I bury my burning face into my book" (p. 92). Another example occurs on the next page where Owl says, "I like writing on the board, if only the others didn't have to see it. I'm always afraid of making a

mistake for all to see. Whenever someone makes a mistake, everyone starts laughing" (p. 93).

Non-verbal communication is the unvoiced but understood form of communication among members of a culture. Words become redundant when the actions or intuitive understanding is perceived. Edward Sapir is quoted as having said, "we respond to gestures with an extreme alertness and one might almost say, in accord with an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all" (Rosenthal, Hall, DiMatteo, Rogers, & Archer, 1979, p. 1). I assume that every culture has gestures and glances that convey meanings inaccessible to people outside that culture.

In the culturally-based novel, these forms of communication may appear in the course of a conversation between characters and would be interpreted as such, but it is not so much the nonverbal behaviour, which is visually apparent, that constitutes much of the Native communication, but that of the nonverbal intuitive form of communication. LaFrance and Mayo (1978) reported that "when two people share the same culture, they share communication systems as well. They speak the same language, verbal and nonverbal, and in more or less the same way" (p. 11). When this happens in an Ojibwa authored novel, the Ojibwa reader will unconsciously understand what has just happened without it being explicitly written down. According to Gaywish (2000),

> when Aboriginal people interact with each other in their own cultural context, Aboriginal culture-based norms of interaction generally tend to become re-emphasized. The more culture-specific the context in which interaction occurs, i.e. place, language and purpose, the more prominence will be given to the

> culture's talk exchange norms and the values and ethics that these express. (p. 115)

I understand the "talk exchange norms" to mean the cultural non-verbal cues and interactional patterns that take place during conversation. Gaywish goes on to explain this in the following:

> Interaction systems are founded on cultural values and reflect ethics or norms of behaviour that develop in support of the values of the culture. The protocol of interaction is held in the relational and non-verbal aspects of interaction systems as well as in patterns of talk distribution. (p. 118)

In their study on Aboriginal school children, LaFrance and Mayo (1978) found that "when there was contradiction between facial expression and verbal message, the facial expression predominated over the words to determine the impression formed" (p. 92). In this case, the Aboriginal child was able to determine when an adult (the teacher) was not telling the truth.

In the context of a Native community, the embedded cultural governance of the place demands a heightened intuitive awareness of the nonverbal communication and nonverbal behaviour and its interpretation among its members to ensure proper manoeuver through the First Nation's complex rules and etiquette. However, the communities described in my novels *Honour the Sun* (1987) and *Silent Words* (1992) should not be understood as necessarily true to every Aboriginal person or First Nations community.

Translation, Interpretation and Perceptions

The Native language itself is comprised of lived expressions, so vivid and alive that words are used only as a guide to imagination and communication. As only natal communication can be, it is embedded in the intuitive and non-verbal. It is this imagination that lends itself to legends and stories of the people that transcend the spoken word into lived experience and understanding. The stories are inherently embedded in the belief system of the culture and thus, act as guiding systems. The thought and direction of a story carry many meanings of wisdom. But, unlike the biblical parables, they do not give the listener explicit interpretation to the meanings. It is in this extension of the mind in the search for understanding that allow these legends to keep pace with the listener's comprehension and understanding of the wisdom and teaching. In one American study, Cleary and Peacock (1998) note that 'Indian'

> stories are the medium through which theories of the world are constructed. Stories are in many ways visual constructions of picture and scenarios taking place internally. Listeners pull concepts/memories from the long-term memory, creatively constructing imagery and visual representation of the oral stories . . . And listeners go away thinking about the story. A Hopi woman told us the same thing about stories: "As children, we went away thinking". . . . This was the way some of these old Indians say things. They just say something, and then people have to think about it awhile. . . . The thinking that children and adults need to do in connection with these stories is very abstract, yet it is acultural to articulate that abstraction. The mind has to work inductively to discover how to live by the

> values of the stories, but the morals themselves are rarely articulated; they work on metaphoric abstraction. The listeners need to make the abstract leap, connecting the unsaid message of the story to their own lives. (p. 189)

The abstract and intuitive cultural knowledge that is normally left unsaid must be articulated in a way that makes sense to the outside world. This is referred to as decontextualized thought by the orality/literacy theorists Bruner and Weisser (1991). Using this method, I communicate the internal cultural knowledge and inductive reasoning implicitly, thereby leaving the Aboriginal sense intact between the lines of the written English text in my novels. Therefore, understanding what is happening in a story requires a reader to look beyond the surface words. According to Ruffo's (1993) term, it is these 'perceptual-interpretive systems' that I will demonstrate in my stories to articulate the hidden cultural contextual meaning. For the purposes of this study, though it may be 'acultural' to do so, I will nonetheless reveal the hidden contextual meaning only to show that it is actually present.

My experiences as an artist and author foreshadow my interest in exploring the significance of the written text to its extension of teaching through stories. The artist expresses much more in artistic creations than that which is seen through the eyes (Irwin & Farrell, 1996). There is a spiritual and highly personal connection to an object that may be regarded by the outsider as a simple piece of artwork (Vastokas, 1992). Based on the previous definition, the source of this spiritual connection is directly linked to what can be understood as Aboriginal epistemology by an Aboriginal artist. The same is true of a story told or written in that it is also linked to the same source.

In my own novels, I explored the possibility of conveying the intimate knowledge and understanding that I learned from the wisdom of the old stories that I had heard as a child. Moving them into a novel format proved to be quite a satisfying experience. In teaching culture through literature, there are many instances in which traditional teachings, values, ethics and rules of behaviour appear. Non-verbal communication is portrayed by the characters in my novels who show the ways in which we communicate without words in the printed form.

Cultural transmission occurs in the home, community, and school setting and traditional practical knowledge illustrates how we subconsciously perform or transmit knowledge in our daily interactions with others in the community. The cultural specific meaning embedded in a word, is that which changes when the words are translated from an Aboriginal language into English. The cultural recognition of that word, its interpretation and understanding, explains how an Aboriginal person understands something in print without descriptions and explanations, and sense-making provides the immediate context of sense of time and place.

The traditional stories as they are told, grow with you as you grow older. What one understands a legend to mean as a child, changes and acquires a deeper meaning as one grows older (see also Johnston, 1976, p. 122). Even today, one can still apply the concepts and teachings learned from a legend heard long ago to one's own everyday urban life. In *Silent Words* (1992) these cycles of learning and the connecting network lines of comprehension begin to look like a cross-section of a tree and as Danny says at the end of the book, "I built my cabin with silent words" (p. 250). Indeed, it is an internal

language as there are no words to express "silent words" in the Ojibwa language. These two English words inhabit the space between the cycles.

In teaching culture through literature, there are many instances in which traditional teachings, values, ethics and rules of behaviour appear. This study provides many examples where the non-verbal communication as portrayed by the characters in the novels, shows how we communicate without words in the printed form.

Even the simplest of words, when translated from the oral to the written, can pose great problems when gestures are part of the narration. Translating from the Aboriginal language to English would by necessity require the translator to be present at the time of the recording in order to note these gestures and to try to find the proper English word that incorporates this complexity. An example worth noting is the reference to primary colours. Saville-Troike (1976) discovered that "the colours considered basic in English do not correspond to the basic colour divisions in many other languages. In Navaho, blue and green colours are placed in a single category. The English black covers two distinct Navajo colours of black and dark. Brown and yellow has only one word in earth colour in the Native language" (p. 19). In the Ojibwa language, blue and green also occupy only one word, as do black and dark, and also brown and yellow. Yet, to a Native listener in the audience, there is no question as to which colour the story-teller is referring. Therefore, to translate a Native language into English requires more than the literal verbal translation. It also involves the awareness of non-verbal communication, the need to distinguish value-laden words not only in the social meaning in English, but also the social context of the culture. It requires diligence in detecting words that could initiate

unmatched behaviours, ensure proper sense-making, and discern cultural specific language to assure recognition and proper interpretation. Saville-Troike (1976) also notes the following:

> The meaning of what is said . . . is largely dependent on what is *not* said, and what is presupposed or implied . . . It would be completely impossible to separate language from culture, even if it were desirable to do so, because of the solid imbedding of cultural information in language use and interpretation. (p. 20, 47)

A literal translation from a Native language to English requires someone who is fluent in the Native language and culture as well as absolutely fluent in English in order to select the right English words which are also laden with social and cultural meanings. The meaning of a Native word can also vary according to the changing times. To avoid a complicated explanation, two rather simple examples of single words like *neeba-ka-oo* and *no-chi-iwa* follow. Neeba-ka-oo can mean when a hunter has killed something for food, a thunder bird feeding on a snake when lighting strikes a rock, and more recently, the word is also used for police pulling someone over for a speeding ticket. No-chi-iwa can mean a bear pestering people, a man wooing a woman, flies swarming an animal, or a spirit constantly invading someone's dream. In cases like this, the translator would need to be aware whether double meanings are intended in a given word. This, of course, would change the whole interpretation altogether. Another important consideration is that meanings depend very much on precise context of place and time, and explicit sense-making. Johnston (1990) laments the loss in translation when he states,

> Had the authors known this meaning of the Creation Story, perhaps they might

> have written their accounts in terms more in keeping with the sense and thrust of the story. But not knowing the language nor having heard the story in its original text or state, the authors could not, despite their intentions, impart to their accounts the due weight and perspective the story deserved. The stories were demeaned. (p. 14)

LaRocque's (1990) statement echoes the sentiment when she says that "Literature is political in that its linguistic and ideological transmission is defined and determined by those in power. . . . To this day, inept and ideologically informed translations of legends or myths are infantilizing Aboriginal literatures" (p. xvi). But, in spite of the many and consistent problems in working with the English language, LaRocque concludes,

> the fact is that English is the new Native language, literally and politically. English is the common language of Aboriginal peoples. It is English that is serving to raise the political consciousness in our community; it is English that is serving to de-colonize and to unite Aboriginal peoples. Personally, I see much poetic justice in this process. (p. xxvi)

By that, I understand her to mean that the English language was forced on Native people since we were colonized by the English and the English language displaced our Aboriginal language. That we should use the English language now to rebuild our cultural heritage is, indeed, poetic justice.

Many studies abound that have recognized and recorded the significance of misunderstood and misinterpreted meanings of English text by a Native as a first language reader. It has to do with the struggle of attributing value-laden English words

into the Native person's own context. The social-meaning is the hardest to grasp since this is the meaning that comes from a shared culture and when Native readers interpret English words according to their own culture, the meaning may become distorted and misunderstood. Of course, the reverse also applies. Merely using English words will not express what a Native language speaker originally attempted to say. Added to this, as Mitchell (1984) points out, is that "while the word "language" implies much more than just words and structures, the word "behaviour" reminds us directly of the need to teach appropriate facial expressions, gestures, physical distances, response times, patterns of emphasis, emotional expression, and so on, along with the more obvious components of language. Unless all these behaviours "match" the English utterances, the speaker will not be well understood" (p. 42). This would explain why a printed English version of a well-known traditional oral-story just does not "match" its new context.

In the preface to *Earth Elder Stories*, the editor speaks of Alexander Wolfe's stories stating that:

> The very psyche of a people is revealed in Wolfe's accounts, in their hardships, joy, commitments, and challenges. His stories reveal man's interdependent relationship with his environment, his responsibility to himself, to his fellow man and to all of creation. In his descriptions and expectations, Wolfe provides insight into not only how things were done but why they were done. The stories are not merely a presentation of "dry" material facts of history, they also convey the deeply philosophical and spiritual aspects of that history. (Knight, 1989, p. ix)

Culturally specific events in contemporary Native literature are lost on readers who

do not know the significance of an action in the story. Ruffo (1993) notes an example of this in his reference to Louise Erdrich's *Tracks*, that:

> What is immediately evident in the work is an elaborate system of coding which subsumes a complex body of information central to plot, structure, character, and even theme, and yet, ironically, information which is not readily available to the culturally uninitiated. This is not to say the novel is incomprehensible to a non-Native audience but rather that it operates according to different levels of understanding and, hence, meaning. . . . So while critics may state that "encoding invites decoding" [6] such a work necessarily raises questions: How much goes unnoticed? How much is left unknown? How much can the 'outsider' really know and feel? Again the problem of cross-cultural interpretation comes to the forefront. The point here is to proceed by examining specific aspects of the novel in light of Anishnawbe culture in order to attain some insight into these "perceptual-interpretive systems" and by doing so attain a better understanding of how the novel builds upon Native American culture. (p. 163-164)

An example of a culturally specific event from *Silent Words* (1992) occurs when Danny is pestered by mice on the floor where he sleeps so he releases a snake under the bed so that it would never be hungry again. The next morning he hears a yell from the cabin that sounds like Hog. He hears a lot of banging on the floor, then a stove lid clangs. A Native reader will understand what just happened. *Honour the Sun* (1987) contains some explanation when Owl can't understand why the sight of a snake would be such a bad omen that it had to be killed immediately to ward off the bad luck. So, the unstated

understanding is that a snake, if seen, has to be caught, killed, and burned. Allen (1987) says "the basic meanings important to these American Indian systems are carried over into the book. To be unaware of the meanings of these symbols and their accompanying structures is to miss the greater part of the significance of the novel" (p. 570).

McGrath (1988) notes the vivid visual imagery in Inuit poems. He mentions one poem that describes a ptarmigan's appearance that ends with "and right between its buttocks, sat the sweetest little arse" (p. 21). His explanation of this line is even more perplexing when he states that it "might more properly be translated into English as a "pope's nose" or a "parson's nose" (p. 21). McGrath succeeds only in translating the line into a more confounding one for me since I am not of the English culture and therefore, not familiar with that expression.

Another example of misunderstanding occurs if the author mentions in English the facial expression of a Native person at a given moment. As this is a rather subconscious element in Ojibwa communication, in *Honour the Sun* (1987), it is a given and need not be mentioned. In *Silent Words* (1992), however, since Danny is just learning about these things in the beginning of the novel, he notices what also comes to the attention of the reader. But, towards the end, it is only stated and the interpretation is left for the reader to decipher. The non-verbal features are not only things that are apparent to the eye but also things communicated by intuition or collective understanding. One example of this intuitive understanding is the scene at Danny's friend Charlotte's house where the mother was cutting his hair. Her hand suddenly stopped and her fingers began to part his hair all over and then the old man came over to see and no one said a

word. He knew they were looking at the scars on his head. Danny shrugged and said, "That's why I left home" (p. 190). Still without a word, the woman began to clip his hair again and the old man sat back on the bed.

The reference where Danny verbalizes what he observes is in his statement "I watched him closely, reading him the way Mr. and Mrs. Indian Old Indian had taught me. His eyes blinked, flicked around . . ." (p. 234). The result of that observation ends with Danny thinking "I didn't trust him!"

Great care is given in the selection of English words that can be translated back into the Ojibwa language. In *Silent Words* (1992), Danny asks the old man,

> "By the way, how long is this trip?" I said in English. He pretended not to hear me, so I switched to Ojibwa. "When are we going to get to where we're going?" (p.116)

The second statement is the only one that can be translated into the Ojibwa language. In *Honour the Sun* (1987) where all the dialogue is in the Ojibwa language, it is written in English words that can be easily translated back into Ojibwa, as when Owl says "Hey, Mom! Know the old man over there that owns that old black dog? He's floating dead in the water at the beach!" I pant. Mom looks at me and asks, "The old man or the old dog?" (p. 86). A literal translation of this statement appears exactly the same in Ojibwa.

Why an incident happens in a written story may not be explained but is understood in the course of the action, quite unconsciously by a Native reader with the same cultural upbringing. These communicators appear within the stories of Native literature, in an action stated but not explained. A reader who does not understand the

significance of the action will continue to the next sentence. The reader who recognizes the significance of the action will interpret the action, will know what is happening, and understand why it happened. I return to the example of the snake as the bearer of bad omen that must be killed on sight. Danny puts the snake in the cabin and Hog catches the snake and throws it into the stove (1992, p. 170). Grant (1986) offers this explanation:

> The oral tradition is present mainly in the style of the writer. . . . Oral tradition assumes that the listener, or when transferred to writing, the reader, comes from the same background as the storyteller. Because of the common heritage there is no need for lengthy descriptions or wordy explanations. There is no need for elaborate displays of emotion; in fact, emotion is rarely described. The events speak for themselves. Much is implied because common understandings are assumed. (p. 69)

What is harder to explain in a novel is the implicit understanding that exists between speakers where the option of feigning a misunderstanding frees the person to answer the question in any way he/she chooses to. In this case, the person asking the question would not repeat the question because to insist would be to insult the other person. This gives the respondent the option of misunderstanding which saves face for both parties (Farrell, 1993, p. 52).

View of the Land, Community, Relationship with the Natural World

A common thread that weaves through Native literature is the holistic view of the land and the acknowledgment of the interdependent network within that environment. It is from this sphere that our writing expresses the view from within. In her discussion

about the Dene, Barnaby (2002) states that,

> The relationship of people to the natural environment, and their place in it, is common to all Aboriginal cultures. Our languages reflect our relationship to creation. For example, there is no Dene equivalent to the English word "wilderness." Everywhere we go on the land is our home. Our worldview encompasses far more than the need to make a living and use resources effectively. The relationship between the Dene and animals is a very spiritual one, based on equality and respect. In fact, the Dene believe that animals are higher beings than people, because they were created first and have taught our people many things that enable us to live in harmony with the natural environment. Animals may choose to give themselves to us depending on our demonstrated respect for them and for each other. We know we will not be successful in future harvests if we waste meat, do not dispose of bones properly, or fail to share with one another. (p. 87)

All of the above is the same in the Ojibwa beliefs, traditional knowledge or ways of knowing. Ortiz (1998) also offers the following explanation:

> Land and people are interdependent. In fact, they are one and the same essential matter of Existence. They cannot be separated and delineated into singular entities. If anything is most vital, essential, and absolutely important in Native cultural philosophy, it is this concept of interdependence: the fact that without land there is no life, and without a responsible social and cultural outlook by humans, no life-sustaining land is possible. (p. xii)

In terms of the relationship between an individual and his/her community, much has already been said regarding Aboriginal ways of teaching and learning. However, the relationship between the author and his/her use of the first person in the written text has been the topic of discussion in recent literature.

Eigenbrod (1995) states that "the "I" speaking or writing in these texts is not the individual "I" of the Western society, but rather a communal "I". This shows clearly towards the end of *Halfbreed* where Maria Campbell blends the private together with the political; both aspects are part of one story because they are seen as part of one reality" (p.98). Eigenbrod also notes, "In Canadian contemporary Native literature, most long prose narratives or novels are written in the first person form. . . . More importantly, this narrative perspective may be considered as a device and a technique that make the writer 'become' a character . . ." (p. 97).

I believe that the communal "I" *is* Weesquachak, the trickster from the legends of our people who has now been replaced by the collective 'first person' voice in First Nations writing. As there was never a 'first person' voiced in any traditional story-telling, only Weesquachak was himself the '*first person*' and as such, the "I" functions now as his/her/its voice. This allows for the teachings through contemporary Native literature to continue without interference, and still ensure total reader autonomy. Since Weesquachak is an entity that is one for all and all for one, that 'one' is the 'glue' that becomes the communal *I*. He/she/it represents all of us, and as such we are all a part of him/her/it. This is presented in my novel *Weesquachak and the Lost Ones* (2000) where this entity becomes all that affects us in our daily lives. Fee (1990) offers this opinion,

> The use of the first-person narrative in each novel is a primary tactic used against the dominant discourse. . . . However, to present as a whole that which has always been seen as fragmented, the construction of a Native "I" performs a shift from that which has always been constituted as Other to Self. This may not be a subversive tactic in the classic realistic text or in the popular novel, but it is within the literary discourse of Canada. Native readers finally will find what white Canadians take for granted -- a first-person voice that does not implicitly exclude them. . . . The novels give a voice directly to those who generally are silenced. (p. 172)

In this way, Weesquachak as the "I" still performs his/her/it's task of being the voice in a now written format.

Allen (1987) holds the view that, "The primary impulse of the imagination is wholeness. It is, in that sense, the faculty which relates exterior perception to interior impression. It closes the circuit, as it were, between I and other, creating a coherent relationship, a meaningful vision of what is" (p. 566). In this process, we are like Danny in *Silent Words*, we are 'outside' people entering into the world of a Native community in search of 'self' and 'identity.' Whereas The Owl in *Honour the Sun* is already inside and is a part of the community. When the readers share and discover this interior, they too can look out onto the exterior world with Owl. Bevis (1987) states that "these books suggest that "identity," for a Native American, is not a matter of finding "one's self" but of finding a "self" that is transpersonal and includes a society, a past, and a place. To be separated from that transpersonal time and space is to lose identity" (p. 585).

Bevis (1987) talks about the common theme of 'coming home' in most Native stories. This would include the legend of Iyas and Danny from *Silent Words*. Bevis explains this in the following:

> Grounded Indian literature is tribal; its fulcrum is a sense of relatedness. To Indians tribe means family, not just bloodlines but extended family, clan, community, ceremonial exchanges with nature, and an animate regard for all creation as sensible and powerful (Lincoln 1983:8). These books suggest that "identity," for a Native American, is not a matter of finding "one's self," but of finding a "self" that is transpersonal and includes a society, a past, and a place. To be separated from that transpersonal time and space is to lost identity. (p. 585)

As Danny's father says in *Silent Words*, "have you noticed that Native people are generally like one big family? Everyone knows everyone, or someone knows of someone who knows the person in question. You'd be amazed how many relatives you could find if you took it into your head to find out" (p. 244).

Besides the beliefs, values, and ethics, there are also other more nasty idiosyncrasies that are solidly embedded within the life of the community. These are also described in contemporary Native literature. A note on one community aspect mentioned earlier as social conformity and individual equality, is shared here by Oskaboose (1995) as a comical tale in his article "Telling Stories, Northern Ojibwa Style" in which he says,

> Of all the different genres of Ojibwa story-telling, by far the most popular has to do with put-down — keeping each other in line — and on the straight and narrow

> — by creating outrageous versions of simple, everyday matters that wouldn't even get mentioned under normal circumstances. No one seems to know why this thing about put-down came about, or where it came from. . . . Anyone not with the program is soon whipped into shape with ridicule and with a story hung on them. (p. 120)

Discipline of this sort is more likely to be doled out to people who should know better than to do something that is clearly against the norm and so, a seemingly simple breech of action or incident takes on grossly distorted details and becomes totally exaggerated out of proportion as the story is told and retold with the purpose of making the wrong-doer look silly. The story is not expected to be believed, it is simply recognized for what it is - a disciplinary action.

Early publications of community stories and legends, prompts Johnston (1990) to note the following:

> As rich and full of meaning as may be individual words and expression, they embody only a small portion of the entire stock and potential of tribal knowledge, wisdom, and intellectual attainment, the greater part is deposited in myths, legends, stories, and in the lyrics of chants that make up the tribe's literature. Therein will be found the essence and the substance of tribal ideas, concepts, insights, attitudes, values, beliefs, theories, notions, sentiments, and accounts of their institutions and rituals and ceremonies. (p. 13)

Every aspect of knowledge need not be expressed in words printed on a page, so much more can be expressed without the use of words. Communication and expression of ideas

also function between the lines. They in a sense, become the non-verbal communication of the printed word. Rothe's (1982) research article describes "sense-making" by saying that:

> Students locate and elaborate particulars differently by relying on speech patterns, visual, auditory, cultural and biographical information . . . they have an implicit understanding (based on community membership) of the speaker's biographical knowledge and his purpose for speaking, the circumstances of speaking, the preceding elements of the conversation and the actual or potential relations between the speaker and listener. . . . (p. 2)

In the translated written version of a story, all this of course would not be present and in its absence is the loss of understanding. Researchers also state that "different types of nonverbal communication are so embedded in our daily lives that we use the nonverbal messages without being aware of them" (Rosenthal et. al., 1979, p. 1). LaFrance and Mayo (1978) also observe that, "because of the out-of-awareness nature of nonverbal communication . . . the potential for unrecognized communicational misunderstanding is far greater" (p.173). Argyle (1972) speaks of this when he says "there are considerable cultural variations in many aspects of NVC [nonverbal communication], and the same signal can have different meanings depending on the culture and the situation" (p. 267).

The task then, is to voice the unspoken elements of Aboriginal communication into the English written language. Any Native word can also be used in so many ways that it needs a context to anchor its specific cultural meaning. Without the cultural specific context, the statement loses its intended meaning. Care is therefore necessary in

translating a word in the Aboriginal language or it just will not make any sense. Elaborating in an attempt to get to the closest translation, only removes it further from the original Aboriginal language context. Where translating concepts or inherent cultural values and understanding is impossible, experience has shown ways in which to overcome this particular problem.

When in close vicinity to frequent storytelling, it is not only the story itself that is understood and remembered, but an underlying thread also begins to weave itself through the spirit and memory of those within hearing. It is this that teaches the philosophical and spiritual connection to all that there is. Ellis (1995) also speaks of the historical narratives that are also a part of the oral story-telling tradition. "On a somewhat different level and yet part of the traditional literature must be included accounts of local history. . . . There must be many narratives of this general type which preserve factual (or what is regarded as factual) information" (p. xxxiii). This serves to illustrate the point that in *Silent Words* (1992), Ol'Jim is only doing what he naturally does when he, at times, totally baffles the young boy with his on-going commentary as they come across each landmark (p. 97-99, 101, 119, 157, 171-172). By this method, I ensured that these actual landmarks and the stories behind them will not be forgotten.

Many other teachings and beliefs are expressed in the course of the dialogue in contemporary Aboriginal literature. For this example, Stevens (1971) notes that "when a person dies, there is a place he goes for his rewards. He is accepted or if not he remains on earth. His spirit never wanders far from his grave. It is very lonely and afraid and would like to talk to people but seldom does" (p. 8). In *Silent Words* (1992), Ol'Jim tells

Danny to stay away from the sand cliff. "Ghosts of ancient people live there. . . . That is an old burial site. . . . Some souls who loved life so much may have refused to leave their bones to go to the other world. Now they just wander around the area where their old bones are. Don't go near areas like that and don't pick up anything from the ground!" (p.172).

I've given several examples from each of my novels to each of the teaching, learning, and behavioural examples mentioned so far to illustrate how the dissertation attempts to illuminate these cultural teachings. The next section will set out how this will be accomplished.

Teaching Cultural Ethics and Values

The works of greater numbers of published Native writers are categorized under one general 'Native Literature' without indication whether it is the topic of the text that is 'Native' or because they are authors who happen to be Aboriginal people. All this has, of course, been under discussion in the Aboriginal communities for some time as King (1990) stated in the 'Introduction' to *All My Relations*:

> when we talk about contemporary Native literature, we talk as though we already have a definition for this body of literature when, if fact, we do not. And, when we talk about Native writers, we talk as though we have a process for determining who is a Native writer and who is not, when, in fact, we don't. . . . In our discussions of Native literature, we try to imagine that there is a racial denominator which full-bloods raised in cities, half-bloods raised on farms, quarter-bloods raised on reservations, Indians adopted and raised by white

> families, Indians who speak their tribal language, Indians who speak only English, traditionally educated Indians, university-trained Indians, Indians with little education, and the like all share. We know, of course, that there is not. . . . (p. x-xi)

Another issue for consideration is the 'genuine knowledge' of topic, as opposed to one that is of the 'fictional variety' or one that is of 'as told to me' variety. Who publishes under this general 'Native Literature' heading? Swann (1992) writes that,

> The appropriation can lead to many undesirable results, even to the invention, or reinvention, of Native American tradition, a tradition which is fed back to the Native community, and then out again, thus inflicting multiple damage. As William Powers has noted, a good deal 'of what passes today for Indian culture and religion has been fabricated by the white man, or the Indians who have been trained in the white man's schools.' (p. xvii)

The concern here, whether we are addressing the authenticity of the source of information or the critical evaluative model that should be applied to the work, is the seeming disregard of the source of the knowledge that is contained in what is attributed as 'Native literature.' As stated by Grant (1990), "We lack a definition of what Native literature is, and do not agree on criteria for judging it. It is imperative that we look more closely at Native literature and judge it not within a European cultural paradigm but from the points of view of the culture from which it springs" (p.126). Why must Native literature be 'judged' at all? To do so is against the traditional teachings of my culture that speaks of non-interference and personal autonomy. Passing judgement on a thing is of the

European paradigm. Grant (1990) also says the following:

> "Native literature" means Native people telling their own stories, in their own ways, unfettered by criteria from another time and place. Native literature reveals the depth and status of the culture, expresses Native wisdom and points of view familiar to other Natives, reveals the beauty of the Native world, beauty rarely recognized by non-Native writers. Native literature records oral narratives, values, beliefs, traditions, humour, and figures of speech. . . . (p.125)

If Native writers can't agree on what Native literature is, or determine who is a Native writer, Grant does not seem to have any problems in describing what Native literature is. On this note, King (1990) states that,

> There is, I think, the assumption that contemporary Indians will write about Indians. At the same time, there is danger that if we do not center our literature on Indians, our work might be seen as inauthentic. Authenticity can be a slippery and limiting term when applied to Native literature for it suggests cultural and political boundaries past which we should not let our writing wander. And, if we wish to stay within these boundaries, we must not only write about Native people and Indian culture, we must also deal with the concept of "Indian-ness" a nebulous term that implies a set of expectations that are used to mark out that which is Indian and which is not. (p. xv)

There are Native writers who have had work turned down by publishers because the content was not 'Native' enough. Still others are expected to produce 'Native' content because they are Native (Lutz, 1991, p. 194). There is also the misconception that if

Native writers have works published, their publisher must be a Native publishing company. Therefore, authors whose works are published by Native publishers are not necessarily Native. Prudence is therefore necessary in the selection of a text required for a specific purpose. Caveat emptor.

