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**Evaluating Aboriginal Curricula using a Cree-Métis
Perspective with a regard towards Indigenous
knowledge**

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Summary

There has been much development in Aboriginal curriculum guides across Turtle Island since the 1970s by education authorities. This development has been due to a need by many Aboriginal communities to decolonize their education systems. After all this development there is now a need to determine the direction this decolonization has taken and how far the process has progressed. To do this an analysis was conducted of the curriculum currently in use. Three different evaluation models were developed using an Indigenous philosophy to help assess current Aboriginal curricula in relation to an Indigenous philosophical and holistic worldview.

To this end, five subgoals were set forth:

1. define a pan-Aboriginal philosophy of Indigenous knowledge;
2. review the history of Aboriginal education;
3. determine the objectives of Aboriginal education;
4. construct multiple frameworks to assess Aboriginal curricula; and
5. analyze over 48 Aboriginal curricula currently in use by Canadian Aboriginal education authorities.

This research aims to improve the quality of education for Aboriginal peoples, in response to concerns raised by the Canadian federal government and more importantly by Aboriginal Canadians. Among the latter, multiple debates are going on about the type of education they wish for their children. Should it be integrationist, or Indigenous? Who should control the Aboriginal education system: the federal government, the provincial governments, or Aboriginal organizations (and which one and at what level)? Education is a battleground for larger political projects by both the dominant society and the dominated society. The underlying issues are power, agency, societal structures, survival, money, decolonization, and ongoing colonization. . Long-term change is needed, and the conflict will be over the nature of this change. Will it be the Western worldview or the Indigenous one?

Resume

Depuis les années 70, de nombreux changements se sont produits sur l'Ile de la Tortue concernant le curriculum des Autochtones. Ces changements sont survenus au sein des communautés des Premières Nations afin de décoloniser leur système éducatif. Mais, il est temps maintenant de dresser un bilan de la direction prise par ces systèmes afin de déterminer l'étendue du progrès. Pour ce faire, une étude a été menée sur le curriculum actuellement utilisé. Trois différents modèles d'évaluation basés sur la philosophie autochtone et une vision holistique de l'éducation ont été utilisés.

À cette fin, cinq champs de travail ont été choisis:

1. définir le savoir des Premières Nations selon la philosophie pan-autochtone
2. Réviser l'histoire de l'éducation autochtone
3. Déterminer les objectifs de l'éducation autochtone
4. Mettre sur pieds des critères d'évaluation des curricula autochtones
5. Analyser plus de 48 curricula autochtones présentement utilisés par les autorités autochtones du Canada

En réponse aux demandes du gouvernement fédéral et des autochtones du Canada, cette recherche a pour but d'améliorer la qualité de l'éducation offerte aux Premières Nations. De nombreux débats touchant le type d'éducation que les Premières Nations souhaitent offrir à leurs enfants sont présentement en cours. L'éducation se doit-elle d'être intégrationniste ou bien aborigène? Qui devrait contrôler le système éducatif: le gouvernement fédéral, le gouvernement provincial ou des organisations autochtones? L'éducation est le cheval de bataille des grands projets politiques, qu'ils soient ceux de la société dominante ou de la société dominée. Contrôle, «agency», les structures sociales, survie, argent, décolonisation et colonisation sont des éléments qui affectent l'éducation des autochtones. Un changement durable est nécessaire, mais il ne se fera pas sans quelques conflits sur la nature de ce changement. Sera-t-il occidental ou bien autochtone de nature?

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General

BIA - Bureau of Indian Affairs
CCL - Canadian Council of Learning
CMEC - Council of the Ministers of Education of Canada
CRPA - Commission Royale des Peuples Autochtones
DIAND - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (older name of INAC)
FN - First Nations
IK - Indigenous knowledge
INAC - Indian and Northern Affairs Canada
IQ - Inuit Qaujimajatuqangit
IRS - Indian Residential Schools
IRSRC - Indian Residential School Resolution Canada
MNWGE - Minister's National Working Group on Education (within INAC)
NGO - Non-governmental organization
OCED - Organisation of Cooperation and Economic Development
RCAP - Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples
TEK - Traditional environmental knowledge
TK - Traditional knowledge

Aboriginal Political Organizations

AFN - Assembly of First Nations
FNEC - First Nations Education Council
FNESC - First Nations Education Steering Committee
FSIN - Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations
Funai - Brazil's National Indian Foundation
ITK- Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami
MNC - Métis National Council
NAN - Nishnawbe Aski Nation

British Columbia Framework Agreement

CEA - Community Education Authorities
CFNEJA - Canada-First Nations Education Jurisdiction Agreement
FNEA - First Nations Education Authority
FNSA - First Nations Schools Association
IFN - Interested First Nations
PFN - Participating First Nations

Dedication

I dedicate this work to my creator, my elders, my mother. Even though she has passed on into the spirit world, she was a primordial source of encouragement for me. I would also like to thank my grandmother who has always been around to help in the raising of her two grandchildren. We have been inseparable. My wife Catherine is extremely important and has put up with the stress and heartache of a husband who is always working. The 5th Field Ambulance of Valcartier helped inadvertently pay for my night classes. It was a great honour to have served with such dedicated medical personnel fighting another forgotten war of Canada. I saw two tours go off to fight in the sandbox of Afghanistan; what commitment! Thanks also go to my father. Despite being long gone, he has always been around his children in spirit, thus providing an example of a life not to lead. Without yours' and moms' life lessons I would have never had such a burning desire to succeed. As a young boy, your lives made me face the question: What is the purpose of such a hard life? Life always seems very unjust, but when you are on top you learn to sip from the cup of victory and savour the taste.

I would like express gratitude to my professor Frederic Laugrand who encouraged me in my endeavours. A number of other teachers have also been important in my life, such as Raymond Ringuette, Louise Mathieu, Ursula Stuber, Lance Nagels, Michel Eastep, Raymond Sioui, Désirée Nazabera, Barbara Gravel, Lise Bastien, Judy Côté, Gilbert Whiteduck, Guy Niquay, William Wuttunee, Preston Manning, Eber Hampton, Dorys Mercier, Nick Cantin, Guillaume Cantin, Kathleen Borgia, Marie-Eve Roberts, Robert Cantin, Doris Pepin and, significantly, Duane R. Hendricks.

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I would like to thank the universe for taking care of destiny, for bringing life's lessons to me directly, and for pushing me, often against my wishes, into areas I would never have imagined. The universe represents all of creation and is a great mystery. So thank you Manitou.

Finally I dedicate this thesis to all Aboriginals, Métis, Nêhiyaw,¹ Status, non-Status, with treaty, without treaty, convention, without convention, Inuit, and all those in-between. The Indigenous peoples and nations of Canada can achieve far more together than alone in isolation. For even if we do not realize it, we are all united...it is even written in the constitution, and if it is written it must be true!!!

¹ Cree People

EAST: INTRODUCTION

Initial Thoughts

Working and researching in the field of Aboriginal education can be very discouraging. We see only the great needs; what is wanting and what is lacking. It is hard to distinguish the essential and get away from the superfluous.

Aboriginals come from a great diversity of environments: urban, semi-rural, and rural, woodlands, prairies, and wetlands. Many inhabit communities that are close to the dominant society's cities but still too far away. We are a diverse group of nations and peoples, but we also hold much in common. Everything we do with our lives is judged by ourselves and by others and frequently this judgement of economic and social successes is seen through the eyes of the dominant society.

We share a common collective experience that is manifested in our communal behaviours. We often succeed or fail in the Western economic system through our ability or inability to master Western educational, financial, and industrial systems. Some of us succeed, but many do not, sometimes because they actively reject that system. Even those who do succeed are not always at ease with their place in the world. I for one am not. I can handle school and often do not need much study in order to get good grades. Educational success has brought me relative financial ease: an upper middle-class lifestyle, two cars, a wife, kids, a pool, a large home, ... Nonetheless, I often question the point of it all. Would not life be much easier with only the basics? Imagine... I could be back on the prairies, on horseback, hunting the buffalo, enjoying the freedom. My wife could be preparing my moccasins, food and clothes. My children would play and learn by watching us go about our chores in and around the tipi, and they would take greater responsibility as they got older. I would fast several times a year, with multiple vision quests. I would talk with all of creation, all animals big and small, with the winds, with the earth. Unfortunately and fortunately, I strongly doubt any of this will come true.

My Uncle William Wuttunee wrote a book, *Ruffled Feathers*, back in 1971. He wished pan-Canadian Indian/Aboriginal society would wake up, stop living in the past, stop

living off government handouts, and take pride in themselves and their past. Uncle's assessment had many things I agree with, but at the same time I felt he missed an important element: the profound sense of LOSS. Loss defines the feelings of Aboriginals today. They know that their cultures have irreparably changed forever. There can be no going back (barring an unlikely disaster destroying much of Western civilization). We, as Aboriginals, are stuck in this century and in the Western political and economic system. Almost all Aboriginals have this sense of loss, even the most economically and socially successful ones.

For me, much of Western life revolves around MONEY. Where is the money to get the things I want? I may not need two cars, a large house, and a pool, but it sure is nice. Are these things at odds with a traditional way of life? Most likely, but at the same time they have become a necessity, much as the metal knife and pot were back in the 17th and 18th centuries for Aboriginals. Obviously, not everything in the West revolves around money, but it certainly is very important. One cannot do much without money.

Chapter 1. Introduction and Method

There does not exist a real education system for Aboriginals. We have agreements by which the Federal government gives money to Aboriginal communities and they then do their own thing. But there exists no national standards, no specific curriculum, no teaching certificate is required. All the children across Canada are afforded the protection of an Education Act. The only children who have no protection, are the First Nations children living on Reserve.

Jim Prentice, September 27, 2006

Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the
Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

The Minister of INAC has spelled out his vision of what Canadian Aboriginals need in education. While there is much to agree with, at the same time I have reservations about the actual standards to be put in place. Whose standards will they be? Nor is it true that the education system for Aboriginals is not real. Too often words are spoken quickly without thought or reflection. Prentice is referring to the formal education system, which in his eyes should follow a Western industrial model. Any model developed or used by Aboriginals is therefore not “real.” Many Aboriginal communities, such as Kanehsatake, the Québec Woodlands Cree, the St’át’imc people, and other Aboriginal groups, have developed and are attempting to develop their own school systems and curricula. These curricula are diverse, with some being very extensively developed and others limited in scope. Many are successful and others less so. What matters is what students should know and, consequently, what they should learn in Aboriginal schools.

Many well meaning researchers and practitioners are developing and pushing new curriculum programs in the belief that such programs meet the needs of their target audience and are in the “best interest of the learners.” There still exists, though, a feeling among Aboriginals that “education is a threat to Native cultures and traditions” (Birchard, 2006, 46). For Tunison, this feeling has led to questioning of the value and need to conduct research on Aboriginal education and is thus inhibiting the potential growth and improvement that could result from examining more closely education issues (2007, 6).

Formal education is composed of many elements. A crucial part and often the most important one is the educational program or curriculum. The curriculum is very important in education; it is the ‘what’ of education. A key element is the definition of the course objectives, which is often expressed in terms of educational outcomes and normally includes the assessment philosophy for the program. These outcomes and assessments are often grouped into various sections, and the curriculum thus comprises a collection of such sections, each corresponding to a specific part of the formal program (Whitson, 2007).

Through the use of a critically constructive approach based in Aboriginal anthropology, I will address issues raised by different political authorities in Canada, and I will do so largely from a pan-Aboriginal holistic worldview. Often the modern Western worldview seems to leave little room for the Aboriginal worldview while furthermore denying its religious² nature and failing to recognize its validity and possible contributions (Deloria, 2006, xviii, 201).

An Aboriginal worldview describes a holistic cumulative unique world experience(s) which contains a fluid integral sense of existence and provides a framework for generating, sustaining, and applying knowledge about the physical and metaphysical universe. It may be specific to an individual, family, group, people, tribe, or nation and may be passed down over several millennia.

The term apparently comes from German and is translated as *Weltanschauung* (Descola, 2005, 282). Jacques Galinier rejects it as not corresponding to Mesoamerican systems of thought and prefers the terms understanding or conception. It is felt that worldview in the Western sense limits the complete understanding of Aboriginal cultures (1999; 101-121). I will nonetheless use this term, but with an Aboriginal understanding that comes from such Aboriginal philosophers as Cajete, Battiste, Hampton, Adams, Littlebear, and Deloria.

² Religion refers to an organized set of rules or conventions that allows us to experience a spiritual understanding of a person’s meta-physical existence. The two terms are intertwined, but may also be exclusive.

I will particularly focus on the Aboriginal vision of science and spirituality espoused by Gregory Cajete (1994, 42) and Vine Deloria Jr and juxtapose it with the Western scientific worldview. Science is often considered to be an objective and a secular undertaking, devoid of God, spirituality, and metaphysics, i.e., that which cannot be “proven or seen.” For instance, the French scientist Étienne Klein (2008) sees science as objective knowledge that plays “the role of an acid, dissolving progressively various beliefs taught by natural authorities” but “does not have any values.” At the same time, Klein acknowledges that science is not devoid of sense. There exists a need to “join the love of the world to its comprehension” and, to this end, we must have “urgent collaboration between philosophy and science” (Moreault 2009, A8). Science has been traditionally a search for knowledge, a desire to understand the world surrounding the individual and the greater community. In this, Aboriginals and Westerners have great similarities. Neither worldview is perfect but both facilitate a search for the “truth.” In the following pages, I will argue for a co-existence of the two approaches.

History is therefore never truly impartial: There is always some underlying objective. It is partial, despite protests to the contrary, and remains inevitably so – which is yet another form of partiality.

Claude Lévi-Strauss, *La pensée sauvage*, 1962

There is a cultural mismatch between the values and philosophy of Western science and the values and philosophy held by many Aboriginal people and communities. It will thus be difficult to increase Aboriginal participation in education and the Western industrial polity. As explained by Niel Haggan, the latter see people, landscapes, and life resources as a spiritual whole. In contrast, Western science seeks greater understanding by breaking apart the whole and analyzing it in its smallest parts (Cajete, 1994, 75-8; Deloria, 1992, 64; Haggan, Brignall, Pewacock & Daniel, 2002). Haggan also argues for bringing the two approaches together to enhance mutual understanding (2002).

Bruno Latour also criticizes Western science and its supposed objectivity. It is reputed to be detached from value judgements, but when a new discovery is made we not only look

at the facts, but also consider who made the discovery, where he or she is from, where he or she works, what language he or she works in, his or her background, and so on. These elements will often affect the degree of acceptance of the discovery (1995, 13-4). A scientist exists not in a vacuum, but within a society and, as such, has value judgements. For Latour the scientist is not above society, but within. A multitude of other factors also come into play: ability to get a grant, to obtain equipment, to do research, to present arguments, to publish, and to gain recognition. A scientist must push the boundaries, but not too far (p 34-5). For Latour, science functions much as capitalism. A scientist frequently pursues research with ideals that may be noble (p 37), but often it brings personal gain such as recognition and grants. When a profit-oriented scientist abandons an avenue of research it is not because it is no longer worthwhile, but because it will not bring any further gain to the researcher (p 38). Finally for Latour, scientists often lack respect for the political. They fail to realize that they are doing the same type of work as politicians do. Both groups speak for interests, forces, power, people, and players with very few differences (p 56). Scientists make value judgements based upon their society, upbringing, education, and so on... value judgements based on a distinct cosmology and morality. Quoting the 16th century French writer Francois Rabelais, Latour wrote that “science sans conscience n’est que ruine de l’âme” (1995, 71).

On a broader level, differences in approach must be recognized. The Western scientific approach of breaking a problem down to its smallest components is a tempting method to use. Many Aboriginal thinkers (Hampton, 1993; Little Bear, 2000; Kovach, 2009), however, consider it to be the antithesis of Aboriginal thought (Cajete, 1994, 12-3). They advocate a holistic approach, a larger picture based on rationality and also on the metaphysical. They contend that their philosophy is holistic: people, landscapes, and life resources constitute a spiritual whole (CCL, 2007).

Often when writers, especially Aboriginal ones, are dealing with issues that are colonial in nature, there is a tendency to separate Western and Indigenous cultures into two groups: the preverbal “us versus them” mentality. Raymond Sioui (Wendat) of the First Nation Education Council felt I should focus more on the Indigenous aspect and not

waste time juxtaposing the two worldviews (personal communication, 15 April 2007). This advice has helped direct some of my criticisms. At the same time, it is almost impossible not to place the two worldviews side-by-side, because they have co-existed for the past 500 years. Each has been influenced by the other. As Hall says, in South and North America the result has been the creation of Creole societies, which in turn have influenced the rest of the Western polity (2003, 21). Needless to say, Aboriginal culture has been affected by the Western worldview.

This comparison will require some discussion of terminology. The use of either 'Indian' or 'Aboriginal' is a hard one. Aboriginal people in Canada are peoples recognized in the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982, sections 25 and 35 as Indians, Métis, and Inuit. The term may also include self-identified Aboriginal People who live within Canada but have chosen not to accept the extinction of their sovereignty rights, their Aboriginal title, or simply their right to exist as Aboriginals. Such individuals assert that their sovereign rights have not been extinguished and point to the Royal Proclamation of 1763. The Royal Proclamation is also mentioned in the Canadian Constitution Act, 1982, Section 25.

The term 'Indian' refers to a specific group within the larger Aboriginal grouping who are either status or non-status, with or without treaty, with or without reserves, urban or rural, and recognized by the federal government and/or by First Nations governments. This term makes many people uncomfortable in Canada, with some of them feeling it to be racist and colonial. Others, such as Howard Adams, see the term 'First Nations' as political, demeaning, polarizing, and destructive of solidarity among Canadian Aboriginals (1999, 55). They see it as being colonial in nature and destructive of Aboriginal solidarity because it places some before others, thereby creating a hierarchy of political power (Foucault, 1977). The term 'Aboriginal' seems to me the most inclusive one. By using this term, I feel I am continuing work begun in the 1960s with the National Indian Council, which attempted to represent all Aboriginals across Canada without regard to their status (personal communication William Wuttunee (Cree), September 13,

2009). While this goal still exists, it has been modified and co-opted by the Canadian state for political reasons (Adams, 1999).

This dissertation is based on pan-Aboriginal essentialism. Many scholars criticize essentialist theories of identity for treating identity/race as a stable and homogenous construct (McCarthy & Crichlow, 1993, xviii). Essentialism is seen by many Western scientists as a terrible under-theorization of identity, its complexities, and its contradictions. They reject reducing membership within a specific group to an inventory of characteristics, saying this view is, at best, inaccurate and, at worst, discriminatory.

Science, however, does not exist in a vacuum. A political aspect holds great sway (Latour, 1997, 11; 1995, 56). Many critics of essentialism promote a discourse of democracy, power, social justice, and historical memory (McLaren & Giroux, 1997, 17). Within these ideas is a failure to recognize the need for decolonization. The cart is put before the Red River ox. Consecutive (Canadian) governments have imposed a definition of what it is to be Aboriginal and Indian through laws that remove agency and identity from vast numbers of people. This has forced Aboriginals to engage in costly and time-consuming battles that pit us against them (Grande, 2004, 93).

Non-essentialist theories blur the lines of race and identity. The contradiction is that this discourse says we are all different while also saying we are all identical with the same human rights. For many Aboriginal scholars this theory promotes a continuing colonization of Aboriginal identity and Aboriginals by the Western Canadian polity. Until there is a certain “coming together” (personal communication William Wuttunee (Cree), September 13, 2009) it will be very difficult if not impossible to decolonize the lives of Aboriginals. Remember, most Aboriginals live in urban areas. They make up large classes of people who may have minimal contact with a specific tribal area. Often they see themselves in a broader manner, being specific to a tribe, but also part of an Aboriginal proletariat that shares many of the same identity issues. For too long, Aboriginal contemporary identity (as displayed at the 2010 Vancouver Olympics) has

been controlled by “whitestream forces” within homogenizing global capitalism (Grande, 2004, 95).

This dissertation takes a pan-Aboriginal approach, using an emerging subfield of Indigenous anthropology based principally on the work of many Aboriginal scholars. It is consistent with views long held by numerous Aboriginals within and outside academia such as Deloria, Wildcat, Little Bear, Adams. It should be remembered that most Aboriginals do not participate in academia, except as subjects for studies and reports by non-Aboriginals, who generally support and understand the desire for Indigenous agency. Many Aboriginal scholars believe that “warrior scholars” (Alfred, 2004, 88) must use all possible disciplines holistically while conducting their research (Mihesuah & Wilson, 2004) in order to decolonize Indigenous knowledge.

Not all Aboriginals may share this inclusive essentialism. Many ignore the positions of Aboriginal intellectuals and most certainly feel unconcerned. One example is the supposed importance of spirituality in the pan-Aboriginal worldview. In fact, some real-life Aboriginals have a secular, or even totally materialistic (non-metaphysical) worldview or even question the idea of the creator as often portrayed in the popular media (William Wuttunee, personal communication, June 17, 2006). Nonetheless, pan-Indigenism is a potentially strong foundation for a unified effort to develop curricula that would suit most Aboriginals.³

This research may also be relevant to educational anthropology. Anne-Pascale Targé describes George Spindler the founder of educational anthropology (2005, 17), who sees this field as being concerned with the process of cultural transmission. For Spindler, cultural transmission includes initiations, rituals of passage, learning, and schools. It is a “calculated intervention in the learning process” (Spindler, 1987, 153).

³ While not all Aboriginal people will approve the idea of the pan-Aboriginal approach, they may find it somewhat interesting to see what various groups across Turtle Island are doing in the field of curriculum development.

For Targé, educational anthropologists pay too little attention to all of the learning that happens throughout a person's life, but are only interested in the results of deliberate interventions (2005, 17). As well Levinson and Holland feel that educational anthropologists tend to take the effects of schooling for granted by only looking at the adult forms of knowledge transmission and ignoring what is going on in schools (1996, 20). Aboriginals see learning as lifelong and, as such, all educational aspects of a lifetime are important. Deliberate interventions nonetheless do matter in the transmission of culture to students. The educational curriculum is extremely important because it conveys official learning to be transmitted to all students, regardless of their prior beliefs and different backgrounds. There is also a null or hidden curriculum within schools, but it will be for another thesis. Students will spend hours in school learning the official deliberate curriculum. The curriculum does affect students and their ability to succeed and advance in school.

Targé also considers culture clash to be a key topic in educational anthropology because it concerns "misunderstandings" in education (2005, 19). Other key topics are power, survival, and the structural violence in school systems. Many researchers may be taking paths that have some interest but do not adequately reflect the realities underlying the structure of schooling and education (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 2).

Much like Oscar Kawagley, this dissertation is written from the perspective of an urban Franco-British-Cree-Métis researcher who feels that specific philosophical generalizations can be made for many cultures. These generalizations do not characterize all and everything, but simply offer a means of further exploration, a window into differing worlds. At the same time, many cultures share numerous characteristics. In the Creole West (Hall, 2003) many ideas, practices, and artefacts have been derived from Indigenous peoples around the globe. Many have also moved in the opposite direction⁴ (Hall, 2003, 62-5; Kawagley, 1995, 3).

⁴ Lévi-Strauss in his *Introduction to a Science of Mythology* a work concerning the oral traditions of Indigenous peoples notes that "so many features of French folklore, transmitted orally to the Indians by Canadian trappers, came to occupy a privileged place" in the storytelling of his Aboriginal subjects (1981, 23).

The title of this dissertation has undergone a number of changes. The original long winded title was *Current Curricula Best Practise Developments in Indian Education as Seen Through the Lens of the First Nations Religious World View*. This was eventually changed to *Current Curricula Best Practise Developments in Aboriginal Education as Seen Through the Lens of the Indigenous World View* and then to *Evaluating Aboriginal Curricula using a Pan-Indigenous Worldview and a Cree-Métis Perspective* and finally *Evaluating Aboriginal Curricula using a Cree-Métis Perspective with a regard towards Indigenous knowledge*. These changes show the evolution of my thinking and the influences of others upon my work. The evolution of the title is an attempt to convey in precise words what is the essential of my thought. There are three principal ideas in the title:

1. Evaluating Aboriginal Curricula;
2. my Cree-Métis Perspective; and
3. Indigenous knowledge.

My principal goal is to study Aboriginal curricula. It has been suggested to replace the words Aboriginal with First Nations, but I feel this misrepresents the diversity of those being served (students, families, communities and all our relations) by the curricula studied in this dissertation. For instance many provinces make no distinction between the various Aboriginal nations because they are mandated to serve this great diversity. Also many provinces wish to be inclusive of Métis and Inuit peoples. I approach this aspect from an inclusive frame of mind grounded in the legal document of the Canadian Constitution. This is not the moment to address the Canadian Constitution, but it is a central document for Aboriginal rights in Canada.

The second aspect is who am I? It would be another misrepresentation in my research to say that my perspective is a pan-Aboriginal perspective. I do not speak for others, but give my subjective opinion based on my life's experience. While I consider myself to be Aboriginal; at the same time more specifically, I am of mixed heritage which can be

broken down into Cree and Métis. It is from this perspective and understanding that I approach this work.

I am not advocating no objectivity.⁵ This ideal, so looked for in Western science, can never truly exist. Thought and understanding are wholly based in the accumulated cultural context of any writer. This research is an attempt to further the use of Indigenous knowledge in Aboriginal education and thus to promote the decolonization and affirmation of Indigenous peoples across Turtle Island (Hall, 2003, 21-55). While not pretending to be objective, it hopefully will allow for a deeper understanding of Aboriginal curricula and its relation to a pan-Aboriginal worldview.

The most important aspect of this research is Aboriginal philosophy or Indigenous knowledge. There are already too many studies which use a non-Indigenous philosophy as their basis. What is needed are tools which allow Aboriginals (if they so desire) the ability to assess the types of education being taught to Aboriginal children. Without Indigenous knowledge there is no reason to complete this research because you are essentially saying that all Aboriginals must integrate and assimilate into the Western body politic. If this was the case there is no need for Aboriginal based curricula and thus no need for any assessment of those curricula.

Again, this is not a classical anthropological research project, but one that will use many different sources with a focus on Aboriginal philosophers and their understandings and their specific pan-Aboriginal worldview.

1.1 Research Methodology: Procedure and Questions

⁵ Lévi-Strauss as quoted in Poirier writes that there exists “limitations of a system of thought dominant among Western cultures, based...on a dubious but no less absolute notion of “objectivity” the certitude of a world-in-itself underlying this notion, and the correlated view of world devoid of spirit and subjectivity” (Poirier, 2004). Multiple types of “experience and sensory perception received as true on the basis of our respective cultural objectivity and value laden ontologies.” Overing, as quoted by Poirier, also says, “one truth does not go against the truth of another” as both will increase the diversity and depth of knowledge and experience in the universe (Poirier, 2004, 60).

The information for this research comes from a number of sources, primarily written studies, governmental reports, NGOs, books, journals, newspapers, interviews in 3 communities, interviews with urban Aboriginals, questionnaires, websites, curriculum guides, and recorded oral accounts in the public domain, including published and non-published literature from American, Canadian, Australian, and New Zealand sources with a principal focus on Canadian sources.

The goal was to use primarily Aboriginal sources. Some elements are shared among different Indigenous peoples, as seen in my personal Cree-Métis perspective. This aspect will be dealt with later in this dissertation. The use of primarily Aboriginal sources does not imply that non-Aboriginal researchers and writers have no interesting or profound knowledge of Indigenous peoples. Rather, Aboriginals are simply better situated to talk about Aboriginal education. I nonetheless cite non-Aboriginal authors extensively, many of them having valuable information about Aboriginals. Included throughout are various interviews with Aboriginal educators. This direct information gathering from subjects (Aboriginal people) builds on the ample written information that currently exists. Interviews were conducted in Kitzigan Zibi, Manawan, and Wendake as well as by telephone with various informants across Canada. Informal interviews were started in 2007 with the bulk of formal interviews being in 2009 for a total of 11 interviews.

These interviews offer direct experience in Aboriginal education. While books and other written sources are important, there is great value in being able to have direct contact with people in the field. Such fieldwork fleshes out the trail of written information. These interviews complement the already ample written record, while allowing researchers like myself to fill in the missing pieces.

The interviewees were chosen for their experience and their knowledge of Aboriginal education. Others were chosen because they had previously tried to influence the course of educational history. Their participation was therefore primordial to set the record straight. Out of the original 11 interviews 4 were chosen for more extensive study. These interviews provided a range of opinions that reflected their commitment, understanding

and insight into First Nation education and to education in general. Excerpts from the interviews are used throughout the dissertation according to their pertinence of the matters at hand.

Some written information is certainly of value to this research and its attempt to articulate a new matrix (of Aboriginal knowledge) in curriculum evaluation. While interviews are important, too often this kind of fieldwork has become an end in itself. We need ever new information, new informants, spending too much valuable time never getting to decolonization. The principal goal here was to draw on the existing Indigenous worldview in developing curricula for our youth.

This research must be made available to those who may benefit the most. For this reason, the research was primarily conducted and written in English. English is used by many nations, tribes, and communities across Turtle Island (North America). It will be useful to the degree that it can be understood by those in decision-making positions. Accessibility and wide dissemination will be all the more necessary because many Aboriginal communities still use many forms of consensual decision making.

Research Objective: This research will help determine the philosophies of pan-Aboriginal education, establish a general history of Aboriginal education, offer an inventory of objectives for Aboriginal curricula, develop several Aboriginal curriculum evaluation frameworks, and verify whether the curricula are in keeping with an Indigenous philosophical and holistic worldview.⁶

To this end, five holistic fundamentals were set forth:

1. The pan-Aboriginal philosophy of Indigenous knowledge;
2. The history of Aboriginal education;
3. The objectives of pan-Aboriginal education;
4. Multiple frameworks for assessment of Aboriginal curricula; and

⁶ Each individual Aboriginal community is sovereign in its affairs and has a specific view of the world and science. Nonetheless, many elements are shared by many Aboriginals on Turtle Island. If there were no shared ways of knowledge, why do national organizations like the Assembly of First Nations exist?

5. An analysis of over 48 Aboriginal curricula, currently in use by Canadian Aboriginal education authorities.

This dissertation has six principal sections, in keeping with the medicine wheel of Cree culture.⁷ These six sections cover the five fundamentals, which are nonetheless often treated outside any specific section of the medicine wheel. The conception is instead holistic in which objectives continually reappear and are interconnected to other objectives. There remains, however, some concordance with the medicine wheel. The medicine wheel concept and the associated philosophy of circularity will be further explained in the introduction and throughout the dissertation.

It is important to do research for Aboriginals, by Aboriginals, and in an Aboriginal manner (Wilson, 2008). This dissertation does not follow a traditional Western format, which is often linear, but instead attempts to use a pan-Aboriginal circular holistic thought structure (Sioui, 1999). This circular way of viewing the world will be in evidence throughout and will be further explained and developed.

Not all Aboriginals from Turtle Island adhere to this circular thought process and not all Aboriginal nations easily recognize themselves within this worldview. But many do see themselves as having a specific worldview. This concept and its underlying foundations will be explored in greater detail.

Medicine Wheel

1. The East: An Introduction
2. The South: Indigenous Knowledge

⁷ The Cree medicine wheel is divided into four equal sections with two additional sections for the heavens and the earth. Eber Hampton has elaborated on this structure in his work (Hampton, 1995, 16). While other structures exist, this is the one that will be used here. The CCL has developed a number of educational models, with the Inuit having four types of well-being, the Métis four types of leaves, and the First Nations the traditional medicine wheel (cf. sections 3.8.1, 3.8.2, 3.8.3 for more information). The model is divided into 6 sections based on the medicine wheel, is a very personal attempt to recreate an organizing representation that allows me to feel comfortable in the exploration of this topic.

3. The West: Curriculum, the New Buffalo
4. The North: Curriculum Evaluation
5. The Heavens: The Spirit
6. Mother Earth: The Foundation

1.1.1 The East: An Introduction

The East: An Introduction is the opening salvo for this research. It presents the reasoning and conceptualization behind this research, being subdivided into the introduction, initial thoughts, and research questions.

1.1.2 The South: Indigenous Knowledge

The second section will present the general philosophy of pan-Aboriginal education and set forth the objectives of Indigenous knowledge as seen through an Aboriginal holistic worldview. To do this, we will explore the historical and philosophical currents of Aboriginal education principally through the works of Indigenous writers from the Americas. These historical and philosophical foundations will be further used to view and study the curricula of Aboriginal education currently in use.

This section will further explore the dichotomy between Western educational systems, and the very different Aboriginal cultural outlooks (Indigenous knowledge), the differences between secularism, spirituality, and religion in both worldviews, and their differences of place and of power.⁸ Many variables affect Aboriginal education and will be considered, such as economics, dominant cultural influences, bureaucracy, pan-Indianism, nationalism, family, community, politics, traditions, governmental funding, jurisdiction, assimilation, integrationism, decolonization, colonization, society's structure, structural violence, power, money, knowledge transmission, international agreements, traditionalism and jurisdiction.

⁸ Theologian Vine Deloria Jr. believes that power and place are very important to Indian education, power being the living energy that inhabits and composes the universe and place being the relationship of things to each other (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, 21).

As an example of one variable among many within an Aboriginal holistic worldview, jurisdiction has played an important role in curriculum development. What principal developments in the courts, laws, and financing have affected Aboriginal education in Canada and the international system? We need to understand these developments and their effects on educational outcomes and possible ways of looking at jurisdictional confrontation over education on Turtle Island.

While the aim is not to study exclusively the effects of jurisdiction, this variable does affect Aboriginal education. This section offers a brief overview of Aboriginal education and the influences on it.

1.1.3 The West: Curriculum the New Buffalo

This section will explore in more detail the curricula of Aboriginal education, the purpose of school secularism and its effect on Aboriginal philosophy, curriculum structures, curriculum objectives, Aboriginal-developed curriculum structures such as *Aboriginal Education sui generis* or *mawitowinsiwini*,⁹ and the Canadian Council for Learning Inuit, Métis and First Nation Lifelong Learning Models.

1.1.4 The North: Curriculum Evaluation

This section will explore the curricula that Aboriginal education authorities use in Canada and evaluate whether current curricula accurately reflect a pan-Aboriginal metaphysical (religious¹⁰) worldview. This section uses three evaluation instruments. The curricula

⁹ Cree for “seeking life” and for “life’s sake” developed by Marie Battiste (2002).

¹⁰ When Jesus was speaking to a woman at a well, she said to him, "I see that you are a prophet. Our ancestors worshipped on this mountain, but you say that the place where people must worship is in Jerusalem." This woman was focused on religious tradition and practice. Jesus answered her, "...The hour is coming, and is now here, when the true worshippers will worship the Father in spirit and in truth, for the Father seeks such as these to worship him" (John 4: 19-20, 23-24 NRSV).

come from elementary and secondary schools. Even though learning should be lifelong, evaluating adult curricula is too great a task for this type of study.

These elementary and secondary curricula will be evaluated to classify them as Western curricula, as culturally grafted curricula with a Western worldview (Snow, 1977), as hybrid curricula, as culturally grafted curricula with an Aboriginal worldview, or as Aboriginal-education-based-on-Indigenous-knowledge curricula (Hampton, 1993).

Unfortunately, there are few evaluations by Aboriginal researchers or even non-Aboriginal researchers of curricula in current use by Aboriginals. Since Aboriginal education came under government control in the 1970s, many Indigenous education professionals have taken interest in developing theoretical frameworks that best express traditional knowledge and understanding (Eber Hampton, personal communication, January 24, 2007). Much if not most curricula come from various sources and are imposed on band councils by the federal government in exchange for funding. A number of curricula, however, have Indigenous origins. Many have been developed within the past 15 years and every year more are being developed. They range widely in quality. Some have been well researched and others poorly conceived (Tunison, 2007, 18).

In 2004, Donald Bell reviewed ten Aboriginal schools in Canada and presented some of these educational success stories. At the same time, there still existed major multifaceted and complex challenges for each of these schools. Bell called for:

Jesus' response is interesting because he, a Jewish religious man, seems to have emphasized what is *spiritual* rather than what is *religious*. He indicated that the deeper reality of religion is spirituality. To understand this in another way, consider the two words *religion* and *spiritual*. The word *religion* in Latin actually refers to piety and to binding. The word *spiritual* comes from the Latin word *spiritus* and refers to the breath or breathing. You are, first and foremost, spiritual. Becoming *religious*—practising piety—is a result of binding ourselves to the spiritual in certain and various ways.

There are often questions and debates among First Nation as to whether they are spiritual or religious. Many people out there are spiritual and yet not religious and others are vice-versa. But what does it mean to be religious? When most people use the word, they are speaking of organized or institutional religion, meaning groups who have incorporated themselves into a recognizable institutional entity under the laws of this country. By 'religion,' I mean the centre of a religious experience based on a set of beliefs and rituals that may be unique or part of an institutional setting that shapes the values of a person's worldview and interactions.

1. Governance structures that include partnerships with other school districts (provincial and band schools);
2. Funding equity from the federal government;
3. A focus on language and literacy that retains both traditional languages and cultures;
4. Working conditions that attract quality teachers;
5. Attention to overcoming transition problems; and
6. Rigorous and relevant educational curricula, programs, and teaching materials (taken from Bell, 2004).

These recommendations make it all the more necessary to evaluate curricula from a pan-Aboriginal perspective.

According to the Organisation for Cooperation and Economic Development (OCED), a curriculum assessment system should help teaching and learning: it should “actively ~~regulate~~ [improve]¹¹ the ~~system~~ [relationships]¹² and educational processes” (Quoted from the White Paper taken from OCED, 1993, 80). The OCED quote has been modified because the words ‘regulation’ and ‘system’ do not adequately reflect Aboriginal philosophy. Those words have been replaced by ‘improve’ and ‘relationships.’ Assessment admittedly has an implied meaning of regulation; the Western world and its education systems seem very inclined towards national standards, centralization, and national assessment with imposed standards that all students and educational institutions must achieve (OCED, 1993).

The West often evaluates curricula in order to impose standards and centralization (OCED, 1993). The use of curricula within the West can be described in behaviourist

¹¹ These words have been modified from the original quote to show the difference between a hierarchical Western system of education and an Indigenous one. Aboriginals are traditionally seen as very independent individuals (Newman, 1998, 173, 227) and they often view governmental regulations and control with mistrust. Jean-Guy Goulet points out that the Dene “deeply respected one another’s autonomy (1998, 109).

¹² Relationships are an important part of many Indigenous worldviews (Deloria, 1991). The world is seen as one whole whereby all things (including human, animals, elements, and even future generations) have inherent positive rights of interaction and responsibility to each other and to themselves (Cajete, 2000, 79). Often systems and relationships in the Western worldview are about control, procedure, and administration and are frequently impersonal.

terms: the student is a “black box” and the teacher shapes the student’s behaviour with an input/output model (Romiszowski, 1993, 166). The goal is to harmonize the student with the Western worldview and to enable him or her to function in a Western cosmology. Centralization ensures compliance with standards throughout society and minimal deviation from the Western tradition (Gatto, 2003, 193-4).

