PLACES FOR THE GOOD CARE OF CHILDREN:

A DISCUSSION OF INDIGENOUS CULTURAL CONSIDERATIONS

AND EARLY CHILDHOOD IN CANADA AND NEW ZEALAND

by

Margo Lainne Greenwood

A THESIS SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in

THE FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES

(Cross-Faculty Inquiry in Education)

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

(Vancouver)

June, 2009

ABSTRACT

Places for the Good Care of Children is, broadly speaking, about Indigenous early childhood and

the potential of understanding child development as a site for cultural rejuvenation and

efforts to rebuild colonized peoples. More specifically, the project seeks to answer questions

about linkages between early childhood, government policies, community visions, and the

identity and rebuilding of Indigenous peoples and communities. I pursue this topic by

examining two communities (Lake Babine and Tl'azt'en) within the Carrier Nation in Canada

and two Tuhoe Maori Kohanga Reo sites in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Integral to this study

is my own positioning as a Cree scholar, a long-time professional in the area of early

childhood development, an advisor on multiple committees and tables concerned with

Aboriginal issues in Canada, and a mother of three. From these multiple positions I have

undertaken a qualitative inquiry employing focus groups, key informant interviews, and

thematic analysis, all of which draw from multiple methodologies and a literature largely

comprising works concerned with decolonization, Indigenous theory, early childhood

development, and policy. The key findings of this research suggest that early childhood (and

related educational considerations) is a critical site for cultural rejuvenation, for the

(re)building of community, and for the establishment of healthy Aboriginal communities in

the future. Fundamental to this (re)building is autonomy by Indigenous communities over

language and culture, over the care and education of their children, over their lives and

futures, and over the lives and futures of their children.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

GLOSSARY

This glossary is divided into two sections: Canadian English terms and Maori terms.

Canadian English Terms

The following definitions of terms are taken from the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RRCAP).[1]

Aboriginal people[2]	Indigenous inhabitants of Canada including First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples (as stated in section 35(2) of the Constitution Act, 1982).
Bal'hats	Potlatch
First Nations	peoples who identify as First Nations people. This term includes those First Nations peoples living on-reserve or off-reserve, those "Indian" persons registered under the Indian Act, and non-Status First Nations.
Indian	person (including, generally, First Nations and Inuit) registered, or entitled to be registered, under the Indian Act.
Indigenous people[3]	the Aboriginal population of a nation (in this instance, Canada) or a geographical area.
Inuit	Indigenous inhabitants of various land-regions throughout the Canadian North.
Métis	a distinct Aboriginal people whose early ancestors were of mixed heritage, and who identify themselves as a nation with historical roots in the Canadian West.

---

[1] RRCAP, Vol.1. (1996). Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services.

[2] The concept or term 'Aboriginal' is used to refer to Canada's First Peoples, (First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples) who self-identify as having Aboriginal ancestry. There are times when I use the terms 'Indigenous' and 'Aboriginal' interchangeably. When I write about specific nations or groups, I try to use the names they use themselves. For example, many of the Elders in various parts of the country with whom I worked referred to themselves as Indians.

[3] Wilson (2008) writes that the concept or term 'Indigenous' is one that is currently being reclaimed by Indigenous peoples:

> As more people become more active politically and in the field of academia the term Indigenous, as an adjective, has come to mean 'relating to Indigenous people and peoples'. ... The first peoples of the world have gained greater understanding of the similarities we share. Terms such as Indian, Métis, [or Aboriginal] ... do nothing to either reflect the distinctiveness of our cultures or the commonalities underlying worldviews. Indigenous is inclusive of all first peoples – unique in our own cultures but common in our experiences of colonialism and our understanding of the world. (pp. 15-16)

Maori Terms

Aotearoa	the land of the long white cloud
aroha	love, kindness
ahurei	gathering of the nation
atua	deity, creator
haka	tribal war dance
Hapu	sub-tribe
Hinepūkohurangi	Maiden mist (deity)
hongi	traditional greeting (nose-to-nose)
Ihi	Aura
iritana	CEO
Iwi	main tribe
kai moana	seafood
kaiako	Teacher
kaimahi	Helper
kaitiaki	Caregiver
Kappa haka	to reach out, tribal dance
karakia	prayer
Karanga	Call of welcome
Kaumaatua	Elders
kaupapa	theme (ideology)
kohanga	nest or nursery
Korowai	a key handbook about Kaupapa philosophy
Maatariki	stars
mahi Tahi	collaborative work
mana	prestige, authority, power
Manuhiri	Guests
Maori	Indigenous Peoples of New Zealand
Maoritanga	Maori ways of being
marae	sacred gathering place
mataatua	tribal canoe
Matāatua waka	ancestral canoe (migrated from Hawaikinui)
Maungaphatu	Primeval ancestor of the Tuhoe people
mokopuna	Grandchild
Moteatea	Song
Murakareke	ancestral deity
Nga	to take breath
Nga mōteatea	the lament (traditional chant)
Nga Tamariki ō Te Kohu	The Children of the Mist
Ngai	sub-tribal groups
Ngai Tuhoe	Urban Tuhoe
noa	be free from the extensions of tapu
Pakeha	European
Papatuaanuku	Mother Earth
peka	to call into a place
peruperu	war dance (performed with weapons)
pepeha	tribal sayings

pohiri	traditional welcoming ceremony
Poi	Ball (used in dance)
Potiki	Son of Hinepukohurangi and Maungapohatu
purakau	tribal narratives
purapura	regional meetings
rangatira	Chief
Ranginui	Sky Father
Rau Rakau	Female leaf ceremony
Ringatu	upraised hands
Tā Moko	tattoo (male
Taha Maori	Maori dimension
Taha wairua	Spirtiual side
Tamakaimoana	Sub-tribal group
tanga	way of being
Tangi	Funeral
Tangata Whenua	People of the land
Taonga	Treasure
tapu	Sacred
Tawhaki	Rural Te Kohanga Reo (deity)
Te Hui Ahurei āTuhoe	The gathering of the Tuhoe Nation
Te Kohanga Reo	the language nest(s)
te korowai	The Cloak
Te mātariki	the stars
te maunga	the mountain
te reo me oona tikanga	language and customs
Te Tiriti ō Waitangi	The Treaty of Waitangi
te tiro rangatiratanga	Maori resources
Te Urewera	"Burnt manhood" (from a foundational legend)
te whariki	the foundation
tiaki	Mentor
tikanga	customs
Tino Rangatiratanga	Sovereignty, Chieftanship
Tiriti o Waitangi	Treaty of Waitanga
Tō tatou āhua	Our ways of being
Tohunga	Spirtitual leader
Tuhoe	Tribe of Te Urewera
Tuhoetanga	Tuhoe ways of being
Tumanaako	Te Kohanga Reo (urban)
Tu Tangata	Stand (man)
Uananga kaumaatua	elders' conference
waiata	song
waiata Koroua	traditional ancient song
Waiata-a-Ringa	Maori actions song
waiata tira	choral
wana	representation
Waimana	Spring of mana
wehi	fear
wero	weaponry (used in Maori welcoming)

whaikorero	formal speech
whaiora	well-being
whanau	family
whakaeke	entry
whakapaakari	training components
whakapākari	to strengthen, nature (of people)
whakapakari tohu	components (modules)
whakapapa	genealogy
whakautu	responding back
whakawaatea	exit
whakawhanaungatanga	our wholeness
whanaungatanga	kinship ties
whenua	land

ACRONYMS

ACS	Aboriginal Children's Survey
AFN	Assembly of First Nations
AHRDA	Aboriginal Human Resources Development Agreement Holders
AHSOR	Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program
AHSUNC	Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Communities Program
BCACCS	British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society
BCFNHS	British Columbia First Nations Head Start
BCR	Band Council Resolution
CAPC	Community Action Plan for Children
CCIF	Child Care Initiatives Fund
DIAN	Department of Indian and Northern Affairs
ECDA	Early Childhood Development Agreements
ELCC	Early Learning and Child Care
FASD	Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder
FNICCI	First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative
FNIHB	First Nations/Inuit Health Branch
FPT	Federal/Provincial/Territorial
HC	Health Canada
HRDC	Human Resources Development Canada
INAC	Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
ITK	Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
NAHSC	National Aboriginal Head Start Council
PHAC	Public Health Agency of Canada
QUAD	Quality, University Inclusivity, Accessibility and Development
RAC	Regional Advisory Committee
RFP	Request for Proposals
SDC	Social Development Canada

PREFACE

The day was just beginning as I sat at my kitchen window, gazing out over the once treed landscape and pondering yet again the significance of the story told to me by a teacher of the Cree nation, my nation. Willie[4] had spoken of the red willow basket and how it was made to hold the sacred medicines, that is, our tobacco, sweetgrass … of our ceremonies. He spoke of the red willow and how it was a precious symbol of learning and good humor. And then he shared a story told to him by another Elder. He spoke of how the Elder had gathered medicines in the woods with his grandmother, and how they used to take the medicines back to their cabin and lay them out on a clean white cloth. The white of the cloth, symbolizing purity, was used to honor the sacredness of the medicines. Willie explained that our minds are like the red willow basket or white cloth – they must be clean in order to hold the sacred medicines – in this case, our thoughts.

To receive knowledge, I must be prepared. For me that means writing from a place where my mind and my heart are one. The purity of thought given to me by others cannot find its resting place within me otherwise. I must be ready to receive those gifts in a way that will be beneficial to others. In this way, undertaking this dissertation has been both an academic and a spiritual journey. The dissertation itself is far less than the journey to get there. Nonetheless, this dissertation is intended to be the articulation of my thoughts, and the thoughts of others, combined together for all to learn from.

This prologue is intended to provide the reader with a broader context by which to more fully understand the interrelationship between myself and this work. While I understand that there are specific requirements for meeting the standards of the academy, I must stay ethically true to my own cultural values as well. This dual responsibility will necessarily shape the way I develop this thesis. As such this introductory prologue is written to assist the reader in orienting, understanding and reading this work more easily. This study focuses on

---

[4] Willie Ermine is a Cree Elder from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation. He currently teaches at the First Nations University in Regina, Saskatchewan.

Canada and the early childhood programs and services designed and implemented to serve young First Nations children and their families residing on reserve in British Columbia. While these programs and services are generally felt to be beneficial, there is a growing list of critical questions and concerns about the relevance of cultural components, their underlying values and beliefs, and how these contribute to program and service delivery. In short, the educative and the cultural components need to be more clearly understood in order to provide appropriate support in the right places.

I undertook this study with these questions in mind. It is an opportunity to positively and proactively address community concerns and may potentially be useful in addressing these challenges at both the practice and policy levels. One way I address these questions is to look to others who are doing similar work and who might have experiences and insights from which we might learn. In particular I draw on the insights from the cross-cultural situation of the Maori people of Aotearoa / New Zealand. I knew of Te Kohanga Reo (preschool language nests) in Aotearoa / New Zealand and that they had developed out of a movement by the people themselves, directed by their Kaumaatua (Elders) as an initiative to save their language and thus their cultural ways of knowing, being and doing. Te Kohanga Reo sites came into being in the early 1980s as a tangible response to Maori desire to revitalize their language. This work will examine and learn from the Maori experience (and our own) with the overall aim of exploring ways by which to create change – a change that would address the aspirations and needs of First Nations communities, families and children in the early childhood years. This meant understanding that policies, practices and regulations related to early childhood are critically constructed. This understanding immediately highlights an area that is culturally contested. The 'good care' of Indigenous children is currently regulated with a Eurocentric (Western European) framework. This is

problematic for First Nations children and parents who wish to incorporate their own cultural thinking, values and practices. This is why the New Zealand example is important. Maori have been able to incorporate their own cultural nuances as well as satisfy the state regulatory expectations.

In order to learn about Te Kohanga Reo and our child care and Head Start programs, I needed to 'visit' with community, with parents, with Elders (Kaumaatua), with early childhood caregivers (teachers) and with community members in order to learn from them. I visited with two First Nations communities in British Columbia, Canada and with two Maori Tuhoe sites in Aotearoa / New Zealand. I detail these visits in later chapters.

I believe that research begins with our 'own' reality. I begin there as well. Cree scholar Wilson (2008) describes ontology as "the theory of the nature of existence, or the nature of reality" (p. 33). The related question then is "what is real?" (p. 66). As I explored the complexity of this question for myself, I realized there will be times when I simply tell you about myself. There will also be times, when I engage with the content that I am writing about, and that I show you my thoughts while at the same time demonstrate how I relate to the knowledge I am learning. I know it sounds a bit convoluted, but these notions of being and knowing are so entwined that at times, as Graveline (1998) and Wilson (2008) argue, they seem to be one. I elaborate on ways of knowing and being in Chapters Two and Three.

I bring with me an eclectic background of learning from my Western European education, from Elders of many Nations, my family and my community. I position myself as an Indigenous person with roots in the Cree nation, as a learner, as a scholar, as an early childhood educator, and as a storyteller for the purposes of sharing what I have learned from undertaking this study. This story does not belong to me alone. It belongs to those who work in First Nations and to those Tuhoe Maori early childhood programs and services,

serving their children and families in the hearts of their communities on a daily basis. It belongs to all those people who taught me through their participation with me in undertaking this work. It belongs to all my teachers for their time, kindness and patience with me as I struggled to learn. I am respectful and culturally accountable to all those individuals and communities who helped me undertake this study.

Culturally relating

I wish to acknowledge Shawn Wilson, Jo-ann Archibald, Graham Smith and Fyre Jean Graveline for providing me with examples of writing that resonate with my being.[5] So, if you find there are similarities in style or format, you are likely right. I mean that with the utmost respect for these Indigenous scholars. I stand with them and feel liberated in writing in a way that is congruent with my sense of being and coming to understand. As Louis[6] would say to me when he really wanted me to understand something, "you should try walking a mile in my moccasins." I am walking in their moccasins while at the same time finding my own.

I struggled with how to get my thoughts on paper – I could feel them in my being, but they never seemed to say what I really wanted them to say when I put them on paper. If I were a painter, then it would be easy; but I am not. I have spent many hours wondering how I could paint with words. It was only when I started to write to my son or to you the reader as if we were having a 'visit' while walking in the woods that I felt free and safe enough to put into words what I mean. In other words, I needed to feel as if we are in relationship. Thus, many parts of this dissertation are written in the first person or as personal stories. Personal stories will be identifiable through use of smaller font, indenting of

---

[5] I have only just recently come upon the writing of Shawn Wilson (2008) and seeing connections, revisited Fyre Jean's (1998) work. I also read Jo-ann Archibald's (2008) book, *Indigenous Storywork,* and revisited Graham Smith's (1997) dissertation.

[6] Louis Opekokew is a Cree Elder from the Canoe Lake First Nation in northwestern Saskatchewan. I spent many hours with him over several years, traveling throughout the territory and listening to his stories.

text, and use of 1.5 line spacing. Other parts of this dissertation are written in third person and more formally. There are times when I will engage with other scholars as if we are talking to each other, or I will share my thoughts and stories with you. You may also find that I revisit topics, I hope each time further describing, expanding and or explaining their nuances or application to my work. I was reminded by Wilson (2008) that sometimes explaining the context takes longer than what we are about to say, or we say more than what is needed (p. 7). Where this occurs – I deliberately do it to emphasize and restate important points – this is a cultural nuance that I believe is important. I note that Maori scholars often use this as deliberate methodology (Smith, 1999).

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

For all of those people who own this dissertation with me, who encouraged me, and who taught me so that I too could understand. Specifically I wish to acknowledge:

DEDICATION

>"From a perspective of identity and ultimately citizenship for young
>Aboriginal children, early childhood is a contested place, a place of struggle
>and a place of decolonization." (G. H. Smith, personal communication,
>spring, 2007)

This dissertation is dedicated to all those children whose lives we impact on a daily basis.

CHAPTER ONE

I Begin …

This dissertation is about articulating what comprises the 'good care' of young First Nations children. My primary argument is that Indigenous ways of knowing and being are integral factors relating to the 'good care' and education of young Indigenous children. This argument threads its way throughout the dissertation— in the literature review, the theory, the methodology, and as results that reveal the words of the people with whom I worked undertaking this study. My argument is discussed in relation to the broader ideas of colonial (Little Bear, 2000; Henderson, 2000; Graveline, 1998) and transformative (Archibald, 2008; Pihama, 2005; Battiste, 2002; G. H. Smith, 2002; L. T. Smith, 1999; Freire, 1970) discourses and set within multiple contexts. My discussions about the 'good care' of children are meant to respect and honor the diversity of these multiple contexts and realities and the distinctiveness of groups who live them. My discussions are also meant to understand that at times it is important for groups to come together as one in order to create social change. This notion of collective action has particular relevance when considering systemic and structural change relative to early childhood programs and services for First Nations children.

Chapter One is intended to address three primary purposes: first, to introduce the contents of this dissertation, second to position myself as a researcher, and third to begin situating this research in multiple contexts. I start this chapter by introducing the overarching questions of this research. I then situate myself as a researcher and offer contextual terms and constructs along with a glimpse of current day realities as expressed by the development of Aboriginal early childhood programs and services. This background

context leads to the rationale for this study. The remaining parts of this chapter introduce the theoretical and methodological approaches used in this study, which are elaborated upon in subsequent chapters, and identify potential contributions of this research. This chapter concludes with an introduction to the particular chapters that comprise this dissertation.

1.1   Research questions

This study examines early childhood programs[7] developed for First Nations children residing in specific First Nations communities located in the traditional Carrier territories of north-central British Columbia, Canada and in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of Aotearoa / New Zealand. The overall purpose of the study is to examine program structures, policies, and strategies used for the development and implementation of early childhood programs and services and their consistency with community aspirations for the 'good care'[8] of their children. This purpose may be articulated in three research questions:

1) What are some of the attributes that Indigenous peoples and communities identify as necessary for the 'good care' of their children?

2) How do government and community strategies and policies guide the development and implementation of First Nations-specific early childhood programs?

3) How can the development and implementation of Te Kohanga Reo in Aotearoa / New Zealand inform the development and implementation of early childhood programs and services within a framework for change in the Canadian context?

---

[7] For the purposes of this study, early childhood programs in Canada include the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative and the Aboriginal Head Start Program On Reserve Program, and in New Zealand refers to the Te Kohanga Reo initiative.
[8] The term "good care" of children evolved from the community, from parents, Elders and community members. They used this term when asked about the care of their children - "I take good care of my children." Used in this manner the term is broad and holistic encompassing many aspects of children's growth and development including their education.

These questions drive this research and are situated within a series of contexts and bodies of existing research and in their distinctiveness are guided by unique theoretical principles and research methodologies.

1.2   Situating Myself as a Researcher

As I wrote earlier in the prologue, much of this research has as its starting point concerns about ontology. In my case, this means knowing my own being. My view of reality (ontology) impacts all the decisions I made in undertaking this work, beginning with selecting the subject right through to conducting the research and then to writing the findings. Wilson (2008) writes about ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology relative to his study of Indigenous research paradigms. In this chapter, I focus on his explanation of ontology and epistemology. Wilson (2008) describes ontology as a process of being in relationship with other things in the world. It is not about *knowing the things,* but about knowing things by being in relationship with them. Ontology, then, is the act of *being in relationship* (p. 76). This is the 'being' component of Indigenous ways of knowing and being.

The 'knowing' part of Indigenous ways of knowing and being encapsulates the concept of epistemology. In explaining Indigenous epistemology, Wilson (2008) writes that:

> Indigenous epistemology has systems of knowledge built upon relationships between things rather than on the things themselves. ... It is important to recognize that the epistemology includes entire systems of knowledge and relationship. These relationships are with the cosmos around us, as well as with concepts, that form the key of Indigenous epistemology. ... Indigenous epistemology is our systems of knowledge in their context or in relationship. (p. 74)

I understand the relationship between ontology and epistemology as presented by Wilson best by comparing it with listening to Elders' stories. As a listener, I experienced being in relationship with the storyteller by hearing, feeling and imagining with them. Wilson would call this ontology. The 'knowing' part (or epistemology) came when I made sense of the spoken words and feelings in my mind and my heart – the knowledge is unique to me in this sense and as Wilson explains is derived from the context of relationship.

These systems of knowledge (epistemology) and relationship (ontology) are often collectively referred to as: Indigenous knowledge(s), Indigenous knowledge systems, and Indigenous ways of knowing and being or, in some cases, worldview(s). In this dissertation I interchangeably use the terms 'Indigenous knowledge(s)" and "Indigenous ways of knowing and being" and, though less frequently, "Indigenous knowledge systems." I revisit these concepts throughout this dissertation. For now, I turn to my own being. I engage with you, the reader, through a note to my son.

NOTES TO AARON

I am writing this note to you Aaron, as my eldest son. You have always wanted to know more about your roots, about your family and your history. I am also writing this note to you so that you will understand how I came to be in this place, in this time, doing this work. The journey of writing this dissertation has and continues to strengthen my understanding of myself and the topic I seek to learn about. It is in this relationship of learning that I position myself, by writing these notes to you about my learning. I also hope that readers of this dissertation will gain enough information about who I am so that they may enter into a relationship with me. We may then walk together through these written pages, describing, questioning, wondering and learning about the 'good care' of young Indigenous children.

I have not included my whole life history here but have chosen those pieces that I think are most relevant. And even as I write these memories, I am cognizant of always being in relationship as I learned and continue to learn from others, like you Aaron, and the world. This concept of relationships permeates my being so that these stories become important in you knowing and understanding my work. They

also illustrate my beliefs about reality – we live in a sea of relationships with each other, with the world and all that is in it. This view of reality then influences me throughout my life, including this study right down to why I chose my research question and what I did to learn about it. I will tell you more about this later. And so I begin.

I have lived all of my life in two worlds. I was born of an English mother and an Indian father in the years following World War II. That makes me a person of mixed blood by today's Canadian norm; using yesterday's, I would have been called a half-breed. Colonial legislation, even until present day, prescribes who is an Indian and who is not. This external determination of identity only serves to confuse and frustrate. Understanding this and the importance of identity to the cultural continuity of our people provides me, both personally and professionally, with the motivation to question our being in the world.

The early 1950s were times of change for Indian peoples in Canada. Service by Indian men and women in the military had raised awareness in all Canadians of the plight of Indian peoples in Canadian society. Major changes to the Indian Act occurred. Indian people were once again allowed to practice their rites and ceremonies such as the potlatches of the BC peoples and the sun dances of the prairie peoples. They could now go into professions, religious orders and participate in higher education without loss of status. This was the decade of my birth.

Some 80 years ago, my father was born in central Alberta in a Hudson's Bay tent pitched alongside the Battle River, a now old and meandering river with centuries of history embedded in its banks. My father's grandfather rode alongside those banks in the late 1850s. My great grandfather found his way into Alberta to what is now known as Edmonton. It was during this time that he changed his name to Greenwood, a direct translation of Boisvert. Northeast of Fort Edmonton, he met and married his first wife, Lettetia. Shortly after they married, his wife sold her status, including that of any descendents she might have, for 110 dollars at Fort Edmonton. This assimilation strategy was but one put in place by the Canadian colonial government to eradicate the Indian problem.

There were two children born to my great grandparents – my grandfather, Oliver, and his sister Claire. Great grandmother died shortly after Claire was born and Francois took the children to her parents. My great grandfather moved on and bought a farm outside of a small rural town in central Alberta. Once again he changed his name – this time to Larose. He married and settled down to farming

and raising his children. My grandfather never really associated with his father again, only periodically and only by chance.

My grandfather was raised by his grandparents until he was an adult. In those days people traveled around in wagons with all their belongings; this became the way of my grandfather, Oliver Greenwood. And when my grandfather married my Grandmother Caroline from the central Alberta area, they lived similarly, traveling and residing in many different places. In part this was due to seasonal employment – helping farmers plant in the spring and harvest in the fall. My father was the oldest surviving son along with three sisters born to my grandparents. During the school year my father and his sisters went to residential school. The residential schools, a colonial tool for the assimilation of Indian children, have had a lasting and powerful influence over the children's lives who attended these schools and the lives of generations to follow, including mine.

I have heard stories of the residential schools from the Elders. I have read about them in books but none has impressed upon me their impact as much as living the effects of them. It was during his years at the residential school that my father learned to speak "good English" and write "proper English." I still recall as a small child sitting at the kitchen table watching him write his name over and over on scraps of paper as if practicing his signature. He also learned he was not as good as other people. It was this internalized oppression that my brothers and I felt the most through his drinking and the family violence we experienced. These were the times that he would speak his language, although he never taught us.

My mother's family was second generation English Canadian who farmed in central Alberta. My mother eloped to marry my father. The prevailing attitudes of the time positioned Indians in a negative light, and sadly, many of these attitudes were shared by some of my mother's relatives. My grandmother died when her two daughters were very young, leaving my grandfather to care for them. Grandmother had one sister who lived nearby, but she was busy caring for her own family. By the time my two brothers and I came along, my grandfather was old, with two elderly sisters and their families, and only my grandmother's sister remained from my mother's family. We saw very little of them and virtually not at all after my mother died when I was 16. My childhood years with my mother's family were a series of contradictions and dilemmas: I quickly leaned how to act in different ways depending on who we were with. As I reflect on this now, I have some understanding of the contradictions my father and mother also tried to live with: my

Dad trying to be what he was not, leaving all sense of self and connection to his being behind, and my mother bound by the restrictive teachings of her family and the collective to which she belonged.

I was born in central Alberta in the land of rolling hills, meadows, and a meandering river, the same one my grandfather was born beside. I lived in a small house with my parents, and an older and younger brother. We were cared for and raised by my paternal grandfather for the first six years of our lives. My mother and father worked outside of our home, employed in menial jobs that allowed us to live just above the poverty line. My grandfather lived one block down the street from us in a two room converted cabin. Outside his home were old single stall stables where dray horses once resided. It was as if these old buildings were remnants of farm properties from days past. New homes and yards closed in on him. I used to imagine all sorts of stories about those buildings with heroes, villains and magical animals. My imaginary friend, Charlie Elson, was always with me. He was a constant in my early years, and then one day he just wasn't there any more.

Memories of my early days were filled with play with my brother and sometimes we would get Grandfather to chase us. He always gave us extra sugar on our cereal; Mom never did that. But most of all, I remember the stories he told us and while he was with us – there was a gentleness that flowed from his being. I felt it in his hands – a soft almost velvet touch that was always shared with love – and in his voice that was low and never loud. It was not until later years that I learned he was a very spiritual man who regularly partook in the ceremonies of our people. It was this spiritual peace and energy that flowed through him in his care of us. I recognized this energy in my friend and teacher, Mary Thomas, who I write about later in this dissertation.

As I grew, my days continued to be filled with adventures on the land, freedom to roam in the woods and along the river – to 'discover' flowers and plants that only grew there. These places of my ancestors were the paths along the river that I walked as a child. It is these memories that tie me to the place of my birth, my experiences and those of my ancestors. It was a gift to be able to grow up in the same place as my ancestors; for many children this is not the case.

As an adult I have been given the opportunity to reconnect myself with the teachings of my grandfather and father through the teachings of Elders and others. I recall my first visit to a Cree reserve where I was to spend the better part of five years working; I still remember that feeling of 'being home." It was almost like 'déjà

vu,' a sense of having been there before but not that exact location. The people joked and teased and laughed the way my father and my grandfather had. There was a feeling of caring and belonging. This is where I met Louis, a Cree Elder, with whom I worked developing an early childhood education program for his community and eight other nations comprising the Meadow Lake Tribal Council. I will never forget the first time I met Louis. We were at the first meeting of community members, us academics and the leadership of the tribal council to discuss the development of child care programs for the communities. I did my presentation from a very factual place – I really knew very little. I remember Louis coming to me afterwards and saying, "you must speak about those things you have experienced." I had not spoken from my personal experience but instead from an academic review of the literature about residential schools. That presentation had been so out of place and I will never forget the feeling and awareness of not knowing. Later after the meeting it was my friend Mary Rose, a community member who introduced me to Louis, who told me, "Louis chose to teach you."

As my relationship deepened with Louis over the years, he taught me a lot of things; he was my teacher and I was his student. One activity we undertook together was to develop a book of Elders' reflections on their childhood as a way of caring for children in the communities. As we visited with the Elders, he taught me the Cree protocols of being with Elders, of showing them respect. I also learned the importance of meeting face to face with people. We would sometimes travel three hours for a one hour visit. During these drives, Louis would tell me stories of the people and of the land – where families were from and differences between the communities or nations. He taught me how to read the land and about the medicines he gave me. After nearly five years together, I chose to move to a new position and could no longer regularly travel to Meadow Lake. We maintained our relationship over the telephone and through sporadic visits. Later, after my move, I met Elder Mary Thomas whom I was to spend many years learning from. I remember telling Louis about her and him saying, "it is time to move on and to learn from her." He was right. Soon after that he passed away. Even though he is gone, his teachings continue to guide my thinking and my being.

Mary Thomas and I taught together for two years on her home reserve in Swecpmec territory. She taught the culture and I taught the academics. We traveled together to and from work, and it was on these drives each day that she told me stories, traditional stories, stories from her mother and grandmother, and stories of

her life journey. She took me to the mountains and taught me the names for the plants and the lake in all its variations. It was during these early years together that she asked me to write down her stories so that they would not be lost. She wanted to preserve her teachings – she wanted to leave them for others to learn from. Over the next 12 years I recorded her words. She left before we put the words into a book. My years with her taught me a lot, and I hold those teachings in my heart, in my memory and in my being.

I have been blessed to have so many teachers in my life. Sometimes I think they were given to me to carry on what my grandfather and father taught me in my childhood. When I think of it now, I have been gathering up beads of learning my whole life. As I gather these teachings, I sew them together with my experiences so that most importantly Aaron, you will know your place and your connection in the world. You will find a beaded drawing that presents in art my thinking about the 'good care' of children. This drawing illustrates a way of seeing, and builds upon the works of Indigenous scholars (including Wilson's work on research relationality and accountability) and upon the voices of community. The drawing depicts the centrality of relationship and beliefs or principles (respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility) that maintain and strengthen it. I do not mean to say that these are the only principles that exist. These principles are ones that I have lived, I have read about, and that others use too. These pages tell you about my journey and what I have learned. I look forward to walking with you.

Reflecting on my experience reminded me of words such as 'fragmented past', 'shattered past', 'jagged worldviews,' and all those words that convey the idea of disrupted realities; realities disrupted by a colonial history rooted in imperialism. I did not write the history of colonization in the Americas in this dissertation; others such as Frideres (1998), Miller (1991; 1996), and Tobias (1991) have written this. I do, however, explore certain colonial constructs within the next section, the cognitive impact of colonization in Chapter Two, and colonialism from a policy development perspective in Chapter Five. The following section begins building the context in which this research sits, a context influenced by and embedded in the colonial experience.

1.3 Critical constructs

This section presents special constructs that form a part of the foundation upon which this dissertation sits. Understanding this foundation is linked to the comprehension of many ideas and concepts presented in this dissertation. I begin by offering ideas around eight key constructs: worldview, culture, imperialism, colonization, Eurocentrism, diffusionism, universalism, and hegemony.

1.3.1 Worldview

An important construct in this dissertation is worldview. Graveline (1998) presents worldview as collective consciousness. She draws upon Merchant (1989), writing that consciousness encompasses one's thoughts, feelings and impressions along with an awareness of one's acts and volitions (p. 18). Graveline argues that "consciousness is both individual and group and is shaped by both environment and culture" (p. 18). Worldview thus encompasses the concepts of epistemology and ontology, of methodology and axiology, and takes into account the experience of individuals within the collective: "… worldviews lend form, direction and continuity to life … (Graveline, 1998, p. 19). This term is, in some instances, used interchangeably with Indigenous philosophies, Indigenous knowledge(s) or Indigenous knowledge systems.

1.3.2 Culture

The second construct presented here is culture. Little Bear (2000) describes culture as "a society's philosophy about the nature of reality [ontology], the values that flow from this philosophy, and the social customs that embody these values" (p. 77). Culture is both individual and collective. As Little Bear explains, an individual may interpret his/her

collective cultural code, but their worldview is rooted in the culture of the collective (p. 77). Graveline (1998) argues that cultures exist "in history and are constantly self-creating by the necessity to respond to given conditions" (p. 20). As such, culture is subject to influences of domination and may itself be a tool of resistance (p. 21).

1.3.3   Imperialism and colonization

Imperialism and colonization are constructs of interest to colonized peoples around the world. Edward Said (1993) defines imperialism as "the practice, the theory and the attitudes of a dominating metropolitan centre ruling a distant territory; colonialism which is almost always a consequence of imperialism, is the implanting of settlements on distant territory" (p. 9). Smith (1999) writes "imperialism frames the indigenous experience" (p. 19). In this experience lies an underlying assumption that has impacted Indigenous peoples throughout the non-European world, the notion of defining who was human and who was not. Smith (1999) found this idea of defining humanity common to imperial discourses long before Europeans arrived in the Americas. She writes that imperialism:

> provided the means through which concepts of what counts as human could be applied systematically through forms of classification, for examples through hierarchies and typologies of different societies. In conjunction with imperial power and with science these classification systems came to shape relations between imperial powers and Indigenous societies. (p.25)

Since the 19th Century, "processes of dehumanization were often hidden behind justifications for imperialism and colonialism which were clothed within an ideology of humanism and liberalism and the assertion of moral claims which related to a concept of civilized man" (Smith, 1999, p. 26). As a result, colonized people have had to define their humanity. The challenge in doing so is the binary relationship that exists between the colonizer and the colonized, the dualities that underlie and epitomize Eurocentric thought

(p. 26). This concept of duality is evidenced in W.E.B. DuBois' (1969) 'double consciousness' where those who are colonized assert their humanity, which is then rejected by those who are the colonizers imposing their own universal norms (p.45). In *Ayukpachi: Empowering Aboriginal Thought*, Henderson (2000a) writes "to acquire freedom ... the colonized must break their silence and struggle to retake possession of their humanity and dignity (p. 249).

With the same foundations of historicism and colonization as Smith (1999), Henderson (2000b) maps the British 17th Century construct of the state of nature and its role within the eventual emergence of the artificial construct of colonialism. Henderson uses Thomas Kuhn's science paradigm shifts, and Roberto Unger's social science concept of the natural (a context in which people are allowed to move about freely and discover everything about the world they can) and artificial contexts (a context built upon assumptions that form a picture of what the world is 'really' like) as the lens through which he examines the work of 17th and 18th Century European philosophers, Thomas Hobbes and John Locke. According to Henderson, Hobbes' artificial man state, born out of a view of European man as brutish, fearful, and poor, and driven by their desires and passions for things, demanded that individuals surrender their rights to a sovereign in return for safety and protection. Locke, as recorded by Henderson, however, believed all natural rights, that is, the right to life, liberty, and property, including recognition of material supports and comforts, had to be transferred to an artificial man-state in order for there to be civil society. Locke's concept of individual rights, particularly property rights, provided a rationale for the creation of societies and commonwealths whose purpose was, and continues to be, property preservation (Henderson, 2000b).

Henderson (2000b) writes that Locke believed the state of nature, that is, man living in his natural state, could be found in the Americas but not in Europe and Asia where they had already progressed into a different age. Despite Locke's belief in the concept of natural rights, he never applied them to the Indigenous peoples of the Americas (Henderson, 2000b). Henderson (2000b) writes that Locke's belief in different ages, coupled with his vision of a political or civil society, as determined by two basic criteria: man's desire and European institutions, was used to justify European settlement of the Americas. It was on this basis, Henderson asserts, that immigrants to the Americas rationalized the development of the self-serving and artificial construct of colonialism. Likewise, Henderson (2000b) claims that by understanding the historical development of this artificial context, "Indigenous peoples can understand how to inspire alternative contexts to end the domination and oppression that are the residues of colonialism" (p.14).

1.3.4 Eurocentrism, diffusionism and universalism

Eurocentrism, diffusionism and universalism are colonial constructs deconstructed by Henderson (2000c) and others. Henderson explores the artificial construct of colonialism in *Postcolonial Ghost Dancing: Diagnosing European Colonialism* by examining "Eurocentrism, the cognitive legacy of colonization" (p. 58). Eurocentrism may be described as "a cognitive force of artificial European thought, a differentiated consciousness ever changing in its creativity to justify the oppression and domination of contemporary Indigenous peoples and their spiritual guardians" (p. 58). Henderson defines Eurocentrism as "the imaginative and institutional context that informs contemporary scholarship, opinion, and law. … [I]t postulates the superiority of Europeans and non-Europeans" (p. 21). Graveline (1998), drawing upon Blaut (1993), defines Eurocentrism as "a label for all the beliefs, covert and expressed, that propose and/or reinforce past or present superiority of Europeans over non-

Europeans" (p.23). Smith (1999) analyzes this notion of superiority from within the construct of modernity. She contends that:

> the nexus between cultural ways of knowing, scientific discoveries, economic impulses and imperial power enabled the West to make ideological claims to having a superior civilization. The 'idea' of the West [and its assumption of superiority] became a reality when it was re-presented back to Indigenous nations through colonialism. (p. 64)

These descriptions, definitions and discussions of Eurocentrism share a common thread, that being the superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans as a way to justify their continued oppression of non-European peoples.

Further examination of Eurocentrism reveals artificial assumptions and attributes that serve to justify and maintain a context of superiority, including the concepts of diffusionism and universalism. Battiste and Henderson's (2000) deconstruction of Eurocentrism reveals two assumptions that underlie the concept of diffusionism, writing that "(1) most human communities are uninventive, and (2) a few human communities (or places or cultures) are inventive and are thus permanent centers of cultural change and progress" (p. 21). This duality of ideas places Europeans in the centre with non-Europeans outside of the centre. Battiste and Henderson (2000) argue that:

> [it is] from this framework ... that diffusionism asserts that European peoples are superior to Indigenous peoples. This superiority is based on some inherent characteristic of the European mind or spirit and because non-European peoples lack this characteristic, they are empty, or partly so, of ideas and proper spiritual values. (p. 21)

Battiste and Henderson (2000) apply the concept of diffusionism on a global scale to illustrate the idea of superiority over other nations and cultures that occurred in the name of progress. According to them, Europeans believed that any progress made by non-European peoples is a result of civilized European ideas influencing them. Europeans did not grasp the notion that ideas flow both ways. In other words, non-European cultures were paid for

their civilizing ideas with natural resources from the land (Battiste and Henderson, 2000).

When one considers Indigenous knowledge(s), the concept of the 'other' (created in part by diffusionism) has no place. Yet, as a colonized people, we experience all the constructs of Eurocentric thought. The implications of Eurocentrism on us are profound, thus our need to contradict, create, maintain, and revive our own ways of being and knowing.

In *Postcolonial Ghost Dancing*, Henderson (2000c) argues that universalism, as an aspiration of domination over others, is simply another aspect of diffusionism. The nature of universalism is to test everything against universal good, thus creating universal truths, virtues, and values (p. 63). This notion of universality may also encompass the concept of singularity where, according to Little Bear (2000), this Eurocentric construct is exemplified by one right way as evidenced by one true God. Likewise, Little Bear asserts this assumption which leads to specialized topics in the academy, the need for specialists in society, and the development of a class structure.

Henderson (2000c) explains that universalism can create cultural and cognitive imperialism whereby European ways are held up as the norm, and differences of the dominated are created by the dominator. He claims that it is this binary consciousness that justifies separating Indigenous peoples from their rights to land, their beliefs, their ceremonies, and ultimately, from themselves. Little Bear (2000) terms this notion of separation as fragmentation, a world of fragmented realities exemplifying a Western European value system.

1.3.5 Hegemony

The final construct presented in this section is hegemony. Gramsci (1971), an Italian Marxist thinker, developed the theory of hegemony to explain why exploited groups accept the existing social order. He argued that domination was not dependent of the actual machinery

of the state, but on a prevalent mode of thought that protects the existing social order by convincing the whole of society that this mode is the norm. A group must achieve both hegemony in civil society and state power in political society, ultimately presenting itself as both civil and political society (p. 263). As a result there is "no hegemony without state power; no state power without hegemony" (Day, 2005, p. 63). A Eurocentric hegemony is particularly evident in the academy.

The writings of Indigenous scholars in academe have served as sites of resistance in a variety of disciplines. This has not been without its challenges. As Graveline (1998) writes:

> to openly acknowledge the hegemony of Eurocentrism as a belief system is
> controversial. Challenging Western cultural hegemony means acknowledging
> that for centuries Westerners have studied and spoken 'on behalf of' the rest
> of the world: the reverse has not been the case. (p. 32)

Maori scholar, Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999), advises that in order to understand Indigenous knowledge(s) we need to begin by critiquing Western history for how we are (or are not) included and how we are represented in it. She contends that history is not about truth but about power and justice, and that as long as we are being "othered" (as presented in Said's 1993 work), we do not have the power to change history. Nonetheless, Smith maintains that we must look to "re-righting and re-writing" our position in history so that someday we may realize our own ways of being and knowing (p. 28). Considerable attention has been given by Indigenous scholars to this history, that is, to imperialism and its constituent parts, including concepts of: dehumanization (Smith, 1999), Eurocentrism (Henderson, 2000c), diffusionism, and universalism (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Little Bear, 2000), and linear views of time and space (Little Bear, 2000; Smith, 1999).

Some Indigenous scholars examine the concept of cognitive assimilation. Little Bear (2000) contends that Indigenous scholars have acquired skills and training in academies that

serve to perpetuate Eurocentric thought. Once Indigenous peoples have internalized this knowledge and it becomes part of their being, there is no need for the typical Eurocentric external controls (Little Bear, 2000); assimilation is complete. The generational impact of residential schools attests to such cognitive assimilation (Haig-Brown, 1991).

In a related argument concerning cognitive assimilation, Smith (1999) writes of the process that Indigenous scholars must engage in order to participate in the academy. She draws upon the work of Franz Fanon (1963) to highlight two significant concerns: one addresses those "native intellectuals [who] may have become estranged from their own cultural values to the point of being embarrassed by, and hostile towards, all that those values represented" (p. 70). The second concern brings to attention those Indigenous intellectuals who have been named by the "dominant non-indigenous population as individuals who represent 'real' leadership . . . they are idealized as 'saviours of the people'" (p. 70). Smith explains that:

> [There are] three levels through which 'native' intellectuals can progress in their journey 'back over the line'. First there is a phase of proving that intellectuals have been assimilated into the culture of the occupying power. Second comes a period of disturbance and the need for the intellectuals to remember who they actually are, a time for remembering the past. In the third phase the intellectuals seek to awaken the people, to realign themselves with the people and to produce a revolutionary and national literature. (p. 70)

Based on decades of experience with research and graduate training, Bonnie Duran and Eduardo Duran (2000) claim "the study of colonized people must take on a 'lactification' or whitening in order for the knowledge to be palatable to the academy" (p. 86). They argue that "the consequences of such cross-cultural production of knowledge have been ongoing epistemic colonialism within the discipline of psychology" (p. 86). The probability of this being any different for other disciplines seems unlikely. This whitening of Indigenous knowledge(s) by the academy forces one to question the wisdom of bringing

Indigenous knowledge(s) into the academy. There is a need to teach others about Indigenous knowledge(s) so that they too can understand who we are and may act as allies in our struggle for self-determination and self-sufficiency. Yet, when one considers our history and current day realities, it is scarcely a wonder that there is skepticism of the academy and its ability to act ethically and with integrity when it comes to the knowledge(s) of non-European peoples.

In her discussion of academic writing, Smith (1999) poses questions that are used by communities in a variety of ways in areas such as policy making, curriculum development, and research. These questions include: who is writing?, for whom is the writing?, and in what circumstances is this writing taking place? (p. 37). From my place as an Indigenous scholar, there are many times when I have to defend my existence using the tools of the academy. This writing also depends on for whom and what I am writing. This ability to participate in the world of the academy (without loosing your self) and in the community is, I believe, an important skill, and one that takes time and reflexivity to achieve to greater or lesser degrees. Questions of identity and authenticity are also ones that find their way into these discussions primarily because of our forced need to assert or defend our existence. In doing so, it is easy to fall into a trap of essentialism, reducing existence to essential elements. There are also times when it is strategic to identify specific elements common to the collective, particularly in political arenas. Smith's (1999) discussion of essentialism is particularly helpful in this instance. She explains that:

> The concept of essentialism is ... discussed in different ways with the indigenous world. It is accepted as a term that is related to humanism and is seen therefore in the same way as the idea of authenticity. In this use of the word, claiming essential characteristics is as much strategic as anything else, because it has been about claiming human rights and indigenous rights. But the essence of a person is also discussed in relation to indigenous concepts of spirituality. In these views, the essence of a person has a genealogy [that] can be traced back to an earth parent, usually glossed as an Earth Mother. A

human person does not stand alone, but shares with other animate and, in the Western sense, 'inanimate' beings, a relationship based on a shared 'essence' of life. The significance of place, of land, of landscape, of other things in the universe, in defining the very essence of a people, makes for a very different rendering of the term essentialism as used by indigenous peoples (p. 74).

Smith (1999) argues that Indigenous worldviews based on spirituality are difficult for Western systems to accept. Spirituality "is one of the few parts of ourselves [that] the West cannot decipher, cannot understand and cannot control ... yet" (p. 74).

Acceptance of alternative knowledge(s) paves the way for breaking down colonizing power structures that serve to maintain one group's power over another. Part of the challenge for Indigenous peoples is to look within to see the impact of colonization on their distinct ways of knowing and being so that the causes of fragmentation and dissonance are not unwittingly perpetuated. Overcoming these colonial influences is challenging with answers and solutions found not in government programs or outside of the collective but from within ourselves, in our ways of knowing and being. This study is one doorway through which to articulate Indigenous ways for our children and resist Eurocentric thought, and in doing so position it within resistance and transformation discourse.

1.4   A glimpse of the social, political and health contexts of early childhood education

It is impossible to understand any contemporary Indigenous issue without acknowledging the impact of colonization on all aspects of our lives; this is no less true of First Nations early childhood programs and services and practices. It is generally argued that, as a result of colonization, Indigenous peoples were stripped of power and authority over even the basic necessities of life. Policies and laws developed by European colonizers drove the cultural assimilation process just as it continues to drive present day Indian policy, including policies

concerning early childhood programs and services for young First Nations children (Greenwood & Shawana, 2002). Current Aboriginal and First Nations-specific demographics in Canada testify to the impact of colonization and suggest the current social and economic context of Aboriginal early childhood care and education, for example, First Nations people (North American Indians) have unemployment rates more than double that of non-Aboriginal Canadians at rates of 18% and 6.3% respectively (2006, Census Canada). In British Columbia, First Nations People (North American Indians) show higher incidences of unemployment at 18% when compared with British Columbia's overall average unemployment rate of 6.0% (Government of Canada, 2008).

Similar disparities are found with respect to average incomes and education rates. In 2005, the non-Aboriginal population had an average income of $35934 compared to $23935 for Aboriginal people (Government of Canada, 2008). Furthermore, almost one half (43.67%) of the Aboriginal population in Canada have less than high school graduation compared to 23.10% for non-Aboriginal peoples (Government of Canada, 2008). This difference is likewise mirrored in British Columbia with 38.99% of Aboriginal peoples and 19.06% of non-Aboriginal British Columbians having less than grade 12 (Government of Canada, 2008). Only 4.12% of Aboriginal peoples have a Bachelor's Degree while 11.9% of non-Aboriginal Canadians have a Bachelor's degree (2006, Census Canada). Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia are below the national Aboriginal rate for Bachelor's degrees at 3.62% while non-Aboriginal British Columbians are above the national rate at 12.61% (Government of Canada, 2008). This disparity in educational attainment means the skill levels of the jobs that are available to Aboriginal peoples, including First Nations peoples residing on reserve in British Columbia and across Canada, are considerably lower than those available to non-Aboriginal people.

Beyond British Columbia, national statistics illustrating Aboriginal incarceration rates

and care of children by the state paint an equally inequitable picture for Aboriginal peoples,

particularly North American Indians, when compared to the non-Aboriginal population.

While Aboriginal people make up only 4% percent of the overall Canadian population, they

account for 18.5 percent of the federal prison population (Government of Canada, 2008).

According to Statistics Canada 2006 data, while the overall incarceration rate for non-

Aboriginal people is 117 per 100,000 adults, the overall incarceration rate for Aboriginal

people in Canada is estimated to be 1,024 per 100,000 — or almost 9 times higher for

Aboriginal persons (Government of Canada, 2006).

Since the 1960s the number of Aboriginal children in care of child welfare authorities

has increased over the decades until today when "less than 5% of children in Canada are

Aboriginal, yet Aboriginal children comprise approximately 40% of the total number of

children in care" (Trocme, et.al. 2004, p. 3). Along with these social statistics are health

statistics that likewise evidence gaps between Aboriginal peoples in British Columbia

compared to non-Aboriginal peoples. For example,

> Status Indians are more likely to die before age 75 from any cause compared
> to other BC residents. However the differences are particularly marred for
> what are call external causes of death, i.e. motor vehicle accidents, accidental
> poisonings, suicides, homicides, as well as causes of heart disease, cirrhosis
> and HIV disease. ... These gaps are also evident in number of teenage
> mothers with Status Indian teen mothers at 16.3% compared to 2.4% of
> other BC residents (Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2007, pp. 8-9).

1.5   An introduction to Aboriginal early childhood programs

An equally important context for this research is present day realities, particularly the

development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs and services in Canada.

Formalized early childhood programs offered to young First Nations, Inuit and Métis

children in Canada may be considered places of revitalization and transformation. Although not implemented with this intent in mind, these programs, just a decade old, are an impetus for reflection and discussion, for imagining and articulating the care and education of First Nations children. In examining the development of these programs and services, First Nations' children cannot be extricated from their place as Indigenous people in Canada's colonial and colonizing history, nor can they be disentangled from the current socio-economic indicators which dictate the everyday realities of First Nations peoples in this country. These contexts are elaborated on in Chapter Five of this dissertation. The following paragraphs begin that discussion.

The mid-1990s in Canada saw the development of formalized early childhood programs specifically for Aboriginal children through two key federal government programs: the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative and the Aboriginal Head Start Program. These programs were developed in a context of national and international political pressures; dismal demographics pertaining to Aboriginal health, social, education and economic factors; and an obvious historic and contemporary inequity of programs and services between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian society. In 1994, the then Minister of Human Resources Development Canada, Lloyd Axworthy, announced as part of his broader employment strategy the development of the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative designed to provide formalized child care services for children aged 0-6 years residing on reserve whose parents were either employed or furthering their education. The following year, the Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Program, an early intervention program designed to meet the needs of at-risk children, was announced for children aged 0-6 residing in large, urban and northern communities. This program was expanded in 1998 to children and families residing on reserve.

The scope of these programs is of interest given the limitations it places on actual implementation. For example, the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative is targeted to families with parents that are either working or enrolled in education programs, while children in need of intervention are targeted in the Head Start Program. This scope and subsequent limitations are often based on perceptions of deficit derived from comparisons with non-Aboriginal children who have different cultural, historical and economic contexts or are designed to parallel those of Canadian society. For example, these differences are particularly evident in social determinants discourse (WHO, 2008; Assembly of First Nations, 2006). Unfortunately, these comparisons are often used to demonstrate need and are positioned as a deficit. The subsequent perceptions that arise mask the unique strengths of communities and in some cases are equated to individual inadequacy.

With the announcement of the National Children's Agenda (1997) and the subsequent federal/provincial/territorial Early Childhood Development Agreements (2000), considerably more attention has been given to formalized early childhood programs and services for young children and, in particular, Aboriginal children. However, it is important to note that Aboriginal peoples have never independently developed programs or services specifically for Aboriginal children; rather all initiatives have been a part of, or carved out of, a larger political agenda and strategy.

Early childhood programs and services (that is, the First Nations Inuit Child Care Program and the Aboriginal Head Start Program) for First Nations children residing on reserve in Canada are funded by the federal government, adhere to common principles and components, are evaluated on these principles and components, and in the majority of cases comply to provincial child care standards and regulations. These programs, for the most part, are not owned or controlled by Aboriginal people, nor do the programs themselves

balance Indigenous knowledge(s), culture, and language with that of Canadian society. Overall, much more emphasis is placed on achieving goals and objectives derived from outside the Aboriginal community and outside of an Indigenous worldview. I participated in the development of these programs and services and it is about this experience that I write in Chapter Five.

NOTES TO AARON

I am writing you this second note so that you can appreciate how I came to be involved in the development and implementation of Aboriginal early childhood programs and services. It was during my time with Louis and Mary that I furthered my education and kept working. I met Louis while I was doing my Master's degree at the University of Victoria. My Master's research focused on early childhood as well. It was a quantitative study that looked at parental preferences in child care services. As I think back now, I realize that my focus has not really changed but has deepened as I have learned over my lifetime.

It was also while I was undertaking my degree that I was invited to work with Alan Pence, my MA supervisor, on the development and implementation of an Indian child care program with the Meadow Lake Tribal Council (MLTC) located in northwestern Saskatchewan. There were (and still are as far as I know) nine First Nations who comprise the Tribal Council – four Dene nations and five Cree. This is where I met Louis. I was to undertake a review of the literature that focused on programs and practices in early childhood for First Nation peoples, including effective teaching strategies for Indigenous adult learners. I struggled with this. It was difficult to find information pertaining to Indigenous-specific early childhood programs and practices. We worked with the community as we struggled to develop principles that would guide us on the path we were taking together. One challenge we faced at the university, as the developers of the curriculum for an early childhood program for the people of MLTC, was how to engage the knowledge in the community with the knowledge of mainstream early childhood philosophy and practice. This question became the genesis for what is now called the 'generative curriculum' model where information is generated from the students and the teacher together. This response was generated out of a recognition and respect for the

knowledge(s) of the people and from a desire to ensure that those knowledge(s) were incorporated into the teaching of the students. Community Elders and resource people were thus engaged as co-instructors of the classes. As I reflect back on this experience, with the learning I have now, I would ask whether or not the knowledge(s) we sought to teach were equally valued or attended to? Was the content and ways in which the courses were delivered relevant to the students and ultimately to the children? Did this total experience support community aspirations for self determination? Only the community could respond to these questions.

With my Master's degree completed, I moved to Vernon, British Columbia and began teaching at the local community college in the early childhood department on a one year contract. Upon completion of the contract the following year, I secured a second one year contract, this time teaching adult basic education with Mary Thomas in a one room log cabin on Neskonlith # 3 Reserve just outside of the town of Salmon Arm, British Columbia. The rest you know.

What is important about this time, and continues to be important in my life, are the teachings given to me by Louis and Mary and my experiences in the communities, including my involvement in the development of the Aboriginal Head Start Program Urban and Northern Program, Aboriginal Head Start Program and the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative. I learned many lessons participating in these developmental activities. I was invited to participate on national 'expert' advisory committees for these programs with the purpose of providing advice concerning the development of program frameworks and implementation strategies. These activities caused me to reflect upon my actions and the responsibility I carried sitting at those tables. I tell you more about this in Chapter Five.

1.6   Rationale

It was during a time when community members had gathered together in the development of the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative that an Elder asked me, "Are you sure we are not establishing residential schools in the hearts of our communities for children younger than I was when I first went to those schools?" I felt the weight of responsibility, a responsibility to the people and to myself to ensure that I did not contribute to an initiative

that would in any way repeat the devastation of the past. More than a decade and a half later, I continue to reflect upon the Elder's question. I reflect on the development and establishment of early childhood programs designed to serve First Nations children in Canada. I have also come to believe that in order stave off assimilation and resist continued colonization, Indigenous peoples must be self determining over their lives and the lives of their children. This dissertation is in part that reflection and in part commitment to continued resistance. As I wrote earlier in this chapter, I reflect upon the role of federal government processes and policies and their impact on the care and education of young children in First Nations communities. Despite overarching program principles that articulate local service control, government policies and processes continue to play a significant role in the actual development, implementation, evaluation, and funding of local programs. As a result, First Nations communities have limited and restricted decision-making power in the development and implementation of early childhood programs for their children. One strategy to addressing this reality is to look to other Indigenous groups – as we strive for First Nations-specific early childhood programs in Canada.

The Maori Kohanga Reo (language nests) movement offers such a place. Te Kohanga Reo began with the people and is implemented by the people with structures and curricula that reflect their own ways of knowing and being, their own communities, and their own languages and cultures. The impetus for formalizing the teaching of the language to the children was to abate the decline of Maori language and culture. In doing so, Maori peoples strategically positioned themselves for realizing ownership over the education of their children. There is much to be learned from the Maori experience that may be applicable and support the growth and development of early childhood programs for Aboriginal children residing in Canada. However, one must take into account obvious geographic, historical, and

cultural differences. These distinct experiences of Maori and Aboriginal peoples are conceptualized as sources of learning in this study. Structural elements of programs and services, including philosophical underpinnings, are examined. It is this place of philosophy where commonalities amongst Indigenous people exist and offer opportunities to examine actualization in diverse cultures and locales.

1.7   Theoretical approach

The theoretical principles underpinning this study are anchored in Indigenous knowledge(s) and as such serve to position the research within a discourse of resistance. Indigenous scholars have been arguing for the centrality of Indigenous ways of knowing and being and are adamant in not opting for post colonial theories (Pihama, 2005; Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). Maori scholar, Leonie Pihama (2005) argues that Maori people have engaged in multiple forms of intervention and resistance as part of a wider struggle against colonialism, and that Kaupapa Maori[9] is a source of culturally defined theoretical spaces for explaining Maori experiences. For example, on a recent trip to Saskatchewan I was reintroduced to the teachings of the tipi put forth by Cree Elders. These teachings represent the hundreds of years of understanding and experience both from the metaphysical as well as the physical worlds. These teachings may be conceptualized as principles, as beliefs, and as values. The principles are physically represented by the poles, the ties, and the pins of the tipi. They are the framework upon which the shelter is built. The principles of the tipi include obedience, respect, humility, happiness, love, faith, kinship, cleanliness, thankfulness, sharing, strength,

---

[9] In her arguments Pihama begins with a quote from Tukana Mate Nepe, "E hao new I tenei reanga: Te Toi Huarewa Tupuna" an unpublished MA thesis, University of Auckland:

> Maori society has its own distinctive knowledge base. This knowledge base has its origins in the metaphysical realm and emanates as a Kaupapa Maori, a "body of knowledge" accumulated by experiences through history of the Maori people. This Kaupapa Maori knowledge is the systematic organization of beliefs, experiences, understandings and interpretations of the interactions of Maori people upon Maori people and Maori people upon their world.

good child rearing, hope, protection, and honor. At the heart, then, of Indigenous research is Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the world. These Indigenous principles which reflect Indigenous ways of knowing and being may be seen to underpin Indigenous theories and methodologies. Indigenous ways, then, become sites of resistance through their articulation and application to different spheres of our world. There are however cautions that go along with this articulation. Michelle Pidgeon (2008) cautions us to be aware of power differentials between the marginalized that push against the hegemonic norm. Often times Indigenous knowledge(s) are viewed as anti-theoretical and further marginalized. The very act of writing maintains a style of those in power, while caution must also be taken when knowledge(s) themselves are in venues that may allow for misappropriation and misinterpretation.

The theoretical principles of this study are drawn from Cree ways of knowing and being, principles first proposed as a coherent interrelated set of principles by Cree scholar Verna Kirkness and Ray Barnhardt (1991). They are: respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility (the 4Rs). I discuss these principles in Chapter Two. In that chapter I also provide an illustration meant as a visual aid to understanding the way in which I organized the principles and how understanding them explains 'what I did' and 'how I did it'.