King's (1990) definition "that Native literature is literature produced by Natives" (p.x-xi), will have to suffice for the time being for what is quite obvious at this point is that Native authors are once again trying to fit into a pre-established dominant cultural mould that is not of the same nature. Perhaps Native authors have one of their own that they haven't discovered yet in this transitional phase of the oral to the written.

Ethics and Values

In this section, Brant's (1990) *Native Ethics and Rules of Behaviour* will be used to illustrate ways in which those ethics and values are evident in the social interactions of the characters in the novels. After each of the ethics and values, a legend will be presented, then *Honour the Sun*, and then *Silent Words*. The four sources will form a repeating rotational pattern that will follow the model of the revolving spiral as mentioned earlier. The Aboriginal paradigm (the model) underlying the Aboriginal theory (traditional Aboriginal knowledge) and methodology (the repeating pattern) forms the spiral that revolves around once for each category. In this spiral model, the internal connection that binds all three is Aboriginal epistemology. Where appropriate, other references will also be included.

Non-Interference

Conflict suppression includes non-interference, non-competitiveness, emotional restraint or anger suppression, and sharing. These are at the top of the list for promoting harmony (Brant, 1990, p. 535). The following are examples of how these appear and are taught through the traditional stories and in contemporary literature. Brant (1990) states "a high degree of respect for every human being's independence leads the Native to view instructing, coercing or attempting to persuade another person as undesirable behaviour" (p. 535).

In the story *Wemishoosh: A Cree Legend*, the daughter Iskweo objects to the actions of her father (Wesley, 1991, p. 7), but does not interfere in his intention to kill

each man who has the misfortune of becoming his son-in-law, until he meets Nabeo who manages to outwit him in his murderous schemes. Throughout the story, their conversations are quite civil to each other as they come and go, engaged in one deadly activity after another until finally, the old man ceases to return. In the end, the daughter still does not interfere when Nabeo decides to return home from where the old man Wemishoosh had kidnapped him, "Iskweo made no reply. She kissed Nabeo goodby[e] and he kissed his sons" (Wesley, 1991, p. 23). As non-interference is a given and is deeply embedded within the culture, it is redundant to be expressed.

In *Honour the Sun,* the character is a little girl in an all-Native community. This child has a solid cultural foundation from which to begin her travel to maturity and it is this that gives her strength and dignity. The traditional and cultural teachings are present in her everyday activities and interactions with those in the community and they eventually become the source of her identity. As the actions are limited to the child's understanding, the character only supplies such comments as "Barbara has just put down her sewing - a baby bonnet? Gee, it looks pretty small . . . " Later on, she observes "I study Barbara for a moment and decide her belly must be getting fat" (1987, p. 54). She does not pester by asking questions. Barbara would tell her if she thought it was important or when the time was right. In another scene, the little girl finds herself alone in the classroom with the teacher, "I begin struggling when he pulls me tight between his knees. . . . Something is wrong; he's pulling me tighter, holding me closer to him. I don't know what, but there's something wrong" (1987, p. 126). When she gets away and runs home she states "What was it that scared me? I should tell Mom. Tell Mom what?

I shrug. . . . I don't know" (1987, p. 126). She does not know how to handle the situation.

It is an undesirable behaviour for a person to interfere in the affairs of others and to an extent also to interfere in the decisions and affairs of their children. The mother does not interfere in her children's interactions with each other, as in the case when Owl, the little girl, is dunked head first into a mud puddle by her brother. The Owl states "Mom watches me from the bed but doesn't say anything. The others are too busy going about their own business to ask how I've gotten so muddy" (1987, p. 47).

An example of the whole community's non-interference is mentioned when a man physically beats his wife outside the store. "No one here even mentions it. They totally ignore the couple" (1987, p. 69). When the violence is directed at the family, the mother's action against the intruder who kicks the door down shows how she calmly handles the situation. "Mom whispered from the [neighbour's] window "I had to help him inside a bit. He stopped too close to the door, so I gave him a push. I heard him crash and roll around on the wood blocks I laid all over the floor by the door," she chuckled. We heard him walk across the porch and disappear down the path. Then we returned home and crawled back into bed. Mom had to use all the knives to hold the door closed. Next time, we'll have to get a new door" (1987, p. 81).

The children in the community are free to come and go from the cabin to play. They skip school to walk three miles down the railway tracks to visit a friend and that is where the teacher eventually finds them [one wonders why he wasn't in school either] (1987, p. 163), and they go skating at a nearby pond (1987, p. 155).

Wastefulness is however checked when Owl says "As I turn to dart back out again, a hand clamps down on my collar, "You've been flying in and out of here with chunks of bannock all morning," Mom says, releasing me. It's more like a statement, I guess, just to let me know that she had seen what I was up to when I thought I was sneaking the bannock out. We've been through this before with me wasting food. But, like Cousin Joe said, it's the best thing for [minnow] bait" (1987, p. 27-28). Otherwise, the children go about their daily activities.

In *Silent Words* (1992), the character is a little boy who lives in a small town and Native culture and traditional teachings do not exist in his home life. There are explanations supplied so that he and the reader will understand as the boy matures in body, mind, and spirit. Having said this, the boy does not necessarily state what he has understood all the time, but shows by his actions that he has. In this novel, the character comes from the outside and finds his way to the center of the culture where he finds his identity. The first lesson he is given is to watch, listen, and learn - and so should the reader.

The greatest difference between the Owl and Danny is that Danny is learning as he goes along and therefore breaches protocol, exhibits culturally rude behaviour, miscues when to act or speak, misses the non-verbal communication, or fails to catch and understand an implicit message, and struggles to grasp and internalize the concept of learning with total independence of mind and personal autonomy.

Our first introduction to Danny's personality is his determination to be responsible for his own welfare. He also exhibits some moral values when the mosquitoes drive him

to a desperate act in the darkness of the night. "The pins popped and a warm soft blanket fell from my hand to the ground. I can't just take it. I pulled out one bill from my money envelope and pinned it to the clothesline" (1992, p. 24). Determined to prove that he is able to look after himself, he decides to go for a dip in the water and wash his clothes. Then he loses his socks and thinks, "Somehow, it was very important to me to find my socks. I must not lose anything. I have to be responsible now. I have to look after myself. . . . What humiliation to be wearing shoes without socks. Only beggars have no socks for their feet" (1992, p. 39). No one bothers him in his initial get away.

Later on in the novel when Danny is traveling with Ol'Jim and his socks get knocked into the fire, he says "I hadn't quite figured out what I was supposed to wear on my feet now. I didn't like the idea of not wearing socks inside my shoes. I was suddenly reminded of my first night in the middle of no where" (1992, p. 131). But, Ol'Jim was there. "I heard Ol'Jim digging around in his packsack inside, and when he came out, he handed me a pair of his grey work socks. "Here, put these on. I always carry an extra, extra pair in case a branch decides to take some socks with it into the flames," he said. I pulled the warm socks on and wiggled my toes in them" (1992, p. 131). Danny didn't have to ask. Ol'Jim saw and he fixed the problem.

Non-interference is first shown when Danny meets the group of children playing by a creek. He walks up to them and introduces himself in English. The boys glance at each other and ask in Ojibwa "Where did you come from?" (1992, p. 30). Danny immediately names his home town in English. What Danny completely misses here is that the statement is not asked as a question but rather as an indication that his action was

completely strange to them. Who they took him to be by his appearance and what his words and actions said just simply did not match, until further blundering reveals that he does not know any better and then "They seemed to relax . . ." (1992, p. 30). The children do not interfere with his right to be there or attempt to correct him. This of course, is totally invisible to the reader unless the first question is translated into Ojibwa which then reveals the true meaning of the question to the Ojibwa reader. This first translation sets the stage so that the Ojibwa reader henceforth automatically translates into Ojibwa where the Ojibwa language is indicated. Danny learns this lesson when he realizes that things and people are not always what they appear. His persistence at communicating in Ojibwa with the old woman walking home from the store is first met with silence. He speaks louder, thinking that she may not have heard him. She turns and stares at him with no expression whatsoever, as if he weren't there. His last attempt was in English "I have nowhere to go and nothing to do. I just thought I'd help you carry the bag and ask if you had heard if my mother was around here . . ." (1992, p. 48). Then she stops. Danny discovers that the old man and woman live like Native people but speak a strange sounding English and prayers are said in Latin before meals (1992, p. 51), and he is free to come and go as he pleases.

In another scene, because Danny doesn't know any better, his friend Henry's father has no problem offering some fishing tips to keep Danny from getting a snag. "I was content to let my line drag the bottom. Jim spoke behind me, "Reel in the line a bit, Danny." I turned the little handle until Jim said, "Okay. That will do it" (1992, p.75). Knowing that Danny didn't know any better to be offended, Henry feels free to ask

personal questions to appease his curiosity and also does not take offense to Danny's questions as when Danny asks "What happened to your mother?" (p. 85) and when Henry asks "Why did your mother leave?" (p. 86). Normally, it is not a question to ask.

Non-Competitiveness

Brant's research says that competition breeds personal conflicts, rivalry, embarrassment, and dominance over a person or a whole group and was therefore avoided (p. 535). Children were always taught to work and play together and never against each other. Confrontations were not allowed in this society. If they did occur, the problem inevitably lay beyond the surface. In that case, one would not respond but understand that the problem lay elsewhere.

Wee-sa-kay-jac however, was known to drive animals to competitions when the need arose as in this particular story where he says "We will have a race across and then back over the ice. The winner will become man's companion" then, in the end, "Wee-sa-kay-jac told the dog, "you are the winner and have gained the right to be the companion and partner to men" (Stevens, 1971, p. 26).

Wee-sa-kay-jac was also known to become too cocky as when he says to the rock "I am the fastest runner in the forest. . . . Would you like to have a race, kitchi-assin?" (Stevens, 1971, p. 30). As the rock does not have any legs, Wee-sa-kay-jac rolls the rock down a hill and races it all the way down but it catches up with him at the bottom of the hill where it stops right on his legs pinning him to the ground. There he stays for several years until he implores the thunder to blast the rock in half and thus release him (Stevens, 1971, p. 31).

There is also the story of the two sisters in which the younger sister "was always trying to prove herself better than her older sister. It did not matter what the situation was, the younger girl always tried to outsmart, outguess, outwalk or outwork her sister in order to prove her superiority" (Stevens, 1971, p. 67). So, when she goads her sister to pick one of the stars above for a husband, the older sister selects just any star - a dim one. The young girl however, picks the brightest star who turns out not to be the best choice after all and the older sister who had picked the least got the best. And so, "Never again did the younger sister try to do better than her older sister" (Stevens, 1971, p. 289). Another version of this story also appears in Sugarhead (1996), where one of the lessons is clearly "pick the best; get the worst" (p. 57). By the way, the older sister awoke to find a very handsome young man for a husband. The young girl awoke to find a very decrepit and ugly old, old man. So, the lesson is to never pick the best of the lot for yourself.

In another story called *The Secret Name*, a man had a big problem concerning his daughter as "he did not know how to give the girl to a man without offending many others" (Stevens, 1971, p. 33). So, he announces a feast to be held in a few moons' time where any man who guesses the secret name of his daughter would become his son-in-law. As fate would have it, the spider that Wee-sa-kay-jac sends to find out the name gets blown off-course by the wind and the spider has to rely on weasel to deliver the secret message to Wee-sa-kay-jac. Weasel being who he is, decides to claim the bride for himself. But, in the nick of time, the spider gets to Wee-sa-kay-jac and on finding that the weasel had tricked them, the girl's father is warned in time of the treachery, and the girl Forever-and-ever, is given the right to pick her own man. And weasel, to this day is

still nervously looking over his shoulder for Wee-sa-kay-jac (Stevens, 1971, p. 35). In this case, competition breeds treachery and creates unrequited revenge that constantly lurks in the background.

An example of the series of emotions a competition would generate between two people is given in the story of Ja-ka-baysh who is challenged by a man named Mesanba (Stevens, 1971, p. 102). During the series of contests, Ja-ka-baysh smokes tobacco the longest, shoots his arrows the farthest, shoots his arrows into a crack in a rock, and "Mesanba was very angry but said nothing" (p. 103). Then acorns are thrown up into the air that must all be caught with one hand, only Ja-ka-baysh does so. "Mesanba was infuriated with Ja-ka-baysh" (p. 103). Then there are three wrestling matches in which Mesanba gets thrown to the ground all three times. "Mesanba was very ashamed of himself and very angry at Ja-ka-baysh. He wanted to kill the little Indian . . ." (p. 103). Having also won in the battle with war-clubs, Ja-ka-baysh decides not to kill Mesanba and tells him "Go home to your village and tell them I have given you your life and no longer are any Indians to challenge me in contest of skill . . ." (p. 104).

Non-Competitiveness is listed in Brant's (1990) research paper as an ethic that "suppresses conflict by averting intragroup rivalry (14) and preventing any embarrassment that a less able member of a group might feel in an interpersonal situation" (p. 535). There are no examples of competitive games or actions of rivalry in the entire novel of *Honour the Sun.* Answering questions in school is controlled by the teasing of classmates to establish conformity. This prevents one from exceeding the norm or being exposed to all others for failing to keep pace. As Owl states "I wouldn't dare

talk English in school. I'd be embarrassed and teased to death if I dared to talk English in front of the whole classroom. So the most we ever say is to answer shyly, 'yes' or 'no' to the teacher's question" (1987, p. 77). "I like writing on the board; if only the others didn't have to see it. I'm always afraid of making a mistake for all to see. Whenever someone makes a mistake, everyone starts laughing" (1987, p. 93). These 'yes' or 'no' answers in a Native classroom are also noted by education researcher Dumont Jr. (1972, p. 345) as previously mentioned in this study.

Quite different from The Owl, Danny learns to play cards at Henry's place and says "I even heard my voice squeal when I passed the other pegs and got to the last hole first! I won! I had never won anything in all my life. It felt good" (1992, p. 69). Then he experiences spontaneous joy with Ol'Jim when they start a rather strange race, "I could feel the wind pulling my hair back as my feet pounded on the sand. I saw Ol'Jim paddling faster, and suddenly it became a race to see who was going to reach the campsite first. I ran very fast, but all Ol'Jim had to do was swing his arms back and forth and the canoe sped forward. He came first by two steps. Giggling and breathing hard, I pulled the canoe up and held it as he stepped out" (1992, p. 115).

Towards the end of the novel, Danny is embarrassed at having to wear a very large pair of borrowed skates while Henry has his own well fitting pair, "Charlotte was looking at my feet again and she laughed. "I wonder if you can actually skate faster with those long skates?" I didn't know if she was teasing or if she was actually wondering, but somehow, it hurt. "'Want to race to the dock?' Henry grinned at me, then skated away like a pro" (1992, p. 21). As it turns out, Danny is left so far behind that he turns around

and goes back.

Emotional Restraint

Self-control is part and parcel of non-interference and non-competitiveness. "It promotes self-control and discourages the expression of strong or violent feelings" (Brant, 1990, p. 535). "Children were taught from a very early age never to engage in angry behaviour. Angry behaviour was considered not only unworthy and unwise, but dangerous as well . . . the concept of the bogeyman . . . emerged to maintain harmonious interpersonal relationships . . ." (Brant, 1990, p. 538). When we were children, stories of the Aminisookanak (like hobos) were enough to scare us to submission and prompt us to jump into bed if we had been whining to stay up a little longer.

In *The Legend of Aayaahsh,* (Sugarhead, 1996) that I gave the quick review on earlier, "Wemishoohsh was really angry but he didn't mention it to Aayaahsh" (p. 73), and decides instead to leave him stranded on an island far off from shore. And thus, begins the journey of Aayaahsh back to his mother. In this way, Wemishoohsh avoids confrontation with his step-son and instead uses bad medicine at a distance to try to destroy him. In these Aayaahsh stories, when the young man returns, Wemishoohsh heaps furs and food at his step-son's feet to assuage the young man's anger. Notice also that no one interferes with his brutal treatment of his older wife - the mother of the young man. So, the young man must remedy the situation by razing the land and the evil therein. But, before doing so, he saves the animals, prevents the death of his mother and siblings but changes them into birds afterwards (Ellis, 1995, p.44059; Stevens, 1971, p. 112-120; Sugarhead, 1996, p. 70-91; Bauer, 1973, p. 1-9).

The consequence to showing anger is told in a story of "*The man who kicked away the snow*" (Ellis, 1995, p. 157). He blames the snow for freezing his younger brother to death during the bitter winter. When the time comes in spring as the snow begins to weaken in the heat of the sun, the man kicks the snow, derides it in its now poor state, and dares it to freeze him now. It answers him, telling him that it would come for him in the dead of winter. So, having prepared all summer and stock-piling grease to burn with the wood, he faces the coming winter. When they finally meet, they engage in a freeze-out and melt-down duel in the man's home where the man eventually wins and the snow never bothers him again. So, one had better be ready if he/she abuses something that could retaliate.

To punish the quarrelling and fighting sky children, a brother and sister, Wee-sa-kay-jac tells the brother sky-man to "tend the fires of geesis [sun] until the end of time. You, sky-woman, will look after [the moon] . . . never again will the two of you be together; but a few days of the year you will cross the blueness together and will be able to see each other from a distance" (Stevens, 1971, p. 27). That is their punishment for quarrelling and fighting.

Examples of repressed hostility or times when anger must not be shown are given in the following excerpts: When Owl hands over the bowl to her mother that had just been hit by a stone from a sling shot, the mother says "'Humph,' she turns the bowl over in her hand and goes inside the cabin. I can hear the bowl spin and clatter across the table" (1987, p. 12). Later, when a drunk shoots the family dog "My grief is replaced by anger and hate like I never felt before. I sit in silence while the anger and hate settle like

a ton of cold cement deep inside me" (1987, p. 36). This form of withdrawal is defined by Brant (Video, 1988) as an "adaptive reaction to stress." Note that the older sister who comes home from Residential School only in the summer months reacts in a totally opposite manner. Owl sits quiet and still while her sister cries hysterically, cursing and swearing between each sob. Another example of repressed hostility is shown four chapters later, when the man who shot the family dog shows up at the cabin in the fall, and tries to carry on a conversation. He expects to be offered some tea as would be done in a normal situation, but here is what happens:

> Hey! How about some tea, eh?" Mom glances up again. "There should be some in the pot there. Help yourself." She continues stringing the colourful beads. John Bull chuckles deep in his chest. "Help yourself, she says" he mutters filling the nearest cup with tea. He sits there looking around the table, so I guess he's looking around for a spoon. I stand up and go around to his side. "Move your elbow," I say. He moves aside and from beneath the table, I pull the spoon drawer open and put a spoon in front of him. I move the sugar and can of milk toward him. John Bull stirs his cup with relish and says, "Hey, Delia, you have a good kid here! Hey, you go to school?" He directs the question at me. I nod. "You see anybody fighting my Tommy, you come and tell me, huh?" I think about the snotty-faced, loud-mouthed Tommy, I don't say anything." After a few more exchanges with the mother, on his way out, "John Bull chuckles, then points a finger at me, "Hey you! If anybody ever bothers you, you come tell me, eh? I'll fix 'em for you!" I just sit there and watch him turn and stomp out the door and

across the porch. We can hear him yell and sing going down the path. (84-85)

This is a good example of how the mother responds to that man with total detachment, lack of fear, yet with enough courtesy not to make him angry. The child also responds in the same fashion by offering the spoon, cream and sugar. She has learned well. Brant (Video, 1988) also notes that "after having defined . . . the parameters of a stressful context, Indians will reactivate themselves as soon as they feel ready to deal successfully with the source of stress." As is the case when the mother gets caught inside the cabin when the door is kicked open and afterwards,

> She tries to straighten [the door] then she starts muttering louder and louder. She curses in a quivering voice. My heart is pounding in my chest again. Suddenly, she grabs the flashlight from the shelf and runs out the door. I can hear her hurried footsteps to the outhouse (p. 100).

Two chapters later, the same man returns and flings the door open with such force that it crashes against the outside wall. The two older daughters had been in the process of sorting out the dry and green wood beside the stove when the man hurls himself in. "I see Vera and Barbara on each side of him with blocks of wood still in their hands. Suddenly and simultaneously, they attack the man. . . . Then Mom is in there with the thick broom stick . . ." (1987, p. 120). This is an example of the conservation-withdrawal that initiates sudden action when the time is right.

In Danny's case it is rather 'anger mismanagement' compared to the home that Owl lives in. Danny starts off being subjected to humiliation, shame, being spat on, feeling hopeless, helpless, and unable to defend himself. His only option had been to run

away as fast as he could and hide. Having experienced love, acceptance, and understanding from other people in his travels, his reaction to being unwanted, unrecognized into non-existence by the Hog, causes him to feel anger again. "Hog just pretended I wasn't even there, and that made me mad! Who does he think he is anyway?" (1992, p. 165). Being appalled by the disrespectful treatment Ol'Jim is also getting from his son, Danny feels miserable (1992, p. 165).

Back at the community with Henry and Jim, a woman shows up and Henry gets angry. In trying to reason with Henry, Danny gets hit by Henry. "I have pushed him too far! I saw a blur in front of my face, pain registered on my cheek, and I crashed against the side of the window. The little house rocked to the side. . . . Henry squared his shoulders but said nothing more" (1992, p. 188). Then when Danny finds out that his mother had died in the fall, he remembers the time when Billy and Jim must have known and did not tell him because only his father wanted to tell him . . ." My eyes found the black shadow of my father and I focused my gaze on his back. If I was big, I would punch him very hard!" (1992, p. 245). Having suppressed anger for so long, Danny is now to the point of exploding into violence.

Not having learned to manage anger, Danny suffers emotional pain to great extremes as in the case when he first starts off in his travels. "A whimpering wailing noise started in my throat and I continued walking, crying like a lost baby in the darkness" (1992, p. 37). "The sound rose in my throat again, and I sat on a rock beside the tracks and wailed and cried once more" (1992, p. 38).

Danny experiences another emotional moment when he looks out onto the lake as

he is getting in the canoe to go fishing with Henry and his father "I felt like crying for some reason. Maybe because I was almost happy" (1992, p. 74). Just like a partridge or a rabbit, a person is taught to freeze in times of high anxiety or danger until he/she has gauged the best action to take. Because Danny never learned the need to be quiet in times of danger he still has a tendency to bawl his head off or quite instinctively take off without first thinking things through.

A good example of this is when he thinks he has set a cabin on fire he says "I felt numb, and my heart was pumping a lot of pressure up my throat. It was a familiar feeling by now. I felt exactly like I did that time when I was cornered in that room back home. Suddenly, I shot out of there so fast I didn't even know where I was going. I raced up the hill across the railroad tracks, straight for Henry's cabin. . . . I grabbed my sack and stuffed my blanket and my jacket inside and took off as fast as I could down the path again and up along the tracks. I ran and ran, heading east along the railroad tracks" (1992, p. 89). The next morning, Danny says "I realized now that I had panicked last night. I was half asleep or maybe I was still asleep when the man came in yelling about the fire. Now it was too late to go back. They will think I am such a coward. I couldn't face Billy, Jim, or Henry" (1992, p. 90).

Danny's fears also include hunger as he states when he realizes that Ol'Jim carried only the basics in his food box, "For sure, he would see that I did not like the idea of starving to death. I just realized that it scared me very much to be hungry" (1992, p. 111). When there was no sign of Ol'Jim one morning, Danny becomes afraid, "There it was again, the thought I had been trying to block from my mind–what if something had

happened to Ol'Jim? What if the canoe had tipped over and he had drowned out there? What was I to do?" (1992, p. 134). Only this time, Danny does not panic and take off somewhere but rather keeps busy until the old man shows up. By the time they get to their destination, Danny sits and waits. "I perched on the edge of a bunk and waited to see what was going to happen next" (1992, p. 164). Sensing impending disaster, he says "I retreated into the cabin and sat on the bunk, waiting to see what would happen next" (1992, p. 165).

Feeling rejected and ignored, Danny decides to leave and sure enough, Ol'Jim finds him and brings him back to the cabin. Danny does not mention anything of this sort crossing his mind but clearly, he meant to worry Ol'Jim into paying attention to him again, and he was right. Ol'Jim takes him out on the canoe to set the fishnet and they go camping every time Danny gets into trouble (1992, p. 168, 169, 170). The last trouble that Danny gets into at Hog's camp is when Danny starts the motor on the boat that was tied to the dock. Danny sees Hog coming at him and he says, "My feet carried me in a streak up to the cabin. As I grabbed my sack and blanket, Ol'Jim stood at the door, panting, with his back to me, blocking the doorway and yelling, "No. No! Leave him alone. He'll run away! He'll run away into the bush! Leave him alone!" (1992, p. 177). Since Ol'Jim prevented Hog from reaching Danny, Hog locks Danny inside the cabin, then Danny locks the door from the inside too. He stays inside until the plane finally arrives to take him away.

When Danny gets back to town and meets up with Henry and his father, he finds out that he had actually saved Billy's cabin from burning to the ground by taking the oil

can outside. Then Jim says "you should not run away when something happens. Figure out what to do about it. Things never get better when you run away. If you had hung around, you'd have found out that Billy only had to patch the burnt floor and touch up the wall a bit" (1992, p. 181).

The time comes when he hears that his father will be getting off the train, Danny runs away. "I jumped up and ran out the door and followed the path along the shoreline. I have no intention of seeing or talking to my father" (1992, p. 190). When he gets back to Billy's place after his train trip Billy says "Next time, tell me where you are going. I won't chase you or try to stop you, but just tell me where you are going, okay? Maybe I'd even help you." "Well I guess I could write him a note or something. Notes don't yell back at you" (1992, p. 196).

When Henry's accident occurs, Danny becomes still. "I noticed the tears streaming down his face. I became totally still. I knew the worst was coming . . ." (1992, p. 213). Then, "I started struggling, trying to run. Billy wouldn't let go. I felt myself falling on the bed. Billy was holding me tight until I felt the dam break inside me. An agonized cry burst from my mouth, but Billy was there, holding onto me when I thought I was going to shake to pieces" (1992, p. 213). Later on when Danny falls off the toboggan behind the snow-machine, going full blast across the frozen lake during a snowstorm in the middle of the night, he says "I heard a whimpering moan coming from my throat. Just like that time last summer on the railroad tracks when I found myself alone in the middle of nowhere. Well, here I am all alone in the middle of nowhere again. No! This time I know Billy will come back for me" (1992, p. 221).

At the end when Danny finds out from his father that his mother had died in the fall, he explodes. Danny says, "I hurled the snowshoe at him, then I ran." After a stumbling run he felt his father grabbing his shoulders and shaking him. "Danny! There is no need to run! I am your father, I will always be beside you. There is no need to run away from me. I will never hurt you again" (1992, p. 243). When they get to their destination, Danny, in total exhaustion and grief, thinks his father had tricked him again and he says, "I whirled around and started running again, as fast as I could" (1992, p. 246). Showing his total disorientation, he thinks it's his dog 'Snotty' that comes up to greet him, but then says 'No, of course not!' He is at the end of his endurance at this point.