In Aboriginal communities, this ideal of centralization is not sought after and is frequently an antithesis to their philosophical worldview. For instance, the First Nations Education Council, which represents 22 First Nation communities in Quebec, is often very careful not to be seen imposing standards on member schools or communities. This work holds the same premise; that all Aboriginals have the right to implement the type of education or curriculum that they feel best suits their individual nations and ensures their greatest agency.¹³ Within many Aboriginal communities, regulation by higher authorities presents difficulties on a conceptual level due to: 1) a traditional philosophy of individual and community freedom; and 2) issues related to sovereignty. Aboriginal nations have been fighting for their sovereignty for many years and any perceived attempts to curtail that sovereignty, no matter how minor, causes conflict (personal communication with Raymond Sioui, April 15, 2007). This research is an effort to create a collective Aboriginal foundation upon which to assess individually and collectively Aboriginal work in curriculum development. In no way is the intent to impose a unique way of teaching, since every community and nation is unique, but simply a means to inform many different education authorities what has been done in this field.

The North section of this study was initially based upon work completed by Marie Battiste in 2002 and her listing of current curricula used in Aboriginal education. The primary sources have generally been obtained from provincial departments of education. Also, a few curricula have been obtained from different Aboriginal education organizations and tribal councils across Canada.

¹³ Agency is the capacity of an agent (human, animal, spiritual) to act in the universe. Kockelman sees agency in as two sided with flexibility and accountability, on one side and knowledge and power, on the other. “Agency might initially be understood as the relatively flexible wielding of means toward ends” (Kockelman, 2007).

The fourth section will also present curricula that have been evaluated according to Western models, i.e., culturally grafted curricula with a Western worldview, hybrid curricula, culturally grafted curricula with an Aboriginal worldview and, finally, Aboriginal-education-based-on Indigenous-knowledge curricula. There will be a description of each curriculum, and how it is conceptualized. Also, a quantitative section in Appendix VI will provide a means to measure the effectiveness of a curriculum, its philosophy, and how it should be classified among the models just mentioned.

There are three extended evaluations of some of the most complete curricula that seem to have the greatest amount of Aboriginal philosophical characteristics:

- a) Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs (Section 4.4.3.1);
- b) Dene Kede Curriculum (Section 4.4.7.2); and
- c) Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12 (Section 4.4.7.3).

1.1.4.1 Evaluation Instruments

The evaluation instruments are based on the ideas of Western education specialists, such as the Tyler's Objectives-Centered (Behaviourist) Rationale, the Stufflebeam's Context-Input-Process-Product Model, the Scriven's Goal-Free Model, the Stake Responsive Model, and Aboriginal Evaluation Models

The evaluation is divided into five sections. The first section is qualitative in nature and assesses 48 Aboriginal curricula. The final four sections use a quantitative method where all the qualitative data are assigned values from 1 to 9. These four evaluation instruments are described in the *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework*, the *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework* and the *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework* (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2006, 312). The final section is the

General Results, where the data from the previous frameworks are assigned values and compared to the Curriculum Evaluation Models.

Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework

The *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework* asks questions that reflect a pan-Aboriginal philosophy. The questions (ref Appendix VII) are a means to evaluate curricula in use by Aboriginal education authorities. They were developed from the material in the Indigenous knowledge section of this dissertation and I believe they best represent the pan-Aboriginal philosophy.¹⁴ These questions will allow us to assign the curricula their rightful place within the circle of learning. They will also determine the agency of the curricula according to the above models (developed from Hampton, 1993; Battiste 2002; Cajete, 2000, 64; CCL, 2006). The intent of this research is not to favour any outcome or individual curriculum, but simply to provide those who work in Aboriginal education with a tool to evaluate the foundations of the educational systems that supposedly serve Aboriginals.

The evaluation instrument *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework* contains 21 questions and is quantitative in nature. A qualitative description of each curriculum is offered in the section *Curriculum Evaluation*. A qualitative method would be preferable, but education professionals who directly influence the development of Aboriginal curricula often lack time to read new research. Donald Bell's 2004 study *Sharing Our Success: Ten Case Studies in Aboriginal Learning* is a case in point. It was used as assessment material for the hiring of new employees at the First Nations Education Council, but once they were on the job multiple responsibilities and lack of time did not allow for professional development. Even if one does review the literature it is often difficult to share the information with school representatives, even those who might be available for such information sessions. Thus, a combined quantitative and qualitative

¹⁴ This is not to say that all Aboriginal nations will feel well represented, but rather that the questions should make it possible to compare curricula from different sources.

approach is best to ensure a wider impact for this research among education professionals, particularly those who are actually developing curricula.

On a numbered grid the responses to each question are numbered from 1 to 9. The higher the number, the closer the curriculum is to Aboriginal-education-based-on-Indigenous-Knowledge curricula, the lower the number the closer the curriculum is to Western curricula. The scores for each individual question are added and divided by the number of questions, to allow some comparison among curricula.

Originally, a number system of 1 to 5 was to be used. After verification and testing, 1 to 5 was not found to be precise enough. It was also suggested that numbering from 1 to 100 be used to facilitate percentage calculation. Unfortunately, such numbering was too precise and unwieldy. Would 50 really be different from 51? Numbering from 1 to 9 was informative, while allowing a degree of precision that 1 to 5 could not provide.

Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework

After having assessed the philosophy of the curricula, it is important to assess their effectiveness by using the *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework*. There are seven characteristics: Explicit; Coherent; Dynamic; Practical; Comprehensive; Coherent Organization; and Manageable (Carr and Harris, 2001). Once there is information about what is specifically being taught (objectives), a general assessment should determine whether the curriculum is fulfilling its stated obligations of being understandable and implementable (Carr and Harris, 2001). On a numbered grid responses to each question are numbered from 1 to 9. The higher the number the more completely the curriculum fulfills the desired characteristics. The lower the number the less the curriculum fulfills the desired characteristics. The scores for each individual question are added and divided by the number of questions.

Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework

The *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework* is a means to evaluate the processes (structure) in the curriculum and help determine whether the curriculum is written in such a manner that the stated educative objectives are attained. It uses a quantitative method similar to the preceding one. Once again the structure and known objectives of each curriculum are different. This is an evaluation of the structure and its effectiveness in relation to each curriculum's individual objectives

General Results

The final section is the General Results. It is a quantitative method whereby all the quantitative data from the *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework*, *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework* and *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework* are added together and weighted 60%, 20%, and 20% respectively. This information provides a yardstick with which to compare different curricula and allow each curriculum to be situated in relation to other curricula. Not all evaluation instruments have been given equal weight. Since the principal objective is to evaluate a curriculum in relation to a curriculum evaluation model, it was felt that the most important aspect is not the characteristics and objectives attainment, but the Aboriginal philosophy.

The *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework*, *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework*, and *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework* are all interconnected and evaluate the success of the curriculum in teaching the determined objectives. If the objectives are very Western in nature, it may be difficult to attain them with an ill-conceived structure and objectives attainment. Conversely, if the worldview is Aboriginal, the objectives will be met with more success.

The evaluation instruments have been designed for use in a cyclical manner, but a linear approach is not precluded. There may be great similarities between Western and

traditional Aboriginal curricula, as if the two meet in a circle. Leah Abayao, however, finds a dichotomy between these two important concepts of modernity and tradition (2006, 181).

1.1.4.2 Questionnaire

A letter was sent to each of the 631 individual reserves across Canada with a short questionnaire on the types of curriculum in use. A very small number of communities responded. Almost all of them indicated that they had not developed any extensive Aboriginal-specific general curriculum that they could share. Only whole samples of the most complete curricula from each region were to be evaluated and invariably this material was principally provincially developed. The subject of the questionnaire will be treated in greater detail in the section North: Curriculum Evaluation. Ethical issues are also addressed in Section 1.2.

1.1.5 The Heavens: The Spirit, A Conclusion

This section presents the conclusions and will point to future areas of research that could be of interest. It will also suggest possible directions for Aboriginal curricula and education.

1.1.6 Mother Earth: The Foundation

This final section is the foundation of this dissertation. It will present the references used for this research, including all the writings, curricula, and communications (principally by Aboriginal authors) that have enabled me to present a truly Aboriginal philosophical understanding of Aboriginal educational programs.

1.2 Ethical Considerations

In undertaking this research, I have often questioned myself about my motives. I have questioned my understandings of the traditional teachings and the appropriateness of what I am writing. I pray that it will advance and help all Aboriginal peoples in appropriating an education system for themselves. One question has surfaced since I began engaging in critical ethnographical approaches and is now in the foreground at all times: Will the culture and the people be hurt by this research, and to what extent will an anthropological approach be useful? These questions lead to others: How are culture and the people involved, changed, or transformed by my engaging in this work? Does the transformation honour the traditions, the people, and the ancestors? Will the culture and the people be helped (White and Archibald, 1992)?

Unfortunately, I cannot pretend to answer all of these questions, nor am I able to foresee the final outcome and its effects upon Aboriginals. I can only pray that whatever happens will positively affect Aboriginal culture and the Western society in which we are immersed. Culture is continually evolving and changing. Constant change is our only guarantee (Briggs, 1983; Northwest Territories Education, 1996). If we, as Aboriginals, do not take the initiative to re-create our culture, then others will do so for us, as they have been doing for hundreds of years already (Hall, 2003). While there are no set guidelines for research on Aboriginals, this work takes its inspiration from the *CIHR Guidelines for Health Research Involving Aboriginal People*, which are felt to be the most complete and rigorous.

I have come across numerous writings about the misappropriation of Indigenous knowledge by non-Aboriginals in government, universities, and the general public. Aboriginals who hold traditional knowledge, and are attached to specific places, feel that the most important knowledge cannot be shared, since it leads to continuing colonialism from both within and without. There now exists, however, a large mass of Aboriginals in cities and in rural communities who have become disconnected from this sense of place. Do they not deserve to share this knowledge and understanding? I certainly hope so, for

we can only become stronger by coming together by recognizing shared philosophies and weltanschauung.

There is a continuing debate over non-Aboriginal researchers. Laurent Jerome received a letter from an Atikamekw who opposes his research in Atikamekw communities. “I do not want my culture written by a white. I do not want a white to appropriate for himself something that I am trying to appropriate. This will come back to me at a cultural level. If it must be written, it must be written by an Atikamekw because they would not do a bad interpretation” (Jerome, 2008, 182-3). If there are no Aboriginal researchers, the void will invariably be filled by non-Aboriginal scholars.

Non-Aboriginals do have a role to play in research with Aboriginals, for their criticism makes Aboriginal scholarship stronger. According to Widdowson and Howard, many researchers have bent the ideals of science too far to accommodate Aboriginal knowledge (2008, 231-48). Perhaps non-Aboriginals involved with Aboriginals are nervous about offering overt criticism of Aboriginals, policies, and groups. They want to be politically correct.

Jerome points out the incredible difficulties faced by researchers when attempting to get ethic committee approval. Various guidelines have been set and generally followed but they call into question the independence of researchers to do the research that they deem necessary and the ability of communities to have a real voice in the appropriation of research about themselves (Jerome, 2008, 188-92). There still lingers the feeling among Aboriginals that “field research can, at bottom, be considered as an act of betrayal, no matter how well intentioned or well integrated the researcher. You make the private public and leave the locals to take the consequences” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, 265).

Ethics in research should in no way be decided by non-Aboriginal committees at universities or by “independent ethic committees.” Aboriginals (researchers and non-researchers) should decide. Anything else is a continuing form of colonialism and a collective, institutional rape of the Aboriginal psyche (Smith, 2005, 120, 134).

Unfortunately there is no institutional Aboriginal ethics committee in Canada that can offer such guidance and expertise. This research was approved by the Laval University Ethics Research Committee with the approval number: 2009-103/03-11-2009.

Ethics in research seems to have gone past what is reasonable or necessary (Wolcott, 2002, 148). In this research, observations to be conducted in the Aboriginal schools were curtailed when the Laval ethics committee requested a signed consent form from each parent or each child in each school that I was to be visiting. A rather daunting task when this aspect was not even the initial thrust of the research, but rather a means to highlight and underscore my approach. Initially I was not to contact the interviewees directly, but rather send a letter requesting that they contact me. This letter would hopefully be posted in a place where possible interviewees would pass by. The ethics committee took over 6 months and I doubt they ever truly understood what my research as an Aboriginal on Aboriginal communities was aiming for. An ethics committee often puts emphasis not only on defending the subjects, but on protecting the institutions from legal action. While this is important, we talk too often of academic freedom as an ideal, but give no action to those words. Perhaps the ethics committee was too concerned with the physical sciences and not the social sciences.

Western science and Indigenous knowledge seek many of the same ideals (Aikenhead, 1997, 221). Many non-Aboriginal researchers are afraid of speaking of what they see and of questioning what is given as truth. Without frank and open debates Indigenous knowledge will not be exposed to the conatus of ideas. All science needs debate and fact checking by knowledgeable individuals and communities if it is to progress.

Those who have been named in this research have consented to do so and their participation has been very valuable and important. In all cases, their words offer wisdom and understanding, both of which are needed for the advancement of Aboriginal education as a significant and unique area of study. In addition, the respondents named in this research were never obliged to provide the names of their communities for the questionnaire, as the questionnaire was voluntary. Most respondents did provide the

names of their community, while some did not. To prevent any harm to informants, the identity of the community was withheld when the information did not positively reflect upon a community. This does not mean that the information was not used; rather, identification was deemed to be irresponsible and not in the best interests of the communities and those who had filled out the questionnaires.

This raises questions of academic freedom. To what extent should researchers be able to publish their results without thought to questions other than those of “truth?” Are attempts at self-censorship and ethical committee censorship in the best interests of both Western and Aboriginal science? True, many Aboriginals feel abused by the manner Western scientists obtain information from them and their communities. To counter these encroachments, various policy and ethical guidelines have been developed to regulate research with Aboriginals. Has there been an overreaction? Now that there are more Aboriginal researchers, it is becoming more important to interpret ethical guidelines so as not to stifle debate.

South: Indigenous Knowledge

Chapter 2. General Background of Aboriginal Education

When I first started writing, I was faced with the dilemma of where and how to begin. At first, I decided to use a very traditional historical overview as my foundation because I felt many readers would be more comfortable and at ease with this method. One day, as I was reading Dale Turner's (Temagami First Nation, Ontario) *This Is Not a Peace Pipe: Towards a Critical Indigenous Philosophy*, I was struck by the fact that the point of his book is about Aboriginal philosophy, but starts off dealing with law, constitutions, and history. As Aboriginal researchers, we always feel a need to prove ourselves and our viewpoint on Western terms. We are looking for validation. Those reading our writings (I suspect) really want us to move on and not talk about what the West has done wrong and how it continues to hurt us and our cultures, philosophies, worldview, and ability to promote our worldview. Instead, they want to learn about our worldview. Thousands of books have a principal focus on Aboriginal history and decolonization, but few focus primarily on Aboriginal philosophy and its role in education. People really want to know what it is that "pan-Aboriginals" believe in that is so diametrically different from the Western worldviews and how having this pluralistic understanding contributes to the conatus of ideas.¹⁵

This chapter presents ideas about Indigenous knowledge: holism, consideration of the religious worldviews of both the West and pan-Aboriginalism, the ways anthropology has affected Indigenous knowledge, what is a worldview, and creationism. The purpose of this chapter is to present the principle ideas which were used in the development of questions for the curriculum evaluation section (North). The information forms the philosophical foundation of a pan-Indigenous worldview. It should be noted that not all of these ideas are shared by all Aboriginals, but they are still useful in the construction of a holistic Indigenous worldview.

¹⁵ Conatus (Latin: *effort; endeavour; impulse, inclination, tendency; undertaking; striving*) is a term used in early philosophies of psychology and metaphysics to refer to an innate inclination of a thing to continue to exist and enhance itself (Traupman, 1966). The conatus may refer to the instinctive "will to live" of animals or to various metaphysical theories of motion and inertia. Often the concept is associated with God's will in a pantheist view of Nature. There is also a Darwinian connotation of survival of ideas.

Not all Aboriginals or Westerners are the same; each group's being is not monolithic. We often want life to be simple, black and white, good and bad. Within the Aboriginal community, some follow a very traditional lifestyle and others follow much of the traditional beliefs and knowledge. In much the same manner in the West and in many other cultures around the world, some individuals follow the beliefs that their society holds dear. These beliefs are considered to be the pinnacle of success. Within Buddhism, the Dalai Lama is held in high esteem by Buddhists and by many peoples from very different cultures. Are all Buddhists the same as the Dalai Lama? Should they all be like him? Most certainly not, but at the same time the Dalai Lama has attained a certain level of understanding about his culture and teachings that others would like to emulate. There is no shame in the fact that these teachings are very difficult to follow for most Buddhists. In much the same manner, Aboriginals do share many of the same beliefs, but may have difficulty in living up to them.

Are all Aboriginals able to follow those beliefs fully? In the end, there still exists the "Great Mystery"¹⁶ and the search for knowledge that should guide all Aboriginals to the best of their ability. Not all Aboriginals are the same, however. Every Aboriginal is a different person with a different way of viewing the world. This worldview has been learned through her or his nation(s), community, family, and situation. So many authors have treated this subject that it is difficult to name them all. They include Cajete, Deloria, Sioui, Kawagley, Battiste, Henderson, Wuttunee, Cardinal, and Hampton, to name but a few. Yet, since the 1970s, and even since as far back as the ghost dance, there has been a growing pan-Aboriginal awareness and cross-national understanding. Questioning the idea of pan-Aboriginalism has almost become redundant due to a multitude of inter-tribal organizations. While we still do fight amongst ourselves, we also see each other as allies in this struggle that we have been waging for 500 years.

¹⁶ Often referred to as the Creator or Great Spirit, though also contested by various elders as being non-traditional and more of a neo-traditional/new age concept. William Wuttunee feels that the concept of the creator is better seen as representing all of creation rather than a specific person (personal communication, January 19, 2008).

2.1 Indigenous Knowledge

The Great Spirit or Great Mystery, or Good Power is everywhere and in everything—mountains, plains, winds, waters, trees, birds and animals. Whether animals have mind and the reasoning faculty admits of no doubt for the Blackfeet.¹⁷ For they believe that all animals receive their endowment of the power of the Sun, differing in degree, but the same kind as that received by man and all things animate and inanimate (McClintock, 1968).

From *The Old North Trail: Life Legends, and Religion of the Blackfeet Indian*

The Aboriginal matrix is made up of ideas in constant flux and motion, an existence consisting of energy waves, interrelationships, space/place,¹⁸ and renewal, where all things are animate and all elements imbued with spirit. All matter and all being have a dualistic nature: static or active. Gary Witherspoon writes: “The assumption that underlies this dualistic aspect of all being and existence is that the world is in motion, that things are constantly undergoing processes of transformation, deformation and restoration and that the essence of life and being is movement” (Witherspoon, 1977, 48).

The heritage of an indigenous people is not merely a collection of objects, stories and ceremonies, but a complete knowledge system with its own concepts of epistemology, philosophy and scientific and logical validity. The diverse elements of an indigenous people’s heritage can only be fully learned or understood by means of the pedagogy traditionally [with more modern techniques used in conjunction and] employed by these peoples themselves, including apprenticeship, ceremonies and practice. Simply recording words or images fails to capture the whole context and meaning of songs, rituals, arts or scientific and medical wisdom.

Dr Erica-Irene Daes, 1994

¹⁷ Even fruit flies have a certain amount of free will, as shown in a study in 2006. The study stated, “We find a fractal order (resembling Lévy flights) in the temporal structure of spontaneous flight maneuvers in tethered *Drosophila* fruit flies. Lévy-like probabilistic behavior patterns are evolutionarily conserved, suggesting a general neural mechanism underlying spontaneous behavior. *Drosophila* can produce these patterns endogenously, without any external cues. The fly’s behavior is controlled by brain circuits which operate as a nonlinear system with unstable dynamics far from equilibrium. These findings suggest that both general models of brain function and autonomous agents ought to include biologically relevant nonlinear, endogenous behavior-initiating mechanisms if they strive to realistically simulate biological brains or out-compete other agents” (Maye, Hsieh, Sugihara & Brembs, 2007).

¹⁸ Vine Deloria and Daniel Wildcat (2001) see place as those relationships that we maintain with the universe (between individuals, the environment, and the metaphysical).

For John Friesen, the philosophical foundations of a traditional Aboriginal lifestyle are wholly spiritual (2002). To understand Aboriginals, one must appreciate the holistic-inclusive worldview. It is a philosophy of free will and personal moral choice and an understanding that the past, present, and future are one. The objective must be and is continual well-being, balance, and synchronicity. The Sauleaux elder Manitopeyes says: “it is not enough for us to merely walk on the earth.” We must be mindful about how we walk. This is a practical guide for balance between social, civil, and natural environments, applied on an individual basis and extended to include the family, local community, and world community. The result is not an elusive, mystical concept, but survival with moral living in or through acceptance, learning, and knowledge juxtaposed with a Western vision of immortality or paradise (Akan, 1992).

Traditionally, Aboriginals perceived spirits in everything animate or inanimate, in plants and in creatures of the sky, ocean, and earth. These spirits are respected and held in great reverence. It is a world in which everything is interconnected, with everyone and everything depending on everyone else for survival. A hunter when killing an animal would thank it for sacrificing itself to provide him and his family with sustenance (Miller & Davison, 2011). For Friesen and Friesen, this interconnectedness would require that the warrior understand the role he has to play in the overall scheme and any future sacrifice he might have to make for the greater good (2002).

The anthropologist A. Irving Hallowell conducted a long-term study in the 1930s and 1940s with the Ojibwa of Manitoba at Berens River, publishing on them a number of essays (Nabokov, 2006, 22, 32). In a brief sketch of Sauleaux cosmology, he identified two fundamental notions that explain the Ojibwa imagination, its concepts of Kitchi Manitou,¹⁹ and how this people constructed their natural environment. First, everything in the universe “has an animating principle, a soul, and a body. Man has a ghost as well.”

¹⁹ Creator, Spirit, perhaps God, supreme power of the universe (Hallowell, 1934, 403).

Second, natural entities also have existing and corresponding spiritual “bosses” or owners” that help guide animals and humans (Hallowell, 1934, 391; 1942). Nabokov used the term *Weltanschauung*, which roughly means worldview, and redefined it as “the cluster of assumptions and images that a given society shared about the nature of reality” (2006, 32-3). I see worldview as being a general momentary and yet evolving image of how the cosmos is ordered. It provides humans with the means to react to their environment within that cosmos and dictates how that dynamic environment will react in return, thus enhancing their potential and their perceived objectives of success (Nabokov, 2006, 33).

For Battiste and Henderson, however, Aboriginal spiritual teachings and practices “flow from ecological understandings rather than from cosmology.” This ecology is not seen as a mass, but rather as a synthesis of multiple elements (2000, 99). These multiple elements sustain a sacred living order, self-subsisting and independent of human will (Levy-Bruhl, 1966 taken from Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 99).

This synthesis of multiple elements has occurred over time and has been influenced by multiple beings and spirits who have been involved in creating a global knowledge that goes back generations. An example may be taken from fine arts and the idea of *pentimento* or *palimpsest* (Nabokov, 2006, 149). The first term refers to the layering of oils on a canvas and the second to rubbed out and written drafts of a written composition. There is a detection of earlier efforts underneath. The material that we perceive on the surface is embodied, and it benefits from what has been understood by those who have passed on the experiences of previous knowledge holders to present knowledge keepers. It is a layering of successive knowledge.

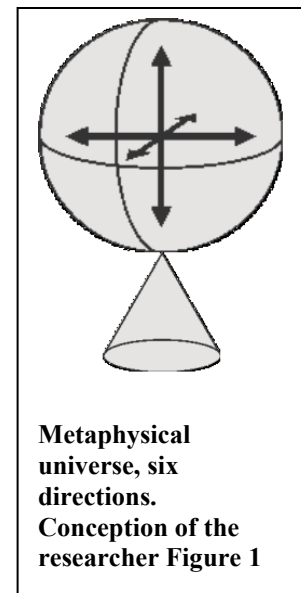
2.2 Holistic and Religious Knowledge

Holistic knowledge is about the interconnectedness of all of creation. Holism is the idea that all is connected, that all living organisms, innate objects, living animals (humans), plants, the soil, the air, the community, nations, and the metaphysical have spirit and are

connected into relationships of interaction, thus creating a matrix offering a dynamic sense of order or dynamic equilibrium (CCL, 2007). It is a 360 degree vision (Dumont, 1976) that is very important in Aboriginal philosophy. Within my own tradition (Cree), the medicine wheel is often used both as a metaphor and as a concrete symbol. It represents the circle of life, containing all experience, both collective and individual; it contains all of creation (Fenelon & Lebeau, 2006, 39-41). Two lines mark off the quadrants of the circle. The centre is the balancing point where the lines intersect. The medicine wheel is part of the tradition of the plains tribes, such as the Dakota, the Siksika, and the Cree. It is used to explain the life stages: childhood, youth, adulthood, and old age. Castellano has written of her own need to obtain balance within life as represented in a medicine wheel. She finds herself heavily pushed towards Western learning, and the medicine wheel represents an equilibrium where the person must seek out different gifts in order to be fulfilled in life. The sharing of individual gifts and the greater balance in life benefits the individual and society (Castellano, 2000, 30).

The circle is perhaps one of the most widely used ideas among Aboriginals. Not all use it, but many Aboriginals today see it as a pan-Aboriginal idea. One of them is George Sioui (Wendat), who rejects linearity. He sees it as being rigid and creating an exclusive [alien] nationalism. The circular conception of the universe has enabled Aboriginal societies to survive. They have been able to regroup literally and spiritually after catastrophes because they have seen life as a “great whole in which humans constitute but one element” (1999, 113).

Sioui also feels that for hunting societies made up of “two or three related families the reality of the circle of relationships is far more evident” but in a larger sedentary population the idea of the circle must become more formal. Such societies must use specific methods to create relationships (1999) that previously were inevitable and easier to make.



Time and space are also two critical elements in understanding Aboriginal thought. Time²⁰ is seen often as a cycle with recurring patterns. On a macro-level, there is the quad-directional circle as a representation of Aboriginal knowledge. The Pueblo call this the four directions (Nabokov, 2006, 77). To this are added two additional directions, being the Great Spirit above and Mother Earth below (Hampton, 1993; Johnston, 2004). This creates a spherical or metaphysical representation of the universe.

This ideal of holism implies that it is wrong to consider isolated pieces of information without looking at the bigger picture (Cajete, 1994, 74-8). There is nothing wrong in delving deeper into specific knowledge, but we must not forget that information and understanding in Aboriginal philosophy are interconnected and all-encompassing.

Creative participation within the living Earth extends from before birth to birth, death, and beyond. Indigenous people view the body as an expression of the sensual manifestation of mind and spirit. Death is the body's ultimate decomposition into the elements that make up earth, wind, fire, air, and water and mark the transformation of one's relatives and ancestors into the living landscape, with its plants, animals, waters, soils, clouds, and air. This is both a reality and a metaphor. When Chief Seattle, apparently in reference to the selling of tribal land, said: "I cannot sell the body, the blood and bones of my people," he was actually talking of his worldview.²¹ Life and death are non-ultimate transformations of energy into new forms, being the energy and material of nature's creativity. Death must be understood as a metamorphosis, whereby the spirit of the deceased does not disappear, but becomes part of the animating and creative forces of nature (Cajete, 2000, 21).

²⁰ Many Aboriginals see groupings. One is tempted to see time as the key concept, but this would not accurately reflect Aboriginal philosophy. Time in itself is cyclical. The term 'existence' better describes the feelings and beliefs of Aboriginals, since it expresses the immortality of pan-Aboriginal teachings and a continuous connection to the creation.

²¹ Apparently Chief Seattle (Sea'thl, Seal'th, or Seathl) never gave the speech we attribute to him today. The speech was originally given in 1854, but only written down in 1887 for the *Seattle Sunday Star* by Dr. Henry Smith, a non-Aboriginal physician from notes he said he had taken. This speech was further developed and modified in 1972 for the ecological film *Home* by Professor Ted Perry (Widdowson & Howard, 2008, 222). Perry "made no bones about the fact that while he used a version of Smith's version of Seattle's speech for inspiration, he came up with his own version which differed markedly from the original" (Francis, 1992, 141).

In North America, Aboriginal and Western spiritual traditions have been in constant struggle over the philosophical basis of the universe for the past 500 years. In the past 30 years, Islam and to a lesser extent Jewish traditions have also joined the conversations. Because of the sheer numbers of Christians, it has often been a conversation between one who is deaf and another who is blind. From the vantage points and traditions of their major religious philosophies, Europeans when speaking with Aboriginals have made and still make authoritative claims about spirituality and the workings of the universe. Aboriginals in their philosophical pluralistic tradition would often listen to such claims because no one would make false claims due to fear of being proven wrong. Aboriginals were not prepared for this very aggressive spiritual interpretation, and eventually Europeans thereby gained a tactical philosophical advantage over them in later negotiations (Friesen & Friesen 2002).

Sioui writes that animist religions are often considered backwards in comparison to “real” religions. For Sioui, religious means a spiritual worldview. Animist religions are circular in conception and often display greater respect for human rights, both individually and collectively than do “higher” civilizations (1999, 21).

Europeans have found it difficult to understand the implications of the Aboriginal holistic worldview. For Vine Deloria and Jean-Guy Goulet, Aboriginals view the world in terms of interconnectedness, as a matrix in which both material and non-material elements are in relation (Deloria, 1992, 77; Goulet, 2007, 169). Traditionally, Aboriginal philosophy does not posit distinct scientific disciplines that operate in isolation. Even when Western-trained scientists make claims of interdisciplinary findings, there always exists some ethnocentrism and difficulties in knowledge transfer between disciplines.

Aboriginals do not reject all of Western thought; nor do they reject the types of institutions that characterize the West. Many Native elders have valued Western formal education and literacy. They have valued the “white man’s” cultural teachings and seen

them as wondrous in their own right. Their vision is that the *mooneyowininihwok*²² or white man's teaching or schooling is part of Creation and is given to them by Kize Manitou, [the Great Spirit] (Akan, 1992). Even after all the major conflicts with the West, and its total material victory over them and their way of life, Aboriginals are still willing to look to the *mooneyowininihwok* and use the best that it has to offer.

Lawrence Sullivan, the editor for a major book on Indigenous tradition, ecology, and religion, writes that "religion distinguishes the human species from all others, just as human presence on earth distinguishes the ecology of our planet from other places in the known universe" (2001, xxi). For many Indigenous peoples, he has already failed to understand the idea of holism. Animals also have religious understanding; the universe has religious understanding; they have their means of communicating with us and among themselves (Johnston, 1976). To continue, Sullivan sees religious worldviews as primordial, all-encompassing, and unique. They are what compel communities to go past secondary realities and consider the primary ones: "life at its source, creativity in its fullest manifestation, death and destruction at their origin, renewal and salvation in their germ" the great mystery. Religious ideas drive the human experience and worldview (2001, xii). It is this lack of true understanding by even those who profess to understand Aboriginals which is causing further difficulties in communication and the building of relationships between Western and Indigenous worldviews.

2.3 IK and Anthropology

Aboriginal scholars face a major ethical problem with Indigenous knowledge. In Western scientific circles, analysis and criticism are commonplace, so long as they serve the established order (Latour, 1997). In Aboriginal circles Indigenous knowledge is seen as something that just exists and should not be analysed because this would lead to defamation of the spiritual (interview with Chief Gilbert Whiteduck, January 15, 2010). This is a problem for many Western scientists (Widdowson & Howard, 2008). Aboriginal scholars have not yet been very concerned with analyzing our societies on the basis of

²² Saulteaux word.

most Western theories; often we state what our beliefs are, our position, and our point of view and we analyze knowledge for power and survival. This Indigenous method of research often concords with Indigenous knowledge.

Both Western science and Indigenous knowledge are based on empirical observations. The difference is in their selection and use of those observations. Western scientists seek data to verify theoretical models, while Indigenous scientists often seek data for survival strategy. “There is no model to falsify; knowledge is not true or false, only more or less effective.” Indigenous knowledge is based on the practical and is concerned with verifying how data can be “found, harvested and used” (Kalland, 2000, 325) or observed, understood, and used (Goulet, 1998).

The point here is not to theorize about the underlying conditions and beliefs of Aboriginals, but to present an analysis of the education systems in use by Aboriginals and in particular the role of curricula. The anthropologist must seek to answer four questions about the study of man. What is presented? Who presents it? Who learns it? What is learned (Nicholson, 1968, 3)? I would also add: What can this information be used for?

For future research, a number of anthropologists have gone beyond traditional ethnographies to look at the essentials of human cultures and natures. The works of Latour, Descola, and Levi-Strauss have not been appropriated yet by Aboriginal scholars to develop an Aboriginal anthropology. These anthropologists have developed tools that at first sight do not easily lend themselves to Aboriginal scholarship; nor do they seem to relate to the underlying goals of decolonization. It would nonetheless be wrong to dismiss this body of theoretical work.

Philippe Descola writes that science must “metamorphose” to include not only objects that are not just anthropologic, but also the collective “existants” [elements or holistic] that are connected to humans (2005, 15). Descola has conceived of four ontologies to categorize humans and their environments across all continents. They are: totemism, which highlights the continuity of materiality and morality between humans and non-

humans; analogism, which holds that between the elements of the world a matrix of discontinuity exists and is structured by corresponding relations; animism, which gives non-humans the interior spirit of humans, all creatures being differentiated solely by their bodies; and naturalism, which links humans and non-humans by a continuous materiality, but still separates us through cultural specificity (2005, 176-80).

In the daily bread and butter of Aboriginal politics and life, it is unclear how these theories may be applied to Aboriginal situations to provide “useful results” (personal communication Raymond Sioui, February 23, 2007). Anthropology (Western science) and Aboriginals existed in parallel during the 19th and early 20th centuries; today a chasm still separates the two. Mills, Dracklé, and Edgar point out that anthropology must “be lived at the same time it is learned”; otherwise it becomes over-structured and formalized (2004, 5). For many Aboriginal scholars, the works of Bruno Latour and Paul Farmer provide more resources for decolonization. It is not that the other theories are not useful, but rather that Aboriginal scholars have so little time (because there are so few of them) that they must concentrate on the essentials of decolonization. In the major works of anthropology, Indigenous people still are subject and object. Their personal power resides in what the writer gives them. Many anthropologists have dealt with this criticism rather successfully by providing unedited excerpts from their interviews. It nonetheless remains difficult for them to criticize the information and the informant while remaining politically correct. Just because Aboriginals are attempting to decolonize should not mean that criticism should be unidirectional. The future well-being of Indigenous peoples requires active constructive criticism, but by whom?

Feit notes that Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals often have difficulty communicating with each other. They must seek new means to communicate their realities and worldviews,²³ attempt at communication often being one way. Indigenous worldviews may be grossly simplified, thus hindering understanding of Aboriginal life (2001, 413, 419).

²³ Harvey Feit specifically addresses the case of the Cree of Quebec during the 1980s and 1990s in their negotiations with the Quebec government and the James Bay hydroelectric agreements.

Indigenous knowledge (IK) has also been difficult for anthropology to integrate into current theories. Anthropology has been attempting to reinvent itself since the 1960s and 70s, having been challenged by many of the subjects it was studying. In response, anthropology has taken on new forms of theoretical analysis, “Marxism, world-systems, dependence theory, feminism, postcolonial theory,” which have attempted with great success to anchor anthropology in the world and all its problems (Goodale, 2009, 121).

Many still criticize the techniques of anthropologists and Western science (Deloria, 1992). For instance, even though Aboriginals are said to be teachers of “important” Indigenous knowledge, too often after publication they become merely another object of study (Tedlock & Tedlock, 1992, xiii). This objectification is said to not allow a full understanding of the unity of the Aboriginal *Weltanschauung*. While I agree that many anthropologist could do well to create partnerships (relationships) with Indigenous groups and peoples the differences between anthropology of the 1950s and the anthropology of 2010 is very different.

The 1980s saw further realignment or catching-up of anthropology with the idea of IK and human rights (Goodale, 2009, 124). IK has been categorized by anthropology as being wholly specific to a local science and local knowledge (Semali & Kincheloe, 1999, 3; Sillitone, 2006, 1-22). This ignores the complexity of IK, for though it is often locally specific, frequently there is a holistic ideal, a larger vision, where IK is the way Indigenous peoples view the world. This is not to say that anthropology has no role to play in Aboriginal issues, for it is far better equipped than political science, education science, economics, philosophy, theology, and cultural studies to conduct constructive research with Aboriginals (Benthall, 2002, 52), for these other sciences fail to see the underlying currents of society and their final consequences. Descola has been able to recognize this idea of holism or the monolithic and its repercussions in the world (2005). These other sciences too often avoid taking a holistic approach, thus disregarding all the variables affecting Aboriginals, their lives, and their worldview.

Furthermore, anthropology and Indigenous populations have been the subjects of a debate that pits nature against culture (Brightman, 2007, 31-3). In the late nineteenth century Indigenous populations were seen as being unable to distinguish nature from culture, and thus having a monolithic worldview. French structuralism of the mid twentieth century eventually concluded that this premise was false and that Indigenous societies could differentiate nature from culture (Lévi-Strauss, 1963 taken from Brightman). Of late the pendulum has swung in the other direction with the nature/culture dualism being contested, and once again Indigenous populations no longer see the difference between nature and culture (Descola, 2001 taken from Brightman). As with many elements of life, the truth lies in the middle. Many Indigenous cultures today are attempting to recreate the past. There are also varying levels of understanding and recognition of nature and culture. Modern Canadian Aboriginals do not all see nature as being separate from culture, while many do. We live modern lives, yet we speak of the monolithic/holistic as if it were still true. There is a difference between those who live off the land and those who work in an office.

Descola writes that the worldview of a society is an organic construction. He finds that the Western duality of nature and culture is being rebuilt or at least contested by a “primitive” monolithic idea of nature and culture. The “mission” of anthropology is to contribute “with anthropologic methods to illuminate the manner in which a specific organism exists within the world, is represented, and anthropology should contribute in the modification of the relationships between the organism and others the infinitely diverse relationships both permanent and occasional” (2005, 11-2). Anthropology must become monolithic, not in “semi-religious terms,” but in order to show that the philosophy of the “moderns²⁴” is not universally accepted and that even Western philosophy is a recent development (12-3).

I disagree with Descola on a number of points. How can you have a holistic philosophy and yet not consider the metaphysical? In this matter he has failed to understand that even if lives are modern, interconnectedness still exists throughout the universe, both

²⁴ Western man and his philosophy.

physically and metaphysically (Goulet, 2007, 169). He ironically perpetuates this separation of the Western Cartesian “spirit and the material” that he is attempting to unify (Descola, 2005, 247).