1.8   Research approach

Research paradigms are also sites of resistance to colonial hegemony. I borrow from the work of Shawn Wilson's (2008) Indigenous Research Paradigm work for articulating the methodology and methods employed in this research study. This paradigm, along with those of others, focuses on Indigenous peoples and places their ontologies and epistemologies at the heart of the paradigms. Specifically, Wilson maintains that Indigenous paradigms are

underpinned by a specific set of beliefs or assumptions that serve to guide a researcher's actions. He argues that these sets of beliefs are interrelated concepts of ontology, epistemology, axiology, and methodology. In this section I am most concerned with Wilson's concept of methodology which he presents as the question: "How do I find out more about this reality?" (p. 34).

Wilson (2008) argues that methodology is based on the ontological and epistemological assumptions of a research study and serves to guide the research. In this research project, the four Rs of Indigenous knowing are the theoretical principles underpinning the method and methodology. The methodology identifies the goal of the research while how that goal is achieved is left to what Wilson (2008) refers to as strategies of inquiry. These strategies direct the implementation of the study methods. Wilson argues that "as long as the methods fit the ontology, epistemology and axiology of the Indigenous paradigm [or approach], they can be borrowed from other suitable research paradigms" (p. 39). Yet he is adamant that dominant paradigms of research must be left behind in favor of Indigenous paradigms; in other words, the philosophical base of Indigenous paradigms must not be compromised.

In this research I employ a descriptive case study as a strategy that can "accommodate a variety of disciplinary perspectives, as well as philosophical perspectives on the nature of research itself" (Merriam, 1988, p. 2). Merriam, like Wilson, also warns against developing conclusions derived from different research paradigms. Stake (2000) maintains that case studies also offer stylistic options (such as writing the report as a story) that allow readers to formulate generalizations, including interactions of the researcher along with significant descriptions of contexts. Ultimately, case studies are "both a process of inquiry and the product of that inquiry" (Stake, 2000, p. 436).

This study examines two cases, from a philosophical and structural perspective. The study does not contrast specific program implementation strategies and activities; each case has a unique context from which flow their implementation strategies. I also undertook two case studies for the purpose of learning from each in order to lay the ground work for change to occur in the development of early childhood programs and services for young First Nations children in Canada. One case study focuses on two Carrier First Nations in northern British Columbia, Canada and another focuses on two Tuhoe Maori Kohanga Reo sites located on the North Island of Aotearoa / New Zealand.

I used multiple sources of data and qualitative methods of data collection consistent with the values inherent in Indigenous ways of knowing and being. Data collection methods included individual interviews, focus groups, and document and audio-visual reviews. Community mentors/guides directed me through appropriate protocols and community ethics processes. A primary source of data was through 'visiting' with key informants and focus groups conducted in two Carrier and two Tuhoe Maori settings. These interviews and discussions were conducted in the presence of community advisors. In-depth key informant interviews and focus groups were conducted in two Carrier communities within the BC region of Canada. In Aotearoa / New Zealand, key informant interviews and focus groups were also undertaken in two Tuhoe Maori settings. In addition to these data collection methods, relevant documents (including narratives and policies) were also used as a source of data. Locating relevant documents and analyzing them were likewise important considerations in employing this strategy of data collection. Thematic, policy and narrative analyses of primary and secondary data provide the foundation for this analysis and interpretation, and ultimately in the presentation of the results. Taken together, these primary and secondary sources of data allow a close up examination and analysis of the

intricate phenomenon underlying early childhood programs for Indigenous children.

1.9   Contributions of this research

This research has the potential to make several contributions to the future of Aboriginal children in Canada. First, it may be used to inform the future design of First Nations specific early childhood programs and services for young First Nations children. Secondly, this study contributes to the limited body of Indigenous specific research literature focused on young First Nations children available in Canada. Third, this dissertation may inform specific policies and practices affecting Aboriginal children's lives and the lives of their families. Fourth and most importantly, this dissertation will provide Aboriginal communities with a base upon which to build, change, and adapt as they engage in formalizing the care and education of their children. In this way, the dissertation becomes a living legacy for community – it is a documentation of their words and mine.

1.10   Sequence of this dissertation

I began this dissertation with a prologue intended to explain to you, the reader, how to read this dissertation. My intent is to assist you with its readability and ultimately your understanding. An opening story follows to position the dissertation in the personal as well as academic context. From here the dissertation is organized into eight chapters.

Chapter One, "I Begin … " introduces the contents of this dissertation, positions myself as a researcher, and begins situating the research in multiple contexts. The chapter introduces the overarching questions and offers critical constructs along with a glimpse of current day realities as expressed in the development of Aboriginal early childhood programs and services as context in which this work is situated. This background context leads to the

rationale for this study. The remaining parts of this chapter introduce the theoretical and methodological approaches used in this study concluding by identifying potential contributions of this research.

Chapter Two, "A Discussion of Theory," focuses on Indigenous knowledge(s) as sources of principles and theories. I explore the nature of Indigenous knowledge(s) as a source of principles relative to theory knowing that Indigenous ways of knowing and being have, for the majority of Indigenous people around the world, been impacted by imperialism and colonization. This impact has led to resistance discourse, including theory, within which this dissertation sits. From this context, I highlight the key principles that guide this study.

Chapter Three, "Passing on Indigenous Knowledge(s)," explores ways in which children are conceptualized and how Indigenous knowledge(s) are passed on from generation to generation to children. This transmission is done through language, stories and storytelling, ceremonies, symbols, revelation, and empirical knowledge.

Chapter Four, "Methodology," presents the methodology that guided this study. In this chapter I consider the methods and methodology of this project. Specifically, I situate the research within an Indigenous research paradigm characterized by beliefs and values derived from Indigenous ways of knowing and being. I follow this with a discussion of a case study approach and why it was the most appropriate strategy for learning about the 'good care' of children. Cultural protocols and qualitative methods congruent with the theoretical principles introduced in Chapter Two are identified and discussed.

Chapter Five, "Setting the Context," offers a contextual backdrop to the emergence of First Nations-specific early childhood programs and services. The chapter draws upon the writings of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars and policy analysts, statistical information garnered from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sources, and mainstream

research on the quality care of children for those aspects and activities of social policy and subsequent program development that impact Aboriginal peoples. Together, the sections of this chapter provide a glimpse of the policy and program context in which this study is located.

Chapters Six, "Pathways to Learning: First Nations of British Columbia" and Chapter Seven, "Pathways to Learning: Tuhoe of Aotearoa / New Zealand," are the specific case studies. In the Canadian case study, the two communities are discussed separately because of their unique contexts and early childhood programs. In the Aotearoa / New Zealand case study, the two communities are discussed together because both are engaged in the implementation of the same early childhood program – Te Kohanga Reo. The discussions focus on broad structural and philosophical aspects within which reside concrete lived experiences. The chapters are designed so that there is enough background for the reader to read them independently from the rest of the dissertation. In this regard, the cases may appear redundant with the other dissertation chapters.

Chapter Eight, "Learnings and Teachings" is a reflection on what I learned from undertaking this study both personally and professionally. The chapter provides responses to some of the fundamental questions posed in this dissertation, starting with "What is the 'good care' of First Nations children?" and proceeding to dream the actualization of first Nations-specific early childhood programs and services in the future. Specific considerations for actualization are presented. A final visit to the theoretical framework upon which this study is situated concludes the chapter.

CHAPTER TWO

A Discussion of Theory

Mary's Story

On a warm spring day, I went to the mountain with Mary. Mary Thomas, an Elder of the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation, was a friend, a teacher, and a grandmother to me. On our journey to the mountain, we drove through town, turned off the highway, and finally followed a small paved road that faced the mountain. At the base of the mountain, the road curved and began to climb. As we passed beautiful dwellings nestled in the trees, Mary described the way the mountain once looked with no human dwellings, only the homes of plants and animals. The road wound upwards until Mary and I were past the dwellings and the road had turned into little more than a dirt trail. Finally, we came round a bend and the road widened so we could pull the car over. We stopped and got out. We walked to the edge of the road and stood gazing for miles over the valley and the lake.

An eagle soared above our heads and we stood in peace and solitude. In her quiet voice, Mary recalled the way it once was, with only the trees and the lake and the little trails that wound their way up the mountain. She had walked these trails with her grandmother as a child over 80 years before. She told me about the forest fire that had been across the valley, and she pointed out the charred remains of what was once a magnificent forest. After a time, Mary stopped talking and we simply stood silently beside each other, together. I had come to her with a troubled heart and many questions. I did not ask them. I just stood with her. I could feel her energy envelope me and I felt safe and peaceful. I felt the tears run down my face and still we stood saying no words, drinking in the beauty of the valley and knowing this was our home, our roots of being born of the land. It touched the very essence of my soul.

I do not know how long we stood, but time passed away. At one point Mary turned to me and said, "My grandmother told me, don't be afraid to cry; it means you are in touch with the land, and it with you." I felt small and humbled, yet a part of it all, and the tears flowed down my face. I felt Mary's energy and in it a sadness, a longing for what was. How hard it must be for her to stand and look over a valley now cut and ravaged, and to know that it will never again be as she once knew it.

We got back into our car and inched our way up the mountain until we came to a place where the trail once again widened. We stopped and walked. Mary pointed out different plants and their purposes. We came upon a spot littered with pine cone pieces. Mary walked over to the spot and said, "See these scattered pine cone pieces; if you look carefully you will find a pile of pieces nearby. Underneath the pile will be a cache of pine cones belonging to a squirrel. The little cones will all be arranged in rows with the tops pointed downward."

As she spoke she cupped one small hand, and with the other, indicated how the cones pointed downward. "This is what my grandmother taught me. When I was a little girl, I asked my grandmother why the cones were all pointed downward. 'Because,' she told me, 'when the winter snows begin to melt, and water drips into the cache, it will run downward off the cones and not wreck the nutmeats inside them.' I asked, 'How do the little squirrels know to do that?' Granny said, 'They learn like we do and then they pass their knowledge on to us.'"

I was humbled for the second time that day; I was humbled by Mary's story, by the magnitude of all that was around me, and by my being within it. The peace and connectedness I felt that day on the mountain is a peace and connectedness I continue to feel. I know that it is a part of me and I am a part of it.

I had heard the old people say, "we don't own the land, we are a part of it." On that day, on a mountain with Mary, I once again knew what that meant. Mary's energy flowed from the land and her being within it. It enveloped me and it helped me to feel and know things I do not see in my daily life. She reminded me of where I come from and of who I am. She spoke of the importance of my learning, of what this dissertation is ultimately about. She said to me, "You must learn so you can teach when I am gone. Like the little squirrels preserve the nutmeats in their pine cones, you must preserve the knowledge I give you."

In this chapter, I examine Indigenous knowledge(s) as sources of principles and theories. The most essential proposition that I make is that theory is synonymous with principles, and that these principles serve to guide our understanding about how knowledge is created and ultimately, how I created the knowledge that forms this research. Within this study, principles have reflected the Indigenous ontology and epistemology, served as a theoretical

approach, guided the methodology, and framed the findings. I begin by exploring the nature

of Indigenous knowledge(s) as the source of these principles. I then move to examining

theory, identifying what it is and why it is important. Indigenous ways of knowing and being

have, for the majority of Indigenous people around the world, been impacted by imperialism

and colonization. This impact has led to resistance discourse, within which this dissertation

sits. From this place of knowing and being, I highlight the key principles that guide this

study.

2.1   Introduction

Blackfoot Elder and philosopher, Leroy Little Bear (2000) states that there are multiple ways

of interpreting the world and that these interpretations are manifest in diverse cultures (p.

77). The notion of a single worldview or social order, as proposed by colonialism, while

recognizing other worldviews at the same time assumes that those worldviews are inferior to

the worldviews of the colonizers. These worldviews are manifest in culture. Little Bear

defines culture as:

> a society's philosophy about the nature of reality, the values that flow from
> this philosophy and the social customs that embody those values. Any
> individual within a culture is going to have his or her own personal
> interpretation of the collective cultural code; however the individual's
> worldview has its roots in the culture that is in the society's shared
> philosophy, values and customs. (p. 77)

Little Bear positions individuals within the cultural collective, and collectives within broader

worldviews, as he compares Aboriginal worldviews with Eurocentric worldviews. He gives

us a starting point from which to understand the impacts of colonialism on our daily lives;

for example, colonialism plays out at the individual level where the effect of colonial

assimilation strategies, such as residential schools, is felt. These disrupted the lives of

children and families, resulting in long-term economic challenges, loss of language and cultural ways, cognitive dissonance and profound marginalization. This disruption weakens, and in some cases, severs the connection between the individual and the collective, and ultimately their cultural identity. Maintenance of this connection is an important consideration for the care and education of young children, particularly for Indigenous children whose knowledge(s) are often systematically marginalized and pushed to the shadows by Eurocentric hegemony, especially in the academy.

Like Little Bear, other Indigenous scholars have argued the fact that colonization exists and has impacted the lives of children and families. Indigenous scholars and theorists entering into resistance discourse have as their fundamental goal, an argument for space within the academy. These arguments are foundational to this study, especially in light of the fact that there is a dearth of Indigenous scholarly literature focused on the care and education of young Indigenous children in Canada. The following pages position this study within this resistance discourse by drawing primarily on North American Indigenous scholars whose writings focus on Indigenous knowledge(s). This literature reveals two vantage points from which these authors write. First, there is a focus on the essences of Indigenous knowledge(s) prior to colonization. Its authority, as knowledge, is drawn from this time and place that is, from tens of thousands of years of knowledge and experience, and as such, is subjective. In her discussion of ontology and being, Maori scholar Makere Stewart-Harawira (2005) reminds us that it is this subjectivity, in a philosophical sense that is most contested (p. 33). The second vantage point concerns understanding colonization, what it has meant in the past, and its continued impact on the present and future of Indigenous peoples (Smith, 1999). Understanding colonization has led Indigenous scholars to articulate their own Indigenous theories, research methods and practices. Scholars are "re-writing" and

"re-righting" their history (Smith, 1999, p. 28) and "writing-back" and "teaching-back" (Battiste, 2002) to education research and practice. For example, Cree scholar, Shawn Wilson (2008) focuses on the development of an Indigenous Research Paradigm, while Sto:lo scholar, Jo-ann Archibald (2008), brings storytelling into educational contexts. At its base, this resistance discourse draws upon Indigenous knowledge(s) prior to colonization and exerts it as the foundation from which Indigenous theory, methods and practices are derived. Indigenous scholar, Michelle Pidgeon (2008) argues:

> Indigenous scholars have been articulating Indigenous theory through the centering of Indigenous knowledges within their practices as scholars, researchers and mentors. ... The centering of Indigenous knowledges within their research, theory, and practice has developed an Indigenous theory that is grounded in Indigenous epistemology, ontology and axiology. (p.19)

Cree scholar and philosopher, Willie Ermine (1995) maintains that, "Aboriginal people have the responsibility and the birthright to take and develop an epistemology congruent with holism and the beneficial transformation of total human knowledge. The way to this is through our own Aboriginal sources" (p. 103). Learning from the works of other Indigenous scholars and my own experience, this study, with its emphasis on the 'good care' of children, including the transmission of Indigenous knowledge(s) through our children, is positioned within this resistance discourse. The care and education of young Indigenous children, then, becomes a site of resistance.

2.2   The nature of Indigenous knowledge(s) and relational ontolog(ies)

> This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life; he is merely a strand in it. Whatever he does to the web, he does to himself. Chief Seattle (1854) (Bristow, 2002, http://www.webcom.com/duane/seattle.html)

Positioning this study as a site of resistance presupposes Indigenous knowledge(s) as the foundation of that resistance. This positioning also suggests that tools such as theory, methodologies and practices are derived and guided by those knowledge(s). In this section I explore the nature of Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing. I identify basic principles of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies. Although identification of shared principles may be viewed as essentialist, it may also be argued that these principles, comprised of beliefs and values, are distinctly Indigenous. Most Indigenous scholars are in agreement that the idea of 'relationship' is central to Indigenous knowledge(s) (Archibald, 2008; Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Cajete, 1999; Castellano, 2000; Cohen, 2001; Ermine, 1995; Graveline, 1998; Holmes, 2000; Kawagley, 1995; Little Bear, 2000; Williamson, 2000; Wilson, 2008) and that this idea is geographically and contextually expressed. Indigenous knowledge(s) then, are as diverse as the cultures in which they are rooted.

Ermine (1995) writes that "those who seek to understand the reality of existence and harmony with the environment by looking inward have a different incorporeal knowledge paradigm" (p. 103) from those that seek to examine the physical world objectively. He terms this way of knowing "Aboriginal epistemology", stating that it "is grounded in the self, the spirit, and the unknown", (p. 108) and is explored through introspection and self-actualization. Aboriginal holy people and philosophers relied on processes of self-actualization to come to understandings of the universe grounded in the spirit and of wholeness that extends both inwardly and outwardly.

> Their fundamental insight was that all existence was connected and that the whole enmeshed the being in its inclusiveness. In the Aboriginal mind, therefore, an immanence is present that gives meaning to existence and forms the starting point of Aboriginal epistemology. It is a mysterious force that connects the totality of existence— the forms, energies, or concepts that constitute the inner and outer world. (p. 103)

Ermine claims that when we employ inwardness, we can connect with this mysterious life

force which "manifests itself in all existence because all of life is connected, and all of life is

primarily connected with and accessed through the life force" (p. 104). He maintains that

Aboriginal people looked to the "inner space" or that universe of being within each person

referred to as the spirit, the self or the soul. From this place comes the insight that

wholeness permeates inwardness and extends to the outer space (p. 103). Karla Williamson

(2000) writes that all organisms on earth are evidence of these life forces, and are perceived

into existence through this process of self-actualization (p. 132). This place of manifested

actualization is a place of creativity, which reveals the relationship between inner and outer

realities. Cree scholar, Joe Couture (1991) summarizes self actualization by stating:

> ... reality is experienced by entering deeply into the inner being of the mind,
> and not by attempting to break through the outer world to a beyond. This
> positions the Native person in communion with the living reality of all
> things. His communion is his experience of the ideas within, concentric with
> reality without. Thus to "know", to cognize, is experiential, direct knowing.
> (p. 280)

These relationships of creativity and energy are termed "unity" by Battiste and

Henderson (2000). Yupiaq scholar, Oscar Kawagley (1995) elaborates on the power of this

energy from a Yupiaq worldviews:

> the creative force, as manifested in nature, is more profound and powerful
> than anything the human being can do, because in it is the very essence of all
> things. Yet within this profound and powerful force are efficiency, economy,
> and purpose, the expression of which is dependent on the human being. (p.
> 11)

He explains that there exists a spiritual landscape within the physical landscape which

acts as a plane through which integration of life forces may be achieved. Thus,

Alaska Native worldviews share a belief and an orientation to a "synthesis of

information gathered from interaction with the natural and spiritual worlds" (p.11)

for the purposes of achieving harmony and balance among the human, natural, and spiritual worlds. Okanagan scholar, Jeanette Armstrong (2000) explains that Okanagan people understand spirituality as "everything including ourselves is part of everything else. We are part of the land, a part of community, a part of family, and so on. We do not have any clear way of understanding this except when we let ourselves become involved in celebration" (p. 40).

Relational ways of knowing and being are evident in the teachings of our knowledge holders, in physical symbols such as the medicine wheel of the Plains peoples, through ceremonies and, as Armstrong (2000) writes, in our celebrations through dances and songs. I write about these manifestations of knowledge and how these manifestations are passed from generation to generation later in this chapter. For now, I share my understanding of Elders words: "doing things in a good way", of "walking our talk" or "living our values." I understand these words as teachings that direct me to live with integrity, in all my actions, so that I realize harmony in relationship with all beings and happenings. These words also guide this research. These words of the Elders, embedded in a relational and spiritual way of knowing and being, speak of values and beliefs that guide and shape our knowing, being, and doing in the world. In this way, these values and beliefs are principles. Principles such as: caring, sharing, strength, honesty, kindness, responsibility, and respect lead to balance and harmony in relationships (Little Bear, 2000), thereby ensuring wholism and connection of all beings.

These principles inform how I understand theory and apply it in this work. Knowledge created from this place of relationship, as in this study, highlights the centrality of the researcher to the research process. As Ermine (1995) states, experience is knowledge and comes from a connection of the self and life force known in the context of the knower.

In essence, then, I have been in relationship with this study. Each step of the research led to my understanding and coming to know about the 'good care' of young Indigenous children. In doing so, knowledge is created.

As I pondered these ideas late one evening, I could feel them but I could not express them until I began to think of my younger son, Jacob, and how it is that he is coming to know. I saw myself in relationship with him and through me came teachings about the world. It was as if I could see my heart giving to his. I realized that my relationship with him was more than that of a mother and son or a teacher and student. The knowledge I carried came from an inner landscape, and it was from this inner place that I gave to him. He would use his own experiences (including those with me) to develop his personal landscape that he would in turn use to understand his reality. I was a part of Jacob's landscape. As Kawagley teaches: "the landscape shapes the mindscape and the mindscape shapes the landscape" (Presentation, September, 2004). This understanding underscores the importance of my own personal learning and actualization as a way of ensuring my relationship with my son and his coming to understand. As I thought about this way of knowing and being and its application to formalized early childhood programs and services for young Indigenous children, it became apparent to me how critically important are the relationships between caregivers and children, and the knowledge and training received by caregivers. These reflections also speak to pedagogy, or how we teach our children, and to the critical role that Indigenous knowledge(s) play in shaping those practices. I write of these in the following chapter.

I also thought of children, such as myself, whose ontologies have been disrupted and how important it is for children to have the opportunity to realize their identity and place within the collective. In my case, my understanding of the collective and my place within it comes from multiple sources including Elders and teachers from many Nations. My learning

and knowledge is eclectic. I take those gifts of knowledge and experience to myself so that I may make sense of my being and my reality. I believe that one of the greatest challenges (and opportunities) facing formalized early childhood programs and services for young Indigenous children is to ensure children have opportunities to learn who they are as individuals and as members of their collectives. This is a topic for discussion in later chapters.

Cree scholar, Shawn Wilson (2008) writes that "if Indigenous ways of knowing [have] to be narrowed through one particular lens then surely that lens would focus on relationality. All things are related and therefore relevant" (p. 58). He identifies relationality and accountability to those relationships through the constructs of Indigenous ontology, epistemology, methodology, and axiology as the foundational elements of an Indigenous research paradigm. Wilson argues that each of these elements is inseparable and blend into each other forming a coherent whole – in other words, the whole of the paradigm is greater than the sum of its parts. He concludes that:

> [r]elationality seems to sum up the whole Indigenous research paradigm to me.
> Just as the components of the paradigm are related, the components themselves all
> have to do with relationships. The ontology and epistemology are based upon
> a process of relationships that form a mutual reality. The axiology and
> methodology are based upon maintaining accountability to these relationships. ...
> (pp. 70-71)

Wilson's work clearly argues for a distinct paradigm of research for Indigenous peoples. This paradigm is based on an understanding that peoples' knowledge is not outside of the self or the collective. It makes sense that if theory is historically and culturally constructed, then that theory should come from the people if it is to be relevant and respectful of their ways of knowing, being and doing. Maori scholar, Graham Hingangaroa Smith (2002) points out that one of the principles argued around Kaupapa Maori Theory is

consideration for the context in which theorizing is taking place. He argues that "theorizing needs to evolve from and interrelate with the specific 'cultural' context within which it is to be applied" (p. 3). With this idea in mind, I propose that this notion of relationality underpinned by the knowing and being of the people is the bedrock from which principles and theory are derived. What follows is a discussion of theory and the articulation of the principles underpinning this study.

2.3   Theory

Theory helps us understand the world. In many of the social sciences, theory may be thought of as a set of principles or beliefs that explain, describe or predict our reality. As theory assists us in understanding our world, it is likewise situated within our own worldviews and philosophies (Pihama, 2005) and passed from generation to generation. It can be said, then, that theory is culturally and historically constructed. Smith (2002) proposes that if theories are socially constructed, they are consequently: "manipulable phenomena in their construction, application, interpretation and selection" (p. 6). As such we all have theory.

> Maori scholar, Leonie Pihama's (2005) work on Kaupapa Maori theory argues that:
>
> the possibilities of theory are multiple. Theories are not solely descriptive or explanatory or predictive but can be all of these simultaneously. … Theories can provide ways of explaining the world through the use of given understandings. Given the diversity of worldviews, of cultural ways of seeing, understanding, and therefore explaining the world, it is expected that a range of theories may exist simultaneously for any given event or to explain experiences. (p. 195)

> Pihama (2005) advocates for theory that is rooted in practice, explaining that this

notion shifts theory as description or explanation to theory directly related to practice. In doing so, theory becomes subject to the social and political realities within which practice sits

and as such, becomes a reflective and transformative place (p. 196). "Without unity of theory

and practice, theory has little to offer" (p.196). Smith (2002) describes the relationship

between theory and praxis (action and reflection) as:

> stand[ing] in dialectical relation to each other where praxis ... reflects theory
> at work and in action. ... With respect to transformative social action, praxis
> connects theory to the 'people'. That is, theory is developed out of the
> actions and reflections constituted by the 'people'. (p. 4)

These scholars argue that theory emerges from the context in which it is applied and

that theory is directly related to practice. In other words, theory emerges from distinct

cultures and knowledge systems, the people, and their actions. A context of Indigenous

knowledge(s), people and actions becomes a source of theory wherein propositions can be

made that explain, predict and/or describe reality. Principles, defined as laws or rules of

action or conduct, are likewise anchored in Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and are

commonly presented as the beliefs and values that guide our behaviors. These principles may

be articulated as theory. Principles in and of themselves may be considered theoretical.

Scholars also advocate for bringing theory into resistance and transformative

activities. Linda Tuhiwai Smith (1999) argues for "creating the space for the emergence of

organic Maori theory from Maori people and communities themselves" (p. 4). In her

discussion of theory, Smith explains that:

> not all ... theories claim to be derived from some 'pure' sense of what it
> means to be indigenous, nor do they claim to be theories which have been
> developed in a vacuum ... . What is claimed, however, is that new ways of
> theorizing by indigenous scholars are grounded in a real sense of, and
> sensitivity towards, what it means to be an indigenous person. (p. 38)

In this study, I claim that Indigenous ways of knowing and being are the source or bedrock

within which principles, theory and, in this case, identity is anchored. As Little Bear (2000)

explains, individuals have their own interpretation of the collective cultural code, but their

worldview is rooted in a culture that has society's shared philosophy, values and customs (p. 77). Theorizing then requires a theorist to engage their own identity within the collective of which they are a part.

I also believe that there are times when it is strategic to articulate a common collective identity in order to achieve a shared goal. We saw this in Canada as Indian peoples came together as the first peoples of the land, as First Nations, united in responding to the federal government's 1969 White Paper. Articulating the 'good care' of children, from an Indigenous place (which is what I strive to do in this study), may also serve to resist the imposition of Eurocentric views on the care of Indigenous children. In this way, early childhood programs and services serving young Indigenous children can be politicized and transformative places.

Smith (1999) writes of theory as a site of resistance. She claims that theory provides a space to plan and to strategize resistances, adding that while we are "mak[ing] sense of our own world [we are also struggling] to transform what counts as important in the world of the powerful" (p. 39). Indigenous literature on sites of resistance and subsequent discourse has emerged in response to colonial imperialism and Eurocentric hegemony experienced by Indigenous peoples around the globe. For example, Graham Hingangaroa Smith (2002), writing of Kaupapa Maori theory, argues that theory itself is a "site of struggle between dominant Pakeha and subordinate Maori interests" (p.7). He claims that Kaupapa Maori theory critiques the implicit impulse to maintain the status quo situation of Pakeha dominance, and attempts to give support to what many Maori individuals 'do' as part of their taken for granted everyday experience. Cultural values, practices and thinking are often intuitively included in the daily existence of most Maori (p. 7). In theorizing Indigenous transformation and education, Smith (2003) identifies six principles he considers to be

critical change factors in Kaupapa Maori theory. The first is the principle of self-determination or relative autonomy where there is to be increased 'control over one's own life and cultural well-being'. The second principle of validating and legitimating cultural aspirations and identity speaks to ensuring that Indigenous language, knowledge(s), culture and values are validated and legitimized to the point of being 'taken for granted', while the third principle speaks to incorporating 'culturally preferred' pedagogy – that is teaching and learning practices that connect with the cultural backgrounds and life circumstances of the community.

The principle of mediating socio-economic and home difficulties is the fourth principle. This principle commits communities to take seriously the potential of education to impact at the ideological level, as well as mediating a societal context of unequal power relations; that is, by drawing upon the cultural strength of the whanau (extended family), socio-economic circumstances may be mediated. The fifth principle, the principle of incorporating cultural structures which emphasize the 'collective' rather than the 'individual', such as the notion of the extended family, highlights the importance of the extended family in providing a collective and shared support structure that encourages reciprocity and responsibility. The sixth and final principle is that of a shared and collective vision/philosophy which provides the guidelines for excellence in education, taking into account both Maori and Pakeha (in this case) (pp. 8-11).

In sum, theories help us make sense of our realities and figure things out. Theories anchored in Indigenous ways of knowing and being serve as sites of resistance and, most importantly, they can help us describe things in the world, explain the actions we take, and make predictions about the world. It is from this place that I articulate the principles guiding this research.

2.4 Guiding principles

Teachings, values and or beliefs, anchored in Indigenous knowledge(s), serve to explain, describe and or guide our understanding of the world. As such, they may be conceptualized as theoretical. This study is guided by four key principles rooted in Indigenous knowledge(s), first conceptualized by Cree scholar Verna Kirkness and non-Indigenous scholar Ray Barnhardt (1991) in their research concerning post-secondary students' experience. The four principles are commonly known as the four Rs: respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility. Respect is the need to honor the cultural integrity of First Nations students, including their values and traditions. The second principle speaks to the relevance of learning within First Nations perspectives and experiences, for students to "build upon their customary forms of consciousness and representation as they expand their understanding of the world in which they live" (p. 8). The third principle, reciprocity, is evidenced in relationships that create possibilities for new kinds of education, new paradigms, and explanatory frameworks. The fourth and final principle, responsibility, speaks to the ability of individuals and collectives to take responsibility for their own lives. At the heart of this principle is the empowerment of First Nations peoples in realizing control over their daily lives. Kirkness and Barnhardt argue that these principles are anchored in distinct Indigenous worldviews/knowledge systems and are distinct in their application:

> ... while the manifestations [of knowledge] can vary considerably from one
> group of people to another, some of the salient features of such knowledge
> are that its meaning, value and use are bound to the cultural context in which
> it is situated, it is thoroughly integrated into everyday life and it is generally
> acquired through direct experience and participation in real-world activities.
> If considered in its totality, such knowledge can be seen to constitute a
> particular world view, a form of consciousness or a reality set. (pp. 6-7)

Others have used these principles in their works. Some have added to the Rs and some use different terms for similar concepts. However, these principles share a common purpose, one that is consistent with the knowledge(s) in which they are anchored: the development and maintenance of positive relationships. As I have written earlier, most Indigenous scholars are in general agreement that relationships are a cornerstone of Indigenous knowledge(s). These four Rs are cradled in simultaneous interaction and relationship. Explanation of these principles relative to the 'good care' of children and this study begins by describing how other Indigenous scholars have used these principles in their work. I conclude by discussing how the works of these authors impact the articulation and contextualization of the four Rs as principles applied to this study.

Michelle Pidgeon's (2008) work is also concerned with post-secondary education. She employs the Rs – responsibility, respect, relevance, reciprocity, reverence, and relationships – to critically examine how universities could be more successful spaces for Aboriginal students (p. 70). Pidgeon explains each principle in the context of her study, stating that responsibility is used in the same manner as Kirkness and Barnhardt (1991) defined it, as occurring through participation (p. 23). Responsibility also encompasses a sense of being part of community life and becomes part of one's credibility (p. 72). Respect is best understood within the context of relationships with phrases such as 'I know you know how to act in someone else's home where you are a guest' or 'you are member of this team.' Pidgeon reminds us that Indigenous communities have their own protocols for showing respect; respect encompasses understanding the practice of community protocol (p. 71). Relevance speaks to the meaning and value the research project will have to the people, while reciprocity has to do with sharing knowledge and reporting back to the people (pp. 74-75). Pidgeon writes of reverence in reference to Indigenous spirituality—it is the "grounding

of theories in Indigenous epistemology, in that the relationships between the earth, cosmos, and the individual are all interconnected components of Indigenous knowledge" (p. 77). Finally, Pidgeon writes of responsibility as critical to understanding the interconnectedness of all living things and Indigenous peoples' ways of knowing as fundamental to establishing relationships that honour their traditions and beliefs (p. 77).

Wilson's (2008) articulation of an Indigenous Research Paradigm employs Cree scholar Cora Weber-Pillwax's three Rs as part of his argument for relational accountability. He explains the three Rs – respect, reciprocity and relationality – by citing his colleague's (E. Steinhauer) interpretation of a personal conversation with Cora Weber-Pillwax about these principles:

> Respect is more than just saying please and thank you, and reciprocity is
> more than giving a gift. According to Cree Elders showing respect or
> *kihceyihtowin* is a basic law of life. Respect regulates how we treat Mother
> Earth, the plants, the   animals and our brothers and sisters of all races ...
> Respect means you listen intently to others' ideas that you do not insist that
> your idea prevails. By listening intently you show honour, consider the well
> being of others, and treat others with kindness and courtesy. (E. Steinhauer,
> 2001, p. 86 as cited by Wilson, 2008, p. 58)

Wilson (2008) argues that these principles of a relational ontology are the basis from which a distinct methodology and axiology emerge (p. 147). He explains that an Indigenous axiology (the ethics or morals that guide our search for knowledge) is based on relational accountability and concepts such as right or wrong, validity, and worthwhile or not, lose their meaning. As Wilson declares, the most important role is being accountable to your relationships (p. 77).

Sto:lo scholar, Jo-ann Archibald (2008), acknowledging the work of Kirkness and

Barnhardt (1991), identifies seven storywork[10] teachings: respect, reverence, responsibility,

reciprocity, holism, interrelatedness, and synergy that she understands as cultural values,

beliefs, and understandings passed from generation to generation (p. 1). These seven

teachings are both principles and practices (p. 1). Drawing from her Nation's wisdom,

Archibald explains cultural respect, responsibility and reciprocity in the context of

knowledge and power, writing that "if one comes to understand the power of a particular

knowledge, then one must be ready to share and teach it respectfully and responsibly to

others in order for this knowledge, and its power, to continue" (p. 4). Archibald's (2008)

book, *Indigenous Storywork*, takes us on a journey of understanding Indigenous knowledge(s)

by engaging the reader in her stories of learning from Elders. In the telling of her story, she

writes of respect as:

> respect for each other as human beings, respect for the power of cultural
> knowledge, and respect for the cultural protocols that show honour for the
> authority and expertise of the Elder teacher. ... respect includes trust and
> being culturally worthy. ... being culturally worthy means being ready
> intellectually, emotionally, physically and spiritually to fully absorb cultural
> knowledge. (p.41)

Reciprocity and responsibility occur in the sharing of knowledge along with a reverence for

the spiritual. Prayer before beginning storytelling exemplifies the concept of cultural

reverence in practice. These teachings or principles, along with concepts of holism,

interrelatedness and synergy, are the theoretical framework upon which Archibald builds

story work.

As I read pages of Jo-ann's book, I felt in many instances as if I was walking beside

her. In her descriptions of conversations with Elders, I was reminded of my own

---

[10] Story work is the application of the seven story work teachings to education (Archibald, 2008, p. 3).

relationships with Elders, particularly Mary Thomas and Louis Opekokew with whom I spent many hours listening to their stories. I knew what Jo-ann was talking about as she wrote about the responsibility of respectful giving back through teaching. Her description of being worthwhile to receive the teachings particularly resonated with me. I have learned being worthwhile or feeling worthwhile begins from within and that not all teachings are revealed at once. So I spend much time reviewing the teachings that have been given to me in my mind and in my heart. I look inwardly to my self as I seek to better understand those teachings in relation to myself and to the world. I open my hands and accept the story basket from Jo-ann. The cultural principles of respect, reciprocity, relevance, and responsibility, form the strands of a new basket; one that will hold teachings and learnings about the 'good care' of young Indigenous children.

The Indigenous scholars discussed in this chapter have drawn principles from Indigenous knowledge(s) to explain, describe and/or guide the conceptualization and implementation of their work. I too draw upon Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and upon the works of these and other Indigenous scholars as a source for principles that guide my research. The principles guiding this study are anchored in an overarching belief that societies and cultures rejuvenate and regenerate each new generation through relationships with the world. In doing so, our cultural ways may be revitalized and regenerated through our children. This study deploys Indigenous principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility set within relationship as a way to understand and undertake this revitalization through the 'good care' of our children. These principles are depicted in the illustration below (Figure 2.1)[11]. For the purposes of this study, the principles are described as: one,

_____

[11] This illustration is to be viewed as if one were looking down at an open four-petal flower, with its internal parts (children and families, communities and nations) guarded by the petals (respect, reciprocity, relevance and

respect identifies the need to honour the cultural integrity of Indigenous children, families and communities, including their systems of knowledge, values and traditions; two, relevance references to the utility of the program and practice to the children, their families and community; three, reciprocal relationships are characterized as meaningful, respectful and creative, where learning opportunities are generated for all those involved; and four, responsibility speaks to the ability of individuals and collectives to take control of their own lives. At the heart of responsibility is the notion of empowerment of children, their families and communities. These principles set the context for continuity and change. I return to them in the last chapter of this dissertation adding to the illustration as a result of undertaking this research. The next chapter, though, continues setting the context of this research by presenting a discussion of ways in which Indigenous children have been conceptualized and how Indigenous knowledge(s) are passed to them.

responsibility) sitting on a foundation of relationships (sepal). This flower is in the world in a real, vibrant, and beautiful way, just as our children are. The idea for the illustration came from the beading on a pair of moccasins given to me by my teacher Louis Opekokew.

Figure 2.1 Theoretical Framework (M. Greenwood, 2009)
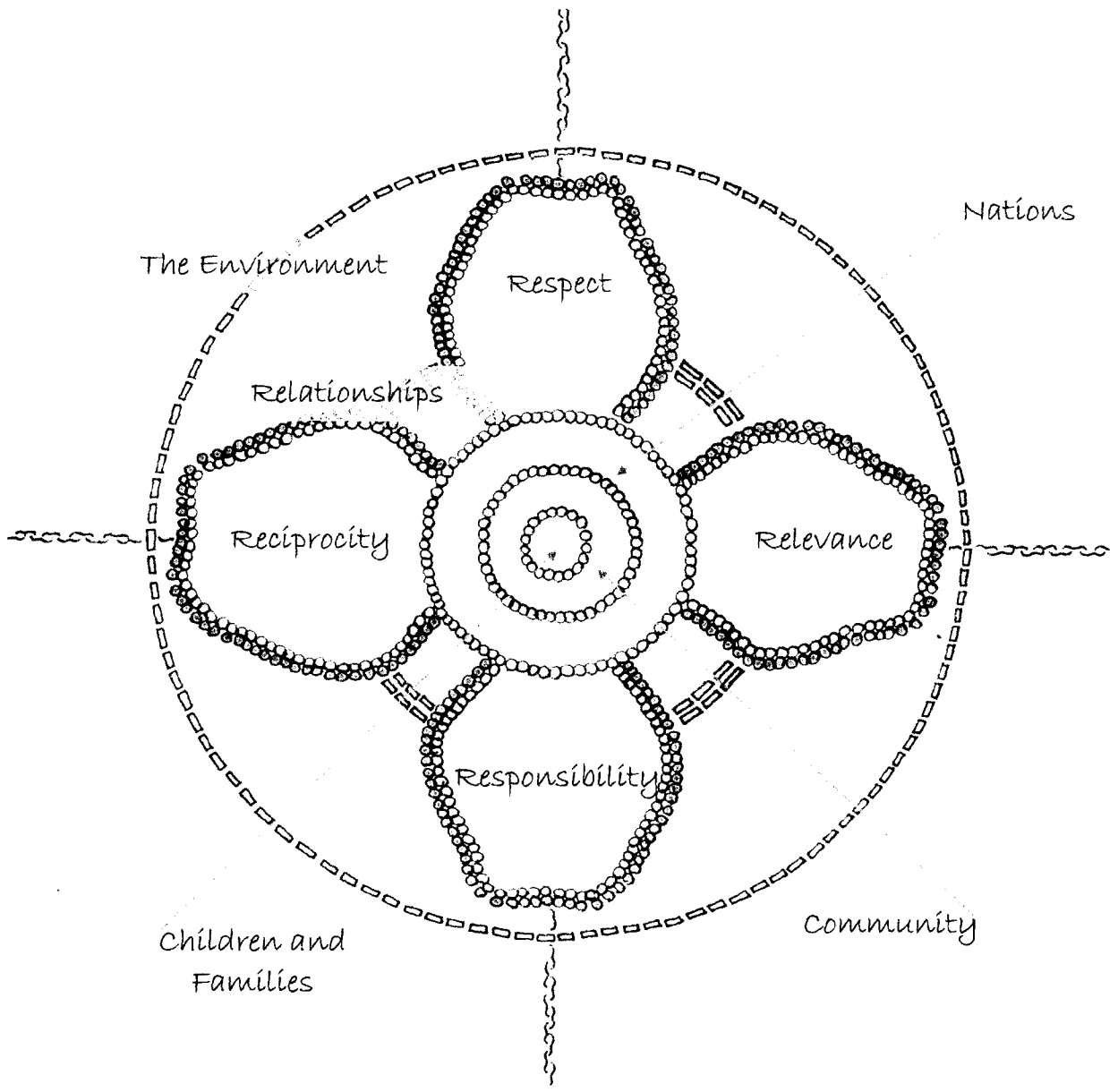
CHAPTER THREE

Passing on Indigenous Knowledge(s)

Mary's Story, at the beginning of Chapter Two, illustrates the fundamental principles that serve as a foundation for this study – and the need for societies and cultures to rejuvenate and regenerate through their relationships to all beings for each new generation. Her story points out the centrality of relationships to all beings and the critical need for intergenerational transmission of knowledge. In Chapter Two, I also discussed the nature of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and the theory and principles rooted in those knowledge(s). From this place, I identified and described the theoretical principles that guide this study. Chapter Three adds to these theoretical principles by articulating Indigenous conceptualizations of children and exploring how Indigenous knowledge(s) is passed from one generation to the next through children. This transmission of knowledge(s) may be viewed as pedagogy and seen to inform early childhood practices and change. I begin by discussing the conceptualization of children followed by ways in which knowledge is passed including: language, stories and storytelling, ceremonies, symbols, revelation, and empirical knowledge.

3.1   Conceptualizing Children

There is a scarcity of scholarly literature focused on the care and education of Indigenous children. Early writings were primarily undertaken by non-Indigenous anthropologists and sociologists sent to study the "Indians of the area." Fortunately, Indigenous scholars (e.g., Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Chisholm, 1996; Goforth, 2003; Kawagley, 1995; Little Bear, 2000), along with other Indigenous individuals and groups, are beginning to put into writing

their family and communities' cultural teachings concerning the care and education of their children. However, reconstructing these traditional child-rearing practices is challenging given the impact of colonization and subsequent societal change. Elders, the stories, songs, dances, and ceremonies are often the most accurate sources of these teachings (that is, knowledge(s)).

How conceptions of children, and their care and education prior to colonization, influence (or should influence) children's care and education today is also a subject for discussion in this section. Whereas children once learned from their families and communities (that is, their parents, grandparents, siblings, aunties and uncles, and community members), the school system and early childhood programs for young children have in some cases taken over a large part of this role (Goforth, 2003). Most often, these formal systems of care and education perpetuate a philosophy and set of values about the world that are representative of the broader dominant society and not those of Indigenous or colonized peoples. Yet this is the contemporary and colonial present in which the Aboriginal people of Canada and many other Indigenous peoples around the globe find themselves. Acknowledgement of multiple knowledge(s) (or worldviews) with their inherent power differentials, and the quest to find ways in which to achieve harmony and balance, are the plight of many of these peoples. It is in this quest that different worldviews come together and is evidenced in pedagogical goals. It is here too that Indigenous educators caution that "never again must our adaptation to the larger society be at the expense of our languages, values, spirituality or cultural identities" (Manitoba Education and Training, 1993, p. 3). This question of emphasis or balance (in early childhood programs in this case) emphasizes the critical nature of ensuring that Indigenous ways of knowing, being and doing are accounted for.

In Indigenous cultures, children are imbued with the ways of knowing and being of their culture (Little Bear, 2000). Children are vital to their collective, and ultimately to the survival of their culture. Because of this centrality, children are greatly valued and, in many Indigenous societies, considered gifts from the Creator or on loan to us from the Creator. Some believe that each child brings with him/her a special gift, while others believe that children are the ancestors reborn (Little Bear, 2000; Joint First Nations/Inuit Federal Working Group, 1995; Native Council of Canada, 1990). From this perspective, the care and education of children (child rearing) is considered a sacred and valued responsibility. Secwepemc Elder, Mary Thomas teaches that the care of children begins long before birth at the time of conception:

> When a young woman got pregnant, she was careful about what she ate and about the exercise she got. She drank a lot of good medicines, a lot of broth, and she did not overdo herself. The young Mother was also given the most attention— loving, caring attention. She wasn't allowed to see anything that was unpleasant, like spilled blood, a smashed finger, whatever. She wasn't allowed to go to a funeral where there was a lot of crying. She was only allowed to see nice things, like singing and dancing. The old people strongly believed that whatever happened to the young Mother also happened to her unborn child. (Personal communication, 1995)

One of the motivations for this special care stems from a belief that the unborn child is a separate spirit who will be affected by what the mother sees, feels, does, thinks, hears, and eats (Aboriginal Association of Nurses, n.d., pp. 9, 17). The Mi'kmaw believe that "from the time a child is conceived there is an acceptance that the child's spirit has also been conceived. There is no notion of *tabula rasa* or blank slate" (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, p. 52) upon which to build. Instead, "Each person has a unique spirit that is predetermined before his or her body grows into it" (p. 52).

These beliefs, anchored in distinct Indigenous knowledge(s), direct adults and others to interact with children in certain ways that may differ from those that might arise from

belief in tabula rasa for example. Many Indigenous beliefs lead to learning that is about coming to know the self— realizing the relationship of the spirit and the self to the world – not just creating the self through learning. This sense of predetermination is manifested or tempered by actions in life. Battiste (2002) argues, "Inherent talents and capabilities are animated when people are faced with life decisions and situations" (p. 15). Learning plays a significant role in children realizing the gifts they are born with (Battiste, 2002; Henderson, 2000a). Battiste (2002) explains that "knowledge is not secular. It is a process derived from creation, and as such, it has a sacred purpose. It is inherent in and connected to all of nature, to its creatures, and to human existence" (p. 14). Learning in this context is a life-long responsibility that people employ to understand the world and to realize their personal gifts or abilities:

> ... traditions, ceremonies, and daily observations are all integral parts of the learning process. They are spirit-connecting processes that enable the gifts, visions and spirits to emerge in each person . . . self knowledge and transmitted teachings are equally important, and people cannot effectively learn their purpose and actualize that purpose unless they receive both. (pp. 14–15)

Henderson (2000a) adds that ecological forces uniquely gift each person and that "the process of recognizing and affirming one's gifts or talents is the essence of learning . . . failure is when a person refuses to follow his or her gifts or understandings" (pp. 265–66). He explains that if children do not have the opportunity to learn or find their path, as adults they will seek their path, their gifts, and their place in the world. This finding of self later in life has resulted in many positive outcomes for Aboriginal communities. There have also been less positive outcomes in learning, attributable to interruption by the colonial experience, which supply part of the rationale for (re)configuring children's care and education.

Related to learning is teaching or pedagogy. Who is teaching, and how teaching occurs, are integral parts of Indigenous children's growth and development. Henderson (2000a) writes that caring is the source from which all teaching arises (p. 268). Caring is a fundamental value that describes a way of living within the flux and energies of Indigenous knowledge(s), and it is through relationships of truth that one knows the spirit in every relationship (p. 269). These relationships are first found within the circle of a caring family; it is from this place that children begin to learn. Learning through experience within the safety and protection of the family and community is common to many North American Indigenous peoples. Cree scholoar Winona Wheeler (2002) describes this circle of care or kinship relations as four concentric circles with the babies and children in the centre. Moving outward to the next circle is the place of the Elders, grandfathers, and grandmothers. The third is for the women; the men make up the fourth outer circle of care and protection. Wheeler explains that in Plains societies, roles and tasks were equal and reflected the egalitarian base of their societies. Family circles ensured that no child or family was left unsupported. Mary Thomas also speaks of the family circle. She speaks of this circle as a place where the goal of the family's survival is intricately woven with children's and family members' learning and teaching:

> The family circle grew as parents became grandparents, and their sons and daughters became parents. The big brothers, big sisters, uncles, aunts and the older ones became the teachers of the younger ones. They had already learned about survival from the Elders. The family circle is based on survival.

> It was a peaceful life. In the winter everyone stayed in and prepared their tools, weaved their baskets and got ready for the next season of food gathering. Winter was also a time of storytelling. These were the "school months" for the children. The children were taught to sit and listen to the Elders, even if they didn't fully understand what the older people were talking about. When the children watched the Elders doing the activities in the spring and summer, they had already heard stories about it. Like making

baskets, they knew what the basket was for, how it was made, and how to use it. This is how the children were taught.

> Everything we did had to do with survival. Old men would tell stories of experiences they had hunting and fishing. They, in turn, encouraged the uncles and big brothers to tell their stories. The women did the same. The grandmothers told their stories. They told of the challenges they faced and the things they had accumulated. They encouraged the young women so that they felt they could tell stories too.

> When a young man took a wife he would remain a part of the family circle. He stayed and learned from his older brothers and uncles. He also bonded with the younger ones who he, in turn, would teach. These young men had the ability to connect with both the older people and the younger people. It was the same for the young women. They taught the younger ones through games and stories. Every day was about learning. (Personal communication, April, 1996)

The Native Council of Canada (1990) affirms this notion of a collective responsibility for the care and education of children in their study of urban Aboriginal parents in Canada. Children were the responsibility not only of their biological parents, but also of the entire extended family. Grandparents played a key role in the rearing of children. Grandparents spent many hours telling stories and showing children how to do things, and older siblings as well as those of the same age nurtured a tiny baby. A child's family was also supported through care for him. In short, the whole community took responsibility for both the child and family through extended relationship patterns, clans and other family groupings.

In a summary about traditional Aboriginal life, and the context in which children were raised, the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), Vol. 3* (1996) offers this description:

> Babies and toddlers spent their first years within the extended family where parents, grandparents, aunts and uncles, brothers and sisters all shared responsibility for protecting and nurturing them. Traditional Aboriginal child-rearing practices permitted children to exert their will with little interference from adults. In this environment, children were encouraged to

develop as thinking, autonomous beings. At the same time, they acquired language and were integrated into the rhythms of daily life in the family and community.

In this early stage of development, children learned how to interpret and respond to the world. They learned how to walk on the land, taking in the multiple cues needed to survive as hunters and gatherers; they were conditioned to see the primacy of relationships over material possessions; they discovered that they had special gifts that would define their place in and contribution to the family and community. From an early age, playing at the edge of adult work and social activities, they learned that dreams, visions and legends were as important to learning as practical instruction in how to build a boat or tan a hide. (pp. 446–47)

In this context of family and community, the primacy of relationships to Indigenous knowledge(s) is apparent. The importance of relationships (including how to develop and maintain them) is often one of the first Aboriginal teachings taught to children (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Henderson, 2000a). Little Bear (2000) writes that "the function of Aboriginal values and customs is to maintain the relationships that hold creation together" (p. 81). Without relationships, the collective is fragmented and the interdependent ways that have ensured the survival of Aboriginal communities is endangered. Survival of Indigenous knowledge(s) is dependent upon the interrelationships developed at the individual and collective levels. This learning of relationships and collective begins with the children and their teaching and learning.

The colonization of Aboriginal peoples in Canada interrupted this relational way of knowing and being. Colonization, with its underlying imperialistic philosophy, is significant primarily in its attempt to destroy and assimilate Indigenous peoples in a colonial history, an attempt linked inextricably to intervention into the care and education of children. The importance of children's care and education within the family and community, and based upon Indigenous knowledge(s), is as critical today as it was prior to and at the onset of colonization. The impact of history and its subsequent changes to reality has also created

significant challenges (including identification of who is an "Indian," migration of Aboriginal peoples to urban centres, jurisdictional differences and so on) to implementing early childhood programs reflective of First Nations communities and cultures.

The impact of colonization on Aboriginal families— the building block of Aboriginal communities and cultures— has changed the very structure and role they play in the care and education of children. Many Aboriginal children are now being cared for in formal early childhood programs; families and communities no longer assume the sole role of caregivers and educators of their children. Poverty, lack of employment, educational opportunities, and access to services have contributed significantly to the increasing mobility and migration of Aboriginal families from rural and reserve communities to urban settings. This mobility also plays a significant role in reducing extended family support. Not only does this movement reduce the actual number of family members available to offer support to children, it also erodes the very role that individuals play within the collective in providing their care and education. However, as the role of families change, the teaching of collective knowledge(s) shifts and are actualized in new ways. There are, however, beliefs and values that remain constant, changing in their expression but not in their intent. For example, the Anisnabe's "seven teachings of the seven grandfathers": wisdom, love, respect, bravery, honesty, humility and truth (Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, 2007) have remained constant through the centuries. For other Indigenous peoples, these values are embedded in their laws or protocols. The impact of colonization on the lives of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and specifically the development of early childhood programs and policies affecting them, are explored further in Chapter Four of this study. The following section focuses on Indigenous pedagogies or how knowledge has been and continues to be passed from generation to generation through children. Although these ways may be viewed as being 'traditional' by

some, these ways are as important today as in the past. This process of teaching and learning has as much to offer as the content.

3.2 Passing on Indigenous knowledge(s) – "For those yet to come"

Flowing from holistic Indigenous knowledge systems are explicit, tangible sources of understanding rooted in the past, serving to both teach those in the present and hold knowledge for those of the future. These understandings are discussed by Indigenous scholars and focus on a variety of sources and processes that lead to them (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Castallano, 2000; Cajete, 2000; Gardner, 2000; Holmes, 2000; Kawagley, 2001, 1995; Sterling, 2002; Weber-Pillwax, 2001). Castallano (2000) offers three overlapping categories of knowledge sources: traditional teachings, revelation, and empirical observation. Traditional teachings, like those identified and recorded by Battiste and Henderson (2000) as traditional ecological knowledge, build upon knowledge that has been passed intact through the generations. This knowledge is evident in such processes as storytelling, ceremonies, and symbols within a context of language and orality.

3.2.1 Language

The role of language is at the heart of any examination of Indigenous knowledge(s). It is in languages that knowledge(s) are embedded, transmitted, and created (Battiste, 2002; Gardner, 2000; Williamson, 2000). Witherspoon (1977) argues that, "this world was transformed from knowledge, organized in thought, patterned in language and realized in speech … . In the Navajo view of the world, language is not a mirror of reality; reality is a mirror of language" (p. 175). Language is also tied to our identity as individuals and collectives. Battiste and Henderson (2000) make this observation of language and knowledge:

> Transmitting Indigenous knowledge is intimate and oral . . . Indigenous peoples view their languages as forms of spiritual identity. In them are the lessons and knowledge that are the cognitive-spiritual power of a certain group of people in a specific place, passed on through the elders for their survival. (p. 49)

Indigenous scholars explore the relationship between Indigenous knowledge(s) and language by examining their collective knowledge(s), describing and explaining them (Cohen, 2001, Gardner, 2000; Kawagley, 2001; Williamson, 2000). Gardner (2000) quotes Elders as saying, "Language is central to our identity . . . and our worldview is embedded in our language" (p. 9). Kawagley (2001) writes about the connection between language and the ancestors, stating that the "Yup'ik language is . . . critical because it intimately connects one to the ancestors and their thought world. This is a spiritual, emotional, and intellectual connection that helps to shape all thinking and behaviour" (p. 51). Henderson (2000a) discusses the fluid relationship between the language and the land:

> Aboriginal languages express an awareness of a local ecology and are directed to understanding both external life forms and the invisible forces beneath them, which Algonquin languages describe by the sounds *mntu, manidoo, manito, manitu* or *Manitou*. These words can be equated with the forces or essences of life or spirit, knowledge and thought. . . . Aboriginal consciousness and language are structured according to Aboriginal people's understanding of the forces of the particular ecosystem in which they live. They derive most of the linguistic notions by which they describe the forces of an ecology from experience and from reflection on the forces of nature. (pp. 262–263)

As a result, many Indigenous languages are primarily verb-oriented and acknowledge and respect the constantly changing energy of the land, thereby creating an active relationship with the living energy within an ecosystem (Henderson, 2000a, p. 262). The sound, the meaning, and the relationships conveyed in the spoken word manifest the very essence of Indigenous knowledge(s) in a way that the written word cannot. Weber-Pillwax (2001) writes that it is:

... impossible to "translate" the lived cultural effects of philosophies and beliefs that are embedded within and associated with the words and terms themselves. Yet . . . herein exactly lies the source of the power and meaning of those words and terms. (p. 159)

This power of language, with its connection to the past and its role as repository and transmitter of Indigenous knowledge(s), is enhanced in the act of speaking (orating). Orality is an inclusive concept encompassing oral manifestations and processes including stories, ceremonies (including dances and songs), and symbols (including the medicine wheel and sacred tree). Archibald (1990) positions Indigenous orality within a holistic framework whose primary goal is to achieve: "balance and harmony among [the] animal/human kingdom, elements of nature, and the spirit world" (p. 72). Cultural practices within this context carry the knowledge and behaviour codes necessary for acquiring Indigenous knowledge(s) (p. 72). Weber-Pillwax (2001) underscores this argument: "The survival of Cree epistemologies and cosmologies are totally dependent on the strength and presence of Cree orality" (p. 153). She explains:

> In the world of the northern Cree, orality systems govern all communication, whether interpersonal or intrapersonal . . . The systems of Cree language use and Cree thinking patterns determine and guide all forms of social interaction and individual development... Individual development is directly related to an understanding of the values and beliefs of the culture. (p. 152)

Elaborating further, she writes that Northern Woodland Cree societies of the past employed primary orality including storytelling, dancing, and singing to ensure the survival of their ways of knowing and being. Primary orality demands understanding (i.e., a capacity, an ability, and a willingness to immerse oneself totally in the event as it is enacted or unfolds) and participation on the part of all the listeners and participants (p. 156). Given the centrality of language and orality to Indigenous peoples and their knowledge(s), it is equally important to note that any change to oral traditions affects the very essence of Indigenous ways of

knowing and being (Archibald, 1990). Battiste and Henderson (2000) are adamant that "any attempt to change Indigenous language is an attempt to modify or destroy Indigenous knowledge and the people to whom the knowledge belongs" (p. 50).

The importance of language to children's growth and development cannot be overstated. It is a keystone element for their 'good care'. As such, the immersion of children into their language becomes paramount, giving them access to knowledge, and the construction of that knowledge, beyond the spoken word. This significance of language to knowledge is expressed in stories and orality.