Danny's dash to madness ends in the conclusive explosion of the gun in his hands. Because violence against one another is discouraged from an early age, when it does happen, people tend to freeze and do not react to the violent situation and the action is perceived as the violator's problem and public shame. Johnston (1982) explains that historically,

> The Anishnabeg were primarily men of peace, visionaries who depended upon hunting for survival. Since the worth of a man was measured by his generosity and by his skill in the hunting grounds, bloodshed was not the final test of manhood in Anishnabeg society. Instead, the War Path was followed when it was deemed necessary to avenge an injury, whether real or imaginary, to oneself or to one's brother. It was a matter of pride never to let insult or injury go unpunished - but never was conflict begun for the purposes of conquest or subjugation. (p. 59)

In the Aboriginal community, if the victim has no one to avenge him or her, nothing is done. Therefore, when violence is committed on women and children who have no relatives, the violator is the one to be pitied and no one is required to do anything about it because, indubitably sooner or later something would happen to the violator that clearly demonstrates justice for the victims. The teaching is that one is not to harm anyone or anything that cannot defend itself.

Discipline and Child-rearing Practices

"Teasing, shaming and ridiculing as means of social control maintains harmonious interpersonal relationships by placing the responsibility for the discrepancy between self and ego ideal only upon the child. . . . This is functional in that it keeps young people attached to the group, promoting group unity and survival" (Brant, 1990, p. 538). This ties in with the school room scene between the children where they tease and laugh if one makes a mistake or if one's achievement gets better than the rest. Teasing, shaming and ridiculing also serve to "erode self-esteem and give rise to an overwhelming sense of humiliation when encountered later in life" (Brant, 1990, p. 538). To explain this, there is one vocal sound that is directed at someone who may be exhibiting an action or gesture that may be deemed by her peers to indicate that he or she really thinks he or she is someone special, different, better, or trying to be like a non-Native person. This vocal sound is still being used today and it apparently has not changed its meaning. To give an example, if a group of Native students at University was milling around before class and one of the students' cell phone suddenly rang, as she fumbles to answer the phone, if one of them makes that sound just as she says "hello," the whole scene would instantly

change. The girl's face would go red with shock, embarrassment and humiliation, but she would have to laugh so that the others can burst into hysterical laughter. At one time, this prevented young people from dreaming of another future outside their traditional roles, deviating from expectations, or leaving the group, thereby ensuring conformity to cultural norms and maintaining the Native values, ethics and rules of behaviour.

It is interesting to note that in the Apache culture, they use the "narrative category of '*agodzaahi*,' or historical tales, "to criticize, to warn, or to 'shoot' people who have behaved in a manner inappropriate to the Apache way" (Krupat, 1998, p. 246). An example given is the story of a woman who appeared at a ceremony with pink plastic curlers on her head. Two weeks later, at a family gathering her grandmother told a story that was clearly directed at her behaviour. She was, 'shot with an arrow.'

> And, indeed, this young woman understood the story to be "stalking" her; she recognized that the community-agreed-upon moral of the story was not to behave too much like the "whiteman." The story-arrow shot by the young woman's grandmother spoke literally of someone else, but as Basso notes, "every historical tale is also 'about' the person at whom it is directed" and speaks directly to that person's behaviour and sense of self." (p. 247)

The legends are also used in this way. As a child, you are told about a story that clearly gives an example of what happens to you if you don't do as you are supposed to. As an adult, if you've done something wrong, an elder will likely tell you a story about something or someone else. That is why Weesakechak is important because he is usually the mediator when the ethic of non-interference prevents one from directly censoring or

confronting someone.

Another character used as an example for children is Chahkabesh. There are many stories of Chahkabesh, the little orphan boy or man-child with super-natural powers who speaks with a childish lisp. He lives with his older sister who warns him not to do certain things with explanations to consequences if he does. But, he always does exactly what his sister tells him not to do. Being such a contrary being, there are always consequences to his actions and always what his sister said would happen that she must on occasion save him or bail him out of his misfortunes. Such stories are "How Chahkabesh snared the sun" (Ellis, 1995, p. 16-17), "Chahkabesh is swallowed by the giant fish" (Ellis, 1995, p. 115-117), and "Chahkabesh is drawn up by the moon" (Ellis, 1995, p. 119).

Sugarhead (1996) tells of Cahkaapehsh as a healthy strong boy who lives with his aunt deep in the bush. When he returns one night, his aunt asks him to go and fetch some water but not to look at the moon and not to talk to it. But he does so anyway and "the moon grabbed Cahkaapehsh because he never listened even though he had been told. . . . And so today if any of you see the moon you will see Cahkaapehsh there holding onto his pail. That is what we used to be told long ago, that we should never be teasing people, and that we should listen when people told us something so we would not get into trouble" (p. 35-37). The way our mother told this story, it was a girl that was up there in the moon for the same reason - she looked at the moon after she was told not to. The change in character may have had to do with the fact that my mother had seven little girls in bed in the cabin at the time.

Discipline by teasing, shaming, and ridiculing ensures social conformity and maintains cultural norms. In *Honour the Sun*, when Owl gets sick from chewing snuff, the mother handles the situation as follows: "Mom glares at me before asking, "I guess it was the snuff that made you sick?" I nod. She turns and goes back in. I can hear her saying, "It seems The Owl tried to chew snuff and got sick." This is followed by a burst of laughter from inside. They call me The Owl" (1987, p. 13). In another example, being limited in movement in the packed canoe, the mother reacts in total frustration in the following:

> Ouch! Mom taps me on the side of the head with her paddle. "How many times do I have to talk to you before you hear me?" Water drips off my hair and into my ear. "Now hand me my bag there in the box beside you!" Mom says in her high, angry voice. The canoe rocks to the side when I lean over and yank the bag out, and turn around to hand it to her. "Watch her now, she'll have us all in the water yet!" she says glaring at me. Sinking my head lower between my shoulders, I settle back on my seat at the bottom of the canoe. In front of me. Annie's back is shaking with laughter. I feel embarrassed and humiliated. (1987, p. 57)

Feeling hurt about the personal humiliation, the girl responds in the opposite manner with exaggeration. "I glance back at Mom who's putting her snuff box back in the bag. Her voice gentle now, she says 'Here. Put it back in the box." With exaggerated care, I slowly lean over and shove the bag back in the box" (1987, p. 57). This is one time that the mother expresses her feelings to the girl and it is done quietly but, it is still not a direct apology. When The Owl accidently swallows a stone and goes to her mother for help, the

girl says, "So I tell her the whole story. She looks at me again and says "It'll probably pass through you." She turns away, muttering, "You do such stupid things sometimes!" A flood of relief flows through me along with a mixed dose of shame" (1987, p. 70).

The attempt to get the girl to stop playing with the boys like a tom-boy and act more lady-like, results in the following conversation, "And another thing," mom continues, "You stop carrying a slingshot around. You're getting too big for that. They say that as far as a girl can stretch a slingshot, that's how long her titts will be!" There's a sudden explosion of choking and giggling all around the table" (1987, p. 85). This particular saying is known in many areas across the north.

Ignoring a person is another means of discipline that surely hurts more than any tongue-lashing a child might receive. When the mother thought the girl had wrecked her new school stockings and discovers instead, that they were hers, she reacts this way, "Mom takes a deep breath, then totally ignores me. . . . The conversation starts again with Mom pretending I'm not even there" (1987, p. 86). At another time when the girl had been instructed to put the door lock and key in a safe place immediately upon unlocking the door, she fails to do so and after the consequence of that she says, "Without a word or glance at me, Mom unlocks the door and they all go in" (1987, p. 86). The fear of getting hit by her older sister is apparent though when The Owl runs away down the railway tracks after dropping and spilling a bowlful of blueberries, forgetting that a train is coming. The sister chases her down and manages to grab her in time to pull her off the tracks just as the train crashes by. She says "Barbara fixes a strange look at me for a second before she turns away without a word and walks through the bush towards our

cabin. Neither of us speak, while I follow several yards behind her, all the way home" (1987, p. 138).

The only other reference to an Ojibwa community is that described by Wagamese (1994). He writes about the treatment of a young man who returns to his Reserve located northeast of Kenora, Ontario, after being abducted as a child during the '60's Scoop.' His view is that of an outsider and in regard to the silent treatment he experiences, he writes:

> Others just used silence that probably hurt the most. Hard to figure where you stand with people when they won't recognize you in any way. I didn't mind the name calling I'd get every now and then, especially from the younger crowd, on accounta I'd grown up with that and kinda learned to ignore it. And I didn't mind the teasing I got when I didn't know how to do things that even the little tykes knew. . . . Got used to all of it and learned how to deal with lotsa different reactions from people. . . . There was a lotta laughing going on about something I'd done or tried to do, something I'd said all wrong or some way of behaving and even now those stories bring a lot of laughter" (p. 91).

Several quotations from Wagamese (1994) will be included where relevant, just to illustrate that there are other Ojibwa communities that hold similar views and practices.

In *Honour the Sun*, as Owl gets older, she discovers that her guilt or innocence becomes irrelevant when she gets caught in bad company and takes part in sips from a wine bottle being passed around by her friends. She knows it is wrong and stops but is branded guilty anyway when the mother finds out. "All the next day, they make fun of me saying, "There was The Owl, hiccuping and saying, 'I never drank.' Hiccup!" They

giggle and laugh. I'm mad. They don't say anything about Annie, Rita or Hanna or anybody else – only me! I stick out my tongue when no one's looking" (1987, p. 157).

When Owl's home begins to disintegrate, there is chaos of emotions that the girl experiences plus the onset of puberty, and her mother offers this suggestion:

> Always listen to the silence. When you feel your emotions all in turmoil inside you, listen to the silence . . ." It is hard to break a habit, a reflex, an unthinking response but eventually I no longer retaliate in kind to Brian's [her little brother] tricks. During a loud drinking party, I listen to the spring rain falling softly against the window pane. During loud arguments of belligerent drunks, I strain to hear the wind in the trees outside the cabin and shut everyone out. More and more, I spend time sitting by the woodpile listening to the silence. The ice melts on the lake, the grass turns green, the leaves come out, the flowers bloom. I look over the land and feel peaceful and happy. I rarely talk to anyone else outside the family and I never go out to play. (1987, p. 185)

Again, this is conservation-withdrawal. So, when Owl hears her mother's angry voice when she learns that Owl has started her periods, the girl feels bewildering rejection and remembers what her mother said. "Silence, listen to the silence, I think. I hear seagulls and Annie breathing beside me. I grin at her. 'You have a whistling nose'" (1987, p. 189). In this process, the 'umbilical cord' is gradually being severed and as Owl gets ready to leave for Residential School she says, "I'm scared but I'm also looking forward to leaving home. I hate it at home now. I have nowhere else to go. I feel like Mom doesn't want me around anymore. She rarely talks to me directly so I avoid her as much

as I can. I hardly ever talk to her anymore and she acts as if I'm already gone" (1987, p. 189). What is not stated in the limited view of the young girl's understanding is that the mother is probably also preparing herself for the imminent separation from the last of her daughters to be sent away from home.

In *Silent Words*, only by blundering does Danny learn some manners as he states in the following: "Suddenly I said in English, 'Why don't you just go and buy a spoon and not have to go through such pain to make one?' There was a deep silence as if they were waiting to see what Bobby would do. But Bobby just glanced at me, shrugged, and resumed his careful work" (1992, p. 32). Danny breaches non-interference by telling someone what they ought to do and thereby being disrespectful, but Bobby forgives him for his ignorance. The one scene where he gets a response is from the family with the talkative outgoing girl named Billy. Danny says,

> Billy was babbling on about something again, and I said to the older girl, "Does she always go on like that? If she's not careful someone will call her motor-mouth, or say she's suffering from verbal diarrhoea." Suddenly, all was quiet. I caught a quick exchange of glances between everyone, but it was Billy who said, "You talk like a smart aleck. If you're not careful, someone will bash you one in the mouth. You are not home now, you know! Who do you think you are, anyway? (1992, p. p.45)

Again, having been forgiven, Danny is now a little wiser and he says, "I tugged at Charlie's sleeve. 'Tell Billy I'm sorry for what I said, okay?' He reached and ruffled my hair with his hand and whispered, 'My grandfather used to tell me to always listen, watch,

and learn. Can you remember that?'" (1992, p. 45). But once again, when he becomes relaxed and smiling at a joke Henry tells his father, Danny interjects. "'I thought it was Jim here,' I said. They looked at each other and burst out laughing. I sagged against the wall. For a moment I thought I had opened my big mouth again when I shouldn't have. But they were laughing with me. Suddenly I realized how much I missed kidding around with other people." (1992, p. 68).

When he travels with Ol'Jim and the canoe scrapes rocks at the bottom of the canoe when he was supposed to be watching, he says, "I was feeling quite ashamed. I should have been watching for rocks. I kept my head high and my back straight and the silence was loud behind me" (1992, p. 147). Discipline by scaring children is also used by Henry's father when he says "You go ahead, but come home right after. The bears are probably around again tonight" (1992, p. 70). Bears? Having never seen a bear, Danny gets scared.

Sharing and Equality

People are not to take any more than they need and to share freely of what they have thereby, promoting equality for all individuals. "Sharing, the exercise of generosity, is a behavioural norm that discourages the hoarding of material goods by an individual" (Brant, 1990, p. 535). Group survival demanded the sharing of food and materials. Food preservation methods also required a lot of work which could be done quicker with many hands. Since generosity connotes an action above and beyond what is expected of someone, then sharing is not generosity when sharing is a fact of life. "The ethic of sharing has its corollaries: equality and democracy. . . . An economic and social

homogeneity is promoted by the ethic and practice of sharing, and every member of the society is considered as valuable as any other" (Brant, 1990, p. 536). From a very early age, children are encouraged to share with other children. I remember an instance when I was about five or six years old. I had a pair of black rubber boots on as I didn't have any shoes. The general store stood a short distance from the train station and my mother had just bought me a brand-new pair of running shoes while we waited for the train to arrive. I was so excited that I put the shoes on right away and ran around in them for no more than fifteen minutes when my mother noticed a little girl by the station who had no shoes on. She was the youngest of four children who had just lost their mother and they were getting on the train to live with relatives elsewhere. My mother bent down to me and indicated the little girl saying, "Her feet look to be the same size as yours." There was nothing else said as I sat down and pulled off my new shoes and my mother put the shoes on the little girl just as the train came in. I don't remember being upset about the shoes, but I do remember feeling sorry for the little girl who no longer had a mother.

"Weesakechahk tricks the bear" (Ellis, 1995, p. 129-137), tells of the hungry trickster who informs a bear that he has a cure for the bear's near-sightedness. Saying that he had suffered that same affliction himself, he convinces the bear to lay its head on a rock while Weesakechahk crushes the red berries into its eyes. When the bear shut his eyes tight, the trickster crushes the bear's head with another rock. Seeing that he could not possibly eat such a huge pile of meat at one sitting, he throws away the liver and the innards, and then when he totally fills himself, he decides to wedge himself tight between two trees to flatten his stomach. Then he tells the trees to press tightly together. They do.

But they do not let him go. Instead, they call all the animals and birds together to feast on the pile of meat until there is nothing left at all. When he finally gets loose from the trees, Weesakechahk searches for the liver and insides which was all he had to eat. The lesson here is "while there is plenty to eat, something which is left over should never be thrown away"(Ellis, 1995, p. 135).

When Wee-sa-kay-jac was laying out the diet of each animal and bird, a raven kept flying ahead of line demanding to know what he was to eat. He was told to "Go to your place and await your turn" (Stevens, 1971, p. 25). But, being so impatient, he kept flying over the heads of the others to ask again and again, what he was to eat. Finally, in total exasperation, Wee-sa-kay-jac told him "For the rest of your days you will have to devour the decayed and rotten remains of other animals' prey. Only by stealing will you survive. . . . To this day the raven is a scavenger and a thief" (Stevens, 1971, p. 25).

Then there was the time when Weesakechahk decided to grant the wishes of two men, and one man asked that he live to be of an average age before he dies. Weesakechahk blew on his head and so it would be. The other man asked that he live forever. Weesakechahk rolled him into a ball and threw him on the ground, as the man was now a stone (Ellis, 1995, p. 171). The moral of that story is not to be greedy.

Another story of greed tells of a fox catching fish with his tail in a hole on the ice. Wanting to catch some fish too, a bear got instructions from the fox and as bears used to have long tails, he dipped his tail into the hole on the ice but he didn't pull when he felt the tugging because he wanted a lot of fish on his tail and not just one. But as his tail became frozen in the hole, it became heavy, and thinking that he had a lot of fish then, he

pulled and tore off his tail (Ellis, 1995, p. 289).

In places where there was or still is no electricity and therefore no means of quick food preservation, food is shared freely after the killing of an animal, and this sharing is a part of everyday life, not only with food but with material goods as well. Brant (Video, 1988) states that "Group survival is more important than personal prosperity. Consequently, individuals are expected to take no more than they need and to share freely. . . . The ethic of democracy, which underlies the ethic of non-interference, emphasizes the equality of all individuals, encourages economic homogeneity, decision making by consensus, independence of mind, autonomy and a high degree of personal privacy."

In *Honour the Sun*, there are many examples where the sharing of food during the course of the day is quite normal as when Owl and her cousin unsuccessfully try to feed the cat the minnows they had caught, "Mom smiles as she says 'That might be because I took a lot of fish ends for the cat when I went over to give Aunty some fish. That cat must have a pound of fish in its tummy right now'" (1987, p. 31). One example of someone helping another is when one man goes around cutting wood for people. The girls had gone "to see the old lady across the tracks and found the Town Joker there, cutting wood for the old lady" (1987, p. 44).

Feeding the children wherever they happen to be when lunch time comes around is also expected. "'Rita's mother glances at us. She's filling a bowl from a big pot on the stove. 'You kids had lunch yet?' she asks. 'No', we shake our heads. 'Here, sit down. It's just duck-dumpling soup,' she says" (1987, p. 67). When the Town Joker shows up

at the cabin, "Barbara comes out with a plate for him. He sits down on the porch and eats with us" (1987, p. 70). There are many other examples as when the Town Joker eats breakfast first before he helps the mother fix the broken door (1987, p. 102) and where the Town Joker comes with a power-saw borrowed from another man and saws wood for the family and afterward also cuts wood for the old man down the path (1987, p. 111-112). In another scene, "The Joker sits down in front of her [the mother] on the bench and proceeds to pop the nuts into his mouth as fast as Mom can crack them. Their faces are a foot away from each other. Suddenly, Mom shakes the hammer over his head and the Joker ducks back laughing . . ." (1987, p. 119).

When an old man comes to visit, he is also fed. "Uncle Daniel gets to eat first. His plate is piled high with fried fish, bannock, canned peas and mashed potatoes and he gets a big mug of tea" (1987, p. 119). Other children also eat meals at the cabin whenever they happen to be there. "Ben doesn't hesitate and sits down at the table to make short work of the steaming bowl of porridge, dunking a large piece of bannock with each bite" (1987, p. 150). And, a recent widow offers them a bowl of creamed corn while Owl's mother cleans up the widow's house and sorts out the old man's things for community distribution (1987, p. 143).

Throughout the novel, there is no social 'class' distinction as such and it is evident that everyone is treated equally. There are, however, references to children from dysfunctional homes as when Owl tucks her school issued vitamin biscuit into her waist band to give to her dog, "I watch Ben, Jed and some others, asking for more biscuits and I realize that it is probably their breakfast" (1987, p. 93). "After recess, I watch the same

kids stock up on the vitamin biscuits and milk again. They probably won't have another meal till tomorrow's recess" (1987, p. 95). Perhaps out of jealousy, as Owl spends more time with her friend Ben rather than her Cousin Joe, he becomes mean. "Ben shrugs his shoulders somewhere in the oversized coat he has on" . . . "Joe spins around on the step and faces us again, 'You mind your own business, you stupid flea bag. Your drunken father must have made a mistake and hung his dirty old coat on you instead!'" (1987, p. 107). In the summer when Owl asks Ben why he didn't go to church, "Ben looks down at his calloused bare feet and his faded tattered pants rolled up to his knees. His old shirt is full of holes" (1987, p.132). But, aside from the references to the condition of his clothes, Ben is part of the girl's activities and games within the community.

In *Silent Words* (1992), sharing and being treated equally is very much a part of daily life for the people that Danny comes across in his travel. His first introduction to this is when he had been with the children by the creek all afternoon and he follows them home for supper. "I hesitated and slowed down when I saw an old lady at a fireplace outside the cabin. She was filling bowls with stew, which she handed to the children as they came up. Without question, she handed me a bowl with a smile" (p. 31).

When Charlie slips him some money into his hand as he is getting on the train, Danny says "Charlie had put a twenty-dollar bill in it. Suddenly I wanted to cry. I wanted to go back to Charlie. I didn't know people could be so kind" (p. 45). The old couple that Danny calls Mr. and Mrs. Indian take him in without comment other than "Tis a los'boy, a wanderin chile lookin' for 'is mama" (p. 49). He works hard every day and says "I never knew there was so much work to just living from day to day" (p. 52). He

also meets another old woman who hands him a pop and a chocolate bar and lets him stay and wait for the train at her place beside the railroad (p. 54).

Danny is also taken in by a father and son when he finds himself with nowhere to go. Friendship develops when the lonely boy meets the homeless one. When they enter the cabin and discover a fresh fish on the table, the father says "Well, Billy saw us getting off the train and he had caught more fish than he could eat, so he brought one over" (p. 67). As an explanation, "Henry grinned at me. 'That's one thing about not having refrigerators, you have to give away what you can't eat before it gets rotten'" (p. 67). Henry also gives him all of his old clothes that he had outgrown (p. 68).

With only the two paddles in the canoe that Henry and his father were using, Danny offers to paddle back so that he does not appear useless (p. 74). At another time when Ol'Jim returns from the trapline to winter in the community, Henry and Danny help him clean up and fix his cabin in preparation for the winter. They stockpile split wood and get water for him, haul in more wood, saw and bring the wood into his cabin (1992, p. 74).

As a warning of things to come, they had just tied a load of wood on the sleigh when Danny noticed "Ol'Jim standing there all out of breath with his hand clenching the left side of his chest. Concerned, I asked, 'Are you okay, Ol'Jim?' 'Oh, I'm fine. Just fine. Got a heartburn again is all. Too much bannock,' he laughed" (p. 206).

Wagemese (1994), has an Ojibwa elder talking, saying, "all through that they were learnin' how every action touches everybody. Respect. Learnin' that there's big honour in takin' care of people. Humility. Learnin' that bein' responsible starts with the simple

things and leads up to the bigger ones. . . . Started learnin' real young about workin' together for the benefit of the people" (182).

Wagamese's statements on equality say that it "reminds us there ain't no such things as better or bigger. Equal. Share the responsibility. Men'n women gotta be equals. That's what the simple sharin' of responsibility remind us of. Equals. Two sides balanced in that circle. Makin' it complete. . . . That's why they're such big things and that's why we keep 'em so simple. The only thing I ever learned by someone tryin' to hit me over the head with something' was how to duck good. Heh, heh, heh" (p. 200).

Decision by Consensus

Decision by consensus involves independence of mind and equality for everyone. Even the smallest of them have a voice and are treated with equality. There is a story of Wee-sa-kay-jac and his meeting with all the creatures of the earth, where a decision needed to be made as to the length of the winter. After suggestions from the moose and the beaver had been heard, the lowly frog said "There should be only as many moons as I have toes." All the beasts told him to be quiet because Oma-ka-ki was such a small creature" (Stevens, 1971, p. 28). As it was, it was decided that this was the best suggestion and so, winter has five months as does the number of toes on a frog. This same story appears almost verbatim in Sugarhead (1996), that at his suggestion, they too told the frog "not to make so much noise because he was too small" (p. 39). But, it was decided that winter would be five months long which was the number of toes on the frog.

In *Honour the Sun* (1987), decision by consensus and independence of mind is illustrated by the fact that although the mother is the center of the girl's life, she does not

seem to be the obvious head of the household. The mother and the older daughters decide when or what should be done or are the cues in mobilizing the younger children. Everyone also seems to be free to do things as they see fit. The oldest daughter Barbara, comes and goes in the story and the older foster girl who lives with them also eventually leaves to live with the son of the old lady on the hill (1987, p. 135). It is also clear that the foster girls are free to go and stay with either of their real parents whenever they choose (p. 96).

Personal privacy and non-interference are important to ensure that no one loses face or feels personal shame, although it is clear that there are times when Owl wishes she could talk to Uncle Daniel. "Uncle Daniel always asks me the same question every time I see him. 'How are you, Indian Maid?' and always, I'd smile and answer 'Fine.' Sometimes when I'm sad I often wish I could tell him that I'm not fine and tell him all my troubles but I always give him the answer he expects" (1987, p. 47). There is a difference here between the teasing and shaming to instill conformation and the personal humiliation and shame that would require 'saving face.' There is no reference to discussions of a personal nature, between the kids in the community, the grown-ups, or with their children. However, there is one curious exchange between Owl and her mother where the mother seems to have realized what the problem was. "Yesterday, Mom noticed my bottom lip sticking out when I was pulling on my pants. After several questions, I finally answered, 'My legs are too long!' She laughed and said, 'Well, don't worry. Your upper body will catch up soon!' That was comforting. I won't be a kangaroo forever. But that still didn't make my long legs and big feet disappear" (1987, p. 158).

In *Silent Words* (1992), Danny assumes that Henry's father made the decision by himself when he says "The next morning, Jim decided to take us fishing" (p. 72). Later he begins to understand how things get done. Sharing also comes without an overt invitation or time set to get a piece of meat at a kill. "The next morning, Billy showed up with a packsack on his back, which he dropped by the door. 'Come on, hurry up. Little Foot killed a moose down the tracks and everyone is going to get some meat. Gee, Shims had made two trips already!'" (p. 82). Decision by consensus is sometimes evident when Danny explains, "Billy and Jim stopped to wait for us by the station. They had decided to roast some moose meat for supper by the open fire-pit at Billy's place. It was too windy and bushy to have a fire outside at our place tonight" (p. 87).

After his trip with Ol'Jim, Danny is back at the community and is at Charlotte's cabin and he says, "The door was open, so I walked in. Sarah, Charlotte's mother, was dishing out spare-ribs and dumplings, and she gave me a plateful. . . . After supper Sarah sat me down on the bench, threw a sheet over my shoulders, and proceeded to cut my hair. She didn't even ask me if she could, but I thought it was nice of her to give me a haircut" (1992, p. 190). After seeing the scars on his head, she says nothing at all and she does not object when her daughter and Danny plan on disguising him and helping to sneak him aboard the train in order to escape his abusive father (p. 191).

When Danny has money left over, he gives it to Sarah and she smiles and takes it but does not say anything (p. 192). Throughout these interactions, no one voices any comments. It is all done with non-verbal consensus that this is the best way to handle the situation. There is no need to say thank-you, in fact there is no word for it. What does

show, is that he did the right thing.

The expression 'meegwetch' which is understood to mean thank you, is not a word one normally uses in the course of the day. It could be used in more formal interactions with others where an equivalent to thank you is required. There is also no word for please, hello, or good-bye as the English language uses such terms. Poosho is now understood to mean 'hello' but, that too could be a derivative of the French version of greeting. In the course of daily conversations, these words do not exist. The closest to goodbye that I have heard, translates to "and so it shall be, that I will see you again."

Concept of Time

The concept of time is knowing what needs to be done at a certain time. "Like others living in close harmony with nature, the Native person has an intuitive, personal and flexible concept of time . . . doing things when the time is right" (Brant, 1990, p. 536). Since activities of any sort were conducted without the use of the western concept of the 'clock time', the time to do something depended on an interpersonal intuitive awareness of 'when everyone was ready'.

There is no mention of 'time' as we understand it in the English language in any of the myths and legends. Time as the 'time to do something' is understood in the Native language as 'time when something needs to be done.' In other words, it is not the person who decides when a thing needs to be done, but rather the thing that requires the doing. When time is mentioned, the sentence appears as, "After some time passed Nabeo knew that the time had come for another task" (Wesley, 1991, p. 6). "When it came time to decide who was going to go first . . ." (Wesley, 1991, p. 6). Time as the passage of days

and years does occur in communicating the duration of travel or activity in progress. In recalling historical events, the time that has passed is referred to as a certain number of winters ago. In the myths and legends, words like, "a long time", "long ago", "already a very long time", "all day long", "travelling for a long time", are words that are normally used (Sugarhead, 1996, p. 35, 47, 53, 71, 81, 83, 95, and so on).