Jack Forbes (Native American Studies) attempts a definition of nature and culture. For Forbes, nature and nation are derived from the same Latin root *nasci*, or to be born (2001, 103). Culture is descended from the Latin root *colore* meaning to “till, cultivate, dwell, inhabit, and worship.” Eventually it came to represent caring for land and eventually, in French, cultivating of humans as well as the soil (2001, 114). Because Europeans cultivated the land to such a great extent, there eventually developed a schism between nature and culture and the creation of a duality in their worldview. In many Aboriginal societies, the earth was tilled, but never to such a great extent as in the West. Their separation between nature and culture has just started to take place.

Our Native American culture has been strip-mined by the European’s Judeo-Christian ethic. It is clear to indigenous peoples that we are dealing with a desperate society trapped inside a crumbling mythology...Indians know how to play games with nature. Europeans – Whites – have been at odds with nature for many centuries. The Man vs. Nature argument is a contrived dichotomy with ancient roots in Christianity, Descartes and Francis Bacon. What you end up with is a race of people trapped by myth, striving to claw its way back to Eden against ever growing odds. The project of nature is on-going, we are part of it, yet the European continues to set himself outside of it...Non-Indians will never have Western eyes so long as they cling to the Man versus Nature dichotomy.

Raymond Cross, Mandan tribal attorney

Quoted in Gonzales and Nelson, 2001, p 495

2.4 Worldview

For Friesen and Friesen, few world cultures have demonstrated the capability to survive and endure that Aboriginals have (2002). The Indigenous worldview has been validated by a “baptism of fire” that has attacked, harassed, and victimized this cosmology. They have been told that they are a dying race and have become a white man’s burden, yet their worldview continues to exist.

The idea of worldview needs to be addressed in greater detail. For Kawagley, it is closely related to definitions of culture and a cognitive map. “A worldview consists of the principles we acquire to make sense of the world round us. Young people learn these values, traditions and customs from myths, legends, stories, family, community and examples set by community leaders. The worldview (cognitive map) is a summation of coping devices that have worked in the past [but may not work in the now or future]... The worldview [allows a people who self-identify] to make sense of the world around them, make artefacts to fit their world, generate behaviour and interpret their experiences” (1995, 8).

Jean-Guy Goulet writes that the Dene Tha (Northern Alberta) “shape their lives according to a distinctive indigenous tradition.” The Dene Tha have epistemological and ethical values that are not shared by Westerners (1998, xxiv). It is also difficult for Westerners to translate the meaning of religious experience (xxv).

The way of life for the Indian was the combination of culture and religion. The culture is now being exploited, degraded, prostituted and commercialized not only by the white man but by some of our own people as well. Religion has been forsaken by the Indian youth because they have been taught that it is primitive and savage...the Indian's way of life was based on his religious beliefs which he valued more than anything else. The native religion respects human value which the white education system treads down and replaces with something else we do not want. The human values are replaced with profit-making based on competition and discrimination...these prevalent factors in the system often produce white men with brown skins.

Lydia Yellowbird, 18-year-old Cree from Edmonton,
Member of the Native Youth Society of Alberta, 1972. pp 93-4

In 2005, the French physician Etienne Klein met five Aboriginal chiefs from the Amazon. These chiefs “expressed their angst and revolt in facing the menace of the technologically powerful Western world upon theirs” (Klein, 2008). While listening, Klein discovered that the nature these Indians were speaking of was not his. As a “héritier de Galilée,” the author did not recognize himself in the sensitive and un-separated nature of these chiefs.

His nature was “reduced to simple matter and energy. It is abstract, insensitive, devoid of all life” (2008).

Mutual relationships exist in the natural world: animals, plants, humans, celestial bodies, spirits, and natural forces (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 41-2). According to Cajete, Indigenous peoples can manipulate natural phenomena by applying appropriate practical and ritualistic knowledge, but at the same time natural phenomena, forces, and other living things can affect humans (2000). For Cajete, Aboriginal people view holism as a dynamic harmony, a multidimensional balancing act of ecological interrelationships. Disturbing these interrelationships can create disharmony, and balance can be restored only through action and knowledge. Profound knowledge is needed of the complex natures of natural forces and their interrelationships. There can be no separation of science, art, religion, philosophy, or aesthetics in Aboriginal thought, for such categories do not truly exist (taken from Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 43).

According to Battiste and Henderson, the Inuit in Nunavut define their traditional knowledge [*Qaujimaqatuqangit* or IQ] as practical teaching and experience passed on from generation to generation. It is a way of life based on respect, with rules governing the sharing of resources. It is knowledge based on information from the environment and the relationships that exist among all beings. It is rooted in spiritual life, health, culture, and language. It is an assertion that the holistic worldview cannot be compartmentalized or separated from the people who hold these beliefs. It is dynamic, cumulative, and stable. It is truth and reality (Battiste and Henderson, 2000, 43).

In my first contacts with Black Elk, almost all he said was phrased in terms involving animals and natural phenomena. I naively would begin to talk about religious matters, until I finally realized that he was, in fact, explaining his religion.

Joseph Brown, 1964

Black Elk, 1991 may be seen for more information

Every tribe has a spiritual heritage that distinguishes them from all other people. Most tribes are so unique that they describe themselves as “the people” or the “original people.”

They have followed the commands of the spirits as they have been experienced over countless generations and recognize that other people have the same rights and status as themselves. In the past, it was inconceivable to fight over traditions, thus religious wars were generally unheard of. Tribes would fight ferociously over hunting and fishing territories and retaliate for raids on property. The nearest that they would come to fighting over beliefs and practices was in the quest for medicine and supernatural powers, i.e., powers that would neutralize the medicine and powers possessed by other peoples (Deloria, 2006, xxiii).

Anthropologist Lawrence Keeley writes that Indigenous societies fought more, had a higher proportion of the male population engaged in warfare, and generated higher casualty rates than have the vast majority of wars between modern states. He found that many scholars downplay the warlike nature of “primitive” societies. As have other archaeologists, he uncovered evidence that many tribal societies needed to erect barricades for protection against non-related tribes. Too many scholars have been influenced by Rousseau and the idea that civilized life has somehow corrupted our natural peaceful state (1996, 22). All in all, it is very difficult to categorically say how Aboriginals conducted their lives generations ago. We can only be certain about how they conduct their lives today and the philosophies behind their actions.

For Cook-Lynn, Native mythology still encompasses the observations by people over hundreds and thousands of years, and how they wanted to live their lives. Aboriginals believed that there had to be a connection between humans and other creatures, between the land and the creatures that inhabited there, between the sky and the earth. The buffalo,²⁵ for instance, was a powerful force in plains culture and the universe (2007). Perhaps one of the most beautiful creation stories is one by Basil Johnston (1976, 12), which is in and of itself very representative of creation stories by many Aboriginals on Turtle Island and offers great insight into various Aboriginal philosophies and worldviews (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, 60; Kawagley, 1995, 24; Sioui, 1999).

²⁵ During the mass killing of the buffalo by European settlers, Cook-Lynn writes that Europeans committed a “crime against humanity, a human act of deicide, a crime against the land” (2007, pp 149).

2.5 Creation

Many Aboriginal nations share the same themes of creation. Authors such as Basil Johnston (1976), George Sioui (1999), Vine Deloria (2006), and even my own father James Ouellette (conversation 2006) highlight the manner in which many Aboriginals see their place in the world through different parables of creation. Indigenous spirituality around the world is centred on our relationship to the whole of creation. This relationship is one of love and faithfulness between humans and the creation (McKay, 1992). The universe, by its personal nature, demands that each and every entity seek and sustain personal relationships. There is a broad idea that a relationship in this universe is very personal and in particular that all relationships have a moral content. Thus, Aboriginal knowledge of the universe is never separated from other sacred knowledge about ultimate spiritual realities (Deloria, 1991). Many other world beliefs do not hold man apart from all of creation as its master, but rather as part and parcel of creation, an integral part, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, and Aboriginal religions (Lévi-Strauss, 1976, 336).

Both the Aboriginal Vine Deloria and the French anthropologist Lévi-Strauss have argued that not only man but also all organisms²⁶ have innate rights and responsibilities to each other. A number of points are worth considering: the idea of responsibility is perhaps even more important than that of right, for it entails a sense of duty to the common good. Even in a moment of absolute distress and destruction, one always continues to have responsibilities (Ouellette, 2007).

The word responsible contains the word response. This implies responding to a situation, hopefully to one's best ability, to bring about a beneficial response. The consequences must have the greatest benefit. The greatest benefit occurs when respect for the laws governing the natural world helps maintain a harmony or equilibrium.

²⁶ This includes living animals, plants, the soil, the air, and the community, which interact with each other in ways that create a sense of order or equilibrium.

Because Aboriginals have been so affected by Western philosophy, and because these creation stories can offer great insight there is a need to at least discuss the Western foundation story which demonstrates the foundational Western worldview. It may be found in the Old Testament (Genesis 1-31). Of primary interest is Genesis 28:

28: And God blessed them, and God said unto them, Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth, and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth.

Different groups/nations place different emphases on different points, but the Western world generally follows this Judeo-Christian worldview. The Aboriginal tradition of creation has many stories, but most share the same philosophical outlook. There are similarities, but also major differences.

Both Aboriginal and Western traditions hold that a God or a Great Spirit/Great Mystery created the world and all its creatures. In the Western tradition, God created man in his image (Descola, 2005, 246) and gave him dominion over the rest of creation to use as he needed and so desired (Deloria, 1992, 81). In the Aboriginal tradition, man was not created in the image of the Great Spirit or Great Mystery (Manitou) because Manitou does not even have human form. All of creation was a vision held by Manitou.²⁷

The idea that man is in charge of nature and is separate from nature runs counter to Aboriginal philosophy. Western man often does not consider himself a part of creation; he is above creation, and separate (Descola, 2005, 247). In the Euro-centric worldview, the idea of man being given dominion over creation by God is very prevalent (Descola, 2005, 102-5). God does not often show himself; he has become abstract, and people have taken the place of God to varying degrees according to their position within a hierarchical society. God decided how the world would be, while in contrast Manitou was given a vision, for it was not his creation, but a gift given to him to create. It is the double great mystery of Manitou, from whence came the vision. The idea that man must manage the

²⁷ Manitou cannot and should not be seen as a being but as a “Great Mystery” (Forbes, 2001, 120).

environment is contemptible.²⁸ We need not manage nature; we must manage ourselves because the Universe and nature existed for millions and billions of years before the existence of man.

In modern times we rarely talk of God in the West. For many, God no longer exists; he is dead and replaced in a post-Christian culture (Vahanian, 1967). The philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche in *The Gay Science (Die fröhliche Wissenschaft)*, section 125, *The Madman*, writes that “God is dead. God remains dead. And we have killed him.” He is thus writing that religion and spirituality are no longer viable sources of any moral code or spirit in the West. The death of God has created a void (Brantl, 1962, 9), which has been filled by individual democratic liberalism. In the West, the individual is the pinnacle of achievement.

This death of God had become by the 1960s a movement called *theothanatology*, although this movement had started earlier with the spread of atheism in Europe after the Second World War and also Marxism (Moreau, 1953). Its mainstream expression was the *Time* cover of April 8, 1966, and an accompanying article about a movement in American theology that arose in the 1960s and was known as the “death of God.” Earlier in 1957, Gabriel Vahanian published *The Death of God*, arguing that modern secular culture had lost all sense of the sacred and lacked any sacramental meaning, transcendental purpose, or sense of providence. He concluded that for the modern mind “God is dead.” God had been replaced by a transformative post-Christian/post-modern culture that now created a renewed experience of deity (xiii). Nietzsche earlier recognized the crisis that the death of God represents for existing moral considerations (1954, 190). When the great mystery (Forbes, 2001, 120) is gone, what is left to replace it within the conscience of man?

For traditional pan-Aboriginal philosophy, the approach to the universe is very different. For example, a man has been placed at the top of a mountain. He believes he has been assigned the power and responsibility to improve his natural environment. He decides to

²⁸ The implication of man in the environment should be as a co-steward, but it must be remembered that all spirits/creation have roles to play as co-stewards (Miller and Davidson-Hunt, 2011, 10).

put more birds in the sky and to add a few more clouds for balance. He sees an old board lying on the ground in the middle of a field. The wooden board is very obviously keeping the grass from growing. He decides to remove the board. Underneath, ants are scrambling to take their eggs to safety, woodlice are digging to get into the ground, earthworms are coiled up like snakes, and a spider is looking up and saying, “what have you done to my home?” He immediately places the board as near to its original position and apologizes to the insects for having disturbed their home. He gives thanks for being taught not to interfere with the workings of the universe (Pelletier, 1974 in Friesen and Friesen, 2002, 48).

It has been said by critics of the three desert religions (Christianity, Judaism, and Islam) that monotheism would have encouraged humans to have a different relationship to nature if the Abrahamic God had revealed himself in a more verdant environment. The desert can encourage a sense of disregard for the natural world. Even Jesus cursed the recalcitrant fig tree and turned it into firewood (Rodriguez, 2007).

For thousands of years, men of the desert have been battling with nature in an attempt to overcome her. It is the desert as a seemingly uninhabitable place that convinces Jews, Christians, and Muslims alike that we are meant for a different world. In the deserts of the Bible and the Koran, the descriptions of Eden, which could be descriptions of the Promised Land, resemble oases. For Jews, Eden was pre-desert; for Christians and Muslims, paradise is a reconciliation with God, a post-desert (Rodriguez, 2007).

For many Aboriginals, you are where you are (Nabokov, 2006); the land is not an abstract ideal, nor is it a “Promised Land.” Your actions today will decide how the spirits and the universe will maintain their relationships with you. There is no salvation, for this is the Promised Land and your spirit is already part of nature, the Great Spirit. The pan-Aboriginal cosmology sees the world today as a place wholly connected to your ancestors and all of creation.

Another aspect of Western religious tradition needs to be mentioned: the idea of sin. I personally do not know of many traditional Aboriginal religious ideas that hold that man is sinful. Adam “lost grace not for Adam but for his descendants. It introduced sinfulness as a condition and tendency in man. All men after Adam would be born with the taint of the original sin...Sin is any violation of the will of God...the natural laws or in positive law expressed by God” (Brantl, 1962, 58-9).

The idea of original sin for many peoples around the world is very difficult to grasp. In the Western tradition, Pelagianism²⁹ is the belief in human free will, that original sin did not taint human nature and that mortal will is still capable of choosing good or evil³⁰ without special Divine aid. Thus, Adam’s sin was “to set a bad example” for his progeny, but his actions did not have the other consequences imputed to Original Sin. Man is still free to choose and maintain his and her agency.³¹

Cook-Lynn writes that America holds onto the ideal of the Christian myth in its conceived image of the America body politic. Innocence is “followed by Sin and Penance and finally Redemption” (2007, 95). It is this idea that the first European immigrants to the Americas were fleeing a corrupt world, and that settling and remaking the New World was a condition for their redemption. The Americas were seen as an Eden where the land was pure and given to man in order to remake in his image (Cook-Lynn, 2007).

Chapter 3. Colonialism and Decolonization

We should mention at least in passing colonialism and how it functions in Canadian society and its effects on the lives of Aboriginals today. We have already seen how Cook-

²⁹ A doctrine named after Pelagius (354 AD– 420/440 AD).

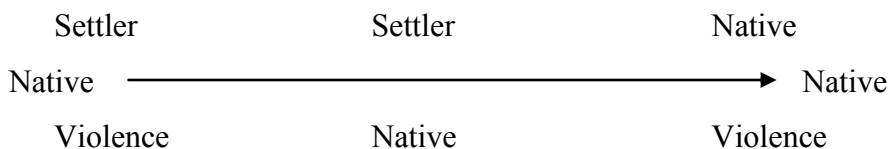
³⁰ According to George Sioui, Aboriginals have an understanding of morality that differs from the Christian tradition. Christian morality seeks and advocates absolute good, while Aboriginal morality sees absolute good and evil as equally dangerous concepts for human conscience (1999, 17).

³¹ Kockelman (2007), an anthropologist, explains agency using a Peircean theory where flexibility and accountability exist with knowledge and power. Within this theory is the idea of residential agency whereby one may control the expression of a sign (actions and thoughts), relationships, and interpretations of these signs and relationships (379-80).

Lynn views the myths surrounding the purity of American history. Canadians and the nation-state of Canada are not immune to the same criticisms. Although Canadians feel that racism no longer exists and that colonialism is part of an older unimportant part of Canadian history, for many Aboriginals the effects of racism and colonialism still subsist in Canadian society and insidiously affect both full Canadian citizens and Aboriginals. It is very difficult to carry out decolonization because such change has to be justified with reference to the rule of law. The result is a long and ongoing process. This chapter will not finish on a negative note by denying Aboriginal agency. It will instead present ideas that are key to our continuing decolonization.

Aboriginal authors for the past forty years have been writing about colonialism and its devastating effects on Aboriginals. Among the first books was one that profoundly impacted the way Aboriginals and Canadians see themselves and their condition: *The Only Good Indian* (Waubageshig, 1972).

This was a revolutionary book. Waubageshig, in an effort to force Canadian society to wake up to the terrible suffering of Aboriginals in Canada, wrote about the works of Frantz Fanon (1925-1961), which have become the “handbooks of revolutionaries throughout the third world.” Waubageshig explains Fanon’s theory of decolonization in stages.



According to Fanon, the first stage of colonization-decolonization is traditional Aboriginal culture. It is conservative, and innovation in both technology and society generally moves very slowly. Social values and norms are in accordance with the natural environment (Waubageshig, 1972, 65-66).

Stage two comes with the arrival of the settlers. Their arrival creates a very volatile social structure with the introduction of a “new breed of men” and technology. For the settlers and Natives, it is a time of great innovation although generally the Native loses out in any power struggles over the long term. These power struggles often involve violence between Natives and settlers, as Natives attempt to maintain their status and culture. Settlers attempt to impose their culture and create status for themselves in this new land. Over time, more and more of them arrive, giving more weight to their culture and military/economic power (Waubageshig, 1972, 66).

With stage three, there is a dichotomy in relations between Natives and settlers. The new economic and social power is in the hands of the settlers. Natives are often exploited legally, economically, and politically. They are not seen as being human, but as the “Other.” They have become rejected as inferior and forced to occupy low-status positions. Violence is less pronounced, but often takes verbal and socially structured forms. In the third stage, a Native bourgeoisie has also developed and is given multiple responsibilities in administering and controlling other Natives. This bourgeoisie assumes most of the outward appearances of the settlers, except for skin colour (Waubageshig, 1972, 67).

The fourth stage is the use of violence by the Natives. This stage is perhaps the most difficult to reach. According to Waubageshig, prior to decolonization, there is a noticeable increase in the crime rate and violence among Natives. The Native culture also enjoys a revival with traditional dances and songs, as rites of the Native’s religion are performed more. Eventually, this idea of the “Other” takes hold among the Natives, whereby the settler becomes the Other. It is not the Native bourgeoisie who is the prime instigator of decolonization, but rather the peasants. The peasants have almost nothing to lose through violence and much to gain. Eventually, the bourgeoisie’s intellectuals identify with the peasants, their own people. The latter will lead the revolution towards “its nationalistic outcome; which is stage five of the theory” (Waubageshig, 1972, 67).

Waubageshig then lays out how the Canadian situation meets many of the requirements of Fanon's theory, thus providing a wake-up call to the 1970s system of treating Aboriginals. Waubageshig says: "Indians will have the opportunity to adequately gauge the limits of peaceful negotiations. Then it will be possible to discern if decolonization will occur and if so, whether or not it would be a violent process" (Waubageshig, 1972, 67). Under the Canadian system, many Aboriginals (but not all³²) have been unwilling to use excessive violence when demanding their rights over the past 40 years. Instead, very pragmatic Aboriginal leaders have used public desire for justice and fairness to make political and economic gains against colonialism. Many Aboriginals still believe this process has not gone fast enough and have advocated concrete action against the Canadian state (Chief Gilbert Whiteduck, personal communication, February 7, 2007). At the same time, Waubageshig does not believe that Canadian Aboriginals are willing to use any large-scale violence to achieve their ends (p. 83). Perhaps, this is due to their philosophy of life or because they see the benefits of negotiation and talking within an increasingly pluralistic society that is more and more willing to allow difference.

The need to decolonize Aboriginals and their communities is widely accepted by almost all Aboriginal philosophers and leaders. Battiste and Henderson have suggested that acceptance of Eurocentric thought process will eventually result in a single world centre (2000, 21). They feel, as do others such as Kennedy (1989) and Dimont (1962), that even North America wholly relies upon Europe for much of its knowledge and understanding. The problem for Battiste and Henderson is that "as a theory it [Western worldview] postulates the superiority of Europeans over non-Europeans. It is built on a set of assumptions and beliefs that educated and unusually unprejudiced Europeans and North Americans habitually accept as true, as supported by "the facts," or as "reality" "(Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 21).

³² May 18, 2010 there was a firebomb attack by "Native radicals" (FFFC-Ottawa) on a Royalbank in the Ottawa region before the G8 and G20 summits to be held in Canada that summer denouncing the stealing of land by "colonial British Columbia and the RBC" for the winter Olympics (FFFC, 2010).

3.1 Colonialism and Indigenous Knowledge

Western religious leaders have often had trouble understanding the foundations of Aboriginal traditional religious practices, perhaps because this religion has few books, no certified priesthood, and no churches (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 100).

Aboriginal/Indigenous knowledge is often largely misunderstood by much of the Western politic.

Within Western systems, groups are nonetheless attempting to rectify certain facts. For instance, in 2004 the Canadian Parliamentary Research Branch, which conducts research for members of Parliament, wrote a research paper about traditional Aboriginal knowledge. Members of Parliament will use this background information to be better prepared for debates and decisions on Aboriginal-related issues. For the Parliament of Canada Research Branch, traditional knowledge is “the beliefs, knowledge, practices, arts, spirituality and other forms of cultural experience and expression that belong to indigenous communities” (Simeone, 2004, 1). Indigenous knowledge is often considered collective to the community, unlike Western legal property right systems in which ownership is invested in the individual or in a small group (Simeone, 2004, 1, 3). The paper nonetheless shows a fundamental lack of understanding of traditional knowledge. It approaches this knowledge from a Western scientific perspective that does not highlight the interrelationships within metaphysical understanding.

Tonina Simeone also highlights the difficulties experienced by Aboriginals in using existing intellectual property right law to protect indigenous knowledge (2004). Intellectual property should be “new, original, innovative or distinctive to qualify for protection.” These requirements are usually very difficult for Aboriginals to meet. There is also the problem of the community versus the individuals. Western intellectual property law is based upon the individual, not the group, while Indigenous knowledge has been passed down over many generations (Simeone, 2004).

Indigenous/Aboriginal groups encounter several other problems. There is an unequal balance of power between them and multinationals in the defence of patents and property rights. Multinationals have far greater financial and legal resources to defend and claim intellectual property rights to knowledge developed from Indigenous sources (Simeone, 2004).

Western scientists themselves, due to the nature of Western science, have not accepted Aboriginal knowledge as a distinct system. They have attempted instead to make this knowledge fit into the existing academic categories of Eurocentric philosophy. Margaret Lock gives an example of scientists mapping the genome. Of the DNA mapped, over 98% was considered “junk” because it did not conform to the scientists’ ideas of how the blueprint for life worked (2005, S47). Battiste and Henderson write that these scientists have not been intellectually adventurous enough when engaging Indigenous knowledge (IK). They feel that scholars need to see IK as *sui generis* in order to develop greater understanding of the world, ecologies, and the metaphysical (2000, 39; also see Sillitoe, 2006).

Western scientists have become the priests of a new religion and have used missionary zeal to spread the civilizing influence of their worldview. Indigenous peoples are viewed with disdain because their conception of relationships in the universe and their consideration for ecology make them seem to be against future development and advancement of the technological and scientific society (Sioui, 1999).

The West, which has a negative relationship to nature, will dismiss the idea of the “noble savage” and ideals of maintaining a positive relationship to nature. The orderly progression of civilization is felt to be impeded by Aboriginals who attempt to communicate with plants, animals, mountains, and spirits. This is seen as a rhetorical invention and is “not serious” (Sioui, 1999; Widdowson & Howard, 2008, 194).

In the decolonization of Indigenous knowledge (IK) there has been a concerted effort by scholars of IK to redefine the interaction between Western science and IK. This

redefining has not always succeeded, but has allowed IK scholars to challenge Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars working with Aboriginals and Indigenous peoples to reconsider their worldview. Often, IK is accused of being not a true science, but rather a traditional ecological knowledge. It is nonetheless scientific in the sense that it is empirical, experimental, and systematic.

According to Battiste and Henderson (2000, 35), IK does differ from Western science in a number of ways. IK is very local and social, or as Deloria says IK is defined by relationships. Much of Western science conversely searches for universal laws and is characterized by relationships between human animals, plants, natural forces, spirits and land forms. Aboriginals with a traditional lifestyle have developed an understanding of local interactions over centuries within their very small geographic locations. Western science is conversely very much concerned with applying and testing generalizations, which go beyond one's field of experience. Thus, Westerners know little about the very specific nature of local ecosystems. For Battiste, Aboriginals who have lived within a particular ecosystem are better equipped than Western researchers to predict changes that might occur due to human stresses and natural dynamics within their local ecosystem. This idea is questioned by Widdowson and Howard, who see local IK as being imprecise and wholly political (2008, 3-7, 82-3).

However Western science and IK also have much in common. Western sciences, while often attempting to look for all-encompassing theories of the workings of the universe, also maintain very specific fields of study. Scientists often refrain from making generalizations about untested theories outside their field. I have often heard scientists claim that they "hope this might be applied to other areas to study, but it will take much further research and study in order to determine applicability." Western scientists, much like Aboriginals, often only talk about their local environment, specific fields of study, and/or collective experience. They often refrain from extrapolating ideas that have not been directly or collectively experienced (as would Aboriginals). Often the general public, through the media and the political arena, will attempt to apply scientific findings to very different situations.

This duality of collective experience and replicated experiment is very important. For instance, IK has often been passed on orally, while in the Western tradition writing holds great sway, so much so that the oral word is dismissed as insignificant. For instance, in today's world when budgets are being spent or decisions being made civil servants usually request an e-mail, so that they may "back themselves up." In science, we often want proof of past knowledge. This proof often comes in written form. Western scholars must semi-blindly trust the written word. Without this trust, it becomes very difficult to advance specific areas of research. When scholars/scientists break the common trust/ethics by writing false reports and information, it becomes difficult to take that information out of circulation, thereby undermining trust by other scientists in that area of study. We thus rely on collective written experience to advance our research. If we needed to experience everything first-hand in our field, it would be difficult to make any further advances.

The Dene Cultural Institute in the Northwest Territories has argued that traditional environmental knowledge (TEK) has "its roots firmly in the past." "TEK is both cumulative and dynamic, building upon the experience of earlier generations and adapting to the new technological and socioeconomic changes of the present" (taken from Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 44). Aboriginals pass on information through stories and examples from "generation to generation" that explain symbolic kinship and alliances of "ecological relationships between prey and other species" (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 45-6). In each generation, individuals will make observations, compare experiences, test the information for reliability, and exchange their findings with others.

For Battiste and Henderson, each Aboriginal must be a scientist to subsist "by direct personal efforts as a hunter, fisher, forager, or farmer with minimal mechanical technology." These are very high standards, especially for urban Aboriginals. Since every individual is engaged in a lifelong personal search for ecological understanding, the standard of truth in Indigenous knowledge systems is personal experience" (2000, 45). Even in Western society, average people use empirical methods in their daily lives. The

environment is different, but in order to subsist in an urban or wage economy, one must earn a wage. One must fill in forms, have identity cards and numbers, a job, bank accounts, interaction with people during a given day, and proficiency in a particular situation in order to be promoted and earn more money. For instance the task of getting to work is empirical in itself. Many questions must be answered: Do I take the bus or car? Which route? Do others near where I live have suggestions as to the best route to take? Are there shortcuts? This is much like an Aboriginal hunter living on the land and tracking his prey.

Western science and IK share very similar elements that nonetheless diverge in their approaches. Many consider this difference to be insurmountable, but each method has knowledge that can be of great use to the other. There has been much criticism of academia and the Western worldview concerning IK by Aboriginal authors such as Elizabeth Cook-Lynn. She has written that the most important IK ideas have not been explored by the academic world, due to differing viewpoints and unwillingness to “go against the prevailing intellectual thought of capitalist democracy that holds the idea that everything is for sale...and the only [importance] is the bottom line” (2007, 34). She further writes that these ignored ideas include the idea “that the intellect of an entire people is not property and therefore cannot be bought or sold or appropriated” and that sovereign nationalist tribalism should be able to speak from within and not be required to have outside “spokespersons” who will speak with the coherency of their unique human ethos (2007).

3.2 Colonialism and Identity

Cook-Lynn has also attempted to address the idea of identity this is an important subject because who has the right to discuss these issues. Who has ownership of ideas and policy even within supposedly “pure” aboriginal communities. The question of “who is an Indian [Aboriginal]” interacts with multiple groups that have competing and complementary interests (2007, 37). For Cook-Lynn, there have been many problems with how one goes about determining who is Aboriginal. Multiple authors and

“spokespersons” parade publicly, giving opinions about Aboriginals and what must be done. She ridicules the Aboriginal credentials of Micheal Dorris, Jamake Highwater, David Seals, Hertha Dawn Wong, Dr. Reyna Green, and Asa Forest³³ (2007, 88). Many authors write as if they are Native, but have no proof of ancestry or affiliation to a tribe.

Aboriginal tribes within Canada today are still not allowed to determine who their citizens are (Indian Act regulations), even though the government says that Aboriginal First Nations have a certain amount of autonomy. Admittedly, citizens of ordinary nation states often do not have questions raised about their citizenship. Authors and activists are not asked to provide proof of citizenship before publicly defending their scholarly work. They may be questioned on their values and whether those values correspond to the “general values” of their nation state, but they are never disowned. I disagree with Cook-Lynn and other Aboriginal scholars such as Deloria, Pewewardy, and Adams who wish to see Native Studies scholars justify their claims to Native ancestry. They must realize that this debate happens across many societies. Aboriginal societies, because of their still colonial tie to Canada, have much more complicated issues of identity and possession. To complete decolonization, however, identity should really be decided by Aboriginal groups and not by the federal government or any other outside organization.

Aboriginal communities are continually battling over the purity of the race. The Wendats of Wendake near Quebec City, in conversations about identity, often explain that they may have blond hair and blue eyes, but they still feel Aboriginal and hold dear the values that they feel serve them well as Wendats and Aboriginals (personal communication with Wendat presenter at annual powwow, 2001). Ray Young Bear in *Black Eagle Child, The Facepaint Narratives* wrote that such classification abounds among Aboriginals: “EBNOs (Enrolled But in Name Only)...BRYPUs (Blood-Related Yet Paternally Unclaimed)...EBMIWs (Enrolled But Mother is White)... UBENOBs (Unrelated By Either Name Or Blood)... Red Apple (Indian on the outside, but white inside), etc....” (1992).

³³ A member of the Ku Klux Klan identified as an Indian author and wrote *The Education of Little Tree*, a popular book among the University of New Mexico Press’s titles.

For Cook-Lynn, this identity debate among scholars has derailed more important debates about sovereignty, genocide, and other Aboriginal issues. It should be recognized that Aboriginals and their identity are closely tied to colonialism, sovereignty, and education. The ability of a tribe to decide who their members are and on what terms they are citizens is a human right that requires much internal debate. In no way should debate be precluded when ideas come into conflict (2007, 71-90).

3.3 Colonialism and Legitimacy

Who is given legitimacy in speaking for Aboriginal peoples is crucial to these nations' economic and social status, laws, and their relations to academia. The use of exogenous scholarship as the norm for helping Aboriginal nations has "failed to strengthen and develop Native American populations in any substantial way" (Cook-Lynn, 2007, 79). For Cook-Lynn, true Aboriginal spokespersons with real legitimacy have been belittled, ignored, and/or disavowed in academia "by individual non-Native scholars who call into question" Aboriginal testimonials about their experiences and those of their communities. She cites the 1996 collection of essays *The Real Thing*. It is certainly understandable that in the 1990s certain scholars would feel discomfort at being challenged in their ideas and positions.

In my conversations with doctoral students at Laval University, most feel a certain malaise about their studies at various points. They ask themselves: Do I have a right to undertake this research? Is it useful? Perhaps an Aboriginal could do this better. What right do I have to be writing about people who are not even my own? (confidential informants' personal communication, 2009). Often though, there are not enough academically trained Aboriginal scholars. As nature abhors a void, the void is filled by those who are qualified. Very few Canadian scholars hold racist views or are hostile to the political aspirations of Aboriginal nations. Some are critical, such as Tom Flanagan

(2008), Smith (1995), Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard³⁴ (2008). By challenging the current orthodoxy in Canadian Aboriginal politics, they have created a niche viewpoint. For the most part (based on what I see as my personal experiences), many who work in political science and especially anthropology are very supportive of Aboriginals and their aspirations as nations and individuals.

Wole Soyinka (African) has written: “When the writer in his own society can no longer function as a conscience he must recognize that his choice lies between denying himself totally or withdrawing to the position of chronicler and post-mortem surgeon (taken from Cook-Lynn, 2007, 45). If writers and scholars are afraid to speak their minds in a decolonized society, then it is no better than a colonial society. Little has changed in the power structure and how that power is used.

3.4 The Land

Oren Lyons, the faith keeper of the Onondaga Nation, on December 10, 1992 addressed³⁵ the UN General Assembly just before the 1993 proclamation of *The International Year of the Indigenous Peoples* about the need for recognizing the Aboriginal philosophy:

We created great ceremonies of thanksgiving for the life-giving forces of the Natural World, as long as we carried out our ceremonies, life would continue. We were told that “The Seed is the Law.” Indeed, it is the Law of Life. It is The Law of Regeneration. Within the seed is the mysterious force of life and creation. Our mothers nurture and guard that seed and we respect and love them for that. Just as we love I hi do' hah, our Mother Earth, for the same spiritual work and mystery.

³⁴ They are not racist. They overtly question Aboriginal orthodoxy in Canada and the United States. After having read their books, I have found many points that need consideration and have even affected my approach in writing this dissertation. When these authors challenge an “Aboriginal industry,” they have not always been offered measured scientific discussion of their views. The response has too often been heinous diatribes on the part of those involved in the “industry.” They feel that many non-Aboriginal scientists are afraid to speak up about situations because of concerns for later research. Debate and discussion maintain a rigorous scientific mind. If we are afraid to express our opinions, our collective search for truth will be compromised.

³⁵ According to Craig Carpenter, the transcriber (Lyons, 1992), Oren Lyons received a standing ovation and shouts of approval from Indian spectators.

We were instructed to be generous and to share equally with our brothers and sisters so that all may be content. We were instructed to respect and love our Elders, to serve them in their declining years, to cherish one another. We were instructed to love our children, indeed, to love *ALL* children. We were told that there would come a time when parents would fail this obligation and we could judge the decline of humanity by how we treat our children.

Oren Lyons, 1992

At a later meeting of the UN Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders August 28-31, 2000 Oren Lyons gave another statement about the sacredness of earth.

Leaders of the World: Indigenous nations and peoples believe in the spiritual powers of the universe. We believe in the ultimate power and authority of a limitless energy beyond our comprehension. We believe in the order of the universe. We believe in the laws of creation and that all life is bound by these same natural laws. We call this essence the spirit of life. This is what gives the world the energy to create, procreate and becomes the ponderous and powerful law of regeneration, the law of the seed. We in our collective voices speak of this to remind you that spirit and spiritual laws transcend generations. We know because this has sustained us. Religions and spirituality are vital to survival and moral law. It is faith that has sustained our human spirit through our darkest hours. It has sustained our human spirit in crisis, during the times we suffered through the grinding measures of inexorable persecution that have spanned generations and continue today. Yet here we are today, adding our voices to this plea for sanity in leadership and responsibility to the future generations whose faces are looking up from the Earth, each awaiting their time of life here. Leaders of the World: There can be no peace as we wage war upon OUR MOTHER, THE EARTH. Responsible and courageous actions must be taken to realign ourselves with the great laws of nature. We must meet this crisis now, while we still have time.

Oren Lyons, 2000

The relationship of theology to the modern ecological crisis became an intense issue of debate in Western academia in 1967, following publication of the article, *The Historical Roots of Our Ecological Crisis* by Lynn White. White put forward a theory that the Christian model of human dominion over nature has led to environmental devastation.

White's premise is that “all forms of life modify their context,” i.e., all of creation will create change in our environment. She felt that man’s relationship with the natural environment was always a dynamic and interactive one, even in the Middle Ages. For White, the Industrial Revolution was a fundamental turning point in Western and global ecological history. Renaissance science and its improved access to technology increased possibilities for affecting and exploiting the environment (1967). The Industrial Revolution fostered a mentality of seeing the earth as a resource for human consumption. There are, of course, older roots in medieval Christianity and its attitudes towards nature. White wrote: “What people do about their ecology depends on what they think about themselves in relation to things in their environment.” The Judeo-Christian theology was fundamentally exploitative of the natural world, with the Old Testament asserting man's dominion over nature and establishing a trend of anthropocentrism, and with Christianity making a distinction between man (formed in God's image) and the rest of creation, which has no “soul” or “reason” and is thus inferior (White, 1967, 1203-7).

The resulting indifference towards nature continues to impact the “post-Christian” world. White felt the use of more science and technology to help fix problems would not help. It is essentially Western fundamental ideas about nature that must change; Westerners must abandon “superior, contemptuous” attitudes that make them [willing to use] mother earth for [their] slightest whim.” White, after having made such a leap of faith, still maintained that Christianity was still the best worldview. The medieval St. Francis of Assisi was a religious model who could inspire a “democracy” of creation where all creatures are respected and man’s rule over creation is delimited (White, 1967, 1203-7). It is incredible that within the borders of North America smaller Aboriginal nations have held these beliefs for thousands of years, but they are seen as neither serious nor viable to the Western worldview, and as such are not seriously considered.

The Dakota children understand that the earth is a part of us and we a part of the earth, that we all cherish the birds and the animals that are nourished by the earth as we are. All things are intricately combined because all drink the same water and all breathe the same air.

Luther Standing Bear, *My People the Sioux*

In Suzuki, 2007, 131

For many Aboriginal peoples, the land is the foundation from which life, inspiration, identity, history, and purpose are derived (Smith, 2005, 121). Suzuki says that some Paiakan and Kayapo chiefs have described the land as our “supermarket and our pharmacy.” For most of human history we have been nomadic hunter-gatherers moving from area to area constantly searching for food. The idea of land ownership was and still is a difficult concept for many Aboriginals. Traditionally many Aboriginals still believe that they had the right to use a given area, but this use still implied a certain amount of responsibility (Suzuki, 2007, 132) and of stewardship (Miller and Davidson, 2011, 10-1).

Each chief has an ancestor who has influenced the life of this land and was as such recognized. Authority comes from parallel meetings. The spirits inhabit the territory, it inhabits the animals and the people, all, and we must demonstrate our respect. It is the foundation of our law.