3.2.2 Stories

Traditional stories are a form of primary orality that provides opportunities for participants to come to understand Indigenous knowledge(s). These stories demand understanding and participation, and serve to both transmit and teach Indigenous knowledge(s). They are described as specific devices containing cultural teachings and processes of living history (Cohen, 2001; Holmes, 2000; Kawagley, 1995; Sterling, 2002; Storm, 1972). Sterling (2002) writes, "Stories are mnemonic devices that help us to remember events for many decades. ... they remain alive in the present tense of the stories, reviving, restoring, and revitalizing what has been lost" (pp. 9–10). Holmes (2000) describes stories as memories of the living land that connect humans to the land through a timeless genealogical link (pp. 44-5). Kawagley (1995) defines stories as living history: "Children learn and the grown-ups are reminded of who and what they are, where they come from, and how they are to interact with others, with natural things and with spirits. This is truly living history" (p. 17). Henderson (2000a) explains how the old stories (e.g. the trickster stories of Coyote and Weeseekeechuk) focus on "the processes of knowledge . . . how to acquire relationships on every level, how properly to use them, and how to lose them" (p. 266). Cohen (2001) writes of stories as

metaphors in which the listener creates meaning by using one attribute of an experience to understand another (p. 143). In other words, stories serve a dual purpose. On one hand they are an explicit expression of knowledge. On the other hand, they are a vehicle or tool through which others may create their own understanding of Indigenous knowledge(s)— they are both content and process understood through experience.

The importance of stories for children is critical— stories offer pathways to their Elders, their history, their knowledge(s), and ultimately to their identity as individuals and members of the collective. To travel these pathways requires listeners to engage with both a story and a storyteller in a certain way so that a synergy is created for making meaning through the story, thereby resulting in meaning and understanding (Archibald, 2008). Archibald (2008) coined the term "storywork" to describe this unique experience.

3.2.3   Storytelling

The experience of listening to a story is complex. The listener engages with the story and as Cherokee scholar, Hyemeyohsts Storm (1972) writes that after we have heard a story it becomes a part of our awareness and understanding:

> Stories are like paths or Ways. Whenever we hear a Story, it is as if we were
> physically walking down a particular path that it has created for us.
> Everything we perceive upon this path or around it becomes part of our
> experience, both individually and collectively. (pp. 16-17)

Holmes (2000) offers Elders' stories as a "circular connection between the people, … the gods, and the land is forged not by information but by blood and roots. Central to this concept of blood and roots is the notion that experience is crucial to knowledge" (p. 42). She describes her experience of listening to the Elders: "It seemed as if through them, knowledge lodged in the heart of the listener, memory flowed through bloodlines, and the land was given voice and agency" (p. 40). From this experience, Holmes identifies three

categories of Elders' teachings: heart knowledge (knowledge that is passed on to others in the context of relationships and deep feelings), blood memory (knowledge forged not by information but by blood and roots, and is passed through generations of Hawaiians, uniting them with the Elders of the past), and the voice of the land (p. 42). Holmes suggests that the third category is derived from a belief that knowledge exists within a grounded cosmology, and when the Elders share their knowledge they are articulating the voice of the land (p. 46). She refers to these categories collectively as "an ancestry of experience that shapes dreams, desires, intentions, and purposeful activity" (p. 46).

Storytellers play an essential role in Indigenous societies. Sterling (2002) describes the storyteller Yetko as a "tradition-bearer, the teacher of values and morals, and the entertainer" (p. 6) whose knowledge is passed through the generations. Archibald (1990) writes that "it was the magic of the storytelling skill that allowed the thoughts and meanings to meet and create new patterns of understanding; personal and communal knowledge found a meeting place with orality" (p. 77).

It is the relationship— that is the energy between the story, the teller, and the listener— made explicit in orality that creates the space for learning and understanding to occur. Sterling (2002) writes of this experience as a "living experience." Her experience of listening to her mother's story of Yetko causes her to reflect:

> More than anything else, the story of Yetko is a personal one. She was my blood kin, an ancestress, a member of the family clan . . . teacher of my mother whose friendship and presence I can experience through my mother's stories about her. (p. 6)

She adds that Yetko and Sophie are still teaching since:

> [t]he story about them is a living tradition because they are alive in the memories and living words of the storyteller . . . the experiences they allow us to have are in the present, because as hearers we are in the present. (p. 7)

Holmes' (2000) and Sterling's (2002) reference to blood memory and blood kin begs the question: can individuals who have fragmented connections, or who have been completely disconnected from their blood memory or blood kin, come to understand Indigenous knowledge(s)? Such is the experience of some of the children that attend Aboriginal early childhood programs in Canada. As evidenced in the writings of Indigenous scholars identified earlier in this paper, there are multiple ways of coming to understand Indigenous knowledge(s). In its essence of fluid totality, Indigenous knowledge systems and worldviews are inclusive of all beings and relationships, and therefore can neither be reduced to a single way of coming to know nor be simplified to any single attribute that allows one to come to know. For those of fragmented and uneven histories, Holmes offers this solution: "If one does not have the experience, knowledge must come through the experience of the kupuna [Elders]" (p. 42), the storytellers who also have a responsibility to teach the morals and ethics that go along with that knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2000). This solution along with others is particularly important when considering colonization and its impact on Aboriginal children, their families and their communities. We draw from these storytellers, from the stories, from our past, and from our lived experience to gain understanding of Indigenous knowledge(s) and come to know and understand our world from that place. Sometimes these opportunities to learn take the form of ceremonies.

3.2.4 Ceremonies

Ceremonies (including song and dance), like stories, are explicit vehicles of knowledge that serve to teach those in the present while simultaneously connecting to the past and the future. Knowledge experienced by the heart and the mind allows learning to occur. Indigenous scholars write of the ability of ceremony participants to connect with their being,

with their ancestors, and with their spirits. Armstrong (2000) locates understanding of

ceremonies, songs, and art in the spiritual dimension:

> [Through] ceremony and the original teachings we can come to understand
> our own spirituality, or, you can call it your philosophy, of the world. If we
> look at the world through the eyes of generations past, to the time when
> ceremonies were constructed, we can begin to see how each ceremony helps
> us to sustain, maintain, and pass on those philosophical values that affirm
> family, community, and land .... The spirituality of our dances, songs, feasts
> and festivals, and ceremonies celebrate the self, the family, the community,
> and the land... [and] is about renewal and regeneration. (pp. 40–41)

She advises that "you cannot be spiritual if you are not being spiritual at the physical level, at

the emotional level, and at the intellectual level" (p. 41).

Writing of Bush Cree ceremonies, Weber-Pillwax (2001) explains that "the words,

the music, the drumming all contribute to the total experience of the individual in the

ceremony" (p. 157). She explains further that "we experience ourselves through the talking,

the dancing, the drumming, and the feasting as a physical expression of the collectivity as it

exists across time and space" (p. 160). Using dance as an example, she elaborates:

> Such events as the wihkohtowin [dance of the ancestors] provide
> powerful connections with the consciousness that bring to the individual the
> presence of all the living persons, the ancestors, and the spirits that are part
> of his or her collective family or group or community.
>
> The wihkohtowin experience of orality consciousness is one of
> healing, a reconnecting to self and to collectivity, not in a cerebral logical
> way, but at the deepest level of acting and engagement with life. It is
> psychological healing of a most intense nature: that of knowing who you are
> and where you belong. (p. 162)

Writing about the Yupiaq people, Kawagley (1995) states, "Rituals and ceremonies

enable [the Yupiaq] to recognize their own uniqueness as human beings and the

interconnectedness of all" (p. 35). Songs are another expression of Yupiaq being and

knowing. Kawagley cites the "Eskimo"[12] Orpingalik as saying:

> Songs are thoughts, sung out with the breath when people are moved by
> great forces and ordinary speech no longer suffices . . . it will happen that the
> words we use will come of themselves. When the words we want to use
> shoot up themselves— we get a new song' (qtd. in Halifax, 1979). The
> 'enlightened wisdom' of a spiritual being seems to express itself without the
> conscious effort of the recipient, the person through whom it is speaking. All
> it requires is that the person be willing to be the vehicle of expression. (p. 34)

Like stories, ceremonies offer pathways to understanding Indigenous knowledge(s) –

pathways that provide connections to the spirit, the heart, and the mind. They too are critical

to children's growth and development as fully participating citizens of their communities and

collectives.

3.2.5   Symbols

Indigenous knowledge(s) may also be learned from symbols. Kawagley (1995) suggests that

art is a symbol that makes an idea clear for a group of people. He states that "the making of

masks is an expression of what one has experienced through one of the many levels of

thinking. It is bringing into a tangible level the experience. Art is the essence of this" (p. 33).

Pueblo people express their worldview through their art, particularly their pottery (Cajete,

1994).

> In art forms such as Pueblo pottery, we are reminded of our
> connection with those things that give life to ourselves and our community.
> The creation of pottery, or any traditional art form among Indigenous people
> is filled with understanding of relationship.

> For Pueblo people, pottery is a prayer realized in physical form.
> Every step in the traditional making of pottery is a reflection of who Pueblo
> people are and their respect for life. (p. 185)

---

[12] The word "Eskimo" is a colonial term for the Inuit peoples of the north. In some cases, individuals prefer to
be identified using the colonial names of the past as did my Moshum (grandfather). He referred to himself as
an Indian, ignoring the current-day terms of First Nations, Aboriginal, or Indigenous.

Storm (1972) describes the Medicine Wheel, another symbol used to convey Indigenous knowledge(s), writing that "the Medicine Wheel can best be understood if you think of it as a mirror in which everything is reflected: 'The Universe is the Mirror of the People,' the old Teachers tell us, 'and each person is a Mirror to every other person'" (p. 5). He explains the powers of the Medicine Wheel are one of the first teachings a child learns. The teachings of the Medicine Wheel include these:

> To the North on the Medicine Wheel is found Wisdom. The Color of the Wisdom of the North is White, and its Medicine Animal is the Buffalo. The south is represented by the Sign of the Mouse, and its Medicine Color is Green. The South is the place of Innocence and Trust, and for perceiving closely our nature heart. In the West is the Sign of the Bear. The West is the Look-Within Place, which speaks to the Introspective nature of man. The Color of this Place is Black. The East is marked by the Sign of the Eagle. It is the Place of Illumination, where we can see things clearly far and wide. Its Color is the gold of the Morning Star. (p. 6)

In this context of being, Storm writes, "After each of us has learned of our Beginning Gift, our First Place on the Medicine Wheel, we then must Grow by Seeking Understanding in each of the Four Great Ways. Only in this way can we become Full, capable of Balance and Decision in what we do" (p. 6). These symbols and art forms provide more pathways to learning Indigenous knowledge(s) for children as they come to know and realize their gifts individually within their collective.

3.2.6 Revelation

Other Indigenous scholars focus on coming to understand Indigenous knowledge(s) through dreams and visions, or through "revealed knowledge." Brant Castellano (2000) writes that dreams and visions are timeless and "understood to be spiritual in origin" (p. 24). She claims "constant testing of knowledge in the context of current reality creates the applications that

make timeless truths relevant to each generation" (p. 24). Brody (1988) documents the lives

of the Beaver Indians and their ability to dream, to dream of the hunt, of trails, of trails to

heaven (pp. 45–46). However, he writes:

> ... today it is hard to find men who can dream this way. There are too many
> problems. Too much drinking. Too little respect. People are not good
> enough now. Maybe there will again be strong dreamers when these
> problems are overcome. Then more maps will be made. New maps. Oh yes,
> Indians made maps. (p. 45)

Like Brody, Kawagley (1995) writes of shamans and others with no specific training

other than having the ability to vision and dream:

> Shamans were trained to have visions via a pot of water, through an animal's
> eyes, through a star, and other means. These abilities were referred to as
> Tangruak or "pretend to see," and the visions were often brought to fruition.
> Dreams often told of the future, especially with respect to an individual's
> impending death. The shaman could tell by the picture or aura of a sick
> person whether he or she would be ill for a long time, get well, or die. (p. 32)

Children are not exempt from visions and dreams.

3.2.7 Empirical knowledge

Empirical knowledge is derived from information gained through the senses, through

experience. Little Bear (2000) states that "the only things I know for sure are the things I

experience, see, feel, and so on. The rest of it is presumption and persuasion" (p. 85). Brant

Castallano (2000) drawing upon Waldram describes empirical knowledge(s) as being:

> ... created from many observations by many persons over extended time
> periods. 'This information processing forms a constant loop in which new
> information is interpreted in the context of existing information, and
> revisions to the state of knowledge concerning a particular phenomenon are
> made when necessary.' (p. 23)

Kawagley (1995) argues that the quest for knowledge is "sought through the use of

the five physical senses, well sprinkled with intuition" (p. 18). He also writes of Elders and

others talking about the conditions of their environment, that is, their observations of the environment and when there were times of plenty and times of scarcity: "Nature would give them the indicators, as long as they were willing to observe, learn, and apply knowledge to ensure the continuation of the people" (p. 32). He includes serendipitous discoveries in his discussion, such as, for example, that polar bear fur is good for absorbing radiant energy (p. 33). Taken together, these ways of coming to understand Indigenous knowledge(s) are what he claims Yupiaq knowledge was based on: "a blending of the pragmatic, inductive, and spiritual realms" (p. 33). I am reminded of Mary Thomas's teachings in which she describes and identifies edible and non-edible plants and medicines. I asked her once how she knew all these things. She said her grandmother and mother began teaching her when she was just a little girl and continued to teach her throughout her life. I asked, "How did your mother and grandmother know?" She said, "In the old days, they used to watch the animals and what they ate and didn't eat; other information was passed to them from their ancestors and their own experiences." As I reflect on this story and experience with Mary, I am reminded of how children were taught— through stories of life that were connected to the land and everyday experience. This was her experience with her grandmother, and my experience with Mary.

3.3   Closing comments

Understanding Indigenous knowledge(s) and its place in our lives likewise allows us to understand its place in the lives of children. The relationship between Indigenous knowledge(s) and the care and education of children is critical when one considers children and their development, particularly of their identity. This individual and collective identity development may be conceptualized as being ultimately tied to the perpetuation of cultures

themselves. The nature and processes inherent in Indigenous knowledge(s) provide opportunity and elements that constitute the 'good care' of children and that may be also used to inform a theoretical and policy framework for First Nations early childhood programming in Canada. The fundamental role of language to Indigenous knowledge(s), and thus to children's learning, is of primary significance. Other elements include stories; ceremonies including feasting, songs, and dances; experiences through the senses; and revelations through dreams and visions. Each element has the potential to provide a tangible connection to the past, to the values and protocols of their cultures and knowledge systems. While these elements constitute the cultural markers that map the teachings and learning important for children and their care, how we view children also impacts their 'good care'. The early childhood setting becomes the context in which children are embedded and where they become sites of cultural transmission. With this in mind, one of the greatest challenges facing early childhood caregivers is to take principles of Indigenous knowledge and actualize them in current practice. This is a topic I explore in later chapters.

Chapter Four

A Chronicle of Undertaking this Study

Opening

The kitchen was warm when I walked into the house. Off to the left sat an electric frying pan and you could hear the fat sizzling within it. Straight ahead of me was a large rectangular kitchen table, with a wood stove nearby. It was just about suppertime and Rose's older sister was preparing caribou meat. I knew this from the fresh hindquarter leaning out of the sink.

I had not met Rose's father, but I had heard many stories about him. Rose introduced us. He was no longer a young man, but I could feel the strength still in his grip as we shook hands. I felt the look of his eyes as we sat down after much excitement about our arrival. Rose's home was located in one of the northernmost reserves in Alberta; it was late fall and we were glad to be indoors. I had come to visit Rose's father – to hear him speak of his childhood and how his parents and family cared for him many years ago. We sat at the kitchen table and shared stories of our travels and the things we had done over the past few weeks. I should say that Rose shared the stories; I only added to them when she called upon me to do so. Mostly I listened, and watched, and learned. Her father and family spoke of other family members, how soon the winter would come, and the goings on in the community. Sometimes we sat in silence, thinking about what was being said. At some point, the fat in the frying pan stopped sizzling.

Somewhere in our discussions, Rose had woven in the general purpose of our visit and how that fit with what we had been doing for the past few weeks. She turned to me and asked me to explain the specifics of our project to her father. At some point the other family members had moved away from the table and only Rose, her father, and I remained. I spoke of our project— its purpose, usefulness to the community, confidentiality, and ownership of information. In the warmth of the kitchen, in relationship with Rose and her father, it felt strange to speak of these things, as if they had no place there, as if we were insulting our relationship by speaking of them aloud. As Rose's father began to speak of his childhood, we stepped back into relationship, into visiting:

I heard the sizzling of the fat begin once more.

4.1 Introduction

Indigenous peoples have experienced Euro-western research processes since the arrival of Europeans in the Americas. Research, although not new to Indigenous peoples, has often historically and contemporarily been undertaken on and about them – not by them, for them. Indigenous scholar, Vine Deloria, (1969) writes of anthropologists in the 1960s:

> the implications of the anthropologist, if not for all America, should be clear for the Indian. Compilation of useless knowledge "for knowledge's sake" should be utterly rejected by the Indian people. We should not be objects of observation for those who do nothing to help us. (p. 98)

Some 30 years later Charles Menzies (2001) wrote "it is unfortunate that there are still many researchers who continue to conduct research on Aboriginal peoples as opposed to with us" (p. 21). Menzies, like others, argues that:

> despite nearly four decades of debate over the impossibility of objective research and the importance of a researcher's subjective location, the academic establishment still values dispassionate and "clear-headed" science above personal testimony and experience. ... Although my personal experience does not privilege my voice it does allow me to see the impact of a colonial research ideology that puts the accumulation of knowledge ahead of the interests of the people studied (p. 20).

He also reminds Indigenous academics of their responsibilities, insisting that they understand they are affiliated with mainstream institutions and located in places of power within dominant society. From this position of power, he cautions Indigenous researchers not to "expand the power and knowledge of dominant society at the expense of the colonized and the excluded [warning that] to deny the colonial legacy by not adapting our research projects to accommodate Aboriginal concerns is to participate in the colonial project itself" (p. 22).

With these individual warnings, and in spite of significant structural challenges, Indigenous research approaches have emerged and continue to do so within the academy. These approaches challenge Euro-western paradigms, offering ways that take into account

the impact of colonialism and Eurocentrism on Indigenous peoples and in doing so,

recognize and legitimize Indigenous ways of knowing and being within the academy. Linda

Smith's (1999) seminal work, *Decolonizing Methodologies*, highlights the importance of

understanding the impact of imperialism and colonization on Indigenous peoples and

research, advocating for the decolonization of Euro-western research processes. Cree

scholar Shawn Wilson (2008) draws upon Steinhauer's (2001) work to illuminate a fourth

category of research, one that is independent of Western scientific methodologies and one

that articulates methodologies and methods anchored in Indigenous knowledge(s). His

recent work also offers an Indigenous research paradigm characterized by a foundation of

Indigenous ontology, epistemology, axiology and methodology. He argues that these

concepts are interrelated and defines ontology as the relationship one has with an object. He

claims that the essence of Indigenous knowledge systems or epistemologies is the

understanding that multiple relationships make up reality, and that this reality is derived from

thinking of the world as a web of connections and relationships where nothing can be

without relationship. Axiology and methodology, according to Wilson, are based on

relational accountability. He argues that "what is more important and meaningful [than right

or wrong, validity, significance or worthiness] is fulfilling a role and obligations in the

research relationship – that is being accountable to your relations" (p. 77). Methodologies

flowing from this paradigm are ones that preserve and foster positive relationships by

employing such principles as respect, relevance, reciprocity, and responsibility. Indigenous

research paradigms, including Wilson's, also offer sites of resistance, transformation, and

change within the academy and beyond. This research study stands with these works in its

desire to support transformation and change, in this case for First Nations children, their

families and their communities.

In this chapter I consider the methods and methodology of this project. Specifically, I situate the research within an Indigenous research paradigm characterized by beliefs and values derived from Indigenous ways of knowing and being. At the onset of the chapter, I discuss the overarching theoretical principles (respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility) that guide this study and also guide the methodology and methods employed. These considerations appear in the second section "Chronicling my journey" and their implementation is evident throughout this chapter. I then present a description of the case study approach, along with a rationale for why it was selected as the most appropriate strategy for gaining information about the 'good care' of children. This is followed by a discussion about research participants and my role in the information gathering process. An integral part of applying these methods was the integration of cultural protocols. Consequently, I describe the methodology and methods, including cultural protocols of this study, through story – a story that identifies the strategies and methods, chronicles the process of undertaking the work, and makes explicit the beliefs, values, and theoretical principles guiding the study. I allow the chronology of the research activities to dictate the story's structure. Finally, I examine the qualitative methods for data collection which aligned with a case study approach. Specifically, I talk about individual interviews, focus groups, observations, document reviews, and audio-visual tape reviews. In the third section, data review and analysis follows the story with a brief discussion of accuracy, consistency, and relational accountability relative to this research. I conclude the chapter by reflecting on what I learned undertaking this study.

4.2   Chronicling my journey

To undertake this research I drew upon the teachings of Elders, my family, and my academic education. I also drew upon my experience working with Indigenous communities, including knowing that communities have distinct protocols that I had to learn about in order to establish the relationships necessary to undertake the work.

4.2.1   Descriptive case studies

I began this study believing that a descriptive case study approach was the most appropriate research strategy for undertaking this project given the phenomenon that I wanted to learn about and the nature of the research questions. In 1985, Lincoln and Guba wrote that while there are many references to case studies in the literature, there is little agreement about what a case study is. They identified different kinds of case studies as: 1) those that have different purposes, for example a chronicle of events or a document to teach with; 2) those that are written at different analytical levels that are factual, interpretive or evaluative; 3) those that demand different action from the researcher; and 4) those that result in different products (p. 361).

Three years later, Merriam's (1988) *Case Study Research in Education* defined a qualitative case study as "an intensive, holistic description and analysis of a single entity, phenomenon, or social unit. Case studies are particularistic, descriptive and heuristic and rely heavily on inductive reasoning in handling multiple data sources" (p. 16). She adds that while case studies can accommodate multiple methods of information gathering, they are anchored in real life situations. This anchoring leads to rich and holistic accounts of a phenomenon (p. 21). Merriam explains further that qualitative research, including the case study approach, also assumes there are multiple realities defined by personal interaction and perception.

These perceptions are based on beliefs, rather than facts, gathered through observation, intuition, and a sense of the natural setting (p. 17).

Stake (2000) applies Merriam's multiple realities, arguing that defining a case is not independent of the paradigm in which it is situated. In fact, depending on the worldview or situation, the same case may be seen differently depending on the audience's orientation (p. 449). He thus adds to case study description and definition, asserting that "a case study is both a process of inquiry about the case and the product of the inquiry" (p. 436).

In this research study, I drew largely upon Merriam's (1988) case study work in education partly because of its kinship with early childhood education but, more importantly, for its ability to take into account distinct paradigms. In the case of my research, this includes Indigenous ways of knowing and being, diverse contexts, and individual and collective perceptions of the world. This rationale also considers Wilson's (2008) argument for use of methods that may be borrowed from other suitable research paradigms so long as the methods fit the ontology, epistemology, and axiology of the Indigenous paradigm. He advises that "some methods and strategies have inherent in them more relationship building and relational accountability and therefore may be more attractive in an Indigenous paradigm" (p. 39). The case study approach employed in this research provides opportunity for relationship building and relational accountability. This approach afforded me a way to develop a rich narrative about Indigenous knowledge(s) and reflections on early childhood programs (particularly their structures, policies, and practices) with community members and others. Furthermore, the approach was respectful, relevant, and useful to them. Finally, and not to be underestimated, was the fact that past experience has taught me that this approach is familiar and acceptable to many Indigenous communities.

4.2.2   Research participants

Selection of research sites, and the choosing of individual participants within those sites, took into account several considerations. One of those considerations was Merriam's (1988) 'purposeful sampling.' This technique is sampling based on the assumption that one must "select a sample from which one can learn the most" (p. 48). Two distinct Indigenous groups, located in Canada and Aotearoa / New Zealand, were thus selected. Research participants were drawn from First Nations and Maori communities that had established early childhood programs and displayed evidence of language and cultural practices. In Canada, two Carrier First Nations sites located within the traditional territory of the Carrier people of north-central British Columbia were selected. In Aotearoa / New Zealand, two Tuhoe Maori sites located in the central area of the North Island – one on Tuhoe territory (Tawhaki Te Kohanga Reo – rural Ruatoki) and the other on Ngati Ana territory, although the site taught and was oriented to the Tuhoe language (Te Tumaanako Kohanga Reo Kawerau) – were selected. The Carrier peoples have established early childhood programs: a child care program (Lake Babine Nation Day Care) and a Head Start program (Tl'azt'en Head Start Program). These two sites also exhibit use of the Carrier language and continue to implement the bahlats (potlatch or governance) system in their communities. The Tuhoe Maori peoples have established Te Kohanga Reo (the language nest) programs throughout their territories, are strong in the language, and engage in the practices of the marae (sacred gathering place). From these four research sites, a total of 63 Elders (Kaumaatua), caregivers, and/or teachers, parents, key informants, and community members participated in this research (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1: Number of Research Participants by Role and Locale

Country	Canada	Aotearoa / New Zealand
Key Informants	9[13]	4[14]
Elders	7	5
Parents	22	4
Caregivers / Teachers	6	6
Total	44	19

Research participants were selected for their knowledge and expertise in Indigenous early childhood practice, policy, and service delivery within community, at a regional and national level. Key informants were those individuals whose role and/or positions included Canadian federal government early childhood program officers, Canadian provincial Aboriginal non-government organizations engaged in the implementation of provincial early childhood programs, senior community administrators, and knowledgeable community members. In Aotearoa / New Zealand, key informants were knowledgeable of regional and national development and implementation of Te Kohanga Reo. Elders and parents who participated were directly, or had been directly, involved in the respective programs, while caregivers/teachers were currently involved in the programs. Elders were also selected given their role within the collective – as keepers of cultural knowledge including the care of children.

4.2.3 My role as a researcher entering the research process

Undertaking this study demanded an awareness and understanding of both the phenomenon being studied and the ways in which information was to be gathered. The study also

---

[13] Key informants in Canada included individuals from national, provincial/regional and community perspectives.
[14] Key informants in Aotearoa / New Zealand included individuals whose expertise included knowledge of the regional and national development and implementation of Te Kohanga Reo.

demanded that I play different roles throughout the process. Some of these roles are identified by Stake (1995) as teacher and interpreter, while I also add learner, fellow community member, and peer. My role as teacher was evident, for example, when asked by community members about recent political or policy shifts or current practices. In writing the case study report, I was an interpreter offering different ways of viewing or seeing a phenomenon through words. In this way, I felt much like an artist who paints an interpretation of the world for others to, in turn, connect with and interpret in their own way. I was also a learner in this study. I am both a member of the Indigenous collective and thus, in most venues of the research, a peer with those I was interacting with. These latter roles respond more directly to Stake's discussion of relativity where he maintains that the most important choice a researcher will make is how much they will be themselves and how much that role will be determined by the immediate circumstances. Stake insists that whatever role a researcher chooses, it should be "an ethical choice, an honest choice" (p. 103). What is important in this role shifting is awareness of self and the role needed in a particular context.

For all of these reasons, it was important to know and be myself throughout this research process while at the same time taking on different roles. This was especially important in cultural ceremonies and activities. To be other than myself would be disrespectful of me and others; I would be denying my own integrity and a collective way of knowing and being which are, in turn, intricately connected to the theoretical principles underlying this study.

Indigenous scholar Cora Weber-Pillwax (2001) insists that personal integrity is a critical attribute of a researcher. She describes personal integrity as being "based on how [she] contextualizes herself in the planet, with the rest of all living things" (p. 168). In this

way, the researcher is in relationship with all aspects of the research. To not have integrity, then, would be a denial of the relationships I was engaged in throughout this research. Wilson (2008) affirms this understanding, writing that researchers are not objective and outside of the research relationship but are embedded within it. He argues that the more relationships researchers have between themselves and the phenomenon being studied, the more fully they can comprehend and understand it (p. 79). However, engaging in these relationships brings with it a responsibility, in this case a responsibility that comes with bringing a new idea into being (or articulating/making visible an existing one) within a context that respects all other relationships. It is this responsibility to ensure respectful and reciprocal relationships that becomes the axiology or the measure of a person's integrity in making the connections (p. 79).

Entering the data collection phase of this research, I was also reminded of the advice of Indigenous scholars like Smith (1999) who offers codes of conduct to follow: 1) respecting people, 2) presenting yourself to people face-to-face, 3) looking, listening . . . speaking, 4) generously sharing and hosting people, 5) being cautious, 6) not trampling over the mana (spirit) of people, and 7) not flaunting your knowledge (p. 120). I revisit my experiences undertaking this research later in this chapter.

4.2.4   Entering the community sites: Community guides and protocols

Community guides are respected members of their communities who are knowledgeable of both the ways of the community and the community's early childhood programs. They taught me about their communities prior to entering them and travelled with me as I engaged with their communities. Their presence provided me with a cloak of credibility by virtue of our relationship, and I accepted the responsibility of those relationships. I had a relationship with these individuals prior to undertaking this study, and it was because of

these relationships that I was able to engage them in undertaking this study with me. Wilson (2008) identifies this process as a cultural practice that includes proper protocols for building healthy relationships. He states that:

> One important Indigenous research practice is the use of family, relations or friends as intermediaries in order to garner contact with participants. This use of intermediaries has practical uses in establishing rapport with research participants and placing the researcher within a circle of relations. This in turn enforces the accountability of the researcher, as they are responsible not only to themselves but also to the circle of relations. (p. 129)

To enter each community in a respectful way, I learned protocols necessary for gaining entrance. My relationship and the teaching that Tina Ngaroimata Fraser, a Maori woman of the Tuhoe people, gave me was critical to my ability to work in Aoteoroa/New Zealand and her people. Appendix 1 contains a brief description of the process involved in securing permission to undertake research with the Tuhoe peoples, as written by Tina. Appendix 2 contains the letter I wrote to Tina's father, Mr. Richard Ranapia Tamehana, a Tuhoe prominent leader, and copies of the response letters I have since received from Dr. T. Black and Mr. J. Tamehana giving me permission to visit their land and their people and to learn from them.

In a like manner, I had the guidance of friends and colleagues in approaching individual communities within the Carrier Nations (in Canada), in particular the support and help of Monty Palmantier, Warner Adam, and Yolanda Spenst. In some regards, I had my own relationships with members of the community through my work in early childhood education. When approaching the Lake Babine Nation, I sent an initial e-mail to the Chief and head counselor identifying the question I was seeking to answer and asking for direction about how to approach the nation in a respectful way in order to obtain their reactions to my study question and to ascertain whether or not they would like to participate in the study.

Upon receiving their response, I prepared a briefing note and a Band Council Resolution (BCR) and presented them to the Chief and Council (see Appendix 3 for copies of the Briefing Note and BCR). The study received unanimous support from the Lake Babine Nation Chief and Council. It is significant to note that some points of discussion focused on ownership of the findings and this resulted in agreement on joint ownership of any publications resulting from this dissertation.

When entering the Tl'azt'en Nation, a similar process was followed. It began with a meeting between the band manager, senior research and program administrators, Monty Palmantier and me. Like Lake Babine Nation, I received a BCR and also agreed to adhere to the ethical guidelines of the community (see Appendix 4 for the BCR and ethical guidelines). These formal processes of entering First Nations in Canada were possible because of both formal and informal relationships I had established at individual and collective levels. Throughout this study, awareness and respect for community (including the relevance of the study to them) was at the forefront.

In addition to these collective community-specific protocols, specific UBC ethical research requirements also demanded proof of community permission to allow the study to occur as well as agreement by individuals to participate in it. These ethical requirements also focused on ensuring that individual study participants were completely informed and aware of what they were consenting to in the study (see Appendix 5 for introductory letters and consent forms).

4.2.5   Gathering information: Qualitative research methods

Qualitative data-gathering methods, which in this project involved individual and group interviews, observations, document reviews, and audio-visual tape reviews, were employed in this study. Using multiple methods to collect information is considered one of the strengths

of a case study approach (Creswell, 1998; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2003). Merriam (1988) suggests that "the depth and detail of qualitative data can only be obtained by 'getting close,' physically and psychologically to the phenomenon under study" (p. 68). She also argues that "interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behaviour, feelings or how people interpret the world around them" (p. 72).

Individual or group interviews offer opportunity for conversations with a purpose (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I prefer to understand the interviews as 'visiting' because, in addition to addressing the purpose of the study, visiting is an 'everyday' cultural process of interaction that fosters relationships based on equity and common commitment to the topics of discussion. These conversations allow entry into another person's perspective and to get close to the phenomenon for which information is being sought, in this case, the development of early childhood services, care of children, and policies and legislation that impact children's care and the services designed to serve them. Interviewees in this study were informed following the UBC ethical guidelines. Sufficient time was allowed to discuss any questions raised by study participants or clarify any necessary points. Community guides assisted by clarifying and translating when needed. In-depth semi-structured interviews were used in this research, taking into account interviewer knowledge of the subject, including an awareness of what is not known about the topic and of cultural attributes unique to the cases being studied.

My background knowledge and experience in early childhood practice and policy led me to view my relationship with the majority of interviewees as that of a peer. However, in most cases I was regarded first as a fellow Indigenous person and second, as a researcher with all of its various roles. This regard of my Indigeneity though was not automatic, particularly when working across cultures. This affirmation is bestowed by the community

and its members. The concept, then, of being an insider from one perspective (sharing an Indigenous identity) but still an outsider to the community assumes some level of collective experience and/or knowledge, but not necessarily specific cultural community knowledge and protocol.

Specific questions designed to guide individual and group interviews and discussions were developed for each group of study participants (Elders, community administrators, parents, early childhood educators, community members, and key informants) who were knowledgeable about early childhood programs at the community, regional, and/or national levels. The community questions were piloted with community members, early childhood caregivers, and parents from the local Aboriginal Head Start program to ascertain their relevance and meaningfulness for interviewees. Based on the responses, the questions and the way in which they were asked were revised. The questions were further revised after they were reviewed by community guides from the respective study sites (see Appendix 6 for final versions of interview and focus group instruments). Although the wording and manner in which the questions were asked were modified to account for cultural and protocol differences, the essence of the questions remained the same. Implementation of these methods required unique processes such as adherence to distinct protocols, 'visiting', participation of community guides, gifting, and giving back, all of which were intended to demonstrate respect, reciprocity, and responsibility. In addition to these individual and focus group interviews, I also made observations (which I have written in Chapters Six and Seven), reviewed program policy documents that are evidenced in the case studies (Chapters Six and Seven and in Chapter Five, 'Setting the Context'), and made use of audio-visual tapes of the Tuhoe Aruhei, as described in Chapter Seven.

It should also be noted that storing and use of the research participant's information adhered to the University of British Columbia Ethics Guidelines. These guidelines emphasize confidentiality, cultural safety, and future uses of the information gathered. Likewise, use of participant information also adhered to the First Nations agreements identified earlier in this chapter.

4.2.6 Gathering information: Cultural processes (community guides, visiting and stories, gifting and giving back)

I reached back in my experience to recall the teachings of my Moshum (Grandfather) who used to take me visiting. This visiting was characterized by the development of respectful, reciprocal interactions, the kinds of interactions that I needed to build in this study. Visiting generally took place in community members' homes or in a place of their choice. Visiting always included an explanation of what I was trying to learn or accomplish. Such was the case in this study. In most instances, visits occurred in the early childhood settings or in individuals' homes with the community guides present. The guides assisted in establishing the relationship between me and the interviewee(s). They provided introductions, translation, and assistance in explaining questions when needed.

Our visits began with conversations on important topics such as our families, the weather, and the land. These were followed by an explanation of what I was trying to learn. I also sought participants' permission to audio-tape and/or record in written notes the information we were going to be talking about. In most cases, snippets of information were given to me throughout our whole visit, which meant I needed to listen well the entire time. While I had developed questions to guide our conversations, inherent in seeking responses was the sharing of stories. The act of telling stories or storytelling is one of the processes through which Indigenous knowledge(s) is passed from generation to generation (Hampton,

1995; Little Bear, 2000; Cruikshank, 1990; Sterling, 2002). According to Little Bear (2000), storytelling is a very important part of the educational process. It is through stories that customs and values are taught and shared. Sterling (2002) writes that "like the grandmothers before us we can create lessons built on experience and storytelling to transmit knowledge and skills, cultural pride, and self-confidence" (p. 5). In fact, according to King (2003), "[t]he truth about stories is that that's all we are. 'You can't understand the world without telling a story,' the Anishinabe writer Gerald Vizenor tells us. 'There isn't any centre to the world but a story'" (p. 32). In most Aboriginal societies, there are hundreds of stories of real-life experiences, spirits, creation, customs, and values (Little Bear, 2000), and this was the reality for this study as well.

I needed to be patient as I listened to Elders, parents, and early childhood caregivers offer their stories. It was highlighted to me once again that even though I had focused on the interwoven questions, the dialogue around the stories were paramount – it was part of developing the relationships and understandings of each other. These stories of life experience and the collective pasts were offered during these visits rather than being elicited. The questions acted as catalysts to explicitly and implicitly encourage purposeful stories of the development of early childhood services, care of children, and legislation (see Appendix 6 for the specific questionnaires). All aspects of the process, including listening to the stories, engaging where appropriate, and the way in which questions were asked, were grounded in a fundamental belief in the centrality of relationship.

Visiting is about respect and reciprocity. It is about learning and showing patience. I showed respect by preparing for my visits by learning about the people, their land, and their protocols as best I could as an outsider; by listening with my head and my heart in their presence; and by observing and being attentive to their non-verbal teaching. I, in turn,

received respectful behaviour, ideas, and teaching. This respect and reciprocity for each other laid the foundation for trusting, lasting relationships that allowed us, in the moment, to work together, to collaborate toward a common goal.

A related aspect of respect and reciprocity within the process of visiting is the concept of gifting. There are different cultural reasons for gifting. Gifting, as Elders have taught me, is to show honour, respect, and generosity. It is not meant to be payment for a service rendered but, instead, understood as a way of showing individuals and groups my recognition and appreciation, in this case, for their contribution of knowledge, experience, and time to this study. I offered gifts at the end of our visits to participants as an outward expression of this gratitude. Through their stories they allowed me to glimpse their realities and perceptions so that I could better understand. A follow up step in the research relationship was to return the transcripts and /or recorded notes to each participant for their review (with an eye to accuracy) and to provide an opportunity for individuals to add further comments. This process of purposeful giving back occurred a second time as the dissertation was being drafted for their review, and will occur one final time when this dissertation is complete.

Visiting with Elders is unique by virtue of their special role and status within the community. Elders in many communities are considered the repositories of cultural knowledge, wise teachers, and leaders of the community. I had been taught by my Cree Moshum (Grandfather) protocols for inviting Elders to share their knowledge. This involves cultural gifting and a move to a spiritual place. Although this protocol was unique to Cree culture, I employed it in many of the communities I worked with in this research. Face to face, Elders from these communities understood the spiritual significance of my gesture as

displaying respect and honour for their role in the community, their stories, and their collective knowledge.

Food was also an important aspect of visiting – of reciprocity. In almost every community meeting (with both individuals and groups), there was a time to share food with each other. In some cases, the sharing of food was meant to welcome and honour me as a guest in their territory. The sharing of food was also a collective time when we came together to laugh and get to know each other by sharing personal stories of who we are. In community, I came to understand that sharing food is also about connection and relationship. It is about being hospitable and showing a reciprocal respect for each other.

Reflecting on these cultural processes (of employing community guides, visiting and stories, gifting, giving back and hospitality), including where I learned them and how they were used in this study, brings with it an awareness of their connection and reflection of Indigenous ways of knowing and being. It specifically highlights the theoretical principles underlying this study.

4.3 Reviewing and analyzing the information gathered

I began the analysis by reviewing my initial research questions:

1) What are some of the attributes that Indigenous peoples and communities identify as necessary for the 'good care' of their children?

2) How do government and community strategies and policies guide the development and implementation of First Nations-specific early childhood programs?

3) How can the development and implementation of Te Kohanga Reo in Aotearoa / New Zealand inform the development and implementation of early childhood programs and services within a framework for change in the Canadian context?

As much as possible, data analysis was undertaken throughout the research process with the bulk of analysis completed following data collection. Analysis is both descriptive and interpretive, and considers the original purpose of the research and the questions to be answered. The data gathered was first reviewed and categorized, taking into account recurring themes, credibility of categories with participants, uniqueness, and specific anomalies (Merriam, 1985). Conceptual categories, that is, categories evident from the data but not the data itself, were then developed. These conceptual categories include identity, the tension between language and culture, community and provincial licensing, success and utility and self determination. This development also involved interpreting the meaning of the data. The analyzed data from each case were given to individual participants from each of the respective communities and to the community guides for review and feedback, particularly in ensuring the accuracy of data analysis and interpretation.

The analysis of the data also sought to build broad philosophical or structural constructs that would reach across the case studies. Yin (2003) writes that in multiple case studies, one attempts to build general explanations across cases even though they differ in their details. Besides these categories, analysis in this study involved understanding the context and its impact on each community and early childhood program. The cross-case analysis focused on its original intent, which was to learn from the experience of others by identifying those broad structural and philosophical constructs that inform both case settings.

4.3.1 Accuracy, consistency and relational accountability

To ensure the accuracy (internal validity) and consistency (reliability) of the information presented in this study, I looked to strategies appropriate to case study approaches (that is qualitative research). Triangulation is one strategy that address both accuracy and consistency by responding to how well the study findings match the perspectives – reality and experience – of study participants and how consistent those responses are across the methods used. Merriam (1988) explains that triangulation is a strategy that takes into account the fundamental strength of case studies, that is, the opportunity to use multiple methods, stating that "the flaws of one method are often the strengths of another, and by combining methods observers can achieve the best of each, while overcoming their unique deficiencies" (p. 69). Cresswell (1998) writes that the triangulation process involves "corroborating evidence from different sources to shed light on a theme or perspective" (p. 202). Strategies offered by Merriam and Cresswell, and ones that I used to address accuracy and consistency, occurred throughout the study process. These included: (a) employing different methods such as focus group interviews, individual interviews, document reviews and audio-visual tape reviews; (b) inviting study participants to review the data and findings; (c) checking interpretations with community advisors and colleagues; (d) clarifying my own perspectives, stance, and assumptions (researcher bias); and (e) including community as much as possible throughout the research. Evidence of these strategies may be found in earlier sections of this chapter and within the case study reports themselves—Chapters Six and Seven. These strategies also fit within a broader Indigenous research paradigm, within the construct of relational accountability.

Relational accountability plays a fundamental role in this study. This construct is

embedded in an Indigenous worldview and considers the obligations of researchers to their

relationships within the research process. Wilson (2008) argues that:

> Right or wrong: validity; statistically significant; worthy or unworthy: value
> judgements loose their meaning. What is more important and meaningful is
> fulfilling a role and obligations in the research relationship— that is, being
> accountable to your relations. ... The knowledge that the researcher
> interprets must be respectful of and help to build the relationships that have
> been established through the process of finding out information.
> Furthermore the Indigenous researcher has a vested interest in the integrity
> of the methodology (respectful) and the usefulness of the results if   they
> are to be of any use in the Indigenous community (reciprocity). (p. 77)

This accountability occurs in all aspects of the study: in the design of the project, in

individual interactions, in learning collective cultural protocols, in coming to understand the

knowledge offered, in being accountable to the people with whom and for whom this study

was undertaken, and so on. I am reminded of my earlier discussion about researcher integrity

and the necessity for this relational accountability, and the responsibility that goes with

taking on such a project. There are times when I feel overwhelmed.

4.4   Closing comments

I close this section by identifying some of the challenges or concerns leveled against

case study approaches. Case studies are often criticized for their inability to provide scientific

generalizations. By definition, case studies are contextual and individualistic. As such, they

offer opportunities for powerful exploration and description, but the findings they generate

are not scientifically generalizable to the broader population (Yin, 2003). Yin does however

argue that:

> case studies like experiments are generalizable to theoretical propositions and
> not to   populations or universes. In this sense, the case study, like the
> experiment does not represent a "sample" and in doing a case study, your

goal will be to expand and generalize theories (analytic generalization) and not to enumerate frequencies (statistical generalization). (pp. 10-11)

Another concern expressed about case studies is the fact that they are time consuming, complex, and difficult. They demand a high level of knowledge (for example, of methods and of specific topics) and skill from the researcher. In this study, knowledge and understanding of Indigenous ways of knowing and being, including established relationships, were also necessary requirements for its successful implementation.

Undertaking this research, apart from being successful in achieving the purpose of this study, also enhanced my learning as a researcher. In some cases this learning affirmed my understanding and in others, deepened my knowledge of a particular aspect of the process. These areas included clarification of the relationship between the theoretical principles guiding this study and the realization of those principles in the methodology of this study. Examples of this realization are evidenced in earlier sections of this chapter. These principles also form the foundation for the claim that this study is anchored in Indigenous ways of knowing and being, and therefore employs an Indigenous paradigm for undertaking research.

This understanding is also congruent with my own view of reality. Undertaking this work has led to a much deeper comprehension of my own Indigeniety and as a result, has impacted overall understanding of my research topic including the methodology. This learning has also allowed me to explore the interface of research paradigms oriented to diverse worldviews. As a result I am even more resolved in positioning this descriptive case study approach within a larger Indigenous research paradigm.

And as I reflected upon this experience, I heard the sizzling of the fat begin once more.

CHAPTER FIVE

Setting the Context ...

OPENING

> The schools alienated Aboriginal people from their culture by
> separating children from their families, forbidding them to speak their
> languages or to honour their traditions. This has taken a toll on
> succeeding generations. For example, one generation of children were
> punished for speaking their languages; when they became parents, they
> did not teach their children their native tongue, to protect them; the
> third generation was denied an opportunity to learn their languages,
> cultures, and traditions and is now attempting to recover that
> knowledge (Assembly of First Nations, Health Secretariat, 1998, p. 5).

I am one of those children who were not taught their language. I can recall my Dad
speaking fluent Cree when he drank, but never when he was sober. I remember
watching him practice writing his name on little bits of paper, and we talked about
handwriting and learning English in school. And he always said, "I write 'good
English'" and "I speak 'good English'". And I knew that these comments were
rooted in a much larger teaching, a teaching that taught him he was not as good as
everyone else. And he accepted this, internalized it, and denied the identity of his
birth. It saddens me to think of him denying who he was as an Indian person. In my
head I understand why, but it is not so easy in my heart.

I feel the depth of his sadness when I am asked if I know my language and
I have to say "no." This comes in part from a deep and resonating understanding of
how important language is to cultures and peoples, and in part from others, both
Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, who seek to judge who is an Indian and who is not
according to their own criteria. Much has been written about colonization, yet to
live its impact is to know it to the depths of your being.

5.1   Introduction

From the time of contact, the lives of Aboriginal peoples have been dominated by attempts
to change their cultures, their ways of knowing and being— their very lives. Colonial
processes and practices, both implicit and explicit, were implemented by non-Aboriginal

peoples who encountered Aboriginal peoples in North America. Residential schools (one of

the most significant forms of colonial intervention) (RCAP, Vol.1, 1996; Haig-Brown, 1991;

Milloy, 1999), discriminatory land and territory allocations such as "Indian" reserves (Harris,

2002), and legal policies or laws such as the *Indian Act* and ongoing litigation findings that

deny Aboriginal histories or claims[15] (Armitage, 1995) were all pathways for implementing

government assimilation policies.

What is important to keep in mind is that these explicit interventions also

perpetuated an attitude that Aboriginal peoples' social constructions are uncivilized,

irrational, subordinate, and heathenistic (Raibmon, 2005). These colonial interventions and

(re)constructions impacted Aboriginal families. Witness Duncan Campbell Scott, deputy

superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs between 1913 and 1932 wrote:

> The happiest future for the Indian race is absorption into the general [white]
> population, and this is the object of the policy of our government [and] 'great
> forces of intermarriage and education will finally overcome the lingering
> traces of native custom and tradition.' (Titley, 1986, p. 34)

In Scott's statements, the collision of colonial agendas and Aboriginal

families becomes transparent. As Emberley (2005) observes, the family was the site

of paramount focus in imperialist and colonialist interventions during the nineteenth

and early twentieth centuries: "The [Aboriginal] family emerged as a material force in

the [colonial] destruction of kinship societies and their subordination, socially and

economically, to the colonial and imperial nations" (n.p.).

---

[15] For further information on the means through which Canada's legal system systematically negates
Aboriginality, see for instance: Bell, C. & Asch, M. (1997). "Challenging Assumptions: The Impact of
Precedent in Aboriginal Rights Litigation". In M. Asch (Ed.) *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law,
Equality, and Respect for Difference* (pp. 38-74). Vancouver: UBC Press; Green, J. (December 2001). "Canaries in
the Minces of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada". *Canadian Journal of Political Science*, 34:4. 715-38.

This chapter borrows from Armitage's (1995) six periods of Canadian Indian policy (Early Contact, Period of Royal Proclamation, Transition Period, Assimilation, Integration, and Self-Government Assertion) as a contextual backdrop to the emergence of First Nations-specific early childhood programs. The chapter draws upon the writings of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars and policy analysts, statistical information garnered from both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal sources, and mainstream research on the quality care of children for those aspects and activities of social policy and subsequent program development that impact Aboriginal peoples. The importance of understanding this context and reality in which we currently find ourselves, is as great today as it was at the onset of colonization. It is this understanding that begins to fill in the canvases of our reality and reveals the threads that tie us to the past as we seek to create the future. Early childhood programs, as written in previous chapters, play an important role in children's lives through the very strategy that played such a significant role in the colonization and assimilation of past generations of children— education and care. Taken together, the sections of this chapter provide a glimpse of the policy and program context in which this study is located.

5.1.1   Contact, colonization, and assimilation

First contact between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans was sporadic and occurred about a thousand years ago when Norsemen are believed to have landed and established a village in the northern parts of what is now Newfoundland. Intermittent contact between Aboriginal peoples occurred as European sailors came in search of natural resources such as fish, furs, and timber, and in the 1400s, a route to the Orient. These brief explorative voyages grew to longer encounters with Aboriginal peoples and by the time of Cartier's visits to the Maritimes and inland, trade patterns were being established. These early trade relationships between European and Aboriginal peoples were characterized by mutual cooperation and

benefit, albeit sprinkled liberally with racist stereotypes (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, pp. 99-100).

Importantly, there was a balance of power between groups rather than the imbalance that

came to define the process of settlement and land colonization (Fisher, 1992, pp. 96-7).

By the 1700s, more immigrants were arriving and the simple numerical differences

began to shift the balance of power between Aboriginal peoples and European immigrants.

Colonial societies flourished; Aboriginal societies declined. The end of the 18th and early

19th centuries saw Aboriginal peoples subordinated to colonial governments and European

ideologies. These ideologies stemmed from a scientific belief in the "evolutionary

development of human beings from lesser to greater stages of civilization" (RCAP, Vol. 1,

1996, pp. 188) to beliefs in racial and cultural superiority in non-Aboriginal people. This

period also saw the agendas of colonial governments move from protecting Indian peoples

and their lands to "civilizing" and assimilating them: "It was a policy designed to move

communities, and eventually all Aboriginal peoples, from their helpless 'savage' state to one

of self-reliant 'civilization' and thus to make in Canada but one community — a non-

Aboriginal Christian one" (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, p. 333).

One of the most paternalistic strategies taken to ensure the civilization and

assimilation of Indians was education, but not just any education — education through

residential schools. These schools received the complete support of the churches and the

federal government, both of whom believed that they were "responding not only to a

constitutional but to a Christian 'obligation to our Indian brethren' that could be discharged

only 'through the medium of the children'" (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, p. 334). The socializing

influence of residential schools made them more than just tools of social construction and

control. In effect, the schools also played a larger role in nation building by marginalizing

Indian peoples (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, p. 334).

Through most of the 19th and early 20th centuries, the Government of Canada intervened in Aboriginal families by removing the children and placing them in residential schools. These interventions were established in policy through the 1876 *Indian Act* and consolidated in 1879 by Nicolas Flood Davin's *Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half-Breeds*, in which he noted that the "call of the wigwam" would only be circumvented with Aboriginal children's removal from families and their placement into long-term boarding schools that would provide the "care of a mother" in the form of "circles of civilized care." Residential schools were officially established in 1892 with a three-pronged vision of education (as a tool of assimilation): "first, a justification for removing children from their communities and disrupting Aboriginal families; second, a precise pedagogy for re-socializing children in the schools; and third, schemes for integrating graduates into the non-Aboriginal world" (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, p. 337).

The schools were concentrated in Western Canada and were implemented through a partnership between the federal government and churches (Assembly of First Nations [AFN], Health Secretariat, 1998, p. 9). Children aged 5–15 years (with some as young as three years) were removed from their families and homes and put into the residential schools. Families who resisted risked being charged under the *Criminal Code*. While some children returned home for the summer months, others stayed at the schools year-round. The curriculum offered in the residential schools generally focused on domestic skills for the girls and farm skills for the boys. This training was intended to meet the government's requirements to provide work-related training while at a practical level help defray the operating costs of the schools themselves (Haig-Brown, 1991, p. 69). Until 1946, approximately two hours of each day were spent on reading, mathematics, and composition. This was a far cry from the five hours of each day devoted to academics in schools for non-

Aboriginal peoples (Haig-Brown, 1991, p. 66). Nowhere in the curriculum was there evidence of the children's lives prior to coming to the schools (Armitage, 1995, p. 111). At age 16, children were forced to leave.

By the late twentieth Century, residential schools were on the wane. In 1969, the government-church partnership ended, although some schools continued into the 1980s:

> In the end, the residential schools did not prepare First Nations children for life in any type of community: not for the First Nations community from which their parents originally came; not for the urbanized white communities to which they tried to go; and not for the idealized Christian community which existed only in the minds of the missionaries. (Armitage, 1995, p. 112)

The impact of residential schools on families and kinship ties was devastating. Martens, Daily, and Hodgson (1991), writing of the separation of children from their families, describe the breadth and longevity of this action:

> The structure, cohesion and quality of family life suffered. Parenting skills diminished as succeeding generations became more and more institutionalized and experienced little nurturing. Low self-esteem and self-concept problems arose as children were taught that their ... culture was inferior and uncivilized, even "savage." (p. 10)

The intergenerational impacts of the schools struck at the very heart of cultural continuity. The removal of children from their families and communities "severed the ties which guaranteed culture continuity and effectively eliminated Native forms and norms of the informal learning process" (Barman, Hebert & McCaskill, 1987, p. 144). Thousands of people alive today are past attendees of these schools, and there is ongoing litigation for damages by Aboriginal peoples against the Government of Canada and the churches. In December 2002, Canada announced the Canada's Resolution Framework. This framework:

> supports a variety of initiatives intended to provide counseling support to those who are dealing with their experiences at residential school which can help former students and their communities to learn more about their history and to honour and pay tribute to one another through commemoration. It

also provides additional options for individuals and groups to pursue legal claims for sexual and physical abuse. (Government of Canada, 2003a, p.1)

Some six years later Prime Minister Stephen Harper offered an historic formal apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools. He sought forgiveness for government's role in students' suffering and subsequent damage to Aboriginal cultures and languages.

> The treatment of children in Indian Residential Schools is a sad chapter in our history" Prime Minister Harper said. Today we recognize this policy of assimilation was wrong, caused great harm, and has no place in our country. The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks forgiveness of the Aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly. (Office of the Prime Minister, June 11, 2008)

In sum, colonial processes and practices through education strategies bound to assimilation ideologies and policies (along with other Euro-colonial interventions) simply dismissed the socio-cultural structures of Aboriginal peoples, in particular families and kinship systems, and characterized them as inherently flawed when positioned against European and colonial practices and norms. Ultimately, these processes and practices, operated through discourse and physical interventions, sought to construct, reconstruct, and conceptualize Aboriginal peoples as 'othered' in reference to (colonially defined) "normalcy", thereby creating and justifying the marginalization and continued assimilation of Aboriginal peoples.

Assimilation of Aboriginal peoples into Canadian society continued as the Canadian government's overarching policy direction until well into the 1950s and beyond. During the period of World War II, policy makers gave scant attention to Indian matters, developing only ad hoc policies. However, one significant policy direction that did arise during this time was a new direction that would achieve the goal of assimilation by turning over to the provinces responsibility for services to Indians. The overall policy goals were to erode barriers provided by the reserves and the Indians' special status (at the same time still under

the constitution) through a new policy of provincial intrusion on reserves. Although these guidelines could not ensure speedy assimilation of Indian people into the broader Canadian society, it was the alternative the Canadian government was looking for (Tobias, 1991).

After the war, Canada entered a period of renewed interest in Indian policy. This interest resulted both from public pressure to examine the plight of Indian people, some of whom had fought alongside other Canadians on the war front, and from the failure of assimilation policies (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998; RCAP, 1996, Vol. 1, p. 583). Stark differences between Indians and the broader Canadian society became evident.

Although Canada was maturing into a modern welfare state, the revisions and changes to Canadian government structure and policy continued to perpetuate the assimilation of Indians into broader non-Aboriginal Canadian society. It was during the 1940s and into the 1950s that universal programs emerged that were either funded by the federal government or cost-shared by the provinces (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998, p. 147). While these programs were meant to be universal, in reality they often excluded Indian peoples. For example, the Family Allowance Program, introduced in 1945, provided cash directly to mothers on a basis of the number of children in the family. The distribution of funds to Indian mothers was different from that of their Canadian counterparts. The Department of Indian Affairs administered funds intended for Indian mothers through local Indian Agents as an extension of welfare rations. This deviation from the overall federal program policy left Indian mothers vulnerable to local Indian agents who were positioned to withhold (or threaten to withhold) goods to exact compliance with a desired behaviour such as sending children to residential schools or failing to assure children's school attendance (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998). This program, one of the first universal programs targeted to children and families, also marked the beginning of undertaking programs for Aboriginal

children differently, albeit in this instance unfairly and unjustly, from those of broader society. This is no surprise when one considers the broader goal of assimilation inherent in Indian and social policy.

5.1.2 Integration and equality

Integration and equality policies in the 1960s sought to normalize relations with Indians by discarding assimilation and separateness (reserves) in favor of a principle of assimilation through integration and mainstreaming of Aboriginal peoples (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998, p. 22). Laws that prohibited Indians from living on reserve or from becoming citizens were eliminated. Citizenship was no longer dependent on acceptable levels of assimilation. Indians could now be Canadian citizens without being forced to relinquish Indian status (Crawford, n.d., p. 18). This new policy environment, however, continued to reflect the common assumption that to be citizens of Canada, Indians must be integrated into the broader Canadian society. The expansion of national programs administered by provincial governments became one of the most significant mechanisms through which the federal government could ensure the perpetual assimilation of the Indian peoples while at the same time reducing their responsibility for Indian peoples.

Although specific initiatives for Aboriginal early childhood programs were virtually non-existent in the 1960s, there were sporadic government-driven activities that, while not the primary focus, included preschool children. For instance, the Canada / Ontario Agreement Respecting Welfare Programs for Indians (1965) were one of those rare activities. This agreement made Ontario the only province with parental subsidies for child daycare services accessible to on-reserve Indian parents in need. In doing so, the agreement gave credence to Indian communities' expression of need for on-reserve early childhood programs while at the same time acting as a model for how services could be funded like

those of non-Aboriginal parents living in mainstream Canadian society. For some, this agreement was a double-edged sword. On one hand it meant problematically complying with provincial legislation. On the other hand, it actually allowed access to funds for child and family services.

The prevailing democratic ideologies of integration and equality of the 1960s were likewise articulated in the *Hawthorne Report* (1966), one of the first government inquiries to examine the needs of preschool Indian children. Although the focus of this study was on the socialization of Indian children and their preparation for integration into provincial education systems, the report brought the needs of these preschool children into public view. The report pointed to the inequity of service availability and accessibility between Indians living on reserve and the rest of Canada. Out of this policy context, the rationale for need, based on inequity, emerged. It would form the basis of arguments for Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs for the next two decades.