There are also stories like *The dog and the squirrel* (Sugarhead, 1996), where the dog is used as an example of a lazy person who lies around in the shade under the tree all summer, laughing and making fun of the squirrel who runs about all season, picking and storing food for the coming winter (p. 43). If people do not prepare adequately for the coming seasons, they are at the mercy of the elements and dependent on the good graces of those around them. As such, they are a liability in that others are obligated to look after them and they are resented for creating the burden, and so, they very quickly become undesirable neighbours.

As there is a time when things need to be prepared for a certain coming time, there is also a time when things need to be done for the time that has passed. Some examples are that at the end of summer, having to build a canoe rack in the fall so that you can hang up the canoe to get it off the ground over the winter months; repairing and putting away the jigger board and other ice fishing equipment when the ice begins to melt in the spring; putting away the winter traps after cleaning and oiling them to prevent rust over the summer months, and then getting the materials and equipment ready for the next season's needs. Preparing for what is coming and storing the things for what has just finished its usefulness, setting and removing, gathering and dispensing, creating and utilizing, are all

'times' that demand seasonal attention.

Hunters will wait and work around the campsite for many days until early one morning, the sound of ducks announcing their arrival will set them into great excitement and action. There is no mention of 'time' as a conscious event in the daily life of Owl's family (*Honour the Sun,* 1987). They come and go with the activities that go with the seasons. Examples are the days of blueberry picking, camping, fishing in summer, wood gathering in the fall, fishing in the winter, cutting and hauling wood, spring ice fishing, spring fishing in streams, and so on. The only mention of time as in 'clock time' is when it involves interaction with non-native people. These are the times to go to school when children usually scramble to reach the school before the teacher comes out to ring the bell. The 'time' for the whole community is when it is time to go to church, the passenger train and way-freight train arrival time, going to the store, and only at each of these times, is there great preparation. The whole community dresses up, perfume wafts up from the group of young ladies dressed in their very best, and there is high excitement in the air. Otherwise, time flows with the daily activities that turn into bed time, meal times, and time to go somewhere.

There is no mention of prior planning in the family. For example, after the daily morning ritual of cleaning up the cabin, the sentence starts, "Mom is packing our lunch in a cardboard box while Barbara fills another box with cups, mugs, and cans. We're going to the portage about three miles away to go blueberry picking" (1987, p. 19). Lunch time happens when Owl notices "I can see smoke and hear pots banging. They're making lunch by the lake on the other side of the railway tracks. . . . I can see the others drift

towards the fire . . ." (1987, p. 21). With no apparent announcement or indication, Owl just states "Time to eat" (1987, p. 34), then goes on to mention what she is eating. After a day of cutting wood, 'time to go' is indicated by "All of us have gathered at the clearing" (1987, p. 63).

Danny's first introduction to this is when he is by the creek playing with the group of children when "Suddenly Bobby decided it was time to go home for supper" (1992, p. 30). All Danny is aware of is that Bobby has suddenly indicated to him that it was time to go home for supper. At Mr. and Mrs. Indian's place Danny states "There was no clock and no calendar in the entire place. I soon discovered that there was no need to know what time it was or what day it was" (1992, p. 53).

Time is also taking the time to look around. As Ol'Jim says to Danny during their canoe trip, "You rush too much, you know that? I have never been in such a big hurry before in my whole life. This is the first time I have made this trip in one big mad dash! I don't even remember seeing what changes there may have been in the last two lakes we passed. You should take time to look around and remember how things are, son. Would you remember how we got here if you had to do the trip all over again without me?" (1992, p. 129).

When Danny meets up with Henry and his father again, Jim says "'It's the second of September already, you know. School starts next week' I asked, 'What day is it today?' Henry smiled and said, 'Boy, a real bushman you turned out to be! It's Saturday today'" (1992, p. 182).

Gratitude and Approval

Praise is usually shown by an approving smile or other non-verbal means. "Gratitude or approval among Native people is very rarely shown or even verbalized" (Brant, 1990, p. 536). Brant postulates that one is not rewarded for doing a good job since that is what he/she is supposed to do. "The intrinsic reward of doing the deed itself is considered sufficient. Consequently, Native people have a great deal of difficulty accepting praise, reward, and reinforcement" (Brant, 1990, p. 537). Among Native people, gratitude and approval is given but it is not verbalized, nor is it always visually apparent. Thus, when an authoritative outsider, like a teacher, verbally praises a child for something, it singles the child out from the group, embarrasses the others since they didn't do as well, "thereby disrupting harmonious relationships in the peer group" (Brant, 1990, p. 537). Although Dr. Brant states the result, the cause is not that the people can't take praise and gratitude, it is just something that should not be verbalized, and creating a visual display is unacceptable since that too is part of conflict suppression. Further to this, Brant (1990) also states that "since excellence is expected all the time, they generally are reluctant to try new things. They often experience a great deal of performance anxiety about making mistakes and holding themselves up to public scrutiny and teasing" (p. 537). As an example, long ago, children learned how to make clothing, moccasins and such by using discarded ends and scraps. When a child felt confident in his/her ability to make the 'real thing' then, he/she made it. This eliminated the unfortunate ruining of a piece of leather that took an awful long time and hard labour to produce.

The good qualities of a character in a story are mentioned by his or her actions.

As in Sugarhead (1996), "Aayaahsh tried to do things properly, anything that should be done properly, and he did well when he went hunting. He always killed something, game and fish. Aayaahsh was very handsome" (p. 71).

Gratitude is shown in many ways but more often as a returned favour for an act of kindness. Wee-sa-kay-jac (the Trickster) is one most often used for this purpose. In one story, Wee-sa-kay-jac is saved by a weasel and he returns the favour by granting a wish. The weasel's request was for another colour on his all-white coat, so he was given the colour black, at the tip of his tail (Stevens, 1971, p. 32). In return for saving a little girl's life, the Whiskey-Jack (Canada Jay - the bird, not to be confused with the Trickster) asks only for a share of her food for the rest of her life (Stevens, 1971, p. 82). And, in return for freeing the Flying Skeleton who gets himself caught on the branch of a tree, a man named To-maton is granted a blessing of good hunting and a long life (Stevens, 1971, p. 98).

Gratitude and approval are most often non-verbal but not always visually apparent. Praise is shown by the approving smile from Owl's mother during blueberry picking and she says "I've filled my cup so many times, I've lost count. Mom is very pleased . . . Mom smiles at me when I empty my cup . . ." (1987, p. 21). Praise from her brother is shown thus "When the bannock is done, Wess pulls out a knife and cuts off a piece. I guess I've passed the test because he doesn't say anything and helps himself to a second piece" (1987, p. 46). And after completing her new carving of the spindle and crossbar for her miniature fishnet, Owl says "'I'm done and here comes Mom. A pleased look crosses her face when I place my new crossbar and full spindle beside the shiny

white nylon spools on her sewing bag. 'Oh, you've finished them,' she says smiling. 'Yep!' I answer, grinning, quite pleased with myself'" (1987, p. 54).

The following is an example that although it does not say that this was obviously not the first attempt for the ten-year-old girl, she has no qualms of taking over and doing a job correctly. "Mom has just put aside the fish net she is making and lays back on the moss to rest. She's already made her new net quite long since this morning. I sit down beside her and pick up the net. The rectangular wood and the spindle of twine are quite large in my hands, but my fingers are long enough to hold the knots as I pull in each loop. It seems forever to do one row of squares. After finishing the third row, I decided I've had enough" (1987, p. 34). There is no mention or confirmation of approval after this sentence.

In *Silent Words* (1992), without being asked, wherever he happens to find himself, Danny always pitches in and works to please others. At times when he is given praise, it pleases him to no end and thus he works harder.

Danny also seems to take a lot of pride in his work helping the old couple and they seem to enjoy having him with them but nothing is said of the appreciation they have of his hard work and winning personality. When he is with Jim and his son, Henry, he again works very hard. As he says "Maybe if I make myself useful and stay out of trouble, they will let me stay" (p. 72). Affection is shown in many ways and Danny describes one action from Jim that makes him feel good. "Jim reached out and pulled a twig out of my hair and said, 'You pretending to be Caesar, with twigs in your hair?' I laughed as he ruffled my hair. Everything was all right" (p. 87).

Danny describes his discomfort at times when Henry receives affection in 'public.' As Danny says, "I always felt out of place, like I had no business being there, at times when Henry would hug his dad, or when Jim would put his arm around Henry's shoulder and pull him and kiss him on the head. I always pretended I didn't notice, but I wished I could disappear at those times" (p. 90). Then he discovers gratitude and pleasure from Ol'Jim too for a job well done. "Ol'Jim turned and smiled at me and nodded at the pile already there. I grinned. He reached and ruffled my hair" (p. 101). With an impending severe storm, Danny scurries around, pulling up the canoe, well into the safety of low bushes, hiding the tent and paddles under the canoe, bringing an armload of wood into the cabin, starting a fire in the stove, running down the lake to fill the teapot, and when Ol'Jim comes in, he says, "Good thinking, boy! You learn fast" (p. 174).

In order to thank Henry's father Jim, for his kindness and understanding, Danny says to Henry "You have the best father in the whole world!" (p. 182). When he visits Mr. and Mrs. Old Indian again, he meets their son, "He smiled at the old couple who were now sitting on their mattresses on the floor. I detected so much love and warmth from the big man as he looked at them. For some strange reason, I felt tears spring into my eyes" (p. 193).

During the winter, Danny sees Henry and his new step-mother having a fight and an argument and, "Then she got up and pulled Henry up, and they stood there hugging each other. I could tell Henry was crying so I decided to disappear and get the water. For some reason, I felt such a pain in my chest that I cried all the way home" (p. 202). Danny is unable to understand the source of his emotional pain.

After Henry's death, Danny is with Ol'Jim at his winter trapper's shack and says "For some reason, I remembered him and Henry. They used to laugh like this. I was always watching them, laughing with them. I liked how they made each other happy. I blinked back an overwhelming pressure of tears and concentrated on chewing" (p. 225).

Basil Johnston (1982) gives an example of an imposter who did not earn approval from the community, "Unless he could provide some food for his wife, the impostor would be driven from the village by the laughter of the hunters. He would be regarded as less than a man, incapable and incompetent, a burden upon his wife and upon the village" (p. 27). In another story about a man who was too ashamed to ask for assistance and go on welfare, he says "Ain't gonna borrow no potatoes. People gonna laugh at me. . . . Can't do that. People'd laugh at me" (1978, p. 33-34). Just as it is difficult to ask for help for fear of being laughed at, there is also the fear of embarrassing someone with verbal praise. Wagamese (1994) also has one of his characters saying "It's about honoring. See, us we find it hard to just come out'n say things like we're prouda you, we respect you. Timid that way us, I guess. Rather show it. Means more to us an' to the one we're doin' the showin' to. Always been our way to show the things we feel about people instead of sayin' them" (p. 196).

Protocol and Manners

Observing protocol and manners is knowing when to do and say the right thing. "Native society has highly structured and demanding rules of social behaviour. There are rules about everything" (Brant, 1990, p. 537). As a consequence to the ethic of non-interference, Brant goes on to say that "rules can never be stated, for to do so would

interfere with the individual's right to behave as he sees fit" (p. 537). So, outsiders, not knowing the proper protocol in a given situation could be forgiven for their ignorance.

The following does not refer to children teasing each other into conformity or the teasing that occurs to discipline children, it refers to how children should deal with adults and the natural environment. It teaches children not to laugh at people or any other living thing for fear of making them angry. This was mentioned previously as showing proper respect for everyone and all of nature. What you do to others or things will come around so that the same thing happens to you or your loved ones. An example of this is a story told about a man who had gone hunting and was bitten by a rabbit that was still alive as he tried to let it loose from a snare. His hunting partner teased and laughed so hard at him that it made the hunter very angry. He cast a spell so that the same should happen to the man who had laughed at him. Sure enough, when it was the partner's turn to go hunting, a swarm of rabbits came at him so fast, attacking and biting him, that he could not fend them off, and they overpowered and devoured him. This story begins with "This is the way little children are taught not to laugh at anyone who is in trouble" (Ellis, 1995, p. 145). Notice here that the hunter does not tell his partner that he had been offended and that he was going for revenge. He simply says nothing and kills his partner by magic.

People should also not discount the least among them for they may prove to be the greatest, as illustrated in the story about the village outcast who volunteers to kill the Windigo when the greatest Medicine Men had failed. "Everyone laughed at the humble man. He was unwanted; he had no wife or children; he was the joke of the village" (Stevens, 1971, p. 123). Needless to say, he slays the monster and saves the village and

"he was given the most beautiful and favourite woman in the camp for his wife and for the rest of his days he lived happily. The village outcast, Red Tail, had saved them all from the horrible Windigo" (p. 124).

Another story tells of a fat boy who steps forward during a debate as to what can be done to save the village from a race of murdering giants. "There was much laughter in the lodge when the fat boy sat down. He was such a weakling and a very poor hunter . . . "The fat one is a fool," one of the braves said. There was more laughter and the fat boy felt so ashamed that he left the lodge." Indubitably, he goes to the land of the giants and kills them all. "This is how the fat boy saved his people and why Indians live at Deer Lake today" (Stevens, 1971, p. 77). One is never to be discounted or scoffed at because, "You never can tell until a situation arises in which their power for good or ill becomes manifest" (Hallowell, 1975, p. 164).

Basil Johnston (1976), also recalls the story of the little muskrat that managed to find a handful of soil from the bottom of the sea when all the others had failed, saying "Where the great had failed, the small succeeded" (1976, p. 14). Wagamese (1994), also mentions a story that goes: "The animal that's got the most respect from his animal brothers an' sisters . . . is the mole. Tiny, blind little mole that lives in the ground is greatest warrior in the animal kingdom" (p. 152).

Protocol breached by an outsider is cause for amusement in the community but the person would never know what he/she had done, for to tell him/her would be to subject the person to shame. Non-interference prevents Owl from telling the teacher what he had done wrong so she becomes embarrassed for him when the laughter starts. The teacher's

laundry on the line for all the community to see is hung up all wrong. "Aunty told it all to Mom when we got home and they all laughed so hard, I started to feel sorry for Teacher" (1987, p. 95). Again the teacher causes Owl a lot of problems when he singles her out in front of the other children. "Teacher comes out of his house and falls into step beside me. I'm embarrassed. . . . We resume walking towards the boys and then it starts, I knew it from their faces. They tease me about the teacher. In our language, they chant, 'Teacher likes her-er, Teacher likes her-er.' I ignore them and begin going out of my way to avoid the teacher. I no longer speak to him outside the school and I always wait till lots of kids are in front of the school so I can stand at the back of the line" (1987, p. 95).

There are many rules of social behaviour acted on without conscious intent. Even when getting into the canoe, Owl pauses "I glance at Mom. She nods. I step into the canoe and sit down beside Annie" (1987, p. 19). A parent showing affection to one child in front of the other siblings can also be embarrassing to that child. After the shooting of the family dog, the younger brother shows up at the right time to break the tension. "With a cry of joy, Mom springs up from the bench and plants a loud kiss on his cheek. I snicker and giggle because I know he hates to be kissed or shown even a bit of affection. Come to think of it, I don't usually see Mom kissing anyone" (p. 39).

Manners also involve knowing when to laugh without hurting someone's feelings. Laughing *with* someone is not what is discussed here, but rather, laughter that is usually reserved to teasing and laughing at someone to discipline them. Laughing at someone at any time is bad manners. An example of this is when Jane lands butt-first on an anthill, "I disappear behind a boulder and stumble to the tracks with my chest and throat bursting.

There, I finally clamp my mouth with both my hands and let my laughter out of my chest like a deflating balloon" (p. 22). Here, Owl explains,

> I had learned how to keep from laughing when I had been caught in situations where I couldn't laugh. Like the time our storekeeper served each customer with a smile despite the fact that one eye was almost swollen shut from a mosquito bite. For me, that was torture. Mom's expression never changed. Or there was the time our Minister gave a sermon from an open Bible, held upside down for quite a long time before he noticed it. . . . Then there was the time at church and that John, one of the older men, was a little tipsy and he toppled over backwards, chair and all, and went down with a mighty crash. All we could see were his feet sticking up. Oh, I would have died then, if I hadn't noticed that Mom was silently shaking with laughter too. (p. 22)

Daydreaming also gets Owl into trouble by smiling when it was not proper. "I smile at the thought and then see Barbara glaring at me. Whatever Mom had been saying wasn't supposed to be funny. I put my head down and concentrate on finishing my supper" (1987, p. 23). There are times though, it appears when something is just too funny not to laugh. When the boy is slapped on the face by the fish inside the canoe, Owl says, "I study Mom before I see, beneath the straight face and calm voice that her eyes are filling with swallowed laughter" (p. 58). But, the mother loses it when the oldest daughter asks why the boy was crying. Owl says, "Mom answers, 'The jackfish slapped him on the face for smelling him.' That did it for Mom. I felt it from the canoe first, as her big body quivered and shook before she let out peals of high-pitched laughter" (p. 58).

Another instance is when Owl accidently splashes a sheet of water with her paddle on her sister who was lying in the canoe reading a comic book. "Is the canoe shaking again? I glance back at Mom. She's looking across the lake, biting her lower lip" (p. 60). Another time is when the girl bumped into the frying pan handle that held a sizzling supper, wedged on the stove top lid and it fell inside the stove. "Mom just claps her hands over her mouth. Shoulders shaking, she sits there laughing" (p. 67).

The mother has a hard time to keep from laughing when the girl thinks the old man's black dog had died in the water and it turned out to be the bearskin he had sunk into the water to clean. "I glance at Mom. She has her back to me. Do I see her shoulders shake?" (p. 87). The one time when they all burst out laughing was when the Town Joker accidently sets the matches in his pocket to flames when he holds the hot power saw against them. "He looked so funny. Then he comes after us for laughing at him. I get a handful of snow rubbed in my face before Vera, Jane and Annie pull him off me" (p. 112).

Among the examples of times when not to laugh, there are also spontaneous actions that cause laughter. After the door had been kicked open one too many times that it could not be mended again, the girl suggests something that the mother acts upon - to remove the axe that held the door in place.

> "Hey, Mom. Here comes the Town Joker. Hurry, pull that axe out and see what happens!"
>
> Mom glances at me with a twinkle in her eye and carefully removes the axe just as the footsteps fall on the porch. One push on the broken door and it comes

> crashing down, throwing our unsuspecting visitor off balance. With a quick lunge, Mom saves him from falling on the stove. Shaking her head at me and sighing with relief, she says "You'd think I'd know better than to listen to you." I was laughing so hard my face hurt. (p. 101)

There are also times when the mother teaches the child when to laugh to ease tension or fear as the time when Owl thought she was alone and got scared during a blueberry picking outing. "'Once,' she says, looking at me. 'Wess could fill his cup every two minutes, 'til one day, he tripped in front of me and out rolled a wad of moss he had been using to stuff his cup over halfway full.' I start to laugh, and she turns away to continue with her picking'" (p. 23).

Showing manners and respect is required for all situations. Owl sees a good example of this when she runs home one day and stops at the door. There was an awful stink coming from a drunk and filthy visitor who was sitting on the bench beside the table. "Mom gets up and gives her a cup of tea and offers her some snuff." The woman continues spitting on the floor and when she finally leaves, "I enter the cabin again. In a flurry of activity Barbara has emerged from Mom's room, mumbling and grumbling. She wipes the spit off the floor with an old rag which she throws into the fire. Then she viciously attacks the floor with a pan of water and scrubbing brush. Amused by all this, Mom continues with her sewing as Barbara thoroughly wipes off the bench" (p. 66). This falls in line with the reception of John Bull who had shot the family dog, that manners must override feelings of anger. Manners also include never refusing something that is offered, no matter how vile. "I close my nose at the back of my mouth and deposit

the rotten meat inside" (p. 118). Owl holds the rotten meat inside her mouth until she is out of the old woman's range of vision, where she then spits it out, gagging.

Danny also discovers that manners involve knowing when and how to laugh. As in the beginning when he was brushing up on his Ojibwa language with the children, he says "I got a lot of practice speaking Ojibwa, and they laughed with me when I made a mistake" (1992, p. 30). They laughed 'with' him rather than 'at' him. In his days with Mr. and Mrs. Indian, Danny says "Once in a while, they would chuckle and cackle at the way I was doing things. I laughed with them a lot" (p. 52). Danny also learned the proper thing to do which in this case, was to stay and listen to what the old man had to say. As he says, "I frowned at the old lady, but she just smiled and disappeared from the window where she had stood watching us. I knew I was going to be here for a long time, I couldn't just leave while he was talking to me" (p. 55). So, he stays and listens.

When Danny meets the lonely boy Henry for the first time, Henry spots him for the 'city kid' that he is and Danny realizes this as he says "I smiled as I plodded along behind him. He was acting like I had never seen a water pail before" (p. 66). Danny is caught staring which is pretty bad manners, "One eye now winked at me. I didn't realize I had been staring" (p. 67).

After learning that a prayer came before meals, Danny is at a table again. "Soon the fried fish was on the table and we all sat down to eat. I sat, waiting, my hands clasped obediently before me, when I sensed the silence again. They were sitting there looking at me. Then Jim said, 'Are you waiting for Grace? Sorry, she doesn't live here'" (p. 68). Danny also learns something when "Henry yelled and waved his arms, 'Charlotte!

Yeooh!' Suddenly Jim whistled a sharp high-pitched note. Henry was immediately quiet but smiling as he brought his shoulders up. 'Sorry,' he said under his breath" (p. 74). "Jim pretended to scoff and look down his nose at Henry . . ." (p. 74). That is how Henry is reminded that being louder than the natural outside noise is not an acceptable behaviour.

Danny is also not aware that people can 'read' his face and it must have registered disgust as he describes what he sees at the moose meat cutting scene. "There were nine men and four women working in a circle. A huge skinless thing lay in the center. It showed pink-and-white stretched layers and blotches. Then I noticed a long-haired furry thing piled on top of some branches. The smell of blood was everywhere. I heard a man's voice saying "What's the matter with him? A city Indian?" Suddenly, I became aware that they were laughing and looking at me" (p. 83). Knowing now that he can get in their good graces if he did something to be helpful, he gets some water for the workers. "I gave it to the first lady I saw. 'Oh, water! He got us some water. We were getting very thirsty. . . . She paused as she took a couple of good swallows before she handed the pail to the next person. I felt very proud as I watched the pail being passed from one person to the next. Each person glanced at me when he or she took the pail" (p. 84). From here on, Danny learns to be useful whenever he perceives he has just done something wrong.

Danny also goes through a change of opinion when he connects food to the moose butchering site that disgusted him, the store-bought meat that comes pre-cut and packaged, and then having to kill a duck for his next meal with his own hands when he is

with Ol'Jim. At that point, he says "I felt like laughing for joy. I did it! I killed it! Breakfast! I will have breakfast cooked for Ol'Jim before he wakes up!" (p. 154).

Back to doing something wrong, with Ol'Jim, he says, "He was very quiet. I wondered if I had offended him or something. I decided to keep my mouth shut and make myself useful" (p. 118). Begging for forgiveness, Danny says, "I turned and gave him my biggest smile. He grinned and splashed me with his paddle as we headed out full speed into the open water of Smoothrock Lake, heading toward Loon Narrows" (p. 118).

Learning when to laugh is hard for Danny. "He turned his head away so all I saw were his brown cabbage ears lifting, but I could tell he was smiling when he said, "That huge bear back there would come around for sure during the night. I was tracking him down when you crashed that rock on my head." When he turned and locked on to my eyes there was no way I could keep my face from stretching. First I tackled the left side, then the right side of my mouth, but both escaped and I cracked into a big smile and giggled, "If that yell didn't scare him away, I'm sure the sight of your behind did!" (p. 108).

As part of the cultural recognition, interpretation, and understanding, here, Danny had the option of not saying anything about the incident had he been able to keep a straight face. So, from here on, Danny makes no attempt to try not to laugh as he says, "I made sure I was well out of the way before I started to laugh, in case he decided to come after me. His shoulders started to shake and soon a bellow of laughter escaped his throat" (p. 126).

After a moose swims into their fishnet and drags it off deep into the bushes,

Ol'Jim comes back all upset at having to retrieve two pickerel from the bush among his shredded fishnet, he marches toward the campsite and Danny says, "He stomped to the fire, his baggy pants hurrying to keep up with his legs. A giggling fit doubled me over . . ." (p. 135).

Just as Henry was quickly silenced by his father, the same thing happens to Danny. "A loon was whooping and laughing like a maniac by the bay. I cupped my hand and blew a whistle the way Henry had taught me and, immediately, water pelted me across the back. I gasped and glanced back. Ol'Jim looked stern. He shook his head, but said nothing. I did something wrong. I hunched my shoulders and vowed to remember not to whistle like that again" (p. 150).

Humour is a big part of learning also. As Wagamese (1994) observes, "they find a way to laugh about it. Keeper says that it's the way they've survived everything and still remained a culture. Lotsa Indian ways changed when the whiteman got here, lotsa people suffered, but they stayed alive on accounta they learned to deal with things by not taking them so damn serious all the time. Go anywhere where there's Indians and chances are you'll find them cracking up laughing over something. Humor's a big thing with Indians" (p. 87).

Teaching and Learning

Teaching and learning is also done through stories by providing examples of what should not be said or done and also provides desired and expected behaviour that ensures social conformity and maintains cultural norms.

One is *shown* how rather than *told* how. This can be seen as another form of

> *conflict repression* in that the teacher does not purport to know more than his student, but through his own actions conveys useful and practical information which the student then has a choice of adopting or rejecting. The student is never placed on the spot and required to perform before he has been adequately trained. (Brant, 1990, p. 537).

As all these values and ethics are interconnected, this is but an extension of the brief discussion on attitude toward gratitude and approval. Brant (1990) also states that "Modelling seems to increase attachment to the older members of the group, promoting group cohesiveness and continuity" (p. 537). As an apprentice of all skills and trades, the child learns not only the physical skills, but knowledge of the spiritual and mental as well.

The greatest teacher of all (frequently referred to as the 'third entity' or used often as a 'projection of conflict' that relieves others of direct responsibility) is the trickster or Wee-sa-kay-jac. He/she/it is described by Stevens (1971), as a supernatural Indian who "can change himself into any shape or form to protect himself from danger. . . . He is also an adventurer who likes to create mischief and play tricks on us. Sometimes he gets our people very angry; however, Wee-sa-kay-jac is to be respected by our people because he has great powers. If you ever meet him offer him some of your tobacco and he may help you" (p. 20). Wee-sa-kay-jac "represents all the polarities of our world: creator-destroyer; intelligence-stupidity; power-impotence; good-evil, and so on" (p. 11).

Ellis (1995) says of the trickster, "In each case he is in turn tricked or meets his come-uppance. Each story then normally concludes with an explanation of how Weesakechahk's behaviour accounts for some natural phenomenon or points up a lesson

in proper behaviour drawn from his misdirected activity, or both. Clearly this transmission of the cultural repertoire fulfils the second of the ways in which the cultural heritage is passed on in non-literate societies. It constitutes a paradosis, or, at least, a statement of standardized ways of acting" (p. xxvii).

Other stories include those told to teach young mothers never to leave their children unattended outside. In one story, a starving wolverine carries off the child and eats it and the woman "was grief stricken but there was nothing she could do. She had not listened to the words of her elders" (Stevens, 1971, p. 35). Wee-sa-kay-jac's form of punishment to the wolverine for this act is to create a white imprint in the shape of a child on the wolverine's back that it may eternally display its evil deed for all to see. In another story, a woman leaves her child in a cradle-board leaning against a tree while she gathers wood for the fire and a witch steals the baby. This starts an adventure that eventually returns the child to the mother. It ends with "so this indeed is the legend which is used to teach people that children should not be left alone when they are young" (Sugarhead, 1996, p. 51).

A teaching against vanity includes the little Whiskey-Jack (Canada Jay) who thinks he is too plain and wants to look "very important and handsome" (Stevens, 1971, p. 37). So he asks Wee-sa-kay-jac to help him. He is told to go and borrow a feather from each bird and having done so, discovers that with his wide assortment of feathers, he cannot fly very well. To this day, he dips and swerves quite awkwardly in flight.