Delgam Uukw, Hereditary Chief of the Gitksan, 1987

In Suzuki, 2007, 132

Consequently, the relation between man and the land creates a necessity for man to protect and preserve the latter’s fertility. Man must never take more than is needed, leave some for others or for other times, and give the earth the fruits of hunting and food gathering (Suzuki, 2007, 132).

The Hopi territory is from a spiritual point of view held in trust for the Great Spirit...This land is as a sanctuary of a church-it is our Jerusalem...This earth was assigned to the Hopi people by a power that goes far beyond that of humans. This right is the foundation of the Hopi way of life in its integrity. The land is sacred and if it is the victim of abuse, the sacred character of the Hopi life will disappear and in consequence all other life as well. We have received these lands from the Great Spirit and we must conserve them until his return, in the way of a steward or a guardian.

Hopi chiefs in *L'Équilibre Sacré* by David Suzuki, 2007, pp 132-3

For most Aboriginals, spirituality is a component of their lives to various degrees, much as in Western societies. This reverence for the land and the universe appeals not only to

Aboriginals but also to a wider audience of environmentalists, concerned people, and even theologians. Many Aboriginal spiritual leaders insist that Mother Earth needs to be tended to and is sacred. This Aboriginal movement has helped create a parallel Christian faction of ecotheology³⁶ or creation theology as well as New Agers (Page, 2003, 407-8).

Goulet points out that the Dene Tha conceive of land in both physical and metaphysical terms. They use the terms *ndahdigeh*, “our land” and *echudigeh*, “the other land,” for there is no delimitation between the physical and the metaphysical. The other land is experienced firsthand “in dreams or in visions when the soul journeys away from the body. Narratives by elders will often have stories of the other lands followed by stories of land (physical) such as a car trip into town” (1998, xxix).

This Indigenous worldview shows how nature and culture are a whole. The Cree of Quebec believe that ‘human’ and ‘animal’ are distinct concepts, but that nature is not radically separated from culture or society. The animal world is a part of the same social world that humans inhabit (Feit, 2001, 412). According to the Yup’ik worldview humans and nonhumans share a number of characteristics, such as the immortality of souls within a spiritual continuity. Both animals and humans could control their destinies; each was a thinking and feeling being (Feinup-Riordan, 2001, 543).

The importance of land to Aboriginals living nearer nature and still living off the land is vital to their worldview. If nature is removed from their daily experience, the land will become an abstract entity. This abstraction will lead to a further weakening of their worldview. If you are missing half your worldview, i.e., “your land,” how does your “other land” maintain itself? This difficult question has not been fully answered by Aboriginal writers and philosophers like Deloria, Battiste, and Cajete. How does an urban Aboriginal maintain his worldview when it is half- gone? What do you do if you never go hunting, and if you work in an office and never go or very rarely go on the land?

³⁶ Ecotheology is a form of constructive theology that focuses on the interrelationships of religion and nature, particularly in light of environmental concerns.

Aboriginals are falling into the same Western trap of us-versus-them. Early Christianity was divided into “those who held the true faith and those who held the false ones” (Goulet, 1998, xxvi). Aboriginals have set a standard for what constitutes an Aboriginal characteristic that all Aboriginals must meet, yet most do not live in small reserve communities and off the land. They live in the cities near services and jobs. Their contact with the land may be only cursory.

Debate is going on behind the scenes between Aboriginal traditionalists and integrationists. Some proud Aboriginals function very well within the Canadian body politic. Some Aboriginals still believe in maintaining a traditional lifestyle as much as possible. Most Aboriginals are still coming to grips with the idea that the moral world as it existed is no longer possible and any return would only be superficial (Deloria, 2006, xviii). It is a moral dilemma for Aboriginals. Both ways are wanted, but they are almost incompatible with each other. Many youth would love to lead a traditional lifestyle with greater attachment and relationship to this concept, but at the same time it is very hard with many inconveniences. A modern lifestyle with wage work provides many benefits that we all know to be very destructive of nature and the natural world..

Most readers have heard of the stereotype: Aboriginals are attached to their lands. The land is very important to their beliefs both spiritual and physically. Deloria in many of his books talks at great lengths of this importance. The same theme is often discussed by anthropologists in Canada and the United States who spend much time with Aboriginals. Admittedly, social scientists studying Aboriginals often only speak with those who are on the land and have a spiritual connection to the land. What about those who are urban?

The stereotype is an easy one. When David Suzuki (2007) speaks about traditional ecological beliefs and Aboriginal land, it is from a political position in which the primary interests of Aboriginal become secondary. The political issue is the relative power and resources to be made available to Canadian and American societies. Who controls what? The environment, mother earth, and the land form a structural triangle (pyramid) (Foucault, 1977, 127) that is difficult to challenge by Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals

alike. These ideas are used not because they may be true or not, but because of their political purpose and utility. They offer a type of political capital (Latour, 1995, 37) for many Aboriginal organizations and NGOs associated with them.

3.5 Power and Place

According to Deloria, power and place form two of the principles of “Indian” forms of knowledge. Power and place are dominant concepts. Power is the living energy that inhabits and composes the universe, and place is the relationship of elements/things to each other. For Deloria, power and place will produce personality. The universe³⁷ is thus alive and contains within it the suggestion that it is personal and therefore should be seen in a personal manner (1991; Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, 21).

Other Aboriginal writers, such as Cajete, while not challenging this idea also see place as being related to land (2001, 621). Place for Cajete, while it does include the land or physical place “with sun, wind, rain, water, lakes, rivers, and streams,” also includes the “spiritual place.” The sense of place is in continuous evolution within its relationships between all life and participants (2001, 621-5).

Aboriginal people have constructed beliefs around specific places whose sacred ambiance empowers human consciences and spirituality. For Battiste and Henderson, Indigenous concepts of “sacred ecology have five legal principles.” First, every individual human and nonhuman in an ecosystem is reciprocally responsible for the maintaining of relationships. “Knowledge of the ecosystem is legal knowledge” and those who have access to this “information bear especially heavy burdens of responsibility for teaching others and for mediating conflicts between humans and other species” (2000, 67).

Second, this responsibility and knowledge must be transmitted personally to an apprentice who has undertaken spiritual preparation. The apprentice must be prepared to

³⁷ This idea includes living animals, plants, the soil, the air, and the community, which all have relationships of interaction that create a matrix offering a sense of order or equilibrium.

accept this burden and hold the power of knowledge with humility. Much like the Ojibway and the Midewiwin³⁸ (Johnston, 1976, 80), the apprentice must undergo preparation with tests of courage, maturity, and sincerity (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 67).

Third, knowledge is transmitted through kinship according to the specific responsibilities of a particular lineage or clan. Individuals will have differing layers of information depending upon their kinships. For Battiste and Henderson, this IK is localized to an environment and its peoples, and is not conceived as having application to other ecosystems (67).

Fourth, knowledge may be shared or “lent” with visitors to a specific territory for “a specific time and purpose...the lender retains the right to conclude the arrangement if the knowledge lent is misused or if the responsibilities ...not fulfilled” (p 67). I question this idea that knowledge can be taken back after it has been “lent.” In many traditional stories, an Aboriginal hero has usually received information from a dream and then must proceed on a voyage. During the voyage, he/she meets elders and other beings who provide even more information freely, because they know that the heart of the person collecting the information is good.³⁹

Last, misuse of knowledge “can be catastrophic” for the individual, community, territory, and other beings. For Battiste and Henderson, such misuse is an “act of war on other species, breaking covenants and returning the land to a pre-moral and pre-legal vacuum.”

³⁸ A religious society of the Ojibwa who through learning, tasks, and greater understanding of the universe attain higher realms of metaphysical and physical knowledge. The Midewiwin practitioners are initiated and attain various degrees. Much like an apprentice system/academic degree program, a practitioner cannot advance to the next higher degree until completing the required tasks and gaining the full knowledge of that degree's requirements. Only after successful completion may a candidate be considered for advancement to the next higher degree (Johnston, 1976)

³⁹ In the Cree story, Nosesim was sent by his Nokoom (grandmother) on a trip where he met many grandmothers, all of whom provided him with a place to sleep and fresh moccasins. After many days of travel, he met a great chief who tested the youth. After having passed the test, Nosesim was given strange large animals (horses) from the Great Spirit, whereupon he returned to his tribe a great hero and leader (James Ouellette (father), personal communication, 1984; but also found in Brass & Nanooch, 1982).

Human use of a territory, beyond already known uses, interactions, and relationships among species “is, again tantamount to war and invites chaos” (2000, 67).

The education that an Aboriginal elder’s apprentice receives is very important not only for the individual, but also for the community. Basil Johnston writes that the community had a duty to train its members as individuals not so much for the community’s benefit (though this benefit did exist), but rather for the person’s good. The men or women so trained had received a gift from the community that was to be acknowledged in some way. That way consisted simply of enlarging one’s own scope to the fullest of one’s capacity, for the stronger the man, the stronger was the community. Equally true: the stronger the community, the firmer were its members (Johnston, 1976, 60-70).

Many Aboriginal cultures share a common ideal of spirituality. It is an attitude that surrounds the world and an individual’s place in the world. It stems from the philosophy that all is interrelated in a sacred manner and that everything has an importance. For instance, the relationship to the land needs respect and requires responsibility from humans for stewardship. For McCaskill, there is also a natural law of the universe and, because of holism; there should be no distinction between natural law and human law (1987).

The idea of land is also very important in many Aboriginal communities (reserves). It is not known if this is true for all Aboriginals, such as those living in urban areas. Most Aboriginal tribal religions have at their centre a sacred place that is physical in nature. This physical centre allows people to look along the four dimensions and locate their lands, to relate to all historical events within the confines of this particular land, and to accept responsibility for it. No matter what happens to the people, the sacred lands remain as permanent fixtures in tribal cultural or religious understanding (Deloria, 1992, 143, 172-4).

One’s place was viewed through the lens of land and, thence, identity, power, and continuity of life (Deloria, 1992, 146). In 1821, the Potawatomi chief, Metea, supposedly

said: “My father, our country was given us by the Great Spirit, who gave it to us to hunt upon, to make our cornfields upon, to live upon, and to make our beds upon when we die” (Armstrong, 1971 taken from Deloria, 1992, 172).⁴⁰

Control of land is power for many cultures. Many Western governments based their claims to lands taken from Indigenous populations on the idea of *terra nullius* (Hall, 2003, 31). It is the idea of empty wastelands that Aboriginals were not appropriately and efficiently using and that allowed European powers to take possession. By taking possession of tribal lands, Western governments have broken the covenant between specific Aboriginal nations and the lands, destroying both power and place. In Australia, in 1992, this idea was overturned by the *Mabo* ruling of the High Court of Australia. The court felt that there are surviving principles of cultural, territorial, and legal configurations that originated in forms of human understanding and organization predating the jurisdiction of European imperialism (Hall, 2003, 31), and it rejected as unfounded that Aboriginals did not have pre-existing ownership prior to Australian sovereignty.

Europeans, when they came to Turtle Island, knew little of the land and its workings. They had little perspective on the cultures that existed here and the relationships between the Aboriginals and the universe. Due to this lack of understanding, they saw the land as hostile, giving them the right to conquer and tame it.

Cook-Lynn writes that the American nation-state is based upon a myth of youth, newness, and whiteness of innocence. There is a moral dilemma that Americans have not been able to solve since they first set foot on eastern Turtle Island (2007, 94). The American myth requires denial that anything worthwhile ever existed before the Europeans came. The land, while beautiful and compelling, needs to be changed to meet the specifications of European culture and religion, ploughed up, made productive, and made to be worth something (Cook-Lynn, 2007, 91-6).

⁴⁰ Much like the speech by Chief Seattle, these words must be viewed with some scepticism.

For Cook-Lynn, America requires its history to be decent, good, and moral. America as a democratic and rich nation must have been good for Aboriginals, and they have clearly benefited. In this, Canada is no different. Aboriginals are different because they wish to see their own histories as Indigenous peoples contextualized in the land they have claimed since time immemorial. They believe in the existence of relationships between all of creation.⁴¹ “It is a religious view of origin[s] and occupancy not shared by colonists” (Cook-Lynn, 2007, 56).

3.6 Power, Respect, Reciprocity

Words have the power and ability to heal and the power to hurt. Elders say “think carefully about the words you say, choose them wisely; and let silence help.” The power of words/knowledge of the speaker/storyteller/teacher had to be “given back,” as our people say. This “giving back” is to others who need the knowledge, the power, and the teachings; it thereby ensures the perpetuation of cultural teachings, values, and beliefs that contribute to the cultural strength and understanding of the people (White and Archibald, 1992).

The movement of power is not hierarchical, as from the teacher (the top) down to the student (the bottom). Archibald pictures the movement of power as flowing from concentric circles. The inner circle may represent the words—the knowledge itself that expands and moves as it is taught to and shared with others. Other circles represent individuals, family, community, nature, nation, and the spiritual realm that are influenced and in turn influence this power. This knowledge-as-power reciprocity is grounded in respect and responsibility (White and Archibald, 1992).

Respect is essential; everyone has a place within the circle; their place and role is honoured and respected. All have a particular cultural responsibility for their place, their role, as storyteller-teachers, to share their knowledge with others, the listener-learner, to

⁴¹ For the Sioux, the stars are their relations (Cook-Lynn, 2007).

make meaning from the storyteller's words and to put this meaning into everyday practice, thereby continuing the action reciprocally (White and Archibald, 1992).

3.7 Respect in the Transmission of IK

Respecting traditions is very difficult in Aboriginal circles. Many leaders and traditionalists do not want the oral histories recorded or written down. They feel that they will lose control of their IK and that this knowledge may be used by those whose intentions are not to benefit their communities. When information is written down, a community gives up control. It will now enter the public domain, where those with little understanding of the local situation or circumstances will now judge that knowledge. The Western world has been doing this for thousands of years, but Aboriginals are just currently coming to grips with this “new” phenomenon (Castellano, 2000, 32).

Many, however, have concerns about the transmission of IK to newer generations. With modern technology and compulsory schooling, many young people have little time to be engaged in conversation about traditions with elders of their community. This is causing further rupture in IK transmission. When IK has not been written down, it can be very difficult for teachers to adapt Western pedagogical structures to transmit this information in a school environment. Elders may not be able to come to class and students may not have sufficient time to talk in depth with elders inside or outside class (Castellano, 2000).

Chief Dan George⁴² wrote in 1974 (184-8) about the difficulties faced by Aboriginal peoples. Many of his generation and of all generations often had trouble adapting to the modern Western 20th century. He writes: “I think it was the suddenness of it all that hurt us so. We did not have time to adjust to the startling upheaval around us. We seemed to have lost what we had without a replacement for it. We did not have time to take our 20th century progress and eat it little by little and digest it. It was forced feeding from the start and our stomachs turned sick and we vomited.”

⁴² A Hereditary Chief of the Coast Salish First Nation and honorary Chief of the Squamish First Nation (1974). Also a well-known Aboriginal actor and movie star who is featured on a 2008 Canada Post stamp.

These difficulties to adjust to a new way of life also affected how Aboriginals viewed themselves and how non-Aboriginals viewed them. “Do you know what it is like to feel you are of no value to society and those around you...had nothing to offer...I shall tell you what it is like. It is like not caring about tomorrow for what does tomorrow matter. It is like having a reserve that looks like a junk yard because the beauty in the soul is dead and why should the soul express an external beauty that does not match it? It is like getting drunk for a few brief moments, an escape from ugly reality and feeling sense of importance. It is most of all like awaking next morning to the guilt of betrayal. For the alcohol did not fill the emptiness but only dug it deeper” (George, 1974, 184-8).

Many Aboriginals have this same feeling and use much of the same self-destructive techniques to function. My father in 1977 left law school (University of Calgary) to take up drinking, saying he was “not deserving, unaccepted by those sons of guns, and it was just too much pressure to take” (personal communication with James Ouellette, February 15, 2006).

For Dan George, the 1970s were not the right time to accept integration into Canadian society⁴³ because the Aboriginals did not have self-respect. For “I will hold my head high for I will meet you as an equal” and only then will Aboriginals be ready to meet with Canadians. Chief George is talking of respect and not integration into a system that he and many Aboriginal do not believe in, but wishes instead to have his culture and worldview respected. “We want an equal opportunity to succeed in life...but we cannot succeed on your terms” (1974, 184-8).

3.8 Sharing

When we think of pre-contact Aboriginal cultures, we often think of a sharing society where no individual went hungry or was without the basic necessities of life. There was a great variety in the various cultures and in how they conceived of sharing. This idea of

⁴³ This is in reference to the White and Red Papers of 1969 and 1970.

Aboriginal sharing is a long-lived stereotype. When we share, it is usually in reference to material objects, and these material objects are often under the control of those who have procured them. It should be said that Aboriginal peoples worked very hard in pre-contact, contact, colonial, and modern periods. In the fur trading period, there was sharing among small tribal groups (family) that had special bonds, but sharing diminished once the bonds broadened to include more and more individuals.

Sharing was also much easier in the pre-contact and contact periods than in the modern period. Sharing was done when it did not put you and your family's survival at risk. You were most likely not going to feed others when your children were hungry. If you had too much it was expected that you give to others (who were most likely related to you) and help them in their time of need. Most of the people in your immediate group would have had much of the same materials; some might have had a few more horses, two guns instead of one, and a larger tipi, but in the end, there was a general levelling of material culture. No one had any educational, economic, or political advantage over others in the group. This is in sharp contrast to the modern period where people can make very diverse decisions about their lives and thereby gain very diverse material benefits. One may complete only Grade 10 while another will become a medical doctor. One might have his own business while another receives welfare. Another might have a drug and alcohol problem while another does not. I have made choices in my life that have led me to a certain level of education, a certain job, wife, children, and a large house. I would certainly be very distraught if a large number of needy Aboriginals expected that they could move into my home and use the material benefits that I have earned through wage labour. In this, we are very much like the Hudson's Bay men when they first started trading with Aboriginals. Theirs was a quest for material and wealth accumulation, while the Aboriginals were principally concerned not about material accumulation, but with survival (Newman, 1998, 166-177).

This is not to say that I will not share some of my wealth, of which I give 2% (not including taxes paid for services to the various governments) a year to various charities, but rather that often Aboriginals today are very reticent to engage in sharing as it was

once practised. We may give money to very close relations or friends who are in need, or give them some small amounts of money, but you would be hard pressed to find an Aboriginal who would permanently donate a \$20,000 car to someone who needed it. That car represents a year's labour and wages, and as such is important for the efforts that have been made. If a human was in absolute need or in the process of dying and this suffering could somehow be alleviated, few would say no. But I would find it difficult to give \$300 to pay a phone bill for someone with multiple personal problems. I would not want my time and wage labour wasted on such a futile effort.

In pre-contact and contact times I would most likely have been hunting, and if I was able to catch game I would have shared much of the meat with those in my small tribe/group who had not been as lucky that day. This is the sharing that characterized traditional Aboriginal cultures. Ethically, the Aboriginal people were known for their honesty. The papers of Women's Auxiliary (box 29, taken from Miller, 1996) write about a conversation between an Aboriginal and a Missionary: "May I leave my goods here? Will they be quite safe?" asked the missionary. "Quite safe, there are no white men about," replied the Indian.

I would like to take this occasion to mention that I did not review modern sharing practises of Aboriginal people in too much depth, because I am unfamiliar with many of these practises outside of my family and friends. I felt this would be of incidental understanding and I would not like to generalize in this manner.

3.9 Spirituality in Schooling and Responsibility

The older Sioux had never given up their beliefs, and the younger generations "have lately taken an interest in things Indian." This 1960s "religion [Aboriginal] revival" reflects a political interest in pan-Indianism," a multi-tribal "nationalism" (Ferrara, no date).

Akan (1992), a Saulteaux educator, states education is about character formation and the development of youth. This process involves the making of human beings. Children who do not have this sense of morality are believed to be incomplete as human beings. To be wholly human means to have a good sense of right and wrong and to be able to act on that sense. For a traditionalist Saulteaux teacher and parent, this carries tremendous responsibility because it means giving children a good spirit. In the modern educational system, do we have a responsibility to provide youth with a good spiritual foundation? Akan asks the question: “Are we doing this (1992)?”

Manitopeyes, an elder, makes us ask the question: “What is the spirit and intent of Native education or education itself” If it is not spiritual in nature, it is not good education for the Saulteaux traditionalist. The spiritual and emotional aspects of personal development must not be forgotten. Life for the Saulteaux traditionalist involves learning how to think and act in a morally acceptable way and to act in accordance with the old ways within a balanced modern context (Akan, 1992).

Elders have a very important role to play in traditional Aboriginal culture and education. They have vast experience and have learned throughout their lives the values, traditions, philosophy, and ceremonies of their specific Aboriginal nations. But the status and function of elders in modern Canadian Aboriginal society, and at school has not been settled (Medicine, 1987, 147). A holistic philosophy of the world forces Aboriginals not to put their elders away and separate them from life. Too often elders are separated from youth and youth separated from others in society. This gives very little chance for interaction between multiple generations. Youth, for instance, are organized by grade, and in school there is often very little contact with other grades let alone with elders (Gatto, 2003).

Andrea Smith in her book *Conquest* (2005, 134) shares the following story about the importance of elders and how they share knowledge and the responsibilities that come to both the giver and the receiver of IK.

In this community, there was a respected elder who knew all about cliff drawings and rock paintings as well as where they were located on the reservation. A young man who was interested in learning about traditional ways went to the elder and asked if the elder would teach him. So the elder agreed to teach him. He would take this young man on long walks to where the rock paintings were and take great care in uncovering them. He would then tell him a little about the paintings. Then, he would take great care to cover them up again before they took a long walk home. This went on for some time before the young man said, "We could save a lot of time if we just stayed here and you told me what the paintings all mean." To this, the elder replied that walking to the paintings and taking care was as important to understanding the traditions as was hearing about what they meant. Simply knowing facts was not enough; Native traditions are a way of life, and you have to know everything about the way of life. It wasn't just about information, it was about a way of being. Whatever comes easy, you do not value. He concluded: "It is not enough for you to understand the traditions, you must learn how to respect them."

As told by the sister of Andreas Smith (Smith 2005, 134).

In schools, many non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal educators have a compartmentalized view of the role an elder should play in the educational process. They are: 1) a source of information; 2) sources of strength; 3) a source of responsibility; and 4) a source of direction (Claire Goldsmith principal of John d'Or Prairie School taken from Medicine, 1987, 147).

Many times the elder's participation must be "appropriate," as defined by the school staff. Such a policy depreciates the knowledge of elders and restricts their independence to explain the values and traditions of their culture. There are also pay issues and how the elders are to be asked for information. Some schools will pay their elders a pittance while others will provide a decent salary. Many in the dominant society see such payment as unethical (Medicine, 1987, 150). Information from elders is probably not considered valuable for a Western educational experience. The question comes down to one of culture and indigenous knowledge. It also is one of sharing. Elders usually do not work, are unable to engage in many wage-earning activities, and often may need financial resources. Paying them for their information may be a way to maintain traditional philosophy.

Today's society is pervasively secular. This secularity must share much of the blame for the erosion of spirituality in all traditions. For Deloria, the result has been a parody of social interaction and a decline in civility. By believing in nothing except for what we can touch and feel (material), we pre-empt any role for higher spiritual forces in our lives (Deloria, 2006, xvii).

Even on the most traditional reservations of the United States and Canada, the erosion of many old ways is so pervasive that many people have cast aside ceremonies and traditions that had helped their ancestors for thousands of years. They have started to live in an increasingly meaningless secularity. For Vine Deloria, the consumer society is without end "consuming everything in its path." "The overwhelming majority of Indian people today have little understanding or remembrance of the powers once possessed by the spiritual leaders of their communities. What we do today is often simply a "walk-through" of a once-potent ceremony that now has little visible effect on the participants." For Deloria, mystery is largely gone, as it has likewise gone from the Christian sacraments, and all that remains is a perfunctory recitation of good thoughts not unlike the mantras of self-help books and videos (Deloria, 2006, xviii).

Non-Indians who find our old spiritual life-way meaningful often wish to believe and hope that much of that ancient kind of religious life still exists among our people... Sometimes it seems I am the only one left who lives completely that way. Years ago, in the time of my youth, there were lots of them. But now, even though there are others, including a few medicine men at Pine Ridge and Rosebud whom I have taught how to live holy lives, and who even do some of the ceremonial things that I do, there are only a few. Some have tried to live completely spiritual lives, but the attempt is as far as they get. So many drink, you see, and haven't the strength or the dedication to live that way. They just give in and give up. I am not pleased to say this, nor am I boasting when I say I do better. I wish for the sake of the people that there were hundreds immersed in constant vision-seeking and prayer. But I think I am one of the very few left...

Frank Fools Crow (Lakota)

Taken from *In the Spirit of Crazy Horse*, 1992, p 219

People discredit or discard facts that call into question socially acceptable explanations. Society tends to isolate the facts of experience and to accept only the ones that support already popular beliefs and dogmas (Deloria, 2006, xix).

When you arise in the morning, give thanks for the light; give thanks for the morning, for life and strength; give thanks for your food and the joy of living. If you see no reason for giving thanks, rest assured, the fault lies within yourself.

Chief Tecumseh, Shawnee Nation

Taken from Friesen and Friesen, 2002, p 50

3.10 Language and Orality

To protect their heritage, indigenous peoples must control their own means of cultural transmission and education. This includes their right to the continued use and wherever necessary, the restoration of their own languages and orthographies.

Dr. Erica-Irene Daes,

Principles and Guidelines for the

Protection of the Heritage of Indigenous Peoples, 1995, Art 7.

For Battiste and Henderson, “language is a manifestation of the finite contained in an infinite mystery” within human conscience (2000, 73). Benjamin Whorf suggests that languages with radically different structures create radically different worldviews (1956 taken from Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 73). He writes that worldviews grow out of the structure of language, thus creating important ideas that then become embedded in our conscience. He also points to major differences. Indo-European languages and worldviews are based on nouns, whereas many Aboriginal languages are based on verbs (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 90).

Even though Whorf’s hypothesis has been seriously questioned, few would disagree with the idea that language is key to the transmission of a culture and a specific understanding of the world. The original language of a culture incorporates many aspects of a society, be they social, cognitive, linguistic, material, emotional, collective, or spiritual (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 29). Its most significant aspects, according to Leavitt, are

conceptualization, preservation, and transmission of knowledge (1995, 126-8). To protect these aspects, authors such as Fettes and Norton have advocated a program for Aboriginal languages within the Department of Canadian Heritage and an end to piecemeal initiatives (2000, 29-54).

Our Native language embodies a value system about how we ought to live and relate to each other...it gives a name to relations among kin, to roles and responsibilities among family members, to ties with the broader clan group...there are no English words for these relationships...Now, if you destroy our languages you not only break down these relationships, but you also destroy other aspects of our Indian way of life and culture, especially those that describe man's connection with nature, the Great Spirit and the order of things. Without our languages, we will cease to exist as a separate people.

Eli Taylor, elder from Sioux Valley First Nation in Manitoba
AFN Rebirth of First Nation Languages (1992)

In 2003, the Department of Canadian Heritage mandated a committee, *The Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures*, to study Aboriginal languages in Canada and make recommendations for their preservation. In 2005, it presented the Minister with their findings. It found that over half of the sixty Aboriginal languages in Canada are endangered while ten others have gone extinct over the past century (CBC News, 2005). Through its efforts and those of its partners, such as the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), Inuit Tapiriit Kanatami (ITK), and the Métis National Council (MNC), \$172.5 million was earmarked over eleven years for Aboriginal languages. The report has several interesting elements that are all the more so because they come from a government committee.

The final report surprisingly refers to the Creator. The task force “was inspired by a vision that sees First Nation, Inuit and Métis languages as gifts from the Creator carrying unique and irreplaceable values and spiritual beliefs that allow speakers to relate with their ancestors and to take part in sacred ceremonies. This vision sees the present generation recovering and strengthening the ability to speak these sacred, living languages and passing them on so that the seventh and future generations will be fluent in

them” (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, 2005). It is very beautiful rhetoric, but unusual for a government committee.

The task force also reported that Aboriginal languages embody a “people’s philosophy and culture,” and are “key to the collective sense of identity and nationhood of the First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples.” Furthermore, Aboriginal “languages arose here and are structured differently than languages born elsewhere, because they are based on relationships.” These relationships are primarily a connection to the land. For the task force, “the land” is more than the physical landscape; “it involves the creatures and plants, as well as the people’s historical and spiritual relationship to their territories.” There also exists a “responsibility to protect it and to preserve the sacred and traditional knowledge associated with it.”

For the task force, knowledge and culture are passed on to future generations through oral tradition. This is the “preserve of Elders and others whose sacred responsibility is to pass on the stories that reflect the relationship between the people and the places and events that define them.” Aboriginal nations are “linked by common bonds of language, culture, ethnicity and a collective will to maintain their distinctiveness.” The task force then set aside the high rhetoric and harangued the government about past policies of assimilation that have contributed to language loss (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, 2005).

An additional point needs discussion. There are many benefits from being able to converse with the dominant society in its language. When Aboriginals and Westerners first met, there was little ability to communicate. McCormick the former National Spokesman for the Native Council of Canada wrote about the lack of understanding that still pervades the Canadian political system. The lack of understanding becomes an “unintentional breeding ground for misunderstanding” (1990).

These multiple misunderstandings resulted, thus allowing Western explorers the liberty to classify the Aboriginal peoples as they saw fit, as savages, primitive, slow, and so on... Because Aboriginals could neither defend themselves nor quickly offer up a different

viewpoint, this Western vision of Aboriginals has become anchored in the psyche of dominant and Aboriginal peoples. Today, by being able to speak the same language as the dominant society, Aboriginals can more effectively communicate both on a personal level and within the media.

According to the Western liberal economic system, differences in currencies, borders, measuring systems, and laws impede the free flow of goods, wealth, and knowledge between different world regions, thereby preventing the creation of monetary wealth (Kennedy, 1989). Advocates of this view largely avoid discussing language because it has been such an emotional issue with many minorities around the world, and not just Aboriginals. While growing up, I often heard: “Why don’t people in Quebec just speak English? It would save the whole country money, prevent separation, and allow us to just get on with it [it being economic development].” I still sometimes hear this view.

These thoughts, while certainly very horrifying to French-speaking Canadians, represent a certain logic of the Western economic system and a certain continuity of understanding. If we all spoke the same language, we would all be able to communicate far easier and economic growth would benefit accordingly. Such standardization has been occurring around the world since the fall of the Roman Empire and is still continuing today (Kennedy, 1989). Fortunately, for many peoples, and not just Aboriginals, life is not just about economic growth. There are other considerations:

Language is power to understand culture. For a long time, we were told our language was not good. We speak defensively. But our language is beautiful . . . old people at home have a different song . . . language brings a smile . . . when you understand language . . . it is music . . . a song. Bundles were kept alive in the language. If we know how to use medicine bundles, we can give them to the young people . . . hope, forgiveness, balance, in a good way, practising natural laws . . . Language is an incredible teaching tool.

William Dumas, Cree, Thompson
From the Manitoba Curriculum K-12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture

Cultural transmission is often aided by language. Specific to each language are thought processes that are specific to each culture and are conveyed through stories and words. Microsoft computers and Mac computers use different operating systems. These differences have led to differences in the way each computer is used and designed. Today, these two types of computer can communicate with each other, but this has not always been so. File transfer from one to the other used to be almost impossible. Even now, each operating system seems to be better suited for certain tasks. Microsoft is often preferred for word processing and spreadsheets, and Mac for artwork, graphics, music, and so on...

Similar differences exist among the world's languages, and they may matter as much for preserving plurality of ideas. This point was raised by the elders who had been consulted by the task force and who issued a number of recommendations for the preservation of languages. Educational institutions were seen to be very important in helping to stop the decline of languages (Task Force on Aboriginal Languages and Cultures, 2005).

According to the task force, educational institutions should:

1. Create training programs, including immersion and bilingual schools, cultural camps, and urban language programs;
2. Instate Aboriginal control of language curricula to make language study mandatory;
3. Increase language teaching hours;
4. Provide courses and programs (including degree programs), in First Nation, Inuit, and Métis languages and cultures;
5. Develop educational resources, including curricula, books, promotional and supplemental materials, technology, and research to address the needs of professions such as medicine, law, and engineering;
6. Encourage the youth to take leadership roles in language preservation; and
7. Develop other training resources, such as language mentoring programs, language teacher training programs, and formal acknowledgment of elders' ability to teach languages, including appropriate professional recognition.

Many of these findings and recommendations had already been made by the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996). By 2005, not very much advancement had taken place. The problem is not that such reports are erroneous, but rather that they are engaged in a one-way conversation, with no one listening at the other end. Which universities, colleges, or school boards have read this report? How many have actually acted on its recommendations? Who will be taking action? The most likely answer: none and nobody. No one will take up this cause or other similar causes. It is not part of their mandate, the benefits are difficult to quantify and, as all managers like to ask: “Who is going to pay?”

Calliou estimated that fifty of Canada’s fifty-three Indigenous languages would disappear by the end of the next century (2001, 10). Many see schools as the solution, because of the preponderance of time they take up in children’s lives. It is doubtful whether schools can rejuvenate Aboriginal languages without parental support. Some parents have even removed their children from these classes because they see no need for them. Nor will they support a language program if they feel it will handicap their children’s long-term future (Paupanekis and Westfall, 2002, 101).

Are Aboriginal schools up to the task of preparing their children for “survival” in the Western world? (Brèda, Chaplier & Servais, 2008). Some parents once felt that residential school would do something for their children. They would either spend time explaining the importance of a “white man’s” education or just send their children to residential school for the knowledge that they felt they themselves could not give (Miller, 1996). My Uncle William Wuttunee, my Grandmother (Maria Wuttunee-Ouellette), and my father were willingly sent to residential school by their parents, who had decided to leave the reservation in order to improve their economic position. Although many were and are against industrial schooling in Aboriginal communities, others still wish to see their children partake in this learning of non-traditional knowledge.

Many Aboriginal elders believe in language as a means to learn traditional knowledge. Academics such as Kirkness feel that most Aboriginal people in Canada wish to protect,

preserve, promote, and practise Aboriginal languages in daily life (1998). It is nonetheless very difficult to recreate and revive a language. The Wendat of Wendake (near Quebec City) have begun to restore their “long vanished” language in the Wendake elementary school system i.e., the *Yawenda Project*. The project started in 2006 with Professor Louis-Jacques Dorais and Isabelle Picard and is funded by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada. Despite some encouraging results, like introductory classes in conversational Wendat, the language is not expected to become a regular means of communication within the community, at least not in the near future. Language revival is rather aimed at reinforcing Wendat identity (interview with Linda Sioui, 2009).

Language ... is not just a neutral instrument [for communication]. Rather, it shapes our very conceptualization of phenomena, such that some phenomena are not translatable into another language and some languages have no words for certain phenomena found in other cultures.... We Aboriginal people are forced to speak the foreign language of the English to convey a lot of our spirituality, our thought, our essence. Unfortunately, it is not adequate to the task. So, if people want to understand us and the things in which we take pride, they should learn our respective languages. I am proud of my Cree language and heritage.

George Calliou, Cree, Sucker Creek, Alberta

Taken from Alberta Cree Language and Culture Curriculum 10-20-30 6 year program

The Cree of Quebec have their own school board and have set up language programs to develop and preserve the Cree language. They have far greater access to official support because the hydroelectric agreements have given them more bargaining power. They are exempt from Quebec’s language laws (Law 101), which have even given them greater leeway to defend their language.

Such language instruction has the backing of a lobby of Aboriginal parents, teachers, and community members that is getting stronger. Aboriginal language programs are more easily introduced in reserve schools than in public schools. A number of reserves now have such programs. Less has been done in major urban centres. Although many public schools across Canada have taken up this cause, there often are not enough students for any one language to warrant classes. In Saskatchewan, the school system has developed a

centralized Aboriginal language curriculum for elementary and high schools (Fettes and Norton, 2000). Friesen and Friesen (2002) describe this development as a positive step because “it will hopefully give opportunity for non-Natives to expand the repertoire of their potential language learning.” They would like non-Natives to appreciate the nuances of traditional Aboriginal thought and adopt some of the values inherent to those thought processes.

How many students are needed to warrant classroom instruction? As we have seen, the *Official Languages Act* is quite clear on this matter (Rasmussen, 2009). Groups living in a minority official language situation have used the courts to obtain language instruction of their choice. The courts have mandated French schools that now serve very small French communities in Nunavut, Alberta, and Prince Edward Island. As of yet, no court ruling has mandated Indigenous language instruction either in a single class or in an entire school. This is unlikely to change in the future. Few parents and educators are demanding such services. According to MacPherson, minority language (French or English) groups have the legal right under Section 23 of the Canadian Charter to an education in their language when numbers warrant (1991, 43). If Section 15 is also considered, Aboriginals may have a case for a legal challenge under the principle of equality (p 33).

3.11 Oral Tradition

Aboriginal rituals, ceremonies, and observances were based on metaphysical spiritual principles. They were usually transmitted during pre-contact times through oral tradition, since there were no extensive written languages before contact (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 63-64). Oral tradition is a common way to hand down knowledge in the form of stories, beliefs, and customs from one generation to the next. Also passed down are laws and rules of behaviour (Daly, 2005).

Over the past twenty years, major battles have been fought in various courts around the world over Aboriginal sovereignty and title versus the colonial nation’s sovereignty and

title to occupied land. The *Delgamuukw* case has been the most prominent court case since the patriation of the Constitution (1982). In the initial ruling by Chief Justice McEachern (B.C. Supreme Court) on March 8, 1991, the use of Aboriginal law (oral history) on an equal basis as that of common law was rejected as a criterion for determination of title, ownership, and sovereignty. This rejection was eventually overturned by the Supreme Court of Canada on December 11, 1997, which deemed that common law and Aboriginal law must be assessed from their own perspectives and that equal weight must be given both to determine title (Daly, 2005, xiv-xv). The Supreme Court ordered a new trial and instructed that oral history be used.

Aboriginal title arises from the prior occupation of Canada by Aboriginal peoples. That prior occupation is relevant in two different ways: first, because of the physical fact of occupation, and second, because Aboriginal title originates in part from pre-existing systems of Aboriginal law

Chief Justice Lamer, Canada Supreme Court

The factual findings made at trial could not stand because the trial judge's treatment of the various kinds of oral histories did not satisfy the principles laid down in *R. v. Van der Peet*. The oral histories were used in an attempt to establish occupation and use of the disputed territory which is an essential requirement for aboriginal title. The trial judge refused to admit or gave no independent weight to these oral histories and then concluded that the appellants had not demonstrated the requisite degree of occupation for "ownership". Had the oral histories been correctly assessed, the conclusions on these issues of fact might have been very different.