In 1969, with the transfer of services for Indians to the provinces near completion, the federal government released the *White Paper on Indian Policy* (Government of Canada, 1969). The White Paper announced the government's intention "to absolve itself from responsibility for Indian affairs and the special status of Indians and to repeal special legislation relating to Indians— that is, the Indian Act" (Tobias, 1991, p. 141) by completing the transfer of services for Indians to the provinces. Under a guise of equality and non-discrimination, this strategy argued that Indians would then receive the same services from the same sources as other Canadians. Structurally, the Department of Indian and Northern Affairs would be dismantled and the provinces would administer programs for Indian peoples except for trusteeship for Indian lands (Hawthorne, 1966, p. 392). Weaver (1981) has written that while the White Paper once again represented the federal government's

policy of assimilation; it is better seen as an experimental reformulation of that policy with the addition of the idea of termination of special rights.

Aboriginal peoples across the country protested the White Paper. They gathered in strength and formed their own organizations to respond. The Indian Association of Alberta responded in 1970 with the *Red Paper* (Indian Association of Alberta, 1970). This document described how Indian peoples with distinct cultures wished to contribute to Canadian society while at the same time exercising political and economic power at the community level. Despite this strong resistance from Aboriginal peoples from across Canada, the federal government continued to pursue its policy of assimilation under the guise of partnership, consultation, and local control tied to federal standards and laws. Components of the White Paper policy were to be broken down and implemented separately using a low-key approach so that the larger goal of assimilation was not lost (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998, p. 159).

5.1.3 Self-government efforts

According to Armitage (1995), the 1970s saw the onset of the assertion of self-government by Aboriginal peoples, albeit blurred by ideologies of integration. Weaver (1982) describes this time as characterized by experimentation (as in the reformulation of assimilationist policy in the form of the White Paper) evidenced in unique decision-making strategies aimed at providing native organizations with a greater role in federal policy making. Economically, the 1970s was both a time of general prosperity in broad non-Aboriginal Canadian society and a time of rapid expansion in programs and services for Indian peoples. Nevertheless, this time also resulted in an enhanced dependency on many programs by Indian peoples. Increased amounts of money were put into social programs, but none targeted the root dilemma of dependency. By 1978–79, Department of Indian and Northern Affairs (DIAND) program expenditures for social assistance and support accounted for 22.3% of its

budget compared to 6.6% allocated for Indian economic development (Thalassa, 1983, pp. 160-1 quoted in Di Gangis & Jones, 1998). The late 1970s saw a shift from the development of social welfare programs and increased expenditures to a time of evaluation and accountability (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998).

Job-creation strategies characterized the 1980s, and repatriation of the constitution, land claims, and Aboriginal rights, along with fiscal restraint, improved federal-provincial relations (Di Gangis and Jones, 1998, p.163). National Aboriginal political organizations continued to grow and develop expertise in lobbying for their rights (Howlett, 1994, p. 638) while the courts held views on Indian matters differing from those of the federal government. Public support for Aboriginal people and their struggles increased across the country. Non-Aboriginal organizations pressed the government to address Aboriginal rights to land and self-determination.

Following the 1980 Quebec referendum, and the failure of the first ministers' conference on the constitution, the federal government in 1982 decided to repatriate and amend the constitution. In the repatriation process, Aboriginal leaders were able to successfully ensure that the *Constitution Act, 1982* would contain sections that would recognize Aboriginal rights and ensure that individual rights could not annul or diminish Aboriginal collective rights. It was in the midst of this change and recognition of Aboriginal rights that Brian Mulroney's Tory government was elected in 1984. The Constitutional Conference of 1983 had resulted in three more First Ministers' Conferences in 1984, 1985, and 1987. The focus of these conferences was Aboriginal self-governance. Aboriginal groups came to the negotiations with the position that the right to self-government was neither delegated nor constitutionally created, but inherent. Consensus could not be reached, and as

a result, there were no further amendments to the constitution in any of the three First

Ministers' Conferences (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996).

The Tory platform of reduced government spending and overall reduction in

government's role and size mirrored the call for fiscal restraint that started in the 1970s. The

Task Force on Program Review, established in 1985, provided the federal government with

the rationale it needed to reduce programs to Indians, thereby reducing expenditures and

invoking provincial government and the private sector with regard to their involvement in

delivery of Indian programs and services. At the same time, the government sought to pass

on its responsibility for Indians and to limit expenditures to Indian communities, (in the

guise of local control), thereby forcing Indian governments to resolve current and historical

problems themselves (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998).

This report was met with great resistance from many Indian groups across the

country. Unlike in the 1960s, First Nations people were more politically skilled at defending

and promoting their unique rights and interests. As Weaver (1986) writes, formal

announcements of policy without prior consultation (such as those Nielsen planned) were

not destined to elicit Indian consent (p. 30). She points to the way in which the policy was

developed as its downfall:

> The Nielsen Task Force on Native Programs, like the 1969 White Paper, was
> mounted at the cabinet level in the context of government priorities,
> removed for the "realpolitik" of the department's relations with Indians and
> the expectations raised among them by new, well-intended ministers. Like
> the White Paper, the task force operated in isolated secrecy to its own
> detriment and that of the government. In both instances, old bureaucratic
> advice found new political receptivity at the cabinet level where it influenced
> the course of policy development, only to be denounced by Indian people. In
> both cases, the episodes of deception fortified the institutionalized distrust of
> government among Indians in regard to policy content and process. (p. 29)

Weaver (1986) also coined the concept "foundation policy", which she describes as the government's first expression of policy reform in the field (p. 29). These polices were generally informed by a minister's (and his or her advisor's) unmasked attitudes and values which become viewed as the real agenda. It was assumed that these values and attitudes would likely shape any new policy development. These were also the policies that become the benchmarks against which government declarations earn or do not earn credibility (Weaver, 1986).

Despite resistance from Aboriginal peoples, Indian Affairs began a process of devolution in November 1986. The federal government emphasized the benefits of this new policy direction for First Nations peoples as local control, more flexibility in program expenditures, certainty in funding levels, etc. These advantages also benefited the federal government as it was seen by the general public to be transferring responsibility to Aboriginal peoples, thereby being responsive to their requests. At the same time, the federal government would become less accountable to Aboriginal peoples.

In the meantime, the drive for Aboriginal self-government continued. The *Meech Lake Accord* was signed in 1987. Although the Accord resulted in Quebec being recognized as a distinct society, it did not address Aboriginal and treaty rights. The Accord, a constitutional resolution, was defeated in the provincial legislatures: "Aboriginal peoples were unable to have their nation-to-nation relationship recognized, and Quebec was unable to have its distinctiveness as a society recognized" (RCAP, Vol. 1, 1996, p. 213). While these moves toward the recognition of First Nations people characterized the 1980s and onward, as Armitage (1995) writes:

> [The moves] exist alongside government actions which suggest that the objective of assimilation remains deeply rooted in Canadian Indian policy. For example, the Indian Act, 1951, is still the formal basis for policy. Today, this statute is administered in a manner that permits local decision-making

and autonomy at the band level— but what can be permitted can also be withheld. (p. 82)

Economic trends, along with assertions of Aboriginal organizations and individuals for the recognition of Aboriginal peoples, are reflected in the rationales used to establish early childhood programs (with child daycare being the first of those Aboriginal-specific programs) in Aboriginal communities. The rationale shifted from arguments of equity to the creation of links between employment, education, and early childhood. This underscored further an overarching climate of fiscal restraint along with a demographic change in both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal women's participation in the workforce. One of the first national activities to highlight the relationship between employment, education, and early childhood was the 1984 Liberal government National Task Force on Child Care, which gave nation-wide recognition to the need for "Native" child care. The report of the Task Force recognized that Native communities' needs for child care support were similar to those of the general population: namely that quality child care services would "allow parents to seek and maintain gainful employment... at the same time providing the opportunity for them to preserve and maintain their language and cultural traditions" (Status of Women Canada, 1986, p. 87).

As Aboriginal organizations developed political expertise and became more vocal, however, rationales began to emerge that were more holistic and emphasized the identity and socialization of children. For example, in 1986 Native Women's Association of Canada presentated to the House of Commons:

> The reason why child care is so important is because of the nature of our families, of the social and economic conditions of our men and women. Our children require child daycare so that we can break the cycle of poverty, we can break the cycle of alcoholism, but most important so we can pass on our culture, values and language. Without child care services designed by us for our children, in which Elders tell our children their history and assist in the

teaching of our children their traditional languages and values, we will only continue to suffer racism, assimilation, and language loss. Our children will be more alienated as they grow up and the cycles of poverty, of violence and of abuse will continue. (Native Women's Association of Canada, 1986, p. 7)

In response to the need for early childhood services by Aboriginal peoples, the federal government began to consider their requests in broader early childhood initiatives. In 1987, the Progressive Conservative government announced a National Child Care Strategy. Part of this strategy was a seven-year contributions program, the Child Care Initiatives Fund (CCIF). The fund was designed to encourage and evaluate child care innovations and to enhance the quality of child care in Canada. Although the CCIF had Aboriginal child care as one of its priorities, the fund was not designed to support the establishment or delivery of especially Aboriginal child care services. However, it provided an opportunity for Aboriginal groups to access funds for a variety of projects including national child care inquiries; regional- and community-based needs assessments; development of formal training programs, program support materials, and culture and language curricula; and a wide range of service models. The Government of Canada stated of the program:

> CCIF funding has enabled some (Aboriginal) communities to test and develop community and culturally appropriate standards for child daycare services. Other projects have shown how language and culture are not only critical elements of Aboriginal child care programs, but also a means of reviving and retaining language and culture in communities. Most significantly, these initiatives have shown how child daycare can play a role in achieving community wellness. (Human Resources Development Canada, January, 1994, p. 1)

Despite these activities, most Aboriginal communities did not reap the benefits of the limited funding available, nor was federal funding allocated for the development of Aboriginal child care services. However, one of the most significant benefits of the CCIF was the opportunities it provided for Aboriginal peoples to identify the nature and purpose

of child care services in their communities. Specifically, the CCIF supported the creation of Aboriginal-specific documents and research projects. For example, one of the first national Aboriginal studies to be funded by CCIF was The National Inquiry into First Nations Child Care undertaken by the AFN in 1989. This report stressed the importance of First Nations child care in providing children with an early sense of security, stability, motivation, and pride. It also stated that child care should be regarded as a basic social service available to all parents. More importantly, it regarded child care as holistic and saw its intent not only as addressing economic barriers to employment and training, but also as having the potential to be a vehicle for social change. For the first time, Aboriginal people had the opportunity to write about themselves, their communities, and their vision for their children and their children's care. Products of the CCIF would be used to form the basis of arguments for the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood services in years to come.

Akin to the on-reserve experience, little focus or attention was given to the unique needs of Aboriginal children and families residing in off-reserve communities. In some cases it was assumed that these children and families, once off reserve, would simply use the programs and services of broader Canadian society. There were no comprehensive studies undertaken to ascertain the child care needs of these families for their children until 1988 when the Native Council of Canada undertook such a study. This report states: "Cultural appropriateness is sorely absent in present childcare services. Emphasized is the fact that a cultural foundation in child care is a priority and a base from which any structure or program must be developed" ((Native Council of Canada, 1990, p. 35). Like their on-reserve counterparts, Aboriginal off-reserve organizations argued for early childhood programs that would meet the unique cultural needs of their peoples.

5.2 Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs emerge

I didn't think I would be accepted into the program, after all, who would want a barmaid working with their children? These were my thoughts as I awaited my interview with the Chair of the early childhood development program at the college located nearest my home. Little did I know that the program had to accept me because of my standardized test scores. Still today, I hope that was not the only reason they granted me entrance.

Ultimately, I came with a particular history, including an academic background and a lifetime of experience as an Indigenous person. It was this experience coupled with my new knowledge of early childhood education that led me on this life journey. The following stories are derived from national and provincial program documents along with my recollections of participating at both levels of government (not as a member of government but as a member of the related advisory committees) in the development of the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative and the Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program nationally and provincially.

As the seeds of need that Aboriginal-specific early childhood services had sewn in the 1960s, '70s, and '80s took root, Aboriginal-specific early childhood services began to emerge in the 1990s. Children's rights were also being addressed during the early 1990s. Following Canada's hosting of the 1990 World Summit for Children, the Government of Canada initiated a five-year National Plan of Action entitled Brighter Futures. This initiative, announced by the federal government in 1992, comprised two components. One component was designed for First Nations children and families residing on reserve (Brighter Futures). The other, the Community Action Plan for Children (CAPC), was created for Aboriginal children and families living off reserve or outside of Inuit communities. These five-year initiatives sought to employ a community-determined approach to supporting the well-being of Aboriginal children and families living both on and off reserve. The primary focus was on the developmental needs of children and youth between the ages of 0 and 23

years in the areas of community mental health, childhood injury prevention programs, healthy babies programs, parenting skills, and solvent abuse. Brighter Futures and CAPC provided, and continue to provide, opportunities for communities to begin to address some of the complexities of caring for their children in a more holistic way— that is, having the ability within a single program to address multiple needs.

This was also a time of building new relationships between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples. In 1991 The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was established in order to undertake this mandate. Constitutional talks began again, this time with the full participation of Aboriginal people. The constitutional conferences of 1992 resulted in the *Charlottetown Accord*, although once again Aboriginal peoples failed to gain recognition for their inherent right to self-government. In 1993, a Liberal government under the leadership of Jean Chretien was elected. In addition to the financial problems that the new government faced, there was a continuing need to address federal-provincial relationships. As in the 1980s, program reviews sought to cut government spending, thereby reducing the deficit and downsizing government. Also, as in the past, neither review considered Aboriginal rights, land claims, or fiduciary obligations, nor were Aboriginal peoples consulted. Government commitments articulated in 1993 in the *Creating Opportunity: The Liberal Plan for Canada* (*Red Book*) (Platform Committee, 1993) "were considered not *Red Book* commitments but *Red Book* pressures in the context of Program Review and subordinated to the overall imperative of reducing costs and reducing federal presence" (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998, p. 176). These budget cuts, unilateral decision making, and off-loading of federal responsibilities— including services for Indian peoples— onto provincial governments, significantly impacted relationships between the federal and provincial and territorial governments " (Di Gangis & Jones, 1998, p. 176).

In the midst of these *Red Book* commitments was a promise to create new child care

spaces in Canada. However, there was no mention of spaces specifically for on-reserve child

care, although there was a promise of an Aboriginal early intervention program. The

following year, then Minister Axworthy's *Improving Social Security in Canda: A Discussion Paper*

(1994) restated the federal government's child care commitment, including First Nations and

Inuit communities (Human Resources Development Canada, 1994, p. 36). Out of these

federal government commitments emerged the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative

(1995) and the Aboriginal Head Start Initiative (1995). For the first time, formalized

Aboriginal-specific (although Head Start had been adapted from the US Head Start

program) early childhood programs and services became a reality in Canada.

5.2.1   First Nations and Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI)

The FNICCI (1995) had a mandate to create 6,000 new child care spaces in First Nations

and Inuit communities. The initiative came with a fiscal commitment of $72 million in the

first three developmental years and $36 million ongoing thereafter. The services envisioned

for this initiative were to represent a new way of doing business with First Nations and Inuit

peoples. The programs were to be delivered and managed by communities, so that

communities could develop services in a way that reflected their culture, values, traditions,

and priorities. The program was to be First Nations and Inuit directed, designed, and

delivered from the start, and in this context, the Minister invited First Nations and Inuit to

be directly involved in the design of the Initiative prior to his return to cabinet to seek

approval for the program.

In response to the funding announcement and the government's commitment to a

new way of doing business, federal officials together with the Assembly of First Nations, the

Native Women's Association of Canada, and Pauktuutit (which was mandated to work with

communities on child care issues in Inuit communities) established the Joint First

Nations/Inuit/Federal Child Care Working Group. It was to be comprised of diverse

technical experts from First Nations and Inuit communities and be co-chaired by the three

national Aboriginal organizations and Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC). I

was one of those "experts". This group was mandated to explore options on the basis of

their experience and knowledge of child care, consult with community members, discuss

ideas with provincial and territorial representatives, and prepare recommendations for

designing the First Nations and Inuit Child Care Program and Funding Framework. These

would be the basis for the minister's approach to cabinet to seek approval for that program

(Joint First Nations/Inuit/Federal Child Care Working Group, 1995). The First Nations and

Inuit Child Care Program and Funding Framework summarized this new way of doing

business by government this way:

> Direct participation by First Nations and Inuit technical experts in the design
> process of a new program within the Department, prior to Cabinet approval,
> represents an improved and innovative approach to program design within
> the federal government. The technical nature of the design process enabled
> members to take an apolitical approach so that deliberations could focus on
> what works best at the community level for children. The Working Group
> was committed from the outset to the interests of children, families and
> communities. At the same time, First Nations and Inuit members were
> keenly aware that their input was primarily based on their individual expertise
> and most did not have the capacity to "represent" First Nations/Inuit
> leadership in the regions. (Joint First Nations/Inuit/Federal Child Care
> Working Group, 1995, p. 3)

The question of representation was a significant consideration for me. Too often in

the past, Aboriginal people had participated in federal government processes in good faith

only to find their participation misrepresented as "consultation" or "involvement of

Aboriginal peoples", i.e., as representative of all Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Cardinal,

1969). I recall articulating clearly (as did other members of the Joint Working Group), that I

did not, and could not, "represent" the First Nations leadership or Aboriginal peoples of Canada. As a First Nations person on one of the federal government's technical advisory committees or working groups, one is always in the dilemma of being there to ensure there is Aboriginal voice while running the risk of one's very presence being represented by government as engaging or consulting with the overall Aboriginal community. And for some, at a very pragmatic level, presence in these initiatives may ensure or improve chances of receiving program funding. Given that there is never enough funding, competition for limited resources often results in divisions among Aboriginal peoples which can result in even greater discord among them.

The curriculum of the proposed Child Care Initiative, while not articulated in the same manner as that of public schooling, was instead based on broad program principles that were to guide the care and education of young children aged 0–6 years. Consequent programs were to observe the following guiding principles:

1. They would be First Nations and Inuit directed and controlled.

2. They would be community based, holistic, and focused on child development.

3. They would deliver quality of service inclusive of: child/staff ratios, standards, regulations and licensing, training, environments, administration, funding, programming, and family and community involvement.

4. They would be inclusive, comprehensive, flexible.

5. They would be accessible.

6. They would be accountable.

7. They would be affordable. (Joint First Nations/Inuit/Federal Child Care Working Group, 1995, pp. 14–15)

While these principles embraced concepts such as holism, control by First Nations and Inuit communities, and family and community involvement, they also set parameters that were doorways through which government could maintain control and (when read skeptically) continue to assimilate First Nations children. Mechanisms such as accountability, standards and regulations, and licensing provide these pathways. In fact, in British Columbia, First Nations programs and services were required to comply with the provincial child care standards and regulations in order to receive funding. Many of these provincial standards and regulations are in discord with First Nations beliefs and values, protocols and traditions, two examples being the prohibition of serving traditional foods and adherence to specific age groupings of children. These mechanisms are deeply rooted in colonial paradigms and subsequent policies which continue to take form in contemporary guises and continue to influence the lives of our children.

A decade later, the FNICCI, now a full-fledged program, still makes no mention of First Nations and Inuit assuming control of child care services. There remains no emphasis on a holistic culturally-based approach to programs for children. Rather, there continues to be a focus on parental support for employment and or education. This positioning of a decade ago was not the intent envisioned by the technical working group. They saw a program designed to support families' and communities' visions for the optimal growth, development, and well-being of their children. The principles and values underlying the program speak to a holistic approach steeped in culture, language, and values of the people. However, given the political direction of the day and its emphasis on employability and education, the FNICCI was positioned in its proposal to cabinet as a support to parents who wanted to be employed or participate in educational activities. This positioning was meant to ensure cabinet approval of the program. Today this emphasis remains.

5.2.2 Regional implementation of the FNICCI

The FNICCI was implemented across the country using a variety of existing structures in each province and territory. In British Columbia, the Assembly of First Nations was initially charged with rolling out the First Nations and Inuit Child Care Program. Early on, this task was passed on to the First Nations Summit Child Welfare Committee which eventually morphed into the First Nations Day Care Committee and finally into the British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society (BC ACCS). In 2000, situating child care as support for parental employment or parental education once again arose to haunt those who believed that it was more than that. This positioning of child care served to support rationales for the shift, in B.C.'s case, from BC ACCS, a child care-specific non-governmental organization, to the B.C. Aboriginal Human Resource Development Agreement Holders (AHRDA), a government-sponsored entity focused on employment and education. In sum then, the Child Care Initiative went through significant structural change at the national and B.C. provincial levels and, ultimately, at the community level.

The Federal First Nations and Inuit Program and Funding Framework offered minimal guidance for implementing the program, but no concrete policies or formal introduction to it. Each province had to determine how best to implement the program in its communities. In B.C., a Request for Proposals (RFP) was developed and put out to all 203 First Nations communities. The option to universally fund all communities was impossible, given their sheer number and the amount of funding received. In those days, the funding received would have covered approximately eight percent of the total need.

An initial provincial information meeting was held to introduce the program to the First Nations of British Columbia and to encourage them to respond to an RFP that had very short timelines. These timelines were a result of the need to distribute significant

121

amounts of funding to the communities within the last two months of the fiscal year. Fiscal

year-end allocation of funds, to be spent responsibly in a very limited time frame, has been

the history of many First Nations programs and the theme of criticism from First Nations

communities to government in many forums. Non-compliance would mean losing funding

intended for children. As a consequence of this limited time frame, the reality was that

criteria for acceptance of proposals and distribution of funds was developed as the RFP and

process of implementation unfolded. Over the first three (developmental) years of the

program, policies continued to be refined and developed. Provincial implementation policies

mirrored, as closely as possible, those proposed strategies and approaches presented in the

national program and funding framework. These strategies included requiring provincial

licensing which then tied it to funding and, ultimately, a community's ability to access the

program. Funding to communities also mirrored the proposed funding formula presented in

the program and funding framework. In retrospect, even though the program was (and

continues to be) implemented by First Nations entities at the provincial level,

implementation processes continue to be challenged by their inadequate funding (to meet

the needs of communities) and overall lack of First Nations community involvement and

direction.

5.2.3   Aboriginal Head Start

In 1995, the then Health Minister Dianne Marleau announced the Aboriginal Head Start

Urban and Northern Initiative (AHSUN). This $83.7 million, four-year, early intervention

initiative fulfilled the federal government's commitment for an early intervention program

that would serve Aboriginal parents and children living in urban and large northern

communities. Unlike the FNICCI, this program relied on the more traditional process of

federal program development, in which community experts were engaged after cabinet

approval and then primarily to discuss and advise on the implementation of the program at the community level.

The same angst I felt when participating on the Joint First Nations/Inuit/Federal Child Care Working Group returned when I was invited to participate on the National Advisory Committee for the Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Initiative. This time my angst went beyond community engagement to examining structural intent. The AHSUN Initiative was modeled in large part after the US Head Start system beginning with a intervention rational for families in need. Supporting those in need using a deficit rationale often results in masking individual and collective strengths. The US model of Head Start addresses this need for intervention by attending to the social competence of children of low-income families. Social competence here refers to children's ability to effectively deal with their current environment as well as their school responsibilities later in life (Mallory & Goldsmith, 1991). Today, US Head Start continues emphasizing school readiness (US Department of Health & Human Services, 2009). What is not necessarily focused on or structurally supported is the cultural diversity of the children and families the program serves.

The AHSUNC differs from the US model of Head Start most significantly by the addition of 'language and culture' to program components focused on education, health and social development. The language and culture component provides opportunity for addressing cultural diversity and ensuring individual and collective identity development. Yet, in implementation, some components are emphasized over others. Education or school readiness is one such component (AHSOR Program, 2001-2002 Annual Report, p. 3; British Columbia First Nations Head Start (BCFNHS), Head Start Mandate). Availability of resources, ease of assessment and evaluation, parental desires, and the relationship of early

childhood programs to the formal school system supports this emphasis on school readiness

not unlike that of the US Head Start program. Of concern is a focus on non-Aboriginal skills

and knowledge rather than on the enculturation of children into their collective culture.

In 1999, the Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program (AHSOR) was announced.

This program, an expansion of the Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Initiative

(1995), was designed to support First Nations children and families living on reserve through

locally controlled and designed early-intervention strategies:

> The Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve initiative is designed to
> prepare young First Nations children for their school years, by meeting their
> emotional, social, health, nutritional and psychological needs.
>
> This initiative encourages the development of projects that are
> comprised of the following program components: culture and language,
> education, health promotion, nutrition, social support and parental
> involvement.
>
> The program encourages the development of locally controlled
> projects in First Nation communities that strive to instill a sense of pride and
> a desire to learn; provide parenting skills and improve family relationships;
> foster emotional and social development and increase confidence. It is also
> designed to assist parents to enhance their skills which contribute to their
> child's healthy development. (Health Canada, 2005, p. 5)

Like its sister program, the AHSUNC (but unlike the FNICCI) the AHSOR followed a more

typical approach to program development by establishing its advisory committee after the

Memorandum to Cabinet had been approved. Within the parameters of the established

AHSOR program framework (including the six common Aboriginal Head Start

components), implementation processes for the principles and guidelines, evaluation

strategies, and curriculum considerations were reviewed, revised, and developed by the

national advisory committee.

5.2.4 Regional implementation of the AHSOR program

The AHSOR Program shared a similar, although not identical, implementation history to that of the FNICCI in B.C. Funds for implementing the program in B.C. flowed from the federal government to the regional[16] First Nations/Inuit Health Branch (FNIHB) office. Like the FNICCI, the AHSOR Program has never been a universal program. As a result, First Nations communities across B.C. once again entered into a competitive, proposal-driven process to access funding. In early 1998, all First Nations communities were sent information so that they could apply for a community Head Start program should they choose. The communities were to undertake an assessment intended to ascertain the need and capacity of the community to implement a Head Start Program. Regional information sessions including proposal-writing workshops were offered throughout the province for communities interested in applying. Early on in the implementation process, the regional FNIHB established, in partnership with the B.C. First Nations Chief's Health Committee, a Regional Advisory Committee (RAC). The inaugural RAC was comprised of First Nations Elders, child care specialists, representatives of the Chiefs' Health Committee, and officials from different government departments (BCFNHS Program, 2001, p. 6). As the RAC evolved, so did its membership. In 2001, five community program representatives from each of the province's five regional health zones were added to the committee. There were, and continue to be, challenges in communication with individual communities in the regions. Lack of resources and geographic distances pose significant barriers. With involvement of the RAC in proposal selection in this first fiscal year (1998/1999), 25 community programs were funded— albeit at the end of the fiscal year and within a very short time frame. All

---

[16] There are seven Ministry of Health (First Nations Inuit Health Branch) regional offices across Canada. The B.C./Yukon region comprises the Province of British Columbia and the Yukon Territory.

program contribution agreements were between the FNIHB and First Nations communities. In this case all communities are directly accountable to government for their funding.

As this program development was occurring, RCAP was released. It reaffirmed the need for specific Aboriginal child care services, stating that child care is viewed as a means of reinforcing Aboriginal identity— instilling values, attitudes, and behaviours that give expression to Aboriginal cultures. Aboriginal people also want to prepare their children for stronger academic performance:

> [b]ut their concerns go beyond a singular focus on cognitive development. They recognize the need of families for support and respite while they struggle with personal and economic problems. They want to see early identification of children with special needs and provision of appropriate care and parent education in the community. They see high quality child care as a necessary service for parents undertaking training or gaining a foothold in the work force. (RCAP, Vol. 3, 1996, p. 449)

In the wake of the development of these three major national Aboriginal early childhood initiatives in the 1990s came the release of *Whispered Gently Through Time, First Nations Quality Child Care: A National Study* (Greenwood & Shawana, 2002). With few research studies or policy inquiries documenting First Nations' community voices in defining and articulating a vision for the quality care of their children, and given the focus on Aboriginal early childhood programs, this study sought both to examine implementation models for the development of First Nations quality child care programs and to develop options for First Nations jurisdiction in child care. The study found that a First Nations quality child care program would: (a) provide safe, loving, and nurturing care for children, (b) meet the needs of the children, families, and communities, (c) facilitate the passing on of the culture and language from generation to generation, (d) provide children with opportunities to learn their culture and language so they are instilled with a sense of pride about who they are, (e) foster all aspects of children's growth and development, and (f) give children

opportunities to learn and develop school readiness skills (Greenwood & Shawana, 2002).

The context in which these attributes were expressed may be summarized in two thoughts: first, that formalized child care services were new to many communities; and second, that First Nations must have control over the development and delivery of child care services in their communities so as to safeguard against policies of assimilation and the repeat of residential school experiences (Greenwood & Shawana, 2002).

This research study was also unique in that it began to examine the concept of "quality" care of children relative to First Nations. However, the study stopped short of examining care concepts in-depth, although it does reflect the broader policy directions evident in the Aboriginal policy and program development of the day. In short, exploration of the quality care of First Nations children mirrored that of broader society's focus on the quality care of children.

5.3   Opportunities and growth, integration and coordination

In the late 1990s and into 2000, along with the recognition of and significant increase in the attention given to Canadian children, including Aboriginal children, there was also an apparent shift in government arguments and rationales to justify the need for early childhood programs and services. Arguments that had previously focused on the need for equity and employment support began to shift to acknowledging the unique circumstances and lives of Aboriginal children (McKenzie, 1991) as well as their needs for healthy growth and development. For example, child development experts argue that loving care, social interaction, and stimulating environments are important for promoting all aspects of brain development.

As the rationales of the day shifted, so too did the direction of the policies guiding these programs to a rationale of integration and coordination of programs and services for young Aboriginal children. In January 1997, the federal, provincial, and territorial (FPT) governments agreed to work together toward the well-being of Canada's children. In December of the same year, the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Council on Social Policy Renewal agreed to undertake the development of a National Children's Agenda. The foundation for the National Children's Agenda is a framework identifying the following intents:

1. to develop long-term goals and a plan for achieving positive outcomes for young Canadians
2. to establish common FPT priorities for action
3. to provide a basis for coordinated and integrated efforts and partnerships among many sectors which share responsibility for policies, programs and services for children and youth. (National Children's Agenda, 1999, p.2)

It is interesting to note that documents supporting and articulating the agenda made little reference to Aboriginal children, despite the fact that the agenda would impact their lives significantly. Specifically, the Children's Agenda Framework (National Children's Agenda, 1999) made only one reference to Aboriginal children:

Children have a special place in Aboriginal cultures and are the hope for a strong future for Aboriginal peoples in Canada. Aboriginal children should grow up in an atmosphere that respects their unique history, recognizes their identity and values, and enables them to draw on the inherent strengths of Aboriginal communities and traditions. (p. 7)

In September 2000, the First Ministers announced the Early Childhood Development Agreement (2000) (ECDA) that carried with it a fiscal commitment of $2.2 billion over five years for early childhood development programs in the provinces and territories. The agreement provided funding for the implementation of four broad themes:

(a) healthy pregnancy, birth, and infancy, (b) parenting and family supports, (c) early childhood development, learning and care, and (d) community supports. Specifically, the investments were intended to result in better access to services, including prenatal classes and screening, preschool programs, and child care and parental information (Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement, 2001, p. 1).

As part of the ECDA, the First Ministers also agreed to work with Aboriginal peoples to find practical solutions to address the developmental needs of Aboriginal children. This strategy included several new federal early childhood development investments for Aboriginal children (Government of Canada, 2002). These investments were consistent with commitments outlined in the January, 2001 Speech from the Throne (Government of Canada, 2001), wherein the government articulated a commitment to work with First Nations to improve and expand the early childhood development programs and services available in First Nations' communities. The 2001 Speech from the Throne also committed to significantly expand the Aboriginal Head Start program and reduce the number of newborn babies afflicted with fetal alcohol syndrome. These commitments were reiterated in the 2002 Speech from the Throne (Government of Canada, September 2002), along with a new commitment to support the special learning needs of First Nations children. These recent Speeches from the Throne, more than at any time in the past, recognize the unique needs and circumstances of Aboriginal children in Canada. While there is a gaining recognition of this difference, programs and policies specifically for Aboriginal communities and their children continue to reflect the overall direction of broader society.

5.3.1 "Single window" approach in early childhood development

Another key feature of the 2002 budget was a commitment to support the development of a "single window" approach to early childhood development programming for Aboriginal children. The overall goal of this approach is to ensure coordination between federal early childhood development programs for young Aboriginal children and their families. This federal government emphasis on a single window approach also fulfilled the Federal/Provincial/Territorial Council on Social Policy Renewal's (1997) commitment to reduce overlap and duplication among programs and services. Six specific results are anticipated from the implementation of a single window approach:

1. an integrated system at the community level
2. community-based decision-making
3. flexibility and responsiveness to diverse needs
4. improved outcomes and accountability
5. reduced administrative burden on communities
6. a foundation for other programs (Health Canada Coordinating Committee on Children, November, 2002)

It is interesting to note that early childhood programs and services in broader society were not required to use a single window approach to the implementation of early childhood programs. This requirement, for Aboriginal peoples, is reminiscent of the budget reduction strategies of the 1980s and 1990s.

In October 2002, cabinet authorized HRDC, HC, and Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) to jointly implement the federal Early Childhood Development Initiative for Aboriginal Children (Health Canada, 2002). Under this authorization, there was a commitment to return to cabinet by March 2004 in order to propose options for a coordinated approach to early childhood development programming (Government of Canada, 2002). In preparation for their return and report to cabinet, the three federal

ministries of HRDC, HC, and INAC collaboratively undertook several initiatives, including

an environmental scan led by HRDC. The scan was designed to

1. provide information on existing programming;
2. identify best practices in early childhood development;
3. verify capacity at the community, regional and national levels; and
4. share innovative approaches to integration and coordination.
   (Government of Canada, 2002)

INAC took the lead in implementing early childhood development pilot sites. Those

pilot sites focused on three areas: (a) assessing community planning that will provide lessons

on joint planning and priority setting processes at various levels; (b) testing evaluation tools

within four sites, each having diverse early childhood development programs and unique

community settings in order to ascertain the feasibility of establishing common measurable

outcomes of a range of programs and services, and (c) assessing the viability of coordination

and collaboration between departments and other partners at the regional level (Indian and

Northern Affairs Canada/HRC/HC, 2003).

In addition to the environmental scan and the pilot projects, HC and INAC also

undertook a National Dialogue designed to engage people who were involved and interested

in early childhood development activities. This National Dialogue comprised two parts: a

dialogue with individuals and groups across Canada, and comment from constituents from

the five national Aboriginal organizations (Government of Canada, 2002). These dialogues

were an effort to gather feedback and information regarding the development and

improvement of the federal early childhood development delivery system.

A final federal government commitment (which is still underway) is an Aboriginal

Children's Survey (ACS). This survey's primary objective is to address the data gaps that

exist regarding Aboriginal children by producing quantitative data on the health, social, and

economic characteristics of Aboriginal children under the age of 6 years, and who live both on and off reserves. Statistics Canada, through Social Development Canada, continues to work on a national survey of young Aboriginal children that parallels the Early Childhood component of the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth and includes additional questions that are culturally specific.

In response to the federal government's current activities and policy moves to ensure integration and coordination of early childhood development programming for Aboriginal children through a single window approach, a handful of documents (Spigelman et al., 1998; Morgan & McGettigan, 1999; McDonald, 2001; Noonan & Associates, 2002; Greenwood & DeLeeuw, 2004) were developed by Aboriginal groups and individuals to explore various aspects. Taken together, these documents highlight a number of considerations for the coordination and integration of early childhood programs and services for Aboriginal children. Common emphasis lies in recognizing these six issues:

1. First Nations child care programs are an integral function of self-government and self-sufficiency.

2. There is a need for sustained and adequate resources inclusive of capital development and administrative support.

3. First Nations cultures and values will define child care curricula, evaluation, and accountability criteria.

4. Where appropriate, three levels of government— First Nations, provincial, and federal governments— will collaboratively develop policies, reporting practices, and data management systems.

5. Flexibility is needed in order to honour and preserve diversity between First Nations communities and a broad range of community needs and processes.

6. Integration of services must enhance, not diminish, existing programs, and be truly effective in creating effective infrastructures and processes for communication, administration, and evaluation. (Greenwood & De Leeuw, 2004)

These considerations for Aboriginal-specific, early childhood programs ran headlong into broader Canadian society's early learning and child care priority.

5.3.2 Early childhood development and early learning and child care (ELCC) intersect

At the same time as First Nations and Inuit early childhood development dialogues (with their inherent health perspective) were being undertaken, the FPT governments identified ELCC as a shared priority. Just a year earlier, and setting ELCC as a priority, the First Ministers had agreed upon objectives and principles in the 2003 Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Child Care (Government of Canada, 2003b). Under the Multilateral Framework, the Government of Canada committed to transferring $1.05 billion over five years for provincial and territorial governments to make new investments for improving the availability and affordability of quality early learning and child care for children under age 6.

The October 5, 2004 Speech from the Throne confirmed the Government of Canada's commitment to work with the provinces and territories on the development of a national vision to guide the development of the ELCC system. The development of the ELCC was, however, based on the four principles of Quality, Universal Inclusivity, Accessibility, and Development (QUAD) (CBC News in depth: Canadian Government, October 2004, p.6). In moving forward, the Government of Canada sought agreement on an approach that focused on results, built on best practices, and reported to Canadians on progress. As such, stronger accountability was a key element of a new agreement.

At their November 2, 2004 meeting, FPT ministers responsible for social services recognized the critical need to engage First Nations and Inuit leadership in discussions about

ELCC implementation. In the following year (2005) at the May 31 federal government

Policy Retreat, the government announced that it would merge and enhance four existing

Aboriginal early childhood development programs[17] to create a new, consolidated ELCC

program for First Nations and Inuit children. First Nations and Inuit ELCC programming

would be aligned to the same QUAD principles as the national system, but would be

culturally adapted to, and by, First Nation and Inuit communities (Assembly of First

Nations, 2005). The rationale for an Aboriginal-specific ELCC strategy was, first and

foremost, to enhance service delivery as opposed to cutting costs. Secondly, it was to reduce

the administrative burden on communities, enhance the quality and accessibility of regulated

child care for First Nations and Inuit children, and provide support for parents to explore

educational and employment opportunities. Thirdly, the ELCC program was to assist in

supporting, maintaining, and revitalizing the languages and cultures of First Nations and

Inuit, including ensuring a prominent role for Elders.

As a result of these new policy directions, national Aboriginal groups were asked to

revise their current coordination and integration consultations (which were simultaneously

underway) by engaging participants in exploring the interface of the QUAD principles

proposed by the ELCC within a single window approach to Aboriginal early childhood

service delivery. The outcomes of these constituent discussions were four national reports:

(a) The Native Women's Association of Canada, *Discussion Paper: Early Learning and Childcare*

(April 29, 2005), (b) *Aboriginal Engagement Strategy Inuit Early Learning and Child Care Discussion*

Paper, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (April 30, 2005), (c) *Early Learning and Child Care for First*

Nations, Assembly of First Nations (April 2005b), and (d) Congress of Aboriginal Peoples,

---

[17] Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program (HC), Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern
Communities Program—North of 60 and Inuit projects (Public Health Agency of Canada), FNICCI
(Human Resources and Skills Development Canada), and Day Cares in Ontario and Alberta (INAC)

Building a National Aboriginal Early Learning and Childcare System (April 30, 2000). These reports shared common attributes, namely, a vision for Aboriginal early childhood that would be both holistic and comprehensive, and that would see services anchored in traditional community beliefs reflecting distinct early childhood needs. These needs include: providing a safe environment, fostering a positive sense of self, promoting a desire for lifelong learning, and providing opportunities for children to develop fully and successfully. The reports also identified common principles for programs such as local design and control by community, inclusion of language and culture, adherence to the tenets of child development, diversity and flexibility, fostering partnerships and collaborations, and highlighting parental involvement.

At the May 2005 Policy Retreat, INAC was named as the lead federal department in the development of a single window ELCC transition plan. The transition plan was to be undertaken by five federal ministries: INAC, HC, HRD, Social Development Canada (SDC), and the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC). During considerations, the federal ministries were joined by the AFN, Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the National Aboriginal Head Start Council (NAHSC). Together, they were charged with working collaboratively to develop an ELCC transition plan. The Transition Plan was to include recommendations on a new ELCC program for First Nations and Inuit communities. This strategy was to merge and enhance the services of the four existing federally funded Aboriginal early childhood development programs, the goal being a single point of access under one federal department— the single window. As a first step, an Engagement Strategy was developed to build on the earlier early childhood development integration consultation reports (with their inclusion of the QUAD principles) undertaken by the national Aboriginal organizations to ascertain advice and recommendations from First Nations and Inuit

organizations and communities at the national, regional, and community levels. This input was to guide the design and transition of the ELCC program.

Completion of the Engagement Strategy was to be the summer of 2005. The Transition Plan was expected to be completed by the late fall of 2005. Once completed, the Transition Plan would continue implementation of the consolidated ELCC program for First Nations and Inuit communities. However, implementation was not to be. With the election of a new Progressive Conservative federal government, movement in the design and implementation of a single window approach to the delivery of Aboriginal early childhood services has slowed considerably during the transition from the former government. Though not yet in power for a year, the new Tory government has fulfilled its commitment to Canadian families, implementing the Choice in Child Care Allowance which provides $1200 per year for each child under six (Conservative Party of Canada, 2006). The slogan "parent choice" and direct payment to families recalls the 1954 Family Allowance Program. As in the 1950s, Canadians will have to wait to realize a comprehensive early childhood care and education system for their youngest citizens. Liberal government-initiated Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs continue; however there has been no substantive increase in Aboriginal-specific programs and services by the Conservative government. Thus, the critical need for programs, anchored in Aboriginal ways of knowing and being, continues to be a priority for Aboriginal peoples.

5.4   Closing comments

Rapid development of early childhood programs, specifically for Aboriginal children between 1995 and 1999, were undertaken with little, if any, time for meaningful community engagement. A common complaint that I have heard from many Aboriginal politicians,

senior administrators, and individual community members was the need for more time to engage with community in the visioning, design and delivery of programs and services. A practical reality of this haste is the neglect of meaningful community involvement, particularly in the visioning and designing of the programs and services. For example, there was no time to respond to fundamental questions such as, how will the children's curriculum incorporate and reflect the language and ways of knowing and being of their community and culture? A hasty process also calls into question accountability and informed decision-making by communities.

I also reflect upon my role as an "expert" on advisory committees for the development of the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative, Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Program and the Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program. I found myself in a contested place, a place of interface between the needs, aspirations, and protocols of community and government opportunities. I have come to understand that there are no blacks and whites, there is no good or bad, but rather, complexity that is multifaceted and ever changing. I asked myself, what guided my thinking on these committees? It was the teachings of my Moshum (grandfather) and Kookum (grandmother), my experience, and my learning. They had advised me that "if we are not at those tables we have no chance for voice at all. Government will do what they want whether we are there or not so we better be there in whatever way we can." They spoke from a collective place, a place of First Nations' peoples' voices. I think of their words, and those of Indigenous writers such as Thomas King. King (2003) writes of Antonio Gramsci's "organic intellectual" as "an individual who articulates the understandings of a community or nation" (p. 41). I recall thinking about how strategies and processes for program development would be different if they were in control of First Nations peoples.

Relatedly, I remember the responsibility I felt as I sat at those tables. The reality of the process in which I found myself was rooted in a larger context of colonization, and responsibility and accountability to my own collective, all of which seemed to collide in those moments of time. I thought of the children's and families' lives that would be impacted by these programs. Ultimately these programs could be seen as a step in the survival of our children, our families, and our nations. From a very practical place, I was once again reminded of the teachings of my Moshum (grandfather) and Kookum (grandmother) to "take the best, that which is good, and leave the rest behind." In other words, knowing that we do what we can within the parameters in which we work, take advantage of those pieces. In this case, we would do well to ensure the program frameworks and related processes are flexible enough to provide opportunities for communities to implement the early childhood programs in ways that are meaningful to them and their children. It was important to remember that these programs offered families and communities access to formalized early childhood program opportunities that they had never had before. Constant vigilance of these programs, especially against continuing forms of colonization and assimilation at all levels, is necessary to ensure their implementation is as effective as it can be for the children and communities they seek to serve.

Cattails grow in moist, wet, marshy places like the ditches along the roads I walked as a child. They are a strong, wispy plant whose leaves are sleek and slender. Cattails are deeply rooted in the land and wave gracefully in the wind. They pass through the seasons of life, bursting into the spring and sharing their seedlings in the fall. Such is the strength and knowledge of our peoples. Despite colonial interactions, despite programs designed *for* Aboriginal peoples and not *by* them, the continuity of our being as Aboriginal peoples passes

through each new season of policy and government change to take form in relationships, rooted as they always have been, in our being with the land.

We are entwined within the complexity of government policies, programs, and services. Rationales for First Nations-specific early childhood programs are but a microcosm in which larger policy directions are reflected. These program rationales have, like so many other policies for Aboriginal peoples, always been entwined and directed by Canadian governments. The relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian government, with its historical power imbalance, is always at the base of all considerations. Lines are blurred in policies and rationales except for arguments that focus on the cultures and languages of the people. The practical reality of this situation forces communities to adopt those rationales that allow them access to funds and services and potentially perpetuate a cycle of colonial relationships between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples. Yet it is within these relationships that pathways to respect and power equalization have the potential to be created as shown in the following case studies.

Pathways to Learning: First Nations
of British Columbia

It is a good day to tell stories ...[18]

6.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results of research conducted in two distinct First Nations

located in north-central British Columbia. I chose to focus on Lake Babine Nation and

Tl'azt'en Nation. Both are Carrier Nations and have the largest populations within the

overall Carrier Nation. Although identical methodologies were implemented in both research

sites, and while similar themes emerged from both research inquiries, the communities are

dealt with separately because each implemented a unique early childhood program. Lake

Babine operates a child care program, while Tl'azt'en operates a Head Start program.[19]

Accordingly, the structure of this chapter begins with an overview of the Carrier Nation as a

whole, and then splits into two separate discussions: first, Lake Babine, and second,

Tl'zat'en. At the onset of each discussion is a positioning or description of my relationship

with the community. I conclude the chapter with a discussion of themes common to both

communities concerning their experiences developing and implementing early childhood

programs.

My personal journey ultimately led to this research, and is apparent in the Indigenous

protocols that inform the methodology that guided the research. These protocols are derived

from unique epistemologies and ontologies, and are at the heart of the theoretical and

methodological considerations employed in this research. It is these considerations that form

---

[18] These words were offered by Elder Celestine Dennis from Tl'azt'en Nation in the winter of 2005.
[19] See Chapter Three for a description of the Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Communities
Program and Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program.

the framework from which I come to understand the development and implementation of specific early childhood programs in First Nations communities.

In order to gain an understating of the early childhood realities of the Lake Babine Nation, I pursued multiple stages of qualitative inquiry, including (a) interviews with community administrators (key informants including band leadership and senior administrators) and caregivers (current administrators and staff of the daycare), and (b) focus groups comprising parents, Elders, and other interested community members. In total, 22 members of the Lake Babine Nation who had significant interests in early childhood issues in their Nation partook in this study. Participants focused on the development and implementation of the community child daycare centre. In Tl'zat'en, 18 community members participated in this study focused on the Head Start program— its establishment and provision of services to children and parents. I used qualitative methods, including (a) individual interviews with caregivers and administrators of the Head Start program along with one key informant interview, and (b) independent focus groups with parents and Elders.

In both communities where I conducted interviews and focus groups (or visited with a number of people from the community as detailed in the methodology section of this dissertation), it was vital that both formal and informal community protocols were followed. A consistent experience in undertaking this research was the hospitality displayed by both communities, including the sharing of food. With reference to the individualized interviews, all discussions were tape-recorded and supplemented with handwritten notes. In the focus groups, flip charting and private notes were used to record the participants' words. After recording and transcription of the data, thematic analysis techniques were used to analyze the perspectives and words of participants: this approach used close-reading techniques

141

coupled with in-depth evaluation of overlapping or consistent wording and phraseologies, comparative evaluation of statements, and point and counterpoint overlay of discussion trends. As part of the research method and ethical commitment to the community and individuals within it, the transcriptions and subsequent report were returned for their review. Participants were generally in agreement with what was written and had only minor changes. It is also important to note that the final copies of the dissertation will be offered to the community sites. Broadly speaking, a number of consistent and constant themes emerged from the voices and perspectives of Lake Babine Nation and Tl'azt'en Nation members who spoke of the realities of early childhood in their communities.

6.2   The Carrier people

The description of the Carrier peoples in this section is not meant to be comprehensive. Instead, it is meant to provide a general sense of the people— their geographic location, their language, and their most prevalent protocols.

Figure 6.1: First Nations Peoples of BC

TUTCHONE
TAGISH
KASKA
INLAND TLINGIT
DENE-THAH
TAHALTAN
TLINGIT
DUNNE-ZA
SEKANI
NISGA GITXSAN
British
Columbia's
WET'SUWET'EN
Aboriginal
TSIMSHIAN
HAIDA
HAISLA
DAKELH
People
HEILTSUK NUXALK
OWEEKENO TSILHQOT'IN SECWEPEMC
KWAKWAKA'WAKW
STL'ATL'IMC
KTUNAXA
COAST SALISH NLAKA'PAMUX
OKANAGAN
NUU-CHAH-NULTH
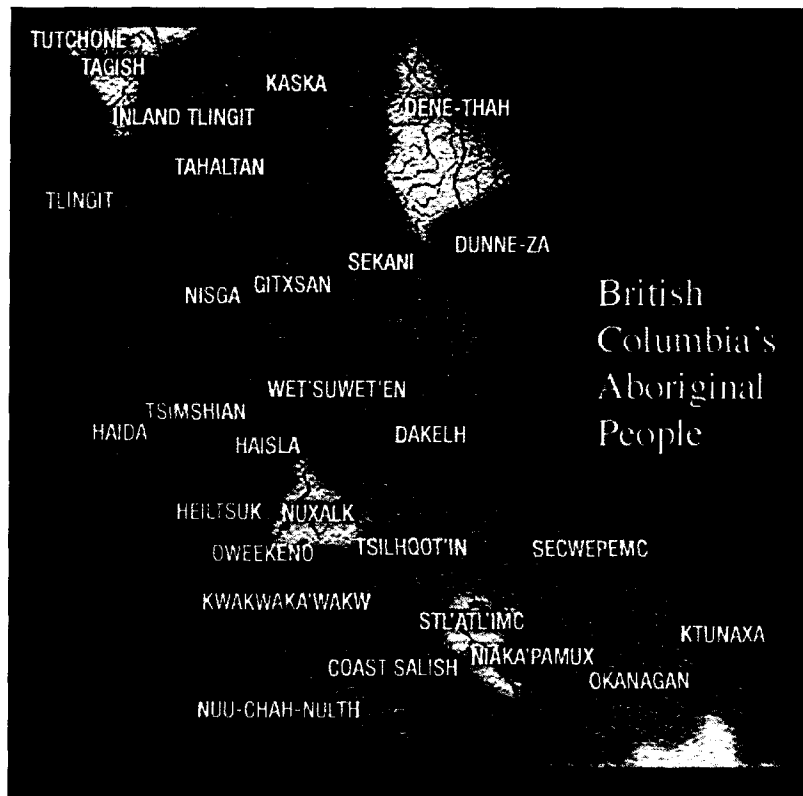
Source: Aboriginal Tourism Association of BC

The Dakelh (Carrier) people are the Indigenous peoples of a vast territory located in

the north-central interior of British Columbia (Figure 6.1). This area spans from the foothills

of the Rocky Mountains in the east to the Pacific Ocean in the west. The Carrier word

"Dakelh" means "people who travel by water." The word Carrier is a term used by

neighbouring Sekani peoples to describe the Dakelh peoples. According to Fiske and Patrick

(2000), this translation from Dakelh to Carrier by the Sekani peoples:

> originated from the widow's practice of carrying ashes of her deceased
> husband on her back for a period of a year or more, depending upon her
> social status and the capacity of her family and clan to hold a feast to mark
> the end of her bereavement. (p. 32)

While Carrier societies may be closely linked with Sekani societies, their social order and language are not identical (Holyk, Adam, & Shawana, 2005, p. 1). Both men and women have important roles in Carrier society; for example, each can be trained to be a hereditary leader. The Carrier language is a member of the Athabaskan language group (Poser, 2004) and comprises different dialects that may be seen to parallel the geographic differences among them.

The bah'lats system, the governance system of the Carrier people, is organized around four primary clans: Bear, Caribou, Frog, and Beaver. Each clan has several subclans which may vary from nation to nation.[20] Each main clan is generally led by one head clansman. Hereditary chiefs, who hold rank as wing chiefs, represent each subclan. All these positions are passed down through family or clan lineages or may result from selections guided by clan Elders. The role of the head clansman varies and includes being main spokesperson for the clan they represent, looking after clan members' welfare, and providing direction to them (Holyk, Adam, & Shawana, 2005; Fiske & Patrick, 2000).

The bah'lats is the core economic, political, social, legal, and spiritual institution of the Carrier peoples. While protocol is flexible and adaptive to the differing systems of each community, the guiding principles of the bah'lats system are shared among communities. Formal business in the bah'lats is conducted in an open and transparent environment where clan members witness all transactions. As witnesses, individuals are expected to commit to memory the details of transactions, and in the case of hereditary chiefs to recount in oral histories the transactions at future feasts when those transactions are relevant (Holyk, Adam, & Shawana, 2005, p. 6).

---

[20] Subclans are sometimes referred to as houses or crests, and members are generally matrilineal kin.

Several protocols in Carrier society are followed when specific formal business is being conducted in the bah'lats feast hall. The most commonly known protocols are those used for the assignment of hereditary chiefs' names, solidifying of law, shaming, and the announcement of births, marriages, or adoptions. The sanctioning of actions, business plans, and transactions in Carrier law is known as "Chus," the law of the eagle down. This law-making is expressed in a ceremony that opens and closes all law-making business in Carrier society, particularly in the feast hall (Holyk, Adam, & Shawana, 2005). In addition to this law-making authority, several principles flow from Carrier laws. These principles are intended to guide the conduct of individuals. They include respect, responsibility, obligation, compassion, balance, wisdom, caring, and sharing. Each principle is expected to be followed one after the other and with equal emphasis on each. These principles and subsequent behaviours are undertaken in relation to spiritual energy. For example, the Carrier believe that "whatever energy is expressed, good or bad, will be visited on the individual in the future. This belief guides the respect demonstrated towards all other beings" (Holyk, Adam, & Shawana, 2005, p. 2).

As I wrote earlier in this chapter, two Carrier Nations participated in this study: Lake Babine Nation and Tl'azt'en Nation. The remainder of this chapter focuses on the experiences of community members from these nations (i.e., Elders, parents/guardians, caregivers, community administrators, and community members) who participated in the development of the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative (FNICCI) and Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program (AHSOR) in their communities. The first section focuses on the Lake Babine Nation and development and implementation of the FNICCI, while the second examines the development and implementation of Tl'azt'en Nation's AHSOR Program.

6.3   Lake Babine Nation

The highway to Lake Babine Nation is often closed in the winter because of treacherous driving conditions. This was the case the first evening we visited the Woyenne community of the Lake Babine Nation. We inched our way along the windy highway for almost three hours before, as we rounded the final bend in the road, we saw the twinkling of residential lights and the glare of business signs diffused in the crystals of ice hanging in the air. Never was I so glad to see the small town of Burns Lake, since it is adjacent to the community of Woyenne. As we drove up to the band office, I could see the parking lot was almost full. We were going to have a good turnout this evening. The invitation we had sent ahead of time invited community members and the Nation's leadership to come together to discuss the care of their children and the daycare centre. Parents, Elders, leadership, caregivers, and interested community members were assembled in the council chambers.

I thought about how I had come to be here. I recalled the many relationships I had with Lake Babine community members, including community administrators and politicians. I also thought of how much I had learned about the community, the culture, and the people from my experience of being in the community over time— as a teacher of early childhood education, a presenter at the community's annual general meeting, a friend to individual community members, and an invitee to potlatches. When I attend potlatch, I am seated with the Bears. The Bear is my totem from my Moshum.

My relationship with the then chief and a senior band administrator (along with others) facilitated my ability to undertake research in the community. Monty (the senior administrator and my friend) had come with me to teach and guide me, as he had on numerous occasions— in this instance, through protocols for engaging the chief and council formally. I wanted to seek their permission and participation in my doctoral studies. Monty

subsequently advised me on whom to contact for assistance to help me in the actual

conduction of the research with community members. In addition to his advisory role,

Monty participated in the research as one of the study participants. His support and that of

all the community contributed to the success of this work.

6.3.1   Geographical location, the people

The Lake Babine Nation comprises three geographically separated communities with a

collective population of over 2,100. The main community, Woyenne Indian Reserve # 27, is

located adjacent to the community of Burns Lake. Both these communities are 227 km west

of the larger northern British Columbian city of Prince George. The two smaller Lake

Babine communities, Tachet (Babine Indian Reserve # 25) and Fort Babine (Babine Indian

Reserve # 6), are located within the Babine River watershed, one on Lake Babine itself and

one on the Babine River respectively. Prior to 1916 when the Royal Commission allotted

reserves, the Lake Babine Nation (as it currently exists today) comprised the "Old Fort

Babine" and "Fort Babine" Bands. These merged in 1957. For the purposes of this research,

such a geographic and historical framing is important because it is the context in which the

only child daycare facility of the Lake Babine Nation exists. The Woyenne Child Day Care

Centre is one of two formal early childhood settings in the community. The other setting is

the DIA-funded K–4 preschool program. Notwithstanding the centralized nature of the

child daycare centre, tensions exist over the institution's mandate to serve all parts of the

Nation, including populations in more far-flung geographic areas.

I arrived late in the day. Most of the children were gone; staff were busy picking up

toys, wiping counters, and arranging furniture for the next morning. This was the second

time I had been to the daycare centre. My eye was again drawn to the child-sized, ebony-

black dugout canoe that seemed to dominate the room. The Elders had made the canoe for

the children along with other real-life replicas, such as the traditional beaded leather clothing

for their play. The large room was divided in two by a centrally located kitchen. On one side

of the kitchen was the infant/toddler room with its high chairs lined up against one wall.

The wall at right angles was dominated by windows. Light streamed in through the windows

flooding the room with brightness. The windowed wall extends beyond the infant toddler

room into the preschool room sharing the light. The preschool room was sectioned by low-

level shelving which divided the children's specific play areas (e.g., block area, role play, and

storytelling). The entrance to the daycare centre was dominated by a bulletin board with a

host of parent notices. The weekly meal plan and activity schedule were pinned to the left of

the board. The door opened and the parent of the last child entered to pick up her son. It

was 10 minutes to five and the centre was soon to close.

6.3.2   Development of the community child daycare centre

Lake Babine's child daycare centre emerged out of a fundamental need for integrated

children's services as a way to better address children's and families' needs. This strategy

brought together a vision for community education and employment and the community's

desire to meet the specific needs of the children. This vision for community education and

employment was based on a belief that education has the potential to lead to employment

and thus ultimately to a better way of life (Community Administrator, 2005). The child

daycare centre was to support parents who worked or chose to go back to school by

providing daycare for their children. However, this did not mean that the care of the

children was secondary to parents' needs. And, in fact, positioning educational and

employment opportunities for parents as a primary impetus for the establishment of a child

daycare centre more closely mirrored the national rationale and intent of the First Nations

Inuit Child Care Initiative funded by the federal government. There is something to be said

here about communities and their need to be astute in accessing program funding. Sometimes this means positioning needs to mirror those of the program being offered. In this particular case, the establishment of a community daycare centre was a response to a government funding opportunity as well as meeting the community's need and intent for its members.