There is also a story in Stevens (1971), about a woman who is so beautiful that she finds no man fit to be her husband and insults each man who comes to ask for her

hand. Then a man arrives who is a good hunter and very well off. He too is insulted with a statement that she would sooner marry a pile of human excrement than marry him. He is hurt and shamed and when he gets home, he tells his father who is a medicine man what was said to him. Then one day the woman sees the most handsome man emerge from the forest and knows right away that he would be the husband for her. She marries him and they begin the journey back to his home. On the way, he is so far ahead of her that she cannot see what he is doing, but she begins picking up bits of his clothing, one by one, that had dropped on his trail that she follows when finally, she picks up the last of his clothing and there where his footprints end, is a huge pile of human excrement. The story ends with a statement that young women should be satisfied with what they have, "Otherwise, they might miss a good man and get a 'stinker'" (Stevens, 1971, p. 79-80).

People who show-off are also frowned upon with ample stories for examples. There is one about a fox who loved to show off in front of everyone, prancing, twirling, racing back and forth and walking only by his hind legs. Then, he sees a dot on the ice. He races to it and discovers that it is a glove. Upon inquiring what the glove is good for, the glove informs him that it is a strangler. Whereupon, the fox invites the glove to strangle him until he yells for it to stop. As it is impossible for a strangled person to yell, "the fox collapsed, unconscious in the snow" (Stevens, 1971, p. 98).

A lesson against doing stupid things tells of a very hungry couple; a frog and a rabbit. The frog crawls into the moose and bites a vital organ and the story explains how frog prints appear on the internal organ of a moose. Having killed the moose, they eat their fill, then realize they are in danger of wolves coming to feast on the left-over meat.

The frog jumps into the snow and burrows into the ground and the rabbit crawls into the moose and "the wolves descended upon the moose and ate the carcass and the stupid rabbit" (Stevens, 1971, p. 86). The story of the bobcat and the skunk also teaches a lesson. Being that the bobcat is not a very good hunter, the couple is always very hungry. As the bobcat leaves to go hunting, his words alert the skunk to some other possible motive when bobcat says "when I return, prepare yourself for a feast" (Stevens, 1971, p. 99). Upon hearing his return, the skunk hides herself. In an attempt to lure her out of her hiding place, the bobcat tries some crazy antics, but to no avail. Then he begins biting his backside and much to his surprise, finds it quite tasty. In his hunger-crazed condition, he begins earnestly to devour himself until he is dead. At this point, the skunk comes out and eats the rest of the bobcat (p. 99). The moral of the story could be that 'what you may plan for others, you do to yourself.'

In *Honour the Sun* (1987), the practice of teaching by modeling often shows up as part of daily routine as in the following example:

> Mom calls me over to her sewing bag and indicates the left over spools of twine from her fishnet, "Look how much was left over," she says to me.
>
> "Would that be enough for a little net?" I ask excitedly.
>
> "Oh, it could be about two feet wide and about seven feet long" she says.
>
> "Oh, Boy! I'll start it right away!" I run my fingers over the smooth surface of the nylon twine. I'll need a little rectangular piece of wood and a small spindle. Mom hands me a piece of cedar wood. I decide to get busy right away. Mom warns me to be careful with the knife before she heads down to the lake with

Wess. (1987, p. 53)

Notice how the mother just indicates what is left over rather than ask Owl if she wanted to make a fishnet. Owl could have just said 'Oh, that's a lot" if she did not feel like making a fishnet and the mother would not have been hurt by the rejection of her idea. This is an example of the cultural recognition, interpretation, and understanding of knowing when and where these cues are in personal interactions. It also clearly shows that the mother has full confidence that the girl knows how to make a complete fishnet on her own, and also to make the tools necessary. As Owl says "I already see in my mind the small spindle that I am going to make" (p. 53). It is interesting to note that an artist from Irwin & Farrell's (1996) research also states that "it is all in your head . . . right away I see what I am going to make" (p. 78). For a carving, one would first examine the wood and visualize how the shape of the object to be made would follow the grain of the wood. The instructions and warnings for the child are given for a very good reason. Carelessness often leads to danger as when Owl is chastised by her brother for forgetting that he was felling trees for wood. She runs up there and he yells at her to go away, fast! The tree just barely misses her as it comes crashing down. Owl says, "with the long upper half of the tree over his shoulder, he walks by me, then turns. He regards me for a few seconds before saying quietly, 'Don't ever do that again'" (1987, p. 62).

When the mother asks six-year-old Tony, to pick up and take a six-foot log down to the shore, no one knows that it is full of dry dust. The boy complies. As Owl says, "Tony smiles sheepishly, as Mom ruffles his hair and says 'Do as you're told right away, Tony. I wouldn't expect you to do something I know you couldn't do'" (p. 63). But, the

mother also warns of consequences "And Tony, if you rip those pants one more time, I'll sew on a bright red patch! We snicker and dunk some bannock into our soup bowls" (p. 105).

In *Silent Words,* 1992, Henry tells Danny to put the pot of water on the fire. "I took the pot and put it down on top of the fire. The sticks shifted suddenly and the teapot fell over and there was a big billow of steam, smoke, and ash! I heard Henry yell, "Why the heck did you do that for?" Henry grabbed the pot, now covered with ashes, and set it to the side and began poking around at the drenched ashes. He glanced at me, then smiled and started to laugh. He was still laughing as he said, "Come on, no big deal! Get some more water and I'll just make another fire, that's all!" He handed me the pot and I walked to the lake" (p. 76). Rather than picking up the pot from Danny, Henry makes him do it again, instructing him as he goes. "I picked up the pot again and set it down gingerly, making sure it would not tip over, before I released the handle. There! I smiled. That made me feel better" (p. 77). This allows Danny not to lose face and prevents Henry from appearing smarter than him.

Later, when Danny and Henry decide to make a cake on top of the wood stove, Henry's father does not interfere and leaves them to find out for themselves. "Jim turned from the stove, a smile tugging at the corners of his mouth. 'Now listen boys, you look after your cake' . . . I grabbed a cup and rushed over to the stove in time to see the brown stuff swell and overflow in long rivers of goo down the side of the stove and lay in gobs on the floor" (p. 80).

Getting carried away at the butchering site, Danny picks up "a sheet of flat

things–ribs! I held it out away from me as I walked to the clearing. Henry's lowered voice came, like the storyteller from a scary movie, "In the village of the dead, out came the murdering zombie of the Collins swamp, holding out the poor bones of . . . Danny Lynx!" I burst out laughing and tried to swing the meat out to throw at him, when suddenly, Henry's face changed. He put his head down and I turned to see Shomis. He stood there glaring at us, then turned around. I slowly put the meat down and asked Henry, "'What's with him?' Henry shook his head. 'I should not have done that. We should not be playing with the meat.' Oh" (p. 85). It is highly disrespectful to the animal to play with its meat and it is possible that the boys' actions could have offended the moose. In that case, the moose would not readily give up its life again where its meat would be expected to be shared with those that disrespected it.

By watching Danny's attempt to get into the canoe, and after his explanation at how he got there, the old man knew that Danny had a lot of learning to do and so he sets out to communicate in the only way Danny understands–at first.

> You know, that was a stupid thing to do!" came the voice behind me. . . . We were coming through high weeds as we entered a muddy bay. I trailed my hand in the water again to wet my lips, and I gasped when I was pelted on the back with water from his paddle. His voice came again, "Danny, I just told you that that was a stupid thing to do. Huge jackfish live here and they don't check first to see if that is a human hand. They will grab anything that hits the water. Now, no more of that! Dip your paddle sideways, tip it up and let the water run down into your mouth. . . . Your safety depends on how careful you are. There are no doctors or

hospitals out here." (p. 96)

Every instruction is always followed by an explanation. As they go on, Danny learns, but, Ol'Jim is still required to say, "by the way, I guess I didn't tell you not to pull the canoe up on top of a rock. That's what made the canoe tip over, you know? I didn't think I needed to tell you that" (p. 129).

When Danny is asked to cover the ground with pine branches he does so and he explains, "I was more intent on making sure I had enough branches to cover the floor before he came back. I had the branches scattered over the floor and was satisfied with the effect by the time he came around the corner of the tent. He peeked in and went "'Humph!' with a big smile on his face, but did not say anything" (p. 110). Several nights later, Danny says "I watched him expertly handle the branches. Side by side, he marched the pine branches across the front and backed up to push another layer into the ground. "The ground is growing pine feathers," I said. I suddenly remembered the branches that I had scattered on the ground the night before" (p. 132). Danny watches how Ol'Jim hangs the fishnet to dry. "He lugged the fishnet to a clearing along the beach. Then he took the lead rope and strung it between two young poplar trees and looped the fishnet over the rope on every other sinker" (p. 115). His own ingenious idea of covering the fresh fish with pine branches to keep the flies off, pleases Ol'Jim and then Danny proceeds to 'take down' the campsite and loads everything into the canoe before the old man comes back from the bushes (p. 116). Danny also decides to take care of the drying fishnet, "I folded the fishnet neatly into the canvas sack and put it in the canoe" (p. 118). Then when Ol'Jim decides to set the net again, Danny says, "he seemed to be having

trouble with the net, and stopped occasionally to untangle it. Finally he grumbled, 'I was beginning to think I must have put this away in my sleep until I remembered that little pup had put it away himself . . .' I felt my face stretch into a big grin and pretended to examine the shoreline ahead of me" (p. 127).

As part of being responsible, notice also how intent Danny is in trying to keep track of all the things he must carry across the portages, making sure he does not forget anything, "I found it hard keeping track of all these things" (p. 117, 126). Besides running around getting things ready, he turns the canoe over by himself and says "I was proud of myself. That was the first time I turned the canoe up all by myself" (p. 122). Danny also does something that has consequences later on "I fired the fish into the food box . . ." (p. 126). "The food box was upside down, the teapot had rolled into the bushes by the path, and the tent poles were knocked aside. . . . The bear tracks were unmistakably clear on the sand around the campsite. He had spilled a bit of flour but seemed to have found the lard more to his liking because that was all he took. Now we had no more lard" (p. 144). When Ol'Jim tells him to dry his feet, "Take off your shoes and hang your socks to dry" (p. 129). Here is what Danny does, "I took Ol'Jim's knife and rounded off the ends of two of the branches he had hacked off the roasting stick. . . . I stuck the ends into the ground and hung each sock over the fire. Suddenly, Ol'Jim walked by with a whole messy tree, its branches scraping everywhere. He dropped it beside the fire and the branches flipped around, spraying water and mud all over the place and knocking both my toast-dried socks off their sticks and into the fire" (p. 130). When he cuts down a tree for firewood by himself, Danny says "I was very proud of myself"

(p.134).

At Danny's request Ol'Jim shows Danny how to set a rabbit snare, "He gave me a piece of wire and I followed his hands as he shaped and twisted the snare. I did the same with my snare wire. Then he explained how to set the snare, where the most likely place to find a rabbit-run was, and how far off the ground it must be" (p. 135). Then, without a word, Ol'Jim points out the lay of the land, as they walk into a swampy area, "It was there he set his snare, slowly and carefully, and I watched every move. Then he waited for me to decide where I was going to put mine. I picked a little trail that looked well used. He watched silently. When I was finished and did everything he had done with his snare, I stood back. He said,

> "That is a kind of a hard decision to ask a rabbit to make."
>
> "What do you mean? I asked, puzzled.
>
> "To stretch or duck under. I think I would decide to duck under if I was a rabbit," he said as he walked away.
>
> Stretch or duck under? Why doesn't he just say that it's too high? I pushed the snare stick lower and the snare came down about an inch. That should do it" (p. 136).

This is an example how a child is taught to think. If you want to catch a rabbit, think like one. This allows Danny to think about where he is to put his snare – where the likely place is to catch a rabbit. Therefore, if he was to catch a rabbit, it would have been entirely from his own effort and logical thinking. Abram (1996) states "The native hunter, in effect, must *apprentice* himself to those animals that he would kill . . . the

hunter gradually develops an instinctive knowledge of the habits of his prey, of its fears and its pleasures, its preferred foods and favored haunts" (p.140).

Ol'Jim and Danny also put the waves to work washing the muddy clothes from the day before. "The waves grabbed the clothes, swished and twirled them between the rocks, then each new wave pounded them against the rocks so hard that the pants stuck to the rock before another wave pulled them back into the water. We stood around and watched the waves at work. Ol'Jim had a stick that he used to fish the shirt back with every time it tried to escape" (p. 138). This activity brings Danny closer to viewing the waves as separate from the lake. The waves in this case, become animate while the lake remains inanimate. In essence then, Danny is playing with the Waves and watching them wash his clothes for him.

Danny also begins to notice things like the tracks on the sand wondering, are they those of a moose? (p. 137). He is also awaking to the bird's weather forecast, "Ol'Jim had taught me by now to listen to the birds" (p. 139). He also "watched a few fancy, bright blue, tiny dragonflies hovering over some weeds . . . a squirrel kicked up quite a chatter . . . noticed some ancient-looking, black, one-inch-round spider shells attached to some boulders by the shore . . . all the rocks were covered with them!" He also pretended to be a wolf . . . kicked up spiral-shaped, empty pink shells on the sand (p. 141) and "Among the weeds by the water, I noticed bundles of thin sticks about one inch long. They were moving! I picked one up and turned it over and saw thin hairy legs sticking out. I dropped it back into the water. Why does it look like a bundle of sticks? If it is a worm, why doesn't it just be a worm and look like a worm instead of hiding inside and

pretending to be a bundle of sticks?" (p. 142). There is actually a legend about this little creature, how he got to be a bundle of sticks. Danny is becoming aware of his surroundings and discovers that the world is very much alive and humming with activity.

Danny continues, "I ran back to the clearing, and there was Ol'Jim roasting a rabbit over the fire. "You checked the snares! Why didn't you wait for me?" I asked as I sat down beside the fire. "I just checked my snare while I was down there. Yours is a bit too far. You can check that one yourself. I put my snares close to my morning path," he said as he went about turning the bannock around on the pan and banking the ashes a little bit higher" (p. 141). Here, Danny is responsible for his own snare and also for taking care of his rabbit, should he get one.

Danny's attention is no longer only focused at his destination, but takes the time to observe and appreciate the natural surroundings. "I paused to watch a squirrel peel off a pine cone as I walked through the swampy edge of the woods. . . . I passed by the Pink-Packsack Lady Slippers as I called them now. I walked around them so as not to disturb their early-morning meal of dew and flies. I pulled out some high soft moss to clean the pots with . . ." (p. 142). These are all the things he has learned in this short time. He also no longer asks for explanations first but just observes. "Ol'Jim smiled and said, 'let's go for a paddle between the islands and set some hooks.' I grinned and threw some twigs and bark into the fire-pit while I waited for him to finish checking over a long rope with a pile of three-inch hooks attached that he had pulled out of his sack" (p. 146). He tries to figure things out as he watches. "He threw an oblong-shaped rock into the canoe, and we paddled out to the channel in the calm hot afternoon. I knew he used a rock like that for a

fishnet, but he didn't have a fishnet now, only the hooks on the rope, so what does he need the rock for?" (p. 146). He observes Ol'Jim to see what he does next. "We paddled between two islands, and here Ol'Jim decided to tie one end of the rope with the three-inch hooks attached every foot or so to an overhanging tree and let the rope out into the water. The hooks were baited with the fish guts from the jackfish he had given away. When we got to the end of the rope, Ol'Jim tied on the rock that he had put into the canoe and let it down into the water" (p. 149).

The next morning, Ol'Jim hauls in a sturgeon attached to one of the hooks and Danny thinks, "well, we would have enough for lunch and supper anyway" (p. 156). There are also other things that can be used for bait, "Ol'Jim sat there baiting the hook on his trailing line with the cut-out cheek of the jackfish" he had just caught" (p. 147). What Danny see, hears and experiences with Ol'Jim is all traditional knowledge. This is the traditional teaching and learning method. The old man shows and explains how things are done and Danny observes and then tries out his new knowledge. Through trial and error, he accomplishes his goal.

When Danny dives into the water he discovers something else. "I touched the soft sand at the bottom and felt the quick sting of the water in my eyes as I looked around. The long blades of grass swayed in flowing wavy motions as I swam by. Then the tall weeds brushed my hands. They were very straight and tight, as if the ground under the water held them tightly, while at the same time they were pulled hard to the surface of the water by the sun. That must be a very difficult place to grow. They were pulled from both directions at the same time" (p. 148).

However, learning not to ask questions and to quietly observe to find the answers, is gone in a split second when he discovers Ol'Jim talking to an old white man sitting along the shoreline. Danny blurts out, "who is he? Where did he come from? What is he doing here? Is he lost? Did someone leave him here? He wasn't a Memegwesi, was he? Does he live here?" There was only silence behind me as the canoe sped forward once more" (p. 149). As Danny begins to understand, logic also comes right behind. Upon finding a path across the sand beach, he calls Ol'Jim over:

> "That's a duck path," he said. I wondered out loud, "If that's a duck path, so much like a rabbit path, couldn't you put a snare for a duck like you did for a rabbit?" Now that was a challenge for Ol'Jim if I ever heard one, and he went for it! "Well, of course!" he said. His chest puffed out and he pulled out the snare wire from his pocket and set about creating a fence along the open sand with little pieces of sticks. When he was satisfied that all access points had been blocked off to the inland pond, he set his snare on the main path. . . . Then we backtracked and he swished the sand around with a pine branch until it looked as though no one had been there at all. (p. 150)

In the evening Danny comes back just in time for supper and Ol'Jim enquires, "did you see or hear anything?" he asked as he dished out the steaming partridge pieces onto the bark and gave me the "penicillin" container of salt. "No. I figured out, though, that frogs keep afloat on the lily pads by passing gas" (p. 151). After thinking on it for a while, Danny realized that he had failed to notice some things, "what if it was a seagull path? What would we do with a seagull? No, Ol'Jim said it was a duck path. What is the

difference between a seagull path and a duck path? Maybe seagulls don't make paths. Maybe they have different foot prints. What does a duck footprint look like? I had seen the prints that seagulls made, but I hadn't examined duck foot-prints. I must remember to do that tomorrow and ask Ol'Jim which duck made which track" (p. 152).

Abram (1996) states that "by affirming that the other animals have their own languages, and that even the rustling of leaves in an oak tree or an aspen grove is itself a kind of voice, oral peoples bind their senses to the shifting sounds and gestures of the local earth, and thus ensure that their own ways of speaking remain informed by the life of the land" (p. 256). In this awareness, any change in the normal sounds of the surroundings alerts one to attention and the cause of the change is located and then appropriate action is determined. This happens as traditional practical knowledge, quite swiftly and unconsciously.

Danny's observation skills are much improved when he starts making connections to other things in life. "I breathed in the fresh air and listened to the swishing of the water against the canoe, the birds chirping along the shore, the ducks quacking in the bay, the croaking frogs, the buzzing flies from the bushes, the seagulls squawking up above, the occasional splash of the fish on the water . . . the place seemed to thrive in a certain natural rhythm. It reminded me of the time I had listened to Henry's stomach" (p. 156). Putting an ear against the trunk of the tree also gives the impression that you can almost hear the tree breathing. Abram (1996) notes that, "There is an intimate reciprocity to the senses; as we touch the bark of a tree, we feel the tree *touching us*; as we lend our ears to the local sounds and ally our nose to the seasonal scents, the terrain gradually tunes us in

in turn. The senses, that is, are the primary way that the earth has of informing our thoughts and of guiding our actions" (Abram, 1996, p. 268).

Later on, Danny is very much aware of his surroundings, "What was going on? I slowly waded to shore listening and looking around. I couldn't hear or see anything unusual. Where had all birds gone? Wait! Then I saw them. They looked like huge mountains looming over the treetops. Clouds! The way I figured it, if they were the same kind of clouds I saw at Mr. and Mrs. Old Indian's place, we were in for a mighty big storm" (p. 173). Danny knows by now what needs to be done and he proceeds to get ready for the storm.

Danny also experiences a new way of learning when quite unexpectedly, his friend Henry realizes they were being tested for observation:

> Henry suddenly slowed down, then stopped. He stood looking around, so I asked, "What's the matter?" Henry turned around. "There's something weird here. See? I don't see any tracks. The tall grass over the path should be bent if anybody had passed by." Suddenly he whirled around again, saying over his shoulder, "Come on!" He was chuckling as I ran to catch up with him. We went quite a ways until we came across a log beside the path. Henry stropped and sat down, a grin on his face. I sat beside him. . . . Then Billy and Jim emerged . . . I nudged Henry. "Where had they gone?" Henry giggled and said, "They hid on us. We walked by, and they probably wanted to see if we would know they were no longer in front of us. But we outsmarted them, didn't we?" (p. 83)

Notice also that Billy and Jim just chuckle and walk by the boys without the need to

praise them for catching on.

Later on when Danny is with Ol'Jim, he finds a can by the shoreline. "I didn't remember ever seeing one like this in the stores anywhere. It must come from tourists from somewhere else. I must hang it up on a branch. If I found one of their coats, I also would pick it up and hang it on a branch. It is theirs. Maybe one day they will come back and pick it up. I hung the can where they could easily see it" (p. 112).

Danny also comes out with some strange statements at times "I thought I heard something that sounded like a puppy. Must be a raven. That's the only thing that can sound like anything and not sound like something at all" (p.114). Learning by observation also includes looking at landmarks for clues. "Ol'Jim spoke behind me. "Tell me what you see, Danny Lynx? Look around you." His arm swept the area. "I see a clearing out there where our tent is. I see some old tent poles leaning against the tree. I just realized I never saw you cut any down!" Ol'Jim rolled his eyes in exasperation, so I continued, "There is strange moss on the branches, and there are tree stumps, and that thing hanging up there." I waited and he waited. "Well," I continued, "I think people lived in this place before." I shrugged and looked at him out of the corner of my eye. Ol'Jim sighed and walked down a ways with me, then turned me around. "Look, one clearing for one family, another clearing for another family, and over there is where the cabin stood. The moss up in those branches was used for babies' diapers in the cradle boards." He said nothing about the dried-out leather bag. I followed close at his heels back to camp" (p. 123). For people who know of this custom, the leather bag contains the remains of the placenta, but here, Ol'Jim selects to ignore that portion of his explanation

to a little boy as any other man would probably not see it fit to do so at that moment. "What do you see?" is a typical example of teaching. When Danny first sees the wolf he says,

> the wolf stood there facing me. It had not moved either. Then the neck stretched forward and lowered a bit more and the dark eyes looked at me through shaded eyelids. The paws were planted firmly in the sand and still it did not move. Suddenly my lungs filled with air. I quite involuntarily took a big breath, but it got me moving. I dragged my feet away, slowly walking backward. Then the wolf's ears twitched and the head turned to the side. It stepped away and now it stood sideways. The head turned my way again and the eyes looked into mine once more, then it was gone, back into the bush. (p. 114-115)

What we notice here is that only then, did Danny whirl around and run as fast as he could back to the campsite. Later Danny asks Ol'Jim about the wolf. "Why did the wolf just stand there and stare at me? What was it waiting for?" He didn't answer me for such a long time that I was beginning to think he hadn't heard me. Then he said, "he probably knows you from somewhere and waited to see if you knew. You obviously did not" (p. 118). Toward the end of the novel when Danny thought he was being chased by a pack of wolves, ready to eat him, but "they would run ahead, sit down, howl again, and watch me some more before they ran ahead and howled again" (p. 221). The chapter ends in the following:

> They watched over him and let us know exactly where he was. When I saw the wolves, we slowed down and started looking for him". . . The wolves had

> watched over me? I thought they were waiting to eat me! Then Ned's voice came again, "That kid has some pretty strong protectors!" (p. 222)

The next day, Ol'Jim says to Danny, "here, I have to give you this. You leave this to thank the wolves who helped you last night. Once they know you know them, they will always be there to help and guide you. They will know you recognize them. They don't forget, it is the humans who do." I thought about the black wolf I saw last summer. I picked up the pouch of tobacco Ol'Jim held out to me . . ." (p. 226). A typical example of teaching is as follows:

> 'Ol'Jim, what came out of those big black spider things? There are a lot of them on the rocks over there on the beach. Each one has an opening on the back and something untied it, came out, and left the white strings hanging there,' I said between bites. He glanced at me, then said, 'There are many of them on the rocks down by the lake here too. You are getting better at noticing things, but let your eyes tell you all of what they see.' I waited for more, but he seemed to have forgotten my question, so I repeated, 'What used to live in the black spiders?' His stubborn chin went up. Then suddenly he said, 'Right there!' and pointed to the sky. I saw nothing. He was still pointing, and then I noticed that his finger was following a big green dragonfly. He said, 'You have to be patient! I was waiting for it so that you can see what it looks like. In the spring, it crawls up on the rocks from the water. There it sits, anchoring its claws on the rock. Then it begins to unlace the seam on its back. Its head and upper body come out first, then its long skinny bottom begins to uncurl as it comes out of the shell. It is all bright green at

> this point. Even the wings are like new leaves, all wrinkled and curled up. They begin to uncurl and spread out to the summer sun. When the wings have all dried up, it flies off. My, that must be such a wonderful feeling.' Things uncurling to the sun. That reminded me of something Mr. Old Indian had said, if I remembered correctly. I decided to see if it made any sense to Ol'Jim. I looked at the old man beside me, his dreamy eyes to the sky, probably still thinking about the dragonfly. I said, 'An old man at Savant Lake said that wrinkled babies are like leaves uncurling.' (p. 143-144)

Here Danny is referring to the words of Old Indian (*Silent Words,* p. 59). I am quoting the next section in its entirety as this is a good example of Aboriginal epistemology. Danny continues:

> Ol'Jim turned and smiled at me. I continued. 'Then he said something about dead leaves and flat hands.' Ol'Jim now sat with his head down, then he picked up one of the brown leaves from the ground. He sat there turning it around and around, but said nothing. I got up and poured another cup of tea and set it down beside him. I waited some more. Then he said softly, 'The words of the Old . . .' He turned to me. 'It is important to remember exactly what is said so that you in turn, when you are an old man, can tell it to a little person like you. But you did good. I understand.' That's it? He sipped his tea. (p. 143-144)

Most of the time, the answers do not come back immediately after the question is asked, as Basil Johnston (1982) explains, "He acted as if he had not heard, as if he resented any intrusion upon work that was more important than any other consideration. But his

deliberation was customary. It did not come from misunderstanding, or from any disrespect . . . [the Anishnabeg] had long experience with the consequences of instant decisions. Even though an urgent issue, or another person's needs were involved, it was always better to take time." He goes on to say, "there were many practical reasons for "taking time," but dominating them all was a reverence for "the word." To be asked to make a decision was to be asked to give "word," an awesome request. An answer or decision was final; a pledge, irrevocable and binding upon him who pronounced it. It was an extension of someone, a test of "being true." Keeping word was the measure of a person's integrity" (p. 80).

One morning Danny notices something. "Look at that! There was a silver lake floating above the treetops with a row of trees around it. . . . I ran back to the shore and grabbed the teapot. Hey, the lake above the treetops had disappeared . . . There was a lake with trees all around it, and it was floating above the treetops across there. Why did it look like that?" I asked. Ol'Jim shrugged and said, "It's called a mirage. With the mist in the air and the sun coming up on the horizon, it creates a reflection. When the mist starts to dry up, the picture begins to fade" (p. 155). The next evening, he discovers something else. "A few minutes later, I realized that I was not listening to one owl but two–one to the east of us and the other answering from the west" (p. 158). In the morning, he says, "I could hear a loon calling, sad and lonesome all by himself somewhere out on the lake. Suddenly another loon answered and soon they were carrying on like two old friends catching up on news. I looked at Ol'Jim and asked seriously, "why do people say 'the lonely call of a loon', or 'the eerie hoot of an owl' when I have

never heard these things by themselves. There are always two or a whole bunch of them!" Ol'Jim chuckled and said, "Well, when you don't understand the language, all the voices sound the same, don't they?" (p. 159). Here, Danny has translated the English 'sayings' into Ojibwa which changes the meaning into "every loon's call is lonely, and every owl's hoot is eerie" hence, the old man's answer that when you don't understand, they all sound the same. Then Danny continues, "along the shoreline, I noticed a long awkward stick move at the top and realized that it was the head of a very long-legged bird. One leg bent at the knee and poised there for a minute before moving the other leg. "Blue Heron," said Ol'Jim behind me . . ." (p. 159). Seeing a lot of flies, Danny says, "I pointed at them and Ol'Jim nodded and stopped paddling. . . . I stopped paddling too and watched the cloud of flies hovering above the surface of the water come closer and closer. Suddenly, with a swoosh, a huge black furry thing rose up above the water! A shock went through me, and I was about to jump out of the canoe when I heard Ol'Jim's calm voice. "Steady, boy. It's a moose coming up above the water. He dunks his whole body into the water sometimes when the flies are driving him crazy" (p. 162). Then right in front of the canoe, we had a couple of playful otters put on a display for us. Showing off and taking advantage of having an audience, they did some tricks and backflips and tried to outdo each other" (p. 162). To understand all such things is traditional knowledge and ecological knowledge and these are the things that bind the whole of Aboriginal epistemology. It is with quiet perception that Abram (1996) states,

> By acknowledging such links between the inner, psychological world and the perceptual terrain that surrounds us, we begin to turn inside-out, loosen the psyche

> from its confinement within a strictly human sphere, freeing sentience to return to the sensible world that contains us. Intelligence is no longer ours alone but is a property of the earth; we are in it, of it, immersed in its depths. And indeed each terrain, each ecology, seems to have its own particular intelligence, its unique vernacular of soil and leaf and sky. (p. 262)

As they entered another lake, Danny says, "'I turned to see him looking up at the towering rock, and he said, 'There are drawings on the ones at the other end of the lake.' 'Drawings? What kind of drawings?' I said" (p. 162). These of course are pictographs and nothing else is said about them in the novel.