Lamer C.J. and Cory, McLachlin and Major JJ

The court, in explaining its ruling on the content of Aboriginal title, how it is protected by s. 35(1) of the Constitution Act, 1982, and the requirements for proof, writes that "Aboriginal title is *sui generis*, and so distinguished from other proprietary interests, and characterized by several dimensions. It is inalienable and cannot be transferred, sold or surrendered to anyone other than the Crown. Another dimension of aboriginal title is its sources: its recognition by the *Royal Proclamation, 1763* and the relationship between the common law which recognizes occupation as proof of possession and systems of aboriginal law pre-existing assertion of British sovereignty. Finally, aboriginal title is

held communally.” This idea of Aboriginal title being *sui generis* and being sourced from orally transmitted systems of Aboriginal law may have ramifications for education.⁴⁴ If oral history is valid for determining Aboriginal title, surely maintenance of oral history and Indigenous knowledge is just as vital. Could Aboriginal education be *sui generis* and as such have a right to exist on its own terms?

Justices Lamer, Cory, McLachlin, and Major write that “the exclusive right to use the land is not restricted to the right to engage in activities which are aspects of Aboriginal practices, customs and traditions integral to the claimant group’s distinctive Aboriginal culture. Canadian jurisprudence on Aboriginal title frames the “right to occupy and possess” in broad terms and, significantly, is not qualified by the restriction that use be tied to practice, custom or tradition. The nature of the Indian interest in reserve land which has been found to be the same as the interest in tribal lands is very broad and incorporates present-day needs. Finally, Aboriginal title encompasses mineral rights and lands held pursuant to Aboriginal title should be capable of exploitation. Such a use is certainly not a traditional one” (Lamer, 1997). Western (former colonial) nation states have often been dismissive of Aboriginal peoples for reasons of power and wealth. To maintain their privileges of power and occupation, these governments have pushed aside any claims by Aboriginal nations to sovereignty or full title to their lands (and their lives) through the use of actual and symbolic violence (Bourdieu, 1992).

Since the early 1970s, non-Aboriginal society has been more willing to accept differing points of view, but often only those that do not challenge the prevailing orthodoxy. This has been a slow process. When the Nisga’a *Calder* case came before the Supreme Court of Canada, Justice Emmett Hall (January 31, 1973), in a minority opinion, felt that the earlier ruling had failed to acknowledge the changes in society and the accretion of knowledge with regard to First Nations life and history (Daly, 2005, xiv).

The assessment and interpretation of the historical documents and enactments tendered in evidence must be approached in the light of present-day research and knowledge

⁴⁴ Aboriginal education is often called *sui generis*.

disregarding ancient concepts formulated when understanding of the customs and culture of our original people was rudimentary and incomplete and when they were thought to be wholly without cohesion, laws or culture, in effect a subhuman species. This concept of the original inhabitants of America led Chief Justice Marshall in his otherwise enlightened judgment in *Johnson v. McIntosh*, which is the outstanding judicial pronouncement on the subject of Indian rights to say, “But the tribes of Indians inhabiting this country were fierce savages whose occupation was war...” We now know that that assessment was ill-founded. The Indians did in fact at times engage in some tribal wars but war was not their vocation and it can be said that their preoccupation with war pales into insignificance when compared to the religious and dynastic wars of “civilized” Europe of the 16th and 17th centuries. Marshall was, of course, speaking with the knowledge available to him in 1823. Chief Justice Davey in the judgment under appeal, with all the historical research and material available since 1823 and notwithstanding the evidence in the record which Gould J. found was given “with total integrity” said of the Indians of the mainland of British Columbia:

...They were undoubtedly at the time of settlement a very primitive people with few of the institutions of civilized society, and none at all of our notions of private property.

In so saying this in 1970, he was assessing the Indian culture of 1858 by the same standards that the Europeans applied to the Indians of North America two or more centuries before.

Justice Emmett Hall, Supreme Court of Canada, 1973

This idea of existing Aboriginal law and sovereignty, as represented by oral tradition, gives life to Aboriginal culture and social structure. Oral tradition was often combined with actions, such as ritual. By participating in these rituals, youths and adults acquired powerful religious and moral sensibilities. Oral tradition held a certain sway over the lives of those involved in its present and future transmission.

For many in the West, oral tradition is less serious and rigorous than written tradition. Yet a tradition is not necessarily less complex just because it is unwritten. Nor is its spiritual and moral impact less important. For instance, the Jewish people had extensive oral laws. These laws were interpretations of the Torah and their ultimate goal was to allow an evolving interpretation of the written word. In the 5th century B.C. two Persian Jews, Ezra and Nehemiah, canonized the Five Books of Moses (Torah), thereby closing

the door to any future revelation. But the outcome was not as expected. Life could not stop at the command of these rabbis; it went right on throwing new problems and questions at the Jewish people. At this point, a new tradition sprang up through oral interpretations of written law by learned men in centres of learning (*Yeshivas*). The Jews could thus amend and reinterpret the Mosaic laws much as Canada now amends and reinterprets our Constitution. Instead of forcing problems to fit the patterns of the past, Jews fashioned new patterns to fit new circumstances. This method became known as the *Mishna* and eventually as the Talmud (Dimont, 1962, 166-9).

Oral tradition exhibits stability and conservative development. Change is inevitable, but if it comes too abruptly there will be adverse impacts. When change comes slowly, oral tradition can be adapted accordingly. As well, elders are more revered. They have had a chance to hear more often and repeat more often the same stories, thus gaining a more in-depth understanding. With the advent of written tradition, elders tend to be eliminated because the written word is seen as providing a better recollection of past knowledge. It is also seen as being objective and free from interpretation. This loss of oral tradition has motivated ethnographers and ethnomusicologists for the past 150 years to record songs, stories, and traditions from peoples around the world. Oral tradition matters because it offers a picture of our cultural past that has been easily forgotten in a modern literary world. It also holds important information about our beliefs and their underlying philosophy.

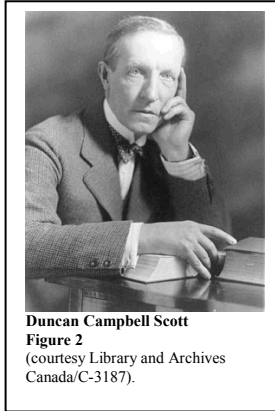
Chapter 4. Historical Review of Aboriginal Education in the Political Entity of Canada

We have discussed approaches to Aboriginal decolonization, but before proceeding further we must lay the groundwork for a proper understanding of the history of Aboriginal education. A number of variables are involved: treaties, government policy, Aboriginal activism, Indian residential schools, international Indigenous rights, pan-Aboriginal organizations views on education, and the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Let us start with perhaps one of the most cited texts on Aboriginal education: the historically important paper of *Indian Control of Indian Education* published in 1972 by the National Indian Brotherhood (forerunner of the Assembly of First Nations, (AFN). This paper came out only 80 years after the disastrous impacts of the Canadian residential/industrial school system on Native culture, identity, languages and, more importantly, the physiological well-being of Aboriginal children had been in full swing. It was published in response (in the area of education) to the 1969 *White Paper* of the federal government and to then Prime Minister Pierre Trudeau. It had the backing of numerous Aboriginals and Indigenous organizations from across the country who were demanding changes.

In February 1973, the Minister of Indian Affairs Jean Chrétien accepted in principle the idea of Indian control of Indian education as official government policy. “I have given the National Indian Brotherhood my assurance that I and my Department are fully committed to realizing the educational goals for the Indian people which are set forth in the Brotherhood’s proposal” (The Indian News, 1973). By this time federal officials had become wholly uncomfortable with the system of assimilation by overt means. In private, they had been questioning the unmitigated disaster of the residential school and on-reserve school systems (CRPA, 1996a).

Aboriginal education has since undergone a number of changes. Policy is still being characterized by major challenges and changes in jurisdiction, sovereignty, and curriculum. These elements are intricately intertwined. In the years following acceptance of the policy its implementation has proved to be problematic. “It was pointed out that the Department of Indian Affairs, while accepting the 1972 policy of Indian control, had re-defined “control” to mean a “degree of participation.” This definition allowed the Department to move slowly, delegating administrative programs rather than policy development and real management and financial control (Barman, Hebert, McCaskill, 1987, 6; Longboat, 1987, 25). Many First Nations education programs have been left in limbo (Shilling, 2002).



Duncan Campbell Scott
Figure 2
(courtesy Library and Archives
Canada/C-3187).

Before Aboriginal peoples were given control of education, they were subservient to a paternalistic state. Even before Confederation, when Upper and Lower Canada together formed ‘United Canada’, John A. Macdonald, Étienne-Paschal Taché, and Georges-Étienne Cartier passed in 1857 an *Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of the Indian Tribes of Canada* (Dickason, 2002). After Confederation in 1867, the Canadian government decided to maintain and even expand this policy of assimilation. The long-term goal was to bring the Native peoples from their “savage and unproductive state” and force civilization upon them, thus making Canada a homogeneous society in the Anglo-Saxon and Christian tradition (Miller, 1989).

I want to get rid of the Indian problem. I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department. That is the whole object of this Bill.

Duncan Campbell Scott⁴⁵

Evidence given before a special committee of the House in 1920

⁴⁵ In 1879 Duncan Campbell Scott joined the federal Department of Indian Affairs. He became its deputy superintendent in 1913, a post he held until his retirement in 1932. He is also known as an early Confederation short story writer and poet. His real ambition was to become a doctor, but his family’s finances were precarious and he was forced to become a federal civil servant (McDougall, 2009).

The most important means to this end was education. The Minister of Indian Affairs, Frank Oliver predicted in 1908 that education would “elevate the Indian from his condition of savagery” and “make him a self-supporting member of the state, and eventually a citizen in good standing” (Oliver, 1908). For McCormick the basis of government policy toward Aboriginal peoples has always been that eventually they will become extinct (1990).

The proposed education was not the one that had been duly negotiated in the numbered treaties. In 1879, the Macdonald government, after being pressured by the Catholic and Methodist churches, commissioned a study on the Indian problem with the power to make recommendations regarding the establishment of industrial schools for Indians and Half-Breeds.

Kawagley writes that these early educational systems were designed not to give Aboriginals “knowledge and skills” for their betterment, but rather to indoctrinate them with Anglo-Saxon values and to foster docility and obsequious service to the state (1995, 1-2). Many were left in a state of subordination, confusion, and debilitation, a fate shared by Indigenous peoples around the world (Kirkness, 1977; Kawagley, 1995, 2).

A member of parliament, Nicolas Davin, was eventually asked to write the report. On March 14, 1879 the following recommendations were made concerning the “application of the principle of industrial boarding schools.” It was recommended that the off-reserve schools should teach the arts, crafts, and industrial skills of a modern economy and that Indian children should be removed from their homes, as “the influence of the wigwam was stronger than that of the school”, and be “kept constantly within the circle⁴⁶ of civilized conditions” such as the industrial school where they would receive the “care of a mother” and an education that would fit them for a life in a modern Canada (Davin, 1879). The report led to the construction of three schools at Lebret, Battleford, and High River (Miller, 1996, 101-104).

⁴⁶ It is ironic that this word is used to justify Indian residential schools (IRS).

John A. Macdonald reflected the prevailing Social Darwinism in a May 9, 1883 statement to Parliament on the residential school system (Stonechild, 2006, 9).

When the school is on the reserve, the child lives with his parents who are savages; he is surrounded by savages, and though he may learn to read and write, his habits and training and mode of thought are Indian. He is simply a savage who can read and write. It has been strongly pressed upon myself, as head of the Department that Indian children should be withdrawn as much as possible from the parental influence...where they will acquire the habits and modes of thought of white men.

John A Macdonald
Prime Minister and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs
House of Commons, May 9, 1883

An 1895 Indian Affairs department report also stipulated: “The Indian problem exists owing to the fact that the Indian is untrained to take his place in the world. Once [we] teach him to do this, and the solution is had” (p 154). It was later written in a Presbyterian service memo that “His failure in life is not because he is dull, but because of moral weakness” (taken from Miller, 1996). There was a need for “moral redemption” (Miller, 1996, 155). This view of course corresponds very well to the Christian doctrine of original sin (Brantl, 1962, 60) and the need to save Aboriginals from their state of Christian ignorance. Aboriginals, in this period were “proven” to be scientifically on a lower evolutionary scale than were Caucasians. Lewis Terman (Stanford University, 1916) wrote that certain racial types would benefit from a minimal education (taken from Pewewardy, 2005, 145).

Canada was not the only nation-state using residential schooling for its Aboriginal populations. The United States, Mexico, New Zealand, and Australia were among many nations that used residential schools as a means to suppress Aboriginal cultures. In the United States, the Bureau of Indian Affairs was established in the late nineteenth century. Almost immediately, the BIA started to provide education to Aboriginals. According to Pewewardy, the aim was to de-culture the young Indian child, and to replace “Indigenous culture and languages with an Anglo-American Protestant culture and the English language” (2005, 141). The American experience is relevant because many American

ideas were eventually attempted here in Canada, such as residential school, termination, reserves, voting, citizenship and enfranchisement, non-respect of treaties, war, schooling and modern day conflicts.⁴⁷

In the United States, the English-only educational program was at full capacity by 1903. As in Canada, the teaching methods were criticized by a number of internal and external reports. The US Secretary of the Interior, Hubert Work,⁴⁸ asked the Brookings Institution to study the economic and social conditions on the reservations and to make recommendations for their improvement. It was funded by the Rockefeller Foundation and led by Lewis Meriam. His report concluded that the real purpose of the Indian service should be education with a view to assisting Indians in their transition to white society (Page, 2003, 356; Meriam Report, 2007, 1).

There were nonetheless Aboriginals who “wish to remain Indians, to preserve what they have inherited from their fathers, and insofar as possible to escape from the ever increasing contact with and pressures from the white civilization.” The Meriam Report noted that many white people believed that this desire was legitimate and that Aboriginal culture (such as art, governance, respect, etc...) had a great deal to teach the “white world” (Page, 2003, 356). The report was especially hard on the Indian Office’s (now called the Bureau of Indian Affairs) education programs, observing that they were inferior to public schools and useless in preparing children for life either on the reservation or in white society. Strong criticism was reserved for the conditions of the Indian residential schools (IRS), with their overcrowding, poor hygiene, inadequate nutrition, and use of forced labour to maintain the schools (Page, 2003, 356).

The Meriam Report also challenged the assumption that Indians are to be trained only for manual labour. “The Indian Service should encourage promising Indian youths to continue their education beyond the boarding schools and to fit themselves for professional, scientific, and technical callings. Not only should the educational facilities

⁴⁷ The 1970s Wounded Knee and Oka are prime examples.

⁴⁸ He was an avowed assimilationist (Page, 2003, 356).

of the boarding schools provide definitely for fitting them for college entrance, but the Service should aid them in meeting the costs” (Meriam, 1928).

The Meriam Report spurred the incoming Hoover administration⁴⁹ to take several actions. The budget of the Indian Office was increased from \$16 million to \$20 million. The administration also set out to improve conditions in Indian schools, while not giving up the principal goal of assimilation. In 1933, John Collier was appointed Commissioner of Indian Affairs and one of his first acts was to construct hundreds of Indian day schools as well as new hospitals with more health personnel (Page, 2003, 359).

His primary initiative was the Indian Reorganization Act of 1934.⁵⁰ There was much opposition from Western congressmen, their constituents, missionaries, churches, and even Indian Office employees. One part of the Act called for better educational facilities that would help preserve Indian traditions and educate youth for life on reservations and, more importantly, for jobs in the Indian Office. Collier also drafted another act that gave preference to Indians for jobs in the Indian Office. The act was seen as being discriminatory, but its legality was later reviewed and upheld by the US Supreme Court.

In this respect, the United States and Canada have often developed similarly. Canada was clearly influenced by the United States and its extensive adversarial relationships with Indian tribes. For instance, American attempts at termination of Indian tribes’ status started in the 1940s while in Canada the Trudeau government attempted the same in the 1970s with the *White Paper*. Both measures failed, even though the Canadian one had been adjusted for American mistakes and had cloaked termination and assimilation with words of equality and human rights. Today, the similarity between these two jurisdictions remains very strong, notably with the refusal of both to sign the Indigenous Peoples Convention on Human Rights.

⁴⁹ Herbert Hoover (August 10, 1874 – October 20, 1964) was the 31st president of the United States (1929–1933).

⁵⁰ This Act may be compared to Trudeau’s 1969 White Paper.

For Canadian Aboriginals in the early 20th century, forced schooling went far beyond the experience of the larger society, whose schooling system was just being formed. The new Indian industrial schools and on-reserve schools were seen as a way to take the savage out of the Native and fill the empty child with Western civilization. Unfortunately, the Indians themselves did not view things the same way (Page, 2003, 368).

True, a large number of chiefs and Native peoples wanted their children to be given the tools and understanding to live in a new world. It was a world where the “old ways” were having less and less importance. They were also willing to give the Canadian government an opportunity to play a major role in helping to provide that education. They did not feel, though, that they should have no say in running these schools or in determining their philosophical approach. They realized these schools would dominate the lives of their children (Thunderchild, 2006).

Native leaders were firm in not wanting to assimilate their children into white culture in order to receive that education; nor was the intent to surrender their lands and to deliver their children into forcible confinement far away from their families and traditional cultures their goal.

In other words, they made it very clear they desired only education for their offspring, not a fundamental change in their way of life. Native people were victims; they did not willingly agree to Canada's deeply oppressive apartheid policies against its First Citizens. They did not willingly agree to Indian Agents luring their children away with promises of rides in planes.

Shannon Thunderbird, 2002

4.1 Treaties and Education

Treaties were seen as the basis for the relationships between Aboriginals and the newcomers. For instance, the numbered treaties were signed only after Canada had come into being and was looking to ensure its future dominance over the Northwest Territories, the former Rupert's Land illegally bought from the Hudson's Bay Company in 1870 (Newman, 1998, 576; Siggins, 1994, 90). Official relations between Canada and

Aboriginals had been mainly guided by the *Royal Proclamation of 1763* (Stonechild, 2006, p 11). The Canadian government was represented by Secretary of State Joseph Howe, who had made an inspection of Rupert's Land in 1869 and written insightfully about the policy differences between Canada and the United States.

The Indian question was not presented to me in any form as I saw none of their chiefs, but they repudiate the idea of it [land] being sold by the Company, and some form of treaty or arrangement will be necessary. Anything will be better than an Indian War at a distance from the centre.

Joseph Howe, M.P. 1869

Taken from John Taylor, Ph.D. Thesis, 1975, 28

In 1984, Rigoberta Menchú⁵¹ wrote: “We indigenous Peoples attach a great importance to the Treaties, agreements, and other constructive Accords that have been reached between the Indigenous Peoples and their former colonial powers or states. They should be fully respected in order to establish new and harmonious relationships based on mutual respect and cooperation” (Menchú, 1984). This was unfortunately not the case. Respected Aboriginal writer Elizabeth Cook-Lynn sees the era since 1492 as a genocide against the Indigenous peoples of the Americas with a view to stealing land, power, and wealth directly or indirectly and to imposing their alien worldview upon the Americas (2007, 185).

In the United States, war was the favoured means of obtaining concessions from the Indian tribes. In 1871, the US congress passed a law forbidding the President and his representative from signing any new treaties with Indian tribes and nations. This measure was motivated by a number of reasons. The congressmen wished to bypass formal agreements and give Indian lands directly to railroad companies without having the lands enter a cumbersome public domain. Indians were also seen as a vanishing race whose eventual extinction should not be slowed. Congressmen felt that they had to protect the public and prevent the executive from giving away “American Rights” to land. The military was thus left as the sole viable means for the US to impose its will. Canada

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obviously chose a less military approach and generally opted for legalistic methods. But this was not always the case, most notably with the 1870 and 1885 Métis Wars (Ouellette, 2009a). The treaties were perceived as an easy means to obtain major concessions from Aboriginal groups and to place them on reservations where they would eventually and expectedly die out. Since the arrival of the Europeans, the Aboriginals had been declining demographically.⁵² The “Indian problem” would thus resolve itself through population decline and slow to rapid assimilation. By the 1930s, the situation had begun to change. Aboriginals were starting to acquire immunity to various diseases and their populations began to grow. Infectious diseases and later alcohol had worked to the European advantage in enabling the subjugation of Aboriginal nations (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 104-105).

The first numbered treaty was signed in 1871 (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 105) after the 1870 declaration of an autonomous Métis nation (Ouellette, 2009a). Louis Riel and Aboriginals attempted to maintain Aboriginal independence and interdependence by asserting their military sovereignty. The federal government saw the 1870 Manitoba agreement for the Métis and the numbered treaties for the Indians as the least costly solution, i.e., as a way of assuring the Aboriginal groups that the Canadian government was well intentioned and buying peace until it could take full control of the Northwest Territories through military force at minimal cost. The treaties allowed the federal government to divide Aboriginals into different groups, such as Métis and Indians, a prospect that was precisely what Louis Riel had fought against (Ouellette, 2009a). The early treaties were nonetheless often signed on a more egalitarian basis due to the military might of the Plains Nations in the West and the lack of settlers in these areas (Toussaint, 2006).

⁵² Many Aboriginal peoples up until 20 years ago refused to self-identify as Aboriginals. They would assimilate of their own accord out of shame for the way the dominant society viewed them as individuals. It has only been since recently, when Aboriginals of all types began to self-identify as such (Adams, 1999). Interestingly, children may identify as Aboriginal even when their parents are less interested or even unaware of their own Aboriginal heritage.

Treaty 1 (Fort Stone treaty) took eleven days of negotiating between Commissioner Wemyss Simpson and various tribes of Manitoba. The Indians were apparently agile negotiators and made demands to keep two-thirds of Manitoba for their reserve. Simpson found their position “so preposterous that, if granted, they would have scarcely anything to cede.” According to Stonechild, negotiations continued into the night on the fifth day between the chiefs and Simpson (2006, 12). The difficult negotiating eventually forced Simpson to give into “their demands,” obliging Canadian negotiators to offer concessions in other areas such as education, economic assistance (agriculture), and medical care.



These concessions fulfilled an Aboriginal desire to enter into a long-term mutual relationship, further developing the one they were enjoying with the Hudson Bay’s Company.

This was one of many misunderstandings. The Canadian government tended to view the treaties and land transfer agreements as short-term arrangements that

would eventually end with the disappearance and assimilation of these Indian tribes (Adams, 1999, 4), rather than as commitments to long-term relationships (Stonechild, 2006, 13). In 1875, there was further disagreement about the exact nature of promises by the federal government. Commissioner Alexander Morris reviewed department files and found additional promises that were not in the written document. Aboriginal oral traditions of the Roseau River Anishanabe First Nation still hold to this day that even more promises were made and have yet to be recognized and fulfilled (Indian Claims Commission, 2001, 21).

Treaties 1 & 2 of 1871 make provision for education as a matter to be decided upon by the Natives “and further, Her Majesty agrees to maintain a school on each reserve hereby

made whenever the Indians of the reserve should desire it.’ Over time, the equal-to-equal basis of the treaties disappeared to be replaced by a more authoritarian one exercised by the federal government. Treaty 9 of 1905-1906 states: “Further, His Majesty agrees to pay such salaries of teachers to instruct the children of said Indians, and also to provide such school buildings and educational equipment as may seem advisable to His Majesty's government of Canada.” The federal government would now decide what was advisable (Ray, 2005).

In the revision of Treaties 1 and 2 in 1875, Commissioner Provencher wrote that education was for “the intellectual, social and religious advancement” of the Indians. For Stonechild, this provision extended the obligations of the federal government from elementary and high school to post-secondary education. Schooling would be the New Buffalo (2006, vii, 16).

Misunderstandings about interpretation were commonplace. For instance, Commissioner Morris said to the Indians about Treaty 4 (1874) that “the Queen wishes her red children to learn the cunning of the white man” (Morris, 1979, 333). The impression is that the Aboriginals were promised an education equal to that of white men. This one quote is very telling. It may have provided some basis for forced residential schooling and for the government saying that Aboriginals were in tacit agreement because they had been informed. Aboriginal children could be subjected to the same educational systems that many non-Aboriginal children had to endure.

Later, the commissioner reported on Treaty 8 (1899, Athabasca) that “they seemed desirous of having educational advantages for their children, but stipulated that in the matter of schools, there should be no interference with their religious beliefs.” This view contradicts the earlier quote and implies that Aboriginals wanted their cultures respected (Stonechild, 2006, 16).

After 1871, the Canadian government was increasingly able to impose its values and interpretation of the treaties on the Aboriginals. After the Second Métis War of 1885, the

latter's military and political strengths had evaporated. The War was used to defeat the independent Aboriginals of the West militarily and emotionally. The Macdonald government afterwards conducted show trials of Indians. The largest mass hanging (8 individuals) in Canadian history⁵³ took place at North Battleford on November 27, 1885. Assimilation picked up pace after 1885. Losers often have little will to resist the victors' desires (Ouellette, 2009a).

In the aftermath of 1885, the federal government imposed measures that removed the Indians' freedom of movement, suppressed their traditional beliefs, and increased their use of residential schools. This outcome of course went against everything Aboriginals had been promised during the treaty negotiations and signings (Stonechild, 2006, p 19). When John A. Macdonald travelled to Western Canada for the first time, he reiterated the government's policy: "The great aim of our legislation has been to do away with the tribal system and assimilate the Indian people in all respects with the other inhabitants of the Dominion as speedily as they are fit to change" (Dickason, 2002, p 230).

Canadian government officials often told the Indians that the education they would receive would be according to their wishes and not those of the government. This unfortunately was a false description of the future role Aboriginal were to play in the education of their children. Federal government officials, such as J.A.J. McKenna, recognized their educational responsibilities in the Report of the First Commissioner for Treaty #10 to Frank Oliver the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs in 1907.

There was evidenced a marked desire to secure educational privileges for their children. In this connection and speaking for the Indians generally, the chief of the English River band insisted that in the carrying out of the government's Indian educational policy among them there should be no interference with the system of religious schools now conducted by the mission, but that public aid should be given for improvement and extension along the lines already followed.

⁵³ They were executed for their roles in the Frog Lake massacre [for Canada] or victory [for Aboriginals] (Ouellette, 2009). There were 6 Cree and 2 Assiniboine warriors. All were tried, without legal counsel. They were Kapapamahchakwew (Wandering Spirit), Itka, Wawanitch (Man Without Blood), Napase (Iron Body), Manetchus (Bad Arrow), Pa-pa-mek-sick (Round the Sky), Kitiemakyin (Miserable Man) and Apistaskous (Little Bear) (Gabriel Dumont Institute, 2006).

As to education, the Indians were assured that there was no need for special stipulation over and above the general provision in the treaty, as it was the policy of the government to provide in every part of the country as far as circumstances would permit, for the education of the Indian children, and that the law provided for schools for Indians maintained and assisted by the government being conducted as to religious auspices in accordance with the wishes of the Indians.

J.A.J. McKenna, Ottawa, January 18, 1907

4.2 Education Pre-White Paper, 1969

Before the arrival of the Europeans, Indigenous education was conducted informally by the kin relations of the children and others who were receiving instruction. Within many tribes such as the Nisga'a, the maternal family was responsible for upbringing. This system greatly changed with the arrival of European settlers and missionaries. By the 1870s, missionaries had put in place the structures for formal religious education, with total submersion in English-language learning, the interests/capacities of the teacher/missionary, and Christian doctrine. In British Columbia, a missionary would often travel between communities, and school would be started and stopped in various communities depending upon his travel schedule. The school schedule was also affected by the hunting, trapping, and cannery lifestyle of the families. These constraints often only allowed four to five months of formal education a year. The end result was a "literacy level of grade 2 or 3, based mainly on rote reading" (McKay & McKay, 1987, 67). In the 1920s, older and promising students were taken out of these schools and sent to larger residential schools. Within each Aboriginal community a number of parents requested that their children be allowed to attend residential school as early as Grade 1. The schools in BC were run by the Church Missionary Society, and the education consisted of the 3Rs and sports. At age sixteen, the students were discharged with a Grade 6 education (McKay & McKay, 1987, 67).

In 1946, J. Allison Glen, the Canadian Minister for Mines and Resources, suggested that whenever possible Aboriginal children should be allowed to maintain as many cultural

characteristics as possible while still developing their ability to function as full citizens in Canadian society (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 88). This was a major break from previous discriminatory policies, but in the end his words did not bring an end to the cultural and human genocide taking place across Canada.

In 1947, an anthropologist from New Zealand, Diamond Jenness, wanted the Canadian government to “solve the Indian problem” by abolishing Indian reserves and establishing integrated schooling for Aboriginals in the larger dominant society. Integration can always be associated with assimilation and the Jenness plan aimed to “eliminate the Indian problem within 25 years” (Haig-Brown, 1993).

In 1949, debate over secularization of Indian residential schools (IRS) and Indian day schools began in the Canadian Parliament. A Special Joint Committee of the Senate and the House of Commons on Indian Affairs vaguely addressed the issue of denominational schooling, but it took another tack and recommended that whenever possible Indian children should be educated alongside white children (1949). The committee seemed to have already made up its mind about what needed to be done, but still went through the motions of consultation. It solicited the advice of Aboriginal leaders and received 411 reports. Many of the recommendations were then distributed to Indian reserves for additional input. At this point the committee felt that a dialogue had been achieved and the consultation completed. There were a number of recommendations. Parents, for instance, would be allowed to sit on school advisory boards, but they would still not have any official voice in policy-making or school procedure.

Another outcome was a 1951 amendment to the Indian Act, which allowed Indian parents “to choose”, where to send their children: provincial public schools or band schools. It was felt that if parents were given a choice, they would invariably choose public schools, which were better funded, had more qualified teachers, and offered students better chances for academic success. These changes would lead to a gradual closure of reserve schools over time and allow easier integration of students into the provincial system and Canadian society. The choice for the parents was very obvious and not difficult to make.

After WWII, the dramatic rise in the general prosperity of Canadian society brought the federal government greater revenues. It became possible to expand funding for IRS and day schools, even though from the mid-to-late 1950s the government wanted to get out of the IRS business. The benefits did not seem to outweigh the costs and it proved far easier to provide education in provincially run schools or in reserve day schools, where the cost of housing children for 10 months a year could be avoided (Miller, 1996, 377).

Laws controlling Aboriginals started to be revised following the end of WWII. The federal prohibitions of potlatch and sun dance ceremonies were ended in the 1951 amendments to the Indian Act, and provinces began to accept the right of Indigenous people to vote. In June 1956, Section 9 of the Citizenship Act of Canada was amended retroactively to grant formal citizenship to Status Indians and Inuit, as of January 1947. Ironically, Canadians can now say Aboriginals have been citizens since 1947, even though this date is a legal fiction. Canada as a nation-state has the power to change history. All Aboriginal peoples, and not just those who had been emancipated, were finally granted the right to vote in federal elections in 1960 under Prime Minister John Diefenbaker.⁵⁴ By comparison, Native Americans in the United States had been allowed to vote since the 1920s (Kinnear, 2003).

Issues surrounding citizenship and voting have never been resolved for Aboriginals. How can one be a citizen of an Aboriginal nation that is demanding recognition of its sovereignty and at the same time be a citizen of a country such as Canada that is seen as a colonial power? Many Aboriginals refuse to vote because they see voting in Canadian elections as legitimizing a colonial power that they do not recognize as their own.

For instance, a leading Anishnaabe scholar Leanne Simpson recently explained this widespread rationalization of non-participation as follows: “I don’t vote in elections in

⁵⁴ Diefenbaker always considered himself to be a friend of the Indians. One reason was a childhood experience where armed Indians arrived at the family farm door in Saskatchewan to warn them that a mentally disturbed Indian was in the area. He felt that the Indians wished to protect his family (Stonechild, 2006, p 154; taken from his personal communication with Bruce Sheppard, Director, Diefenbaker Centre, 24 Oct 2003).

France. I don't vote in elections in Ethiopia. Why would I vote in Canada? They are all foreign nations." In short, at issue is a matter of contested citizenship wherein many Aboriginal peoples (individuals and nations) dispute their citizenship on the grounds that they are already citizens of sovereign Indigenous nations (Ladner, 2003).

In 1963, the federal government asked UBC anthropologist Harry Hawthorn and Université Laval anthropologist Marc-Adélar Tremblay to survey the living conditions of Canada's Aboriginal people. The observations stunned the public and the government. The report *A Survey of the Contemporary Indians of Canada: A Report on the Economic, Political, Educational Needs and Policies* in two volumes showed the terrible living conditions of Aboriginals and how they suffered from unemployment, poverty, health problems, and malnutrition. Their housing was substandard, the education quality below that of other Canadians, and life expectancy far lower. Hawthorn and Tremblay made a plea for Aboriginals to be allowed the same rights as other citizens and their legal status honoured, [citizens plus] (1966, 1967).

In the field of education, the report found that the "general aim of the federal government... is based on the necessity of integrating Indians into Canadian society." Education is considered the principal means for achieving this aim.

Following the Hawthorn and Tremblay Report, the Honourable Arthur Laing, Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development on March 15, 1967 announced a seven-point integration plan for Indian education. The idea was to work closely with provincial departments of education to integrate Aboriginal students into each province's school system. Laing promised that Aboriginal parents would be chosen to sit on school boards where their numbers warranted (Burns, 1998).

The Laing proposals were studied for four years and a report was released in 1971 with the conclusion that the sooner Aboriginal students left the federally run schools and entered provincial schools the better would be their chances of academic success. Students had to become fluent in the official languages of "their" provincial schools in

order to succeed after school. The report also noted that students would lose their Aboriginal languages without some minimal instruction of such languages as an actual subject.

4.3 White Paper 1969

The arrival of Pierre Trudeau as Prime Minister in 1968⁵⁵ ushered in a new promising era in Canadian politics. This was also true in Aboriginal affairs. The Ottawa bureaucrats decided that it was time for a new approach to Indian rights and the very contentious lands claims issues. If Aboriginals would become like other Canadians, by becoming equals, the potentially expensive land claims issues would disappear. There would be assimilation by equality. Similarly, if Status Indians no longer existed as legal entities, other Aboriginal groups⁵⁶ without the same land and legal rights would lose much of their argument for redress.

In 1969, the Canadian federal government decided it was time for a shift in Indian policy. Aboriginal organizations were in disorder, and infighting was taking place among a multitude of different groups. Trudeau saw the Indian Affairs department as notoriously deficient in effective decision-making and a waste of precious dollars. The leadership of the department also left a lot to be desired. The ministers often held the post for less than

⁵⁵ Ironically 1968 also ended the dream of William Wuttunee (the first First Nations lawyer to be admitted to the bar in Western Canada) and the National Indian Council.⁵⁵ The National Indian Council was founded in 1961 in Regina by William Wuttunee and a group of mostly young Aboriginal students. Its goal was to “promote unity among Indian peoples, the betterment of people of Indian ancestry in Canada, and to create a better understanding of the Indian and non-Indian relationship.” It is not known what effect the federal government had on the break-up of the National Indian Council, but in-fighting among Indian groups over federal funding certainly helped. Wuttunee believed that the federal government felt threatened by a pan-Aboriginal organization representing all Aboriginals (personal communication, April 12, 2009). By breaking them down into smaller groups through grants and federal funding, the federal government aimed to play them off against each other (Adams, 1999, 42).

The Council eventually split into two groups in 1968. There was the renamed National Indian Brotherhood (Status Indians) in 1968, which became known as the Assembly of First Nations in 1982, and the Canadian Métis Society (Non-status and Métis). Much later the Métis society split again with the formation of another group, the Congress of Aboriginal peoples representing non-status/urban Indians. The government often plays these groups off one another when making policy changes, especially after 1969 and the *White Paper*. The *White Paper* was a final overt attempt to assert federal aims in Indian matters. Create a vacuum and then fill that vacuum with your ideas and philosophy.

⁵⁶ Métis and Inuit.

a year: Guy Foveae held it for ten months, René Tremblay for one year, John Nicholson for ten months, and Jean Marchand for nine months (Weaver, 1981).⁵⁷

Trudeau was no supporter of the concept of Indian “special status” and was convinced that it would jeopardize Canadian federalism with the threat of Québec nationalism hanging overhead. He believed in the idea of Social Darwinism that cultures should be allowed to thrive or perish, as fate would dictate. It was even said that he referred to Aboriginal efforts to preserve their cultures as the “wigwam complex” (Weaver, 1981). He likewise said: “I am against any policy based on race or nationalism” (Ottawa Citizen, 1968).

The Liberal government started a series of eighteen consultation meetings across Canada, beginning in Yellowknife on July 25, 1968. A discussion paper called “Choosing a Path” laid out choices for equality and self-help (Weaver, 1981). The new Minister, Jean Chrétien, had been appointed only in June and was careful not to make any specific comments about the future policy direction of the government, thus giving the meetings a feeling of real significance and allowing Aboriginals a chance to voice their concerns and desires.

The Prime Minister’s Office, independently of the Department of Indian Affairs, was attempting to come up with a new Indian policy. The department was still headed by Chrétien, who in private meetings talked about ways to terminate Indian status: mass enfranchisement, making large sums of money available for a period of transition until assimilation was complete, dismantling Indian Affairs, and transferring such services as education and health to provincial governments (Weaver, 1981).

Chrétien stated his conviction that whatever policy was eventually favoured, Indians should be allowed to make their own choices and mistakes. The Cabinet Social Policy Committee agreed upon a policy of “full non-discriminatory participation” of Aboriginal

⁵⁷ There was also an “old boy’s network” within INAC that was derided as an anomaly. From 1953 to 1963 it was run as a type of military unit under former Colonel Jones and was called “Jones’ lost battalion” (Weaver, 1981).

people in Canada. Now, with the assistance of Indian Affairs in early 1969, a new Indian policy was developed with specific measures, such as settling outstanding Indian claims and grievances, extending provincial services to Aboriginals (education and health), abolishing the Department of Indian Affairs, repealing the Indian Act, delegating management of Indian lands to Indian bands, and devising a process for the final termination of treaties [much like what had been attempted earlier in the US] (Weaver, 1981; White Paper, 1969). The bill was tabled in the House of Commons on June 25, 1969. For Jean Chrétien,⁵⁸ it was a response to Indian concerns (House of Commons Debates, 1969). He said in the House of Commons:

From the early days of this country, a trustee relationship of a highly paternalistic nature developed between the central government and the Indian people. The Indian people should have the right to manage their own affairs to the same extent that their fellow Canadians manage theirs. Under present conditions they do not have anything like this degree of control over their lands, their funds, or in fact any of their responsibilities. This is the central fact about conditions today, and it must change...I hope the Indian people will agree that this system which sets them apart is no longer useful.

Jean Chrétien, *Hansard*, June 25, 1969

George Manuel (Chief of the National Indian Brotherhood, 1970-1976) when speaking at the book launch of *The Fourth World* with the Ojibway Warriors' Society said: "Change cannot come about without conflict, but conflict does not have to go the road of violence" (Manuel, 1972, 2). The *White Paper* represented a philosophy of American neo-liberalism that was a break from the conservative orientation of Canada's crown heritage as a community of legally distinct communities and nations existing within a covenant. It was a new of idea of Canada as a nation of equals existing within a bilingual and multicultural state as individuals (Hall, 2003, 117-8).