Simultaneous community objectives for parents and children in the establishment of the child daycare centre were intricately entwined. Services were being targeted to young parents, parents who had dropped out of school and were attending the community learning centre, staff who worked for Lake Babine Nation, and other community members employed outside the home (Community Administrator, 2005). There was also a need to accommodate community members in need of respite care. This was especially important for single mothers needing support and for those children in care of the Ministry of Children and Families. In comparison to the statistics for non-First Nations children, a disproportionate number of First Nations children are in the care of the ministry (Blackstock, Clark, Cullen, D'Hondt, & Formsma., 2004). Lake Babine Nation is no exception. It is particularly important to examine this reality in light of the underlying historical, social, and cultural context in which it sits, a context born of the colonial experience. Others have written extensively of the impacts of colonization, particularly the effects of residential schools on Aboriginal peoples, (Milloy, 1999; Miller, 1996; Haig-Brown, 1991). The effects of the colonial experience are evidenced in high numbers of children in care, low school-completion rates, and a high incidence of alcohol and drug abuse and family violence, to name only a few examples (Fournier & Crey, 1997; McGillvray & Comasky, 1999; Blackstock et al., 2004; Rae, 2006; Office of the Provincial Health Officer, 2007). Establishment of the child daycare centre was seen to have the potential to create a "place"

for change where the impact of the colonial experience in today's realities could be addressed (Community Administrator, 2005). This larger conceptualization of the child daycare centre was to become challenged and mired in the complexity of the interface between the community's aspirations and desires for their children within an unfamiliar and formalized structure— the child daycare centre, and the conceptualization of a child daycare centre evident in the policies surrounding funding requirements and implementation of the centre.

While the need to support parents by providing them with child daycare services was great, the direct care of children was equally important to community members. Beginning from a place of values and beliefs, community members expressed the teachings of their Elders— that is, the importance of children to the community and of taking responsibility for their care and preparation for the future just as the Elders had done for the current generations. Thus, the desire for community members to care for their children in the community by themselves was significant, or as one participant noted, "There was no formal care place for children to go— the only other care facility was a non-Aboriginal child daycare centre offered by the local college" (Parent, 2005). This fundamental belief, coupled with the desire to create a holistic environment where culture, family, and community needs and strengths are combined, formed the context in which to address the specific needs of children such as those in the care of the ministry, those having special and unique needs, or those afflicted by such ailments as FASD/E (Caregiver, 2005).

In this context of needs, realities, and vision, the opportunity for funding provided the basis from which to realize the establishment of a child daycare centre. The initial step in their journey was for the Lake Babine Nation leadership to hire a child daycare manager who could first access the funding and second, oversee the development and establishment of the

centre once funding was confirmed. In anticipation of the successful acquisition of funding for the child daycare centre, Lake Babine Nation needed to ensure that the individual who was hired in the manager's position had formal early childhood education training and experience, a requirement of the RFP. This precluded hiring community members, none of whom had such credentials. A First Nations person was hired from outside the community. One drawback to this decision (one that would become evident as the process of implementation played out) was the fact that the new manager was unfamiliar with Lake Babine culture and community ways (Caregiver, 2005).

Lake Babine Nation responded to the BC First Nations Day Care Committee's Request for Proposals (RFP) described earlier in this case study. The child daycare manager and a team of experienced individuals wrote the proposal and submitted it to the provincial Day Care Committee where it was accepted and funded a year later (1999). To address the problem of the new manager's unfamiliarity with Lake Babine culture and respect the direction of the community in the care of their children, the community entered into a partnership with the local college to develop an early childhood education program that would incorporate Lake Babine culture.

The early childhood training was to occur in the community simultaneously with the physical construction of the child daycare centre. The child daycare manager was to oversee the development and establishment of the centre. One of her first tasks was to solicit community members' participation in the upcoming early childhood training. She did this by going door to door and providing families with information and, in part, by hosting a community information clinic (Caregiver, 2005). Community members interested in taking the training were guaranteed employment in the new child daycare centre. Many of the students, having been out of school for many years, had to upgrade at the same time as they

were taking the early childhood education training. The program was offered in the evening so that students could work in the child daycare centre during the day. In fact, the centre opened to staff a month and a half before the children arrived so that the student caregivers could put into practice some of their learning by developing curriculum resources, practicing circle-time activities, participating in the provincial early childhood conference, and visiting other centres (Caregiver, 2005).

Of the 12 students who started the three-year early childhood education training, four graduated. There are several reasons for this, one of which was a fundamental difference in the perspectives students brought to the program versus the underlying assumptions and orientation of the curriculum, including the practices being taught. This dissonance is evidenced in the words of a study participant as she reflected on her formal training: "I didn't know this— we never grew up this way" (Caregiver, 2005). In this context, training might be understood as situated at the interface of knowledge systems where Western European thought is the paradigm found in the majority of mainstream institutions and, by virtue of the power inherent in its existence, serves to perpetuate itself. The reality is that these paradigms reach beyond the training program. In the case of early childhood education training, it influences individual caregiver's practice with children through to the structural operation of the program. Mechanisms such as licensing (with its roots in Western European dominant thought) is one such strategy that serves to reinforce such paradigms despite continuous and consistent calls from community for changes to the standards and regulations (inherent in licensing) and their application to First Nations children, families, and communities.

Just as training practices (and experience of them) highlighted differences in worldviews, so did community members' perceptions of child daycare. As one study

participant said, "The daycare was a foreign structure to the community" (Community Administrator, 2005). The community had many questions around the licensing of child daycare centres by the province. It was the newly hired manager who was faced with explaining provincial regulations to community members and the leadership. When it came to licensing, the community had many questions about why provincial regulations were being implemented on reserve (Community Administrator, 2005). This is not surprising when one considers the history of federal-provincial relations with First Nations peoples. The new child daycare manager shared information with the chief and council and community members about child care in general, and in particular, the provincial licensing requirements the child daycare centre was required to operate under in order to receive funding. The community was unaware of the requirements or implications of those requirements on their community. As one community administrator said, "[The] community wanted a daycare but did not really understand— they did not know what child care was or what was involved in, for example, building a building, child-staff ratios" (Community Administrator, 2005). Chief and council saw provincial licensing as an infringement on their inherent rights, yet in order to access the funding, compliance was necessary.

As expressed by study participants, there were many challenges— not the least of which was community awareness and licensing— to implementing the child daycare service. One of those challenges was combating a general perception in the community about the child daycare centre as a place to drop children off for babysitting. Considerable time was spent "educating" community members (including parents) about their roles and responsibilities in the new child daycare centre (Community Administrator, 2005). The magnitude and complexity of introducing and implementing such structures in a community is not to be underestimated, especially in communities where there is a legacy of residential

schools and the removal of children. In this context particularly, it is critically important to be aware of what and how new structures, philosophies, and practices are introduced and engaged by the community. Community members may have multiple reasons for engaging or not engaging with the new child daycare structure, but ultimately (over time) their engagement or lack thereof will determine its structure and success.

In addition to facilitating the early childhood education training for community members, the child daycare manager was simultaneously charged with providing architects with information and direction that would inform construction of the child daycare centre, while at the same time gathering their ideas, advice, and guidance in its construction. As it drew near to the opening of the child daycare centre, the lack of curriculum resources became apparent, particularly those specific to the community and those for use by the Elders (Caregiver, 2005). Community members focused on the cultural aspects of the program. They sewed dress-up clothes for the children, made beaded vests and slippers, and made dolls with moosehide clothes. The Elders made canoes, paddles, snowshoes, and drums for the children. The community also engaged in how the playground was developed. The development of a parent advisory committee was planned, but has not yet been realized (Community Administrator, 2005).

6.3.3 Language and culture

On all of the research forms, language and culture were emphasized as the single greatest, and most important, aspect of all discussion concerning early childhood in the Lake Babine Nation. One Elder mused, "It is important to understand why language and culture are so important" (Elder, 2005). This understanding comes from realization that impacts on language and culture must be set within historical and contemporary contexts of colonization and its negative impact on community. For example, one community member

stated that colonization (with attendant outcomes of assimilation, annihilation, and even

ethnocide) is at the roots of the negative issues we face today:

> These tenets of colonization are found in government policy and these
> realities come into effect when we talk of developing services for the best
> care of children. The layers of colonization need to be rolled back so that
> people understand that the issues we face today are not issues of our own but
> that were forced upon our nations" (Community Administrator, 2005).

The impacts of colonization have led to a unique social, political, and historical

context where First Nations children are born into a legacy of low socio-economic status,

high rates of substance abuse, residential school trauma, loss of language and culture, and

high rates of interactions with the criminal justice system. It is in this context that First

Nations communities across B.C. have developed child daycare centres with the intent of

fostering in every child a sense of who they are as a First Nations individual and as a

member of the greater First Nations collective. This place of development of identity

ultimately leads to a place of change where the impact of the colonial experience in today's

realities could be addressed. Thus, the need for culture and language expressed by study

participants is rooted in a context that not only foreshadows a need, but demands it for the

survival of a people and nation. This cultural continuity is a right of all First Nations children

(Rae, 2006; Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 1989,

Article 30).

If First Nations children are to become healthy citizens of their Nations and the

world, it is imperative that they know, understand, and internalize the values, histories, and

ways of their culture and people. Repeatedly, study participants stressed the centrality of

children, saying, "Teach children that they are special and precious" (Parent, 2004) and that

children should understand that "their voice and presence is important" (Caregiver, 2005).

All participants again highlighted elements of language and culture as key teachings for

children. In the words of one parent, "It is important for children to know their culture, meaning who they are, where they come from, what territory they belong to, and what clan they belong to" (Parent, 2004). Another parent added language, protocols, and values of the people as critical aspects in early childhood programming. These expressions go well beyond the traditional framework of children's growth and development. They include a holistic approach rooted in a unique history and anchored to distinct epistemologies and ontologies. These frameworks for children's growth and development are, according to study participants, found in the community and as such require a community-driven process for their articulation.

These frameworks are also anchored in the values of the people. The centrality of children, as discussed previously and illustrated in a caregiver's comment, "Children must be at the centre of our caring" (Caregiver, 2005), is a theme that also speaks to the centrality of children as a mechanism for the transmission of values to children. Such a value is reflective of specific cultures. At the heart of teachings for children is the need to pass on to them the teachings and ways of their culture so they will know who they are and where they come from, including their ancestral territories and membership in their clans (Elder, 2004). Learning about identity requires both community and a community-driven process. It requires family: "This caring for children may be achieved in a stable home environment where the child is amongst their family" (Community Administrator, 2005). In a similar vein, a parent reflecting on the language said, "Teach the language as naturally as possible" (Parent, 2004). That is, a child's identity grows within their everyday life, in the home, with the family, and as part of the larger collective. These examples reinforce the need for community involvement and the direction of the collective. Likewise, participants call for the re-conceptualization of children's growth and development "beyond the mainstream areas of

development to identifying those areas important to us as First Nations people"

(Community Administrator, 2006).

6.3.4   Tensions between community and provincial licensing

Although some community members had experienced child daycare outside the community,

a government-sponsored formalized child daycare centre in the community was an

unfamiliar structure to most Lake Babine Nation community members. For the most part,

the care of children had been undertaken through informal systems such as by family and

friends. The imposition of provincial licensing on an on-reserve structure caused tension.

Beyond the political implications of this, study participants expressed the need for licensing

in order to promote wellness and respect for the ways of the community. In fact, they

thought licensing standards should be developed within the community and enforced not by

an outside entity but by a community agency or representative. It makes "common sense to

have the First Nations monitor their own programs based on their own ethos" (Community

Administrator, 2005).

Formalizing informal community child care practices— in this case formalizing the

care of children by family, extended family, and community, into the care of children in

regulated, structured group-care settings— also introduces the possibility of losing the

essence of the epistemologies and ontologies of the people for whom the programs are

designed to serve. Child daycare program elements, such as provincial licensing

requirements, credentialing of caregivers, recommended theories, and pedagogies associated

with the more formal structures of child daycare, serve to reinforce tensions created in the

care, education and socialization of children. This could also be characterized as a tension

between the home and child daycare. From yet another perspective, one may consider that

for many children the need to learn how to live in two worlds becomes the challenge. This

consideration is not often addressed directly: "We don't explicitly say to children, 'You are an Indian so this is how we do things; we teach them who they are through our protocols, traditions, lineage, and values through living life" (Parent, 2004). Without a tangible connection to family and community, disconnection from their fundamental ways of knowing and being can occur, and thus the essences of identity may be lost.

The act of licensing might be understood as a subtle (and sometimes not so subtle) tool of assimilation. The contours of the construct reveal a liability argument, a safety argument, and at times a quality argument. The arguments for licensing always privilege the fundamental knowledge bases of non-Aboriginal peoples' governance and societal structures. This tension might be understood as what a community administrator was thinking of when she/he observed, "You had to educate the chief and council— they didn't know what a daycare centre was all about— Elders also had to be educated" (Community Administrator, 2005). Furthermore, and equally reflective of this, are the words of another participant who observed, "The licensing officer explained the regulations to the chief and council and they wondered why provincial officers were coming on reserve when the reserve is under federal jurisdiction" (Community Administrator, 2005). Finally, such a tension between worldviews, and indeed between colonial and anti-colonial perspectives, is encapsulated in the following observation:

> Too often we accept government programs at face value and find out at the
> end of the day that they don't fit. When we develop with the community,
> looking at community norms and facing the challenges of wider society,
> these programs that come from within last much longer and are more apt to
> address change in the community. (Community Administrator, 2005)

The Lake Babine community experienced these larger, more global, tensions in the realities of establishing the child daycare centre in the midst of their community. The root of many of the tensions was the acquisition of funding being tied to acceptance and

158

implementation of licensing. The licensing requirement brought with it a host of specific requirements rooted in knowledge(s) and experiences independent of the community— requirements such as trained staff, specific child:staff ratios, groupings of children, types of foods served, and playground guidelines— to name a few that were adhered to and became part of the *Woyenne Day Care Policy & Procedures Manual* (n.d.). The fact that these specific requirements identified and became community policy presented specific challenges to the establishment and implementation of the child daycare centre.

The concept of "being licensed" was unknown to many Lake Babine Nation members. This lack of awareness and understanding (and subsequent questioning), became more apparent as licensing requirements became entrenched in the child daycare operational policies. As one of the caregivers said, "We had to educate the community on why the policies were the way they were" (Caregiver, 2005). Despite the obvious tension between the provincial licensing requirements and the community perceptions and understanding, another caregiver explained, "The [first daycare] policies developed were basic. Just enough to get the doors open and satisfy licensing. We had to have certain policies in place that were a part of the provincial licensing system" (Caregiver, 2005). Given that funding was tied to licensing, compliance to licensing requirements became a practicality to communities.

At the level of practical implementation, licensing requirements also became sites of multiple tensions and confusion. For example, the demand for "qualified trained caregivers" weighed heavily in the realities of members of the Lake Babine Nation. As one parent observed, "Parents wanted more of our own caregivers" (Parent, 2004). This idea likely stems from a desire and a belief that fellow Lake Babine community members are in the best position to teach the children of the community about who they are and about other skills

and knowledge Lake Babine children need to survive in multiple contexts that could not necessarily be found in ECE curriculum.

The nature of training for early childhood educators was of concern to community members. This concern is not surprising when considered in the context in which certification of early childhood educators sits. Early childhood education is in the purview of the provincial college system; a system which has no mandatory requirements to include First Nations content in their programs. To address the lack of First Nations specific content in the local ECE program, Lake Babine Nation approached the college to work in partnership on the development of ECE training that incorporated their culture. However, even with the inclusion of Lake Babine culture into the ECE program, tensions remained around fundamental practices of caring for children.

6.3.5   Sense of success and utility

To some, this theme may be somewhat surprising given the tensions and realities discussed previously in the chapter. Despite these obvious challenges, the overall consensus of the study participants was that child daycare was a "good thing" and that from a very practical perspective, the benefits to the community overrode the challenges of implementation. It is at the interface of benefits and challenges that the resilience and creativity of the community abounds. While no specific data exists to support the idea that the child daycare is a "success" (and of course the notion of what constitutes success is a contested idea unto itself), study participants stated that the Woyenne Day Care was a success for a variety of reasons. These responses in part mirrored the original intents of the child daycare centre in the community and were reflective of the realities and context in which they were developing. More parents were able to further their education, children were in a safe and caring environment, children with unique needs could have those needs addressed, parents

were supported for respite, and children in the care of the Ministry of Children and Families were provided with a safe learning environment. Not to be forgotten is the overall desire for this entity to begin to address the historical influences and impacts of colonization on the contemporary community. As one parent explained, "The Elders have taught us the importance of children; it is our responsibility to ensure that the road is paved for them" (Parent, 2004). In this teaching is held all the expectations articulated by the community and more. Today we do not use the same ways of caring for children as our Elders did. Yet we must ensure that in these new entities and processes, the epistemologies of who we are and how we learn are incorporated into the new structures and that they will achieve the same end results— a secure knowing of who we are and where we belong. This means knowing our philosophies, values, traditions, and protocols.

Expectations for the child daycare centre by the Lake Babine Nation were high. This makes sense. A child daycare centre is intricately linked to the children, who are held in the highest of esteem by Indigenous peoples broadly, and locally by the Lake Babine Nation. That the Nation, in their considerations of the child daycare centre (and children), had a constant eye to the future makes a great degree of sense. Consequently, mixed in with these reasons were reflections and visions for the future that reiterated the focus on community and spoke to their experience thus far with the child daycare centre. For instance, the vision to the future is encapsulated in the following observation: "We are finally at a place where these programs have been in operation for almost 10 years. I think we are just now beginning to take a step back and look at these programs with a different lens" (Community Administrator, 2005).

Such statements reflect on the establishment and operations of the child daycare centre since it inception almost 10 years ago. Now, with experience and knowledge, one can

begin to question why (and how) things are done and then reflect on those answers within

the epistemological and ontological framework of being a Lake Babine community member.

Are the children getting what they need to grow and develop into healthy thriving Lake

Babine community members? This is an ongoing question that I suspect generation after

generation will continue to ask and answer. In broader Canadian society, the concept of

socialization and its role in the survival of cultures may not be as focused as it may be for

Aboriginal cultures. Language is a primary example. Aboriginal languages are being lost

continuously, whereas the English language is taught and spoken by the majority of

Canadians with little fear of it being lost. First Nations children are burdened with the need

to learn more than a single worldview in order to function successfully in their multifaceted

realities (Community Administrator, 2006). Most often success is not determined by the

community but by broader society. This of course raises all the questions of power and

oppression, marginalization and racism. This sentiment is most succinctly identified by a

community administrator who made the following observation:

> Be it policy or curriculum, these things should be reflecting community and
> be reflective of children. We are just at the beginning stages of doing this
> kind of thing at the community level and it is going to be awhile before we
> sort through some of these questions that are beginning to come up.
> (Community Administrator, 2006)

The challenge for First Nations communities is to navigate changing realities while

maintaining their unique identities and realities, and to articulate within these new structures

their own ways of knowing and being and what they want to see for their children.

6.3.6   Reflections

As I look back over what I have written (and also recall what is not there), nothing seems

more obvious to me than the interface of worldviews that plays out in the tensions created at

the community level. These tensions are rooted in larger national levels of design and intent that circle back to conceptual and philosophical orientations to the world. Inherent in these different orientations are struggles of power and control, none more evident than the colonization of Indigenous peoples of the Americas.

The concept of formalized, government-regulated child daycare was new to First Nations peoples across the country. Lake Babine Nation was no exception. While the greater human vision of the optimal care and education of children is admirable, the pathway to attaining that vision is not singular. Instead, it is a meeting place of many pathways. Sometime these pathways cross and we come to an interface or meeting of worlds, each with their unique and distinct epistemologies and ontologies. The tugging and pulling at these interfaces is complicated by large concepts of power and oppression, colonization and racism. Yet each reality is bound to the other, and as Louis (my Moshum) would say to me, "Take the best of all there is and leave the rest behind." In this case, the pathway was not distinct. Places of interface and tension litter the path with challenges that may never be resolved in the current political and social context. As a community engaged in formalizing the care of their children, the Lake Babine Nation was forced to support structures not necessarily rooted in the ways of their community. One of the most obvious examples was adherence to provincial licensing requirements. There was little choice regarding compliance: either you complied or you were not funded. These requirements, in turn, drove implementation practices at the delivery level. One of these practices was the qualification requirements for early childhood educators. If the goal is to ensure children come to know and understand their identity as a member of their collective, then a reasonable question would be: Why would you be trained to care for your children by an outside entity that knows little if anything about yours or the children's individual realities? This is not to say

that early childhood education training (as in this case) is not valuable. What this question does point to is the need for early childhood education training to be respectful and inclusive of the peoples it seeks to serve, particularly when we are speaking about the care and education of children whose lives are the tangible link to the survival of their nations. It is within this context of complexity and challenge that Lake Babine Nation successfully implemented the child daycare program. In doing so, Lake Babine Nation highlights their creativity and resiliency in meeting both administrative program requirements and the needs of the community members.

I have come to understand that the care and education of children is a contested place and will remain so. Contestation may, in part and on a practical level, be alleviated by communities taking control of what happens in the lives of their children. Some call this assumption of control "transformation." Some call it "self-government." Some say "self-determination." Perhaps it is learning to live the values of caring for each other, sharing with each other, and respecting each other. This is also a place of wondering and of interface between worldviews. It is a place of opportunity, of creativity and of possibility. As I continue to reflect on this journey, I am reminded of the words of one of the study participants:

> We still have folks at the community level who haven't quite reached the
> point of reflectively and collectively looking at programs. We need to
> examine our programs from our perspective. Our communities have not put
> these to paper yet. (Community Administrator, 2005)

I think that we are at the first step of potential and that together we journey on our pathways to understanding. This place, the child daycare centre with all its tensions, is indeed a site for creating change, of hope in addressing the colonial wrongs of the past, and for addressing the future.

6.4 Tl'azt'en Nation

My last visit had been during the winter. This visit was different, a different season, a different time. The final stretch of road to the community was dusty, a mixture of small rock, gravel, and sand. Beyond the ditches, a mixture of poplar and spruce trees and low-lying bushes dressed in their new spring regalia lined the road. As I came over the crest of the final hill into the village, a vast lake against a background of snow-capped mountains filled my vision. I was awed to the depths of my being by the enormity of what I was seeing, and I was overcome with a sense of infinite vastness and potential. Just beyond, to the right side of the road, was the Health Centre. Next to it sat the elementary school, and beside the school sat a neat rectangular building with a fenced playground— the Head Start building. It was to that building that we were headed. It was mid-morning and we were going to talk with the parents of the children and other community members about one of the most important aspects of their community: their children.

My experience with the Tl'azt'en Nation is different from that with the Lake Babine Nation. While I was a known entity to most caregivers (because of my work in early childhood provincially), I had few personal relationships with community members or direct experiences in the community. Monty, who was known in the Tl'azt'en Nation, came with me so that he could introduce me to the community leadership and guide me through the processes of attaining permission to work with the local Head Start program and community members in my doctoral studies. We met with the band manager and other community administrators including the

education administrator, whose portfolio included the Head Start Program. I was

directed to work with the education administrator and the Head Start coordinator.

6.4.1   Geographical location, the people

The Tl'azt'en Nation, known as the "people by the edge of the bay"

(http://www.tlc.baremetal.com/About%20Us.htm), is located along the north shore of

Stuart Lake in the interior of British Columbia. The term "Dakelh" (those who travel by

water) was used by the people to describe themselves. This was changed to "Carrier" with

the advent of European peoples to the territory. Tl'azt'en Nation comprises two main

villages; Tache, located 60 km northwest of Fort St James, and Binche, located 40 km

northwest of Fort St James. There are also three smaller settlements: Middle River on

Trembleur Lake; Grand Rapids on the Tache River between Stuart Lake and Trembleur

Lake; and Tache, the main centre of administrative affairs. Prior to 1988, the Tl'azt'en

Nation was known as the Stuart-Trembleur Lake Band and it comprised the Tache, Pinche,

Yekooche Grand Rapids, and Trembleur bands. Yekooche separated from Tl'azt'en Nation

in 1994 (Aboriginal Canada Portal). For the purposes of this research, the historical and

geographical context is important because it is the reality in which the Head Start of the

Tl'azt'en Nation exists. The Tl'azt'en Head Start is located in the main village, Tache, where

approximately 800 of the 1,300-member nation reside (Growing Together, Fall 2006, p. 7).

As I entered the door to the Tl'azt'en Head Start, I looked down a short

hallway. To the right was an office used occasionally by the staff to observe and

record children's behaviour. Lining the hallway were 20 children's cubbies each

containing hooks and shelves for their coats and boots. Parents were gathered in the

communal eating area directly ahead; an exit door led to a fenced outside play area.

Four square tables, mirroring the colours of the medicine wheel, were set down in

the centre of the room. Off to the right of the eating area was the children's play room, an L-shaped room dominated by an old rocking chair. It sat to one side of a large medicine wheel rug. I was told that this is where the children heard stories and participated in circle time. Child-sized bookshelves sat against the wall populated with preschool books, puzzles, and building blocks. The drama play area held a little stove, fridge and couch along with a puppet theatre. In this area were dress-up clothes, puppets, pots and pans, and all the accessories necessary for dramatic play. The wall was dominated by the children's artwork— colourful, imaginative, and alive. Toward the back of this large L-shaped room was a smaller room that was used primarily as a napping area for infants and toddlers.

6.4.2   Development of the community program

The Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program, a national early intervention program, was designed to be implemented in First Nations communities across the country. As I have written earlier in this chapter, the fact that the Head Start funding was not universal caused a majority of First Nations communities to enter a competitive, proposal-driven process in order to access the limited fiscal resources. In British Columbia, all First Nation communities were sent information to apply for a community Head Start program from the regional FNIHB office. This process required communities to undertake a needs assessment to ascertain the need and capacity of the community to implement a Head Start Program. In their pursuit of a Head Start Program for the children and families of their community, Tl'azt'en Nation was not exempt from the process. A community-wide survey was undertaken through the combined efforts of the Health and Education Departments of Tl'azt'en Nation to identify: (a) existing child care services available to community members, (b) gaps in child care services, (c) alternate means of service delivery in each community

(comprising the Tl'azt'en Nation), and (d) the interest in and need for child care training

programs (Tl'azt'en Nation Progress Report, April 30, 1999). The assessment was

undertaken by community members who were also participating in a recent early childhood

education training program undertaken in anticipation of the Head Start program and

subsequent requirement for trained early childhood educators to implement programs.

The training was offered in the community, starting in 1996, through the First

Nations Partnership Program from the University of Victoria. It was implemented over

three years with the first year being a preparation year. The curriculum employed a

generative curriculum process that sought to generate community information within the

constructs of the program framework. In reflecting upon her training, a caregiver said, "In

our training I was always trying to come up with cultural ideas for everything, for example, in

the curriculum— it was really hard" (Caregiver, 2005). Despite challenges, however,

community members ultimately succeeded in the training program in so far as the formalized

process recognized "success."

With the submission of a successful proposal in 1999, the Tl'azt'en Head Start began.

The program built upon existing community early childhood resources which were, at that

point, a daycare and a nursery program. It was initially established in a house adjacent to the

local school. In 2005, however, the program was moved into the school itself for a short

time and then back to the house where it currently operates. The focus on preschool-aged

children was, in part, dictated by the requirements of the national Head Start program where

the intent was to serve children aged 3–5 years. Despite the needs assessment revealing that

more than double the number of children are younger than the 3-5 year old age group,

adherence to this overall program parameter was a practical reality for accessing funding.

This adherence to the broader national program framework marked an early deviation from

what the community might have independently envisioned for their children's well-being. In other words, from the onset, there was an adherence to the parameters dictated by forces outside the control of the community.

Nevertheless, the need for Head Start services was great. Indeed, as one parent observed, "All parents in the three main communities needed Head Start services" (Parent, 2005). One of the reasons for this need was, as a community administrator explained, "Our children were not as academically strong as others" (Community Administrator, 2005). It is not surprising, then, that the focus of the Tl'azt'en Head Start Program is on school readiness and language and culture (BC First Nations Head Start, Fall 2006). Study participants also identified the need to have a place where children can learn how to socialize with each other: "We teach children how to be respectful of Elders, how to socialize and be around others. They learn about their culture and traditions and how to speak" (Caregiver, 2005). Additionally, the Head Start program provides support to high-risk parents not only by caring for their children but also by offering specific parenting programs, information, and experiences with their children.

The national Head Start On Reserve Program Framework, and subsequent contribution agreement with the regions (who in turn entered into contribution agreements with First Nations communities), impacted community programs in both their implementation and related policy development. For example, program components, age of children served, and reporting requirements were set out in the national agreements, which in turn were required of First Nations communities through the regional First Nations agreements. Specific policies for implementing the Tl'azt'en Head Start program were developed by the manager at the time, the early childhood educators of the program, and colleagues from a nearby child daycare centre in Fort St. James. Elders and community

members were consulted in the development of the policies, particularly around cultural content. The policies contained the necessary requirements identified in the funding agreements between the region and the community. As in all developmental projects, there was much to learn and subsequent changes to be made, and experience and knowledge were gained. Reflecting on the development of Tl'zat'en Head Start, one caregiver spoke about the need for continuing change: "We didn't really know what was going to be involved in the program; we have reviewed and changed the community policies just about every year" (Caregiver, 2005). Another caregiver thought that "policies need to be revised to make sure they reflect parents' desires to focus on culture" (Caregiver, 2005).

6.4.3 Language and culture

As is the case in all the elements of this study, language and culture were foremost in discussion about the care of Tl'azt'en children. The Elders said,

> Language is very important. In my language, my grandsons say, "Hello Grandma. Do you want some tea?" or "I'll make you tea." . . . It is important for children to learn where they come from. . . . who their relatives are. We don't teach [children] about their uncles and aunties anymore. (Elders, 2005)

And a caregiver observed that "participation of the whole community supports the development of children's language and cultural identity" (Caregiver, 2005). This understanding of children and their development is embedded in a much larger context, one that involves the community and nation as a collective. It is also inextricably tied to the historical and contemporary realities of the impacts of colonization on Indigenous peoples around the world. At the heart of the issues of language and culture is the survival of a people, a survival that has been eroded over time through assimilation mechanisms such as residential schools, enfranchisement policies, and the loss of lands and resources (to name but a few).

An old Elder once told me that we have to know where we have been to know where we are going. The valuing of children in the context of cultural transmission (and associatively, cultural continuity) has never changed. That value resounds from the people through national political arenas to the individual households in small, isolated reserve communities. It is thus no surprise that those thinking about, and tasked with, implementing, early childhood policies in the Tl'zat'en Nation link the aspirations, intents, and desires for the Nation to their children, and consequently, to the philosophy of the Tl'zat'en Head Start Program. A community administrator laid this out very clearly:

> Tl'zat'en Nation Head Start philosophy is to provide high quality care in a safe and happy environment. One that is developmentally challenging and stimulating to meet the needs of the children. We will incorporate traditional values and beliefs in order to preserve our language and culture. Parents and Elders are encouraged to participate to their fullest extent. (Community Administrator, 2005)

Language and culture are, and lead to, the formation of collective and individual identity. The passing on of values, language, and ways of being was a holistic process and a part of everyday life according to the Elder study participants (Elders, 2005). These Elders viewed values such as respect, discipline, sharing, and caring as fundamental to their way of life:

> Our parents taught us never to kill insects. We would pick up spiders and they would say, "Put it back outside." We never made fun of anything, or laugh. They would say, don't say something bad to it. They told us to respect everything. We looked after food and food was not wasted. We would pick berries, herbs, medicine, and when we had tobacco, we would put it back into the ground. It was something to give back to the earth. (Elder, 2005)

It was what they were taught and what they themselves taught their children. The values were taught implicitly, for example, through role modeling or storytelling, and explicitly through direct instruction in their daily life tasks:

We were taught by actions, not just words. We copied our mother. We were
taught to hunt and fish. We would prepare the meat. We would put meat on
a stick and cook on open fire. I didn't know how to cook moose heads until
I got married. (Elder, 2005)

Most importantly, values guided how people conducted themselves individually and as part

of a collective. As one Elder recalled, "We all got together in the community, we looked

after one another. If someone was too old to hunt we took them food" (Elder, 2005).

Younger generations of study participants— the caregivers, parents and administrators—

spoke of similar values as being critical to their children's healthy growth development.

Parents conceptualized attributes of identity, language, and culture as socialization within the

family and community and Head Start, which they viewed as essential not only to their

children's growth and development but also to all their interactions inside and outside the

program. As one parent observed,

It is important for children to learn social skills, especially being with other
children. They need to learn respect for others— how to care for one another.
Another important thing for children is to have opportunities that will allow
them to be successful in school. (Parent, 2005)

In fact, when asked what they would like to see more of in the Head Start Program, the

majority of study participants identified a desire to invite more Elders and other community

resource people into the Head Start, along with a desire for the inclusion of additional

culture and language teaching in the form of traditional songs and rhymes. As one of the

caregivers observed, "Participation of community members in the program supports the

development of children's language and cultural identity" (Caregiver, 2005).

Many study participants spoke of the importance of children learning where they

come from. Linked to identity and respect, the importance of teaching children who their

relatives are (and were) was identified by participants as integral to forming the bonds of

connection and ensuring that children are aware they are part of a whole that has existed

through the generations. As one Elder put it, "It is important to teach children about their 'At'su (grandmas). We never called people by their names. We called them by how we were related to them— I would call them 'Sasti'ten" (Elder, 2005). These familial connections, in addition to the language, are the pathways for transmission of knowledge and ways of being, for relationships within the collective. Thus they are fundamental to identity. The sad truth remains, however, that in the present day many people in the villages were removed in what is now referred to as the "sixties scoop" and placed in foster homes. Their children and grandchildren bear the scars of this colonial incursion, and many of the new generation continue to be placed in foster care (Fournier & Grey, 1997). One Elder commented that these children did not know to whom they were related or even that they were related to their Nations (Elder, 2005), thus were their identities as First Nations fundamentally compromised.

6.4.4 Tensions between community and provincial licensing

The often difficult transition of Aboriginal children into formal (Western) education systems is evident in one study participant's reflection: "A lot of teachers have told us that there is a positive difference in the children's behaviour when entering school compared to those who did not attend Head Start" (Caregiver, 2005). Children are often faced with having to adjust to a whole other world of new rules, new faces, and new ways of conducting themselves. First Nations children in British Columbia are no exception. These children, particularly if they are from small reserves like Tl'azt'en, are in many cases coming from different epistemological and ontological places than the majority of their non-First Nations classmates. As mentioned earlier, the history of First Nations peoples in Canada has not been pleasant. And still today, young First Nations children are being asked to adjust, to learn the rules, so they can "fit in" and be successful in a system not of their making, a

colonial system. It is reasonable then that parents, caregivers, and community members are concerned with their children being taught skills that will assist them in being successful in the formal education system. A parent described the success of the program in meeting their collective aspirations: "Head Start has made a positive difference in children's behaviour when entering school. They have the opportunity [in Head Start] to participate in learning activities in culture, academics, and socialization" (Parent, 2005). These parental aspirations are reinforced by the national program's overall emphasis on education (or school readiness). Of the six components of the Head Start program, education is commonly known and referred to as "school readiness." Readily accessible teaching and learning resources make it much easier for caregivers to teach these school readiness skills. The same availability of resources does not exist in language and culture. "We had few community resources when we started," said one caregiver. "We had to develop them as we went along. We had a hard time to find trained culture and language teachers" (Caregiver, 2005).

Provincial licensing is another system that impacts the community through adherence of the Head Start Program to the requirements. Once again— at least in theory— imposed regulations and standards can be seen as subtle (or maybe not so subtle) pressures to assimilate. Not unlike the way in which the national program framework and contribution agreements with the regional offices influenced policy, so do provincial licensing requirements. An example of the clashes between community desires and formal regulations that Head Start initially faced and finally changed (with the assistance of the leadership) involved serving traditional foods. This has been a particular challenge for First Nations community Head Start Programs throughout the province, and I suspect across the country. Coupled with regulations about serving traditional foods was also the requirement that everyone helping to serve food had to have a Food-Safe certificate, a qualification that

comes only at a cost and which many community members may not have achieved. In essence, certification in the program barred some community members from partaking in the preparation and serving of food to their future generations within formalized child care settings. When one considers that food is a significant part of First Nations culture (and for that matter most cultures), and can be ceremonial, or signify the seasons or a time of social interaction, or simply constitute a part of a child's normal daily diet, regulating the kinds of foods served and how they are served could thus be construed as a means to sever First Nations children from their cultures and senses of identity. Although it may not be the intent this action is certainly disruptive.

These larger tensions were evidenced in the practical realities of implementing the Tl'zat'en Head Start Program. Limited funding placed significant constraint on the community's ability to address children's unique needs and to hire adequate staff. There was the obligation to have "trained staff" as set out in the licensing requirements. As noted earlier, the community had already begun the process of training staff at the same time as they were applying for the Head Start Program. This met a fundamental desire for the children of Tl'zat'en to be cared for by community members, individuals whom parents knew and trusted. This desire is congruent with community aspirations for children, especially for children to form an identity and develop cultural and linguistic competency. The fact that the training was to focus on the culture of the community, for some students (now caregivers in the program), this was one of the most significant reasons they took the training:

> When I decided to take the ECE program I really didn't know what I was getting myself into. . . . It was to be based on our culture. . . . In our training I was always trying to come up with cultural ideas for everything, for example, in curriculum it was really hard. There were hands-on activities. For example, it was good getting berries from the bush— it was really exciting doing that. (Caregiver, 2005)

The demands of licensing also had an impact on the Head Start Program's child:staff ratios for children's age groupings. Potential conflicts over child:staff ratio requirements (despite not being ideal for the community) were simply accommodated. For example, the requirements laid out safety guidelines for taking children on nature walks and field trips. In most cases, however, there were not enough qualified individuals to satisfy the safety standard. Therefore, the program curtailed outings and field trips that had been planned for the children.

The licensing requirements demand structural attributes within the Head Start Program that seem a far cry from the stories of the Elders and how they were taught (and taught their children) on a daily basis through experience and role modelling. These informal ways of learning, knowing, and being are forced to change with the imposition of external structures, e.g., provincial licensing requirements. Beyond the spontaneity of being, of reflecting the community collective, one wonders what else is left behind. Are the threads of values, of language, going to remain intact or will they unravel until there is nothing left? This interface of epistemologies and ontologies is likewise evident in concerns expressed by study participants regarding participation of parents and Elders in the program. As one study participant said, "We had difficulty recruiting Elders and trained people— we needed to interpret early childhood education terminology for them" (Community Administrator, 2005). The fact that early childhood terminology had to be explained begs the question of cultural difference not only in terms and titles, but also with reference to the underlying assumptions and meanings of those terms. This may present a significant challenge for Elders whose experience and knowledge has been accumulated throughout their lifetimes, a process of accumulation which might be theorized as unfolding in opposition to, and not necessarily from, the same place, as these new and formalized terms and meanings. For

Elders, then, it could be like walking into another culture, a process and practice which may lead to questioning themselves and what it is they have to offer in such an environment. This is akin to children going into the formal education system for the first time. A similar experience held true for parents who were "explained the policies and what is expected of them while in the program." (Caregiver, 2005)

6.4.5 Sense of success and utility

Thematically it was the study participants' reflections on the successes and benefits of the Tl'azt'en Head Start Program that brought the interviews full-circle back to intents, desires, and aspirations for their children, parents, and community. Study participants regarded the Head Start Program as a success for children. Children were provided with an environment in which to learn and socialize. Children with unique needs such as speech and language challenges were able to access additional support. One parent noticed, "There is a positive difference in the children's behaviour compared to those who did not attend Head Start or daycare" (Parent, 2005). Furthermore, children were acquiring more acceptable behaviours for school, highlighting one of the hopes for the program and for the children attending it— acquisition of school readiness skills (Parents, 2005). This has been discussed in the previous section— the interface of different knowledge bases and what is given priority. This is a structural as well as a practical reality in the lives of these children and the community, and underscores the tension between specific skill-set developments along with the risk of learning one set of skills at the expense of another.

Throughout this study, participants have spoken about the importance of language and culture. The importance of these has been theorized in a variety of practical ways. Desires and aspirations have been theorized alongside other reasons for the success of the Head Start program. However, this appears to be a contested reality if one considers the

177

challenges in involving community members, Elders, and parents in the program. Elders had attended the program initially two or three times a week; now they attend the program once a week (for a variety of reasons as identified earlier in this case) (Caregiver, 2005). Likewise, although specific benefits for parents (such as special events, parenting courses, and information sharing) were identified as signs of success, attendance was often low and lacked the participation needed. Despite these incongruities and challenges, study participants still maintained that it was of utmost importance to have community members' support in the development of children's language and cultural identity.

6.4.6   Reflections

I had very different experiences within each community I visited. Tl'azt'en was no exception. As I revisit the words I wrote with regard to the Tl'azt'en, I am struck by the Tl'azt'en peoples' absolute commitment and desire for children to know who they are as part of their collective in a context that equally demands that children acquire the skills and abilities for them to be successful outside of their collective. These interfaces and places of tensions were of course evident at the structural/policy level as well as in the daily operations of the Head Start Program. The tensions all bespeak the ruptures that occur when structures from outside the community are integrated and implemented into a community. At their base, these tensions might be understood as anchored in (a) the formalization of informal ways of caring for children, and (b) the employment of structures not rooted in the epistemologies and ontologies of the community.

I am reminded of standing on the shores of a lake as the winds came up and the waves formed and beat against the shore. As I stood at the edge of the lake, I dug my toes into the sand that was shifting with the water, yet I held my ground. I think this is what it must feel like at a cosmic level as change presses on time. These grains of sand are the

essences of the language and of the epistemologies and ontologies unique to distinct cultures. These are the values and beliefs that carry us through time each day, always forming new meaning and possibility. The Head Start Program in the Tl'azt'en Nation, despite significant external pressures, implements a program that preserves these essences, and it is thus an innovative program with possibilities for ensuring Tl'azt'en teachings and practices are transmitted to their children.

6.5   Closing comments

In both the Lake Babine and Tl'azt'en Nations communities, language and culture without doubt were referenced as the most important teachings for children. Language and culture were understood and theorized by the study participants as fundamental aspects of being (and living) as a member of their communities. The perceptions of the participants reinforced the intrinsic link between language and culture, and the growth and development of their children: language and culture were unwaveringly understood as key principles in any consideration of raising young children, particularly as those children are part of, and members of, the larger collective.

For both communities, another important theme was described as "tensions between community and provincial licensing." Put another way, the vast majority of all participants voiced thoughts on the interface between, on the one hand, community expectations, realities, and visions, and on the other hand, the imposition of external (primarily non-Aboriginal, primarily institutional) expectations and demands. This second theme includes discussions encompassing the acquisition of funding and the need for formalized early childhood training, along with the other practicalities of delivering the services associated with early childhood.

A third theme arose that might be described as "sense of success and utility" with reference to early childhood programs. This was by no means confined to early childhood but expanded to include larger notions of the role of children in the future of the community. Broadly speaking, then, a number of consistent and constant themes emerged from the voices and perspectives of Lake Babine and Tl'azt'en members who spoke about the realities of developing and implementing formalized early childhood programs in their communities.

In reality, and in many senses, these First Nations communities, as well as those across the country, are caught in a conceptual and realistic bind in which the care and education of children is paramount while formalized early childhood services for their children are tied, in this particular case, to the much broader challenges faced by Indigenous peoples around the globe.

As I have written throughout this chapter, the challenge of interfacing epistemologies and ontologies is riddled with associated power differentials— subjugation. I believe these larger philosophical and structural issues are the most fundamental challenges facing these communities. As a result, in each level of reality communities are in a place of tension as they seek to implement programs that are meaningful, relevant, and respectful of their children. It is within these aspirations that the philosophical and ultimately structural realities and practical tensions reside, and it is here that community resilience and creativity abound. Communities, through the generations, continue to teach the values and beliefs of relationships with the world and all its intricacies. With each generation come a creating and an uncovering of that which has always been. This continuity of teaching and learning begins with the people and comes from the people. It is the people who must control what is to happen in the lives of their children, physically, culturally, intellectually, and spiritually. Some

would say that this is encapsulated in notions of self-determination, self-governance; perhaps so. It is incumbent upon us to find those ways just as the old ones did for us, so that these generations are prepared for their tomorrow and the tomorrows of those yet to come. It is from this base of strength that we reach out and engage in the struggles so that we may find creative responses that serve us as well as greater humanity. I have learned that the good care of children begins from this place of ethical transformation.

CHAPTER SEVEN

Pathways to Learning:
Tuhoe of Aotearoa / New Zealand

7.1   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the results of research conducted in Aotearoa / New Zealand into the development of Te Kohanga Reo (the language nests) for young Maori and non-Maori children. The discussions begin with an exploration of the personal journey that led to the research. Integral to this personal journey are theoretical principles and methodological considerations such as the cultural protocols that I employed to conduct the research. At the heart of these is the realization that epistemology and ontology in Indigenous research are inherently connected. In other words, the only way I could come to understand Te Kohanga Reo was to experience and become embodied within Maori constructs. I follow my personal positioning with a brief geographical and historical discussion of the Tuhoe Maori of Aotearoa / New Zealand, and a description of my arrival and initial experiences which served to set the cultural context into which this research study was conducted. Finally, a significant component of this chapter is an exploration of the perspectives of research participants who commented upon the overall development of Te Kohanga Reo and its current implementation at the community level. The words of the participants form the foundation of a thematic analysis in which I examine the broad concept of whanau (family) and its role in the establishment of Te Kohanaga Reo. I also explore language and cultural identity, self-determination, teaching and training, bicultural possibility, and legislation and licensing. I conclude the chapter with a brief discussion about trans-national linkages between Aotearoa / New Zealand and Canada in the area of Indigenous early childhood.

Each step of my research journey has been about learning, about peeling back the petals of a closed rose to reveal layers of understanding embedded within it.

It is worthwhile to note that this chapter is not meant to document the history of Te Kohanga Reo movement in Aotearoa / New Zealand. Others have already done that (Tangere, 1997; Fleras, 1983; G. H. Smith, 1998, 1987; Government Review Team, 1988). Further, it is not my place as an outsider to presume to do so. However, in telling my story of learning, I have included some pieces of descriptive history either to add clarification or as offered by study participants. As a learner from another country (and a vastly different context), I have attempted to ask questions and to think about them from a place that will ultimately enhance my understanding and learning. Emphasis is thus put on some aspects of Te Kohanga Reo movement and not on others. This is done in an attempt to select those areas most applicable to my realities.

7.2   Personal positioning: A journey to learning

According to Anishinaabe artist and performer Shandra Spears (2005), the world is made up of stories. These stories form our understanding of the world, our relationship to it, and every aspect of our learning about it. There are, according to Spears, "so many stories to tell" (Spears, 2005, p. 3). In the story, I relate in this chapter about my research journey to Aotearoa / New Zealand, my intent is to simultaneously tell a story about an academic research endeavour and tell a story of coming to understand another culture. Intimate in this narrative journey is a series of teachings (or my understanding of Maori teachings) of physical geography and location, of philosophy, of living, and of caring for children.

My journey to Aotearoa / New Zealand began long before I stepped onto the plane. It started with an idea— the idea that there are many peoples from whom to learn. This idea

guided my conversations and dialogues with my friend and colleague, Ngaroimata (Tina) who is of Maori Tuhoe descent from Aotearoa / New Zealand. It was Tina that taught me and guided me through all of the necessary protocols to engage with the Tuhoe peoples. It is her hand that was always at my back as we journeyed together. From a pragmatic place, the Maori had established Te Kohanga Reo in the early 1980s. These early childhood settings had been established at the direction of the Maori Kaumaatua (Elders) and with some limited assistance from the Department of Maori Affairs (Fleras, 1983). Te Kohanga Reo provided a rich place from which to learn, especially given that we (Canada) are only a decade old in establishing formalized early childhood services for First Nations and Aboriginal children residing on and off reserve. The chronicling of this journey is a blend of the narrative and the objective, but most of all it is about relationship: about friendship, sharing, caring, and giving to one another so that the doors of understanding and knowledge are there for us to walk through. In looking at the Tuhoe tribal situation in particular, I am able to localise the developed in more specific terms rather than generalizing across many tribes and the Maori people as a whole.

This story is also about experiencing the teachings and essences of other peoples' ways of knowing and being— living it in order to know it (in my own limited way as an outsider). I came to realize that for me to understand Te Kohanga Reo movement and its implementation at the community level, I had to have some understanding of Maori epistemology and ontology, especially that of the Tuhoe peoples. This would ensure that I would not be blind to what I was seeing. I came to know that kaupapa (philosophy) is not just about the collective or individuals but stems instead from a place of constant understanding and renewal. These understandings and renewals are evidenced in the language, songs, dances, chants, speeches, graphic arts, and actions of the people. And in this

renewal and energy there is a continuous reaching back to the teachings of the ancestors as we move individually and collectively.

Before I could actually go to Aotearoa / New Zealand, I had to have permission from the Tuhoe people to enter their specific tribal territory and to learn from them. In my case, I was seeking to undertake my doctoral research which, in addition to the university ethics requirements, also required that I entered the territory of another Indigenous group in a respectful and meaningful way. Tina taught me the entry protocols for her iwi (tribe). I first wrote a letter of request to Tina's father, Piipii Tamehana, a Kaumaatua and acknowledged leader among his tribe (see Appendix 2). The letter described the place where I was born and grew up and my ancestors from three generations ago. It also contained a request to come and learn from the people so that the knowledge could inform my current work with communities and governments in developing First Nations and Aboriginal early childhood programs and services in Canada. On one of her trips home, Tina took the letter and presented it to her father. Permission was granted by Tina's father and the other Kaumaatua. They also assigned me an academic advisor from Aotearoa / New Zealand, (Dr. Taiarahia Black, a Tuhoe Maori scholar and tribal researcher from Massey University (see Appendix 2). Tina and I made plans to go to Aotearoa / New Zealand in the spring of 2005.

7.3   The Tuhoe people

Part of my preparation for going to New Zealand was to learn who the people were that I was going to visit. It was my mentor and teacher, Ngaroimata, who guided my learning. The following paragraphs, which are prefaced with a map that provides a visual orientation to the area, are from her teaching. The link between kinship relationships and ancestral lands is a feature of Maori tribal existence. In Tuhoe this relationship is articulated in the earliest

185

Figure 7.1: Geographical map of Te Urewera
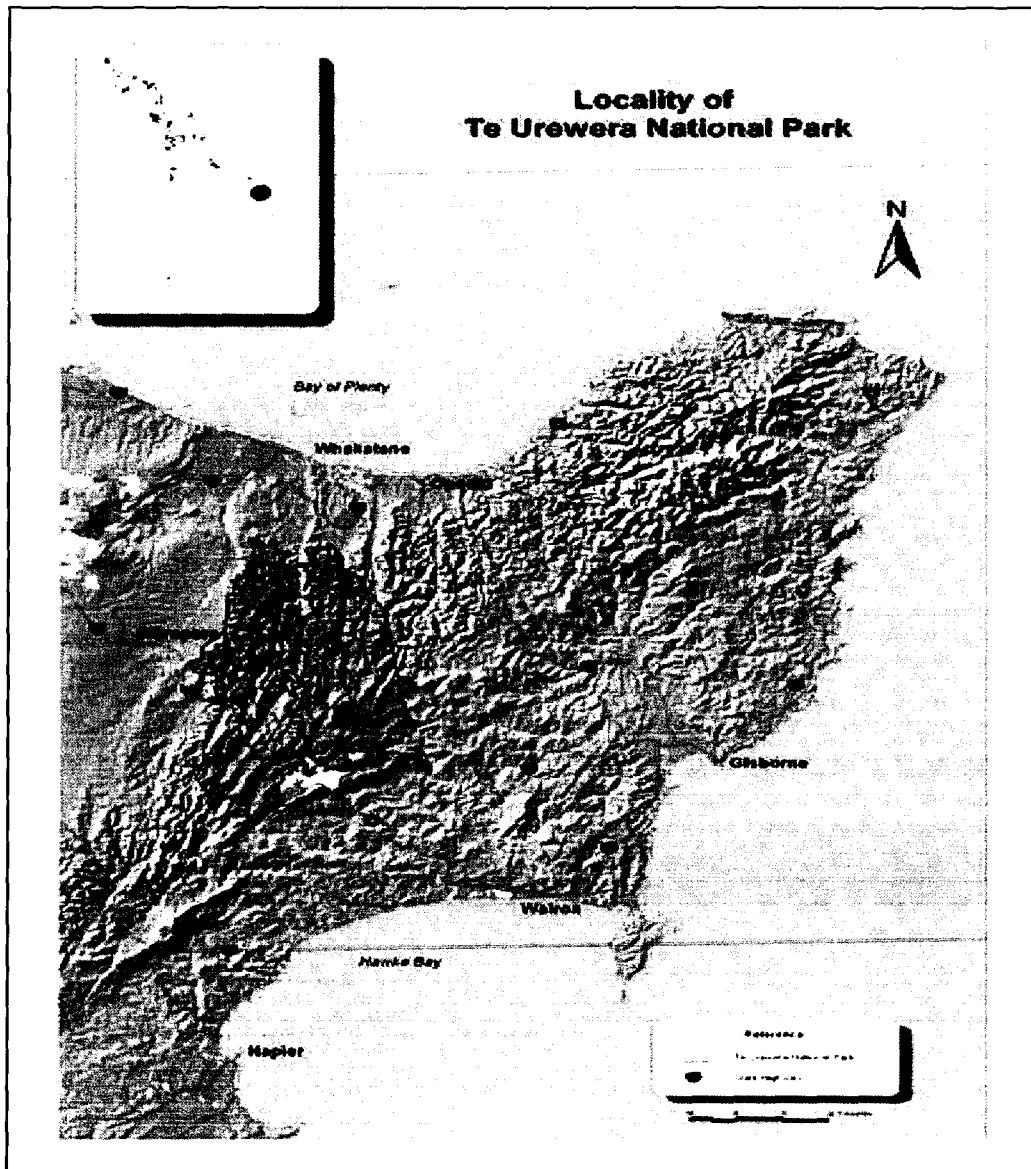
Source: Government of New Zealand website, retrieved from
www.doc.govt.nz/upload/2427/Locality-Map.jpg, May 13, 2008

traditions. The Maungapohatu (mountain) is the embodiment of Tuhoe identity as the

primeval ancestor. The atua (deity) Hinepūkohurangi (the mist maiden), descended from the

heavens to cohabit with Te Maunga (the mountain) and produced a son, Potiki, before

returning to her celestial home. Most of Tuhoe can claim to trace their ancestry from Potiki.

Ngai Tuhoe are commonly known as the "children of the mist," which is an obvious

reference to the mists that cover most of Tuhoe in the winter. To those who know of the

origins of the people, "the children of the mist" alludes to the descendants of

Hinepūkohurangi, a description that further accentuates the traditional significance of the

physical environment. (For a more comprehensive overview of Tuhoe tribal origins, see

Wiri, 1994). In pre-European history the entire tribal area of the Tuhoe was known as Te

Urewera. According to tradition, the name (Tuhoe) comes from an incident when

Murakareke (the Nga Potiki chief) fell asleep too close to a fire and was fatally burnt in the

groin. The literal translation of Urewera is "burnt manhood." The traditions relating to the

origins of the Tuhoe people are complex. In effect, the Ngai Tuhoe (ancestral group) is a

confederation of tribes.

Te Urewera is the North Island's largest native forest. Rugged ridges and densely

misted valleys are features of this area. Early European travellers captivated by the beauty

and isolation of the area wrote inspired poetic descriptions of it. Stokes, Milroy and

Melbourne's (1986) description reflects this poetic response:

> To the Maori of old, the mist wreathed hills and valleys held spirits and gods,
> and even now some strange presence seems to linger. Man, mountain and
> myth are blended together. Revered ancestors are not just part of the
> genealogy, but part of the land. The name of every hill, every rock and tree,
> brings the history of 1000 years to life again. (p. 18)

In 1896, *Te Urewera District Native Reserve Act* designated some 650,000 acres as a

national park. In 1954, the catchment areas of Lake Waikaremoana and other lands were also

taken. In 1957, the Crown allocated an additional 1,350 square kilometers north of

Ruataahuna to Te Urewera National Park. Subsequent acquisitions further transformed the

shrinking Tuhoe tribal landscape. Most of the southern reaches remain in natural native bush

under the control of the Department of Conservation. The ramifications of the land

consolidation scheme continue to be problematic for Tuhoe who, at present, are in the

process of treaty land claims. The complexity of land ownership and claim to land makes it extremely difficult for many Tuhoe Waitangi Tribunal claimants to establish legal title.

There is also a link between tribal social structures and land ownership. In Maori conceptualizations, whakapapa (genealogy) lies across the land. Tuhoe communities are made up of kinship groups affiliated to the land they occupy. Descent within the Tuhoe is multifarious, as Elsdon Best (1925) ascertains in his description of the Tuhoe tribal origins in relation to the land (p. 8). The earliest traditions relate to the union of Hinepūkohurangi and Te Maunga. Other Aboriginal (Aboriginee) tribes are also progenitors of the Tuhoe. For example, the Hapuoneone of Waimana are well known descendants of the original Tuhoe inhabitants. Tuhoe, the ancestor, is affiliated to the mataatua waka (canoe) that migrated from Hawaiiki. Elsdon Best's (1972) informants corroborated this assertion further intimating that Aboriginal descent amongst Tuhoe was of considerable genealogical value:

> The aho ariki, or most revered line of descent of the Tuhoe people, is that
> from the original parents heaven and earth, through the Whaitiri line,
> including Tawhaki, Wahie-roa and Toroa; though not through Toi, or Potiki,
> although the Tuhoe are far more Aboriginal in blood than they are
> Hawaiikan. (p. 13)

In contemporary tribal politics, the different claims to primacy are demonstrated in whakapapa, purakau (tribal and subtribal narratives), pepeha (tribal sayings), and nga moteatea (song). Accordingly, the Tamakaimoana tribe named the place Waimana (the spring of mana) to venerate their Aboriginal title. Similarly, Ruatahuna is promoted as the kohanga (birthplace) of the Tuhoe people. While there may be tacit agreement to these claims, in effect all of the hapu (sub-tribes) that share the Urewera territories have their own distinctive histories. Elsdon Best (1972) further relates a whakatauki (proverb) that supports the different political descendants from the Aboriginal and Hawaiikan place on descent:

Na to raua ko Potiki te whenua, na Tuhoe te mana me te rangatiratanga. (The land is from Toi and Potiki, the prestige and rank from Tuhoe.) Thus admitting that they obtained their lands from their ancestors of the original people, but claiming that they derived their rank from the Mataatua immigrants. Of who Tuhoe-Potiki was a (mixed) descendant. (p. 13)

Coming to know these cultural details has helped me to understand the context and give meaning to the dissertation in ways that I may not have, had I not had this experience.