When they get to their destination, Danny gauges the situation saying, 'I waited for the birds to say it was okay territory. I heard none" (p. 163). Upon first laying eyes on each other, Danny says, "I decided then and there that Ol'Jim's son was the most miserable man I had ever met in my life. Right from the moment he laid eyes on me, he made up his mind that he didn't like me. It was about the same time as I decided I didn't like him either" (p. 163). In an effort to understand his rather cool reception he rationalizes, "maybe he was disappointed that I had come with Ol'Jim. He must have seen us coming. Maybe he had thought I was his son when he saw me in the canoe" (p. 163). It was after all, Hog's son that Ol'Jim had been waiting for at the portage where Danny had joined him. Along with the silence of the outdoors, Danny notices the conversation between the men. "As soon as they finished eating, they left the cabin and wandered off again, talking in a very low outdoor voice" (p. 164).

Back at the community in the fall, Danny continues to make his observations and

wonders about things. "Funny how the fall colours smear together before the white snow comes in. Then the white gets smeared with it before the spring colours come in again. I remember painting once, at school. I had red, green, yellow, and blue. But when I mixed them together, they turned into a dirty brown, just like before the snow comes. If I could separate the colours again, I would get spring" (p. 198).

Danny also makes a metaphorical observation when he states, "I set the table for the two of us. I had to elbow everything aside to find enough room though. There were the playing cards, a cribbage board, books, papers, pencils, ashtrays, matches, a candle, a lamp, the kitchen utensil jar that sits beside the coal oil lamp, and some dishtowels at the corner, and jam and butter at the other corner. All this on the one and only table. I like it this way. It is like Billy" (p. 204). There are no ulterior motives with Billy, he is as he is, everything is on the table.

When the boys decide to cut down a Christmas tree, Jim says, "'do you know how sad it looks in the towns and cities the day after Christmas?' We all waited. We knew another lecture was coming. He continued, 'After Christmas when you are finished with the tree, take off all the branches and put them on the doorstep for people to wipe their feet on, then saw the thing into stove-lengths to be used for firewood. Don't waste any part of the tree. It looks so sick–the tree skeletons that people throw on the sides of the road, waiting for garbage collection. It is not garbage, it is a tree! It was a living thing! It ought to be treated with more respect" (p. 208).

Toward the end of the novel, Danny is with Ol'Jim at the old man's winter trapper's shack, and he teaches Danny what to recite during a game with a beaver hip-

bone.

> 'Eat all the meat, and I'll tell you what to do with the bone when you finish.' His eyes twinkled. I took him up on the challenge and started pulling off chunks of meat, one bite at a time. Hey, it wasn't bad. An odd-looking bone appeared. It was donut-shaped and had a handle on it! I held it up to Ol'jim. His belly jiggled as he said, 'It is the beaver hip-bone. The ancient people used to say this every time they killed the beaver. Now, stick your pointing finger out way over your shoulder and hold the bone out like a slingshot with your left. Try to point your finger and see if you can make it go right through the hole. Here are the words, I will emerge, right by the beaver dam. And if I hit the mark I will find more beaver there!' (1992, p. 224)

The old man made him do it over and over again until he was able to put his finger through the bone without opening his eyes. This game is well known in the north.

Danny seems to have come full circle when he looks at Ol'Jim's dead body on the floor and notices the hand sticking out of the blanket and he thinks: "The hand was open. What was it Mr. Old Indian had said? He said something about if the hand is open in death, the spirit is gone, the time was up, or something like that. That would mean that Ol'Jim knew he was dying or that he was ready to die . . ." (p. 229). When the body had been flown back to town, Danny says "I picked a large pinch of the tobacco and slowly filtered it over the embers. Smoke came up immediately and I whispered, 'that is for you, Ol'Jim. Happy journey'" (p. 233).

Wagamese (1994) states: "Inside out. Keeper was always talking about how

nothing in this world ever grows from the outside in. Growth only ever happens from the inside out. . . . Funny how something as simple as a drum can unlock the universe for you once you get taught how to look at it" (p. 147). That is about how Danny sums up his experiences in life, "documenting you from beginning to end, from the core to the surface," (p.250) very much like the cross-section of a tree.

Teachings of Respect from Traditional Stories

The teachings from the old traditional stories call for respect for all creatures and in teaching the children, there are often repetitions of words or phrases that are learned. Johnston (1976), tells of a grandmother who,

> told stories of acts of courage, generosity, fortitude, resourcefulness, patience, endurance, and perseverance; she sometimes related tales of the origin, purpose, and nature of things; and at other times she explained to the young boy about the laws that governed men's lives and conduct . . . there were basic themes: "Always tell the truth;" "respect your elders;" "honour our grandfathers;" "always be thankful for food, be it scarce or abundant;" "always be thankful for life;" "always be thankful for your powers, great and small;" "seek peace;" "listen to your elders, and you will learn something;" "seek wisdom and you will do what is right;" "someday do something for your people." (p. 35)

Wagamese (1994), also states that "it's the teaching way we been usin' for our young people forever. Start 'em off learnin' respect and humility. Good base for learnin' and workin' as a member of the band. Old man told me he said, us we gotta learn that way, gotta learn that what we do touches everybody, every action, every move touches everybody" (p. 180-181).

A story is told about "the man who was bitten by mosquitoes" who got so angry at being bitten by the mosquitoes in the summer that he gathered a great many of them into a container with the intention to show them how cruel he can also be. So, when winter

came and in the swirling snow, he dumped them out into the freezing winds for revenge. But then, spring came, and then summer, and the mosquitoes feasted on him with a vengeance and eventually ate him alive. And that, "is why it is dangerous for creatures to be abused, because there is nothing they can do for themselves . . ." (Ellis, 1995, p. 153). The same story appears in Stevens (1971) in "Vengeance of the Mosquitoes", which ends with "Before the two moons of berries travelled from the sky, the Indian died. The mosquitoes had drained all the blood from the man's body, avenging the deaths of their brothers" (p. 74). Note this teaching in *Honour the Sun* (1987), regarding the boys by the shore who were cutting leeches in half to which the girl says, "put those back in the water! Remember Mom says you'll be crippled if you maim any creature!" (p. 83). What you do to helpless creatures, so shall happen to you or yours. In *Silent Words* (1992), Danny breaks this taboo when he pulls off the legs of a housefly and releases it, and watches it as it tries to land on many places until he loses sight of it (p. 55). Since he knows nothing of this teaching, only a Native reader with cultural recognition, interpretation and understanding of this action would connect this to Danny's constant move, being unable to settle down somewhere, until something bad happens which results in his father's loss of the use of his legs.

There is a well-known teaching in northwestern Ontario that "whenever you kill a beaver, you must throw his bones back into the pond as an offering to the spirit of the beaver" (Stevens, 1971, p. 21). The paws of muskrats were also thrown back into the water after the recital of gratitude is said. I distinctly remember the first time a pair of paws was placed in my hands and I was instructed to perform this ritual all by myself. I

would have been around five years old, perhaps. Well, I got to the shore and I could not remember exactly what my mother said I should repeat. Facing the embarrassment of returning with them still in my hands, I made up my own words following the gist of the message. When I returned, I confessed to my mother that I had changed the words somewhat because I could not remember all of what she had told me to say. I apparently did exactly what I was supposed to do, which was to say it in my own words.

The head sculls of beavers and other rodents were also hung up on a branch so that their bones were not gnawed by other animals. It is stated in Bauer (1973) that;

> these people once believed that all life - animate and inanimate alike - shared a common spirit and language. From this belief, they developed many strictures regarding hunting, fishing, and the routines of daily life. These rules, taught from infancy largely through folk narratives . . . instilled the deepest conviction of what was considered right and wrong. Just as they propitiated their deities, so they made sacrifice to the souls of animals which they killed. Should the souls of those animals slain take offence because of mistreatment, it was believed that they might well make themselves scarce and the hunters and their families would then go hungry (p. iv).

Grant (1990) also refers to this in her statement: "Prayers were said and rituals were performed for slain animals. It was believed that punishment would follow if anyone killed an animal not needed for food or even if disrespect were shown for the bones" (p. 87). Hallowell (1975), reports that "the hunter must always be careful to treat the animals he kills for food or fur in the proper manner. It may be necessary, for

example to throw their bones in the water or to perform a ritual in the case of bears. Otherwise, he will offend the masters and be threatened with starvation because no animals will be made available to him. Cruelty to animals is likewise an offense that will provoke the same kind of retaliation" (p. 172). It is also noted that "at the level of individual behavior, the interaction of the Ojibwa with certain kinds of plants and animals in everyday life is so structured culturally that individuals act as if they were dealing with persons who both understand what is being said to them and have volitional capacities as well" (p. 160). Johnston (1976), also states: "There were prayers said or thought at the death of an animal being, prayers that expressed sorrow and heed and apology" (p. 57).

In Johnston's (1978) book, more humourous tales are included but the lesson is the same. "'Don't! You better not,' Sweet Plum protested. 'It's bad enough we gonna kill that moose; don't have to make fun of him.' 'That's right' Aessaence agreed. 'Bring us bad luck. Just leave him'" (p. 14-15).

In an earlier discussion about the snake in *Honour the Sun* and *Silent Words*, there is a reference of "a thunderbird feeding on a snake when lightning strikes a rock", an example of this is found in Stevens (1971) where a man, living with the thunderbirds, "found it impossible to eat their food. Serpents, snakes, frogs and toads . . ." When he failed to kill the food they chased out of the rocks with their lightning strikes, they ask "Why haven't you killed anything?" He replies "I have not seen anything good to eat . . . only frogs and serpents came out of the hole." They angrily tell him that they are "exactly what we were looking for" (p. 90). This same story is noted by Hallowell (1975) saying, "When there is lightning and thunder this is the prey the Thunder Birds are after" (p.

156). It is also well known by the Ojibwa that thunderbirds are afraid of sharp objects. I had on occasion witnessed my elders pulling out an axe or knife at approaching thunder and, as Stevens (1971) also says, you would need only point to the approaching thunder to ward them off your area (p. 133). There are other things that people do when thunder is approaching. They cover up mirrors or anything that is shiny so that the thunderbird's lightning doesn't reflect back at them. They light tobacco to honour the thunderbirds, and at night, they burn candles or light the lamp so that the thunderbirds will know that people are there. This prevents the lightning from striking too close or harming the people by mistake. This is a clear example of a teaching that comes from a legend appearing in the actions of the characters in the novels.

Another well-known taboo is mentioned in Stevens (1971): "It is a taboo for a woman to step over a man or his clothing even in the most crowded conditions. If a woman transgresses this unwritten law it is said that her actions will bring sickness, headaches, or nosebleed to the man upon whom this act has been committed. Many of the old people at Sandy Lake rigidly follow this custom today" (p. 133). This again, is quite common in Ojibwa societies.

In referring to guardian spirits, Stevens (1971) states that "even dangerous things can be guardian spirits. If a person is confronted by this dangerous thing he can tell him he has known him before in his dreams and the dangerous thing will not harm him. If the danger is not his guardian spirit a man must rely on the powers of his own protector. It is the only way he can save himself" (p. 7). This was noted in *The Plight of Iyas* legend. When Iyas was about to be attacked by the giant seagulls, he yells, "Remember me.

Remember me from the dreams. We have met before as friends. They would not kill a boy they were protecting" (Stevens, 1971, p. 113). Johnston (1982), also refers to a guardian spirit when he tells the story of an old man who states, "I have seen his patron - a falcon that watches over him" (p. p. 29). In *Silent Words*, (1992), Ol'Jim instructs Danny saying, "You leave this [tobacco] to thank the wolves who helped you last night. Once they know you know them, they will always be there to help and guide you. They will know you recognize them. They don't forget, it is the humans who do" (p. 226). This refers to spiritual recognition and acknowledgement. Hallowell (1975), has commented that "The Ojibwa are a dream-conscious people. . . . For them, there is an inner connection which is as integral to their outlook as it is foreign to ours" (p. 165).

Perhaps it is better understood now, exactly what is meant by people who write of cultural influences in literature. For example, in his dissertation, King (1986), states that "within oral creation stories, in particular, the relationships between the deity and humans, between humans and animals, between humans and the land, and the relationship of good to evil provided writers such as N. Scott Momaday, James Welch, and Leslie Silko with elements and structures that they used in their fiction" (p. iv).

These stories form the nightly ritual in Owl's life, *Honour The Sun*, (1987) when she states, "now the jokes and stories start. Sometimes, we tell old Indian legends with some hilarious mistakes. When we know them well enough, Mom tells us another and we keep repeating it again till we can tell it correctly. I like the story time" (p. 15). This is again mentioned later where she says, "Mom tells a legend of two sisters who went on a journey. They had looked longingly at the brightest star and that star came and took

them up to where they found an old woman fishing from a hole in the sky. They asked her to let them back down to earth with her fish line . . ." (1987, p. 55). This story is a part of a longer version also mentioned in Stevens (1971, p. 67) and Sugarhead (1996, p. 57).

Wagamese (1994) states that, "Elders knew that trying to get our people to listen to stories and the teachings within them was next to impossible in the summers when there was all kindsa other distractions. See, the important thing about our stories isn't so much the listening, it's the time you spend thinking about them. There's lots of traditional thinking buried deep within each story and the longer you spend thinking about it the more you learn about yourself, your people and the Indian way" (p. 100).

Owl remembers a legend as she watches her mother come from the water hole with the water pail in her hand,

> I watch her gingerly make her way back over the wet slippery ice with her pail full of water and the axe in her other hand. I giggle. She looks like the girl in the moon. That's the story she told us once about a girl who went out to get water at night and she was not supposed to look at the moon. But she stopped and looked at the moon anyway because she thought the moon was so handsome. The moon came down and took her away and there she was to stay for ever and ever, on the moon, with her pail still in her hand . . . (*Honour the Sun,* 1987, p. 122).

This is the same story but the character is different as it is Chahkabesh who gets drawn up by the moon (Ellis, 1995, p. 119), or Cahkaapehsh who is grabbed by the moon (Sugarhead, 1996, p. 37).

In relation to land, by the end of the first day, Danny realizes that to Ol'Jim, the land holds the history of the people and stories to remember when he says, "he seemed to be remembering all these things as he saw each point, bay, and portage" (1992, p. 101). Abram (1996) says that "language, for oral people, is not a human invention but a gift of the land itself" (p. 263). "Each place its own mind, its own psyche . . . all these together make up a particular state of mind, a place-specific intelligence shared by all the humans that dwell therein, but also by . . . all beings who live and make their way in that zone. Each place its own psyche. Each sky its own blue" (p.262).

Another puzzling action that Ol'Jim does gets Danny curious so he watches. "Ol'Jim steered us up against a high cliff while he rummaged around in his packsack. I knew by now not to ask stupid questions because he just pretended he didn't hear me anyway. Finally he pulled out an old-looking tobacco pouch. He took a pinch of tobacco and mumbled to himself, then reached out and put it on a rock ledge." At Danny's question of who was there to take it, Ol'Jim responds, "there are a lot of beings here. The Memegwesiwag live there. They see us go by. Long ago they . . ." (1992, p. 97), and Ol'Jim tells Danny a story about the rock people. Notice that Henry's father, Jim, the philosopher, who discusses the 'meaning of a fish's life' with his son, does not mention the Memegwesiwag during their fishing trip by the rock cliff (1992, p. 72-75). That knowledge is left for people like Ol'Jim to teach the young, like Danny.

What follows is another example of things that were done long ago in this weird conversation between Danny and Ol'Jim:

We were coming around a point when Ol'Jim said, "See that point there? The

canoe headed straight out to the lake from that point."

I looked and squinted but saw no canoe, so I said, "Where? Where's the canoe?"

Ol'Jim just continued, "I put the largest louse in there."

I sat straight up. "Louse? You mean the kind that grow on heads?"

"I put two paddles in there with that louse."

"In this canoe? What paddles? You mean you put a louse in this canoe?"

Ol'Jim just continued talking. "I made sure that he was the leader so that all the rest of the lice that ever crawled on me would take off across the water after that old sucker of a louse and I never had an itch again! That little three-inch birchbark canoe I made for him was the best craftsmanship he ever saw, and those little paddles were the most smooth and perfect miniatures you ever saw. Yes sir. That little canoe took to the waves like a pro!" I figured I would just try that if I ever grew lice on my head (1992, p. 99).

Besides learning that each landmark held the history of the people in the area, it also sustained the stories of the land itself as Ol'Jim explains.

Ol'Jim pointed out the "Magic Rock" when we stopped to eat the pickerel. It was at the mouth of a narrow channel. There was nothing special about the rock at all. Just a rock about three feet high, sitting beside the water. . . . Well, Native people have traveled through here for many, many generations back, and that rock has always watched people go by from the other side of the shore over there. You see, the rock has always been near the water, but it was sitting on the main shore. Then one spring, as soon as travel allowed after the ice melted, the first Native

> family that came through noticed that it was now on the opposite shore, where you see it now. They told everyone about it and of course everyone came and looked, and sure enough, the rock was not where it has always been. That was indeed magic, so they called it Magic Rock (1992, p. 119).

When they reach Whitewater Lake, Danny says "I noticed a pile of round rocks jutting out in a pyramid in the middle of the lake. Ol'Jim must have seen that I noticed the rocks because before I could think of a question, I heard him say, 'Don't point at the rocks. They are not to be pointed at.' 'Why?' I asked. 'A big wind will come and swamp us. We will drown here is the middle of the lake,' he said. 'But how did they get there? Can we paddle there to see?' I craned my neck to get a better look. 'No. They are sacred rocks. We would stop to offer tobacco if we had to pass by them. But right now we have no business going there'" (1992, p. 157). Abram (1996) offers an insight into this way of thinking when he says,

> the land is thought to exhibit a sacred order. That order is the basis of ritual. The rituals themselves reveal the power in that order. Art, architecture, vocabulary, and costume, as well as ritual, are derived from the perceived natural order of the universe—from observations and meditations on the exterior landscape. An indigenous philosophy—metaphysics, ethics, epistemology, aesthetics, and logic—may also be derived from a people's continuous attentiveness to both the obvious (scientific) and ineffable (artistic) orders of the local landscape. Each individual, further, undertakes to order his interior landscape according to the exterior landscape. To succeed in this means to achieve a balanced state of mental

health. (p. 67)

When they reach their destination, Danny discovers mice where he had slept on the floor and he says, "I could hear them scurrying under the table until I fell asleep" (1992, p. 165). So Danny sets a mouse trap under the table and catches Hog's toe when Hog sits down to eat. Then Danny catches a snake to eat the mice. Hog catches the snake and burns it in the stove. Of course, Danny only hears the stove lid clanging and does not understand the significance of it (1992, p. 169-170). This was already mentioned in previous sections but the following ties in with the same type of belief.

Again completely ignorant of where he was, Danny stumbles into an old burial site off a sand cliff where the cliffs had fallen down the slope and into the water by the shore. He pulls out a leg bone which he describes in the following way: "The stick I had was only about a foot and a half long, and the knob at one end fit neatly in my hand as I chipped away at more of the sand . . . I slid down the sandbank to the bottom and threw the stick into the water. I picked up some strange flat pieces of rock and skipped them along the surface of the lake." These would be pieces of old pottery shards. When he gets back to the campsite Ol'Jim says, "that is an old burial site. . . . Don't go near areas like that and don't pick up anything from the ground!" Just to make sure Danny does not do that again, Ol'Jim warns, "a spirit might enter your soul and try to live again through your body. . . . But just to be nice and to let them know that we know they are there, we will leave them some tobacco when we go" (1992, p. 171-172).

Johnston (1982), also refers to the tobacco that must be placed where any plant has been removed from the soil for medicinal or other purposes. "Thus Cheengwun

spoke to each plant as he removed it from its place and implanted an offering of tobacco in the soil" (p. 14). Johnston (1982), explains that "from his father's custom of burning tobacco at the onset of storms, of offering tobacco during journeys in those places deemed dangerous or sacred, and of implanting tobacco in the earth while gathering medicine. . . . The offering was given partially to appease, and partially to acknowledge a presence. For whatever reason the act was performed, it was always done with reverence and holiness" (p. 33). Wagamese (1994), also mentions this in his novel when he says, "I remember watching my uncle Gilbert praying and sprinkling tobacco by the base of a big pine tree when he took me out deer hunting one day. Gilbert said it was what we were supposed to do before we went out. Making that offering of tobacco showed respect for the animal we were gonna take and was also a prayer for our hunt to be good" (p. 66). He also writes 'When I finished I remembered what Keeper'd told me and left a small pinch of tobacco by the water's edge as thanks for the food" (p. 167). He goes on to say that "Ma said all along that it's good for me. One of the biggest parts of being Indian is living with respect. Young people learn respect real early and for me, being young at being Indian, it was important that I get into thinking that way right off" (p. 79).

Teaching involves the repeating of words and phrases through many generations, so that what the child hears was in fact what the parent heard as a child, and so on. As Owl's mother speaks, "Wash your faces well and comb your hair. There, now stand by the window. The sun is just about to come out. When the sun comes over the horizon, he will see you and be very pleased that you're all ready to greet him and he will bless you" (1987, p. 101). Bearing in mind that there is no he/she in the Native language, variations

of this statement will appear. Towards the end of the novel, Owl is with her niece by the shore and she says, "'Look, the sun is coming over the hill now,' We watch the lake, the seagulls and other birds in total silence. 'Your grandma used to tell us each morning to honour the sun that it may shine on you again tomorrow with its blessing,' I say softly" (1987, p. 199). This saying is repeated again in the end. Stories of unseen beings are also part of these teachings as during an ice-fishing trip with her mother, Owl says, "She told me stories about Indians of long ago and the magic people who lived inside the rock cliffs" (p. 125). These magic people are the Memegwesiwag that are also described to Danny in *Silent Words* (1992, p. 97).

Respect for nature is also always present as in this instance where Owl says, "Oh, look at the bright pink Lady's Slippers over there. They're so beautiful. Mom gets mad when I pick flowers for her. She says I should just tell her where I saw them so she can see them again and again. I always figured that it's funny how wild flowers die when you touch them" (1987, p. 167). Danny in *Silent Words* (p. 142) also notes the Pink Pack-sack Lady Slippers as he calls them. Wagamese (1994) also explains that "land is the most sacred thing in the Indian way of seeing. It's where life comes from and all the teachings and philosophy that kept Indians alive through everything that happened to them all over all these years comes from the land. Lose that connection you lose yourself. . . . Lose that connection you lose that feeling of being a part of something that's bigger than everything, . . . Kinda tapping into the great mystery. Feeling the spirit of the land that's the spirit of the people and the spirit of yourself" (p. 156).

Teachings in Contemporary Literature

Danny learns independence and self-reliance from Ol'Jim by watching how things are done for survival in the bush. One of the many examples is the following: "'Lunch!' he yelled behind me, and I glanced back in time to see him reeling in the green string he had been trailing behind him all morning" (p. 101), and catches another fish with his trolling line (p. 123). The first fish is fried and shared with the couple of guys at the portage. By evening the first day, Danny is very hungry and says, "I approached the food box very slowly. I had not looked in it before and did not know what was in there. I didn't know if I could keep myself from eating everything in sight– that's how hungry I was! I opened the lid, but what was this? There was nothing in there! No food! There was a bag of flour, oats, the can of tea, sugar, lard, and something called baking powder" (p.111). But, later he says, "I ran up the path and saw Ol'Jim frying bannock. He handed me a porridge made from the tea. He dropped a bit of sugar into it, stirred it, and handed me a cup with a spoon and a chunk of fried bannock. I sat down on a log and smiled. He knew how to make Mr. Old Indian's favourite porridge!" (p. 112). The next day, Ol'Jim is cleaning a rabbit. That is where he had gone when he disappeared into the bush the evening before. This he skewers and roasts over the campfire for breakfast (p. 113). Later he checks the fishnet and "I saw one pickerel and one sucker . . ." (p. 115). At lunch they stop to eat the pickerel and go on a partridge chase for their supper. Later Ol'Jim dries the sucker meat near the flames while he roasts the partridge (p. 120). A jackfish is also roasted whole beside the campfire along with roasted bannock on a stick (p. 129). The lesson here is that the food box does not contain the food you will need on

the journey. The food is in the land, the air and in the water. Young readers identify with these things and are almost always willing to share their own camp food stories.

Then comes the day when Ol'Jim manages to retrieve two pickerel deep in the bushes among his shredded fishnet which he roasts over the fire; Ol'Jim makes his prop-in-front-of-the-fire baked bannock; Danny also shows consideration and respect when as the old man always divides the food in half for them, Danny says "I always pretended I couldn't eat any more, so I left him a leg from my half while I filled up with some of his delicious bannock." Ol'Jim boils the partridge in the teapot and stirs in oats (p. 135, 139, 142, 151). This is a camp favourite and was the common lunch stop meal for anyone traveling.

The next day, Ol'Jim boiled a piece of the sturgeon and made dumpling stew and then he "slits the rest of the sturgeon into a flat piece with crisscross cuts. The fish was held flat by the roasting stick, which was slit down the middle, and was sandwiched in between and held flat by two smaller crossed sticks. This he propped over the hot ashes" (p. 157). When more than one sturgeon is caught, the rest are tied to a rope along the shoreline, like dogs on a leash tied to trees, they swim around out in the lake (p. 169). Where there are no refrigerators or freezers, there are many ways to preserve or keep the food fresh until the next meal. This whole section teaches traditional environmental knowledge, ecological knowledge, and traditional practical knowledge.

Quite a contrast to the 'bush fare,' at the end when his father gets off the airplane at Ol'Jim's winter trapper's shack and takes Danny to Whitewater Lake, their first lunch break beside the portage road consists of a roll of garlic sausage, a loaf of French bread,

two plastic cups for the tea, and four chocolate bars" (p. 238). Being that this was his first winter out-door lunch, he had a problem when he put the hot teapot in the snow "It began to tip over so I tried another spot, but the same thing happened. I made four neat circles in the snow before I finally thought to put the smoking pot back near the edge of the fire where the sticks provided a bottom layer for it" (p. 238). An evening snack was the rest of the sausage and a can of spaghetti (p. 241).

Danny also mentions the moss smoke in the tent that gets rid of the mosquitos inside their tent (p. 112-121). Danny watches Ol'Jim scrape some tree bark into a little dipper and boil it on the ashes after he threw some tobacco into the fire. When the bark liquid was cooled down, his mosquito-bit sore neck was washed with it (p. 117). Notice also that the old man puts tobacco into the scraped off bark before he burns it, as an offering of thanks for it medicinal use (p. 116). As Ol'Jim ran his hands through his scalp, he says "I knew a dog once. He was always beaten so bad by his master. The last time I saw the dog, it had a red film over half of one eye, half the head was swollen real bad, it had cuts and scars all over its head and snout. He limped. That was just before they shot him for killing his master" (p. 117). Here, Ol'Jim is commenting on the hurt that has been inflicted on Danny and that perhaps one day, Danny would snap.