⁵⁸ For many Aboriginals, Jean Chrétien started out as one of the worst ministers ever to have graced Indian Affairs, but by the end of his mandate was widely respected for the policy changes in education and land claims he had brought about. He traveled widely and even adopted an Aboriginal boy named Michael as a sign of love and engagement. Sadly, Chrétien discovered that Aboriginal adopted children often have "issues" when placed with non-Aboriginals. Michael is one of thousands of Aboriginal children who were taken from Aboriginal homes by provincial social services in what is now termed the "scoop generation" (Kenn Richards, CIERA conference presentation, Quebec City, April 16, 2010).

In many respects our elders perceived the treaties as a process whereby the white society, with its legal systems, with its system of law, would guarantee to our people the right to continue practising their beliefs, the right to continue fulfilling their responsibilities to the Creator as agreed upon since time began. Our elders intended that the treaties would tell the guests who came to our country that while we welcomed them to our country, and while we wanted to build a nation in partnership with other nations so our children could grow up in a better environment, we also by the process of our treaties wanted to let other people know that our first allegiance, our first commitment was not to a temporal power, but to our Creator.

Harold Cardinal, 1978 in *Treaties Six and Seven: The Next Century*
Aboriginal activist, lawyer and chief, b. 1945- d. 2005

The *White Paper* mentioned education in a number of areas, the overarching long-term goal being to pass the Indian problem on to the provinces. “The Government could press on with the policy of fostering further education...and eventually many of the problems would be solved. But progress would be too slow. The change in Canadian society in recent years has been too great and continues too rapidly for this to be the answer” (White Paper, 1969). The government maintained that all services should be delivered to Aboriginal people (status) through the same channels and from the same government agencies that served other Canadians (education should be provided by the provincial governments). This was, of course, the way services were already delivered to Métis children. The Métis after 1885 had effectively been silenced as a functioning society and proud nation, with many Métis existing on the fringes of society with little or no personal or collective power (personal communication with James Ouellette, February 15, 2006).

This “equal” education for Status Indians would most likely have been much like Métis education, which was supposedly equal to that of other Canadians. No specific statistics were available in 1969 for Métis education, but in 1959 Lagassé found that the average number of years of schooling was 5.84 with a very high drop-out rate (1959, 128). He also found from Métis interviews an improvement in Métis educational attainment. By the year 2000 their average years of schooling had risen to 8.2 (p 128). Two other researchers found similar results in Saskatchewan and coined the term “Schooling for Failure” (Knill and Davis, 1967, 228; Davis, 2001).

It was still felt that the provincial governments should adapt their curricula to the needs of their Aboriginal groups and ensure “that they adequately reflect Indian culture and Indian contributions to Canadian development... Services must come through the same channels and from the same government agencies for all Canadians. This is an undeniable part of equality” (White Paper, Section 3). Aboriginals may see racism in much of the *White Paper*, but often the ministers, political aides, and advisors had little or no knowledge of the Aboriginal situation. They saw groups that for them were backward, uneducated, unhealthy, and in need of help. They saw a system that had given Aboriginals some benefits, but had not allowed them to attain their full potential. If we got rid of the Indian Act, if Aboriginals became like other Canadians in a multicultural society, then they would most likely improve their economic situation. But at what cost and who would benefit? In addition, have many of these opinions since changed among the general population and its representatives?

Lagassé found that “the practice in Indian schools throughout Canada is to use the same textbooks as are used in the province in which the school is located. Minor attempts are made nevertheless to adjust the curriculum to the special needs of pupils” (1959, 117). How effectively could teachers, with a high turnover rate and little understanding of the realities of Aboriginals, adapt a curriculum to Aboriginal needs?

Often in Canada we hear appeals to fairness. “For how long will we have to pay for these Indians?” “I need to earn a living and pay my taxes, why don’t they?” (Fiss, Canadian Taxpayers Federation, 2004) The *White Paper* wrote: “The significance of the treaties in meeting the economic, educational, health and welfare needs of the Indian people has always been limited and will continue to decline. The services that have been provided go far beyond what could have been foreseen by those who signed the treaties.” This has been the major stumbling block in Aboriginal and Canadian relations. Who will pay? I often feel Canada would prefer to wait it out than negotiate modern agreements and treaties. By waiting, they hope that the situation will resolve itself.

All Canadians should enjoy a certain level of public services. Indeed, the wide range of public services sets Canadians apart as a different people in North America. Paul Martin, former prime minister writes that Aboriginals, in all areas of government services, are under-funded by 20% to 25% vis-à-vis other Canadians. He finds this to be unacceptable (personal e-mail communication, January 17, 2010). Incredibly enough during the French Revolution of 1789 a Declaration of the Rights of Man was produced whose Article 13 stipulated that “pour l’entretien de la force publique, et pour les dépenses d’administration, une contribution commune est indispensable: elle doit être également répartie entre tous les citoyens, en fonction de leurs facultés” (Roulot-Ganzmann, 2010). Aboriginals should pay less for the services they receive because they are on the lowest rung of the socio-economic ladder.

There was general disbelief on the part of Aboriginals and a sense of betrayal with the release of the *White Paper*. They had been led to believe that the government had consulted them in order to take their views into account. Harold Cardinal would later comment: “Which Indian asked for an end to the treaties, which Indians asked for an end to their reserves?” Others yelled “liar, liar” and by July, Chrétien declared: “We will not push anything down anyone’s throat” (Globe and Mail, 1969). Trudeau when asked about the controversy said: “It’s inconceivable I think that in a given society, one section of the society have a treaty with the other section of the society. We must be equal under the law” (Weaver, 1981). Cardinal responded in *The Unjust Society*: “it is a white paper for white people created by a white elephant” (1969, 161).

The Alberta Indian Association was the first to officially respond with their position paper *Citizens Plus*, later known as the “Red Paper.” It was presented to the federal cabinet on June 4, 1970. It was supposedly written principally by Harold Cardinal,⁵⁹ who was the first Aboriginal to respond to the *White Paper* with his *The Unjust Society*

⁵⁹ Cardinal, a former national chief, has also participated in Canadian federal politics. In 2000 he ran unsuccessfully as a candidate for the Liberal Party in the riding of Athabasca. He ran against Dave Chatters, who had been accused of being anti-Native, in explicit opposition to the apparent revival of popular and political support for policies of Aboriginal assimilation.

(1969). Point by point, Aboriginals reiterated their opposition and proposed alternative ways to enhance their status (Stonechild, 2006, p 39; Indian Chiefs of Alberta, 1970).

The history of Canada's Indians is a shameful chronicle of white man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust. Generations of Indians have grown up behind a buckskin curtain of indifference, ignorance and, all too often, plain bigotry. Now at a time when our fellow Canadians consider the promise of the Just Society, once more the Indians of Canada are betrayed by a program which offers nothing better than cultural genocide.

Harold Cardinal
The Unjust Society, 1969, p 1

In 1971, during a meeting of the Standing Committee on Indian Affairs, George Manuel commented that the Indian people had never been given a say in the education of their children. Religious organizations had received responsibility for educating young Aboriginals, and when their service was unsuitable the provincial governments were called in. Meanwhile, no Aboriginals were consulted. Harold Cardinal asked the same committee the following question. If the federal government could provide provincial schools with funds for the education of Indian children, why could not the same funds be used by Aboriginal communities to serve the Indian people themselves (1971)?

The standing committee was not deaf to such requests. A subsequent report, the *Watson Report*, supported increasing the level of Aboriginal involvement in education. It recommended that, without clear approval from a majority of parents in Aboriginal communities, no responsibility for Aboriginal education should be transferred to the provinces. Also Aboriginal history, language, and culture should be included in the classrooms, and universities should do more to provide courses with Aboriginal content (Watson Report, 1971).

In the field of education the Red Paper⁶⁰ itself called for a “re-orientation of the curriculum so that it [be] more explicitly oriented to the interests, limitations and needs of Indian ancestry...the educational system for Indian people should be more relevant to Indian values, mores, modes, customs, and historical perspectives than is presently the case” (1970, 84-85).

Aboriginals are not a monolith. There are as many Aboriginal opinions as there are Aboriginals. Not all were in agreement with the Albertan chiefs and the *Red Paper*. William Wuttunee⁶¹ was barred from 13 reserves in the 1970s for having suggested in his book *Ruffled Feathers: Indians in Canadian Society* (1971) that Aboriginals give up on the Indian Act and much of federal largesse. He felt the Act and the government were holding Aboriginals behind and not allowing them to fulfill their full potential. He was barred from these reserves even though in 1961 he founded and became the first national Chief of the National Indian Council⁶² (personal communication, September 13, 2009).

Most Indian people want their children to get the same kind of education as the non-Indians, in the same schools. These children are going to have to compete with non-Indians in the race for employment and they must also learn to live with the white man. What better “setting and learning environment” than the actual process of learning together as children?

William Wuttunee, 1971

⁶⁰ Incredibly enough the *Red Paper* was actually prepared by M & M Systems Research of Alberta, an organization established by former Social Credit Premier Ernest Manning and his son Preston Manning, for the sum of \$25,000 (Wuttunee, 1971, 58). This seems incredible in itself, given Preston Manning’s later involvement with the Reform Party and his supposed opposition to Aboriginal rights. Wuttunee writes that the paper should have been called the “Sacred Paper.”

Preston Manning indicated that the Reform Party and himself were never actually against Aboriginals, but just against the use of tax dollars to support small interest groups and elites while the mass of their populations live in misery and indifference. The problems of Aboriginals are related not to money, but to the way those monies are spent and on whom (personal e-mail communication, August 21, 2009).

⁶¹ He was the son of Chief James Wuttunee, a blacksmith from the Red Pheasant Reserve who left the reserve to live in North Battleford to offer his children a better life. The family was enfranchised.

⁶² It was the precursor of the National Indian Brotherhood and the AFN. William Wuttunee was later honoured at the AFN’s 2008 Annual General Assembly in Quebec City by Grand Chief Phil Fontaine for his work in uniting Aboriginals in a pan-Aboriginal organization. Chief Fontaine felt that this earlier fragmentation had not worked well for Aboriginals politically and had enabled the federal government to proceed unhindered or much more slowly on numerous fronts because of divisions between Aboriginal groups (personal communication with Chief Fontaine, 2008). Because Aboriginal peoples are such a young population, we often have little collective memory about the battles waged since the early 50s and late 60s for our rights. I myself never realized that at one point all Aboriginals had been working together. It was federal financing that had led to their division.

In 1970, 300 Aboriginal parents held a sit-in at the Blue Quills School in St. Paul (Northeast Alberta), demanding to have an Aboriginal-controlled school, [but they only received administrative control]. They did not realize how far their actions would affect Indian country. After a month-long occupation, the federal government gave in and decided to give them direct school administration via the local band council (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 14, 92). This school was the first one in Canada to be Aboriginal-administered, but not Aboriginal-controlled. By 1975, another ten band councils were operating their own schools. By 1985, almost two thirds were.

According to the *Hawthorn and Tremblay Report*, Indian Affairs hoped to implement one of its' basic principles in school administration: "that of encouraging the participation of Indians in the administration of local affairs... moreover the band councils may set up school committees and nominate the three members composing them... they administer budgets... with respect to "janitor services, sports equipment and extra-curricular programs"... [they] are also responsible for the school attendance of Indian children" (Hawthorn & Tremblay, 1967, 40). Any large organization will have competing groups and ideas. Indian Affairs is no different, with certain groups pushing for assimilation and integration, and others for Indian decolonization. The *White Paper* was a momentary triumph for assimilationists, but the Aboriginal reaction forced Chrétien to fall back on an existing policy from within Indian Affairs.

The Blue Quills School first opened in 1931 as a residential school for Cree and Chipewyan from nine reserves. It was run by the Oblates of the Catholic Church. By the 1940s and 1950s, it had become less religious and more secular in outlook. In 1955, the federal government decided to integrate and started busing students from Grades 9 through 12 to the local high school in St. Paul. By the 1960s, fewer and fewer students were in residence at the school and many were being bused to St. Paul area schools (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 126-7).

In October of 1969, Alice Makokis, an Aboriginal from the Saddle Lake Reserve school committee and an Indian Affairs department employee, learned that the school was to be closed entirely. After having talked with other Aboriginals, she decided to ask the department to take charge of the school and their children's education. There were a number of meetings with the department, but no headway was made. Eventually, in July, after numerous proposals and counter-proposals, such as transferring jurisdiction to the Alberta government, Jean Chrétien signed an agreement to make Blue Quills⁶³ Canada's first Aboriginal-administered [but not controlled] school (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 128-9).

4.4 Curriculum of Indian Residential Schools

The 1970s were the beginning of the end for the federally run Indian residential school system (IRS). Numerous books and documents recount horrific Aboriginal experiences in

⁶³ The school wished to provide Aboriginal students with an education equal to the provincial system, but with Aboriginal languages and cultures in the curriculum. The proposal presented to Ottawa stated: "Our greatest desire is that our children progress in the white man's education, while continuing to retain their dignity and self-respect as Indian people" (taken from Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 129).

Initially, the school followed the Alberta curriculum with enriched language and cultural components. The start-up was not without controversy. In 1984, the school decided to use a new curriculum based on the philosophy of a California company called the Life Values Institute. The new program in its first year was limited to 25 students. It was such a success that instead of being slowly expanded, it was extended to the entire school (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 132, 135).

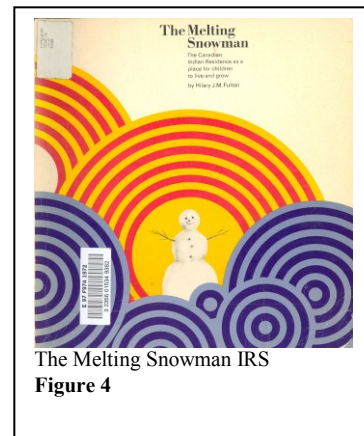
The strategy had three principal components: compulsory attendance, zero-tolerance for substance abuse, and commitment to others. Staff members would maintain close contact with families and community leaders on behalf of the students. Penalties for substance abuse included a militaristic regime with mild to severe punishments such as push-ups, mile runs, 5-mile runs, 20-mile walks, and a forced weekend at the school with an instructor. Many family and community members agreed that the students who participated in the program had changed remarkably for the better. Community members and families felt that the participating students had more self-respect, confidence, respect for others, and responsible behaviour (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 137).

The second year expansion required the hiring of 20 new staff members who in a short time needed to be trained and managed within an unfamiliar program. There were questions about how the program actually related to Aboriginal values and these questions prevented further funding that would have allowed the development of a long-term Aboriginal program. The qualified staff members who were trained in the Life Values methods were too few for 20 students and the results were difficult to maintain. By 1986, with spending cuts in the federal government, the program was eventually eliminated even when there was still significant family and community member support for the Life Values program (Bashford & Heinzerling, 1987, 139).

residential schools and their effects on first, second, and third generations (Ing, 2000). As someone with directly affected and close family members, this section has been the most difficult one to research and write. This period of Canadian history must, however, be presented not only because it was so shameful but also because its consequences still directly affect Aboriginal education. While numerous authors, such as Ing (2000), Haig-Brown (1988), Chrisjohn, Young & Maraun (2005), Urion (1991), Richardson (1993), AFN (1994), Lomawaima (1994), and Castellano, Archibald & DeGagné (2008), all present interesting and comprehensive information about this period, Miller (1996) is the one who offers the most detached and detailed account. It is detached enough for me to deal with much of the material, although I cannot read some chapters. Nor do I wish to do so.

Schools, in general, exercise great power over the mental development of children. Initially, in residential schools, this power was wielded by the church and its staff, who constituted the power structure and provided the ideological ethos. Later, with greater secularization, the rigid social structure was relaxed but a wide gap still existed between home life and school life (Friesen, & Friesen, 2002, 100).

Most importantly, this rigid learning structure deprived the young children of agency. Because the relationships between adults and students were fixed in



a hierarchical structure, the students could do little on their own. They often did not know all the rules when they arrived (and there were rules for everything). They were easily directed and would often wait for adult direction before doing anything. Such socialization created a future pattern of learned helplessness⁶⁴ that the students would

⁶⁴ At the Lestock school (Estevan) of Saskatchewan in 1965, the peewee hockey team, after having just lost their final game, despite being undefeated for 50 games, were allowed to have a feast. They were fed baloney sandwiches and cocoa. Eleven-year-old John PeeAce recalls, “walking past the staff dining room and noticing that they were having steak and chicken. It looked like a king’s feast. We had baloney sandwiches” (PeeAce, 1991). The students came to see awards not as true awards, but as a means to remove their humanity.

display in adult life. They could not accept responsibility or take action without approval, and they lacked the capacity to manage their own lives, thus becoming adults who would almost necessarily be damaged in some way (Friesen, & Friesen, 2002, 116-7).

Indian Affairs often had very good people who were full of good intentions.

Unfortunately more of them should have been teachers. Miller found that many teachers and staff had shady pasts and had been categorized as unfit for employment in better paying white schools. Yet they were able to find employment in Indian schools (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, 44-5; Miller, 1996, 174-5). In 1972, Hilary Fulton (at the time working at the University of Manitoba) was hired by Indian Affairs to write a book *The Melting Snowman* for the IRS section in order to help with the professional development of the 450 staff caring for children across the country⁶⁵. David Kogawa,⁶⁶ the head of the

⁶⁵ The book presented the very reasonable viewpoint that teachers must help the children and students meet their emotional needs. Fulton (1972) offered a number of ways and examples that teachers and staff members could use to assist the personal growth of their charges. Fulton also wrote that students should be allowed to feel pride in their culture and in being Indian, while recognizing that it is very difficult for the children to maintain strong identification with their culture (pp 30-33). The student residences [not residential schools, change in name for greater political acceptance in this period] were there to create a “bridge between Indian and white society” (Fulton, 1972). Fulton admitted that the residences, being so far from home, differed from home life and were run by adults generally from the dominant society. “Confusion” was thus created among the students. The residential school was a sub-culture with its own ways of functioning, thus making current practices very difficult to change. Goals had become fossilized (Fulton, 1972).

The title of the book is interesting because it holds hidden meaning. In the introduction, Fulton explained that the snowman represents children being confronted in spring with a change in weather. A melting snowman means that the school year is ending (p 6). The snowman may also represent the ending of white control over Indian culture, which had been frozen. Such symbolism acknowledged that the end of the IRS era was near, that Aboriginal society was reviving from its time in the cold, and that white culture would no longer be as dominant as it had been.

Throughout the book, Fulton quoted authors to illustrate her thoughts about the direction residential schools should take. There are many quotes from a popular book of the period: Waubageshig’s *The Only Good Indian*. Yet some quotes seem appalling. For example, “If you strike a child, take care that you strike it in anger, even at the risk of maiming it for life. A blow in cold blood neither can nor should be forgiven” (taken from George Bernard Shaw, *Man and Superman*), or “He never spoils the child and spares the rod, but spoils the rod and never spares the child” (taken from Thomas Hood, *The Irish Schoolmaster*). Fulton never explained why these passages were included. Perhaps she was condemning such behaviour, since the quotes are juxtaposed with very insightful and reasonable advice on caring for children. But the final message remains unclear. Perhaps she felt that corporal punishment should be favoured in IRS.

This book was an attempt at propaganda by Indian Affairs to show that the education being offered in residences was caring and well organized. Indian Affairs was in a very difficult period of institutional change and needed to justify its past and future actions.

Education Branch, writes in the *Melting Snowman* that the student residences must “look after the daily needs of the children...that the healthy emotional, social and mental growth of these children will depend upon a child-care program in which their needs are understood and met.” It is a shame that this educational philosophy was not in place in the 1900s.

When IRS were established for Aboriginals, there was little consensus about their intellectual ability and potential for learning, although such ability and potential were probably ranked at the lower end of the evolutionary scale. This included all groups: Inuit, Métis, and Indian. There were frequent exchanges of correspondence about Aboriginal children’s innate ability between government and church officials. Obviously, this era held that Caucasians were smarter than Aboriginals, Blacks, and Asians, although many bureaucrats and church officials also felt that Indians had mental quickness and natural intelligence. They also noted that undisturbed Aboriginal society was ethically very admirable. A day schoolteacher wrote: “The Indian children are intelligent and if given a proper chance will give a good account of themselves at school” (Miller, 1996, 153-154).

The curriculum was based on the 3 [or 4] R’s: Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, and Religion. Given who was running the schools and their qualifications, the 4th R was often the most important one (Perley, 1993). The subjects were English, “general knowledge,” reading, writing, grammar, composition, arithmetic, geography, history, ethics, recitation, callisthenics, art, music, and such trades as sewing for girls and blacksmithing and farming for boys (Miller, 1996, 155; Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 112). The aim was never to

⁶⁶ In an amiable conversation with me, Mr. Kogawa refused to answer any questions about IRS and suggested that I talk with others of the same era who might be more interested. He said he was responsible for the care standards of IRS nationally, but refused to elaborate more and said he had not been a director. The *Melting Snowman* indicates that he had been the Director of the Education Branch, although he denied this. Mr. Kogawa had training in psychology and not education and was, interestingly, of Japanese origin. He had come from Saskatchewan and initially been hired to work with the Indian Chiefs of Saskatchewan. Afterwards, he had worked with INAC as the Director of Care Standards in IRS (personal communication, January 11, 2010). Ironically, Mr. Kogawa spent WWII in Canadian concentration camps for people of Japanese origin in the interior of BC and Western Canada, much like IRS. It is certainly better to have qualified and sympathetic people running such a system, like Mr. Kogawa, than people who have no understanding, are under-qualified, and of bad character. Mr. Kogawa is the ex-husband of Joy Kogawa, author of the book *Obasan*. This book provides more information about his internment.

prepare the students for higher education, but simply to prepare them to work on farms as hired hands or domestics and, eventually, if mentally and physically capable, to have families of their own. The family and home they might have would obviously be raised with Anglo-Saxon and Christian values.

Miller wrote that the curriculum statements in 1890s department reports were hazy and imprecise as to the desired outcomes, indicating simply a desire “to develop all the abilities, remove prejudice against labour, and give courage to compete with the rest of the world.” The earlier curricula were divided into six standards/forms (Grade levels) and the content was authorized in English (Miller, 1996, 155).

In the 1920s, the department reported that “Indian schools follow the provincial curricula, but special emphasis is placed on language, reading, domestic science, manual training such as agriculture.” According to Miller, the industrial schools pursued a trades program while boarding schools trained their charges in less extensive skills (1996, 155).

Over the history of IRS, curriculum drifted in two directions: 1) greater conformity with provincial school standards; and 2) greater emphasis on vocational rather than academic training. In 1931, the schools were generally following the curriculum guidelines of their respective provinces. By 1936 and 1937, with the establishment of schools in the James Bay area by Anglican and Catholic missionaries, a shortened curriculum was introduced. It was realized that the students would need skills that would help them on returning to their families and the trapping/hunting life. This policy shift was made official in 1910. In the Prairie Provinces, the new curriculum mainly involved teaching of farm skills.

All IRS were run on the half-day system (Cunningham, Jeffs & Soloman, 2008, 448). The children would devote half their day to academic subjects and the other half to learning “usable” skills. This system was first used in Egerton Ryerson’s school (pre-Confederation) in Western Canada. In all residential schools (IRS) and many day schools, agricultural training was regularly taught as the principal subject. The students would work on the farm in the morning before classes and in the afternoon they would once

again be forced to work. The farm partially fed the school and partially made food available for sale to neighbouring communities. While the government wanted the Aboriginal students to learn agriculture for later reserve life, the main aim was to provide the schools with free farm labour. Because government funding was insufficient, the school farms were an important source of revenue. Schools would sell the produce in order to buy other necessities (Miller, 1996, 124-7). Often, however, the schools did not have enough food for all the children, many of whom remembered going hungry (Haig-Brown, 1988, 61-2).

Many IRS students never saw the inside of a classroom, notably girls who worked as domestics in the matron's home and boys who were sent off to hunt and cut wood (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, 44-5). The principal reason was lack of government funding for teacher salaries, food, heating, staff, materials for building repairs and school operation and, most importantly, medical supplies and care (Miller, 1996, 251-88). The schools operated on a "rigid work schedule, limited socialization, firm discipline and forced adherence to the teachers' guidance character[ize]d school life" (Coates, 1984-85, 35).

This type of education suited the government because these practical skills were considered to be of more use to Aboriginals for their daily lives and employment. Trades taught before 1910 became more restricted after this period. The government prioritized teaching of less-skilled and thus less expensive trades because it always felt the schools were too expensive to run. A department report stated that "to educate children above the possibilities of their station, and create a distaste for what is certain to be their environment in life would be not only a waste of money but doing them an injury instead of conferring a benefit upon them" (taken from Miller, 1996, 158).

This decline in education quality did not go unnoticed by the parents. In the Pas region of Manitoba, parents told the principal of the Elkhorn school that "they did not send their children to school to be taught how to hunt or trap or fish." The new program had

nonetheless been introduced after being deemed a success in the James Bay area (Miller, 1996, 158).

In the early years of IRS, training of female students revolved around domestic chores and skills (Haig-Brown, 1988, 70), although this curriculum had been largely curtailed by the 1970s when girls were just being taught home economics. A Methodist felt the girls should be taught the following subjects (Ferrier, 1906):

Housework, mending, sewing, darning, use of thimbles, needles, scissors, brooms, brushes, knives, forks, and spoons. The cooking of meats and vegetables, the recipes for various dishes, bread making, buns, pies, material used and quantity. Washing, ironing, bluing, what clothing should be boiled and what not, why white may be boiled and colored not, how to take stains from white clothing, how to wash colored cloths, the difference between hard and soft water. Dairying, milking, care of milk, cream, churning, house work. Sweeping, scrubbing, dusting, care of furniture, books, linen, etc. They should also be taught garden work. Our own women have to do a great deal of garden work, and it is of the greatest importance that the Indian girl should know how. Instruction should be given in the elements of physiology and hygiene, explaining particularly proper habits in eating and drinking, cleanliness, ventilation, the manner of treating emergency cases, such as haemorrhage, fainting, drowning, sunstroke, nursing and general care of the sick. Such an all-round training fits a girl to be mistress of her home very much better than if she spent her whole time in the class-room. (taken from Miller, 1996, 159)

Before WWI, a number of early industrial schools taught carpentry, blacksmithing, and tinsmithing.⁶⁷ A smaller number in the West and Northern Canada also taught printing and the preparation of a school newspaper. These were the exceptions. Most schools attempted to prepare the girls to be domestics and housewives and the boys to be farmers, fishermen, labourers and, occasionally, carpenters (Miller, 1996, 160).

⁶⁷ The reason tinsmithing was so wide spread in IRS was the need for cheap plates, cups and cutlery. Tinsmithing was an extremely inexpensive manner to produce these materials. Also many of these materials could be sold outside of the IRS and the skills could be used quite easily on reserve because no major equipment was needed for tinsmithing (conversation with the Blacksmith at Fort Gibraltar, Winnipeg, 3 July 2011).

After WWI, the IRS system in both Catholic and Protestant schools promoted the Boy Scouts and the Cub Scouts. These movements were seen as a means to promote the values of Canadian citizenship and the British Empire. The Anglicans actively supported them while the Catholics treated them largely as a matter of personal initiative. Miller points out that the scouting movement contained westernized elements of Indigenous culture as imagined by Baden-Powell. The boys would hear stories about brave Indian warriors while learning how to survive in the bush, camping, and British values. No one realized the irony of young Aboriginals being stripped of their Aboriginal culture while being indoctrinated into another Indian culture that was seen as safe and wholesome by the IRS authorities (Miller, 1996, 277-9). The end of WWII brought about the rise of Canadian nationalism with an additional need to educate for citizenship in a liberal democracy. This end would be furthered by the Boy Scouts, the Girl Guides, and the cadets.

Indian Affairs published their education bulletin of January 1948 with an article called: *How to organize a Student Council*. “It is widely recognized and accepted that the primary function of the school is to turn out good citizens” (Miller, 1996, 157). It is ironic that Indians did not have the right to vote, yet they were being prepared for democratic elections. Granted there were band councils with elected members, but the Indian agent could overrule them at any time. Obviously, they were being prepared for the day when they would be enfranchised as Canadian citizens.

Miller wrote that so few Aboriginals succeeded in IRS not only because of the abuse they suffered, but also because of the amount of work they had to perform, the quality of their teachers, and the teachers' poor knowledge of the curriculum. The authorities often disregarded the half-day system. Henry Ogemah in an interview with Miller said of this final 6 years of residential school (IRS): "I did not go to school at all." He was essentially an unpaid worker doing chores and other hard work around the school. Ogemah spent 8 years at residential school (p 172).

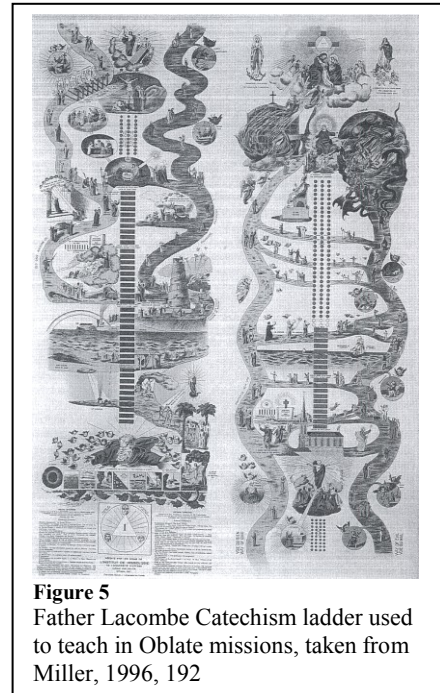


Figure 5
Father Lacombe Catechism ladder used to teach in Oblate missions, taken from Miller, 1996, 192

The half-day system also caused great difficulty for students, who could not, especially those who had just entered school, adequately understand what they were being taught. The language barrier was the most daunting one. The use of Native languages was forbidden in IRS, and this rule was strictly enforced (Cunningham, Jeffs & Solowan, 2008, 450).

The teachers almost always had no understanding of Aboriginal languages, even the Oblates. Up until 1885, this order had expended much effort and time to learn these languages. They then ceased any significant language training of their personnel. The situation was far worse with other denominations and missionaries. The only Oblate in 1947 still able to speak the Sioux language was Father Gontran Laviolette, even though the Oblates were still striving to convert Sioux communities (Miller, 1996, 200).

Rote learning was privileged, most likely because the students had a poor command of the English language. Through this method, they could practise speaking and memorizing various facts. One must wonder whether most of them actually understood what was being taught. Aboriginal languages were initially forbidden in residential schools, with greater leniency being shown in later years (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 112; Miller, 1996,

204). From the late 1950s to the 1970s use of these languages was only discouraged (Fulton, 1972). Previously, punishment had been severe. Stories abound about beatings and mouth washing with soap. Children were punished even when they were unaware of the rules after having arrived at an IRS (Miller, 1996, 204-20).

Using only French or English at an IRS was government policy. At times, some individuals did lobby for the retention of Native languages among the students. While recognizing the importance of English and French and hoping that the students would live their lives in these languages, they also realized that the students would eventually return home and need to use an Aboriginal language. Many religious leaders also felt that the tenets of Christianity would be better learned if the prayers were said in one's mother tongue. The provincial of the Oblates said: "Il faudrait que les enfants apprennent les prières dans leur langue maternelle; les enfants sauteux en Sauteux, et les enfants Métis français en français" (taken from Miller, 1996, 201).

Aboriginal IRS employees often did not enforce bans on Aboriginal languages. In a complaint leading to dismissal made against a Cecilia Jeffrey School farm instructor, the principal "could not recollect of one occasion that [the farm instructor] had sent a pupil into his office for punishment for talking the Indian language" (Miller, 1996, 201). There were differences in enforcement, but overwhelmingly the vast majority of IRS did not allow any use of Native languages and anyone who used them was severely punished if caught (Miller, 1996, 204).

The authorities and teachers frequently had little understanding of how to teach English as a second language. Parents had often sent their children to school to learn the "magic art" of writing (Miller, 1996, 99). At the same time, the methods left much to be desired. Henry Ogemah said: "the teacher would be standing at the blackboard. She got some writing on there. You think I could make out what it is, eh? The teacher would say something and point that thing. There was no way I could understand her" (Miller, 1996, 173).

For Miller, the system worked against the Aboriginal children. Circumstances forced the hiring of sub-par teachers. This problem was already apparent in the 1890s (Miller, 1996, 318-9) and persisted until the late 1970s (Fulton, 1972). Richard King, a teacher at Carcross during the early 1960s, felt the other teachers lacked sufficient cross-cultural training to interpret the students' reactions and behaviour (Miller, 1996, 174). There was a lack of understanding and even realization that other cultures react differently to different situations. Miller (p 472) tells about a "Sister of Saint-Ann who in her first year at Kuper Island School,⁶⁸ spoke sharply to a student who did not respond to a question. The student replied that she had answered: She said, "I raised my eyes." So you learn that if they raise their eyes, that's "yes"; and if they squint their nose, that's "no" " (King interview on CBC radio *A Dinner at Oblate House*, 1995).

The *Hawthorn and Tremblay Report* found only provincial curricula being used in IRS and Aboriginal day schools (1967, 155). "There is no material related to Indian cultures... [and] strongly suggested that provincial curricula allow some flexibility." Often the existing material was of such poor quality that it was recommended for removal. "The Indian is always portrayed as a Plains Indian with the ubiquitous feather band...in one province; texts include biased and falsified accounts of encounters between Indians and Whites." These curricula presented Aboriginals in such a way that the "child learns that his way is not only different but is wrong, his identity and his security are attacked and he is confronted with a crucial problem... For the Indian child the process of socialization within the school represents a clear discontinuity" (1967, 123).

The missionary organizations often felt that a missionary spirit mattered more in IRS than did post-secondary training in teaching pedagogy or even any post-secondary training. A Presbyterian Official in Winnipeg wrote: "You know the qualifications - Christian

⁶⁸ The Penelakut First Nations Tribe is located on the Southern Gulf Islands in B.C. The school opened in 1890 and was run by Roman Catholic missionaries. The newfound intercultural understanding did not go very far because elder Bill Seward (former student) says his sister Margaret was murdered at the Kuper Island Catholic School. She was "thrown from a third story window by a nun" and died. Other stories have surfaced about boys and girls being sexually abused, killed, and drowned at the school. In 1996, the RCMP refused to investigate any of these allegations (Fournier, 1996). This pattern bears out Chrisjohn's allegations of a double standard for crimes against Aboriginal children that the dominant society would not accept if the children were white (Chrisjohn, Young & Maraun 2005).

character and missionary spirit - some experience in teaching and if possible a Normal School training” (taken from Miller, 1996, 174).

Federal official policy promoted hiring of professionally trained teachers, but such hiring was very difficult with the funds provided. Teachers with the necessary qualifications would often back away from a position just before hiring upon hearing of the salary. At some schools, such as Fort Frances in 1925, it was so difficult to find qualified personal that older students were obliged to teach the lower grades. The severity of the problem differed by religious denomination. Roman Catholic schools had less trouble because they had access to low-cost instructors in the religious orders. Since priests, brothers, and nuns had all taken vows of celibacy and poverty, a living salary was no problem. Catholic teachers were paid at rates far below what non-Catholic teachers would expect (Miller, 1996, 242-5).

A number of non-monetary reasons discouraged teachers from joining IRS. They would be expected to live in remote locations (this factor also helped curb run-a-ways) and to live with the children. The schools were poorly equipped, the food of low quality, the buildings badly heated, and the communities rife with death and disease. Few young teachers would spend a number of years at these schools unless they were seeking adventure. Even today many remote Aboriginal communities have difficulty in finding teachers for many of the same reasons (personal communication with Alex Saikaley, non-Aboriginal principal of the Amo Ososwan School of Winneway, March 16, 2007).

A major competitor for IRS teachers was the Department of Indian Affairs. According to Miller, the department would raid the IRS for personnel in order to staff their own day schools. The day schools were preferred by teachers, who would at least not be responsible for the children during off-hours. By 1950, the department had taken direct responsibility for staffing and teacher salaries (Miller, 1996, 177).

IRS curricular and pedagogical material was often inappropriate. A 1927 department report wrote that “at all Indian schools, provincial curricula are followed and fully

qualified teachers engaged whenever possible” (Miller, 1996, 179). This is an interesting comment, seeing that the *Hawthorn and Tremblay Report* directly contradicted it 40 years later. Even today most provincial curricula are not culturally sensitive, and the curricula of the 1920s were assuredly even less so. The pedagogical material referred to places, peoples, and things that meant nothing to the Aboriginal child. There was always emphasis on the history of the British Empire and its overcoming of primitive peoples who stood in the way of progress and civilization. This emphasis helped to reinforce feelings of inferiority and rejection of Aboriginal cultures (Miller, 1996, 178). There was an attempt in the late 1940s to inject more Native content into the curriculum. The schools nonetheless followed their respective provincial curricula, which often did not allow for the insertion of Aboriginal material (Haig-Brown, 1988, 65-6).

The department did attempt to produce information bulletins that contained curriculum suggestions. The bulletins were sent to all IRS, but the suggestions were difficult for the teacher to use. Often the teacher had little or no experience with Aboriginals outside the classroom and felt uncomfortable using the material. In addition, the financial constraints of IRS made the material difficult to implement (Miller, 1996, 389).



Figure 6
Kuper Island Catholic Residential School Band
around 1902 taken from Miller, 1996, p 180.

The use of music was seen as the saving grace of the IRS experience for staff, teachers and, especially, students. Music was a respite from having to teach charges that had difficulty understanding academic subjects. Students too saw music as a means to express themselves physically and artistically

(Miller, 1996, 179). The music was varied: brass bands (Haig-Brown, 1988, 75), wood and brass bands, piano, singing, violin, and strings such as guitar. The type of music would differ by denomination and by resources available. The human voice was the most

common instrument because it was the most readily available one and cost nothing to use. It lent itself to hymn singing and praising of the Lord while being easy to train because almost all teachers had some experience with singing in church.

Many teachers and staff members would not even send their children to the IRS where they taught. It was felt the students were not good influences and the academic material and progress far behind that of any public school. These teachers would request extra funds from Indian Affairs in order to send their children to another location so they would not lose any “opportunities.” As was often the case, the teachers would eventually leave in order to ensure the education of their own children (Miller, 1996, 180-1).

The authorities during the interwar period saw that the IRS were not preparing the children for life after school. They worried about the curriculum in general and the increasing irrelevance of vocational training, such as farming. During this period, it was becoming increasingly clear that trades held far greater wage potential for Canadians to support their families. IRS were thus reoriented toward trades training. This change proved to be very difficult during the war years because the wages demanded by mechanics to teach were beyond the capacity of many schools. Miller writes that “the emphasis on technical instruction remained more a pious wish than an effective policy because of financial stringency through the 1930s and 1940s” (Miller, 1996, 388-9).