7.3.1   Te Tiriti O Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi)

The formal agreement between Maori hapu and the British Crown took the form of a treaty written in both Maori and English. The treaty was signed initially at Waitangi in the Bay of Islands in 1840. Later versions were signed at several other sites around the country. Although the first article in Maori ultimately accommodated a very loosely worded transfer of sovereignty, the Treaty of Waitangi made significant guarantees of Crown protection of Maori taonga (treasures) while guaranteeing that the Maori also retained control over Maori resources in Article 2. In Article 3, the treaty guaranteed the Maori the same rights and privileges that British subjects enjoyed in 1840. Although the treaty was declared a simple occurrence in 1877 because it had never been incorporated into New Zealand law by a specific act of parliament, in 1992 it was acknowledged as the founding document of Aotearoa / New Zealand (Durie, 1994). War, poverty, and contact with introduced diseases contributed to a dramatic reduction in the Maori population from 1769 to 1890. The Maori population, although inaccurately measured, was clearly in continuous decline. Mason Durie (1994) estimates that the Maori population dropped by a third in less than a century, and quoted a prophecy from 1884 in his text Whaiora: "Just as the Norwegian rat has displaced the Maori rat, as introduced plants have displaced Maori plants, so the white man will replace the Maori" (Durie, 1994, p. 32). This prophecy has not been fulfilled. The Maori population remained essentially rurally based until post-1943 when migration to the cities

accelerated. As most of the non-Maori population was already urban based, there was little

real contact between Maori and non-Maori until the mid 1970s when Maori began to recover

in numbers and make a critical impact on the social climate of Aotearoa / New Zealand.

There has been much debate and speculation over the contemporary relevance of the

Treaty of Waitangi, the state of health care, and the application of the words of the treaty as

agreed to in 1840. Debate has also been consistent over the meanings and interpretation of

the differing texts in Maori and in English. Fiduciary obligations, although unwritten, are

understood to mean that both parties must act in good faith toward each other. Many

individual principles of the Treaty have been extracted and applied to contemporary health

situations. Those principles that have acquired the most currency in daily society are the

three which were produced by the Royal Commission on Social Policy (1988). They are the

principles of partnership, participation, and protection. The ideas behind these principles

have been variously interpreted according to which organization has employed them.

Since the *Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975*, the treaty has grown steadily in the public

attention. Pushed largely by Maori urban activism to address the social and economic

consequences of legislatively induced poverty (Durie, 1994), the establishment of the

Waitangi Tribunal has been seen as a significant outlet for Maori frustrations. Publicity given

to the succession of cases and the landmark decisions made in respect of tribal claims against

the Crown has enabled treaty issues to assume an importance that they had not had over the

previous 100 years. The treaty has become a focus for race relations activity, particularly in

respect to property rights. Maori attempts to assert their arguments regarding these matters

often has caused comment from all levels of Aoteoroa /New Zealand society, ranging from

radio talkback to the 1975 Court of Appeal decisions on the role and function of the

Waitangi Tribunal. This is the context into which I was to journey. I was grateful for the

teachings of my friend and for the knowledge and understanding that I had gained as I looked forward to visiting Aotearoa / New Zealand.

7.4 On my way

The plane sped down the runaway and lifted off the ground; I was finally on my way to Aotearoa / New Zealand. The preparation had been hectic. Gifts were prepared, questionnaires printed, and schedules finalized. During our flight, Tina talked about what was to come— a traditional welcoming ceremony which I would later learn was called a pohiri. The ceremony was to take place at Mahi Tahi, a Maori mental health and well-being agency in Auckland where we were to land first. Although we were not on traditional Tuhoe lands, we still had to be welcomed in a formal way.

We were welcomed by a woman who sang a chant to which Tina responded with an ancient chant given to her by her mother. This construct of welcoming is known as the karanga. Once this chanting was complete, we walked into the building and were seated in a row of chairs facing our hosts. Tina's family took over from here. There were whaikorero (speeches) followed by waiata (songs). Long after the ceremony, I asked why there were songs after each speech. I was told that when Maori speak in ceremony, they are in a sacred realm and the songs are meant to purify the whaikorero as well as connect us to the ancestors. I too had to give a speech, a speech about who I am and why I had come to Aotearoa / New Zealand. My speech began by thanking the Creator and acknowledging the Maori peoples of Aotearoa / New Zealand, and proceeded to describe the space and place I come from. Here is a small except of what I said:

> There is an old, windy river where I was born and lived as a child. It
> meanders across flat, sparsely wooded plains in what is now known as central
> Alberta. In its banks are memories of days gone by, of our people and our
> ways. When I stood on the banks of that river as a child and felt the earth

between my toes— I knew who I was and where I came from. It is the same today.

The closing of the ceremony was a round of hugs and hongi (where you touch your forehead down to your nose with the other person) for everyone. The hongi is a sacred action: it infers that you both take in the same air and as such are one. A lunch, more akin to a small feast, was served after the welcoming ceremony.

We left Auckland and headed east to the interior or eastern Bay of Plenty area. This is the home of the Tuhoe peoples. As we drove, Tina's brother Jono taught me how to say the Maori road signs and place names. I am sure I just about drove him crazy with my poor pronunciation. The land was incredible, with vast stands of trees of many species and a lushness that rivaled the tropics. The roads were narrow and windy. We passed through villages and small towns— quaint, clean, and neatly aligned— finally arriving at Tina's whanau in the town of Kawerau.

Our itinerary had been set out by Jono, a teacher, old beyond his years in knowledge, and the recipient of many gifts. He is not only tutor of the kapa haka (dance group) but a role model and a cultural leader within his whanau. All the experiences I participated in were intended to offer me greater understanding of what I was to learn from my research through living it. Our first stop was to participate in the rehearsals of the kapa haka (dance) group as they prepared for the upcoming biannual Tuhoe Ahurei (Tuhoe gathering of the nation).

The marae (sacred gathering place), where the weekend-long rehearsals took place, was located in Waiohau in the valley of Tuhoe territory. This was my first visit to a marae. It was shaped like an elongated A-frame with the roof reaching from the peak to the base. We did not enter in a formal way, but as we stepped through the doorway, removing our footwear, Tina began to explain to me why the marae was constructed as it was. The support

beams were painted and carved with figures that depicted the history of the people. Framed photos of the ancestors (those who have gone on to the spirit world) lined the walls. She spoke softly of the Kaumaatua and their chanting, teachings, and protocol constructs. The marae was shrouded in quietness and peace.

We all slept side by side on mattresses on the floor in the marae. The next day would be a long one with practices for the upcoming Ahurei (the gathering of the Tuhoe Nation). In the morning everyone knew the tasks they were to perform; some were up early preparing breakfast while others were assigned to clean up. As evening came, the older children looked after the younger ones as their parents, aunties, uncles, and cousins practiced. The next evening was to be the final dress rehearsal. This was to take place with a neighbouring group. As I thought once again about the children, I reflected on their ages from birth to young teenagers and was acutely aware of the collective nature of the event and of the expected roles of each individual who was there. Later that evening, Jono explained to me that while the group itself comprised a variety of ages, there was a requirement to ensure that a certain number of young people were engaged (as needed) to take specific roles within the brackets of the performance (i.e., the items that make up the performance). These requirements ensure that the younger people (those under 25 years) are trained in the ways of the Tuhoe. This strategy ensures the education of the next generation and the healthy and productive existence of the people themselves. One might also call this a strategy for cultural continuity, although it does not arise solely from this place but must also be linked to age-old practices and aroha (care and love).

I also had to introduce myself that evening. I shortened this introduction considerably from what I had presented in Auckland and ended with a very short Cree honour song. This was different from what I would do at home, but I was thankful for the

learning and the opportunity to show respect for the ways of the people of the territory upon which I found myself.

7.4.1   Te Hui Ahurei ā Tuhoe (Gathering of the Tuhoe Nation)

The importance to me of observing and understanding the kapa haka group's preparation and final performance at Te Hui Ahurei was to ready me for my visits to Te Tuhoe Kohanga Reo. Jono knew that the knowledge contained within the preparations and performance itself would also be evident in Te Tuhoe Kohanga Reo. As tutor (that is, teacher, leader, and organizer) of the kapa haka group, Jono begins preparing for the Ahurei at least six months before the group's rehearsals. He writes most of the group's songs and develops the associated choreography for each: "By the time practices begin I am drained emotionally, spiritually, physically, and mentally," he confessed. "The songs are given to me spiritually and intended for specific individuals, although I don't know who at the time" (personal communication, March, 2005). Once the songs and actions are ready, the training of the group begins and carries on for about five months. The training occurs on the weekends, because the majority of the group work during the week and the training demands a huge commitment on everyone's part. Jono also has the ability to see the ihi (or inner being or spirit) of each group member. He explained that the performers spiritually feed off of each other. If one performer does not give back spiritually, then the person beside them in the performance becomes drained. The unwilling performer does not perform well either. When all performers are sharing spiritually, you have unity and a sense of the cohesive collective in which the spirit and the body are one. This also provides an opportunity for the group and listeners to engage in new levels of knowing and understanding.

Although I had seen and heard the group perform the day before, nothing prepared me for the impact of the music, the myriad of colourful natural textiles of handmade

costumes, or the reaction of my heart. The group's performance was meant to honour their dead, to bring them on the stage and in performance with them. In the past year, there had been several deaths and this was the time to pay homage to them. As they sang Tina's father's song, I could feel the tears run down my face. I could feel him in the room. My tears were not of sadness. Instead they came from the realization of perfection as I listened to the music and an overwhelming feeling of simultaneous peace between the physical self and the being— like a tiny bird falling from its nest and never reaching the ground but rather coming to a place of rest that transcends the physical being of self.

The performance was followed by a great feast hosted by the neighboring festival group. In the end, at the request of the hosts, we sang for our dinner. Jono's voice rose up from where we were standing as a group by the door. Other members joined in, and soon the whole group flooded the hall with perfect harmony as they sang song after song. There are no words to describe the perfection of those moments.

The Ahurei was held the following weekend. This cultural festival is specific to the Tuhoe tribe and is intended to encourage Tuhoe tribal members to return home, "to the home fires," where the Tuhoe can regenerate their knowledge of who they are as Tuhoe people. The festival embodies the traditional Kapa Haka of the Tuhoe and mirrors the protocols of the marae. Strict guidelines and processes must be adhered to. There are 12 brackets (or sections) for groups to compete in, and they are arranged in a consistent order across groups. These items of the performance mirror the protocols of the marae. Many attendees of the Ahurei equated the festival to a biannual Kohanga Reo for adults where Tuhoe gathered together for a time of celebration, learning, sharing, and caring. This gift of knowledge helped me to recognize what I was experiencing and why I was experiencing it in

the manner that I did. What follows is a recounting of Jono's story to me and a recounting

of his teachings that enabled me to experience what I did:

> Each performance begins with a choral piece, the Waiata Tira. The choral piece can be written on anything and has no actions. It is judged on how well the group sing together, how diverse their harmonies can be, and whether or not they portray that sound in accordance with the words of the song that they are using.

> The second item is the Whakaeke or entry onto the stage. The entry is written about who you are, your sub-tribe, or it can be an acknowledgement to whoever is hosting the festival. This is where the majority of your choreography is— in the entry. You are judged on how well you execute that choreography, how well you work together as a group, and whether or not the actions and choreography are appropriate to the words that you use.

> Third is the Wero. The Wero is part of the welcoming process. A Maori challenger comes out and he lays down a peka [branch], which is laid in a specific way. When they have the welcoming ceremony on the marae, the challenger puts down the peka for the people that are coming onto the Marae. If it is picked up by the host, then they come in peace. If the host doesn't pick it up, then they come in war. The Wero is judged on how well the individual person does their process. When the Warrior turns around to slap his thigh, that means that the person has picked up the token to say that they (the group) may come in peace; the group can then follow.

> Following the Wero is the Karanga, or call of welcome. A girl or woman must do the karanga. She calls three times: the first call goes out to the Manuhiri (guests, the people that are coming onto your marae, the visitors); the second call is to the Dead, that they bring on with them their Dead, so that the spirits of their Dead can be united with the spirits of our Dead— that we mourn our Dead together and they be made as one.

> The men's Haka-pohiri or Peruperu is the fifth item. Once complete, the Haka is followed by the third Karanga which asks the visitors to settle. The Karanga is to let them know, "You can now relax, you're part of us."

> The sixth section is called the Rau rakau, the woman's welcoming dance, and is done with leaves. The woman leader will lead the women and bring them up to the front of the stage. They do their welcoming dance, Te Rau Raakau.

> The Whaikorero or male speech follows as the seventh item. The welcoming speech is based on specific reasons for being at that festival. Once the Whaikorero is completed, the Moteatea or traditional chant is performed. These are the old songs referred to as the Waiata koroua because

they are the old men's songs.

The ninth item to be performed is the waiata-a-ringa or action song that is written on a topic of your choice. The Poi follows next. The Poi is the woman's dance and also refers to the name of a ball on one end of a string. The Poi was originally invented by the men to strengthen their wrist muscles for use with their weapons.

Eleventh, following the poi is the haka, the men's war dance. This dance portrays a story often on a controversial subject.

The last item is the whakawaatea, or exit off the stage. This item is characterized by its focus on choreography. (Jono, personal communication, 2005)

The Ahurei was held in the large open field across the road from the Ruatoki School in the valley of Tuhoeland (the traditional territories of the Tuhoe people). We all stayed in one classroom on mattresses we had brought from our marae. We went to bed late and got up early, some earlier than others as they prepared breakfast for the group. In the centre of the field was a large entertainment stand. A huge outline map of Tuhoe territory on a dark green background served as the walls for the back and sides of the rectangular stage.

As I observed all the activity, I saw people of all ages engaged in specific pursuits, all focused on organizing and setting up for everyone. It seems that children are taught from the time they are very young to know their individual roles within the context of the collective— or as a better way of saying it, children are taught to be part of the whole, to be in the collective, as revealed in their behavioural role. As they move through those roles, they assume more and more responsibility for the care of other children, for fetching and for cooking and caring for each other. There is obvious respect for those older than oneself. Young men and women would not presume to question their aunties, while nieces, nephews, or cousins would care for the young children. Everyone looks out for the children. The children are safe. All of these experiences and teachings had been to prepare me for my visits

to Te Kohanga Reo and Te Kohanga Reo National Trust. My journey to the communities

really began with learning about Te Kohanga Reo and how it came to be in Tuhoe

communities.

7.5   Historical overview of Te Kohanga Reo

> The Kaumaatua of the day had a dream, a dream that our language would
> never die.[21]

In 1979, the Department of Maori Affairs sponsored a series of conferences designed to

garner information from Maori leaders about their constituents' grievances. The Department

of Maori Affairs Tu Tangata policy of the day focused on the devolution of decision-making

to communities (Fleras, 1983). The first of these conferences was the Uananga Kaumaatua

(Elders' Conference). In part, based on the release of the *Benton Report* (1979 the previous

year, Kaumaatua were very concerned that the Maori language would become extinct (Smith,

1987; Tangaere, 1997). The Kaumaatua articulated the following principle: "The language is

the life principle of the Maori mana [spirit, pride]" (Fleras, 1983; Te Kohanga Reo National

Trust Board, 1995). The centrality of this principle to Maori mana necessitated that Maori

people "take control of the future destiny of the language and to plan for its survival"

(Government Review Team, 1988, p. 18, quoted in Tangaere, 1997, p. 6). Subsequent

leadership conferences reiterated and reinforced the necessity of language retention through

preschool programs. Not without a struggle, in 1981 Maori Affairs officials finally secured

$45,000 to implement experimental preschool education programs that would be based on

total immersion in Maori language and Maori family values (Fleras, 1983).

In that same year, the New Zealand government sponsored a preschool pilot project

in Wainuiomata, located close to Wellington. On April 13, 1982, this pilot project became

---

[21] Community Member, 2005.

the first official Kohanga Reo. The success of this pilot quickly spread throughout the country, leading to the establishment of 54 programs by the end of the calendar year (Fleras, 1983) and over 600 within the next seven years (Tangaere, 1997). These programs received very little funding. In fact their success has been attributed to "the dedication of a small team within the Te Kohanga Reo National Trust and the personal commitment that the Maori people gave through voluntary assistance and aroha" (Tangaere, 1997, p. 6).

According to Royal Tangaere (1997), explicit outcomes embedded in Te Kohanga Reo movement included: revitalization of the Maori language, strengthening of the whanaungatanga (kinship ties— everyone is an important member of the extended family), and the right of self-determination and control over tino rangatiratanga. Government viewed the overall intent of Te Kohanga Reo, that is, its revival of Maori peoples, as contributing to the common good of all New Zealand society (pp. 7–8). In her 1983 preliminary findings report on the implementation of Te Kohanga Reo developed for the Department of Maori Affairs, Fleras (1983) included, in addition to total immersion in the Maori language, the need to arrange children's daily activities in a manner that would ensure continuous involvement of the children in Maori situations, for example, attending funerals. From these global intents, as I have written earlier in this chapter, four broad policies were developed: (a) total immersion in Te reo Maori (Maori language), (b) whanau decision-making, management, and responsibility, (c) accountability, and (d) no smoking in Te Kohanga Reo (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1995).

Implementation of these broad policies was to result in: security of the language; supportive and caring environments for the mokopuna (grandchild); whanau (collective) protection of the kaupapa; whanau sharing of responsibilities, knowledge, and expertise; and greater respect and appreciation of each other with less likelihood of conflict within the

whanau (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1995). Actual implementation of Te

Kohanga Reo also meant that each program would look different, given each whanau

interpretation of the broad policies and how best to implement them for their children. This

understanding appears to have been expressed from the onset of the development of Te

Kohanga Reo movement by both the Maori community as well as the government. In

Canada, while diversity of communities was assumed, discussions of particularized

community-specific constructs or strategies were left to the implementation phase

undertaken by regional (provincial and territorial) and community bodies.

In 1983, Te Kohanga Reo National Trust was set up as an umbrella organization to

act on behalf of Te Kohanga Reo whanau and to ensure protection of the Maori kaupapa.

The Trust has a charter with the Ministry of Education and in turn, each local Te Kohanga

Reo operates under a charter between itself and Te Kohanga Reo National Trust. *Te Korowai*,

"a handbook compiled by Te Kohanga Reo National Trust in 1995 to assist whanau, hapu,

iwi, kaimahi [helpers], and those who embrace the Te Kohanga Reo kaupapa" (ERO,

Ministry of Education, 2005, Footnote # 1, p. 5) acts as both the charter agreement between

the Trust and the Secretary for Education, and the framework upon which local Kohanga

Reo charters are built.

In their charter, each whanau that develops a Kohanga Reo commits to the Trust

Board to follow four basic principles: (a) total immersion in Maori language and pedagogy;

(b) management and decision-making by whanau; (c) accountability to the Creator, the

mokopuna, Te Kohanga Reo movement, and the government; and (d) the good health and

well-being of the mokopuna and whanau (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 2003). In

addition to these four principles, the local charter contains all the local Kohanga Reo

philosophies and policies along with the way things are to be done and why. This local

document is then submitted to the Trust. Following acceptance of their documentation, the Trust grants a charter to Te Kohanga Reo whanau for their program. The whanau can then apply to the Ministry of Education for a licence to operate under the *Early Childhood Centres Regulations 1990* (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 2003).

7.6   Voices from the community ...

I visited two Tuhoe Kohanga Reo sites: one in a rural setting at Ruatoki (Te Tawahaki Kohanga Reo) and the other in an urban setting, Kawerau (Te Tumaanako Kohanga Reo). Although these Kohanga Reo were located in different settings, the fundamental Tuhoe kaupapa was at the heart of the implementation of Te Kohanga Reo. It is worthwhile to offer a narrative description of the communities and sites with which I worked. Such a description provides an illustration of the kind of places within which the important work of the care and education of children occurs for the Tuhoe people. The description also allows me to situate myself in reference to larger discussions about the good care of children. On this note let me begin.

7.6.1   Tāwhaki Te Kohanga Reo, Rural Ruatoki

We (Ngaroimata and I) parked the car in front of what looked like a white house with green trim surrounded by a white picket fence. At the peak of the garage was a carved figure of Tawhaki, a deity derived from the line of heaven and earth. Te Kohanga Reo was named after this diety.

Before we entered onto the property, we were greeted with the karanga. Tina responded with a whakautu (response to the call). If Tina did not respond, that would mean that we were disrespectful. Once the welcome was complete, we entered through the front door where we removed our shoes outside and walked through a short hallway into a large

room. Against the far wall stood the children; the babies sat in their car seats with the kaiako (teachers) standing to the side. They said "kia ora whaea Margo, kia ora whaea Ngaroimata" (Hello Auntie Margo, hello Auntie Ngaroimata). Then they sang a waita koroua (ancient song). The Kaumaatua asked us to speak. Tina spoke first explaining the purpose of our visit. I spoke next telling them why I had come to visit and what I wanted to learn. After we had finished speaking, the children did a karakia (prayer) and waiata (song). We responded with a Cree honour song. The children then formed a circle and demonstrated what they would do on a daily basis. They reviewed the calendar (the day and month), the time, and teaching for that day. Everything was done in Maori; there was no English spoken. Following this demonstration we were invited to have lunch with the children. They had a cook, so we all had a hot lunch of mashed potatoes and minced beef. When lunch was over, the children were asked to gather their things ready to be transported home. Before the children left, I presented each individual and Kohanga Reo with a thank-you gift (a painting designed by our local artist, a Métis woman named Carla Aubichon). Ngaroimata and I were invited to ask any other questions we might have. We were also invited back to meet with the Kaumaatua and the rest of the parents for an evening focus-group meeting.

7.6.2   Te Tumaanako Kohanga Reo, Kawerau

We (Ngaroimata and I) were invited to the morning session of Te Tumaanako Kohanga Reo. We entered into a large open room with murals on the walls; to one side hung a large aqua-blue fish. It was handmade, painted by the children. This fish matched their sea mural. Each sea creature had a name label in Maori beside it. On the other side of the room hanging from the ceiling was a net with kai moana (food from the ocean). In the middle of the room, also on the ceiling, was te maatariki (the stars). We sat on benches in a corner of

the room. The children were seated on the floor in a semi-circle with the kaiako and kaimahi assisting the toddlers and infants. The children sang a welcome song and a haka song. The kaiako then told the children who we were and why we were there. She too referred to Ngaroimata and myself as "aunties."

I had the opportunity to have individual conversations with the kaiako and kaimahi. These conversations had to take place in the kitchen away from the children because we were conversing in English. I also undertook interviews with the parents in the afternoon in the staff room away from the children because again we were conversing in English. Once the interviews were completed, we (Ngaroimata and I) were invited to join staff for afternoon tea, where we presented each individual with a gift (painting) as well for Te Kohanga Reo as a token of appreciation.

The words of Maori people about children's growth and development provide rich information about Te Kohanga Reo's structure, intent, and process. These words are the foundation of this research. In total, over 19 individuals with either personal or professional knowledge of Te Kohanga Reo were consulted. Their opinions and perspectives were then transcribed and documented. These individuals shared specific Tuhoe perspectives and understandings of their experience and their knowledge of the implementation of Te Kohanga Reo in their geographic area. Thematic analysis of collective narratives was then undertaken. This analysis revealed several interrelated themes concerning the Maori care of young Maori and non-Maori children. These themes are embedded within the construct of whanau and the overarching Te Kohanaga Reo movement. Set within an exploration of whanau are the themes of language and identity, self-determination, teaching and training, bicultural possibility, and legislation and licensing. At the heart of these considerations are Maori kaupapa that guide not only the implementation of the children's education and care

but also those processes of children's learning that are characterized by explicit and implicit reciprocal interactions among the children, the caregivers, the whanau, and their collective. These values, which centre on the Maori construct of whanau, are evidenced in the structure of Te Kohanga Reo itself as well as in the content and pedagogy of children's care and education.

Implementation of the Kaumaatua dream for language revival and ultimate survival centres on the whanau; that is, recognition of the whanau (family) and its inherent right and responsibility to make decisions concerning the well-being of their children. It is not by mere circumstance that the parents of children attending Te Kohanga Reo are also afforded opportunity to learn with their children. As Smith (1987) writes, Te Kohanga Reo was established in response to Maori concern about the imminent loss of their language. In order to address this loss, "Te Kohanga Reo establish[ed] very strong whanau (extended family) bases, so that families may learn the language together, and so that the teaching and learning of Maori language is facilitated in a supportive, loving and caring environment" (p.13).

7.6.3   Whanau

As I have written earlier in this case, whanau decision-making as articulated in the original broad policies guiding Te Kohanga Reo displayed significant diversity. As one study participant stated,

> When they let the idea of whanau decision-making out into the big wide world of New Zealand, whanau interpreted it differently right across the board. Even though whanau decision-making was paramount, it had lots of variables for lots of places. (Community Member, 2005)

In addition to diverse interpretations of whanau decision-making in practice, the capacity for whanau to undertake decision-making likewise varied. Several study participants spoke of the challenges they faced in implementation. Of primary concern was the administration and

management of the program. Whanau were expected to undertake all aspects of managing the program, that is, everything from managing finances to hiring staff to ensuring transportation for the children. The rationale for the absolute commitment to whanau decision-making in all aspects of the program is evidenced in a study participant's description of the work of Iritana Tawhiwhirangi, the first CEO of Te Kohanga Reo. She described Iritana's absolute commitment to the role of whanau decision-making: "Iritana believed that whanau, through taking responsibility for their decisions, would ultimately feel empowered" (Caregiver, 2005). Even in the face of management challenges, Iritana's first goal was to ensure that the mana of families remained intact. In other words, the dignity of the whanau was to remain intact no matter what. Management of Te Kohanga Reo was of particular concern given the transient nature of whanau. When children have completed the program, their parents tend to move on as well. This challenge is magnified when parents are the managers and employers, especially in cases where staff members want to move jobs and must have the agreement of the whanau before doing so. This reality of whanau management also necessitates an atmosphere of ongoing education of whanau members that is derived from a fundamental desire by Te Kohanga Reo movement to "upskill our people, empowering them . . . by giving them responsibility" (Community Administrator, 2005).

From a related perspective, parents spoke of the challenge of assuming roles in the management of Te Kohanga Reo, particularly when they lost their say in what happens in Te Kohanga because of assuming an administrative or management role. In fact, parents from one Kohanga Reo spoke of hiring a more qualified person to assume the position of treasurer. Building the capacity of whanau to implement Te Kohanga Reo was also a significant consideration in the vision of Te Kohanga Reo. In reflecting on the development of Te Kohanga Reo overall, a community administrator stated:

When Te Kohanga Reo [visionaries] realized what they had done by giving whanau final decision-making [and thus direct involvement in the implementation of Te Kohanaga Reo], they quickly implemented programs and packages and training that was helpful to whanau to better manage. (Community Administrator, 2005)

Whanau decision-making management was also apparent in regional structures that were established to foster the coming together of whanau from different geographical locales within one region to share ideas, their successes, and challenges. These purapura hui (regional meetings) were designed to empower families and allow them to congregate in order to "determine whether what they were doing was okay. The purapura hui was about families, [and] one way to ensure the Kohanga didn't close" (Community Administrator, 2005). The purapura hui did include staff from the various Kohanga Reo, but clearly their role was not to make decisions— that role belonged to the families. Families "are really the governance of the Kohanga, [the heart] of the concept really, of Kohanga Reo" (Caregiver, 2005). As one community administrator observed, "since the beginning of Te Kohanga Reo, where once purapura were attended by parents of whanau, now workers were attending who were also parents" (Community Administrator). In other words, the whanau in addition to filling decision-making roles were also in many cases the teachers of their own children.

In one area, Te Kohanga Reo instituted monthly whanaungatanga (family kinship) days when families from Te Kohanga Reo of the region would come together to share their ideas and activities. These shared practices often led to assessment, not in a formal way, but in a way that was meaningful to whanau. Sometimes these days brought unintended benefits: one parent found her niece and nephew attending one of the other Kohanga Reo programs, something of which she had previously been unaware (Community Member, 2005).

7.6.4 Language and identity

Application of the construct of whanau went beyond administration and structuring of Te

Kohanga Reo; it is part of the whakapapa that forms the foundation upon which Te

Kohanga Reo movement is built. Identified first and foremost by all study participants was

the language and all things connected to it. On revitalizing the language, one community

member reflected:

> I think they thought that in order for the language to survive, the people
> have got to speak it everywhere, in every forum. In order to do that, to
> preserve the language, you tend to lose some of the control of that language
> because you can't control the forum. . . . You have to choose between the
> survival of that language and keeping it authentic as possible or putting it out
> there so that it's alive and you're losing control of it. (Community Member,
> 2005)

In New Zealand, language revitalization through Te Kohanga Reo picked up in earnest by

1984. Now New Zealanders potentially have the opportunity to learn Maori. In my

conversations with Kaumaatua and community members, I heard them speak of the "old"

Maori and the "new" Maori forms of language. The language has been changed to meet the

needs of children just as it will be interpreted and adjusted to meet the needs of the specific

whanau, and hapu, and iwi groupings. This is not so different from our dialects in Canada

and our major linguistic groups. I am left wondering more about the old and new Maori, and

what the differences are. Are nuances of meaning lost in the change to the language? The

same question could be asked of whanau interpretation, although matters of language are

within the specific collectives of the hapu and iwi.

Recognition of language as a cornerstone was evidenced in study participants'

responses to questions concerning the development and well being of their children.

Language was likened to a vehicle by which all other things travel:

> Everything that goes along with me being Maori is inside of me; my culture,
> my histories, my stories, my everything. All those things are inside this bus.

... As I have grown, the bus has stopped at different places and added, picked up, and brought on other things. I guess if we can teach our children that, that really, without the bus we don't get the ride. (Community Member, 2005)

This concept of language being more than the spoken word is evidenced in the words of a parent who stated that "the language isn't just about Maori; the language in itself comes with a whole context of our lives. . . . there are so many other things that are connected to the language" (Parent, 2005). Still another description of the language and related constructs was to that of a "big trunk with the branches coming off. The main branch or main trunk is Te Reo" (Parent, 2005). Tangaere Royal (1997), in describing the words of the Kaumaatua, while attending the 1979 conference in Wellington, summarizes thoughts on language:

> A people without their own language has no power. According to the Maori the language is sacred because it was given to the ancestors by the gods and linked the people to Ranginui and Papatuanuku. The Maori language has a life force and a spirit; it is the central touchstone for the culture. (p. 8)

In their discussions of knowing selves, of learning identity, study participants also spoke of the importance of children learning the language and the Maoritanga (Maori ways of being) associated with it. Parents stated that what they wanted was for their children to know exactly who they (as children) are, to know their tribe (and their Tuhoetanga [Tuhoe ways of being]), their culture, and their tikanga (customs). Study participants also included whakapapa and spoke of it as a way of identifying a specific individual, including bloodlines and blood ties:

> It's also the love that is shown. . . . It's what we term whakawhanaungatanga (our wholeness) where my ancestors meet with your ancestors. It's about my rivers identifying with your rivers and being one; and being able to do that. When I speak of that, it's almost being in the same place as people and being one breath. That's the identity I speak about in language. (Parent, 2005)

When asked directly about identity, that is, "being Maori," one parent said: "I have not sat down to actually speak in depth about what I think, where I come from, and my identity, my

children's identity. It's an unspoken understanding of knowing" (Parent, 2005). If this is not

spoken about explicitly, then how are these ways of knowing taught to children? In Te

Kohanga Reo? Parents spoke of role models at Te Kohanga Reo and at home. Some made

the direct link between the learning undertaken by children at Te Kohanga Reo and children

carrying those teachings on at home— speaking the language, for example. Still other

methods described by the Kaumaatua, parents, caregivers and community members included

the constructs of observation and experience, that is, "doing." During one of my visits to a

marae, I was struck by the participation and obvious knowledge of collective protocols

displayed by the children. There the children were, the babies in their car seats, the toddlers

and preschoolers seated on the ground facing the visitors across a deep green lawn

courtyard. These children had come from the local Kohanga Reo in order to participate in

greeting visitors to their territories. I watched as they sang the waiata, along with community

members, and I was impressed by the obvious knowledge of their collective protocols.

Central to their knowledge was proficiency in the language and with specific protocols

associated with the cultural tradition unfolding on the marae that day. Children were indeed

learning their protocols through experience within their collective.

Parents, in their discussions of children's teaching and learning, also spoke of the

importance and role of the whanau. One parent described her family's role in her decisions

about her life course and how that role was implicitly learned through her lived experience:

> My upbringing didn't just lie with my Mom and Dad. My uncles were
> involved. The ones who would make decisions about my upbringing were
> usually Mom and Dad, my uncle . . . and my oldest brother. When decisions
> were made we had this understanding of that type of wairua that is
> spirituality, emotional, social, and physical, and so we were around it all the
> time. It was always there and we just know it. We understand it, we breathe
> it, and so when it comes to child development we were taught not through
> outside influence but through our own family. . . . Especially the family
> knowledge that has been passed on, and I think it's all internal, not external.
> (Parent, 2005)

She spoke of never simply sitting down with her children; rather that each interaction provided an opportunity for herself and her whanau to role model for the children. In further discussion, when parents were asked about the benefits to Te Kohanga Reo for children and their whanau, several spoke of children learning about family, "of embracing the concept of whanau," and "of bringing our family closer together" (Parent, 2005). As one parent elaborated, "Children are being taught about family, and even if they don't get it in their own little family, that one child may grow up to embrace it with his own or her own children at some stage as they become adults" (Parent, 2005).

The value of respect for others was also attributed to the teachings of Te Kohanga Reo by several study participants. As another parent observed:

> I love the respect that it [Te Kohanga Reo] has brought for our children...
> Everyone here [in Te Kohanga Reo] has respect for the Elders because that
> is what is taught. . . . My kids have respect for everyone, especially the older
> ones. (Parent, 2005)

7.6.5 Self-determination

Kaumaatua spoke of children knowing their rights and of them not being afraid to stand up for those rights. "Te Kohanga Reo taught them that." As one Kaumaatua said, "What this Kohanga has done for my mokopuna, money can't buy" (Elder, 2005). As I reread and listened again to the Kaumaatua voices in my mind, I am reminded of language and its connection to individual and collective genealogies and, ultimately, to the land. It is these relationships that are the bedrock of identity from which spring the pride of being. This is what I saw in the children and heard in the words of the Kaumaatua.

My thoughts ask me, how do individuals become self-determining? What is the relationship between individual self-determination and collective self-determination? It has been my experience that the term "self-determination" itself is often equated with self-

government. I know that for Aboriginal peoples in Canada, self-government is far away.

That said, there are also many individuals and groups who are self-determining in one or

more aspects of their lives. One of the primary outcomes embedded in Te Kohanga Reo

movement was "the right to self-determination and control over Maori resources, te tino

rangatiratanga (chieftainship)" (Bennett, 1979; Hohepa, 1990; Irwin, 1990; Ka'ai, 1990,

quoted in Tangaere, 1997, p. 7). This right to self determination includes knowledge. These

places for children are sites of self-determination— of beginning and potential. Yet they are

not sites just for children. They have much farther-reaching implications that are both

cultural and political. Guiding principles articulated in *Te Korowai* identify the rights of

children and family and also articulate the obligations of the broader collective in the care of

children. The five guiding principles are:

1. It is the right of the Maori child to enjoy learning the Maori language
   within the bosom of the whanau.
2. It is the right of the whanau to nurture and care for the mokopuna.
3. It is the obligation of the hapu to ensure that the whanau is strengthened
   to carry out its responsibilities.
4. It is the obligation of the iwi to advocate, negotiate and resource the
   hapu and whanau.
5. It is the obligation of the government under the *Tiriti O Waitangi* to fulfil
   the aspirations of the Maori people for its future generations (Te
   Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1995, p. 4).

In Canada, children are often situated within the family and community. This

construct in part parallels principles one to four in *Te Korowai*. The last guiding principle

identified in *Te Korowai*, speaks to the *Treaty of Waitangi*. In Canada, the *Constitution Act, 1982*,

guarantees the protection of Aboriginal (First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples') rights,

including treaty rights. Fiduciary responsibilities are articulated in the treaties and agreements

between the federal government and Aboriginal peoples (Greenwood & Shawana, 2002).

There are other ways to achieve Aboriginal law-making authority, e.g., through federal and

or provincial legislation, memorandums of understanding, or bilateral and trilateral agreements.

As I reflected upon what I saw, heard, and felt in Aotearoa / New Zealand, I strove toward greater understanding of the conceptual and philosophical aspects of the Maori construct of whanau and its relationship to self-determination. I have come to understand that the whanau is a place of teaching and learning, of generating new knowledge at the core of the collective, and of struggle for the survival and prosperity of a people. It is also a place, as Smith says, "of social intervention [that is] correlated to the ability to facilitate the social structures of the whanau" (Personal communication, October 2007). Te Kohanga Reo seeks to implement the construct of whanau specifically in its structure, administration, staffing, and program implementation, and it was one of the reasons why I examined the development of Te Kohanga Reo earlier in this chapter, observing the consistency between the structure and the intent within Te Kohanga Reo movement.

7.6.6   Teaching and training

At the grassroots level there is a fear that the Kaupapa "is losing te reo me oona tikanga (the language and customs) and is not counted as it should" (Parent, 2005). These tikanga (customs) must be accounted for in training paradigms. Before formal training became a requirement for Te Kohanga Reo employees, "the CEO Iritana decided that Kohanga Reo Maori children were entitled to all the benefits [i.e., trained teachers] that other early childhood programs were (Community Administrator, 2004). With this in mind, a little "red book" and later a little "blue book" were developed by Te Kohanga Reo Trust. These were the first training guides for Te Kohanga Reo. The little blue book had a series of questions that focused on a person's character. They were designed to ascertain "what it is about you that makes you want to be in the Kohanga Reo" (Caregiver, 2005). In these early days, after

successfully answering the questions, a teacher had to have his or her book signed off by the Kaumaatua.

> Teachers who came out of training college were not qualified to teach at Kohanga Reo, particularly those who didn't have the language. So the only way they could do it was by testing those who wanted to be Kaiako and the only thing they had to test them up against was their Kaumaatua. So they had to develop this little blue book to test and the only people that could do it were the Elders. . . . This attestation by the Kaumaatua held the teacher or kaiako responsible for the mokopuna and the language. (Community Administrator, 2005)

The attestation process undertaken by the Kaumaatua preceded the formal training of teachers, including the development of the whakapaakari (training components) package.

The whakapaakari packages are about "learning about us" (Community Member, 2005). The focus of the training has remained on the Maori language and not on teaching skill development, as is the case in primary teacher education. Study participants noted that one of the debates arising in discussions of training was the polarized debate of language possession versus teaching skills. As one participant said, "Other support mechanisms were needed" (Caregiver, 2005). In some instances team teaching was effective, particularly when one person possessed the language while the other person possessed the teaching skills.

In essence, there was an ideal that families and parents had valuable knowledge to offer teaching practices including curriculum objectives. As one caregiver noted,

> This whole idea that families drive what we do— language is the vehicle that we do it with. Families have an input in what we do, what we need to teach. Then we try and see how it fits with the curriculum rather than the curriculum trying to fit with what we are teaching. The whanau decides [what topics the children will be taught], they decide and then we get the curriculum and fit it in. (Caregiver, 2005)

In addition to training and curriculum, who teaches and how things are being taught is equally important. The importance of role modeling for children's learning was identified by the Kaumaatua. They observed that the younger children were learning from their older

213

brothers and sisters: "The younger ones are watching and taking from the older ones, the older ones are turning around and supporting them" (Caregiver, 2005). Guiding principles in *Te Korowai* (Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1995) speak to how children are to be taught, i.e., the right of children to enjoy learning within the bosom of their whanau and the right of the whanau to nurture and care for the mokopuna. These principles, which underlie the hiring and training of whanau members and Kaumaatua as teachers in Te Kohanga Reo, allow for the creation of loving, caring environments in which children can learn and grow.

7.6.7 Bicultural possibility

Another broad theme, in this case, was that of whanau desire to have programs that developed bicultural possibilities in children. There was occasionally tension between these and regulatory considerations, although as parent participants noted, there are efforts to address these tensions. Parents desired that their children be successful in both the Pakeha (non-Maori) and Maori worlds. In the words of one parent:

> I want my children and my grandchildren to be able to walk really on both
> sides of the road. They will be able to interact and converse in the Maori
> world and all its context and in an English world and all its context. (Parent,
> 2005)

In his examination of learning and teaching methodologies in education, Smith (1987) considers Maori parents' desires for both "things Maori" and "things Pakeha (European)." He writes:

> While these two theoretical positions [Maori and Pakeha] appear
> contradictory both views can be supported as "*legitimate*" as they provide
> complimentary perspectives in building a more complete education option
> for Maori pupils within state schools. Maori people have often stated that
> they want excellence in both "things Pakeha" and "things Maori" in the
> education of their children. It is not a choice of one position over another as
> some seem to believe. (p. 7)

214

This desire by parents for children to be able to prosper in both worlds does not however detract from their commitment to their Maori language and identity, and in fact illustrates some of the challenges of maintaining that commitment. When asked questions about school readiness, most parents agreed, overall, that they wanted their children to learn the language as well as to learn who they are as Maori. Some study participants talked about preparing children for school, while at the same time sharing stories of hesitation from whanau members. Despite these initial warnings that children would not learn how to do their numbers and alphabet if they attended Te Kohanga Reo, parents found the opposite. One of the study participants, now a teacher in primary school after years of teaching in a Kohanga Reo said:

> Getting them ready for the rudiments of teaching in a primary school: yes. . . . I wouldn't labour the children into doing it through the day in terms of the fundamentals of reading and listening. We wouldn't go down that track until just before the child was due to go to school. Other aspects of school readiness happened any way as a result of other activities in the Kohanga. (Community Member, 2005)

She further advises Kohanga Reo staff:

> I'll teach them how to [be in school]. You just give them the language. . . . if you can do that for me then that child is 90% on the way down the track to learning. . . . with oral language comes written language. The more oral language they have the more written language they will have. (Community Member, 2005)

Notwithstanding the participants' observations about school readiness, there is inherently in her words an understanding and a concern for the whakapapa intrinsic to Te Kohanga Reo:

> The concept of Kohanga had become much more than when it initially began as a tool to save the language. It has become a concept to protect what is innately ours, to protect constructs that we hold dear to us, values that we hold dear to us, methods of doing things that we hold dear to us, things that are really important— it has become that. (Community Member, 2005)

At base, participants stressed the vital importance of bicultural considerations in childhood

development, particularly in the area of language fluency and school readiness. The idea of

bicultural considerations has personal resonance for me: it has equipped me to be successful

in multiple realities, in both my personal and professional life. I continue to come to

understand those identities that exist within me and to know how important those

understandings are for children. Elder Ellen White sums up that importance:

> To young people my grandparents always said, "You'll do all right if your hands are both full to overflowing." One hand could be filled with the knowledge of the White man and the other could be filled with the knowledge of your ancestors. You could study the ancestors, but without a deep feeling of communication with them it would be surface learning and surface talking. Once you have gone into yourself and have learnt very deeply, appreciate it, and relate to it very well, everything will come very easily. They always said that if you have the tools of your ancestors and you have the tools of the White man, his speech, his knowledge, his ways, his courts, his government, you'll be able to deal with a lot of things at his level. You'll not be afraid to say anything you want. A lot of people keep back – they say, "Oh, I might hurt them – I might say something." When your hands are both full with the knowledge of both sides, you'll grow up to be a great speaker, great organizer, great doer, and a helper of your people. (Neel, 1992, p. 108)

7.6.8   Legislation and licensing

Of growing concern is the interaction between Te Kohanga Reo and legislation and

licensing. In the early years of Te Kohanga Reo, adherence to existing legislation was not

required. However, programs did comply with basic preschool requirements "especially if

they were interested in receiving child subsidy payments from the Department of Social

Welfare" (Fleras, 1983, p. 11). Not unlike the Canadian experience, with funding came

regulations. These early regulatory requirements included: ample indoor and outdoor space

for recreation and exercise; nourishing meals and snacks; toilets, equipment, and rest areas;

reliable hours of operation; satisfactory levels of supervision; and minimum standards of

health (Community Member, 2004). In 1990, responsibility for Te Kohanga Reo was moved

to the Ministry of Education from the Department of Maori Affairs. With this move came a

greater emphasis on regulatory controls for Te Kohanga Reo:

> Te Kohanga Reo had to come to terms with the regulatory environment and
> compliances of the early childhood sector and a mainstream department,
> whilst maintaining the unique kaupapa of the Kohanga Reo movement. Such
> a system often came at a heavy cost to our kaupapa. (Te Kohanga Reo
> National Trust Board, 2003)

These regulatory requirements continue to also have an impact on the funding and

implementation of Te Kohanga Reo today. For example, programs receive government

funding at three different levels. Those receiving the greatest amount of funding are in the

category containing individuals with significant amounts of training. Te Kohanga Reo are

funded at the mid-level range, that is, the whanau kaiako (family teacher). What this category

does not acknowledge is the contributions of the whanau:

> The quality is in the parents that are nurturing their children. They give all
> their time and there is no money for them. They do voluntary work for their
> children and Te Reo. . . . It's okay for mainstream because at the end of the
> day, they only have to teach in one language. As for Te Reo, we have to go
> back and dig amongst ourselves to get the quality. What mainstream's quality
> is, we don't believe that it's quality. (Caregiver, 2005)

These comments were said in light of quality indicators being applied to Kohanga Reo

programs. This said, the study participant also indicated that these mainstream quality

indicators had been modified in 2001/2002 to be more in harmony with the intents of Te

Kohanga Reo. These modifications to better meet the needs of Te Kohanga Reo were

achieved through negotiations between the Trust and the Ministry of Education office.

When asked what some of the specific challenges were to regulatory requirements,

community members and caregivers gave several examples. These were of particular

significance in the area of child safety. For example, sleeping arrangements in Te Kohanga

Reo are undertaken in a communal manner: children sleep on mattresses beside each other on the floor. Acceptance of this sleeping manner had to be negotiated by the National Trust CEO and the ministry responsible. The use of change tables for the babies was another example. While this method was common to daycare centres throughout New Zealand, Te Kohanga Reo viewed tables from a different perspective: a Maori custom dictates that tables are used for activities that do not include changing infants and toddlers. Again, after negotiation, it is now acceptable in Te Kohanga Reo to change babies on a change mat or mattress on the floor, but not on a table. Nutrition of the children and a safe eating environment is a third area under regulation. Although the nutrition regulation has not been an area of major concern for Te Kohanga Reo, Te Kohanga Reo settings are able to offer a communal eating environment based on their collective value of sharing. Children and adults share their food. For example, "If 12 children brought noodles to eat, they are all cooked in one pot not in 12 separate pots" (Caregiver, 2005).

When asked about the specific impact of licensing upon the implementation of Te Kohanga Reo today, one study participant reflected:

> When the money came, the licensing came in, that meant that we were encouraged by people that knew about languages, that it should be just spoken. We were told that you need a program, you need to do assessments and you need to do all of this. That came in when the money came in. I believe that it made us compromise. You know what we knew was the best way to deliver our language to the children. We now had to go back into the box and conform to what was dictated by the Ministry of Education. They were saying they want quality. (Community Administrator, 2005)

Further, "[w]e tend to bend over backwards to meet the Ministry's needs rather than whanau needs" (Community Administrator, 2005). An example of this compliance to the ministry's direction is the practice of teaching children to write their names and do their numbers, as opposed to caregivers spontaneously speaking with the children. In the opinion of one study participant, the language becomes much more directional rather than conversational in a

structured environment such as that being suggested by the Ministry. The most significant

loss resulting from this change in practice is the spontaneity of the spoken language between

the Kaiako and the children (Community Administrator, 2005). Policies demanding certain

directions in practices highlight inherent tensions between different worldviews,

expectations, and the ways that Indigenous people negotiate these. These tensions form the

foundation of my research questions and constantly remind me to reflect on the Canadian

context.

Fundamentally, as government regulations and licensing impinge on Maori practices

in Te Kohanga Reo, Maori knowledges are eroded and as a result, the control of knowledge

begins to shift. As one community administrator observed,

> [Money] has been a bonus and a tension for all of us in that it changed the
> love for the kaupapa. All of a sudden people wanted to be paid. It was the
> paying of people, and when you looked at them you sometimes thought that
> they were not there for the right reasons. . . . At the beginning when there
> was no money; everyone pitched in together and supported one another.
> Now support is not as honest and forthcoming. . . . It's lost its original
> motivation [that is, the reasons for whanau and volunteer participation].
> (Community Administrator, 2005)

This licensing (including associated funding opportunities) for Te Kohanga Reo is required

by the Ministry of Education. "The Ministry can't close a Kohanga down. They can just take

the license. With the license will normally go the funding. But the charter remains with Te

Kohanga Reo Movement, Te Kohanga Reo Trust" (Community Administrator, 2005). The

tension between formal licensing and Maori ways of knowing and being is a constant

struggle.

7.7   Closing comments

Kei a tatou ano te ara tika. (The answers are within us.)[22]

These closing paragraphs are meant to address my initial question: What is it that I learned from visiting and experiencing Te Kohanga Reo that would benefit my understanding of early childhood experiences in Canada? To tell this story is not to be outside of self. Rather, it is to come to understand both myself and my interactions with these experiences, and to simultaneously apply my learning to what I know outside of myself in the world of early childhood in Canada. Of equal importance is to acknowledge those who taught me: the Kaumaatua, the whanau of Te Kohanga Reo that I visited, and the specific whanau who brought me to Aotearoa / New Zealand. All of these people played a significant role in my experience and thus my current understanding and knowledge.

As I reflect upon my journey to Aotearoa and Te Kohanga Reo, I am struck by the congruency between the implementation and original dream of the Kaumaatua and subsequent articulated intents of Te Kohanga Reo. The structure of the program not only reflects the original intents of Te Kohanga Reo, but also employs structures derived from community to carry out those intents. The visionaries of Te Kohanga Reo movement took the Maori construct whanau and used it as the foundation upon which to build a "new" structure that would preserve and ensure the continuation of te reo through their children. This construct of whanau and whanau decision-making inherently provides opportunity for whanau to be empowered by taking responsibility for decisions while at the same time directing the care and education of their children. I have also learned that whanau (and the collective to which it is connected) are embedded in the land— and subject to seasons of change over time. Durie (2003) writes that there are many different definitions of family and

---

[22] Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board, 1995, Title Page.

often these definitions and descriptions are highly contextual, reflecting geography and local specificity. This contextual diversity is often reflected in the protocols and customs, songs and dances, stories, and even language nuances of the hapu and iwi. Ngaroimata's teaching and my experience in Aotearoa led me to a greater understanding of Tuhoe Maori concepts of whanau, whanaungatanga (kinship ties), and whakawhanuangatanga, especially an appreciation for the richness of their complexity and meaning.

Commitment by the people to their language, their children, and their way of life has always been at the heart of these activities. Language was viewed as an explicit expression of the relationships between the people and the land. In Canada, many of the Indigenous languages are action words often describing a specific state of being in nature including the natural sounds. These sounds of nature become reinforced in thought by the very act of speaking. In this way language is a concrete way of connecting oneself to the land, its inhabitants and spirit. These relationships and knowledge gained from the interactions are foundational to Indigenous identity.

The loss of language was a significant topic for most Maori study participants. I am reminded of Indigenous scholars I wrote about earlier in this dissertation who describe multiple ways (e.g., stories, songs, dreams, empirical experiences, etc.) of coming to understand Indigenous knowledge(s), and ultimately how all that knowledge is in some way connected to the land. I wonder how the environments in which children and families live have changed. Many live in urban settings and or places away from their home communities. I wonder about the impact on knowledge and its evolution as environments change with time. Stephen Point, now Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia, advised in one of his addresses that all lands (in Canada) are Indigenous lands. If this be the case, then one could assume that it does not matter where children are raised because they could still form

connection to Indigenous lands and the teachings of those lands. I am not sure that discussing geographic locales alone addresses the complexity of identity formation, and in this case, consideration for the relationships between the self, the land, and the spirit within a context of changing realities through which we navigate our lives. From a practical perspective, access to the teachings of the Elders and family are of paramount importance. It is the teaching of the language with its inherent core values, protocols, and customs that appears to be the essence of the Maori teachings for their children.

The need to ensure the continuous involvement of children in collective Maori situations, as pointed out in Fleras' 1983 report and evident in the participation of the children in community events, is also an area of significance to the Canadian context. So is the development of the structures underpinning their continuous involvement. Support for capacity building of local Kohanga Reo whanau including training is another significant consideration for the Canadian context. Capacity-building support came at multiple levels from the structure of the program to the individual training units engaged in by the caregivers and whanau members.

This commitment to the language and cultural ways of the Tuhoe and Maori peoples of Aotearoa / New Zealand (in all its complexity) is also supported by the *Treaty of Waitangi*. In particular, Article 2 of the treaty guarantees control over resources, including Maori children, their knowledge, and their way of being. In essence, this article forms the foundation for arguments directed at ensuring self determination or control over all aspects of Maori life. This agreement is fundamental to the establishment and implementation of children's programs as evidenced through the initiation of Te Kohanga Reo movement by the people. In Canada, Aboriginal peoples are recognized in their treaties and in the Canadian constitution, but do not have control over all aspects of their lives. While Te

Kohanga Reo faces increasing regulatory and licensing requirements, many Aboriginal early childhood programs in Canada were implemented on a basis of compliance to licensing and regulation. Development of early childhood programs was in control of the government and not the people.

Tied to regulations and licensing is funding. Without compliance to regulation standards and licensing, individual parents and programs are limited in the funding they receive. The link between these two activities results in tension in many cases, including that of Te Kohanga Reo. At base, the spontaneity and original aims of Te Kohanga Reo movement could be eroded as licensing and regulation push on intents and practices fundamental to Te Kohanga Reo. Acknowledgement of this potential is evident in the words of a study participant: "[Money] has been a bonus and a tension for all of us in that it changed the love for the kaupapa" (Community Administrator, 2005).

Finally it is important for me to revisit how I come to know. I think about living what one experiences. It is not just a visit but an experience that dovetails with my own experience and, in doing so, broadens and enhances my knowing. The opportunity to learn by experiencing goes far beyond the physical and tangible when one is writing and thinking about one's identity. In some way, you live what you are learning, and in doing so go beyond the physical and tangible to understanding underlying philosophies in a way that goes beyond the head to the heart. I can remember being advised that "if you speak to the heart, the head will follow" and they will hear what you have to say. Both my head and my heart have come together to better understand what is taught to me and how I might use those teachings to support the Aboriginal early childhood aspirations of families and communities in Canada.

CHAPTER EIGHT

Learnings and Teachings

OPENING

> The mist is rising off the lake into the hills. The rain has let up; the earth smells fresh
> and alive. She has cleansed herself so we may begin anew. I am reminded of
> Aotearoa, of the Tuhoe people I met— the Children of the Mist— and know that the
> mist is much more than mist; it is generations of knowledge and being. And as the
> mist nestles against the hills, I wonder at what I have learned.

8.1   Introduction

The overarching purpose of this dissertation was to explore the question: What constitutes

the 'good care' of children? The simplicity of the question belies its importance and

transformative power. This query also brings with it a diverse context and series of related

questions. These questions are linked to a broad and varied foundation of theory and

methodology. In the broadest sense, my questions concerned an analysis of the good care of

children relative to the development and implementation of Indigenous-specific early

childhood programs and services in Aotearoa / New Zealand and Canada. More specifically,

I was curious to understand what might be learned from the Tuhoe Maori peoples'

experience of Te Kohanga Reo that could be applied to early childhood programs for First

Nations children and families residing on reserve in Canada. I focused on how and why

programs and services developed in Canada and Aotearoa / New Zealand. I examined the

impact of national policies on program implementation at the community level. I was

especially interested to know whether government structures and subsequent policies fit with

the aspirations and visions of the Elders, parents, and associated community members

concerning the care of their children.

To answer these questions, I undertook research between 2005 and 2007 in Canada and Aotearoa / New Zealand. I worked with two Carrier First Nation communities located in north-central British Columbia, Canada and two Tuhoe Maori communities in the north-central region of the North Island of Aotearoa / New Zealand. This study was guided by the theoretical principles of respect, relevance, reciprocity and responsibility, derived from and anchored in Indigenous knowledge(s). I described the theory underpinning this study in Chapter Two. These theoretical principles also guided selection of the descriptive case study approach (including methodology and methods) that took into account diverse worldviews including related traditions and protocols, along with experiences of relationship building, of visiting, of gifting, and of giving back. This methodology and these methods allowed broad based comparisons between distinct community early childhood programs and services and overarching policies associated with them.

In this last section of my dissertation, I conclude by reflecting upon what I have learned, by offering the findings of this study that underscore critical questions and reflections, by presenting elements of 'good care' including actualizing a vision of what could be, by revisiting the theoretical and methodological principles of this study, and by finally looking to future research studies.

8.2 A time to reflect, a time for change, a time for self-determination

My experience with the Tuhoe of Aotearoa / New Zealand showed me how other Indigenous peoples (that is, Indigenous peoples from outside of Canada) develop programs and services for their children and families. The Tuhoe shared their visions, dreams, strengths, and challenges concerning the development and implementation of Te Kohanga

Reo in their communities. As I reflected on their teachings, I was reminded of the evolution of First Nations-specific early childhood programs in Canada.

We now have over a decade of experience developing and implementing Head Start and Child Day Care programs for First Nations children, families, and communities. Yet as one study participant reflected regarding his community's experience, "Only now are we beginning to step back and question the structures and constructs of government-defined and -directed early childhood programs" (Community Administrator, 2005). It is timely then, that this dissertation examines the epistemological orientations informing the structures and constructs underlying these early childhood programs and their impacts on children, families and communities. This questioning of fundamental structures is a prequel to action and is also coupled with leadership and vision for what change in the case of early childhood education could look like.[23] Early childhood leadership and vision rests within the communities and takes form in the process of questioning and active transformation of programs. The impact of such change has the potential to last for generations.

In Aotearoa / New Zealand, children, parents, teachers and Elders all spoke of decolonization. Although they each told their own stories, collectively the stories were about transforming colonial landscapes and colonized structures. In Canada, peoples' stories addressed colonial practices including, for example, residential schools. In the case of both countries, these stories expressed a desire that such realities never happen again to young Indigenous children. This cautionary note is clear in the Elder's question I cited early in this dissertation: "Are you sure we are not establishing residential schools in the hearts of our communities for children younger than I was when I first went to those schools?" This

---

[23] See Chapter Six for a previous mention of Dr Black.

question reminds us of the past while at the same time guiding the future. It directs us to push current boundaries of early childhood program requirements, policies, and practices. Our future work, then, is about transformation, about societal consciousness, about the well-being of our children, families and communities.

Raising the collective consciousness of community members so that early childhood programs are contextualized and understood as a concrete opportunity for moving toward self sufficiency and self determination for individuals, communities, and nations is a critical first step to developing a social attitude that permeates First Nations individually and collectively. In part, the opportunity provided by early childhood programs is perceived in the conscious conceptualization of children as entities in and through which to undertake decolonizing processes. This means valuing children and their centrality to Indigenous collectives. This also demands a focus on identity formation in individual children (and ultimately the collective), and is thus inextricably tied to the centrality of children to cultural survival. Leadership for this consciousness raising can and must come from First Nations people and their collective communities.

Indigenous scholars, who are also community members, have a responsibility to participate in these transformation processes. Commitment to creating change for children, their children, and those generations yet to come causes us to critically reflect on our current roles, practices and context within which they are practiced. Taking this reflection to a conscious level, by sharing with each other and others, is a vital contribution to creating social change. Through academic writings that include community voices and through teaching, academics contribute toward social change for all those who desire "to redress" past and present colonial injustices. Non-indigenous scholars who have worked respectfully

and cooperatively with Indigenous communities have similar responsibility to support and further goals of decolonization.