At the end of the novel, Danny, having stayed up all night with a dead body; being left alone with his father in the winter trapper's shack; then finding out his mother had died in the fall; thinking that he had been tricked after a long walk on the second sleepless night; totally exhausted, disoriented, stricken with grief, he sees a woman come out of the cabin with a bushy red head. Thinking that it was his father's wife, he runs to another

cabin and hides inside and then they descend on him to get him: "I swung around and pointed the gun as the door swung open. I felt it jump in my hands as a deafening "crack" exploded in the room. I heard the loud clatter as the gun dropped to the floor at my feet, then my father sagged to the ground. I saw a Native woman pull a reddish, fuzzy toque off her head, and long black hair spilled out as she knelt beside my father" (p. 247). That is how his father came to be in a wheelchair for the rest of his life.

Having explained earlier how non-verbal communication is expressed within the culture, how it appears in a novel is also important. Danny first becomes aware of this when he has supper with the group of children. "Then I noticed that they didn't talk very much. Bobby picked up a stick and I saw him glance at Barbara, then she went inside and came out with a knife, which she gave to Bobby" (p. 37). When he first meets Mr. and Mrs. Indian he is aware of this "I picked up the spoon and was ready to dig in when I felt their eyes on me. I stopped and looked at them. What?" (p. 50). After that, Danny just makes statements like "the old lady just smiled and let me know that the old man could take care of himself" (p. 54). Danny also causes some frustration when he says:

> I came tearing around the corner of the cabin and stopped at the door to catch my breath. The old man was standing by the table and the old woman was by the stove. Both stood frozen to the spot, staring at me. Taken aback, I looked at one and then the other. Finally, I blurted out, "What? What's wrong? What happened?" They looked at each other then back to me again. I waited, then asked again, "What?" The old lady sighed, then said in exasperation, that he was the one with the news and they were waiting to hear it! (p. 58)

Later, after another philosophical session from the old man, Danny sits there thinking, "I heaved a big sigh and noticed the old lady's black eyes on me from the table. I shrugged hopelessly and she smiled and looked away. I just did it! I mean talking not in words but in actions. I remembered my second day here, the old man had looked at the old woman, then at me. The old woman smiled and said, "he says you talk too much." I had looked at the old man and said, "What? I didn't hear him say anything". "No," she said. "Use your eyes and feel inside you what the other is feeling. That way, there is no need for words. Your ears are for hearing all the other things around you" (p. 60). [Note that in the editing, the old woman's accent has been removed and rewritten in English]. The next reference says "No one said a word, but we said a lot. I was learning" (p. 61). Consequently, he says, "I found that I still had an hour to spend so I stood around talking to everyone who was willing to listen to my chatter. I missed hearing voices" (p. 62).

By half-way through the novel, every page has examples of this form of non-verbal communication, interspersed only with questions when Danny gets impatient. Typical scenarios of this sort appear in *Silent Words* on pages 155, 161, 201 and more.

Back in the community at Henry and Jim's place, Danny says, "in the evening as we sat round the table, Billy walked in. Jim was watching us and right away I knew something was up" (p. 183). Danny is quite proficient in this form of communication now. "The evening train went by just as we finished supper. I tensed up again and kept glancing down the path. I kept my bag packed every day, just in case my father showed up. I caught sight of Jim looking at me. He shook his head and winked. I shrugged and smiled." The conversation here if it was said outright would have gone something like

this. Jim would have said, "Don't worry about a thing. Everything will be alright" and Danny would have answered, "I know, but I can't help worrying."

When he visits with Mr. and Mrs. Old Indian again, "The old woman poured me some tea, which I sipped as I sat there absorbing the silent words, the little things I had almost forgotten. I saw the old woman's eyes flicker to the old man and she started to giggle. He was sitting there with the long string of black liquorice hanging out of his mouth. I giggled until my face began to ache." Then Danny finds out from her son that the old man is the old woman's brother (p. 193-194). During the winter, Jim walks in at Billy's place where Danny is staying "He looked serious as he nodded in my direction and looked at Billy, then Billy grabbed his coat and they went out. I could hear their footsteps fade down the road. Probably another enraged phone call from my father" (p. 199). Here, Danny provides some information. At his first confrontation with his father, Danny says "I watched him closely, reading him the way Mr. and Mrs. Old Indian had taught me" (p. 234). Johnston (1978), also mentions this when he says "he wiped both sides of his hands along his pants in an unconscious signal that the meal was ready" (p. 26). Wagamese (1994), also says, "he just stops by Ma's and we head off without even saying anything to each other or what we're gonna do. It's one of those unspoken brother things that kinda grew up on its own soon after I was home" (p. 94).

Since examples of the cultural recognition, interpretation and understanding are interspersed under other headings, only several will be high-lighted here. Something in the way the family group interacts and communicates together always leaves Danny with envy as he says of the first group of children "I thought that they must be the happiest

people in the whole world" (*Silent Words*, 1992, p. 31), until the father arrived. When he meets the second family, Danny thinks "It would be wonderful to live here" (p. 44). At Mr. and Mrs. Indian's place he says "I felt safe here and I like this place. It reminded me of life with Mama and Dad before we moved to town. I realized then that I liked the old couple and I decided to stay as long as I could" (p. 53).

Along a beach with Ol'Jim, Danny says "I wished then that we could stay there forever and forget where we came from and where we were going. I wanted this place and time to never end" (p. 137). When Danny returns to Henry and Jim after his trip with Ol'Jim, he says "It was good to be back. I felt I was welcome and needed" (p. 183). Feeling a part of the family after conspiring with Charlotte and her mother to get on and off the train dressed like a girl, Danny says "I stopped at the school outhouse and pulled off the skirt and waited. After a minute I heard Charlotte and Sarah" (p. 195). After helping them home with their boxes, Sarah says "Thanks for carrying the box. Do you like your haircut?" she asked as I stood there. I grinned, then threw the skirt and scarf at Charlotte saying, "If you tell anybody, I'll steal all your clothes!" That got a smile out of Sarah, and Charlotte broke into a squeal of laughter. I turned and ran out" (p. 195). As mentioned earlier, the words 'thanks for carrying the box' would not have been necessary and would have been accomplished with a gesture and the question about the haircut would probably have been a raised eyebrow at his hair accompanied with a smile. Therefore, there is no response necessary from Danny. When he gets home, Billy says "I saw the strangest little woman slip out from behind Sarah's skirt. But she disappeared into the night." He put a hand over his heart and sighed, "Oh, I have been smitten by

love! I have been thinking about the sweet little thing ever since." I grabbed my pillow and threw it at him . . ." (p. 196).

Danny also realizes that there may be a communication link between all the men who work on the railway line as he says, "the section-men all seemed to know each other" and "I waved and some waved back" (p. 196). Then when he was leaving with the old man, Ol'Jim, he notices the section men in their motor car go by on the railroad tracks and he says, "from habit, I waved . . ." (p. 94). In the end, Danny's father says:

> I knew where you were all the time. First, you went with Mrs. Grey to Armstrong. Then you stayed with Roger's grandmother and the kids for the day. Then you showed up at Charlie's. By the way, Charlie still hasn't given me that punch he promised me. Then I visited Mr. and Mrs. 'Old Indian'. Wasn't that what you called them? They went to live with her son at Minaki for the winter. . . . Then you showed up at Jim's cabin. Then you were at Weeby's in Whiteclay - " "Who? Who's Weeby?" "Ol'Jim's son at Whiteclay lake." I felt a weak smile stretch my lips, and I sounded rather tired as I repeated, "Weeby. I just called him Hog." (p. 239)

Charlie had called Tom's father on the CN phone, Jim called Daniel, the Section men that Danny waved to, told Daniel who he was in the canoe with, and he knew Angus Solligan. Daniel says, "have you noticed that Native people are generally like one big family? Everyone knows everyone, or someone knows of someone who knows the person in question. You'd be amazed how many relatives you could find if you took it into your head to find out" (p. 244).

Danny's 'town' mentality becomes apparent when he measures in 'city block' distances, "It stood about three blocks from the railroad tracks. I smiled, remembering when I had told Henry that it was quite a ways to go for water, a good three blocks. He had looked at me, rather puzzled, and said, "Blocks? What kind of blocks?" (p. 79). When he was with Ol'Jim, Danny refers to the size of a rock as "then he pulled out a rock about the size of a brick from the shore and loaded it in also" (p. 110).

Then further on, he almost goes into the 'Billy Goat Gruff' story where he says "I looked down to see long green weeds, like hair, flowing and waving under the water. Long green hair, shifting and rolling off the huge humpback of the Big Green Troll who lived in the murky waters . . ." (p. 119).

His first meeting with Ol'Jim gave the old man a lot of merriment at watching the 'city' kid trying to get into the canoe "The rasping chuckle had now rolled into a belly laugh that shook the canoe" and Danny would learn. Sometimes his observations do not make sense when he makes statements like: "There was a huge ant hill in front of me. I pulled a rotting log aside and watched the ants come to life. They had white rice, long-grained rice, that they were scrambling to gather" (p. 107). These of course would be the ant larvae. Another paragraph says, "I smiled to myself and listened to the gentle crackling of the wood in the fire, the seagulls having a big argument, the laughing mallard ducks having a party at the bay, and the occasional fish taking a breath of air above the water" (p. 112). And then one night, Danny says, "I could hear Ol'Jim hitting leaves in the bush down there" (p. 121). The old man, of course, would be urinating. Then when a moose swims into their fishnet and rips it into pieces, hauling it deep into the bushes,

Danny says 'I was so relieved to see him back, I really didn't care about the fishnet. I smiled and said, "you should have put up a warning sign for the moose" (p. 135). Then he mentions rabbit droppings as, "he was pointing to some little pile of light brown peas. We went farther into a swampy section and the light brown peas became greener" (p. 136). He also says, "the rocks across the lake looked pure white as the sun shone on them. They looked like the sides of white-painted houses. The beaches were like strips of light-gold satin ribbon bordering a royal blue lake, trimmed with ruffled green velvet" (p. 140). They were probably the colours from a movie with horses and swords. He also describes the rocks along the shoreline as follows, "the rocks looked as if they had been poured in layers and had then flowed out into the water. A giant hand poured grey cement mixed with white and black paint that wasn't shook-up enough, poured it in stripes and blotches to the water's edge" (p. 147). Danny's description of the storm is also urban: "Then the rain came down. It poured like water from a big giant hose in the sky!" (p. 174). Then he says, "all at once the wind started again, and I held my breath as I watched the trees across the lake sway and bend like grass on a lawn" (p. 175). From up inside the airplane, Danny describes the scene, "I saw blue lakes, winding rivers, and ponds that looked like rotten mouldy milk left in the cup for a whole month. The trees looked like a bed of flowers in a rock garden . . . I pointed to the thing that looked like a black bug crawling out of the grass to a puddle. The pilot yelled "moose," just as we went over it" (p. 179).

Then hitching a ride into town in the back of a truck loaded with large empty gas cans, Danny imagines that they were bent on killing him. "Every time we hit a

particularly rough section of road they came to life and marched around all over the place . . . the cans were lining up to attack from the rear! In no time the killer gas cans were rubbing against the soles of my feet, but I managed to hold them off. When we went downhill again they withdrew to regroup for the next battle plan" (p. 180).

Knowing when and where the cues are in personal interactions poses quite a challenge for Danny. He knows he did not understand something when, after he had finished supper with the group of children, he mentions the oldest boy Bobby's actions in this way: "He nodded at the girls, then I followed him outside to the woodpile where his grandma was still sitting with a teapot over the fire" (p. 180). According to what happens soon after, we know that Bobby was telling the girls to stay inside and wait until the old woman had spoken to Danny.

Danny also misses cues and, therefore, misunderstands people. At the butchering site with the community people, Danny's foot hit a root and he crashed into the bushes. "Someone in the group had seen me, and Henry's laughter joined everyone else's. I got up rather embarrassed and began walking, a bit too fast" (p. 85). He was expected to laugh with them so he wouldn't be embarrassed, but he took the laughter to be directed at him to embarrass him, and so he was. But he learns about this later when "we saw Billy hit his foot on the rail and just about trip. We burst out laughing at how he looked when he suddenly lurched forward–his arms shooting out, his knees buckling before his feet could catch up with his upper body! They stopped, and we all laughed together before we continued toward the station" (p. 86).

But after some time with Ol'Jim, Danny himself displays some sense of what to

do. In trying to comfort Ol'Jim and take his mind off the moose and fishnet episode, Danny says, "then I finally hit on an idea. "Can you show me how to set a rabbit snare?" I said as I sat leaning against a tree beside the fire. Without comment, he knelt beside me and took out a roll of snare wire from his pocket" (p. 135).

By the shore, Danny is brought to tears by the beauty of an early morning, sadness and loneliness, regret and longing, he wipes tears from his eyes and he says, "I turned at a noise behind me and saw Ol'Jim's hunched back slowly disappear between the bushes, back to camp. Why didn't he say anything?" (p. 140). The old man left him in peace. After many more instances, Danny eventually catches on.

In the end, Danny's father says, "Everything I did, I thought I was doing for you. I was so busy trying to control things that the more I tried, the more things got out of control. Out here, I am myself. This is my world and I belong here, and I know that as hard as I try, I will never be happy anywhere else. I am strong, I am healthy, and I know I can take care of us now, you and me" (p. 242). Then, on the last page, Danny says "Something happened to me that awful night. I have never fully understood what . . . I keep remembering him, even now, the way he looked when I first saw him again at Ol'Jim's cabin. The tall muscular body . . . and then the doctor's words saying, "Your father will never walk again." Then always, the memory of my father's words as I followed him down that winter trail. "I am strong. I am healthy. I can take care of us now, you and me," he had said. That is what I have tried to do for him. I will look after him and take care of him for as long as I live. You can't escape the silent words of your memory. They grow on you, layer after layer, year after year, documenting you from

beginning to end, from the core to the surface. I built my cabin with silent words" (p. 250).

Wagamese (1994) also learns that, "Us Indians we believe that everything moves in a circle. The sun make a big circle when it travels through the sky, our drums are round and life itself is a circle according to Keeper. The way he sees it, we start off with a kinda innocence when we're born and by the time we work our way around the circle of our lives, as long as we live right, we wind up with a kinda childlike innocence again. But an innocence built on wisdom, he says. And humility too, he says" (p. 120).

Taken in its entirety, this section provides a good cross-section of the meaning of Aboriginal epistemology as it functions in the life of the little boy in *Silent Words* and the little girl in *Honour the Sun.* In each of these two novels, there are many examples that can be used to teach the young of the importance of their own experiences, in the stories of their parents and grandparents, and the connections that can be drawn from traditional myths and legends.

Abram (1996) makes an interesting statement in reference to the "relocation" or "transmigration" projects in Indonesia and Malaysia to make way for clearcutting of their forests. He says that severing the people from their land is cultural genocide. If this was compared to the Aboriginal children of this country who were forced into Residential Schools, then it applies here too, when he says "It should be easy, now, to understand the destitution of indigenous, oral persons who have been forcibly displaced from their traditional lands. The local earth is, for them, the very matrix of discursive meaning; to force them from their native ecology (for whatever political or economic purpose) is to

render them speechless—or to render their speech meaningless—*to dislodge them from the very ground of coherence.* It is, quite simply, to force them out of their mind . . . [and] must be understood, in this light, as instances of cultural genocide" (p. 178).

Of Time and Space

The understanding of *time* and *space* is important as these two words appear quite often in the discussion of Aboriginal epistemology. Hanohano (1999), Lightning (1992) and Couture (1996) have had discussions in and around this topic. Lightning (1992) states that "an elder almost always uses speech and nonverbal communication to point out, or establish, where the Elder, the hearer, and the conversation fit in time and space, to establish the temporal and spacial context for the interaction" (p.231). There is also frequent mention of 'time' and 'space' in Native literature and some writers have broached this subject in several articles. In speaking of elders, Couture (1996) states, "it strikes me that their "wisdom" is rooted in Immanence and Transcendence, i.e., this wisdom is attuned to the Immanent in time and space, in the dimensions and seasonal rhythm of the universe, and to the Transcendent, the Above of the confines of historical space and time . . ." (p. 48). I understand the word "Immanent" to mean the inherent internal knowledge and the "Transcendent" as knowledge beyond human experience. The traditional stories, then, surpass the concepts of time and space as the passage of time and the 'then, here, now, and into the future'.

Hager (1996) comments on Thomas King's work that, "his stories, organic in their movement between contemporary and aboriginal concepts of time and space, introduce readers to the world of mythical animals from traditional aboriginal stories . . ." (p. 40).

Leavitt (1994) states that "Aboriginal storytellers and authors normally centre their narratives on a particular place. Their sense of place must be understood as part of both what makes learning possible . . . and what learners see as their goals" (p.184). He goes on to say that the Native students "may include Aboriginal knowledge about space and time in addition to the usual places and dates" (p. 186).

So, what is *time* and *space*? I spoke of the *space* in *time and place* back on p. 41 of this study in reference to the space between the coils of a spiral. That is, the knowledge and experience that happens between and within the evolving seasons in the life of the character in the novel. Abram (1996) has this to say about space and time:

> To our most immediate sensorial experience, "bodies are given as having the sense of being earthly bodies, and space is given as having the sense of being earth-space" (p.42); the human senses, intercepted by the written word, are no longer gripped and fascinated by the expressive shapes and sounds of particular places. The spirits fall silent. Gradually, the felt primacy of place is forgotten, superseded by a new, abstract notion of "space" as a homogeneous and placeless void (p.184); We have seen that alphabetic writing functions to undermine the embedded, space-specific character of oral cultures . . . reading and writing, as a highly concentrated form of participation, displaced the older participation between the human senses and the earthly terrain . . . writing down the ancestral stories disengages them from particular places. This double retreat, of the senses and of spoken stories, from the diverse places that had once gripped them, cleared the way for the notion of a pure and featureless "space"—an abstract conception

> that has nevertheless come to seem, today, more primordial and *real* than the earthly places in which we remain corporeally embedded. (p. 185)

When Ol' Jim and Danny were paddling in the canoe, past the creeks, rivers, and rock-lined shoreline, where was Ol'Jim's sense of time and place? When a person turns his/her mind to a certain time and place, it creates a space around that location from whence the person can then speak. This should bring to mind *Silent Words* (p. 143) and the scene where Danny connects Old Indian's analogy of a newborn baby's face and leaves uncurling in the sun, to Ol'Jim's explanation of the dragonfly's wings uncurling in the sun. Then, dead leaves and hands as fall time and the coming end of a person's full life. This is what I understand as the 'space in the sense of time and place'.

Native Art and Literature

Barman, Hebert, and McCaskill (1992) have noted that traditional holistic education and learning,

> emphasized such values as respect for all living things, sharing, self-reliance, individual responsibility, and proper conduct. Children also had to learn how to utilize the environment most effectively for economic survival. Integral to all aspects of the education of the young was the spiritual, and events in the life cycle from birth to death were marked with ceremonies stressing the individual's link to the spiritual and the sacred. Cultural continuity was thus ensured. (p.3)

In learning to utilize the environment to make what they need for everyday living, the people teach their children at a very young age the proper use of these natural materials. What makes all things animate or inanimate in the Aboriginal language

reflects the thing's existence in time and place, and the creation and/or re-creation of an object. For instance, a rock is animate, but when attached to a handle to make a tool, it becomes an inanimate object. On the other hand, a piece of dried meat is inanimate, but when rendered into pemmican, it becomes animate. In thinking of art for instance, Vastokas (1992) states that "the most recent paradigm shift in cultural interpretation, that of culture not as a static set of rules; not as a code or text to be adhered to and re-iterative, but more creatively as "performance" and as "lived experience" in which the sensation plays a key creative role" (p. 18). The jacket and moccasins are inanimate because they become part of the person as they move and mould themselves into the shape of the wearer. Thus, when an animate object, like an animal pelt, is rendered into a jacket, it becomes an inanimate object. On the other hand, a bag made of otter pelt turned into a medicine bag becomes an animate object because now, it takes on the power of the medicine in the bag. As Vastokas (1992) says, "for the Native people themselves, art works never were simply artifacts; they never did function as isolated and inert physical objects but embodied a life-force of their own and played an active, highly meaningful role in cultural process and in the experiential environment of Native societies" (p. 18). She continues, "In contrast to the Western perception of reality, which is grounded in awareness of physical matter, it is the intangibles which have primacy in Native world view. The material world is simultaneously spiritual and that spirituality is manifested in the material. Access to spirit, to feeling, to meaning, however, is by way of the metaphorical qualities of the actual world" (Vastokas, 1992, p.30). There were many examples of this in prior sections also.

There are examples in *Honour the Sun* where the mother is engaged in making things for the home or to sell. She does beadwork and makes fishnets. I remember as a child, my mother telling me the story of 'Weesakechak and the Birchtree' as we peeled birch bark to make baskets. She would also tell me the story of the pine root that we used to sew the basket. This instills the knowledge that the birch tree and the pine root are alive because they are referred to as animate things. But, when a strip of birch bark is peeled, the bark becomes inanimate. When turned into a birchbark basket, it is still inanimate. A toboggan made from the same tree, however, becomes an animate object. When I was a child, my mother and I were picking wild cranberries at a swamp when she held out one berry for me to see. Directing my attention to the long, straight, thin stem sticking out of it, she told me the story about the "Cranberry and the Needle" and how Cranberry ended up with Needle running through her and why he remains impaled in her today. The needle is inanimate and the cranberry is animate. Together they are animate. In order to work out the proper place for these things, one requires an intimate knowledge of the Aboriginal language and culture. The myths and legends tell the stories of these objects to assist the child to locate them in their appropriate place in the language. Outside researchers may attempt to describe and explain that this is so, but they will never understand why it is so.

Vastokas (1992) also says that "these intangibles, then, have to do with the art work *in relation to* the bodily self, to the sociocultural context, and to the natural environment. It is in these intangibles that cultural meaning and experience are communicated. . . . Moreover, it is clear that they are not grounded in narratives, texts or

words, as are images and even some shapes. Instead, they are "sensibles" experienced physiologically and received as visual metaphores." (Vastokas, 1992, p.33). In as much as she is referring to "visual arts", these *intangibles* are indeed also embedded in the Aboriginal language stories and narratives which have been rendered into English words or texts. The Aboriginal language is such that it incorporates the spacial and physical environment that permits this knowledge to transcend the words on text. This is what creates a visual metaphor in the mind of an Aboriginal reader. This is the embedded story beneath the surface of the text. In other words, the space is in the sense of time and place.

Native artists have stated that they consider art to be "everything that is created from the heart, mind, and spirit" (Irwin & Farrell, 1996, p.60). When examining a beautifully adorned birchbark basket, a child learns the story of the tree and root and why they are picked at certain seasons. They see how the basket (inanimate) is constructed and the decorations that adorn the basket may be porcupine quills (animate), moose hair (inanimate), feathers (animate), or other objects. These decorations and designs carry significant spiritual meanings to the artist. Because of the combination of these materials, a new entity is created (the finished product), born from all the other parts and pieces that have been put together to create it. The completed object is then passed over ceremonial smoke that contains tobacco, sage, cedar, and sweet-grass. These plants and all other plant life also become part of teaching and learning. This ceremonial smoke incorporates the realm of the spirit world to bless the object before it is released to its purpose. In this way, each object that is created passes through the same circular stages of story, preparation, construction, decoration, and blessing. Therefore, the arts and crafts too,

follow the same repeating rotational pattern of the spiral.

This form of education is indeed a creation of knowledge that stems from the body, hearts, minds and spirits of all those involved. Traditional knowledge at this point, sounds deceptively simple. What may be a simple matter of making a tool handle becomes complex when you realize that no two trees are exactly the same. As one axe handle maker states, "It is difficult to find the right white ash as they all behave differently. You have to select a tree depending on the branches" (Irwin & Farrell, 1996, p.79). With this type of learning, a child would know with one glance at an object, "the geographical location of its makers, the land, animals, and the climate in that region" (Irwin & Farrell, 1996, p. 85). The teaching of traditional knowledge is never ending. This also applies to the novels that were discussed in this study. The reader will discover the geographical location of the characters, the land, the animals, the climate in that region, and share the "lived experience" of the Ojibwa culture. In the context of Marmon Silko's work, Jahner (Bloom, 1998) states:

> For the traditional tribal artist, narrative forms have always had to do with particular ways of knowing and learning; they have not been mere objects of knowledge. The novel is a narrative genre well-suited for examining how the traditional ways of knowing function in a multi-cultural world where the meanings of narrative are often twisted and tangled. The novel can accommodate enough detail and can juxtapose enough different kinds of narrative to show how it is possible to untangle our responses to different ways of knowing and follow them to their experiential roots. For that is what event is, a primary experience of

> sources of knowledge shaped not by logical concepts but by the action of story. (p. 43)

This spiral or circular theory is not a new idea as it relates to other Aboriginal cultures and literature. In reference to Silko and Momaday's work, Blaeser (1993) states that "in various ways and in various degrees by other scholars: the seasonal cycles of *Ceremony* have been noted, the cyclical structure of *House Made of Dawn* explored" (p. 58). Blaeser also notes that "Paula Gunn Allen writes of "the sacred hoop" or "medicine wheel" as the informing figure behind much Native writing" (1993, p. 58).

It is my hope that this study will give direction and purpose for teachers to generate their own materials on cultural ethics and values that are embedded in the traditional stories of their Nation. This cultural grounding will instill a sense of place and identity for the youth of First Nations. Ermine (1995) states that, "Aboriginal education has a responsibility to uphold a world-view based on recognizing and affirming wholeness and to disseminate the benefits to all humanity. . . . It is imperative that our children take up the cause of our languages and cultures because therein lies Aboriginal epistemology, which speaks of holism (p. 110).

8 Conclusion

The primary object of this study was to illustrate and provide examples of how the traditional teachings and knowledge of ethics and values can be gleaned from the old myths and legends. This included the cultural beliefs and value systems that are still very much intact in some Ojibwa communities today. Examples of several of the ethics, values, and rules of behaviour in the Ojibwa culture have been provided in the novels. Another First Nation could begin to examine its own particular myths and legends and find comparable teachings from its own natal-based Aboriginal literature.

This study has provided one model for Aboriginal research. In the review of the *Legend of Iyas,* each of the tests and trials that the hero undergoes form the repeating rotational pattern. Each of the places that Danny visits form the rotational pattern in *Silent Words* and the repeating four seasons in *Honour the Sun* form the rotational pattern as shown in Figure 2a and 2b. The old traditional legends themselves are formed in this same way. There is no beginning to the story and there is no end. The story goes on from one episode to the next and each episode would form one rotation of the spiral.

College and University classes can now have a starting point to begin their discussions on Aboriginal methodology and research theory, Aboriginal epistemology, traditional knowledge, ecological and environmental knowledge, Ojibway ethics and values, and traditional protocol and rules of social interaction. In particular, the information generated from this dissertation will be an invaluable source of knowledge and discussion to Native Studies departments across the country.

In a more general sense, this work can serve as a guide to reading, hearing, and

understanding Native literature. Very little has been written on this topic and certainly Native literature has not been read in the ways I suggest here. While I believe that this dissertation is an important starting point in developing greater understanding about Native literature, it may also help to identify Native literature, a topic I discussed earlier. But neither have I exhausted the topic. Much more needs to be done to make Canadians aware of their own Native literary traditions.

Limitations

> Stevens (1971) states in the following that:
>
> Legends and stories were once the viable, living core of Cree culture that was passed on to each successive generation for thousands of years. The reasons for human existence, the origin of the plants and animals of the environment are explained in legends which were a verbal record of the Cree world view. It is apparent that legends were also a method of socializing the younger people to tradition, ceremony, religion and norms of behaviour. Thus the ways of life were perpetuated by the stories and myths of the people (p. 11).

Despite the fact that Stevens is speaking in the past tense, the myths and legends are very much alive and still have no limitations. They have survived with each succeeding generation and their uses and references are still present today. However, the stories of a particular cultural group may not be the same as that of another First Nation but the teachings embedded in these stories may be similar in many. So, when I speak of northwestern Ontario Cree or Ojibwa stories, they are both the same although the spelling and pronunciation of the characters may be different due to the language dialect as was

explained in the review of the four versions of a legend.

Being the only existing research on the Native ethics and rules of behaviour on the region, the article by the Native psychiatrist, Dr. Clare Brant, M.D. was used for this study. Though his list of ethics and values is by no means exhaustive, nor was it meant to be, it is also not for universal application. Having found each of the categories of the Native ethics, values and social behaviour in the traditional myths and legends of this area, they also proved to be present in my novels which are based on the natal culture of this region.