4.5 Continuing Structural Violence of Indian Residential Schools

Residential Indian schools dominate the history of Aboriginal education, and no major research can afford to ignore their impact. The IRS colours the way many Aboriginals function in society and how they view education. I never attended IRS, but members of my family did. If they had not, would they have been better parents? The schools most certainly affected how they lived their lives and how they interacted with their children and the world about them. As I have already mentioned there are many books on IRS, the most notable being J.R. Millers *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential*

Schools. Many chapters in Miller's book are probably too painful for many Aboriginals to read. I myself find parts of this book disheartening.

Very central to IRS and the experiences of Aboriginals in education is the physical, sexual, and mental abuse endured by children (Chrisjohn, Young & Maraun, 2005). Too often, this issue is pushed aside and said to belong to the past. If the children had been middle-class Europeans, the official version would undoubtedly not have been the same (Chrisjohn, Young & Maraun, 2005).

This abuse was documented in a study *Breaking the Silence*, released in 1994 by the Assembly of First Nations. The authors conducted 13 interviews with former residential school survivors (AFN, 1994). Twelve of the thirteen had suffered sexual and physical abuse. After interviews with 187 former students of the Oblates' St. Joseph residential school, the Cariboo Tribal Council found that 89 had been sexually abused, 38 had not been, and 60 had refused to answer (Miller, 1996, 333-4). These are chilling statistics.

The schools were run along the lines of concentration camps for cultural genocide (Cook-Lynn, 2007). They took in not only Indians, but also Métis, Protestants, Catholics, Inuit peoples, and all tribes simply because they were said to be uncivilized. While the school authorities were not allowed to kill their charges directly (although many students did die), they really wanted to kill what was within them. Even if one had been successful in making it through the system, he or she would never have been fully accepted, because the taint would always be there (personal communication James Ouellette, February 15, 2006).

Cook-Lynn repeatedly writes about the arrival of Europeans on Turtle Island as the start of a great genocide that has never been acknowledged. It is spoken of in terms of "conflict, assimilation, post-colonialism" but never genocide. She even goes further by adding that ecocide should be included as one of the crime committed by Europeans. Ecocide is the intentional destruction of the physical environment (2007, 187). She writes

that the systematic killing of a people existed on three principal bases: religious, racial/ethnic, and political.

Stephen Harper will give a lesson to China on Human Rights about Tibet, but what happened to Tibet has already happened here in Canada many years ago, except it is still continuing. The genocide has been strung out and continues today while in Tibet the genocide is really just getting started. Taking away the territories of First Nations has been done, dispossessing them of their homes has been done, placing them on reserves has been done. “We are superior and get out of the way in the name of civilization.” Here you are close and when you disturb you must not rock the boat, but the Tibetans don’t disturb [the governments] too much here, their claims don’t upset Canada, it’s in Tibet, but it is the First Nations who have suffered assaults for 200 years who have been put in miserable places, with destructured societies. When a society has been destructured, there is more violence. I understand you can’t have 100 - 200 years of desolation and stay sane. It is certain that there are social and individual reactions, as an individual they lose themselves, their roots, with their spirituality, losing all sense of worth, at a certain point when you are no longer attached to a social group which values you, giving you a sense to your life you become without value, thus you are judged on that. The dominant society has no sympathy, “why don’t they just assimilate.”

Raymond Sioui, elder from Wendake
Interview 2009

Canada and America have always failed to accept any overt responsibility for the death of possibly 80 million people in what she terms a continuing genocide (Cook-Lynn, 2007, 185-211). On June 11, 2008 the Canadian government on the new “National Day of Reconciliation” offered an apology for Indian residential schools. It offered this apology only after having been forced not by internal moral arguments by government members, but by external moral pressure and public opinion (Zabihyan, 2009, 9). Even this apology was given half- heartedly after years of wrangling.

The genocide was not technically illegal. It was how many nation-states operated around the world. Might was right. In Europe, multiple wars and revolutions killed off civilians and military forces alike. Only in the second half of the 20th century were leaders charged with war crimes and only if on the losing side. Nor were Europeans to blame for

Aboriginals having no immunity to diseases found in the rest of the world. For instance, the Black Death was not a genocide visited upon Europeans by Chinese or East Indian interests, but rather a fact of life. When Western military forces in North America gave Aboriginals contaminated blankets, it was to eliminate their ability to wage war.

My experiences with IRS are through my older relations, including my grandmother, my grandfather, my uncles and aunts, and my father. Recently, I have had the chance to become involved with the IRS settlement in an official capacity, and this opportunity has offered an interesting look into the workings of the federal Aboriginal industry (Widdowson & Howard, 2008) and the structural violence that is still generally present in Aboriginal education.

For instance, there are two separate processes with the IRS settlement. The first one involves assessing claims by survivors who say they have attended IRS. Survivors get a lump sum for the number of years they had attended. If they make claims that go beyond simple attendance, they enter a second process. The second one involves lawyers making \$250 an hour and working supposedly 60 hours a week to take the survivor through adjudication. A part-time adjudicator will make \$15,000 a month (Interview with Cree elder William Wuttunee, September 15, 2009).

Frank Iacobucci, a retired Supreme Court Justice, was appointed in June 2005 to negotiate with the government, the AFN, and the various churches involved with the IRS. He has been paid more than \$2.5 million for his “work” or around \$200,000 per month, plus expenses. This amount includes the work of two junior lawyers. Some lawyers in the Western provinces have up to 10,000 clients and charge above the going rate (\$200), i.e., \$350 an hour. Tony Merchant, a lawyer from Saskatchewan, said: “certainly nobody knew about this, or nobody within the First Nations community knew about this. These are just significant amounts,” when talking to a CBC journalist about Iacobucci’s fees (the lawyer who worked out the residential schools deal was paid \$2.5 million, 2006). Ironically, Merchant himself has been involved in the IRS settlement and may earn up to \$40 million.

Ruth Iron of Canoe Lake in Northwest Saskatchewan, whose brother and mother attended IRS, is troubled by the vast sums lawyers like Merchant stand to receive. “He's just getting rich off the blood, sweat and tears of the people who actually suffered and were tortured at the residential schools” (Potential huge payday coming for lawyer Merchant, 2006). Tony Merchant has said unabashedly: “Money has always motivated me...But it's not really that it motivates me to spend it, in particular. But I guess it motivates me to have it” (Potential huge payday coming for lawyer Merchant, 2006).

As an example of the money involved (from a meeting I attended as a representative of the survivors), the Deputy Chief Adjudicator will potentially make up to half a million a year for the next five to six years.⁶⁹ The survivors on the other hand might get up to \$30,000 to \$40,000 for years of sexual abuse, rape, and mental anguish; the price for having a child's potential essentially destroyed (Deputy Chief Adjudicator selection board meeting, Ottawa IRSAS, September 15, 2009).

An estimated 100,000 Aboriginal children lived in the once mandatory residential schools from 1930 to 1996. A deal announced in May offers any former student a lump sum of \$10,000 each, plus \$3,000 for each year spent in the schools. Statistics Canada estimates that 80,000 people alive today attended residential schools (Lawyer who got residential schools deal was paid \$2.5 million, 2006).

It is as if the survivors are now being abused not physically but rather mentally by a justice system that is supposed to give them back a certain sense of equilibrium and fairness. They are essentially being raped again by the blind Lady of Justice who refuses to see the truth. Paul Farmer's idea of structural violence is best exemplified by the IRS settlement. The Western justice system attempts to right a wrong through a wrongful process. In many Aboriginal communities, a process is just as important as the result. Western justice cannot even ensure a fair result. If the Western system had been truly

⁶⁹ This calculation is based on \$1,400 for a prorated work day of 7.5 hours, (or \$186.66/hour), with the Deputy Chief Adjudicator working sixty hours a week for 44 weeks a year, or \$492 800 (Deputy Chief Adjudicator selection board meeting, Ottawa IRSAS, September 15, 2009).

looking for justice, the approach would have been a non-adversarial one without high-priced lawyers who would take much of the settlement for themselves. If the federal government really wanted to help Aboriginals, it would have allowed the use of an Aboriginal system of justice and compensation.

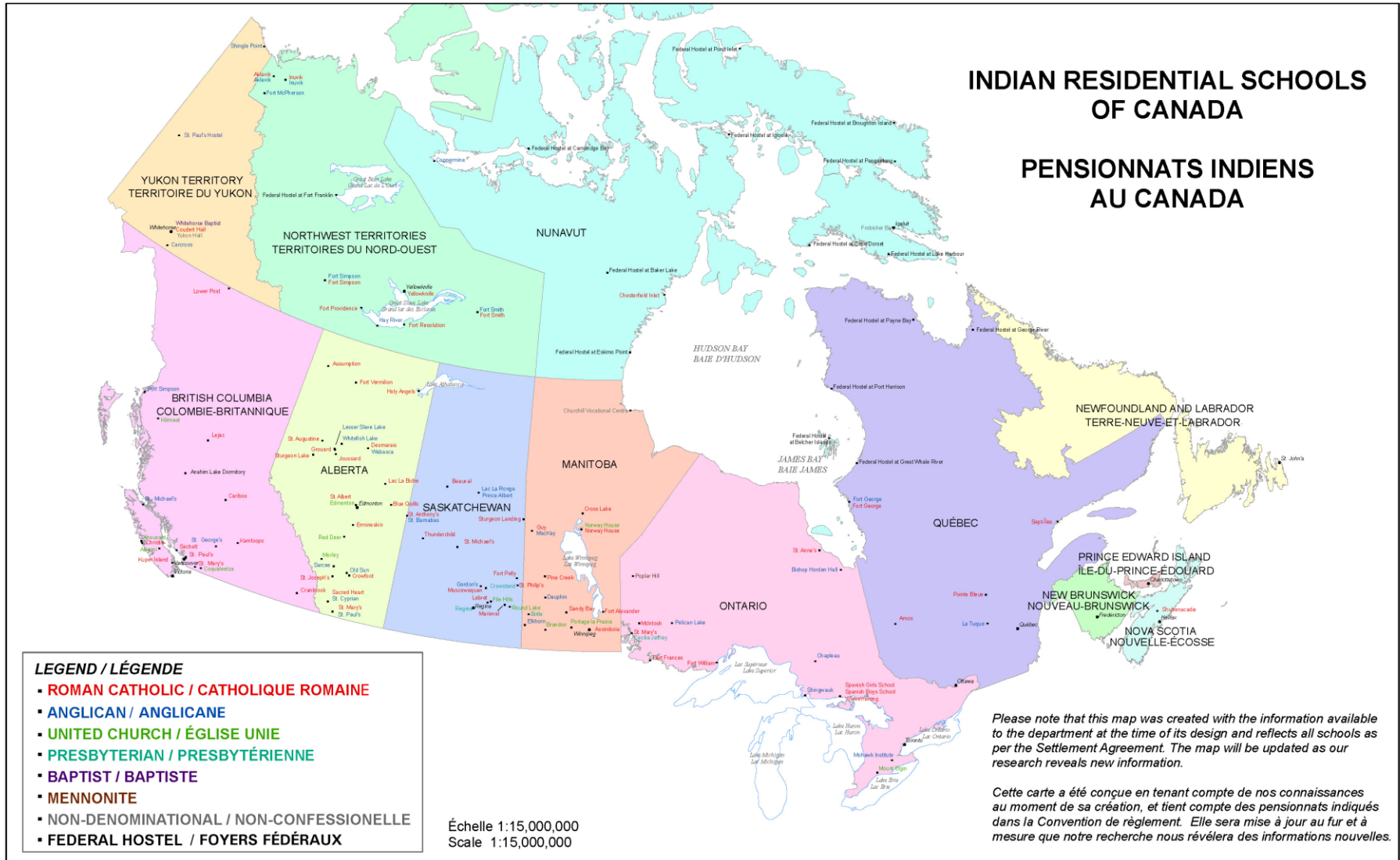
In the courts, there is a definite field of power, symbolically and spatially. The judge is at the top of the social scale and is even elevated at the front of the room. Below his dais are the contending parties. Bourdieu (1992) has pointed out that the configuration of a social field has connotations of force. The socially closer the agents and groups within such a field, the more properties and habitus they have in common.

Actors in a courtroom also coexist uneasily. They have different worldviews and ways of arriving at the truth. The Aboriginal witness provides raw material that is not treated at face value. The agents of the courtroom extract evidence to support the positions of their respective clients. They are subject to the professional habitus of the legal agents and their respective canons of rules and procedures. The Western world is often dismissive of the Aboriginal worldview, because the latter directly challenges its power structure. If the Aboriginal philosophy of the wholeness and interconnectedness of life is true in law, it must also be so in education, health, family, government, and so on...

The IRS settlement represents the structural violence facing Aboriginal education (Widdowson & Howard, 2005). Many people have much to gain from Aboriginals not succeeding. If students do not succeed, those working in INAC, the consultants, lawyers, specialists, teachers, and so on... can better justify their salaries and their work (Gilbert Whiteduck, interview January 15, 2010). It is ironic that Aboriginals are using the law and these Western concepts of justice to now defend their rights to agency and their ability to affect their lives.

INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS OF CANADA

PENSIONNATS INDIENS AU CANADA



PREPARED FOR INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOLS RESOLUTION CANADA BY PUBLIC HISTORY INC. (VERSION: 2007-12)

PRÉPARÉ PAR PUBLIC HISTORY INC. POUR RÉOLUTION DES QUESTIONS DES PENSIONNATS INDIENS CANADA (ÉDITION DU: 2007-12)

Figure 7
Indian Residential Schools of Canada Map
Used by permission of IRSRC

4.6 International Indigenous Rights in Education

The education of the young is the primary way in which a culture passes on its accumulated knowledge, skills, and attitudes. At the centre of this education is a perspective or set of fundamental assumptions about the relationship of humankind to its cosmos. When the education of Aboriginal children was displaced with education from European cultures, it was not merely the particular knowledge, skill, and attitude sets that were supplanted, but more importantly, Aboriginal people's foundational view of the world.

From the beginning of this interference on the traditional educational system, Aboriginal people have attempted to communicate their unease with the inherent contradictions they have faced with formal schooling. The Aboriginal voices have been clear and persistent in calling for a respectful recognition of their *world view*, while acknowledging the value of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to participate in the new technologies and economies. It was to these voices that Aboriginal people turned to, and listened to, in order to overcome these contradictions and create ways to incorporate new technologies and economies that benefit learners wanting to learn about Aboriginal languages and cultures.

Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Language and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum
Framework of Outcomes, 2007

A number of Canadians question allowing Aboriginals separate self-governing systems, including education (Flanagan, 2008, 48-67; Widdowson & Howard, 2008, 106-7, 193-4). If the federal government so wished, there would already be such systems. Raymond Sioui of Wendake believes that the federal government wishes to see Aboriginals assimilated into provincial systems (interview, 2009). This debate is ongoing, but for the most part goes on unsaid, unspoken, and unwritten. Aboriginals have been forced to use other means to advance their causes. For a number of years, Aboriginals have attempted to seek redress for several grievances against the Canadian justice and political systems (Ouellette, 2009). Often they have been forced to go outside the Canadian system and use international treaties by pleading before such organizations as the UN, UNICEF, the World Court, and the International World Court. Canada has ratified almost all of the treaties, except for the *UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*, which the General Assembly adopted on September 13, 2007, being only one of four nations not to do so. There have been a number of international initiatives to protect Indigenous

knowledge (IK), including the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on Biological Diversity, the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the International Labour Organization Convention #168, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights. These treaties have sections specifically on education, and many Aboriginal organizations would do well to invoke such sections more often when negotiating with federal and provincial governments for actual control over education.

Article 8. (j)

Each Contracting Party shall, as far as possible and as appropriate: Subject to its national legislation, respect, preserve and maintain knowledge, innovations and practices of indigenous and local communities embodying traditional lifestyles relevant for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity and promote their wider application with the approval and involvement of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices and encourage the equitable sharing of the benefits arising from the utilisation of such knowledge, innovations and practices.

Article 13. (a)

The Contracting Parties shall: Promote and encourage understanding of the importance of, and the measures required for, the conservation of biological diversity, as well as its propagation through media, and the inclusion of these topics in educational programs.

Convention on Biological Diversity,⁷⁰ 1992

The Convention on Biological Diversity states that IK must be protected, preserved, and maintained. Many Aboriginals feel they only have delegated administrative control over their schools, and most Métis communities do not even have this much control. It is very difficult to protect IK when one cannot officially modify the provincial curriculum to be used in one's school (personal communication with Judy Côté, January 21, 2010). The Convention presupposes that Indigenous peoples must be able to preserve their traditional knowledge. Because school is so key to modern life, it is often central to the transmission of any systematic knowledge. If IK is to be passed on integrally, the task should be given to Aboriginals who best understand this specific knowledge.

⁷⁰ It is informally called the Biodiversity Convention, an international treaty that was adopted at the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro on June 5, 1992.

Article 13, 1 & 3.

The States Parties ... agree that education shall be directed to the full development of the human ... and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms ... enable all persons to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups...

The States Parties ... to have respect for the liberty of parents ... to choose for their children schools, other than those established by the public authorities ... and to ensure the religious and moral education of their children in conformity with their own convictions.

International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights⁷¹

The effect on Canadian Aboriginals has yet to be felt. These international treaties should allow them greater agency over their lives, while validating their worldview. Aboriginal societies have generally been oral in nature, even in many legal documents. This situation presents a problem for Western nations when assessing IK because in the West the written word is power. It is a sign of education and status. Generally, the illiterate come from lower classes that have little power and thus are seen to have been placed on the earth to be ruled by their betters. Arab and Asian cultures are to be respected to a certain degree because their history can be seen and has not been “conjured up on the spot.”

International and national recognition of and respect for Indigenous peoples’ own customs, rules, and practices for the transmission of their heritage to future generations are essential to the Indigenous peoples’ enjoyment of human rights and dignity. Indigenous students must see themselves and their heritage as part of the educational system. In most existing educational systems, Indigenous heritage and the transmission [through curriculum] of that heritage are missing. Even if part of the heritage is present, it is presented from a Eurocentric perspective.

Battiste and Henderson 2000, pp 88.

⁷¹ The International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR) is a multilateral treaty that the United Nations General Assembly adopted on December 16, 1966.

4.7 Control of Education

The 1972 report *Indian Control of Indian Education* laid out a philosophy and practical framework for conduct of education. The initial statement was a simple outline of what the Indian leaders felt was needed for their children.

The need to learn that happiness and satisfaction come from:

- pride in oneself;
- understanding one's fellowmen; and
- living in harmony with nature.

The report went on to describe a number of areas that merited urgent attention from the federal government. The section “Indian Philosophy of Education” gave a statement of values and, just as importantly, laid out the need for parental control of Indian education or the idea of individual agency.

We want education to provide the setting in which our children can develop the fundamental attitudes and values which have an honoured place in Indian tradition and culture. The values which we want to pass on to our children, values which make our people a great race, are not written in any book. They are found in our history, in our legends and in the culture. We believe that if an Indian child is fully aware of the important Indian values he will have reason to be proud of our race and of himself as an Indian.

National Indian Brotherhood
Indian Control of Indian Education, 1972

Parents were the “best judges of the kind of school programs which can contribute to these goals without causing damage to the child.” The Indian right to be involved in children’s education was based on what they felt to be two principles of Canadian society: Parental Responsibility and Local Control of Education (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972).

In the section on responsibility, the collective authors state that “the Federal government has legal responsibility for Indian Education as defined by the treaties and the Indian Act,” and that “any transfer of jurisdiction for Indian Education can only be from the Federal Government to Indian Bands” (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972).

This document has formed the basis of almost all the demands of the FN. There have been modifications and new position papers, but in the end this document still guides the AFN and its allies. How successful has the Assembly of First Nations and individual band councils been in gaining control of their education systems? For many, the successes have been mixed.

1972 was the beginning of the end for IRS, day schools, and religious organizations’ involvement in educating and assimilating Aborigines. There were at one point over 104 “official” residential schools across the country.⁷² The Canadian government had operated nearly every school as a “joint venture” with various religious organizations. On April 1, 1969, it assumed total responsibility, although in some instances churches remained involved for some years. Most IRS ceased to operate by the mid-1970s, with the last federally run residential school in Canada closing in 1996 (IRSRC, 2006).

The First Nations have in all cases decided to take direct control of their children’s education, as a result of the “new” policy direction of 1972. The band schools are allotted financial support in proportion to the number of students. There is additional funding for special-needs students. These monies are paid directly to the band council, which must then decide how they are to be spent. The band council has full decision-making power over the teacher to student ratio, the number of support staff, the number of extracurricular activities, the time spent in class, and so on... Even in 2004, Sheila Fraser (Report of the Auditor General of Canada) wrote: “the Department (INAC) does not know whether funding to First Nations is sufficient to meet the education standards it has set.”

⁷² The number of Indian residential schools (IRS) listed reflects the ones that are currently named in Canada government files.

Chief Snow wrote, “For thousands of years the Stoney people⁷³ gained an education from tribal elders which fitted them to live with pride and confidence on this Great Island.” Because the Nakoda live in a Western-dominated world with Western concepts, a “sound education in the three Rs has become essential for survival” of the Stoney Nation and its people. “In my father’s time this was not so” because they could more easily follow a traditional lifestyle. For Chief Snow, Aboriginals needed “the best available-plus.” They needed to “integrate the wisdom of our culture with the knowledge of the technology of the other culture” (Snow, 1977).⁷⁴

The integration policy was new and there were many questions about how much should be integration and how much assimilation. In the *Hawthorn and Tremblay Report* several flaws, omissions, and ambiguities in government policy were highlighted (p 41). “The government’s policy on the preservation of Indian languages and cultural traditions...are not assigned much importance. This makes it difficult to distinguish between a policy of integration and a policy of assimilation... Is this philosophy being implemented in its

⁷³ Nakoda First Nation (Alberta) means People First Nation, but they are called Stoney by the dominant society.

⁷⁴ The use of Chief John Snow as a source is a cause for reflection. His public image is strong and positive. He is seen as an outspoken advocate for his people. This image has been challenged by Justice John Reilly. Reilly is a provincial court judge in Alberta. For most of his career, he had jurisdiction over the Stoney Nakoda First Nation in Morley, Alberta. Initially, he thought he was doing positive things from the bench, until he kept seeing Aboriginal people in his court. He would apply the law impartially, but when these various Aboriginals kept coming back to his courtroom for the same offences he ordered treatment for their addictions. Incredibly, their reserve refused to pay for treatment even “though they were receiving 100 million in revenues from oil and gas” and were sitting on one of the richest reserves in Canada (Tremonti, 2010 November 8). Subsequently, he ordered an investigation into on-reserve corruption and mismanagement at the Stoney reserve in order to find out why the richest reserve could not provide band members with basic services (Tremonti, 2010 November 8).

The investigation showed that Chief Snow was mismanaging band affairs and financial resources for his family’s benefit (Reilly, 2010). As an example, the reserve school was in disarray and the chief was not even sending his children there. They were sent off-reserve. His apparent goal was to create a dynasty to ensure his family’s financial well-being (Tremonti, 2010 November 8).

There was an addiction treatment centre on the reserve, but it had been closed for years for lack of financial resources. Reilly was told by reserve residents, “I was right on” with the finding of the investigation (Tremonti, 2010 November 8). Lack of accountability affected education, health, wellness, and justice for all members of Stoney First Nation. Reilly was ordered removed from the court bench through pressure from Chief Snow, but was eventually able to keep his courtroom in Morley, Alberta (Tremonti, 2010 November 8).

entirety... is this philosophy... meant to impress public opinion and is it therefore being implemented only in part” (1967, 41).

Kirkness and Bowman wrote that the “educational and socialization processes of the various [Aboriginal] cultures throughout this country were seriously undermined by the formal education system” that went about forcing different values, undermining and devaluing “their spiritual practices, their languages, and their overall way of life.” For Kirkness and Bowman, Aboriginal cultures must be respected and traditional values given a special place in the education of Aboriginal youth (1983: 103).

For many Aboriginals, the crossing of the Rubicon has been reached in education. Should they try to maintain their traditional way of life or give into the pressures of assimilation? Aboriginals in the 1970s made a conscientious choice neither to retreat into the past nor to accept the structural violence of the dominant Western society (Friesen & Friesen, 2002). Getting to that point has taken a lot of soul-searching about the philosophies and values that drive individuals and communities. The debate has been a long emotional counter-crusade that has caused disruption and disjuncture for countless individuals.

The modern history of Aboriginal education offers many examples of overt or hidden assimilation. While the administration of educational programs matters (a sense of control), what is being taught is just as important if not more so. The curriculum,⁷⁵ what to teach, how to teach, and the philosophy of teaching reflect the worldview of a society and civilization. In the past, education has been used positively and negatively to create a population that fits the values of those who are “responsible” for society.

Aboriginals on Turtle Island are no different. They are often forced to suffer educational programs (curricula) that are not of their own design and that do not fit their worldview.

⁷⁵ In formal education or schooling a curriculum is the set of courses and educational content offered by an institution such as a school, college, CEGEP, or university. Most Aboriginal curricula are entirely determined by external bodies such as the various provincial education departments. Often each province establishes the basic curriculum and the band school unofficially adjusts it to fit its basic needs better. Note that the term *curriculum* relates to the range of courses that students are given, but may also relate to a specific program. In the latter case, the curriculum describes the collective teaching, learning, and assessment materials available for that particular course.

This situation might even be described as one of structural violence (Farmer, 2004). Control of what is taught is key to Aboriginal politics and can inflame passions. For the AFN, education is a force for human development that “lies at the base of achieving effective...self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-respect...self-sufficiency ...and a stable culture” (AFN, 1988a)

Billy Diamond⁷⁶ writes that Aboriginals are very unique in Canada. For non-Natives the uniqueness does not go very far and “Indian education” simply means adapting Indians to a school system and pedagogical regime created by a foreign culture in order to fulfill their own aspirations and needs (1987, 86-7). The Cree of Québec in the 1980s believed that a “man cannot be educated unless he lives and works in a community which is culturally and socially vibrant.” There was a need for a traditional foundation on which to grow. Diamond rejected the choices offered to him: adapting to the living standard of modern industrial society or clinging to a woodland/traditional culture. He wrote: “why is it necessary to choose one to the detriment of the other” (1987, 87)?

Aboriginals have been attempting to “take the best from the white man’s knowledge by acquiring a formal education in the field of choice, while affirming the Indian spiritual worldview” (Martin, 1991, 28). Such a feat is difficult. There are profound differences in worldview and values between Western and Indigenous cultures.

In 1971, the Quebec Cree were faced with the creation of large hydroelectricity projects that, according to Diamond, would destroy their culture, society, and way of life. They fought them and were able to force the government to negotiate an economically favourable agreement for the development of their nation. The agreement included a provision for the establishment of the Quebec Cree School Board (section 16). The Cree faced a choice: modify the Southern educational system or create an Aboriginal educational system. They chose “to be practical and combine the best parts of both options” (Diamond, 1987, 88).

⁷⁶ Former Chief of the Rupert House Band, Grand Chief of the Grand Council of the Crees of Quebec, and former Chairman of the Cree School Board.

This school board has powers and responsibilities far beyond those of other provincial school boards and other Aboriginal education authorities. It was deemed essential that the Cree control all aspects of the educational system to be used in their schools. The Grand Council of the Cree wanted complete control over the development, growth, and adaptation of education. The school board was given the power to develop courses, textbooks, and teaching materials, and to establish training programs for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teachers that reflect, preserve, and transmit Cree language and culture (Diamond, 1987, 90).

Section 16.0.09 of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement

The Cree School Board shall also have the following special powers, subject only to annual budgetary approval:

- g) to select courses, textbooks and teaching material appropriate for the Native people and to arrange for their experimental use, evaluation and eventual approval;
- h) to develop courses, textbooks and material designed to preserve and transmit the language and culture of the Native people;
- j) to give instruction and guidance to its teachers in the methods of teaching its courses and in the use of the textbooks and teaching materials used for such courses;

There are three notable elements: the Cree fully control the curriculum (except for budgetary approval); teachers must instruct according to Cree customs; and prior teacher training must be adapted to the conditions of the Cree students. Students are also no longer defined as children, but as people. This definition is more in line with a holistic Aboriginal concept of lifelong learning. Learning is important throughout life (CCL, 2006a, b, c).

A key element is the definition of the course objectives, which are often expressed in terms of educational outcomes and normally include the assessment philosophy for the program. These outcomes and assessments are often grouped into various sections, each specializing in a specific part of the curriculum. Curricula may be arranged sequentially, cyclically, or randomly. The ones currently in use in Aboriginal schools often take a Western linear approach (Whitson, 2007).

Many schools have developed Aboriginal curricula, but a major hurdle continues to be the Western origins of the course materials. Initially, in the early 1970s, the curriculum would be Western-based with elements of Aboriginal culture inserted. Over time, various communities replaced more and more of this Western foundation until the curriculum had generally become a hybrid of sorts. Until the late 1980s, many schools wished to implement cultural programs but lacked the appropriate materials. To remedy this situation, they simply developed their own as best they could or partnered with various Aboriginal learning organizations (McCaskill, 1987, 167).

These complicated questions of what to teach and how to teach have some answers in the *Indian Act*. Unfortunately, in drafting this act the government was unable to lay out complete guidelines for implementation of an educational program. The *Indian Act* gives the Canadian government “assumed” authority to regulate the lives of Indians (see appendix II). The 1920 amendments to the 1876 act made schooling compulsory for Aboriginal children at either day schools or residential schools. Section 114 (1) permits the federal government to enter into agreements with the provincial governments, public or separate school boards, and religious or charitable organizations for the education of Indian children. Section 114 (2) states that the Minister may, pursuant to the act, establish, operate, and maintain schools for Indian children. It is therefore under this section that band schools operate—an administrative delegated responsibility in its simplest of forms. This section does not, however, empower the Minister to enter into similar agreements with a band, such as would be possible with a provincial school board or even a religious organization.

Usually a funding agreement with a band council pursuant to Section 114 usually states something to the effect that the band school program must allow students to transfer to the provincial system without any academic hindrance or penalty. The Canadian government does try to ensure that the band actually fulfils this requirement. Forms must be filled out at the community level to confirm that the school is in fact fulfilling its funding agreement.

Under the Indian Act, Section 115 (a), the federal government permits civil servants to regulate school buildings, equipment, teaching, education, inspections, and discipline. There is nonetheless no specific mention of how the federal government may go about regulating curricula. As the government has no direct authority on the ground (in the individual schools) because none of the teachers or staff are direct federal employees, it is difficult to ensure that the band schools follow provincial curriculum guidelines. Many First Nations believe that the original assumption in the Act was that the band schools, and previously the residential schools, would follow the respective provincial curricula so as to facilitate transfers of students between provincial and reserve schools.

Please note that Section 115 like many other sections states the Minister “may”. Therefore there are no guidelines in regards to teaching, inspection, discipline or for that matter, school level academic programs. INAC has always assumed that the band school would simply replicate what is in the provincial system with some minor modifications. Even though the provincial system has for the most part failed First Nations, it is the trinkets and beads mentality. What they try to impose through their bureaucrats is a smallpox blanket mentality. As the saying goes, be weary of the wolf in sheep's clothes.

Gilbert Whiteduck, elder
personal communication, December 5, 2006
Kitzigan Zibi First Nation (Algonquian)

Provincial education programs, as currently laid out, do not allow for the specificity of Native thought processes or Native epistemology. Because of the lack of certified Native educators in the early 1970s, the federal government was able to get half-hearted compliance with teaching of provincial curricula by non-Native teachers in band schools. Even today Native teachers may only represent a minority in their own band-run schools, with non-Native teachers dominating education of Aboriginal children (Taylor, 1995, 224).

In my correspondence with the then minister of INAC, Jim Prentice, he indicated that First Nation schools “must use, at a minimum, provincial curriculum, and in accordance

with their funding arrangements, must attest that the curriculum used meets provincial education standards.” The minister was unable to provide information on how INAC ascertains that provincial curricula enable Aboriginal students to succeed (Correspondence March 30, 2007).

In the early 1980s, the Edmonton Public School Board started the *Sacred Circle Project*. This collaborative effort brought together the provincial ministry of education, other school jurisdictions, Aboriginal communities, and academics. It came about to meet the needs of urban Aboriginals in the Edmonton school system and was supposed to help Aboriginal people integrate into an urban setting while assisting those who felt alienated from school (Douglas, 1987, 181).

Curriculum development was initiated with the goal of integrating Aboriginal materials into the existing curriculum, subject areas, and grade levels. The “curriculum development component was expected to provide a number of improvements:

1. Improved quality of resources that introduce a Native perspective into the curriculum.
2. Improved articulation of the contexts within the existing curriculum for Native Studies.
3. Improved accessibility to learning resources for and about Native people.
4. Improved communications with local Native communities

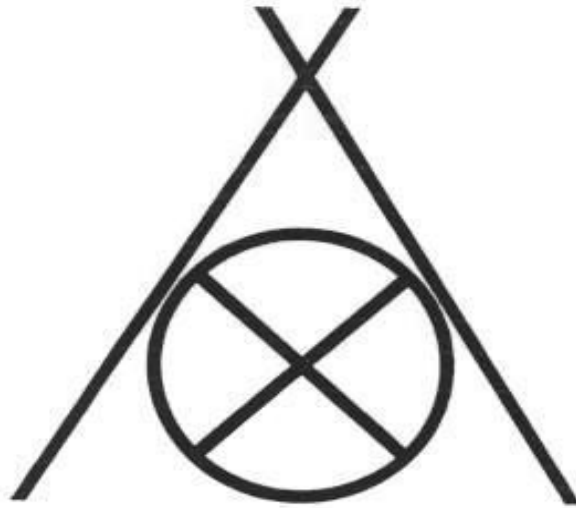
Vernon R. Douglas, 1987, p 192

SACRED CIRCLE PROJECT . . . AT A GLANCE

The multifaceted design of the Sacred Circle project is intended to address the many complex concerns facing Native and non-Native people with respect to Native education in Edmonton Public Schools.³⁷



Figure 8
Sacred Circle Project



The circle (wheel, hoop) is used symbolically to represent the traditional Native perspective of life. The seasons move in a circle one to another. The four directions form a circle. The power of the world always works in circles. It is the symbol of completeness and perfection.

All existence is related and has its place in the circle. Each form of life depends on every other. What happens to one happens to all. This oneness makes the circle of life sacred.

This particular representation of the circle, the education wheel, is only one of many different circles that can be used to represent almost any aspect of existence.

The education wheel illustrates the traditional manner in which individuals learn and teach. Young people (southwest quadrant) are sent to grandparents (northeast quadrant) to learn. Mature adults (northwest quadrant) go to elders (southeast quadrant) to learn so that when they be-

Figure 9

Sacred Circle Project

Guidelines for the Development of Native Studies Curriculum Support Materials³⁸

Sacred Circle supports the outcomes as defined by Edmonton Public Schools' programmes in Language Arts, Social Studies, Science and the Fine Arts in addition to the ones stated here. The four outcomes that are outlined in this document are those desired in the area of Native education. We believe these outcomes are important enough to be achieved by all children in the district.

Native Education Outcome 1—Students will demonstrate an understanding of Native heritage and contemporary lifestyles through an analysis of significant content from history, the social sciences and contemporary events.

Native Education Outcome 2—Students will demonstrate the ability to examine critically the contemporary issues (social, political, economic, legal, cultural) affecting the continued development of Native identity and lifestyle.

Native Education Outcome 3—Students will demonstrate an awareness, empathy and respect for the traditional Native value system that emphasizes the significance of the relationships among self-respect, respect for others and respect for the environment.

Native Education Outcome 4—Students will demonstrate positive attitudes towards Native people in an attempt to prevent prejudicial and stereotypical perspectives from developing.

Figure 10

Sacred Circle Curriculum Development Guidelines

4.8 Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future

In 1988, the Assembly of First Nations conducted a “comprehensive” community-based review of the status of Aboriginal education in Canada. The report *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future* was founded on the idea of Aboriginal self-government. It contained 54 recommendations and argued that Canadians should recognize the inherent right of First Nations to maintain their unique cultural identity and

to exercise control over their educational systems. The report was apparently a follow-up to *Indian Control of Indian Education*.

Education control was tied in with the idea of Aboriginal “self-government.” Many Aboriginal leaders felt that administrative control over education was not enough. Unfortunately federal and Aboriginal authorities still cannot agree on what constitutes self-government, and the AFN has had little success in moving towards actual control. In *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future*, the allocation of resources is recognized as a major concern because Ottawa allocates funds according to its priorities and not those of First Nations.

The exact meaning of self-government is still being worked out. Who is the master of whom and who should decide what Aboriginal children learn? Most parents would assume that they should have the right to decide what their children learn and how. The ideal is one of individual responsibility within the community. This ideal is not fully accepted. Many Aboriginals believe in individual autonomy (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, 40) if it is balanced against community. While the community is very important, individuals must be allowed to make decisions about their own lives and those of their family. This traditional aboriginal understanding of the world is a cyclical whole whereby all things (including humans, animals, elements, and even future generations) have inherent positive rights to interact with and be responsible for each other and themselves through individual action (Cajete, 2000, 168).

In 1981, the Mi’kmaq of Chapel Island in Nova Scotia founded the Mi’kmawey School. Until then, the children were educated in provincial schools off-reserve. The school was founded through a number of actions by provincial school board officials, including action on mistreatment of children in their care. Treatment of children exemplified, for the Mi’kmaq, the divide between the provincial education system and the Mi’kmaq. The provincial system was seen as victimizing the children because “of their language, cultural and learning differences.” The community wanted change because some students

were even being diagnosed as having learning disorders for having spoken their mother tongue (Battiste, 1987, 118).

Initially, the Mi'kmawey school struggled with a lack of defined goals and objectives, an inexperienced school board, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal staff with different aims, misunderstanding by many teachers of traditional culture and tribal epistemology, a shortage of Aboriginal certified teachers and administrators and, eventually, parents who began doubting the whole project (Battiste, 1987, 120). Nonetheless, the school managed to introduce parental involvement and the use of prayers in Mi'kmaq. For the Chapel Island Band, the Mi'kmawey school has demonstrated “that Mi'kmaq cultural and language education can effectively prepare children for basic English skills without sacrificing self-concept and without causing cultural disintegration” (Battiste, 1987, 123).

4.9 Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples

The final chapter of the review of the historical influences of Aboriginal education is perhaps the one that offers the most hope for the future for an Aboriginal controlled education. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) is perhaps the most singularly comprehensive study of Canadian Aboriginal peoples. This chapter is not long, but any research which fails to at least mention this work ignores a strong moral argument for Aboriginal agency and decolonization. It also serves as a starting point in the study of jurisdiction and Aboriginal education.