This collective critical assessment of being leads to that transformative change where Indigenous people assume control of their lives and make decisions for their children, families, and communities. While child and family concerns do not always have the political profile that economic or resource development has, it is nonetheless at the heart of communities and nations. It is for the young citizens of our nations, for realizing the inherent right to be self-determining, and for having control over our lives and the lives of our children, that the struggle continues. Transformation will begin when there is a shift away from paternalistic policy-setting by non-Indigenous people over Indigenous communities. Indigenous ways of knowing and of being are the foundation for the development of respectful, responsible policies and practices for young Indigenous children.

8.3   The findings: Specific considerations for transformation and change

8.3.1   Engaging with community

The need and desire for First Nations-specific formal early childhood programs and services was and is great in First Nations communities in Canada. Early childhood programs and services established through such programs as Head Start and First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative experienced challenges in their development for First Nations children from the onset. Well intended though they may be, the inherent colonial structures perpetuating power differentials did not allow adequate First Nations involvement in the initiation and development of programs and services intended to serve their children and families. These power differentials became evident in the process of "consultation" and the participation on working groups and advisory committees of "experts" whose mandate it was to provide

advice on the development of government programs and implementation of services. From the vantage point of my personal participation on the national advisory committee and working group discussed in this study, I am aware that there are also considerations to be learned from these processes that will inform First Nations communities in developing future partnerships and collaborations. My research suggests that these considerations include:

(a)   identifying community strengths from which to build;

(b)   using existing community structures and capacities (such as traditional governance structures, e.g., potlatch system) as a means through which to engage community and implement programs at the community level;

(c)   implementing regional and/or tribal language dialogues, thereby providing greater opportunity for inclusion of community, tribal, and regional specificity in early childhood considerations; and

(d)   providing time and resources to undertake these activities.

These considerations sit within a larger desire by Indigenous peoples for self-determination. This would place control, development and implementation of early childhood programs and services in the hands of First Nations peoples.

8.3.2   Continuing tensions about power differences

My research also suggests power differentials between government and First Nations communities which became apparent in the daily implementation of national program requirements within community level services. The most obvious of these requirements, for instance, is adherence to provincial licensing requirements. And, in the case of the child daycare programs, funding was contingent on being licensed. The term "foreign" was used

by some community members to describe the actual implementation of provincial licensing overall and subsequent aspects of influence on the community early childhood services and practices, such as the grouping of children by specific ages and requirements for qualified staff. These program requirements have a significant long-term impact on language loss and cultural ways, particularly in cases where emphasis is not placed on language and culture, or where language and culture are subordinated to other aspects of the program.

8.3.3 Creating programmatic success through community adaptation and resilience

The development of formal early childhood programs for First Nations children was often conceived outside the community: a Head Start Program oriented as an early intervention program for children and a Child Care Initiative presented as "support" to parents and guardians seeking employment or further education. My research suggests that these programs do not totally address the aspirations of community for their children, yet these programs are viewed as a "success" by study participants who saw them as a "safe place," and as providing opportunities for children to learn specific skills. Success may also be attributed to the fact that where there were once no services, there are now some and in part, they are meeting specific families' needs. A significant part of this success likewise lies with the community's ability to make these programs meaningful to themselves and their children. This community capacity and resilience should be recognized, fostered, and viewed as a strength upon which to build, especially when considering future developments in the care and education of First Nations children.

8.3.4 Learning from top-down / bottom-up relationships with governments

In comparison with the realities of two First Nations communities in British Columbia, wherein early childhood programs were developed through a top-down approach (that is,

government-initiated), the development of Te Kohanga Reo in Aotearoa / New Zealand was a grassroots movement in response to the impending demise of the Maori language. With limited national government support at the onset, and with the leadership of the Kaumaatua, Maori people across Aotearoa / New Zealand established Kohanga Reo sites. Some sites began in basements, some in garages, many on the marae; all began with a collective vision of combating the demise of the Maori language. This grassroots social movement transformed Aotearoa / New Zealand's educational and political landscape, not only for the Maori language but for education in general. Today, in addition to Te Kohanga Reo, there are kaupapa Maori schools, high schools, and universities where the entire curriculum is delivered in Maori. However, Te Kohanga Reo sites are also currently feeling the pressures of external licensing and demands for qualified teachers. These pressures come from demands that programs adhere to universal standards. The demands have the potential to jeopardize the spontaneity of the programs and strike at the foundations that uphold them. Though government funding may be necessary, it is important for a grassroots movement such as Te Kohanga Reo to be vigilant against funding becoming a new form of colonization. An equally important lesson from this comparison of programs in different countries is the realization that Canadian First Nations may one day assume jurisdiction over early childhood programs and services even if those programs and services began with a top-down approach.

I once was advised by a Maori scholar that "early childhood is a contested place, a place of struggle and a place of decolonization." In the case of this dissertation, both research sites in which I worked demonstrated that early childhood programs (each with different beginnings, each with different contexts) are indeed contested places where, ultimately, liberation and transformation is the vision toward which the collective continues

to struggle. One of the large questions I sought to answer in this dissertation concerned how government and community strategies and policies guided the development and implementation of First Nations-specific early childhood programs. To answer this question one must address the dissonance that exists between, on the one hand, the epistemological underpinnings of First Nations communities' aspirations and of their ways of caring for and educating their children, and on the other hand, external government program requirements.

8.3.5   Placing language, culture and identity at the core of children's good care

Given the dissonance between community and government, it became imperative to ask what constituted the 'good care' of Indigenous children globally, and more specifically, in Canada. My study suggests that in Canada, First Nations are experienced and well practiced in their relationships with government programs, particularly in how to access these programs within an understanding that, once secured, they would be transformed and implemented in ways reflective and respectful of community. This includes providing children with their language and cultural ways. Paralleling this understanding is a sense that school readiness skills are meant to improve the educational success of First Nations people. School readiness skills are also intended to mirror those of the public school system. There is then a surface appearance that parental aspirations and rationales for early childhood services are congruent with government program goals.

The complexity of this situation becomes apparent when considering which aspects or components of children's programming should be emphasized or valued. Early childhood specialists such as Phillips (1994) stress that marginalized children must first be enculturated into their own culture before they take on another. Study participants prioritized the concept of identity – the importance of children knowing who they are, where they come from, who their relatives are, and the ways of their collective. In implementing early childhood

programs for First Nations children then, it will be critical to ensure that the development of individual and collective identity not be marginalized or rendered secondary to school readiness skills whose roots (in this case) are derived from non-Indigenous world views. The health and well-being of First Nations individuals, as well as their collectives (including those generations yet to come), depend on children knowing who they are as members of the collective. School readiness skills are important, but not important enough to displace the need for identity. This belief is evident in Te Kohanga Reo where emphasis is placed first and foremost on the language; school readiness skills are taught once children are in the public school system (Personal communication, March 2005). Ultimately there is a need for balance and opportunity, for children to come to know their individual and collective identities and to also learn skills and knowledge that will allow them to reach their own full potential in broader societies.

This understanding of the role of language and culture in children's identity, and of children's centrality to their collective's future, presents an opportunity for a new framework for learning that is tribal-specific. In that framework sits integrity, oral traditions, social roles, conceptualization of ideas, and articulations of thought. How do we foster the identity of Indigenous children in early childhood programs – that is, an identity that is both individual and collective? I thus consider specific considerations (such as those offered in this dissertation) for program development and implementation.

8.3.6   Maintaining the role of parents, extended family, and community members

One specific consideration in the development of early childhood programs and services is the inclusion and role of parents, the extended family, and community members. These community members provide the collective cultural context that is essential to program development and program implementation. For example, in Te Kohanga Reo, parents

233

administer and make day-to-day decisions about the daily operations of the children's

program. Extended family members play the role of supporter in broader community

matters while the broader community carries early childhood issues forward to the larger

provincial and national political arenas. Underlying this approach to community programs

(and congruent with community structures) are the community values of respect, sharing,

caring, responsibility, and independence. From this perspective, all members of the

community have a role and a responsibility in the care and education of the children and of

themselves as members of the collective. I am reminded of Mary's story of the family circle

(see Chapter Three) and how all members of the community had a role to play in the lives of

the children and each other.

8.3.7 Ensuring that early childhood caregivers/teachers have multiple knowledge(s) and skills

Another consideration is that while study participants indicated they wanted community

members to teach their children, they also indicated they wanted caregivers to be qualified.

In a reality where qualified, trained caregivers are required for the operation of the early

childhood programs, a question arises about the knowledge, skills, and attributes best suited

to implementing a program where Indigenous language and culture are the focus. I have

come to understand that multiple skills, knowledge(s), and attitudes are needed to implement

culturally respectful, meaningful, and successful early childhood programs. For example,

caregivers might be required to know the Indigenous language and to have knowledge of

childhood development. While the language comes from the community, learning about

early childhood development is derived from multiple sources such as learning development

theory offered in many post secondary early childhood training programs or from Elders'

teachings. One of the challenges will be in ensuring that caregivers have access to multiple

sources of education and training. In Aotearoa / New Zealand, where the primary consideration for caregivers is whether or not they can speak the language, training does, in fact, focus on the language and cultural knowledge and ways of the people. When asked about the training, study participants said that Te Kohanga Reo training was independent from mainstream early childhood training which does not emphasize culture and language.

8.4   From visions to actions: Actualizing the considerations

I return once again to the broad overarching question of this dissertation: What constitutes the 'good care' of Indigenous children? To answer this question I began by considering the foundational philosophies and subsequent base structures in the transformation of existing early childhood programs and services serving young First Nations children. Undertaking this research revealed that there are multiple ways of knowing and being in the world, and that this assumption is expressed in diverse ways – in this study, in the care and education of Indigenous children. Within these distinct ways of being are unique cultural beliefs that guide the care and education of children. In this research, the centrality of children to the continuity of the collective is one of those beliefs and as such is a critical program factor, particularly in the context of continuing colonization experienced by Indigenous peoples around the globe. In this case, one must consider, then, that early childhood settings will be contested places and sites of decolonization. These beliefs, contexts, and potentials, taken together lead to new frameworks for learning that are culture- and nation-specific, and in which sit traditions, social roles, collaboration and cross cultural possibilities, and integrity. At base, the good care of young Indigenous children is about living Indigenous values every day, about seeing them actualized in the care of children, about the community and the collective, and about being courageous in seizing opportunities to create change.

The following paragraphs offer summations of implementation considerations for

First Nations and non-First Nations policy makers, practitioners and community members

to consider in their development and implementation of early childhood programs and

services designed for young First Nations children. These summations articulate what counts

as the 'good care' of First Nations children in early childhood centres in Canada – from

learning gleaned from the Tuhoe Te Kohanga Reo sites in Aotearoa / New Zealand and

from First Nations communities in British Columbia. These considerations, anchored in a

colonial history and current day realities of transformative opportunity, are directed toward

structural change, continuity of culture, and self-determination. Transformation begins with

vision and the leadership to make that vision a reality.

8.4.1   Emphasizing critical consciousness

Critical consciousness leads to communities realizing their visions for their children; visions

that are anchored in Indigenous ways of knowing and being and that originate from a will to

be self-determining.

> The term conscientisation is associated with the Brazilian adult educator
> Paulo   Freire (1970) and relates to the development of critical consciousness
> as a form of emancipatory learning. Freire's approach is based on asking
> questions about the root causes of social and political problems rather than
> focusing on the symptoms– in order to plan strategies to address them.
> According to Freire, oppressed (excluded) people need to develop critical
> consciousness in order to challenge the ideas of dominant groups who are
> their oppressors. They need to be able to critically assess the kinds of ideas,
> contexts and relationships which are usually 'taken for granted' or accepted
> as inevitable, in order to question the root causes of their oppression (Freire
> 1970). Through the process of developing critical consciousness, excluded
> groups can learn to identify, interpret, criticise and finally transform the
> world about them. (National Institute of Adult Continuing Education,
> nd)

Critical consciousness requires support (fiscal and human resources) to community so that

they may engage in dialogue and education activities necessary for creating change. Strategies

within this education may include the unpacking of hegemony (in this case, the dominance of non-Indigenous groups over Indigenous groups through imperialism and colonization) and creating counter hegemonic strategies, for example, creating First Nations-specific early childhood education and training or developing First Nations-specific program requirements and practice standards.

Another strategy for developing critical consciousness is positioning positive community role models and recognizing best community practices. It is likewise important to encourage attitudes of self-development (rather than waiting for others to do it) and unpacking attitudes of 'resource welfarism', that is, believing that community resources are less than other commercial resources. The resources needed are in our own communities, on the land in which we reside, and in the consciousness of the community and its members. It will be important for communities to ensure that children and families are a priority on their agendas and that community governments support community leaders in developing educational strategies that lead to change in the care and education of their children and families. Federal and Provincial governments could ensure that community based policies are developed that support the education and development of the community, including associated resources.

8.4.2 Emphasizing community-oriented leadership

This is a visionary construct that seeks to articulate what early childhood programs and services could be for First Nations children and their families. The vision begins with families and community members and is carried forward by community leadership (that is, leadership of community members as well as the politicians) both within the community and within external political arenas. Community based policies that support the development of the community along with associated resources would reinforce the importance of the need

for a change and realization of community control over the care and education of their children.

These visions for what could be demand structural considerations that are congruent with community or collective structures and specific cultural attributes. These structures and attributes are anchored in Indigenous knowledge(s). In the development of programs and services, this notion is often expressed as language and culture.

8.4.3   Living Indigenous knowledge(s): Language and culture

Early childhood programs that focus on language and culture (or, in other words, Indigenous knowledge(s)) provide children with opportunities to learn their specific ways of knowing and being. In this way language and culture are not skills to be taught for 30 minutes a day, for example, but rather a way of being and of living in the world. It is in this learning or coming to know that the most basic of lessons resides— an understanding that all beings are connected. As I have written several times in this dissertation, children's cultural identity and the survival of their cultures and nations is intricately entwined and directly tied to their acquisition of their cultural ontologies and epistemologies. There is urgency here because of the demise and imminent demise of many Indigenous languages which for many are viewed as both the vessels and transmitters of knowledge.

In this context it is critical to support, encourage, and strengthen those who have the knowledge and language ability to pass those learnings on to succeeding generations. Some suggestions for achieving this include structuring the practice of language teaching, providing opportunities for teaching and learning the language, and connecting speakers with each other in efforts to revitalize the language within tribal groupings. These activities must be supported by community and external policies, including incentive strategies for individuals and groups. In addition, existing policies and legislation such as program accreditation,

caregiver training requirements, and licensing of early childhood settings, should be reviewed with First Nations communities for relevance and utility.

8.4.4 Developing structural possibilities: Tribal groupings

Addressing cultural specificity is one of the most significant challenges in implementing meaningful programs and services for young First Nations children. For example, in British Columbia there are many First Nations (196) who speak distinct languages including many diverse dialects. These languages are geographically specific, rooted in the land. Likewise cultural expressions also reflect their relationships with a specific environment and the happenings within it. In considering this context of geographic specificity and historical alliances, it makes sense to build on these structures in developing First Nations-specific early childhood programs and services. These tribal groupings and structures, embedded in their environments and bounded by specific languages and cultural practice, likewise hold the essences of teachings for children. In a more practical light, sharing of language and cultural resources amongst members of a tribal grouping also distributes responsibility to multiple nations rather that a singular nation or group and offers opportunities for horizontal learning between communities and amongst groups within community. For example, where few language speakers or limited cultural resources remain, resources from neighboring tribal communities may be used to support their revitalization and reconstruction. This example of horizontal learning and sharing can also be applied to the training of early childhood caregivers.

Training modules specific to a tribal area (comprised of several communities) are tied to the community and tribe by both the content and processes of the curriculum. These portions of early childhood training are owned by the community and demand similar resources and support as do the components of early childhood curriculum offered by post-

secondary institutions in British Columbia. Partnerships with local post-secondary institutions which also hold valuable knowledge for the care of children may be sought in part because credentialing of caregivers and early childhood programs is under the auspices of the provincial government. In this vision, for example, a partnership between the local college and the Carrier people to provide training for caregivers would see each party receiving similar fiscal resourcing and supports that together would constitute a Carrier-specific early childhood program recognized both in and outside of the tribal area. A significant benefit of this vision is that the structure itself fosters learning between and amongst groups while neither is obligated to provide knowledge and skills that belong to the other.

In turn, tribal areas with their specific programs share with neighboring tribal groups as well as with others at provincial forums. This vision of training would eventually require changes to provincial early childhood post-secondary program accreditation, as well as certification of individuals and program licensing. This credentialing of individuals in tribal areas should involve participation of Elders and/or knowledgeable community members and not just be the purview of external credentialing and licensing bodies. For example, an attestation process such as that used in Aotearoa / New Zealand (where the Kaumaatua (Elders) verify and attest to the teacher's proficiency with the language) could be a new step to credentialing and licensing here in British Columbia. Ultimately the desire is to have the credentialing of programs and individual practitioners reside with First Nations in their distinct tribal areas.

8.4.5   Developing structural possibilities: Family structures

Within these tribal structures exists community structural strengths, in this case, the construct of family that may be drawn upon to develop and implement First Nations-specific early childhood programs and services. Families are a cornerstone of communities and play a critical role in the care and education of young children. Recognition of that role in First Nations specific early childhood programs and services is a first step in building services congruent with family and collective ways of knowing and being. In some cases, families require supports for rejuvenation of family structures and collective ways. Including families in programs through family oriented policies designed to engage them directly and indirectly in decision-making and administration of early childhood programs and in the teaching of the children serve to both rejuvenate and place control of programs and services in the hands of the families and communities. Taken together these actions provide necessary opportunities for fostering the growth and development of children, for supporting the rejuvenation of families, and for building collective capacities.

Just as structural constructs of tribes and families support the development of early childhood programs and services for Indigenous children, so do other First Nations specific structures such as community governance systems, for example, Longhouse ceremonies of the coastal peoples and the bahlats of the Carrier peoples. These governance systems of community, built upon family structures, may serve as formal decision-making mechanisms at the community and territorial levels for the care of the community's children. Taken together, utilizing First Nations specific tribal and community structures are fundamental to transforming and building meaningful and relevant early childhood programs and services.

8.4.6   Developing programs and services for children with diverse Indigenous backgrounds

The need for these tribal-specific programs and services for young First Nations children are not only the demand of families residing in on-reserve communities. A significant and related consideration for the development of First Nations-specific early childhood programs and services is the changing demographic realities and subsequent residential locations of First Nations children and their families. Approximately half of British Columbia's First Nations children and families reside in urban settings away from their First Nations communities. Although this study did not examine these specific realities or subsequent needs, it is nonetheless a necessary and related consideration when contemplating cultural continuity of the collective. Such consideration also forces one to think about the conditions necessary for cultural continuity to occur, including consideration for how one comes to know and understand Indigenous knowledge(s), which I discussed earlier in Chapter Five of this dissertation.

Ensuring the preservation and continuity of the language and cultural ways is challenging in a setting where there are multiple and singular demands for specific languages and cultural expressions. In many ways, it is easier to establish a mainstream program that is homogenous, well resourced and mirrors broader society than face the challenge of diversity that demands multiple implementation strategies. In some settings this challenge of diversity is addressed by teaching the language, for example, of the tribal group in which the early childhood setting is located. In other urban settings the language and ways of the majority of children is taught. Still in other settings the language of the program is determined on the basis of who is teaching the children, for example, the dialect of the kaiako in an urban Te Kohanga Reo. There is no singular response to this challenge of diversity nor should there be, but rather multiple considerations in determining how to address it. A starting point is

contemplation of Indigeneity, including those conditions that enable, foster and support its development. A concrete step toward realizing Indigeneity is, as I have mentioned previously, inclusion of families and communities in program decision-making, particularly around what is to be taught and how it is to be taught.

8.4.7 Linking educational systems

Equally important to the design of tribal and community-specific early childhood programs and services is consideration for the systems with which those programs and services interface. There is a need to ensure that current First Nations on reserve elementary schools interact with early childhood settings in a way that guarantees children progress in learning their language and culture through the schooling system. One of the most significant attributes of Te Kohanga Reo is its singular focus on the language. This focus results in a powerful strength that young children carry with them into the formal education system. A few on reserve elementary schools offer language immersion and in some cases include the community's early childhood program. These sites offer opportunities to explore the 'interface' between the early childhood system and the schooling system so that there is continuous language and cultural learning for children. Kura kaupapa Maori schools and Te Kohanga Reo offer a powerful example of how these systems work together to achieve common goals for children.

8.4.8 Ensuring adequate resources

A final and critical consideration in the development of First Nations-specific early childhood programs is adequate resources. The question of resources looms large in a vision for tribal specific services such as this, particularly the lack of culturally specific teaching resources for children's programs and for caregiver training programs. These culturally

specific resources exist in the First Nations communities. To enhance and adapt these resources requires a commitment to adequate fiscal resources. In Aotearoa / New Zealand, several Kohanga Reo teachers implemented products (children's curriculum resources designed to be used in the program with the children) of their training. In Canada there are examples of innovative language and culture resources, for example, language nests and early childhood elementary school language immersion programs. A first step may be to identify these early childhood settings and provide an opportunity for dialogue between them and other early childhood programs about further development of these and other resources.

The ideas offered in this section offer considerations for actualizing First Nations-specific early childhood programs and services. These ideas demand that the epistemology and ontology of the community and its people are reflected in the structures and systems put in place to ensure cultural continuity through children, families and communities. At the same time, these structures and systems become the foundations from which to address current realities; rather than roadblocks they become enabling conditions, and the early childhood programs and services become sites of transformation and change. Current day realities such as colonial policies, legislation and jurisdictional differences can also become enablers.

8.5   Theoretical principles, methodological principles, life principles

Figure 2. 1[24] was introduced in Chapter Two as an illustration of the theoretical principles guiding this research. They were described as a coherent set of principles that work in

---

[24] This illustration is to be viewed as if one were looking down at an open four-petal flower, with its internal parts (children and families, communities and nations) guarded by the petals (respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility) sitting on a foundation of relationships (sepal). This flower is in the world in a real, vibrant, and beautiful way, just as our children are.

concert to establish relationships foundational to the revitalization and regeneration of our knowledge(s) and our being. I described these theoretical principles as: 1) respect identifies the need to honour the cultural integrity of Indigenous children, families and communities, including their systems of knowledge, values and traditions; 2) relevance refers to the utility of the program and practice to the children, their families and community; 3) reciprocal relationships are characterized as meaningful, respectful and creative, where learning opportunities are generated for all those involved; and 4) responsibility speaks to the ability of individuals and collectives to take control of their own lives. At the heart of responsibility is the notion of empowerment of children, their families and communities.

I revisit these principles by elaborating on them here, drawing upon the learning I garnered undertaking this research. I do this by adding to their descriptions by posing questions related to each principle. These questions are intended to be useful to researchers, policy-makers, practitioners, individuals and communities as they develop and implement early childhood programs for young Indigenous children in their distinct environments.

The principles of respect, reciprocity, relevance and responsibility go beyond theory and practice to living life, to being in the world. A wise friend once told me that Indigenous ways of knowing and being in the world are not just for Indigenous peoples but are about humanity, about living with the world in a respectful and honouring way. This study touched on one small part of this being.

Figure 8.1 Theoretical Framework Revisited (M. Greenwood, 2009)
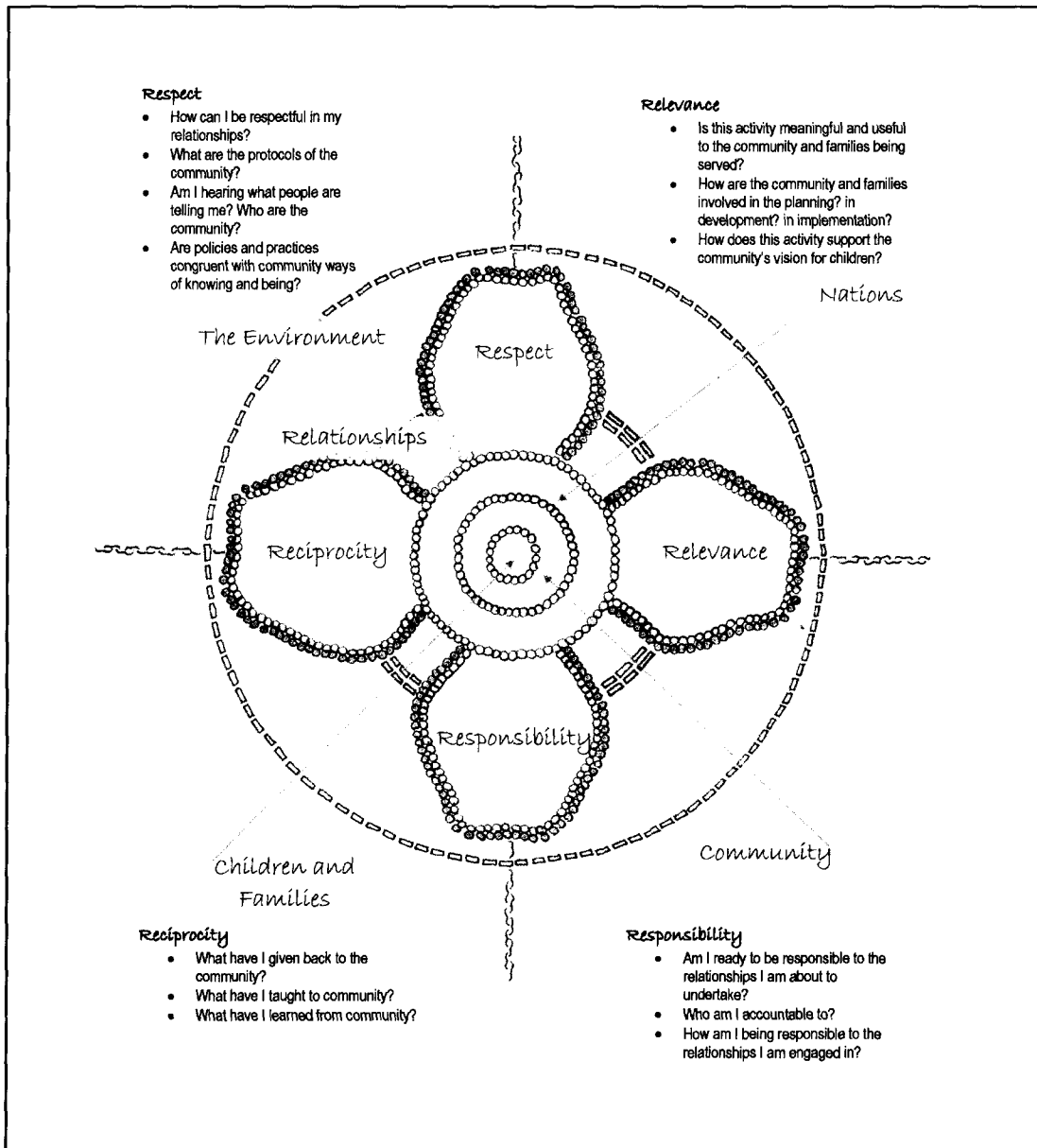
8.6 Implications for future research

There are still many questions to be explored in the ongoing development of early childhood

programs and services for Aboriginal children. In reflecting upon my experiences in

undertaking this study, I am reminded of additional areas to consider in future research.

Perhaps a starting place (in recognition of the complexity and multiple dimensions of

Aboriginal early childhood and the contexts in which it resides) could be other in-depth case studies that would provide comparisons among similar contexts. Exploring concrete possibilities for actualizing First Nations self-determination through the care and education of their children is another potential area of study. For example, the recently signed government-to-government agreement (Tripartite First Nations Health Plan, 2007) between Canada, British Columbia, and the BC First Nations Leadership Council offers a potential avenue for realizing structural change. Provincial child care regulations and licensing practices is a second area for examination. One might consider piloting outcomes-based regulations and their implementation in First Nations communities. Another valuable comparative study would be to examine geographic differences in the delivery of early childhood services to Aboriginal children (including subsequent jurisdictional, funding, and regulatory variations), for example, to residents on-reserve or off-reserve, and in urban, rural, and/or northern settings. Piloting some of the strategies suggested in this dissertation, for example, development of tribal-specific language and culture training modules for early childhood caregivers, might provide valuable community resources and training materials. Another area of study could be the interface of early childhood care and education systems and those of formal education systems. A final area of study might be exploring constructs of family and community relative to Aboriginal communities.

There are, of course, some areas of research that this study could not consider. This dissertation was written with First Nations on reserve communities in mind so it is not necessarily applicable in other Aboriginal community contexts. In this study, and in those yet to be undertaken, it is respectful and necessary to recognize and acknowledge the struggle that all Indigenous peoples have had in realizing their dreams and aspirations for their children, families, and nations.

I close now by remembering my comments at the onset of this study when I wrote, "undertaking this dissertation has been both an academic and a spiritual journey." It has been a journey of finding myself, of pushing myself to new reaches of thinking, and of honouring the teachers who travelled with me. It has also been a journey of passing on knowledge to my son and to those generations now and in the future who want to learn about the 'good care' of children. I lay down the clean, white cloth with my thoughts upon it and give thanks for the privilege I have had.

The mist is rising from the hills and what I have learned becomes clear.
And what I have yet to learn is in the mist for another day.

Afterword

A Final Note to Aaron

Aaron, I have felt your presence as we walked together through the pages of this dissertation. You were by my side as if strolling in the forest with trees hanging over our path, enveloped in commune with each other and with the world. It is here that I shared with you your history and the journey of this dissertation. The knowledge I offer in these pages is now yours to learn from and to share with others. As my teachers gave to me, I now give to you knowing that this knowledge is in place for generations yet to come.

WORKS CITED

Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve Program. (2000-2001). *Annual report*. Ottawa, ON: Health Canada.

Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Initiative. (1998). *Principles and guidelines*. Ottawa, ON: Health Canada.

Archibald, J. (2008). *Indigenous storywork Educating the heart, mind, body, and spirit*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Archibald, J. (2005). *Indigenous methodology: A Coast Salish storywork approach*. Manuscript submitted for publication. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Archibald, J. (1990). Coyote's story about orality and literacy: Using two pairs of eyes. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 17*(2), 66-81.

Armitage, A. (1995). Canada: The general structure of Canadian Indian policy. In A. Armitage (Ed.) *Comparing the policy of Aboriginal assimilation: Australia, Canada and New Zealand* (pp. 70-99). Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.

Armstrong, J. (2000). A holistic education, teachings from the dance house: We cannot afford to lose one Native child. In M.K.P Nee-Benham & J. Cooper (Eds.), *Indigenous educational models for contemporary practice in our mother's voice*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Publishers.

Assembly of First Nations. (2006). *First Nations Public Health: A framework for improving the health of our people and our communities*. Retrieved from February 5, 2009, from http://www.afn.ca/cmslib/general/FNPB-IH.pdf

Assembly of First Nations. (1995). *National overview of First Nations child care in Canada*. Ottawa, ON: First Nations Health Commission.

Assembly of First Nations. (1989). *National inquiry into First Nations child care*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

Assembly of First Nations, Health Secretariat. (2005a). *Where to from here? Building a First Nations early childhood strategy, A dialogue initiative undertaken by the Assembly of First Nations, Discussion Paper*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

Assembly of First Nations, Health Secretariat. (2005b). *Early Learning and Child Care for First Nations*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

Assembly of First Nations, Health Secretariat. (1998). *Residential school update*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

250

Barman, J., Hebert, Y., & McCaskill, D. (1987). The legacy of the past: An overview. In J. Barman, Y. Hebert, & D. McCaskill Barman (Eds.), *Indian education in Canada, Volume 1: The legacy* (pp. 1-22). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Barman, J., Hebert, Y., & McCaskill, D. (Eds.). (1987). *Indian education in Canada, Volume 1: The legacy.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Battiste, M. (2002). *Indigenous knowledge and pedagogy in First Nations education: A literature review with recommendations.* Retrieved August 7, 2003, from http://www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/pr/pub/krw/ikp_e.html

Battiste, M., & Henderson, J. (2000). *Protecting Indigenous knowledge and heritage: A global challenge.* Saskatoon, SK: Purich Publishing.

Bell, C. & Asch, M. (1997). Challenging Assumptions: The Impact of Precedent in Aboriginal Rights Litigation. In M. Asch (Ed.), *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equality, and Respect for Difference* (pp. 38–74). Vancouver: UBC Press.

Bennett, M. (1979). Te kupu Whakamutunga: The last word. In New Zealand Planning Council (Ed.), *He Matapuna: A source.* (pp. 74-9). Wellington, New Zealand: New Zealand Planning Council.

Benton, R. (1978). *The sociolinquistic survey of language use in Maori households.* Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Council for Educational Research.

Best, E. (1972). *Tuhoe, the children of the mist, volume 2., Genealogical tables and maps.* Wellington, NZ: Reed.

Best, E. (1925). *Tuhoe, The children of the mist: A sketch of the origin, history, myths and beliefs of the Tuhoe tribe of the Maori of New Zealand, with some account of other early tribes of the Bay of Plenty district.* Wellington, NZ: Reed.

Blackstock, C., Clarke, S., Cullen, J., D'Hondt, J., & Formsma, J. (2004). *Keeping the promise: The convention on the rights of the children and the lived experiences of First Nations children and youth.* Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society.

Bristow, D. (2002, July 18). *Chief Seattle's thoughts.* Retrieved March 28, 2008, from http://www.kyphilom.com/www/seattle.html

British Columbia First Nations Head Start Program. (2001). *Growing together: BC First Nations head start program 1998-2002.* Vancouver, BC: Author.

British Columbia Provincial Health Officer. (2002). *Report of the health of British Columbians. Provincial Health Officer's Annual Report 2001.The health and well-being of Aboriginal people in British Columbia.* Victoria, BC: Minstry of Health Planning.

Brody, H. (1988). *Maps and dreams: Indians and the British Columbia frontier.* Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre.

Cajete, G. (2000). Indigenous knowledge: The pueblo metaphor of Indigenous education. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (181-191). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Cajete, G. (1999). Look to the mountain: An ecology of Indigenous education. In G. Cajete (Ed.), *A people's ecology* (1-20). Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light Publishers.

Cajete, G. (1994). *Look to the mountain: An ecology of Indigenous education.* Santa Fe, NM: Clear Light.

Canada/Ontario Memorandum of Agreement Respecting Welfare Programs for Indians (1965). Toronto, and Ottawa, ON: Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and Government of Ontario.

Canada's Performance 2005. (2005). The governments of Canada's contribution. Retrieved on March 21, 2008, from http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/report/govrev/05/cp-rc09_e.asp

Cardinal, H. (1969). *The unjust society.* Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.

Castallano, M.B. (2000). Updating Aboriginal traditions of knowledge. In G. Dei, B.Hall, & D. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world* (pp. 21-36). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

CBC News. (2005, October 5). In depth: Canadian government text of throne speech. Retrieved on April 29, 2008, from http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/cndgovernment/thronespeechtext.0410.html

CBC News. (2008, June). PM offers full apology on behalf of Canadians for the Indian Residential Schools system. Retrieved February 7, 2009 from http://pm.gc.ca/eng/media.asp?id=2146

Chisholm, J. (1996). Learning "respect for everything": Navajo images of development. In C.P. Hwang, M. Lamb, & I. Sigel (Eds.), *Images of childhood.* (pp. 167-183). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.

Cohen, B. (2001). The spider's web: Creativity and survival in dynamic balance. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(1), 140-148.

Congress of Aboriginal Peoples. (2000). *Building a national Aboriginal early learning and childcare system.* Ottawa, ON: Author.

Conservative Party of Canada. (2006, January 13). Stand up for Canada Conservative party of Canada federal election platform. Retrieved on April 28, 2008, from http://www.conservative.ca/media/20060113-platform.pdf

Couture, J. (1991). Explorations in Native knowing. In J. Friesen (Ed.), *The cultural maze: Complex questions on Native destiny in western Canada* (pp. 53-76). Calgary, AB: Detselig Enterprises, LTD.

Crawford (n.d). *Aboriginal peoples of Canada A historical overview*. Unpublished manuscript.

Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative research inquiry and research designs: Choosing among five traditions*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Davin, N.F. (1979). *The Davin Report on industrial schools for Indians and half-breeds*. Ottawa, ON: Report for Minister of Interior, Government of Canada. Retreived September, 2008, from http://www.canadianshakespeares.ca/multimedia/pdf/davin_report.pdf

Deloria, V. Jr. (1969). *Custer died for your sins: An American manifesto*. New York: MacMillan Publishing Ltd.

Di Gangis, P., & Jones, R. (1998). *Social development and First Nations jurisdiction: A discussion paper*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations.

DuBois, W.E.B. (2002, 1915). *The Negro*. Amherst, NY: Humanity Books.

Duran, B. & Duran, E. (2000). Applied Postcolonial Clinical and Research Strategies. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision*. (pp. 86-100). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Durie, M. (2003). *Launching Maori futures*. Wellington, Aotearoa, NZ: Huia Publishers.

Durie, M. (1994). *Whaiora: Maori health development*. Auckland, NZ: Oxford University Press.

Emberley, J. (2005, June). Genealogies of difference: Fundamentalisms, families, and fantasies. Paper presented at *TransCanada – Literature, Institution, and Citizenship: An Interdisciplinary Conference*, Vancouver, BC.

Ermine, W. (1995). Aboriginal epistemology. In M. Battiste and J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 101-112). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Education Review Office (ERO), Ministry of Education. (2005). *Evaluation Indicators for Kohanga Reo*. Wellington, NZ: Ministry of Education.

Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement (2001). Federal/Provincial/Territorial Early Childhood Development Agreement – *Report on Government of Canada activities and expenditures 2000-2001*. Ottawa, ON: Health Canada.

First Nations Leadership Council, Government of Canada, and Government of British Columbia. (2007). *Tripartite First Nations Health Plan.* Retrieved December, 2008, from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/alt_formats/fnihb-dgspni/pdf/pubs/services/2007-06_tripartite_plan-eng.pdf

First Nations Peoples of BC Map (n.d.). Retrieved May 13, 2008, from canada.blog.uvm.edu/group1/map2.jpg

Fisher, R. (1992). *Contact and conflict: Indian European relations in BC, 1774-1890* (2nd ed.). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Fiske, J. & Patrick, B. (2000). *Cis dideen kat (when the plumes rise): The way of the Lake Babine Nation.* Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Fleras, T.A. (1983). *Te Kohanga Reo preparation for life - Preparation for school. A preliminary report on the organization, objectives and implications of Maori language nests presented to the Department of Maori Affairs.* Waterloo, ON: University of Waterloo.

Fournier, S., & Crey, E. (1997). *Stolen from our embrace.* Vancouver, BC: Douglas & McIntyre Ltd.

Frideres, J.S. (1998). *Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Contemporary conflicts* (5th Ed.). Scarborough, ON: Prentice-Hall Canada.

Gardner, E. (2000). Where there are always wild strawberries. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 24*(1), 7-13.

Goforth, S. (2003). Traditional parenting skills in contemporary life. *Healing Words, 4*(1), 17-19.

Government of Canada (2008). 2006 Census, Catalogue # 97-563-XCB2006008. Ottawa, ON: Statistics Canada.

Government of Canada. (2006, October 16). *Report Finds Evidence of Systematic Discrimination Against Aboriginal Inmates in Canada's Prisons.* Ottawa, ON: Office of the Correctional Investigator. Retrieved March 28, 2008, from http://www.oci-bec.gc.ca/newsroom/releases/20061016_e.asp

Government of Canada (2003a). *Indian Residential Schools Resolution framework and ADR.* Retrieved on April 29, 2008, from http://www.irsr-rqpi.gc.ca/newsroom_eng.asp?action=info-adr-framework-2003

Government of Canada (2003b). *Multilateral Framework for Early Learning and Childcare.* Retrieved March 21, 2007 from http://www.tbs-sct.gc.ca/rma/eppi-ibdrp/hrdb-rhbd/elcc-agje/description_e.aspp

Government of Canada. (2002, September). *Speech from the throne.* Retrieved October, 16, 2007, from http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/hnav/hnav07_e.htm

254

Government of Canada. (2002). *Information: Federal strategy on early childhood development for First Nations and their Aboriginal children*. Ottawa ON: Minister of Supply and Services.

Government of Canada. (2001, January). *Speech from the throne*. Retrieved October, 16, 2007, from http://www.sft-ddt.gc.ca/sft-ddt/08_e.htm

Government of Canada. (1994, January 18). Child care initiatives fund on and off reserve. *Aboriginal child care projects*. Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services.

Government of Canada. (1969). *White paper on Indian policy*. Ottawa, ON: Indian Affairs and Northern Development.

Government of New Zealand (2008). *Geographical map of Te Urewera,*. Retrieved May 13, 2008, from www.doc.govt.nz/upload/2427/Locality-Map.jpg

Government Review Team, Ministry of Education. (Sept. 1988). *Report of the Review of Te Kohanga Reo*. Wellington, NZ: Minsitry of Education.

Gramsci, A. (1971). *Selections from the prison notebooks*. New York: International Publishers.

Graveline, F. (1998). *Circle works: Transforming eurocentric consciousness*. Halifax, NS: Fernwood Publishing.

Green, J. (2001). Canaries in the Minces of Citizenship: Indian Women in Canada. *Canadian Journal of Political Science, 34*(4). 715-38.

Greenwood, M., & de Leeuw, S. (2004). *A report of the Assembly of First Nations early childhood development national discussion*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations, Health Secretariat.

Greenwood, M., & Shawana, P. (2002). *Whispered gently through time, First Nations quality child care: A national study*. Lanham, MY: Educational Resources Information Centre.

Greenwood, M., & Shawana, P. (2000). Aboriginal perspectives on child care. In G. Cleveland & M. Krashinsky (Eds.), *Our children's future: Child care policy in Canada*. Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Haig-Brown, C. (1991). *Resistance and renewal*. Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press Ltd.

Hampton, E. (1995). Towards a redefinition of Indian education. In M. Battiste & J. Barman (Eds.), *First Nations education in Canada: The circle unfolds* (pp. 5-46). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Harris, H. (2002). *Remembering 12,000 years of history: Oral history, Indigenous knowledge and ways of knowing in northwestern North America*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Alberta, Canada.

Hawthorne, H. (1966). *A survey of contemporary Indian education in Canada. A report on economic, political and educational needs and policies, 2.* Ottawa, ON: Department of Indian and Northern Affairs.

Health Canada. (2005). Aboriginal Head Start On Reserve. *First Nations & Inuit health.* Retrieved on May 11, 2008, from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fnih-spni/famil/develop/ahsor-papa_intro_e.html

Health Canada. (2002, October 31). The government of Canada announces early childhood development initiative for Aboriginal children. Ottawa, ON: News Release. Retrieved on April 28, 2008, from http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/ahc-asc/media/nr-cp/2002_72_e.html

Health Canada Coordinating Committee on Children. (2002, November). *Single window approach.* Ottawa, ON: Author.

Henderson, J. (2000a). Ayukpachi: Empowering Aboriginal thought. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 248-278). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Henderson, J. (2000b). The context of the state of nature. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 11-38). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Henderson, J. (2000c). Postcolonial ghost dancing: Diagnosing European colonialism. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 57-76). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Hohepa, M. (1990). *Te Kōhanga Reo hei tikanga aka I te Reo Māori: Te Kōhanga Reo as a context for language learning.* Auckland, NZ: Unpublished master's thesis, University of Auckland.

Holmes, L. (2000). Heart knowledge, blood memory, and the voice of the land: Implications of research among Hawaiian Elders. In G. Dei, B. Hall, B., and D. Rosenberg (Eds.), *Indigenous knowledges in global contexts: Multiple readings of our world* (pp. 37-53). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Holyk, T., Adam, W., & Shawana, P. (2005). *Whu'Neeh Nee' (Guiders of Our People): Strengthening Carrier First Nation Law through Research and Training.* Unpublished manuscript.

Howlett, M. (1994). Policy paradigms and policy change: Lessons form the old and new Canadian policies towards Aboriginal peoples. *Policy Studies Journal, 22*(4), 631-649.

Human Resources Development Canada. (1994). *Improving social security in Canada: A discussion paper.* Ottawa, ON: Human Resources Development Canada.

Indian Association of Alberta. (1970). *Red Paper Cardinal.* Edmonton, AB: Author.

Indian and Northern Affairs Canada/Human Resources Canada/Health Canada. (2003). *Early childhood development strategy for First Nations and other Aboriginal children*. Ottawa, ON. Author.

Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (2005). *Aboriginal Engagement Strategy – Inuit Early Learning and Child Care Discussion Paper*. Ottawa, ON: Author, April 30.

Irwin, K. (1990). Maori research methods and processes: An Exploration. *Sites*, 28, 25-43.

Joint First Nations/Inuit Federal Child Care Working Group. (1995). *Considerations and recommendations for the First Nations/Inuit child care program and funding framework*. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada.

Joseph, M. (Fall, 2006). Site profile Tl'azt'en Head Start. In BC First Nations Head Start Program *Growing Together* pp. 5-7. Vancouver, BC: Author.

Kawagley, O. (2004). *Let's bring sanity and common sense back to the techno-scientific world*. Prince George, BC: University of Northern British Columbia, First Nations Studies Program sponsored presentation.

Kawagley, O. (2001). Tradition and education: The world made seamless again. In K. James (Ed.), *Science and Native American communities: Legacies of pain, visions of promise* (pp. 51-56). Lincoln, NB: University of Nebraska Press.

Kawagley, O. (1995). *A Yupiaq Worldview: A pathway to ecology and spirit*. Prospect Heights, IL: Waveland Press.

King, T. (2003). *The truth about stories. A Native narrative*. Toronto, ON: House of Anansi Press Inc.

Kirkness, V. & Barnhardt, R. (1991). First Nations and higher education: The four R's – Respect, relevance, reciprocity, responsibility. *Journal of American Indian Education*, 30(3), 1-15.

Landry, D. & MacLean, G. (1996). *The Spivak reader Selected works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*. New York, NY: Routledge.

Lincoln, Y.S., & Guba, E.G. (1985). *Naturalistic Inquiry*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage Publications.

Little Bear, L. (2000). Jagged worldviews colliding. In M. Battiste (Ed.), *Reclaiming Indigenous voice and vision* (pp. 77-85). Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Little River Band of Ottawa Indians, (2007). *Seven teachings of the seven grandfathers*. Anishaabemowin Program, Manistee Michigan. Retrieved February 5, 2009, from http://www.anishnaabemdaa.com/grandfathers.html

Malloy, N. & Goldsmith, N. (1991). *Head start experience ERIC Digest.* Retrieved February 11, 2009, from http://www.ericdigests.org/pre-9218/head

Manitoba Education and Training. (1993). *Policy for heritage language instruction.* Winnipeg, MB: Manitoba Education and Training.

Martens, T., Daily, B, & Hodgson, M. (1991). *The spirit weeps, Characteristics and dynamics of child sexual abuse with a Native perspective* (3rd ed.). St. Alberta, AB: Nechi Institute.

McDonald, R. (2001). *Early childhood development and First Nations children.* Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations, Social Development Secretariat.

McGillvray, A. & Comasky, B. (1999). *Black eyes all of the time: Intimate violence, Aboriginal women and the justice system.* Toronto, ON: University Press.

McKenzie, H. (1991). *Native child care in Canada.* Ottawa, ON: Ministry of Supply nad Services.

Menzies, C. (2001). Reflections on research with, for, and among Indigenous peoples. *Canadian Journal of Native Education, 25*(1), 19-36.

Merriam, S. (1988). *Case study research in education: A qualitative approach.* San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miller, J. R. (1991). *Sweet promises.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Miller, J. R. (1996). *Shingwauk's vision: A history of native residential schools.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Milloy, J. (1999). *A national crime: The Canadian government and the residentialschool system, 1879 – 1986.* Winnipeg, MB: University of Manitoba Press.

Morgan, N., & McGettigan, D. (1999). *Integration of services: From concept to reality.* Vancouver, BC: First Nations Education Steering Committee.

National Children's Agenda Canada. (1999). *A national children's agenda: Developing a shared vision.* Ottawa ON: Health Canada.

National Children's Agenda Task Group. (1997). *National children's agenda framework: Task group report.* Ottawa, ON: Minister of Supply and Services.

National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NAICE) (nd). *Emancipatory Learning,* Retrieved November 23, 2008, from http://www.niace.org.uk/information/briefing_sheets/Emancipatorylearningmar00.html,

Native Council of Canada. (1990). *Native child care: The circle of care.* Ottawa ON: Author.

Native Women's Association of Canada. (2005). *Discussion Paper: Early Learning and Childcare*, Retrieved April 29, 2008, from http://www.nwac-hq.org/en/documents/EarlyLearningandChildcare.pdf

Native Women's Association of Canada. (1986). *House of Commons submission on child care*. Ottawa, ON: Author.

Neel, D. (1992). *Our chiefs and elders: words and photographs of Native leaders*. Vancouver, BC: University of British Columbia Press.

Noonan, A. & Associates. (2002). *Policy considerations for the proposed integration of children's services for First Nations*. Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations Health Secretariat.

Office of the Provincial Health Officer. (2007). *The health and well-being of the Aboriginal population in British Columbia, Interim update*. Victoria, BC: BC Ministry of Health Planning.

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. (1989, November). *Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Retrieved April 20, 2008, from http://www2.ohchr.org/english/law/crc.htm

Phillips C. (1994). The movement of African American children through sociocultural contexts. In B. Mallory, & R. New (Eds.), *Diversity and developmentally appropriate practice challenges for early childhood education* (pp. 137-154). New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Pidgeon, M. (2008). *It takes more than good intentions: Institutional accountability and responsibility to Indigenous higher education*. Vancouver, BC: Unpublished PhD thesis, Faculty of Grad Studies (Education), University of British Columbia.

Pihama, L. (2005). Asserting Indigenous theories of Change. In J Barker (Ed.) *Sovereignty matters Locations of contestation and possibility in Indigenous struggles for self determination*. (pp. 191-208). University of Nebraska Press: Lincoln, NE.

Platform Committee (co-chairs: Haviva Hosek and Paul Martin). (1993). *Creating opportunity: The Liberal plan for Canada*. Ottawa, ON: Liberal Party of Canada.

Poser, W. (2004). *Dating Velar Palatalization in Carrier*. Retrieved April 20, 2008, from http://faculty.arts.ubc.ca/gohanson/pdf/GH_BL530_Dekelh.pdf.

Rae, J. (2006). *Indigenous children: Rights and reality. A report on Indigenous children and the U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child*. Ottawa, ON: First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada for UN Sub-Group on Indigenous Children and Young People (ISG).

Raibmon, P. (2005). *Authentic Indians: Episodes of encounter from the late nineteenth-century northwest coast*. London, GB: Duke University Press.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 1,* Ottawa, ON. Government of Canada, Minister of Supply and Services.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 2,* Ottawa, ON. Government of Canada, Minister of Supply and Services.

Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples. (1996). *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, Vol. 3,* Ottawa, ON. Government of Canada, Minister of Supply and Services.

Royal Commission on Social Policy. (1988). *The April Report.* Wellington, NZ: Ministry of Social Policy.

Said, E. (1994). *Culture and imperialism.* New York, NY: Knopf.

Smith, G.H. (Personal communication, Spring, 2007).

Smith, G.H. (2003, April). *Indigenous education transformation.* Paper presented at the American Educational Research Association Conference, Chicago, IL.

Smith, G.H. (2002). *Beyond conscientisation to transformative action: If the answers are within us, what are we doing about it?* Auckland, NZ: University of Auckland.

Smith, G. H. (1998). New formation of colonization in Aotearoa / New Zealand with apologies. Paper presented at the Second World conference on *Remedies to Racial and Ethnic Economic Inequality.* University of South Australia, Adelaide, AU.

Smith, G.H. (1997). *The development of Kaupapa Maori: Theory and praxis.* Unpublished doctoral dissertation, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Smith, G.H. (1987, January). *Akonga Maori A discussion paper of culturally preferred learning and teaching methodologies as used with Te Kohanga Reo and related educational issues.* Auckland, NZ: Auckland College of Education.

Smith, L.T. (1999). *Decolonizing methodologies: Research and Indigenous peoples.* London, GB: Zed Books, Ltd.

Spears, S. (2005). Reconstructing the colonizer: Self-representations by First Nations artists. *Atlantis,* 29(2), 1-18.

Spigelman, M., et.al. (1998). *Putting it all together: An approach for integrated planning in First Nations communities.* Ottawa, ON: Assembly of First Nations, Strategic Initiatives.

Stake, R. (1995). *The art of case study research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Statistics Canada. (2005, February 2). Secondary school graduates, *The Daily*. Retrieved on April 28, 2008, from http://www.statcan.ca/Daily/English/050202/d050202b.htm

Statistics Canada (2001). *Census*. Retrieved on April 26, 2008, from (http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary

Statistics Canada (2001). *Census*. Retrieved on May 12, 2008, from http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/Products/Reference/dict/pop001.htm

Statistics Canada (1996). *Census*. Retrieved on April 26, 2008, from (http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census06/reference/dictionary

Status of Women Canada. (1986). *Report of the task force on child care*. Ottawa, ON: Canada Government Publishing Centre.

Sterling, S. (2002). Yetko and Sophie: Nlakapamux cultural professors. *Canadian Journal of Native Education* 26(1), pp. 4-10.

Stewart-Harawira, M. (2005). *Globalisation and the Return to empire: An indigenous response*. London, New York: Zed Books.

Stokes, E., Milroy, J.W., & Melbourne, H. (1986). *Te Urewera – nga Iwi, Te Whenua, Te Ngahere, People, land and forests of Te Urewera*. Hamilton, NZ: University of Waikato

Storm, H. (1972). *Seven arrows*. New York, NY: Ballantine Books.

Tangaere, A.R. (1997). *Learning Maori together: Kohanga Reo and home*. Wellington, NZ: New Zealand Council for Education Research.

Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board. (2003). *Structure; history*. Te Kohanga Reo National Trust: ko te reo te mauri o te mana maori. Retrieved June, 2005, from http://www.kohanga.ac.nz/structure.html

Te Kohanga Reo National Trust Board. (1995). *Te Korowai*. Wellington, NZ: Author.

Titley, E. (1986). *A narrow vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the administration of Indian affairs in Canada*. Vancouver, BC: UBC Press.

Tl'azt'en Nation. (1999). *Tl'azt'en Nation progress report*. Fort St. James, BC: Author.

Tl'azt'en Nation (n.d.). Retrieved on April 20, 2008, from http://www.tlc.baremetal.com/About%20Us.htm

Tobias, J. (1991). Protection, civilization, assimilation: An outline history of Canada's Indian policy. In J.R. Miller (Ed.), *Sweet promises: A reader on Indian – white relations in Canada* (127-144). Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Trocme, N., Knoke, D., & Blackstock, C. (2004). Pathways to the Overrepresentation of Aboriginal Children in Canada's Child Welfare System. *Social Service Review* 78: 4, 578.

US Department of Health & Human Services, Office of Head Start (2009). *About the Office of Head Start.* Retrieved February 14, 2009, from http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/ohs/about/index.html

Weaver, S. (1986). Indian policy in the new conservative government, Part I: The Neilson task force of 1985. *Native Studies Review, 2*(1), 1-44.

Weaver, S. (1982).The joint cabinet/national Indian brotherhood committee: A unique experiment in pressure group relations. *Canadian Public Administration, 25*(2), 211-39.

Weaver, S. (1981). *Making Canadian Indian policy: The hidden agenda 1968-1979.* Toronto, ON: University of Toronto Press.

Weber-Pillwax, C. (2001). Orality in northern Cree Indigenous worlds. *Canadian Journal of Native Education 25*(2), 149-165.

Wheeler, W. (2002). American Indian Religious Traditions: An Encyclopedia, Feminism and Tribalism p. 296 as quoted by Warren Goulding. Retrieved August 21, 2008 from http://books.google.ca/books?id=SEopBoB8ch0C&pg=PA296&lpg=PA296&dq= winona+wheeler+2002+%22kinship+%22&source=web&ots=sGZU9ClWHk&sig =zW66zm0zssADCvL8pQ5OsqCfMxM&hl=en&ei=EJaYSYS0D4nYsAOUroCPA Q&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result# PPA296,M1

Williamson, K. (2000). Celestial and social families of the Inuit. In R.F. Laliberte, P. Settee, J.B. Waldram, R. Innes, B. MacDougall, L. McBain, & L. Barron (Eds.), *Expressions in Canadian Native studies* (pp.125-146). Saskatoon, SK: University Extension, University of Saskatchewan.

Wilson, S. (2008). *Research is ceremony: Indigenous research methods.* Halifax, NS & Winnipeg, MB: Fernwood Publishing.

Wiri, R. (1994). *Te Wai-kauka o Nga Matua Tipuna: Myths, realities and the determination of Mana Whenua in the Waikaremoana district.* Unpublished Masters thesis, University of Auckland, New Zealand.

Witherspoon (1977). *Language and art in the Navajo Universe.* Ann Arbor, MI: University of Michigan Press.

World Health Organization. (2008). *Closing the gap in a generation: health equity through action on the social determinants of health. Final Report of the WHO Commission of the Social Determinants of Health.* WHO Press. Geneva, SW.

Yin, R. (2003). *Case study research design and methods* (3rd Ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Appendix 1

Description of process involved in securing permission to undertake research with Tuhoe peoples of Aoteoroa/New Zealand

Tuhoe Connection - Meeting Margo Written by: Tina Ngaroimata Fraser April 21, 2004

Social Support Evaluation Project for Health Canada - Power of Friendship/Prince George Aboriginal Head Start sites. Health Canada and Margo had suggested that I be a part of their Environ-Scan ECE Training Needs and Assessments research. Through our research interest, Margo and I were able to find commonalities within traditional ways of supporting potential early childhood educators and community participants.

Our vision is to look at ways at implementing courses that reflects culture, traditional child-rearing, community voices, and the Indigenous world-view and knowledge. It wasn't hard to engage in the conversation once we got around to talking about what "good care" means to Maori people. I could only comment on my lived experience as a Maori Tuhoe traditional woman who is fluent in all aspects of the Tuhoe language and culture.

One day, Margo casually asked "Can a non-Maori person come to understand Maori? I responded with a yes, as I spoke about the descriptive writings of the Victorian era notable Eldson Best 1973, "Tuhoe: The children of the mist" (Nga tamariki o te kohu). After much discussion about the Tuhoe people, I decided to invite Margo to my birthplace to look at the Kohangareo in Waiohau, Bay of Plenty. I also mentioned my cousin Dr. Black who teaches Maori studies at Massey University Aotearoa. I asked how she would feel about researching in Aotearoa that Dr. Black may be able to assist her if he agrees. A phone call to Dr. Black about my plan was approved followed by our Tuhoe protocol. Margo was eager to participate with my guidance as to how the protocol worked. Margo's letter of permission onto Tuhoe land was an invitation for her to not only compare programming but to observe Maori traditional knowledge.

My trip to Aotearoa/New Zealand during Christmas was an opportunity for me to present a letter that was drafted by Margo along with her comps. It was presented to a Kaumaatua (elder) from the Tuhoe area. Once it was approved, the next stage was to approach the rest of the elders and [name in original] professor of Massey University. This is a part of our Tuhoe protocol. The procedure followed included: welcoming, church service, speeches, traditional songs, chanting, and discussion about Margo's letter. Comments by the elders as to what the visit might look like, and how will we assist her with her research. After a lengthy day of presentations and sharing, the elders had decided that [name in original] would respond to Margo's letter agreeing to supervise her from Aotearoa and that I would have to assist her from the Canadian side into Aotearoa onto Tuhoe land.