The discussion of ethics in this dissertation is particular to my cultural understanding in as much as the word is the closest translation to what is under discussion in the Aboriginal context. The ethics and values in the European sense, are part of a much larger discussion, which could be an area of further investigation. How do Native ethics compare with other main-stream western theories? One type of study could deal with the larger philosophical issue of metaethics that concerns what is included in ethical discourse and how people might talk about such issues. A meta-ethical analysis could provide the basis for a comparative study. The same call for further investigation could be said of the area of the study of language in both its oral and written forms. How does the relationship to land and culture that informs my study exist in other places, among other peoples? Although I have addressed this in part with reference to Leslie Marmon Silko, a broader study could reveal many important facets of oral culture within contemporary literate culture. Even within my own culture, I have omitted many important aspects.

Although I am familiar with the Ojibwa spiritual beliefs, practices and ceremonies, I do not speak of them in this study as it is not the place for such things. I mention legends in my novels but I do not tell the story, as I feel that the novels are not the place for them. However, for the purpose of this study, the legends were summarized and the Legend of Iyas was shared not as the story is told, but as a summary for the purpose of comparing the four versions.

The interpretations provided in the myths and legends are also limited to the purpose at hand and should not necessarily be understood as the only true interpretation of a given story. The myths and legends that were mentioned have also not been retold in their entirety but rather given a cursory summary to illustrate their potential in the teachings.

The use of examples from the many research articles cited are limited to my own cultural experience and knowledge based on my traditional 'bush-oriented' upbringing. In some instances where the researchers refer to the topic under discussion, I may not agree with the statement in its entirety. As a case in point, my understanding differs from the statement made by Hallowell (1975) in his discussion about an Ojibwa hunter's proper treatment of animals killed for fur or food, "Otherwise, he will offend the masters and be threatened with starvation . . ." (p. 172). In my understanding, there are no *masters* of the animals. Each animal is an individual in its own right and therefore deserves the same respect as everyone else, including humans.

My views and knowledge of my cultural beliefs, values and ethics are those of my family and my First Nation and not all views may agree with mine. Other sources of

theoretical grounding have been explored in the course of this study. I have also spoken with Elders of my Nation to ensure that my ideas and notions were culturally grounded to safeguard this particular source of knowledge from academic contamination.

For reasons mentioned above, I would have jeopardized the integrity of my study were I to include other literature from other First Nations into the Ojibwa knowledge sections. This study however, makes reference to the vast stores of knowledge that are available in the literature of other First Nations.

In the attempt to provide explicit examples of implied meanings, the process has inevitably limited the understanding or 'fenced in' the perception, interpretation and knowledge of a given scenario which should otherwise be left open to personal interpretation as in 'feeding yourself' the knowledge therein. Therefore, it is very important that all examples that were used for these purposes in this study, be 'released' from their now restricted meanings to be set free again to anyone else's interpretation and understanding.

The problems associated with the search for an acceptable definition of Native literature, Native author, and the interpretation of Native content will not be resolved, nor will it disappear of its own accord, but must be addressed and wrestled head-on in order to move forward. It has been nearly twenty years since Cornell (1987) made these comments,

> This modern trend of imposing western literary definitions on Indian oral traditions must be rethought and substantially revised, for a number of reasons . . . they must not be usurped by literary imperialism. Native peoples cannot allow

> their traditions to be defined by scholarship which chooses to interpret their oral record out of context. For, if this occurs, they have lost control of their history, and all that was, and have become the products of another culture's imagination. . . . The oral record of these peoples cannot be adequately interpreted outside the cultural parameters which constitute the totality of specific indigenous cultures . . . interpretations of oral traditions that are not based on detailed familiarity with a specific culture are fabrications which create new stereotypes and disseminate false information. (p. 176)

This is also true of Aboriginal research methodology and theory. Having engaged in this struggle, I can honestly say that it has not been easy to connect so called 'scholarship' with 'traditional Aboriginal epistemology', 'traditional knowledge', 'ways of knowing' and 'traditional ecological/environmental knowledge' and so forth.

In Cornell's opinion "only by analysing specific oral traditions in formal cultural contexts can this meaning be elucidated. It is the meaning of specific facets of Native oral records that maintains the integrity of the people's history" (p. 177). He goes on to say that "Oral traditions, as historical records of indigenous peoples, encompass the breadth of human experience. It is fitting, then, that these traditions be examined in a specific cultural context which accurately reflects the mode, purpose, and rationale for communication. Only when this is achieved will a more accurate understanding of Native peoples be realized" (p. 180).

May we some day reconnect with Weesquachak walking along the sand beach with his bag of songs slung over his shoulder. "For as we perceive, so we behave; and as

we behave, so we create" (Allen, 1987, p. 570) thereby, ensuring that what we create in Native literature is that which we intimately know as a part of ourselves. My sincere appreciation to the elder who said, "Close your eyes so that you can see further" (Lightning, 1992, p. 253).

Bibliography

Abram, D. (1996). *The spell of the sensuous: Perception and language in a more-than-human world.* New York, NY: Pantheon Books.

Acoose, J. (1993). Post halfbreed: Indigenous writers as authors in their own realities. In J. Armstrong (Ed.), *Looking at the words of our people. First Nations analysis of literature* (pp. 27-44). Penticton, BC: Theytus Books Ltd.

Alaimo, S. (2000). *Undomesticated ground: Recasting nature as feminist space.* New York, NY: Cornell University Press.

Allen, P. G. (1987). Bringing home the fact: Tradition and continuity in the imagination. In B. Swannn, & A. Krupat (Eds.), *Recovering the word: Essays on native American literature* (pp. 563-579). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Argyle, M. (1972). Non-verbal communication in human social interaction. In R. A. Hinde (Ed.), *Non-verbal communications* (pp. 243-269). London, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Armstrong, J. C. (1992). Trickster time. In L. Jaine, & D. H. Taylor (Eds.), *Voices: Being Native in Canada* (pp. 1). Saskatoon, Sask: University of Saskatchewan.

Armstrong, J. C. (1993). *Looking at the words of our people: First Nations analysis of literature.* Penticton, BC: Theytus Books Ltd

Barman, J., Hebert,Y., & McCaskill, D. (Eds.). (1992). The legacy of the past: An overview. *Indian education in Canada: Volume 1: The Legacy* (pp. 1-22). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press

Barnaby, J. (2002). Recognizing traditional environmental knowledge. In J. Bird., L.

Land., & M. Macadam (Eds.). *Nation to nation: Aboriginal sovereignty and the future of Canada* (pp. 85-91). Toronto/Vancouver: Irwin Publishing.

Barnhardt, R. (1991). Higher education in the fourth world: Indigenous people take control. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18*(2), 199-231.

Battiste, M., & Barman, J. (Eds.). (1995), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds.* Vancouver, BC: U.B.C. Press.

Bauer, G. W. (1973). *Tales from the Cree.* Cobalt, Ont: Highway Book Shop.

Beardy, L., & Wolfart, H. C. (Eds). (1988). *Pisiskiwak ka-pikiskwecik: Talking animals.* Winnipeg, Man.: Algonquian and Iroguoian Linguistics, Memoir 5.

Berlo, J. C. & Philips, R. B. (1998). *Native North American art.* [Oxford history of art]. Oxford, New York: Oxford University Press.

Bevis, W. (1987). Native American novels: Homing in. In B. Swann, & A. Krupat (Eds.), *Recovering the word: Essays on Native American literature* (pp. 580-620). Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Bird, J., Land, L., & Macadam, M. (Eds.). (2002), *Nation to nation: Aboriginal sovereignty and the future of Canada.* Toronto/Vancouver: Irwin Publishing.

Blaeser, K. (1993). Native literature: Seeking a critical center. In J. Armstrong (Ed.), *Looking at the words of our people: First Nations analysis of literature* (pp. 51-62). Penticton, B.C.: Theytus Books Ltd.

Bloom, H. (Ed.). (1998). *Native-Amrican writers.* Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers.

Bopp, J., Bopp, M.., Bopp, L., Brown, L., Lane, P. (1988). *The sacred tree.* Alberta: The

Four Worlds Development Project.

Bowles, S., & Gintis, H. (1976). Education, inequality, and the meritocracy. In *Schooling in capitalist America* (pp. 102-124). New York, NY: New Books.

Brant, C. (1990). Native ethics and rules of behaviour. *Canadian Journal of Psychiatry. 35*(6), 534-539.

Brant, C. (1988). *Native ethics and rules of behaviour*. (Video Recorded Lecture). Thunder Bay, Ont.: Lakehead University.

Bruner, J., & Weisser, C. (1991). The invention of self: Autobiography and its forms. In D. Olson, & N. Torrace (Eds.), *Literacy and orality* (pp.129-148). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Buswa, E., & Shawana, J. (Eds.). (1992). *Nishnaabe bimaadziwin kinoomaadwinan/ Teachings of the medicine wheel.* West Bay/Wikwemikong, Ont.: Ojibwe Cultural Foundation and N'da Gkenjge Gamig.

Cazden, C. B., John, V. P., & Hymes, D. (Eds). (1972). *Functions of language in the classroom*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Cleary, L. M., & Peacock, T. D. (1998). *Collected wisdom: American Indian education.* Needham Heights, Boston, London, Toronto, Sydney, Tokyo, Singapore: Allyn and Bacon.

Coggins, K., Williams, E., & Radin, N. (1997). The traditional tribal values of Ojibwa parents and the school performance of their children: An exploratory study. *Journal of American Indian Education, 36*(3), 1-15.

Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1988). *Teachers as curriculum planners: Narratives*

of experience. New York, NY: Teachers College Press, Columbia University.

Cordero, C. (1995). A working and evolving definition of culture. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 21,* (Supplement), 28-41.

Cornell, G. L. (1987). The imposition of western definitions of literature on Indian oral traditions. In T. King, C. Calver, H. Hoy (Eds.), *The Native in literature* (pp. 174-187). Oakville, Ont.: ECW Press.

Couture, J. E. (1996). The role of Native elders: Emergent issues. In D. A. Long, & O. P. Dickason (Eds.), *Visions of the heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues* (pp. 41-56). Toronto, Ont.: Harcourt Brace Canada.

Crowe, K. J. (1991). *A history of the original peoples of northern Canada.* Montreal, Kingston, Ont.: McGill-Queen's University Press.

DeVault, M..L. (1999). *Liberating method: Feminism and social research.* Philadelphia, PA: Temple University Press.

Dumont, R.V., Jr. (1972). Learning English and how to be silent: Studies in Sioux and Cherokee classrooms. In C. B. Cazden, V. P. John, & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Functions of language in the classroom* (pp. 344-372). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Duran, J. (1991). *Toward a feminist epistemology.* Savage, MD: Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc.

Eigenbrod, R. (1995). The oral in the written: A literature between two cultures. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, *15*(1), 89-102.

Ellis, C. D. (Ed.). (1995). *a talohkana nesta tipacimowina/Cree legends and narratives*

from the west coast of James Bay. Winnipeg, Man.: Publications of the Algonquian Text Society.

Ermine, W. (1995). Aboriginal epistemology. In M. Battiste, & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 102-112). Vancouver, BC: U.B.C. Press.

Farrell, R. (1993). *Native teaching methods: An exploration of the use of traditional practical knowledge in the classroom.* Unpublished master of education thesis, Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario.

Fee, M. (1990). Upsetting fake ideas: Jeannette Armstrong's 'Slash' and Beatrice Culleton's 'April Raintree.' In W. H. New (Ed.), *Native writers and Canadian writing,* (168-180). [Canadian Literature: Special Issue]. Vancouver, BC: U.B.C. Press.

Foreman, K. (1991). A dramatic approach to Native teacher education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 18*(1), 73-80.

Friesen, J. W. (1999). The function of legends as a teaching tool in pre-colonial First Nations' societies. *Interchange, 30*(3), 305-322.

Gaywish, R. (2000). Aboriginal people and mainstream dispute resolution: Cultural implications of use. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, S. Kollage, L. Simpson, & N. Schuster (Eds.), *Aboriginal health, identity and resources* (pp. 84-89). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Grant, A. (1986). Naive literature in the curriculum. A. Gregor, & K. Wilson (Eds.), *Monographs in education.* Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba.

Grant, A. (Ed.). (1990). *Our bit of truth: An anthology of Canadian Native literature.* Winnipeg, Man.: Pemmican Publications Inc.

Grant, A. (1990). Contemporary Native women's voices in literature. In W. H. New (Ed.), *Native writers and Canadian writing* (pp. 124-132). Canadian Literature: Special Issue. Vancouver, BC: U.B.C. Press.

Greenbaum, P. E., & Greenbaum, S. D. (1983). Cultural differences, nonverbal regulation, and classroom interaction: sociolinguistic interference in American Indian education. *Peabody Journal of Education.* Fall, *61*(1), 16-33.

Hager, B. (1996). Thomas King: Coyote in central Canada. *Honour Song: A Tribute* (pp. 39-46). Vancouver, BC: Raincoast Books.

Hall, S. & duGay, P. (Eds.). (1996). *Questions of cultural identity.* London: Sage Publications.

Hallowell, A. I. (1975). Ojibwa ontology, behaviour, and world view. In I. & B. Tedlock, *Teachings from the American earth: Indian religion and philosophy* (pp. 141-178). New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation.

Hanohano, P. (1999). The spiritual imperative of Native epistemology: Restoring harmony and balance to education. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 23*(2), 206-219.

Hinde, R. A. (Ed.). (1972), *Non-verbal communications.* London, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Irwin, R. & Farrell, R. (1996). The framing of Aboriginal art. In D. A. Long, & O. P. Dickason (Eds.), *Visions of the heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues* (pp. 57-92).

Toronto, Ont.: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada.

Jacko, E. (1992). Traditional Ojibwa storytelling. In L. Jaine, & D. Hayden Taylor (Eds.), *Voices: being Native in Canada* (pp. 40 - 51). Saskatoon, Sask.: University of Saskatchewan, Extension Division.

Jahner, E. (1998). Interview with Elaine Jahner. In H. Jaskowski, *Leslie Marmon Silko: A study of the short fiction* (p.120-121). New York, NY: Twayne Publishers.

Jahner, E. (1998). An act of attention: Event structure in *ceremony.* In H. Bloom (Ed.), *Native-American writers,* (pp. 35-44). Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers.

Jaine, L., & Taylor, H. D. (Eds). (1992). *Voices: being Native in Canada.* Saskatoon, Sask.: University of Saskatchewan, Extension Division.

James, K., Chavez, E., Beauvais, F., Edwards, R., & Oetting, G. (1995). School achievement and dropouts among Anglo and Indian females and males: A comparative examination. *American Indian Culture and Research Journal, 19*(3), 181-206.

Jaskoski, H. (1998). Interview with Elaine Jahner. In *Leslie Marmon Silko: A study of the short fiction* (pp. 120-121). New York, NY: Twayne Publishers.

Jaskoski, H. (1998). *Leslie Marmon Silko: A study of the short fiction.* New York, NY: Twayne Publishers.

Johnston, B. H. (1976). *Ojibway heritage.* Toronto, Ont.: McClelland & Stewart Limited.

Johnston, B. H. (1978). *Moose meat and wild rice.* Toronto, Ont.: McClelland and Stewart Limited.

Johnston, B. H. (1982). *Ojibway ceremonies*. Toronto, Ont.: McClelland and Stewart Limited.

Johnston, B. H. (1990). One generation from extinction. In W. H. New, (Ed.), *Native writers and Canadian writing* (pp. 10-15). [Canadian Literature: Special Issue]. Vancouver, BC: U.B.C. Press.

Kaulback, B. (1984). Styles of learning among Native children: A review of the research. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 11*(3), 27-37.

Kawagley, O. (1990). Yup'ik ways of knowing. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 17*(2), 5-17.

King, T. H. (1986). *Inventing the Indian: White images, Native oral literature, and contemporary Native writers*. (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Utah, 1986). Ann Arbor: UMI. 8616611.

King, T. (Ed.). (1990). *All my relations: An anthology of contemporary Canadian Native fiction*. (Introduction). Toronto, Ont.: McClelland & Stewart Inc.

King, T., Calver, C., & Hoy, H. (Eds.). (1987). *The Native in literature. Oakville: EWC Press*.

Knight, H. (1989). *Earth Elder Stories* (pp. vii-x). [Told by Alexander Wolfe]. Saskatoon, Sask.: Fifth House.

Kowanko, R. (Ed.). (1994). *Aboriginal art and the dreaming: Teaching about Aboriginal art, craft and design in secondary schools*. [Aboriginal studies 8-12. Department for Education and Children's Services]. Adelaide: South Australia.

Krupat, A. (1998). Dead voices, living voice: On the autobiographical writing of Gerald

Vizenor. In H. Bloom, (Ed.), *Native-American writers* (243-257). Philadelphia, PA: Chelsea House Publishers.

LaFrance, M., & Mayo, C. (1978). *Moving bodies: Nonverbal communications in social relationships.* Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Company, Inc.

LaRocque, E. (1990). Preface, or here are our voices - who will hear? In J. Perrault, & S. Vance (Eds.), *Writing the circle: Native women of western Canada.* An Anthology (pp. xv-xxx). Edmonton, Alta.: NeWest Publishers Limited.

LaRocque, E. (2001). From the land to the classroom: Broadening epistemology. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, M. Bennett, & B. Chisholm (Eds.), *Pushing the margins: Native and northern studies* (pp. 62-75). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Leavitt, R. M. (1994). They knew how to respect children: Life histories and culturally appropriate education. *Canadian Journal of Education, 19*(2), 182-193.

Lightning, W. C. (1992). Compassionate mind: Implications of a text written by Elder Louis Sunchild. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 19*(2), 215-253.

Long, D. A., & Dickason, O. P. (Eds.). (1996). *Visions of the heart: Canadian Aboriginal issues*. Toronto, Ont.: Harcourt Brace & Company Canada.

Lutz, H. (1991). *Contemporary challenges: Conversations with Canadian Native authors.* Saskatoon, Sask.: Fifth House Publishers.

McGrath, R. (1988). Monster figures and unhappy endings in Inuit literature. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 15*(1), 51-58.

Mitchell, M. L. (Ed.). (1984). *TESL Nakina (Teaching English as a second language) in*

the Nakina district (pp. 1-69). Department of Indian Affairs. Thunder Bay, Ont.: Lakehead University, Faculty of Education.

More, A. J. (1989). Native Indian learning styles: A review for researchers and teachers. *Journal of American Indian Education, 10*, 15-28.

Nabhan, G.P., & Trimble, S. (1994). *The geography of childhood.* Boston MS: Beacon Press Books.

New, W. H. (Ed.). (1990). *Native writers Canadian writing.* Vancouver, B. C.: University of British Columbia Press.

Niatum, D. (1993). History, nature, family, dream: The musical colour of their poems. In J. Armstrong (Ed.), *Looking at the words of our people: First Nations analysis of literature* (pp. 63-81). Penticton, BC: Theytus Books Ltd.

Nielson, J. M. (Ed.). (1990). *Feminist research methods: Exemplary readings in the social sciences.* Boulder, CO: Westview Press, Inc.

Oakes, J., Riewe, R., Kollage, S., Simpson, L., & Schuster, N. (2000). *Aboriginal health, identity and resources.* Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Oakes, J., Riewe, R., Bennet, M., & Chisholm, B. (Eds.). (2001). *Pushing the margins: Native and northern studies.* Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Olson, D., & Torrace, N. (Eds.). (1991). *Literacy and orality* (pp.129-148). Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.

Ortiz, S. J. (1998). Wah nuhtyuh-yuu dyu neetah tyahstih (Now it is my turn to stand).

Speaking for the generations: Native writers on writing (pp. xi-xix). Tucson, AZ: University of Arizona Press.

Oskaboose, G. (1995). Telling stories, northern Ojibwa style. In L. Jaine, & D. Hayden Taylor (Eds.), *Voices: Being Native in Canada* (pp. 118-121). Saskatoon, Sask.: University of Saskatchewan.

Ouellette, G. (2002). *The fourth world: An indigenous perspective on feminism and Aboriginal women's activism*. Halifax, NB: Fernwood Publishing.

Perrault, J., & Vance, S. (Eds.). (1990). *Writing the circle: Native women of western Canada*. An Anthology. Edmonton, Alta.: NeWest Publishers Limited.

Petch, V., (2000). Traditional ecological knowledge: An anthropological perspective. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, S. Kollage, L. Simpson, & N. Schuster (Eds.), *Aboriginal health, identity and resources* (pp. 137-149). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Philips, S. U. (1972). Participant structures and communicative competence: Warm Springs children in community and classroom. In C. Cazden, V. John, & D. Hymes (Eds.), *Functions of Language in the Classroom* (pp. 370-394). New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.

Plank, G. A. (1994). What silence means for educators of American Indian children. *Journal of American Indian Education,* Fall, 3-19.

Preston, C. J. (2000). Environment and belief: The importance of place in the construction of knowledge. *Elsevier Science Inc.: Ethics and the Environment, 4*(2), 211-218.

Procter, A. (2000). Traditional environmental knowledge: An analysis of the discourse. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, S. Kollage, L. Simpson, & N. Schuster (Eds.), *Aboriginal health, identity and resources* (pp. 150-164). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Robinson, H. (1989). *Write it on your heart: An epic world of an Okanagan story-teller.* (W. Wickwire, Ed.). Vancouver, BC: Talon Books.

Rogers, E. S., & Smith, D. B. (1994). *Aboriginal Ontario: Historical perspectives on the First Nations.* Toronto: Ontario Historical Studies Series for the Government of Ontario.

Rosenthal, R., Hall, J. A., DiMatteo, R. M., Rogers, P. L., & Archer, D. (1979). *Sensitivity to Non-verbal communication: the PONS test.* Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Rothe, P. J. (1982). Researching Native education: An ethnomethodological perspective. *Canadian Journal of Native Education*, *9*(4), 1-11.

Ruffo, A. G. (1993). Inside lookout out: Reading "Tracks" from a Native perspective. In J. Armstrong (Ed.), *Looking at the words of our people: First Nations analysis of literature* (pp. 161-176). Penticton, BC: Theytus Books Ltd.

Saville-Troike, M. (1976). *Foundations for teaching English as a second language: Theory and method for multicultural education* (pp. 5-66). New Jersey: Prentice-Hall, Inc.

Simpson, L.(2000). Anishinabe ways of knowing. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, W. Koolage, L. Simpson, & N. Schuster (Eds), *Aboriginal health, identity and resources* (pp.165-

185). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Sioui, G. E. (1992). *For an Amerindian autohistory: An essay on the foundations of a social ethic.* (S. Fischman, Trans.). Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Slipperjack, R. (1987). *Honour the sun.* Winnipeg, Man.: Pemmican Publications.

Slipperjack, R. (1992). *Silent words.* Saskatoon, Sask.: Fifth House Publishers.

Slipperjack, R. (2000). *Weesquachak and the lost ones.* Penticton, BC: Theytus Books.

Slipperjack, R. (2001). *Little voice.* Regina, Sask.: Coteau Books

Stevens, J. (1971). *Sacred legends of the Sandy Lake Cree*. Toronto, Ont.: McClelland and Stewart.

Stevenson, E. (2001). An Aboriginal perspective on TEK and western science. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, M. Bennett, & B. Chisholm (Eds.), *Pushing the margins: Native and northern studies* (pp. 76-83). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Winnipeg, Native Studies Press.

Sugarhead, C. (1996). */Ninoontaan/I can hear it: Ojibwe stories from Lansdowne House.* (J.O'Meara, Trans. & Ed.). Winnipeg, Man.: Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics. Memoir 14.

Swann, B., & Krupat, A. (Eds.). (1987), *Recovering the word: Essays on Native American literature*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press.

Swann, B. (Ed.). (1992). *On the translation of Native American literatures*. Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press.

Tedlock, D. & Tedlock, B. (Eds.). (1975). *Teachings from the American earth: Indian*

religion and philosophy. New York, NY: Liveright Publishing Corporation.

Van Gerwen-Toyne (2001). Traditional ecological knowledge and university curriculum. In J. Oakes, R. Riewe, M. Bennett, & B. Chisholm (Eds.), *Pushing the margins: Native and northern studies* (pp. 84-89). Winnipeg, Man.: University of Manitoba, Native Studies Press.

Van Hamme, L. (1996). American Indian cultures and the classroom. *Journal of American Indian Education, 35*(2), 21-36.

Vastokas, J. M. (1992). *Beyond the artifact: Native art as performance.* North York, NY: Robarts Centre for Canadian Studies, York University.

Wagamese, R. (1994). *Keeper 'n me.* Toronto, Ont.: Doubleday Canada Limited.

Warren, W. (1984). *History of the Ojibway people*. Introduction by W. Roger Buffalohead. St.Paul, MN: Minnesota Historical Society Press.

Wesley, J. (1991). *Wemishoosh: a Cree legend.* [N. Wesley, Trans.]. Kashechewan, Ont.: Hishkoonikun Education Authority.

Whitbeck, L. B., Hoyt, D. R., Stubben, J. D., & LaFromboise, T. (2001). Traditional culture and academic success among American Indian children in the upper midwest. *Journal of American Indian Education, 40*(2), 48-59.

Whyte, K. J. (1986). Strategies for teaching Indian and Metis students. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 13*(3), 1-20.

VITA

Name: Ruby V. M. Farrell

Place of Birth: Collins, Ontario

Year of Birth: 1952

Post-secondary Education and Degrees:

	1986-1988	Bachelor of Arts
		Lakehead University
	1988-1989	Bachelor of Education
		Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario
	1990-1993	Master of Education
		Lakehead University, Thunder Bay, Ontario
	2000-2003	Ph.D.
		University of Western Ontario
Honours and Awards:	1993-1996	SSHRC Research Grant: Co-investigator
	1995-1996	Ministry of Education and Training

Related Work Experience:

	1989-1990	Coordinator, Native Support Services, Lakehead
		University
	1990-1993	Lecturer and Counsellor, On and Off Campus,
		N.T.E.P. Faculty of Education
	1993-1999	Assistant Professor, Coordinator, Native Teacher
		Education Program, Faculty of Education, Lakehead

University. Granted Tenure: 1996

1999-2001 Assistant Professor, Department of Indigenous Learning

2001-present Assistant Professor, Chair, Department of Indigenous Learning, Lakehead University

Publications:

Novels: Author Name: Ruby Slipperjack

Slipperjack, R. (2001). Charlie Goes to University. In T. King (Ed.), *First Voices, First Words.* Winnipeg, Manitoba: Prairie Fire

Slipperjack, R. (2001). *Little Voice.* Regina, Saskatchewan: Coteau Books

Slipperjack, R. (2000). *Weesquachak and the Lost Ones.* Penticton, B.C: Theytus Books.

Slipperjack, R. (1992). *Silent Words.* Saskatoon, Saskatchewan: Fifth House Publications.

Slipperjack, R. (1987). *Honour the Sun.* Winnipeg, Man.: Pemmican Publications Inc.

Academic Publications: Ruby Farrell

Irwin, R., Rogers, T., & Farrell, R. (1999). Multiculturalism Denies the Realities of Aboriginal Artist and Culture. In D. Boughton & R. Mason (Eds). *Beyond Multicultural Art Education: International Perspectives.* European Studies in Education.

Irwin, R., Rogers, T., & Farrell, R. (1997). The Politics of Culture and the Work of Contemporary Aboriginal Artists. *Canadian Society for Education Through Art.* 28(1). Boucherville, Quebec, Canada: C.S.E.A.

Irwin, R., Rogers, T., & Farrell, R. (1997). The Irrelevance of Multiculturalism. *The*

Kaurna Higher Education Journal. Issue 6, 1997. Underdale, Australia: University of South Australia.

Irwin, R., & Farrell, R. (1995). The Framing of Aboriginal Art. In O. Dickason, & D. Long (Eds.), *Visions of the Heart: Contemporary Aboriginal Issues in Socio-historical Perspective.* Toronto, Ontario: Harcourt Brace & Company.

Areas of Expertise:

Contemporary Issues in Native Education; Teaching English as a Second Language to Native Children, Native Arts and Crafts; Native Women and Health; Native Literature, Canadian Native History; Native Imagery; Native Myths and Drama; Native Narratives, Myths, Legends and Ceremonies; Gender Relations in the First Nations Communities; Native Women and Their Changing Roles.