Margo has since been invited to the Tuhoe Ahurei Festival for March 30, 2005 to observe the traditional ways of the Tuhoe people. Margo will be informed of traditional tribal protocol, introduction to basic Maori language before she leaves Canada. Once Margo has reached Aotearoa, she will be welcomed and hosted by the Tuhoe tribal affiliates to go over her schedule.

Appendix 2

Initiating the research process
Aoteoroa/New Zealand

MARGO GREENWOOD
4460 Stauble Road
Prince George, BC
V2K 4X3
Telephone: 250-960-5842
Fax: 250-960-5744
E-mail: greenwom@unbc.ca

[name in original]

Kia ora:

My name is Margo Greenwood. I am an Aboriginal woman of mixed blood with ancestors from the Cree and Sioux nations. My Great Grandfather, on my Father's side, was Frances Boisvert, a Sioux man from South Dakota in the United States. When he was in his early twenties he moved to Canada and traveled west to Rupert's Land, now know as Alberta. He resided primarily in central Alberta, a place of low rolling hills, vast spaces of grasslands, and wooded areas that were home to many large and small animals such as elk, deer, bears, moose, raccoons, bobcats, badgers, gophers and a host of birds.

My Great Grandmother, Letitia Whiteford, was a Cree woman from north eastern Alberta. She and my Great Grandfather had two children my Grandfather, Oliver, and his sister, Claire. My great Grandmother died shortly after her daughter was born. My Great Grandmother's parents (the Whitefords) raised the two young children. My Grandfather met and married my Grandmother, Caroline Hodgson, a Cree woman, from central Alberta. Part of her family still resides on the Ermineskin First Nation in Hobbema, Alberta. My Grandmother and my grandfather had six children, my father, born fourth, was named Jack. All my Aunties and Uncles and my Father are now gone.

My Father married my Mother, an English girl, who came from a farming family residing in central Alberta. They married in the late 1940s and over the next 10 years had three children, Norman, my older brother, my younger brother, Leonard, and myself. We were raised in a small town of 3,500 people in central Alberta called Ponoka, a Cree name meaning "Black Elk". My Father's relatives resided on the Ermineskin Reserve some 17 miles north of Ponoka. As children we visited the reserve and spent many hours playing outdoors. I recall the freedom we felt as we wandered on the land, walked by the river, and even as I write, I can smell the earth and the water of the river. The Battle River was an old and windy river that once had been young and strong but now in its banks and beds are contained a history older than ourselves. I spent my whole life in this area until I became an adult and moved to British Columbia to work and go to school.

An important part of my growing up life is linked to my father's Father, my grandfather. My parents worked outside of the home when I was young and so it was that my Grandfather cared for my younger brother and I from the time we were toddlers until we went to school. My grandfather was a spiritual man who participated in the Cree ceremonies and, although we did not attend with him, the gentleness and ways that he cared for us are still vivid in my mind.

I carry these memories of him today and find him in my mind many times in my life work with young Aboriginal children and their families. I have been working in the field of Early Childhood Education for almost two decades, focusing on both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal children and their families. I have been a front line caregiver of early childhood services, taught and have designed early childhood curriculum, programs, and evaluations. I have participated in international early childhood activities, and have served with over 20 national and provincial federations, committees, and assemblies.

Internationally, I represented Canada at the UNICEF Innocenti Research Centre where I participated in the development of an UNICEF Innocenti digest focused on Indigenous children. I also presented at an international conference in Iceland that focused on children with special needs.

I have been a national committee member of all early childhood initiatives in Canada that have focused on establishing formalized early childhood programs and services for Aboriginal children residing in on and off reserve communities. These initiatives include: the First Nations Inuit Child Care Initiative, the Aboriginal Head Start Urban and Northern Program, and the Aboriginal head Start Program On reserve. I have also been a member of the Canadian Child Care Federation's Member Council and the National Aboriginal Health Organization's Ethical Review Panel.

Provincially, I am a member of the British Columbia aboriginal Early childhood development roundtable and a founding member of the British Columbia Aboriginal Child Care Society for which I am currently the Vice-President. I am also a Regional Advisory Committee member of the First Nations Head Start Program, On Reserve.

I am currently an assistant professor at the University of Northern British Columbia's (UNBC) Education Program. I have been at the university for six years and during that time have also served as Chair of the First nations Studies Program, and faculty member of the Social Work Program. I continue to author curriculum pertinent to Aboriginal Peoples, and to work closely with community in developing works that have appeared in and been published in a wide variety of both community and scholarly locations, including on-line databases, academic journals, government reports and program evaluations, and assessments. I am currently the Director of the Centre of Excellence for Children and Adolescents with Special Needs, the UNBC Task Force on Substance Abuse, a Health Canada funded institute committed to increasing knowledge and understanding about children, including Aboriginal children in rural communities. In December of 2002, I received the Queen's Jubilee Medal in a national forum recognizing my work with young Aboriginal children and their families in Canada.

I continue to learn throughout my lifetime, and true to my belief, I am working on my Doctorate of Philosophy from the University of British Columbia. The focus of my work is on early childhood development and education for young Aboriginal children. In Canada the formalized care and education of these children is less than 10 years old. Programs and services for young Aboriginal children and their families are very new and we have much to learn. Thus, with your permission, I would like to come and visit you so that I may learn about the Kohangareo. My friend, Ngaroimata, has agreed to accompany me and teach me about the protocol I will need to know to learn about the Tuhoe people and the Kohangareo. I am interested in learning about how the Kohangareo were started by the people, about Maori philosophy, and what that looks like in the implementation of the Tuhoe Kohangareo. I am also interested in the development of the Kohangareo over time and how they have come to be as they are today. It is my overall intention to undertake a comparative study between the development of early childhood programs and services for young Aboriginal children and families in Canada, and the development of the Kohangareo in New Zealand. As I refine this idea I would like to send you a copy of the proposal I will be submitting to the university and continue to speak with you throughout this project.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to your response.

Meegwetch,

Margo Greenwood

Name in original

Te Pūtahi-ā-Toi, School of Māori Studies
Massey University
Palmerston North

22 January 2004

Canada fax number 2505632183

A letter of support for Margo Greenwood
4460 Stauble Road
Prince George,BC
V2K4X3
Telephone: 250-960-5842
Fax 250-960-5744
E-mail greenwom@unbc.ca

It is my pleasure to support and invite Margo Greenwood to Aotearoa New Zealand in 2004. This visit by Margo will enable her to undertake a research project that will effectively look at a Tūhoe tribal Kōhanga Reo initiative, and an intertribal urban-Kōhanga Reo (a Māori language early childhood immersion programme). Further to this a comparative study of a Kōhanga Reo and Early Childhood Developments of Aboriginal children in Canada will take place. There will also be the opportunity to establish national links with the Head Office of the National Kōhanga Reo Movement based in Wellington.

I have also had the opportunity to read the two examination papers presented by Margo Greenwood to her PhD supervisors. First paper *'How do we understand indigenous knowledge* August, 2003: Second paper *'How do indigenous knowledge inform methodologies for research inquiries about young aboriginal children'* October, 2003. The conviction of these two papers is strongly linked to Māori knowledge development aspirations here in Aotearoa New Zealand where Māori values, and te reo Māori (Māori language) have always valued knowledge. Māori, and indigenous people traditionally have, and more recently have begun

I

the task of restating their objectives methodologies, philosophies and world view inculcated in the narrative of their indigenous languages.

A number of attributes can be envisaged from this invitation to invite Margo Greenwood to Aotearoa New Zealand 2004

- to support and provide an academic focus for Margo's doctoral studies at the university of British Colombia from a Māori perspective linked to the Kōhanga Reo movement here in Aotearoa New Zealand
- to support a comparative study between early childhood development of Aboriginal Children in Canada and Tühoe tribal Kōhanga Reo and an urban-tribal Kōhanga Reo
- to establish international indigenous links in academic, social, cultural and economic developments of mutual benefit to First Nations People and Māori
- to establish and identify other potential research opportunities between Massey University School of Māori Studies and the University of British Columbia.

Margo Greenwood will be a visiting indigenous scholar. She will be under my guidance and it will be a pleasure to host her as a guest of Te Pūtahi-ä-Toi, School of Māori Studies, Massey University, the Tühoe tribe and the Kōhanga Reo Movement.

I look forward to having Margo Greenwood visit Aotearoa New Zealand in 2004 and beyond.

Yours sincerely

Signature in original

Te Pūtahi-ä-Toi, School of Māori Studies
Massey University
Palmetston North
Aotearoa New Zealand

2

Uri Kohu
Talent Agency
Limited

Ki te Whai Ao - In Search of a New Era

G.S.T: 84-907-340

13 January 2004

Margo Greenwood
University of Northern British Columbia
3333 University Way
Prince George BC
CANADA

Tēna Koe Margo Greenwood

It is with great pleasure that I extend this invitation to yourself and Mrs Tina Ngaroimata Fraser, on behalf of Uri Kohu Talent Agency, to participate in cultural research for Kohanga Reo in the Tuhoe tribal regions.

We invite you to research any areas of the development and implementation of our Language Programs within our Preschools, namely Kohanga Reo - Language Nests, which may be of assistance to the development of the Canadian Aboriginal Headstart Programs.

We would also like you to be a part of our Cultural and Protocol programs which add support to the preservation of our native language and traditional customs and culture.

Uri Kohu Talent Agency, although set up to manage Maori Talent in the fields of Music, Media, Art, Dance and Drama, also manages and provides Maori Language Advisors and Consultants and from time to time do enter into the education arena to offer assistance to our Kohanga Reo by way of resources.

Ko te tumanako ka whai wāhi atu koe ki te haere pēnei mai ki to mātou taha, hei whakawhiti whakaaro, hei tuhatuha kōrero.
It is hoped that you will be able to join with us, that we may exchange ideas and share stories.

271

Should you have any queries or require further information, please do not hesitate to make contact.

Toku reo, toku ohoobo
Toku reo, toku mapihi maurea
Toku reo, toku whakakai marihi

My language is my vitality
My language is a precious ornament
It is the object of my affection

Nāku noa

Name and Signature in original

Director

N.B A set programme will be sent out closer to the time.

C

Appendix 3

**Initiating the research process
Lake Babine Nation**

MEMORANDUM

TO: LAKE BABINE NATION CHIEF & COUNCIL

FROM: MARGO GREENWOOD
    UBC Doctoral Student

DATE: April 21, 2004

RE: COMMUNITY RESEARCH PARTNER REQUEST

Attached are (1) Briefing Note, which outlines my request for Lake Babine Nation to be a community research partner in an international research study on early childhood education, and (2) proposed wording for a Band Council Resolution affirming the Nation's approval.

BRIEFING NOTE

April 25, 2004

Issue/Topic

To obtain permission to conduct research with the Lake Babine Nation in the area of early childhood education.

Background and Overview

I am currently enrolled in a PhD program at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Jo-anne Archibald, a Sto:lo professor at UBC, is my supervisor. I have completed my course work and successfully passed my comprehensive examinations. I am now at the stage of planning the research for my dissertation, the final phase of my PhD. As a First Nations mother of a young son, and based on my experience in early childhood and with First Nations communities I am interested in the development of early childhood programs and services for First Nations children and more specifically with Indigenous ways of knowing and being and its reflection in the care and education of young children.

To explore this idea further I propose to undertake an international comparative study between the Kohanga reo (language nests) of the Maori in New Zealand and early childhood programs implemented in a First Nations community in Canada. I have approached the Tuhoe Tribe of the Maori people, following traditional protocol, and have been invited to undertake research on early childhood (specifically the Kohanga reo) in their tribal area. I am now keen on establishing a research partnership with Lake Babine Nation as my Canadian counterpart in this study. Lake Babine Nation is my first choice because: 1) of the existing strength of the language and culture, 2) of the existing child care program and preschool, and 3) logistically, I reside in this area.

As with any study my research will conclude with recommendations that are designed to enhance the delivery of early childhood programs in First Nations communities. In the long term, this study will have potential to influence policy-makers, curriculum developers as well as the education and training of early childhood educators such that First Nations ways of knowing and being will be fundamental. The information generated by this study may also specifically support Lake Babine Nation in their delivery of early childhood services as well as providing a solid rationale in advocating for funding and policy change.

As I stated above, this is research to complete my dissertation, its purpose is not publication. However, in the event that there should be a publication I propose that copyright be held by Lake Babine Nation, the Tuhoe Tribe of the Maori people, and myself.

Upon approval of Lake Babine Nation Chief and Council, I would respectfully request that an advisor or advisors be identified to guide me in conducting research that follows Lake Babine Nation protocols.
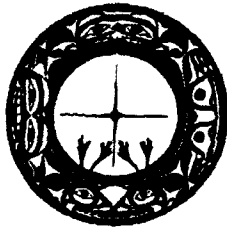
Lake Babine Nation

225 SUS AVENUE,
P.O. BOX 879
BURNS LAKE, B.C. V0J 1E0

TEL: (250) 692-4700
FAX: (250) 692-4790

The Council of the Lake Babine Nation
Date of Duly convened meeting April 25, 2004, British Columbia

WHEREAS, Margo Greenwood, a University of British Columbia doctoral student, is conducting a doctoral research in the area of Early Childhood Education;

WHEREAS, this proposed research will entail an international comparative study involving two (2) Indigenous peoples, with a confirmed partnership with the Tuhoe Tribe of the Maori peoples in New Zealand;

WHEREAS, Margo Greenwood requests that Lake Babine Nation be the Canadian Indigenous community partner.

THEREFORE, BE IT HEREBY RESOLVED THAT, the Lake Babine Nation Chief and Council does approve of Margo Greenwood's request and consents to Lake Babine Nation being the Canadian Indigenous community partner in her doctoral research.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVES THAT, In the event that there is a publication (s) from this research, Lake Babine Nation will be one of the joint copyright holders.

Names and signatures in original
document

277

Appendix 4

Initiating the research process
Tl'azt'en Nation

TL'AZT'EN NATION

CHIEF AND COUNCIL RESOLUTION

The council of the *TL'AZT'EN NATION*	Date of Duly Convened Meeting			
Ndiz un'a acts' oninai:	**B.C.R #**	**DAY**	**MONTH**	**YEAR**
Do Hereby Resolve:	0661	27	10	2004

Whereas, Margo Greenwood, a University of British Columbia doctoral student, is conducting a doctoral research in the area of Early Childhood Education.

Whereas, this proposal research will entail an international comparative study involving two (2) indigenous peoples, with a confirmed partnership with the Tufoo Tribe of the Maori peoples in New Zealand; and Lake Babine Nation.

Whereas, all three (3) indigenous groups in the study are involved with the Head Start programs.

Whereas, Margo Greenwood requests that Tl'azt'en Nation be 1 of 2 of the Canadian Indigenous community partner.

Therefore, be it hereby resolved that, Tl'azt'en Nation Chief & Council approve Margo Greenwood's request and consents to Tl'azt'en Nation being 1 of the 2 Canadian Indigenous community partner in her doctoral research.

Be it further resolved that, in the event that there is a publication(s) from the research, Tl'azt'en Nation will be one of the joint copyright holders.
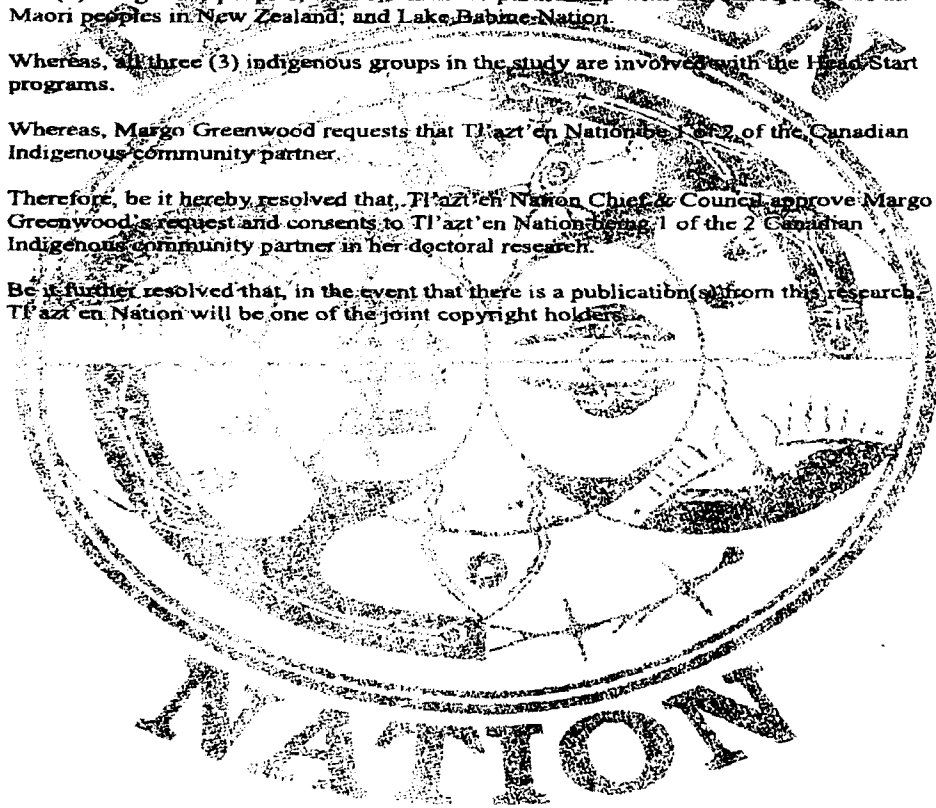
Names and signatures in original document

279

Margo Greenwood
4460 Stauble Road
Prince George, BC
V2K 4X3
250-960-5842 (o)
250-960-5644 (fax)
e-mail: greenwom@unbc.ca

September 16, 2004

Name is in original letter
Ti azt en Nation
P.O. Box 670
Fort St. James, BC
V0J 1P0

Via Fax: 250-648-3250

Dear Mr. Name is in original letter

I am writing this letter to request permission to conduct research with Tl'azt'en Nation in the area of early childhood education. I am currently enrolled in a PhD Program at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Jo-anne Archibald, a Sto:lo Professor at UBC, is my supervisor. I have completed my course work and have successfully passed my comprehensive examinations. I am now at the stage of planning the research for my dissertation, the final phase of my PhD. As a First Nations mother of a young son who has experience in early childhood and with First Nations communities, I am interested in the development of early childhood programs and services for First Nations children and, more specifically, with Indigenous ways of knowing and being and its reflection in the care and education of young children.

To explore this idea further I propose to undertake an international comparative study between Te Kohangareo (language nests) of the Maori in New Zealand and early childhood programs implemented in First Nations communities in Canada. I have approached the Tuhoe Tribe of the Maori people, following traditional protocol, and have been invited to conduct research on early childhood (specifically Te Kohangareo) in two communities within their tribal area. I am now keen on establishing a research relationship with Tl'azt'en Nation as the second of two Canadian counterparts in this study. I have also approached the Lake Babine Nation and secured their agreement to participate. I am particularly interested in Tl'azt'en Nation because of their commitment to early childhood through the community's Head Start Program.

As with any study my research will conclude with recommendations that are designed to enhance the delivery of early childhood programs in first Nations communities. In the long term, this study will have potential to influence policy-makers, curriculum developers as well as the education and training of early
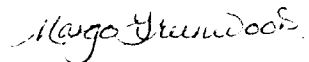
childhood educators such First Nations ways of knowing and being will be fundamental. The information generated by this study may also specifically support Tl'azt'en Nation in their delivery of early childhood services as well as providing a solid rationale in advocating for funding and policy change.

As I stated above, this research is to complete my dissertation, its purpose is not publication. However, in the event that there should be a publication I propose that copyright be held by Tl'azt'en Nation, Lake Babine Nation and the Tuhoe Tribe of the Maori people, and myself.

As discussed earlier this week   See original   Education Director, I respectfully request a meeting with yoursel.. .. ..   1e Head Start Coordinator and others you feel would be appropriate, to discuss the possibility of undertaking early childhood research with Tl'azt'en Nation. If you are agreeable, I   See original letter a faculty colleague, and myself will attend the meeting.

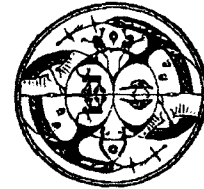Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

Margo Greenwood
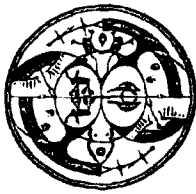
TL'AZT'EN NATION

P.O. Box 670, Fort St. James, B.C. V0J 1P0
Phone (250) 648-3212 • Fax (250) 648-3250
Email tlazten@tlazten.bc.ca

March 9, 2005

Margo Greenwood
4460 Stauble Road
Prince George, BC
V2K 4X3

Dear Margo

This is a letter of support on behalf on Tl'azt'en Nation Chief and Council expressing their full support of your research study " the good care of Children research project" and participation in this important process.

See original letter , Manager, Sum Yaz Daycare/Tl'azt'en Head Start and myself will be the primary contact for gathering information for your research paper. It is important that any information that is culturally sensitive to Tl'azt'enne (membership) will be authorized before hand. In addition, the attached band council resolution states Chief and Council recognized a joint copyright holder.

Further, Tl'azt'en Nation in return would like your expertise by providing training opportunities with Sum Yaz Daycare and Tl'azt'en Head Start staff during your research process. Please contact See original letter for any training needs for the staff.

Margo, we want to provide the best service possible to assist you in completing your research project. We have a number of experts in our community that are willing to provide information such as; elders; child caregivers; administrative staff and parents. We look forward to review the outcomes of your research by involving the people that provided input into this process.

If you require further information or clarification please call me at 1-250-648-3227. We want to thank you for giving us an opportunity to be part of your research project and hope that we can assist you to completion.

Sincerely

Signature and name
in original letter

Director of Education

Name in original
c.c   ,n, Manager – Sum Yaz & Tl'azt'en Head Start

282

TL'AZT'EN NATION GUIDELINES for
RESEARCH IN TL'AZT'EN TERRITORY

I. Purpose

These guidelines have been developed to help ensure that in all research sponsored and supported by the Tl'azt'en Chief and Council, appropriate respect is given 10 culture, language, knowledge and values ·of the Tl'azt'ennne, and to the standards used by Tl'azt'ennne to legitimate knowledge. These guidelines represent the standard of "best practice;' adopted by the Tl'azt'en Chief And Council.

2. Principles

A. As Tl'azt'enne we have distinctive perspectives and understandings, deriving from our culture and history and embodied in Tl'azt'en language. Research that has Tl'azt'en experience as it's subject matter must reflect these perspectives and understandings.

B. In the past, research concerning Aboriginal Peoples has usually been initiated outside the Aboriginal community and carried out by non-Aboriginal personnel. Aboriginal people have had almost no opportunity to correct misinformation or to challenge ethnocentric and racist interpretations. Consequently, the existing body of research; which normally provides a reference point for new research, must be open to reassessment.

C. Knowledge that is transmitted orally in the cultures of Aboriginal Peoples must be acknowledged as a valuable research resource along with documentary and other sources. The means of validating knowledge in the particular traditions under study.· should normally be applied to establish authenticity of orally transmitted knowledge.

D. In research portraying community life, the multiplicity of viewpoints present within Tl'azt'en Communities should be represented fairly, including viewpoints specific to age and gender groups.

E. Researchers have an obligation to understand and observe the protocol concerning communications within any Tl'azt'en community.

F. Researchers have an obligation to observe ethical and professional practices relevant to their respective disciplines.

3. Guidelines _Aboriginal Knowledge_

A. In all research sponsored and/or supported by the Chief and Council, researchers shall conscientiously address themselves to the following questions:

B. Are there perspectives on the subject of inquiry that are distinctively Aboriginal

C. What Aboriginal sources are appropriate to shed light on those perspectives?

D. Is proficiency in Dakelh required to explore these perspectives and sources?

E. Are there particular protocols or approaches required to access the relevant knowledge?

F Does Aboriginal knowledge challenge in any way assumptions brought to the subject from previous research?

G. How will Aboriginal knowledge or perspectives be portrayed ill research products and/or how will these be validated?

Consent

A. Informed consent shall be obtained from all persons and groups participating in research.

Such consent may be given by individuals whose personal experience is being pOl1rayed, by groups in assembly, or by authorized representatives or communities or organizations.

B. Consent should ordinarily be obtained in writing. Where this is not practical, the procedures used in obtaining consent should be recorded.

(' Individuals or groups participating in research shall be provided with information about the purpose and nature or the research activities. including expected benefits and risks.

D. No pressure shall be applied to induce participation in research.

E. Participants should be informed that they are free to withdraw from the research at any ti me.

F. Participants should be informed of the degree of confidentiality that will be maintained in the study.

G. Informed consent of parents or guardian and, where practical, of children should be obtained in research involving children.

Collaborative Research

A. In the studies located principally in Tl'azt'en communities, researchers shall establish procedures to enable community representatives to participate in the planning, execution and evaluation of research results.

B In studies that are carried out in the general community and that are likely to affect particular Tl'azt'en communities, consultation on planning, execution and evaluation of results shall be sought through appropriate Tl'azt'en Committees.

C. In community-based studies, researchers shall ensure that a representative cross-section of community experiences and perceptions is included.

Review Procedures

A. Review of research results shall be solicited both in the Tl'azt'en community and in the scholarly community prior to publication or dissemination of research findings.

Access To Research Results

A. Tl'azt'en Chief and Council shaHlll1aintain a policy of open public access to filial reports of research activities except in cases involving information deemed to be confidential and/or sensitive. Reports may be circulated in draft form, where scholarly and Tl'azt'en community response is deemed useful.

13. Research reports or parts thereof shall not be made public where they are reasonable grounds for thinking that publication will violate the privacy of individuals or cause significant harm to Tl'azt'en communities or organizations.

C Results of community research shall be distributed as widely as possible within participating communities, 'and reasonable efforts shall be made to present results in non-technical language and in Dakelh languages where appropriate.

Acknowledgments

A. All Tl'azt'enne who contribute to the research must be acknowledged during and after project.

B. Due credit must be given to Tl'azt'en Nation and Tl'azt'enne in the dissemination of research results

Ownership/Copyright

A. Tl'azt'en Nation reserves the right to be the sole beneficiary of all commercial gains that may be attained through the dissemination of all research results and/or the marketing and sale of products that may be derived from research results.

Community Benefit

A. In setting research priorities and objectives for community-based research, the investigators shall give serious and due consideration to the benefit of Tl'azt'en communities.

B. In assessing community benefit, regard shall be given to the widest possible range of community interests, whether groups in question be Tl'azt'en or non-Tl'azt'en, and also to the impact of research at the local, regional or national level. Wherever possible, conflicts between interests within the community should be identified and resolved in advance of commencing the project. Researchers should be equipped to draw on a range of pr-bl-lll-solving strategies to resolve such conflicts as may arise in the course of research.

C. Whenever possible research should support the transfer of skills to individuals and increase the capacity of the community to manage its own research projects.

Implementation of Guidelines

A. These guidelines shall guide the activities of all individuals, groups, funding agencies, organizations, and communities conducting research sponsored and supported by Tl'azt'en Chief and Council.

B. It shall be the responsibility, in the first instance, of all the researchers to observe these guidelines conscientiously. It shall be the responsibility, in ascending order, of investigators/researchers, Tl'azt'en Administration, and Tl'azt'en Chief and Council itself to monitor the implementation of the guidelines and to make decisions regarding their interpretation and application.

C. Where, in the opinion of the researcher or the research manager, local circumstances make these guidelines or any part of them inapplicable, such exception shall be reported to the Chief and Council through the appropriate Tl'azt'en administrative branch, and the exception shall be noted in the research contract or contract amendments as well as in any subsequent publication(s).

Research Contract

A Once an agreement is developed between Tl'azt'en Nation and a particular group of researchers about the nature, duration, and purpose of research activities, the researchers will be expected to state (in writing) their agreement to follow Tl'azt'en Nation guidelines.

B. Depending on the nature and scope if the particular research activity, Tl'azt'en Nation and the researcher(s) may develop a detailed research contract which addresses the specifics of the particular research project at hand.

Approved by Tl'azt'en Nation Chief and Council Resolution – May 5, 1998

Appendix 5

Invitation letters, project information sheets, and consent forms

First Nations Early Childhood Education Research Project

CALL FOR PARENT INVOLVEMENT

UNBC faculty members, Margo Greenwood is seeking parent input into her research project titled, The Good Care of Children. This project has been approved by the Tlazt'en Nation Chief and Council. Tlazt'en Nation education administrator, [name included in original letter], will be helping Margo with this project. The following is a short description of what her project is about.

The Good Care of Children

- Margo is working on her Doctoral degree at the University of British Columbia. She is focusing on what First Nations people mean when they answer the question: "What is the good care of children?"

For this project, Margo would like to meet with a group of parents. After meeting with parents, she will write up what has been said and then return for another meeting to make sure she has everyone's words correct.

She would like to set up the first meeting with parents around the middle of December, 2004. Interested parents can contact any of the following:

Margo Greenwood   [Name included on original]
Education Program   Education Department
UNBC   Tlazt'en Nation
960-5842   648-3227
greenwom@unbc.ca

Early Childhood Education Research Projects

Call for Parent Involvement

UNBC faculty members, Margo Greenwood and Monty Palmantier are seeking parent input into two research projects that they are working on. Both projects have been approved by the Lake Babine Nation Chief and Council. Lake Babine Nation preschool/kindergarten teacher, [name included in original], as well as day care staff members will be helping Margo and Monty with these projects. The following is a short description of what these two projects are about.

II.   Transitions of Aboriginal children from pre-school (Woyenne Day Care and Morris Williams Memorial Pre-School / Kindergarten)

- In this study, we will be looking at how children do in elementary school after they complete pre-school programs. We want to find out what parents think in terms of how there children do when they move from pre-school programs and into the elementary school year.

III.   The Good Care of Children
- Margo working on her Doctoral degree at the University of British Columbia. She is focusing on what First Nations means when they answer the question: "What is the good care of children?"

For both of these projects, Monty and Margo would like to meet with a group of parents. After the first meeting, we will write up what has been said and then return for another meeting to make sure we have everyone's words correct. This might take a couple return visits.

We would like to set up the first meeting with parents towards the end of October, 2004. Interested parents can contact any of the following:

Monty Palmantier	Margo Greenwood	LBN Education Dept.	[Name in original]
Education Program	Education Program	LBN Band Office	Pre-School
UNBC	UNBC	692-4700	[tel. # in original]
960-5714	960-5842		
palmantm@unbc.ca	greenwom@unbc.ca		

288

Early Childhood Education Research Project

INSERT NAMES OF DAY CARE AND HEAD START HERE - ONE OF ONE PAGE THE OTHER FOR ANOTHER PAGE are taking part in a research project. The research project is in partnership with the Education Program of the University of Northern British Columbia.

UNBC researcher Margo Greenwood will be working closely with Amelia Stark on this project.

- The project focuses on what First Nations people mean when they answer the question: "What is the good care of children?"

She needs to interview interested parents of children who are attending (or have attended in the past) the day care INSERT ONE FOR ONE PAGE AND THE OTHER FOR THE OTHER PAGE (or Head Start) program in Tlazt'en.

Please contact: Margo Greenwood at (250) 960-5842 or the Tlazt'en Nation Education Department for [name in original] at [tel. number in original].

Early Childhood Education Research Projects

Woyenne Day Care Centre and Morris Williams Memorial Pre-School / Woyenne Kindergarten are taking part in 2 research projects. The research projects are in partnership with the Education Program of the University of Northern British Columbia.

The UNBC researchers, Monty Palmantier and Margo Greenwood will be working closely with [name in original] with both projects.

- One project will be looking at how students do in school when they move from Lake Babine Nation education programs (Morris Williams Memorial Pre-School / Woyenne Kindergarten and Woyenne Day Care Centre) to the public school system.
- The other project will focus on "the good care of children"

The research team needs to interview interested parents of children who are attending (or have attended in the past) either the pre-school or day care programs in Woyenne.

Please contact: Monty Palmantier at (250) 960-5714 and Margo Greenwood at (250) 960-5842 or the Lake Babine Nation Education Department or [name in original] **at** [tel. number in original].

LETTER OF INITIAL CONTACT FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS

(DATE)

VIA FAX

(ADDRESS)

SUBJECT: Letter of Invitation

Dear:

Please accept this invitation to participate in an interview as part of an international comparative study between New Zealand and Canada that focuses on the establishment and implementation of Indigenous early childhood programs and services. This research is being undertaken as part of my doctoral studies within the Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia (UBC). As a graduate student I am a co-investigator on this research study with the Principal Investigator being my PhD Supervisor, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Educational Studies, UBC. She may be contacted by telephone at: 604-822-5286 or by mail: Educational Studies, University of British Columbia, 2044 Lower Mall, Ponderosa 'G', Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2.

This comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples will critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of this study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,

2. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and

291

3. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected implications or applications of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

More specifically this study will be undertaken in two Carrier communities and one Tuhoe community. Study participants will be interviewed from each of these communities. They will be identified on the basis of their knowledge, experience and involvement with the care and education of young Aboriginal children and may include Elders, parents, frontline practitioners, and administrators. It is expected that interviews will take one to two hours of your time. Following the interviews I will be asking for feedback on your transcript of responses, and later, on sections of the final report relevant to your responses.

All responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. Any publication of interview responses will be edited to avoid identification of the informant. In the event that you may wish to be identified relative to your responses that may be subsequently published, please advise me of your decision at our meeting, that is, if you are agreeable to participating in this research.

Likewise, if agreeable to participating, please let me know if I may interview you by recording your responses by tape recorder or whether you prefer to have your responses recorded in some other manner, for example, note taking.

I look forward to your response to this invitation of participation as an interviewee in this research study. If you have any questions you may contact me at 250-960-5842 (telephone) or 250-962-0945 (fax).

Sincerely,

Margo Greenwood
Co-investigator

LETTER OF INITIAL CONTACT FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS

(DATE)

VIA FAX

(ADDRESS)

SUBJECT: Letter of Invitation

Dear:

Please accept this invitation to participate in an interview as part of an international comparative study between New Zealand and Canada that focuses on the establishment and implementation of Indigenous early childhood programs and services. This research is being undertaken as part of my doctoral studies within the Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia (UBC). As a graduate student I am a co-investigator on this research study with the Principal Investigator being my PhD Supervisor, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Educational Studies, UBC. She may be contacted by telephone at: 604-822-5286 or by mail: Educational Studies, University of British Columbia, 2044 Lower Mall, Ponderosa 'G', Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2.

This comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples will critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of this study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,

2. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and

3. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected implications or applications of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

Aboriginal early childhood programs and services are embedded in a context of history and policy, and as such require its documentation for a more comprehensive understanding. An important source of that information is in government documents and from government officials. Consequently, government participants will be identified on the basis of their experience and involvement with the development of Aboriginal early childhood programs and services. It is expected that interviews will take one to two hours of your time. Following the interviews I will be asking for feedback on your transcript of responses, and later, on sections of the final report relevant to your responses.

All responses to interview questions will be kept confidential. Any publication of interview responses will be edited to avoid identification of the informant. In the event that you may wish to be identified relative to your responses that may subsequently be published, please advise me of your decision at our meeting, that is, if you are agreeable to participating.

Likewise, if agreeable to participating, please let me know if I may interview you by recording your responses by tape recorder or whether you prefer to have your responses recorded in some other manner, for example, note taking.

I look forward to your response to this invitation of participation as an interviewee in this research study. If you have any questions you may contact me at 250-960-5842 (telephone) or 250-962-0945 (fax).

Sincerely,

Margo Greenwood
Co-investigator

LETTER OF INITIAL CONTACT FOR COMMUNITY MEMBERS AS FOCUS GROUP PARTICIPANTS

(DATE)

VIA FAX

(ADDRESS)

SUBJECT: Letter of Invitation

Dear:

Please accept this letter as an invitation to participate in a focus group as part of an international comparative study between New Zealand and Canada that focuses on the establishment and implementation of Indigenous early childhood programs and services. This research is being undertaken as part of my doctoral studies within the Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia (UBC). As a graduate student I am a co-investigator on this research study with the Principal Investigator being my PhD Supervisor, Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Educational Studies, UBC. She may be contacted by telephone at: 604-822-5286 or by mail: Educational Studies, University of British Columbia, 2044 Lower Mall, Ponderosa 'G', Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2.

This comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples will critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of this study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,

2. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and

3. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected implications or applications of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

More specifically this study will be undertaken in two Carrier communities and one Tuhoe community. The study will involve document reviews and interviews. Focus group participants were identified on the basis of their knowledge, experience and involvement in the care and education of young Indigenous children and may include Elders, parents, frontline practitioners, and administrators. It is anticipated that the focus group will take approximately two to three hours of your time.

Limited confidentiality is offered to focus group participants. While all participants will be encouraged to refrain from disclosing the contents of the discussion outside of the focus group; we cannot control what participants do with the information discussed. In our documentation of participant responses, we will however ensure that all responses will be edited to avoid identification of the participants.

I look forward to your response to this invitation of participation as a focus group participant in this research study. If you have any questions you may contact me at 250-960-5842 (telephone) or 250-962-0945 (fax).

Sincerely,

Margo Greenwood
Co-investigator

The Good Care of Children:
Invitation Letter for a Focus Group

December xx, 2004

Dear Focus Group Invitee:

Congratulations, you have been selected to participate in a focus group of parents and community members interested in the 'good' care of children. Focus group participants were identified on the basis of their experience, knowledge, and involvement in the care and education of young First Nations children.

The focus group is part of a larger international research project that examines the development of Aboriginal early childhood services in Canada and New Zealand. The project is part of my doctoral studies at the University of British Columbia. In Canada there will be two Carrier communities participating, one of them is Tlazt'en Nation. Part of the project involves working with First Nations communities to respond to the questions, "what is the 'good' care of children?" and "how is this care supported or not supported by government program policies?" The focus group will take about two to three hours of your time.

The focus group discussion and responses will be written up and edited to avoid identification of individuals. These transcripts will be returned to you for your review before being written into the final report.

I look forward to your response to this invitation to participate in the upcoming focus group to be held on December 17, 2004 from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm. at the xxxx. Dinner will be served. If you have any questions please contact: Margo Greenwood, Education Program, UNBC, telephone 250-960-5842 or [name in original], Education Administrator, telephone [number in original].

Sincerely,

The Good Care of Children:
Invitation Letter for a Focus Group

November 15, 2004

Dear Focus Group Invitee:

Congratulations, you have been selected to participate in a focus group of parents and community members interested in the 'good' care of children. Focus group participants were identified on the basis of their experience, knowledge, and involvement in the care and education of young First Nations children.

The focus group is part of a larger international research project that examines the development of Aboriginal early childhood services in Canada and New Zealand. The project is part of my doctoral studies at the University of British Columbia. In Canada there will be two Carrier communities participating, one of them is Lake Babine Nation. Part of the project involves working with First Nations communities to respond to the questions, "what is the 'good' care of children?" and "how is this care supported or not supported by government program policies?" The focus group will take about two to three hours of your time.

The focus group discussion and responses will be written up and edited to avoid identification of individuals. These transcripts will be returned to you for your review before being written into the final report.

I look forward to your response to this invitation to participate in the upcoming focus group to be held on November 17, 2004 from 5:30 pm to 9:00 pm. at the Lake Babine Nation Council Chambers. Dinner will be served. If you have any questions please contact: Margo Greenwood, Education Program, UNBC, telephone 960-5842 or [name in original], LBN Preschool, telephone [number in original].

Sincerely,

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Information Sheet - Pilot
November, 15, 2004

Co-investigator: Margo Greenwood, Ph.D. Student, Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia. Telephone: 250-960-5842

This research is part of my doctoral studies at UBC.

Purpose:

The overall purpose of this comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples is to critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of the study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,
2. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and
3. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected results of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

Information for this study will be gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing individuals, and conducting focus groups. However, before

this information can be gathered from individuals in a focus group session it is important to test the questions to see if they generate the information needed to meet the objectives of the study.   Thus our time together today has two purposes: 1) to respond to the focus group questions, and 2) to evaluate the focus group questions and overall focus group process.

Thank you for your support in this process.

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Project Information Sheet

JUNE, 2005

Co-investigator: Margo Greenwood, Ph.D. Student, Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia. Telephone: 250-960-5842

This research is part of my doctoral studies at UBC and has been approved by the Tlazt'en Nation Chief and Council.

The overall purpose of this comparative study between the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Tl'azt'en Nation and Lake Babine Nation Carrier peoples of Canada is to critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of the study are:

> 1) to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Tl'azt'en Nation and Lake Babine Nation Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and

> 2) to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children.

The expected results of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

Information for the study will be gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing individuals, and conducting focus groups. Transcripts of these activities will be returned to you for your changes and approval prior to incorporation into the final report.

Thank you for your support in this process.

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Tlazt'en Nation Parents
Project Information Sheet
December 16, 2004

Co-Investigator (Researcher): Margo Greenwood, PhD Student, Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia <u>Telephone</u>: 250-960-5842

This focus group is part of a larger international research project that examines the development of Aboriginal early childhood services in Canada and New Zealand. The project is part of my doctoral studies at the University of British Columbia. In Canada there will be two Carrier communities participating, one of them is Tlazt'en Nation. Part of the project involves working with First Nations communities to respond to the questions, "what is the 'good' care of children?" and "how is this care supported or not supported by government program policies?" The focus group will take about two to three hours of your time.

The focus group discussion and responses will be written up and edited to avoid identification of individuals. These transcripts will be returned to you for your review before being written into the final report.

Thank you for participating in this process.

Margo Greenwood

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Information Sheet - Focus Group

MARCH 2005

Co-investigator: Margo Greenwood, Ph.D. Student, Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia. Telephone: 250-960-5842

This research is part of my doctoral studies at UBC.

Purpose:

The overall purpose of this comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples is to critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of the study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

4. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,
5. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and
6. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected results of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

303

Information for this study will be gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing individuals, and conducting focus groups. Transcripts of these activities will be returned to you for your changes and approval prior to incorporation into the final report.

Thank you for your support in this process.

Margo Greenwood
Education Program
3333 University Way
Prince George, BC
V2K 5E7

December 21, 2004

Dear Focus Group Participant:

Let me begin by once again thanking you for participating in the parent focus group for the Good Care of Children research project currently being undertaken with Lake Babine Nation. As you know this focus group is part of my doctoral studies at UBC and I have committed to sending you the transcripts of the focus group you participated in on November 17, 2004.

I have attached a copy of those notes and request that you review them for accuracy and for any additions, deletions or changes you might have. Please write directly on the transcript and mail it back to me in the self-addressed envelope I have enclosed with the transcript. You may also choose to write out your edits on a separate page or e-mail them to me at greenwom@unbc.ca.

I will be sending you a revised version of the transcripts once everyone's changes have been received. Please submit any changes you might have by January 31, 2004. If you are mailing please post your letter one week prior by January 24, 2004. If I do not hear from you by January 31, 2004 then I will assume that you are in agreement with what is recorded in the transcription.

I am most appreciative of your contribution to this research study and look forward to sharing the final results with the Lake Babine Nation.

Sincerely,

Margo Greenwood

THE UNIVERSITY OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

Centre for Cross-Faculty Inquiry (CCFI)
Faculty of Education
Vancouver, B.C. Canada V6T 1Z4
Tel: 604-822-6502
Fax: 604-822-8234

CONSENT FORM

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN: A RESEARCH STUDY

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Dr. Jo-ann Archibald, Educational Studies, University of British Columbia, 2044 Lower Mall, Ponderosa 'G', Vancouver, BC V6T 1Z2 Telephone: 604-822-5286

CO-IVESTIGATOR: Margo Greenwood, Ph.D. Student, Centre for Cross Faculty Inquiry in Education, University of British Columbia. Telephone: 250-960-5842

This research is being undertaken as part of my doctoral studies and will result in a doctoral dissertation that is a public document.

PURPOSE: This comparative study between the Maori of New Zealand and Canadian Aboriginal peoples will critically examine the development and implementation of the Te Kohangareo (language nests) in order to suggest future policies that could support the development of Aboriginal-specific early childhood programs in Canada. The broad goals of this study are to investigate how and why early childhood programs were developed for Indigenous children residing in the traditional territories of the Tuhoe Maori of New Zealand and the Carrier peoples of north central British Columbia, Canada and to determine whether or not the respective program policies are consistent with community aspirations for the 'good care' of their children. The specific objectives of the study are to:

7. identify Indigenous indicators of the good care of children,
8. identify Indigenous and non-Indigenous indicators of good care embedded in government policy, and
9. determine the ways in which policy supports or negates Indigenous practice.

The expected implications or applications of this research include raising the awareness of frontline practitioners of the roles and possibilities of Indigenous knowledge within early childhood practice, giving voice to Indigenous communities and community members, informing community and government (federal and provincial) policies and practices, and adding to Aboriginal early childhood discourse.

Information for this study will be gathered by reviewing documents, interviewing individuals, and conducting focus groups. Interviewees have been identified on the basis of their knowledge, experience, and involvement with the care and education of young Indigenous children and will include Elders, parents, frontline practitioners, administrators, and government officials.

STUDY PROCEDURES: Individual interviews and focus groups will be conducted in one visit and are expected to take one to two hours, and two to three hours respectively. Please let me know if I may record your responses by tape recorder or whether you prefer to have your responses recorded in some other manner, for example, note taking. Once transcribed, recordings and/or notes will be returned to you for your verification and editorial comment.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Participant identities will be kept confidential. All documents will be identified by code numbers and kept in a locked filing cabinet. Subjects will not be identified by name in any reports of the completed study. If the data records are kept on a computer hard disk they will be password protected.

If you are participating in a focus group only limited confidentiality may be offered. We encourage all participants to refrain from disclosing the contents of the discussion outside of the focus group; however we cannot control what other participants do with the information discussed.

The only people to have access to the data will be a professional transcriber, co-investigator Margo Greenwood, and Principal Investigator Dr. Jo-ann Archibald. All individuals will be made aware of and abide by the terms and conditions outlined in the Consent Form and upon which participants agree to participate.

If you wish to have your comments attributed to yourself please sign both signature places at the bottom of this form or you may wait and sign your attribution consent upon review of your transcriptions.

RISK: There are limited risks (for example, breach of confidentiality) associated with participating in this research. Confidentiality is discussed in the previous section including measures to ensure it. While we do not anticipate psychological or cultural risks, for those individuals who may expereince some discomfort as a result of the interview questions, community resource information will be provided to them.

CONTACT FOR INFORMATION ABOUT THE STUDY: If you have any questions or desire further information with respect to this study you may contact the principal investigator or co-investigator at the aforementioned address and telephone numbers.

CONTACT FOR CONCERNS ABOUT THE RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS: If you have any concerns about your treatment or rights as a research subject, you may contact the Research Subject Information Line in the UBC Office of Research Services at 604-822-8598.

CONSENT: Your participation in this study is entirely voluntary and you may refuse to participate or withdraw from the study at any time without jeopardy to your personal well-being, employment or standing within the community.

Your signature below indicates that you have received a copy of this consent form for your own records.

Your signature also indicates that you consent to participate in this study.

_____

Subject Signature   Date

_____

Printed Name of the Subject

Your signature below indicates that you wish to have your comments attributed to yourself.

_____

Subject Signature   Date

_____

Printed Name of the Subject

Appendix 6

Interview and focus group instruments

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Lake Babine Nation
Parents and Community Members
Focus Group Questions
November 17, 2004

1. What do you think is important for your child to learn when she/he is an infant? a toddler? a preschooler? a primary school age child?

2. What do you hear? see? when you visit your child's program?
   What would you like to see that is not there?

3. What has been good for your child in his/her program?

   What does you child like about the program?
   What does your child not like about the program?

   What do you like about the program?
   What don't you like about the program?

4. Have there been any hard times in the program?

5. Do you think the program is good for all children?
   Do most people think it is a good program?
   Are there people who criticize the program? What don't they like?

Part 1 – Development of Services

History

Please tell me about the development of the day care centre in Lake Babine Nation.

Prompt: Why was the day care centre developed in the community?
Prompt: What role did community have in the development of the program?
Prompt: What role does the community have in the implementation of the program?

Thinking back about the development of the day care centre in Lake Babine Nation, what were some of the aspects of development that went smoothly?
Prompt: Why did these things go smoothly?

What were some of the challenges you faced?
Prompt: What would you have changed?

What policies were developed for the implementation of the day care?

Prompt: Who developed the policies?
Prompt: Did the community play a role in the development of the policies?

Current Day

Would you say the day care has been successful?

Prompt: What are some of the indicators of its success?

Does the program reflect its original intent?

What have the benefits of the program been for the children? families? and communities?

Part 2 – Care of Children

What's important in caring for the children?

Prompt: What teachings are important for children to learn?

How do we know that children are being cared for in a good way?

Prompt: What do you hear? see? when you visit the day care centre?

Do program policies support these intents?

In your opinion do these polices developed for the day care support community in their desires for their children?

Part 3 - Legislation

What current legislation impacts the care of children in your community?

Is licensing useful or does it get in the way?

What options are there for responding to legislative barriers to the delivery of services in your community?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

Part 1 – Development of Services

History

Please tell me about the development of the day care centre in Lake Babine Nation.

Prompt: Why was the day care centre developed in the community?
Prompt: What role did community have in the development of the program?
Prompt: What role does the community have in the implementation of the program?

Thinking back about the development of the day care centre in Lake Babine Nation, what were some of the aspects of development that went smoothly?
Prompt: Why did these things go smoothly?

What were some of the challenges you faced?
Prompt: What would you have changed?

What policies were developed for the implementation of the day care?

Prompt: Who developed the policies?
Prompt: Did the community play a role in the development of the policies?

Current Day

Would you say the day care has been successful?

Prompt: What are some of the indicators of its success?

Does the program reflect its original intent?

What have the benefits of the program been for the children? families? and communities?

Part 2 – Care of Children

What's important in caring for the children?

Prompt: What teachings are important for children to learn?

How do we know that children are being cared for in a good way?

Prompt: What do you hear? see? when you visit the day care centre?

Do program policies support these intents?

In your opinion do these polices developed for the day care support community in their desires for their children?

Part 3 - Legislation

What current legislation impacts the care of children in your community?

Is licensing useful or does it get in the way?

What options are there for responding to legislative barriers to the delivery of services in your community?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN
Individual Semi-Structured Interview Questions
Elders
INTERVIEW QUESTIONNAIRE
June 30, 2005

1.   What were you taught when you were young?

2.   How were you taught?

3.   When you think back on your childhood what values and beliefs did you learn?

4.   What are the important things that we should be teaching our children in the Head Start Program?

5.   Why did the Head Start come into being?

6.   Please tell me about the development of the Head Start in your community.

       What obstacles did you face when you first developed your Head Start?

       What support systems did you have?

       Did you accomplish what you set out to achieve?

       How has it changed over the years?

7.   What are the benefits of the Head Start for the children? Families? Communities?

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Tlazt'en Nation Parents
Focus Group Questions
December 16, 2004

1. What do you think is important for your child to learn when she/he is an infant? a toddler? a preschooler? a primary school age child?

2. What do you hear? see? when you visit your child's program? What would you like to see that is not there?

3. What has been good for your child in his/her program?

   What does you child like about the program?
   What does your child not like about the program?

   What do you like about the program?
   What don't you like about the program?

4. Have there been any hard times in the program?

5. Do you think the program is good for all children?
   Do most people think it is a good program?
   Are there people who criticize the program? What don't they like?

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN
Individual Semi-Structured Interview Questions
INTERVIEWER QUESTIONNAIRE
June 15, 2005

Part 1 – Development of Services

History

Please tell me about the development of the day care centre in Tl'azt'en Nation.

Prompt: Why was the day care centre developed in the community?
Prompt: What role did community have in the development of the program?
Prompt: What role does the community have in the implementation of the program?

Thinking back about the development of the day care centre in Tl'azt"en Nation, what were some of the aspects of development that went smoothly?
Prompt: Why did these things go smoothly?

What were some of the challenges you faced?
Prompt: What would you have changed?

What policies were developed for the implementation of the day care?

Prompt: Who developed the policies?
Prompt: Did the community play a role in the development of the policies?

Current Day

Would you say the day care has been successful?

Prompt: What are some of the indicators of its success?

Does the program reflect its original intent?

What have the benefits of the program been for the children? families? and communities?

Part 2 – Care of Children

What's important in caring for the children?

Prompt: What teachings are important for children to learn?

How do we know that children are being cared for in a good way?

Prompt: What do you hear? see? when you visit the day care centre?

Do program policies support these intents?

In your opinion do these polices developed for the day care support community in their desires for their children?

Part 3 - Legislation

What current legislation impacts the care of children in your community?

Is licensing useful or does it get in the way?

What options are there for responding to legislative barriers to the delivery of services in your community?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN
Key Informant Semi-Structured Interview Questions
INTERVIEWER QUESTIONNAIRE
June 15, 2005

Part 1 – Development of Services

History

Please tell me about the development of the Head Start in Tl'zat'en Nation.

Prompt: Why was the Head Start developed in the community?
Prompt: What role did community have in the development of the program?
Prompt: What role does the community have in the implementation of the program?

Thinking back about the development of the Head Start in Tl'zat'en Nation,
what were some of the aspects of development that went smoothly?
Prompt: Why did these things go smoothly?

What were some of the challenges you faced?
Prompt: What would you have changed?

What policies were developed for the implementation of the Head Start?

Prompt: Who developed the policies?
Prompt: Did the community play a role in the development of the policies?

Current Day

Would you say the Head Starthas been successful?

Prompt: What are some of the indicators of its success?

Does the program reflect its original intent?

What have the benefits of the program been for the children? families? and communities?

Part 2 – Care of Children

What's important in caring for the children?

Prompt: What teachings are important for children to learn?

How do we know that children are being cared for in a good way?

Prompt: What do you hear? see? when you visit the day care centre?

Do program policies support these intents?

In your opinion do these polices developed for the Head Start support community in their desires for their children?

Part 3 - Legislation

What current legislation impacts the care of children in your community?

Is licensing useful or does it get in the way?

What options are there for responding to legislative barriers to the delivery of services in your community?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

   Thank you.

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN
Semi-Structured Interview Questions
BC Region
March, 2005

1. Please tell me about the development of the day care program in British Columbia.

    What was the impetus for the development of day care program for Aboriginal children?

2. What was the political context in which these programs were developed?

3. How were these programs developed in the BC region?

4. What role did communities have in determining these developments? What was the breadth of their decision-making capacity?

5. Would you say these programs have been successful? What are some of the indicators of their success?

6. Do these programs reflect their original intent?

7. If you could change how these programs were developed and implemented, what would you change?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF CHILDREN
National Interviewees
Semi-structured Interview Questions
July, 2005

1. When was the program announced? Implemented?

2. Why did the program come into being?

3. What was the political climate of the day?

4. What was the process for developing the program framework?

   How was it developed?

   Who was involved?

   What went smoothly? What were the challenges?

   How were Aboriginal peoples and organizations involved?

5. What was the program intended to do?

6. What was the process for the national implementation strategy?

   How was it developed?

   Who was involved?

   What went smoothly? What were the challenges?

   How were Aboriginal peoples and organizations involved?

7. What would you change about the development process for the program?

8. What would you change about the implementation process for the program?

9. Do you think the program has been successful?

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Semi-Structured Interview Questions

March 2005

1. Please tell me about the development of Te Kohanga Reo in New Zealand.

    Prompt: What was the impetus for the development of Te Kohanga Reo for Maori children?

2. What was the political context in which Te Kohanga Rreo was developed?

3. How were Te Kohanga Reo developed in the Tuhoe region?

4. What role did communities have in determining these developments? What was the breadth of their decision-making capacity?

5. Would you say Te Kohanga Reo has been successful? What are some of the indicators of its success?

6. Do Te Kohanga Reo reflect their original intent?

7. If you could change how Te Kohanga Reo have been developed and implemented, what would you change?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

THE 'GOOD CARE' OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN
Key Informant Semi-Structured Interview Questions
INTERVIEWER QUESTIONNAIRE
March 2005

Part 1 – Development of Services

History

Please tell me about the development of the Kohanga Reo in your community.

Prompt: Why was the Kohanga Reo developed in the community?
Prompt: What role did community have in the development of the Kohanga Reo?
Prompt: What role does the community have in the implementation of the Kohanga Reo?

Thinking back about the development of the Kohanga Reo, what were some of the aspects of development that went smoothly?

Prompt: Why did these things go smoothly?

What were some of the challenges you faced?

Prompt: What would you have changed?

What policies were developed for the implementation of the Kohanga Reo?

Prompt: Who developed the policies?
Prompt: Did the community play a role in the development of the policies?

Current Day

Would you say the Kohanga Reo has been successful?

Prompt: What are some of the indicators of its success?

Does the Kohanga Reo reflect its original intent?

What have the benefits of the Kohanga Reo program been for the children? families? and communities?

Part 2 – Care of Children

What's important in caring for the children?

Prompt: What teachings are important for children to learn?

How do we know that children are being cared for in a good way?

Prompt: What do you hear? see? when you visit the Kohanga Reo?

Do Kohanga Reo policies support these intents?

In your opinion, do these polices developed for the Kohanga Reo support community in their desires for their children?

Part 3 - Legislation

What current legislation impacts the care of children in your community?

Is licensing useful or does it get in the way?

What options are there for responding to legislative barriers to the delivery of services in your community?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

TE KOHANGA REO
March 29, 2005

Interview Questions

1. What are the important things that we should be teaching our children?

   How can we do that effectively?

2. Why did the Kohanga reo come into being?

3. Please tell me about the development of the Kohanga reo in your area.

   What obstacles did you face when you first developed your Kohanga reo?

   What support systems did you have?

   Did you accomplish what you set out to achieve?

   How has it changed over the years?

4. What have been the benefits of the Kohanga reo for the children? families?

Are there any other comments you would like to make?

Thank you.

THE GOOD CARE OF INDIGENOUS CHILDREN

Parents and Community Members
Focus Group Questions
March 2005

6. What do you think is important for your child to learn when she/he is an infant? a toddler? a preschooler? a primary school age child?

7. What do you hear? see? when you visit your child's Kohangareo? What would you like to see that is not there?

8. What has been good for your child in his/her Kohangareo?

    What does you child like about the Kohangareo?
    What does your child not like about the Kohangareo?

    What do you like about the Kohangareo?
    What don't you like about the Kohangareo?

9. Have there been any hard times in the Kohangareo?

10. Do you think the Kohangareo is good for all children?
    Do most people think it is a good program?
    Are there people who criticize the Kohangareo? What don't they like?

Appendix 7

UBC Ethics Approval

The University of British Columbia
Office of Research Services and Administration
Behavioural Research Ethics Board

Certificate of Approval

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR	DEPARTMENT	NUMBER
Archibald, J.	Educational Studies	**B04-0608**

INSTITUTION(S) WHERE RESEARCH WILL BE CARRIED OUT

CO-INVESTIGATORS
Greenwood, Margo Lainne, Education

SPONSORING AGENCIES

TITLE
The Good Care of Indigenous Children

APPROVAL DATE	TERM (YEARS)	DOCUMENTS INCLUDED IN THIS APPROVAL
	1	July 16, 2004, Contact letter / Consent form / Questionnaire

CERTIFICATION

The protocol describing the above-named project has been reviewed by the Committee and the experimental procedures were found to be acceptable on ethical grounds for research involving human subjects.

Signature of approval
contained in original letter

Approval of the Behavioural Research Ethics Board by one of the following:

This Certificate of Approval is valid for the above term provided there is no change in the experimental procedures

330