RCAP was established by order in council on August 25, 1991. The terms of reference had been developed by former Chief Justice of Canada Brian Dickson with national and regional Aboriginal groups, Native leaders in various fields, federal and provincial politicians, and a variety of experts. The mandate was to study the evolution of the relationship between Aboriginal peoples, the Canadian government, and Canadian society as a whole. Justice Dickson identified sixteen areas for special attention. On his recommendation, 4 of the 7 commissioners were Aboriginal and 3 non-Aboriginals (Doer, 2009).

For many, the RCAP was a government response to the Oka Crisis of the preceding summer (Doer, 2009), but others felt it was established because Prime Minister Brian Mulroney had offered it to Elijah Harper and his supporters in June 1990 when the *Meech Lake Accord* was struck down in the Manitoba Legislature (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 95). Many Aboriginals have criticized the RCAP because they see it as a means to stall any action on Aboriginal issues. Daniel Paul, a Mi'kmaq wrote on his web site that “the expected effectiveness of its [RCAP] work was contained in an editorial in *The Edmonton Journal*, Thursday, April 25, 1991: “Royal commissions are Canada's favourite substitute for action.” For Paul, this prediction has been borne out. “The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples has proven to be a royal waste of money” (Paul, 2005).

Even though most of its recommendations have never been implemented, the RCAP is still widely cited by Aboriginals, politicians, and researchers because of its extensive findings and revolutionary recommendations. The initial research plan and the resulting publications were divided into four⁷⁷ themes: governance, land and economy, social and cultural issues, and the North. In addition, these themes were addressed from four perspectives: historical, women, youth, and urban (1993).

The Commission, after the release of the final report on November 21, 1996, most likely expected a change in government relations and concrete action by the federal government (Doer, 2009). Unfortunately, the government of the day decided to issue a lengthy information document, *Aboriginal Agenda: Three Years of Progress* outlining its achievements beginning in 1993. When the federal government finally made a formal response on January 7, 1998, its proposals emphasized non-constitutional approaches to selected issues raised by the report. Specifically, it proposed four objectives: renewing partnerships, strengthening Aboriginal governance, developing a new fiscal relationship, and supporting strong communities, people, and economies. In particular, the federal

⁷⁷ I have not been able to find any information about the significance of this number and subsequent sections of the Royal Commission. It reminds one of the four directions.

government issued a Statement of Reconciliation, expressing profound regret for errors of the past and a commitment to learn from those errors (Doer, 2009).

Very little response came from provincial governments, which viewed the report as a federal initiative. Currently, federal and provincial governments to varying degrees endorse practical approaches to Aboriginal social and economic issues raised in the RCAP. But there is no government interest in constitutional discussions on issues affecting Aboriginal peoples and communities. The constitutional recognition and protections of Aboriginal and treaty rights, entrenched in the Constitution Act of 1982, will continue to fuel ongoing reform of policies and programs (Doer, 2009).

Chapter 5. Jurisdiction in Aboriginal Education

Jurisdiction and control are two very important elements that often involve ideas of resources or wealth. Aboriginal education seems to be stuck in a politically indeterminate state between the needs of Aboriginal sovereignty/self-government and the need of the Canadian nation-state for political control. At present, most major constitutional negotiations between Aboriginals and the Canadian government are in political limbo. This limbo constitutes unfinished business for the Canadian state as well as a moral dilemma. Incredibly, the Constitution Act of 1982 requires further meetings between the First Ministers and representatives of Aboriginal peoples on the issues of self-government, but there has been little progress in subsequent negotiations. The two high-profile topics are self-government and Aboriginal land rights. Many Aboriginal nations have chosen education as a fundamental area for assertion of their sovereignty and their wish for autonomous government, within a larger concept of total self-government. Several Aboriginal leaders nonetheless feel that true control over education is impossible without sovereignty (Longboat, 1987, 30).

This chapter deals with some of legal aspects surrounding Aboriginal education and gives a special treatment to perhaps one of the most significant legal agreements to be signed concerning Aboriginal education in Canada since the Mi'kmaq Education Act of 1998

between pan-Aboriginal nations of British Columbia and the federal and provincial governments.

There is a difference between sovereignty and jurisdiction. Sovereignty implies the right to control the internal and external affairs of one's nation-state without overt control by another nation-state. Jurisdiction implies a delegated authority operating within a nation (Longboat, 1987, 30). Often, Aboriginal leaders are simply offered a delegation of jurisdiction.

On February 23, 2009, Phil Fontaine, the AFN Grand Chief, addressed the Council of the Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC). Since the early 2000s, the council had been pushing for greater accountability and improvements in standards for Aboriginal education. But who should be responsible for deciding what is taught to Aboriginal children? Fontaine stated that "there was some question as to whether or not the leaders of the National Aboriginal organizations, including the Assembly of First Nations, would be allowed to speak" to the CMEC and whether the CMEC had the mandate and legal authority to speak on behalf of Aboriginal children and communities. "At a minimum, First Nations expect to have input, and meaningful engagement at the onset of any discussion that impacts our people and our rights."

During Chief Fontaine's speech, it became evident that little progress had been made on jurisdiction since 1988. He felt that redress was needed in such areas as the Aboriginal baby boom, lack of funding, and jurisdictional confusion. On reserves and in urban centres, First Nations, Inuit, and Métis are having children at a far higher rate than is the general Canadian population. They are thus faced with exploding needs for education, health care, and jobs. On-reserve population growth is running at 6.2% (Fontaine, 2009). Since 1996, any increase in funding for education has been capped at 2%, which is often below inflation. When adding in population growth, the funding is increasingly insufficient to keep services at acceptable levels. Fontaine mentioned that this shortfall in education funding had left a hidden accumulated deficit by all band councils across Canada. "This cap has left our communities with an accumulated deficit of \$1.7 billion

from 1996 to 2005. The projected deficit in 2010 [for reserves] will be \$304 million alone” (Speech by Grand Chief Fontaine, February 23, 2009 to the CMEC).

This raises the alleged inability of Aboriginal communities to manage their affairs. It also brings into question the real reasons behind imposed third-party management of band council funds. Often, reserve schools are “unhealthy and unsafe schools, [with] overcrowding, extreme mold proliferation, [have] high carbon dioxide levels, [have indoor] sewage fumes in schools, unheated classrooms, frozen pipes and other health hazards. These challenges do not include the fact that First Nations schools receive ZERO dollars for libraries, technology, sports and recreation, languages, employee benefits and School Information Management Systems” (Speech by Grand Chief Fontaine, February 23, 2009 to the CMEC). When confronted with needs in their community, chiefs will often take funds from “non-essential” areas and transfer them to education in order to get teachers, to pay for supplies, and to ensure that the schools are at least able to function at a minimal level. Countless Aboriginal schools underpay their teachers when compared to their provincial counterparts, thus decreasing their likelihood of attracting quality teachers. The turnover rate is often very high. Few teachers stay in an Aboriginal community for a long period of time.

Fontaine (speech Feb 23, 2009) finally stated that the “crisis is further complicated by imaginary jurisdictional confusion perpetuated by the federal government that causes a paralysis of action. Indian Affairs Officials have stated that when the federal government devolved First Nations schools, they did not devolve school systems; all they devolved was local administration with a very narrow scope of authority and funding for each school.” For Chief Fontaine, “First Nations students and schools are caught in this jurisdictional wrangling between provincial education systems, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and First Nation systems -- all the while we see dropout rates increasing and quality of services decreasing. The ones who suffer the damage are First Nation youth.”

What did Fontaine mean by imaginary jurisdictional confusion? I suspect that he was referring to the AFN position that First Nations have an inherent right to self-government. Unsurprisingly, INAC has not acceded to AFN demands for jurisdiction over education. As Raymond Sioui (First Nations Education Council) has said, “the long term issues are too important.”

I also suspect that Fontaine was referring to the AFN idea that Aboriginal rights to self-government are already in the Constitution. There is consequently no need for formal constitutional changes in order to proceed. On the other hand, INAC’s negotiating starting point is that Aboriginals have no constitutional right to self-government, as shown in *The MacPherson Report*.⁷⁸

Chief Fontaine’s speech, while outlining the tremendous difficulties in Aboriginal education, also spoke of the successes in the years since *Indian Control of Indian Education*. These changes include “moving from zero schools in 1972 to over 500 schools in 2008; Approximately 33,000 First Nations students enrolled in post-secondary institutions yearly and more than 4,000 First Nations post-secondary graduates each year; Thousands of First Nation teachers and administrators working in our schools today; Over 80% of First Nations youth who say they value speaking their language; And the emergence of on-reserve Early Childcare Centres, and many more signs of success.” Fontaine pointed out to the Ministers of Education that Aboriginal education systems obtained better results for Aboriginal children. This finding was mentioned in a report by the Prince Albert Grand Council in 2004, which tracked a sample of First Nation students

⁷⁸ In 1990, INAC appointed Professor James MacPherson to review *Tradition and Education: Towards a Vision of Our Future* and make specific recommendations. This report called for far-ranging constitutional changes to Indian education. MacPherson found a possible “juridical basis for the concept of inherent aboriginal sovereignty which might include...an education component” (p 40). He also felt that education and jurisdiction should be the pivotal negotiating points for proper reform to the Aboriginal education system (MacPherson, 1991).

MacPherson also wrote that Aboriginals should devise their own definition of self-government. After negotiations, it might be included in the constitution. MacPherson did believe that Aboriginals should have a right to self-government and that eventually education laws should be enacted to improve the structures of the educational systems and the quality of the education for Aboriginal students. Aboriginals would then be able to establish educational policies that were more compatible with their philosophy and beliefs (MacPherson, 1991).

in provincial high schools and in band schools. In the provincial schools, 56% of the Grade 12 students graduated. By comparison, Prince Albert Grand Council high schools had a significantly higher graduation rate of 92% (Fontaine, 2009).

In the 2001 report *First Nations Educational Jurisdiction*, the AFN attempted to review what jurisdiction actually meant. It described jurisdiction as a right that is usually given or described by law⁷⁹ or custom “to exercise full or a measure of authority or power over a certain subject-matter, in this case, education.” The AFN has continued to develop this idea of jurisdiction as a “sphere of authority exercised by a State.” In *Tradition and Education*, jurisdiction was defined as an “inherent right of sovereign First Nations to exercise its authority, develop its policies and laws and control financial and other resources for its citizens” (AFN, 1988a).

For the AFN, it is important to ensure that the federal government accepts that definition, which is so closely tied to self-government. It is a “political act of survival” and ensures “the vigour of a particular way of life, a distinct culture[s] and a unique set of traditions” (Tremblay, 2001). The basis for this belief is ultimately the numbered treaties. The AFN wrote in 1993 in a report to the Royal Commission that “treaties stand as a covenant between nations that are sovereign...Nations make treaties” (AFN, 1993).

The AFN has used British and then Canadian law to extend pre-existing Aboriginal title and law. Adams (1999) and Hall (2003, 42-3) have both suggested that this approach does not serve Aboriginal interests well in the long-term. In essence, it acknowledges the legal supremacy of the Canadian nation-state. For example, the AFN has often referred to the 1763 *Royal Proclamation* as an important document that recognizes the sovereignty of Indian nations, but this sovereignty is subject to the crown (Tremblay, 2001).

Using the Canadian legal system has been risky. In recent times, the courts have been a far faster and more efficient means of obtaining redress for grievances than long negotiations. While this approach is also difficult and frequently long, some surprising

⁷⁹ Both oral and written.

rulings have come about, such as the *Nisga* ruling (1973), the *Delgamuukw* case (1997), and the *Powley Decision* (1998) on Aboriginal (First Nation-Métis) rights. The *Delgamuukw* case is interesting because Aboriginal oral law was taken into consideration to determine title (Ouellette, 2009b).

Even the Cree, who have a modern-day treaty, have used the courts to make the provincial government of Quebec and the federal government respect their negotiated agreements. The *Quebec Association of Indians* — an *ad hoc* representative body of Native Northern Quebecers — sued the Quebec government and on November 15, 1973, won an injunction in the Quebec Superior Court that blocked all hydroelectric development until the province had negotiated an agreement with the Natives. The courts, in the last 30 years, have been a powerful means to reassert Aboriginal title and rights *sui generis*. Negotiated constitutional talks have only come about through court rulings, and many “modern” treaties have only come about because the courts have forced governments to negotiate and accept certain Aboriginal rights (Ouellette, 2009b).

The basis of New World governments’ claims to former Indigenous lands and their own sovereignty stems from the doctrine of *terra nullius*—empty wastelands that the Aboriginals were not appropriately and efficiently using. This doctrine allowed European powers to take possession as a matter of natural order. In Australia, *terra nullius* was finally rejected in 1992 with the *Mabo* ruling by the High Court of Australia. The court upheld surviving cultural, territorial, and legal principles that originated in forms of human understanding and organization predating European imperialism (Hall, 2003, 31). It rejected as unfounded the belief that Aboriginals did not have pre-existing ownership prior to Australian sovereignty.

The courts over the past 20 years have helped to empower Aboriginal communities. In any negotiation, there must always exist a will to achieve agreement. Without political will, no agreement can take place. Aboriginals and Canadians must recognize that the Canadian Constitution is not currently set up for a fourth level of government. The Canada Act (BNA Act of 1867) in Paragraph 24 of Section 91 gives the federal

government exclusive jurisdiction to legislate for “Indians and Lands reserved for Indians.” The courts have nonetheless vaguely recognized that limited Aboriginal title and rights do exist and have not been extinguished (Ouellette, 2009b).

The basis for this claim stems from the *Calder* case of 1973. It was brought forward in the late 1960s by the Nisga’a Nation, who claimed they still had unextinguished title over the Nass Valley of British Columbia. It was originally dismissed by the BC Supreme Court, and unanimously dismissed again on appeal by the Court of Appeal of BC (three-man court). It was finally appealed to the Supreme Court of Canada where in a split decision it was again dismissed. A closer look at the judgement shows that it was dismissed 4 to 3 on reasons of a technicality, i.e., that a fiat had not been first sought and obtained from British Columbia, as then required (Lysyk, 1973). In their reason for judgment, three judges in the majority decision felt that Aboriginal title no longer exists, one justice expressed no opinion, and three judges of the minority position supported the view that Aboriginal title still existed till the present time (Smith, 1995). If three of seven justices expressed the opinion in 1973 that Aboriginal title still existed, it only can be imagined what their ruling would be today. I suspect that the dismissal on technicality was a means to obtain slow social justice without disrupting the Canadian legal system.

Much in the Canadian Constitution is still convention and unwritten covenant. Aboriginals could easily take their own jurisdiction upon themselves and create governments that best reflect their autonomy. Unfortunately, in Aboriginal circles, autonomy is often followed by requests for compensation and grants from the federal government. By accepting any monies, Aboriginal authorities are essentially denying their autonomy. They are saying they are self-administrating. It has been suggested that an Aboriginal government should be run along the lines of a municipal government (Smith, 1995), yet municipal governments are creatures of the provinces. By accepting any monies, Aboriginal authorities are essentially disempowering themselves and their communities. They should instead proceed to seek revenue through internal taxation and equalization payments from the federal government to ensure that public services are equal to those of other Canadians and in accordance with treaty rights.

If an Aboriginal authority decided to take full sovereignty upon itself by offering services and maintaining the rule of law over its “territory” without any monies from another government, the federal authorities would have no choice but to enter into negotiations and formally legalize this new form of government.

Is this option really possible? Some writers think not, given the current population numbers of Aboriginal communities. Tom Flanagan does not think so: to be more efficient and to create a critical mass for complex government, a certain population is needed. Flanagan feels that many Indian Bands should amalgamate, thus creating larger groups that would offer certain economies of scale (2008). Through economies of scale, Aboriginal authorities would have a larger population base in order to draw revenue and present a viable alternative to Canadian governments.

Canadian and Aboriginal authorities have built up extensive experience in constitutional negotiations over the past 30 to 40 years. For the dominant Canadian side, these experiences have led to terrible consequences for the nation-state of Canada (such as the very divisive *Quebec Referendum* in 1995 whereby the country was almost torn asunder with general bad feelings all around). There has since been little desire even to entertain constitutional talks in Canada. The Aboriginal experience has been difficult as well. In debate over the *Meech Lake Accord*, they were essentially ignored and only able to make headway with their demands when Elijah Harper prevented the passing of the Accord in the Manitoba legislature, essentially killing it. Later negotiations on the *Charlottetown Accord* went much further and allowed Aboriginals to sit down at the table as almost full representatives. The Accord’s rejection in the 1992 referendum by Canadians “fed up with special interest groups⁸⁰” affected later negotiations (such as the Nisga’a treaty), eventually leading to a deeply divisive B.C. referendum in 2002 (Ouellette, 2009b).

⁸⁰ Canada is not the only country with “average people” challenging the rise of Aboriginal power. In 1996 the Australian Prime Minister John Howard refused to sign the Sorry Books. He cut \$400M from the Aboriginal Affairs budget and used the writings of Geoffrey Blainey to oppose in the words of the One Nation Party (rightwing) leader Pauline Hanson “immigrationism, multiculturalism, Asianisation and Aboriginalism (romantic primitivism).” Canada also has a writer who fulfills the same need in the Canadian

During these negotiations and the intervening periods, federal and provincial governments have always been unwilling to accept autonomist Aboriginal governments. This reluctance is understandable because many Canadians see Aboriginal autonomous government and the “Creation” of a special privileged class as a threat to their very understanding of what it means to be Canadian and to their ideals of equality in a multiethnic mosaic (Smith, 1995). Governments reflect the population, and as the general public has little understanding of the worldview of Aboriginals or their past, most politicians will not either. Politicians often enter into negotiations with little understanding and, in order to obtain consensus, agree to various demands. Often, governments will accept an idea in principle, but then go about redefining and modifying its meaning (Ouellette, 2009b).

Canadian constitutional negotiations are very clumsy. Amending formulas require almost total agreement among provinces, even though unanimity is quite impossible. Unanimity among 11 parties is very difficult, and agreement between some parties may have other parties who hold up, delay, and block any final agreement. Agreement even between seven out of ten provinces has only worked once. This type of process is part of the problem and does not easily lend itself to a quick solution (McCormick, 1992).

For the AFN, education is a force for human development that “lies at the base of achieving effective self-government. Self-knowledge, self-confidence, self-respect and self-sufficiency must be developed in order for any people to attain a healthy society, a stable culture and self-government” (AFN, 1988a). Former national Chief Matthew Coon Come has stated, “all peoples have the right of self-determination,” as mentioned in the International Bill of Rights of the United Nations. Self-determination refers to the right of a people to freely determine their political status and freely pursue their economic, social, and cultural development and to dispose of and benefit from their wealth and natural

political system; he is Tom Flanagan and he has influenced the Reform, Alliance, and Conservative parties, as well as Prime Minister Stephen Harper.

resources. Under international treaty law, Canada is obligated to respect the First Nations' right of self-determination (Tremblay, 2001).

United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, September 13, 2007

Article 14

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to establish and control their educational systems and institutions providing education in their own languages, in a manner appropriate to their cultural methods of teaching and learning.
2. Indigenous individuals, particularly children, have the right to all levels and forms of education of the State without discrimination.
3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.

Article 18

Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own indigenous decision-making institutions.

Article 19

States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free, prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them.

Article 20

1. Indigenous peoples have the right to maintain and develop their political, economic and social systems or institutions, to be secure in the enjoyment of their own means of subsistence and development, and to engage freely in all their traditional and other economic activities.
2. Indigenous peoples deprived of their means of subsistence and development are entitled to just and fair redress.

Tremblay wrote that the position of the AFN is to consider education as an inherent Aboriginal right and that the federal government is legally bound by the numbered treaties to provide adequate resources and services for education (AFN, 1988b). Using

the numbered treaties as a means to strengthen the claims of all Aboriginals to funding of their education system is doubtful for many Aboriginal groups. If a group has not signed one of the numbered treaties, it is placed in a weak bargaining position because the federal government is not bound by treaty to provide them with education. Non-treaty students could well attend a provincial school because the federal government might have no obligation to provide for their education. The government has often accepted this obligation due to convention and the desire, in later periods, to assimilate all Indians and to help improve socio-economic conditions on reserves. The Indian Act and the Constitution also state that the Federal government is responsible for Indians. Responsibility for education could become negotiable in the case of non-treaty Aboriginals.

The recent signing of an education agreement between First Nations in British Columbia, the federal government, and the B.C. government brings the question of jurisdiction to the forefront (INAC, 2006). These changes are being actively pushed by the “new” Conservative government, which sees more rigorous legal mechanisms as a means to ensure greater accountability to Aboriginal populations by their elected representatives. Many in Aboriginal organizations view this agreement suspiciously as an attempt to bring a Trojan horse (the province and loss of funding) into Aboriginal education. Aboriginal organizations across Canada are closely watching developments and outcomes that will provide them with an indication of the true intentions of the federal government (personal communication with Raymond Sioui-FNEC, 2007).

Only by modernizing the legal mechanisms that govern the relationship between the Government of Canada and First Nations, can we ensure that First Nation youth receive the quality of education they need to secure their own future and that of their communities.

Jim Prentice Minister of INAC

Speech given to the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations Legislative Assembly,
February 27, 2007

5.1 First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act and Other Cases: Independence, Integration, or Assimilation

The British Columbia Framework Agreement was signed on July 5, 2006 only after six years of negotiations between the federal and provincial governments and First Nations, represented by the First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC). The negotiating team for the British Columbia First Nations was composed of Nathan Matthew (North Thompson Indian Band), Christa Williams (Special Advisor), Jan Haugen (First Nations Education Steering Committee), and Nancy Morgan (Lawyer) (FNESC, 2008). The agreement covers jurisdiction for on-reserve K-12 education and represents but only one aspect of Indian education (INAC, 2006).



Figure 4
FNESC signing of the BC Framework Agreement, 2006 from FNESC web-site.

The First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act came into force on November 22, 2007. It is a non-binding agreement. First Nations reserves may therefore choose to enter into the trilateral Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement, thus removing themselves from sections 114 to 122 of the Indian Act. These sections enable the Minister of INAC to enter into agreements with third parties to provide educational services to on-reserve First Nations learners.⁸¹ If a First Nation chooses not to opt in, it will continue to be governed by the Indian Act (INAC, 2006).

For INAC the governing powers that First Nations will assume under a Canada-First Nation Education Jurisdiction Agreement are: 1) teacher certification; 2) school certification; and 3) establishment of curriculum and examination standards (INAC, 2006). The Act notably concerns two areas that Jim Prentice (Minister of INAC) felt needed to be addressed: transferability and education standards (Department of Justice

⁸¹ This is an attempt by First Nations to redefine the term “students.” By using the word “learners” they are attempting to get the federal government to accept that all First Nations regardless of age have the right to a quality free education. This is a longstanding jurisdictional problem. Many Aboriginal groups believe that post-secondary education should be provided to all Aboriginals, while INAC believes that current funding goes far beyond the responsibilities outlined in traditional and modern agreements, both oral and written.

Canada, 2007). Transferability still means that participating First Nations must be able to show that their students meet provincial levels. The rest of the Act is fairly vague about other areas, such as curriculum development, although it is mentioned that the curriculum should take into account local needs.

Transferability

9 (2) A participating First Nation shall provide, or make provision for, education so as to allow students to transfer without academic penalty to an equivalent level in another school within the school system of British Columbia.

Education Standards

19 (2) The Authority shall, as provided for by a co-management agreement,

- (a) establish standards that are applicable to education provided by a participating First Nation on First Nation land for curriculum and examinations for courses necessary to meet graduation requirements;
- (b) provide a teacher certification process for teachers providing educational instruction in schools operated by a participating First Nation on First Nation land, other than teachers who teach only the language and culture of the participating First Nation;
- (c) provide, upon request by a participating First Nation, a teacher certification process for teachers who teach only the language and culture of the participating First Nation in schools operated by the participating First Nation on First Nation land;
- (d) provide a process for certifying schools that are operated by a participating First Nation on First Nation land; and
- (e) perform any other duties that are consistent with the individual agreement and this Act.

First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act

On December 5, 2006 Jim Prentice introduced the *First Nations Jurisdiction Over Education in British Columbia Act* in the House of Commons, where it received unanimous approval. This unanimous approval shows the explosive nature of the debate and the acknowledgement by politicians that they lack a mandate. Even the 1969 *White Paper* received no criticism initially. The NDP decided to oppose it only two weeks later, after having met with Aboriginal leaders (Smith, 1995). Politicians felt hard pressed to criticize the new education Legislation. They provided no ideas, no amendments, and no debate. It is a sad day for democracy when there is neither debate nor dissent.

We have not had a system of education for primary and secondary education in this country for first nation children. First nation children, frankly, have been the only children in Canada who have lacked an education system. Instead they have had the mere legislative authority of the Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs expending a budget of approximately \$1.2 billion per year...What we have lacked is a school system. What we have lacked is a first nation driven school system that will provide first nations with authority over their own education which will inculcate a sense of possession on the part of the community, a sense of pride in the school system. What we have also lacked is working relationships between the respective provincial government and the first nation authorities working hand in glove to make sure that the system of education works properly and to make sure that there is provincial compatibility. That is very much at the heart of this particular legislation.

Jim Prentice, December 5, 2006
Minister of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada and the
Federal Interlocutor for Métis and Non-Status Indians

This lack of debate is the opposite of what is happening in Aboriginal communities. The agreement has been hotly debated in Aboriginal communities, especially among educators and professionals concerned with jurisdiction. Many are intently watching what is going on and how the federal government proceeds. The agreement is seen as a watershed. Raymond Sioui of Wendake and the First Nations Education Council offered a number of criticisms.

BC and New Brunswick have already done something similar, which has allowed us to calculate costs of various services, and BC is no different but the problem is one of money. The First Nations want these 2nd level services [school-board-like services]. They put pressure on the provincial government to put pressure on the federal government, who refuses to pay. They are willing to transfer responsibility to the province and as much of the bill as possible. The province is willing to accept more responsibility, but they want the federal to pay. The province wants the federal to pay and both are stubbornly fighting, while First Nations are caught in the middle of their game. In some ways, the Quebec First Nations have problems with the whole process, because we consider First Nations not to be a provincial jurisdiction.

We also see through the intentions of the Minister who at the last assembly said he “didn’t want to transfer services to the provinces, but have First Nations transfer services to the

province.” It is a big lie, a lie. It has been forty years [since the *White Paper*]. They have been trying to transfer responsibility to the provinces and the provinces thankfully have resisted taking on more responsibility.

The objectives of the *White Paper* still continue today. The intention to integrate [or assimilate] First Nations into provincial structures still continues today. I have a document we prepared right here which will be presented to the UN outlining the criteria and different forms of forced integration. There are several types of criteria: For instance how do you explain that the government pays more for a student to attend a provincial school than a reserve school? How do you explain that? This question was asked to the Minister and he said: “We will look at that and ask the province to contribute.” What he is saying is that the provincial schools will have better means than the First Nations schools, but we will ask them to assume a part of the bill. He is not saying that we will finance to the same levels. He is saying if it is assumed to cost \$14,000 in a provincial school in Manitoba, then they will have \$14,000, but the federal government will only give \$7,000 to First Nations schools and the province will give the other \$7,000, but with their standards and their philosophy.

Raymond Sioui, elder and Assistant General Manager of the FNEC
Interview 2009, Wendake

Funding issues are very important in Aboriginal education, being directly related to sovereignty and jurisdiction. If the federal government provides their funding directly to the provinces, which then give that funding to Aboriginal schools, the provinces will be in charge. It will be their curriculum, their standards, and their way of learning. They will slowly gain long-term control over Aboriginal minds.

What I have understood within their message is they are not allowing the First Nations schools to be competitive. They don’t say that they won’t finance First Nations schools, but they say they will contribute the necessary funds to First Nations schools with the help of the provinces and their contributions.

Raymond Sioui, elder
Interview 2009, Wendake

Judy Côté also from the First Nations Education Council said in an interview that the real issues come down to trust and solidarity among Aboriginals.

We don't trust each other; we don't trust the local system is going to provide adequately for our students. Because we are not supporting our local system, we don't have the necessary resources, because we don't have the necessary number of students...It is very difficult to have First Nation schools of any size and quality. If we had everyone on the same page asking, wanting the same thing, it would be much easier to just say look: "This is what we want." Because there are so many divisions amongst us, we lose out on funding.

Chief John Snow made a statement in the late 1960s about integrated [or provincially controlled] Indian education: "Of course I believe in integrated education. Let the neighbouring communities bring their children onto our reserve and we'll do our best to integrate them" (Taken from Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 13). Most people, when seeing this statement, laugh and believe that he cannot be serious. In 1969, assimilation not integration was the order of the day. The plan was for the federal government to remove children from federally run reserve schools and "integrate" them with non-Native students in provincial schools (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 13). What is the difference when the rules make it clear that integration/assimilation must occur but only on the terms of the dominant society? There is even a certain acculturative stress for the Aboriginal students when an Aboriginal component is simply added on to the non-Aboriginal curriculum in an attempt to be more inclusive. It reduces Aboriginals to Disney-like status.

Friesen makes a case for more sharing of traditional spiritual knowledge with the dominant society. He also offers a different model of integration. It is integration into the dominant society of Indigenous knowledge. He writes, "Indigenous cultures have knowledge to offer... to enrich our thinking. By engaging in an aggressive...campaign to acquaint their non-Native counterparts with the essence of Aboriginal philosophy, First Nations will ...gain a great deal more public acceptance" (p 21-2). He not alone in this belief that IK can have and is having profound effects upon the Western psyche (Deloria, 1992; Hall, 2003).

Chief Dan George writes of integration in schools: “Does it really exist? Can we talk of integration until there is social integration? Unless there is integration of hearts and minds you only have physical presence...and the walls are as high as the mountain range” (George, 1974, 184-8). Chief George later expressed his opinion that schools can be a place where students learn respect and understand each other. He is not talking of integration where Aboriginals must give up their culture and beliefs to be like the other students, but where both groups come to understand each other with respect.

For Battiste and Henderson, exposure to other cultures is valuable. It is critical for Aboriginals (she was writing about Mi’kmaw children) to be taught their knowledge and heritage through Indigenous transmission (2000, 91). The Canadian education system has for many Indigenous peoples a history of cultural genocide, segregation, isolation, and forced assimilation with the goal of killing the Indian, and saving the deculturated individual (Cook-Lynn, 2007). Many Aboriginals are unsure whether the Canadian education system can fulfill their needs and their children’s needs. While many Aboriginal communities have hired Aboriginal teachers, transformation has remained superficial because the schools “still represent the hegemony of dominant Eurocentric knowledge, values and expectations” (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 91).

In the late 1980s, the Department of Indian Affairs was still encouraging integration of Aboriginal students into the Canadian mainstream. “The branch also encourages integrated education in the full realization of the benefits that the Indian child gains by close association at an impressionable age with non-Indian children” (*DIAND Field Manual* from McCaskill, 1987, 151). Education socializes its captive audience (children), who are forced to partake in the dominant society’s project to instil its values, culture, attitudes, and beliefs.

Education can enhance the survival of First Nations’ people if it contributes to identity development through learning our languages, our cultural traditions and our spiritual beliefs...An [Aboriginal] identity provides a framework of values upon which one views life, the natural world and one’s place in it.

Dianne Longboat, 1987, p 39

Included in the Canada-First Nations Education Jurisdiction Agreement (CFNEJA) are the Funding Agreement and the BC-FNESC Education Jurisdiction Agreement. As of 2009, negotiations in British Columbia involved 63 First Nations that had submitted letters of intent to become Interested First Nations (IFNs). IFNs are defined as those nations that intend to negotiate CFNEJAs and, ultimately, to become a Participating First Nation (PFN) (FNESC, 2008).

In 2006, under the umbrella of the First Nations Education Steering Committee, the IFNs met and worked out a process for capacity building and negotiation of their individual CFNEJAs. INAC is waiting for the IFNs to begin the planning and capacity building required to start the negotiations (INAC, 2006). The IFNs, before negotiating the CFNEJAs, began discussing two possible approaches: working individually or continuing to work together. The First Nations chose to continue working together, as they saw value in sharing their knowledge, creating economies of scale, and collectively working toward capacity building (FNESC, 2008). The role of funding is very important. The IFN and the FNESC have indicated that the process will not move forward without more funds for education. “Should adequate funding not be secured, they [IFNs] will not be legally bound to participate and a final agreement will not be signed” (FNESC, 2008).

To date, negotiations have covered: 1) Credentialing (or the ability of First Nations schools to grant a recognized graduation certificate equivalent to a Dogwood Diploma.⁸² The Federal government still sees transferability as coming under the provincial system while the FNESC uses the Dogwood Diploma); 2) First Nations school certification (within the First Nations Schools Association process); 3) Teacher certification; 4) The structure and role for Community Education Authorities; and 5) The structure and role for FNESC with respect to education jurisdiction (FNESC, 2008).

⁸² This is the semi-formal name given by British Columbia’s government to the BC high school diploma.

5.2 First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act - Community Education Authority (CEA)

The CFNEJA has another level of authority: Community Education Authorities. “A participating First Nation may, on its own or jointly with other participating First Nations, establish a Community Education Authority to operate, administer and manage the education system of the participating First Nation(s) on First Nation land in accordance with an individual agreement.” The Community Education Authority also has “the powers, rights, privileges and benefits conferred on it by a participating First Nation and shall perform the duties — and be subject to the liabilities — imposed on it by a First Nation law in accordance with an individual agreement.” According to the FNEESC, such authorities may take many forms and it has proposed a number of possible models to the federal government (FNEESC, 2008).

Each individual First Nation must pass a comprehensive “First Nations’ Education Law.” This law must describe the composition of the nation’s CEA and represents the policy foundation of the nation’s education system. For the FNEESC, it should “not contain a lot of detail regarding day-to-day administration of the system. The details will be included in the policies and/or rules of the CEA” (FNEESC, 2008).

The FNEESC proposes three models for the Community Education Authorities:

- I. Single Community, Single School.
- II. Multiple Communities, Single School (*An example is the Saanich Indian School Board*). With this option, the participating First Nations form a multiple community with a single school CEA. They would thus establish a joint authority under their respective education laws. All of the participating First Nations’ education laws would need to be harmonized to ensure that the CEA receives the same authority and direction from all participating First Nations.

III. Multiple Communities, Multiple Schools, (*Current examples include the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council and the Gitksan-Wetsuwet'en Education Society*).

This model is similar to model II.

The FNESC has included language instruction as an area of CEA authority.

Unfortunately, Canadian legislation makes no mention of Aboriginal languages for purposes of instruction. The *Official Languages Act* proclaims English and French as Canada's two official languages with no mention of Aboriginal languages (Rasmussen, 2009). There is only a mention of Aboriginals with regard to federal institutions, cf. the *Canadian Multiculturalism Act*:

“federal institution” means any of the following institutions of the Government of Canada:

(a) a department, board, commission or council, or other body or office, established to perform a governmental function by or pursuant to an Act of Parliament or by or under the authority of the Governor in Council, and

(b) a departmental corporation or Crown corporation as defined in section 2 of the *Financial Administration Act*, but does not include

(c) any institution of the Council or government of the Northwest Territories or of the Legislative Assembly or government of Yukon or Nunavut, or

(d) any Indian band, band council or other body established to perform a governmental function in relation to an Indian band or other group of aboriginal people;

Canadian Multiculturalism Act

Both acts essentially state that Aboriginal organizations must provide services in the two official languages but are not obliged to provide Aboriginal language services. Aboriginal languages are, however, considered to be heritage languages, even though such languages are never specifically mentioned, such as in the *Canadian Heritage Languages Institute Act*. In this respect, Nunavut's experience may seem disappointing to BC First Nations. Over 75% of its students have Inuktitut as their mother tongue, yet the language of instruction is either English or French (Rasmussen, 2009) from Grade Four on. No school is fully taught in the Inuit language, even after ten years of Inuit self-government.

It is not that simple to legislate an Aboriginal language as the language of instruction. We cannot assume that the First Nations participating in the CFNEJA will not have any students from the dominant society and that all Aboriginal parents will want Aboriginal language instruction for their children. By joining in this process, British Columbia's First Nations are also submitting themselves to Canadian legislation and thereby recognizing its power to regulate First Nations sovereignty.

Parents may also sue the CEA if they feel their children's rights to a quality education are being compromised. Finally, transferability must occur between provincial and First Nations schools. It will most likely be the Aboriginal community that must conform to a provincial standard and not the other way around.

5.3 First Nations Jurisdiction over Education in British Columbia Act - First Nations Education Authority (School Board)

The CFNEJA also sets up a First Nations Education Authority (FNEA). The FNEA acts as a school board with delegated areas of responsibility from participating First Nations (PFNs). The FNEA collectively provide smaller First Nations with some support (FNESC, 2008). PFNs agree to maintain common standards in three areas:

1. Teacher certification;
2. School certification; and
3. Standards for curriculum and examinations in the case of courses required for graduation.

The FNESC has drafted the terms of reference for British Columbia's FNEA. One notable aspect is what seems at first sight to be an effort to save money. To prevent overlapping of authority and duplication of services between the FNESC and FNEA, it was decided to have the FNESC provide the FNEA with services (Terms of Reference, 2009). In practice, this will make the FNEA an empty shell and the FNESC the actual school board.

British Columbia's agreement is not accepted by all Aboriginals across Canada. Some view this agreement as a slower means to attain the desired outcomes of the *White Paper*, i.e., transfer of responsibility for Aboriginals to the provinces (Raymond Sioui, interview, December 17, 2009). This will place Aboriginal groups in limbo of responsibility between the provinces or the federal government, thus stranding Indians in an administrative limbo. If the federal government refuses funding and the provinces give what they feel is their fair share, Aboriginals will be caught between the two systems.

We want our own system, our own partnerships to prepare our students for post-secondary institutions and prepare them as well as anybody else, if given the opportunity and the resources.

Gilbert Whiteduck, Chief of Kitzigan Zibi

January 15, 2010 interview

The federal government is still negotiating the financial arrangements for this agreement today, nearly four years later. INAC does not seem genuinely interested in improving the capacity of Aboriginal Education Authorities, but simply in delegating authority. They do this through maintain funding, but by using inflation as a means to decrease fiscal responsibility. The federal position will eventually be that Aboriginals "wanted this system, it was their decision, and responsibility for its failure lies with them" (interview with Raymond Sioui, December 17, 2009).

This future failure will demonstrate that Aboriginals are not suited for self-government; therefore, this type of system should not be extended to other Aboriginal groups in Canada. The only clear solution will be their integration within provincial systems for "important services," and the continuation of minor-level services in each reserve. Over the long term, this position will be conducive to resource extraction from traditional Aboriginal lands (interview with Raymond Sioui, December 17, 2009).

In an interview (January 15, 2010) with Gilbert Whiteduck, we discussed Aboriginal education and whether INAC really wants Aboriginal education to succeed. I suggested that success might not be in the best interests of the federal government. The reasons

come down to power, money, structure of society, and land. These issues were further discussed with Raymond Sioui.

I don't think it is in the best interests of INAC. There are many layers to this, for as long as First Nations remain in poverty, the bureaucracy does very well for itself. Keep in mind that INAC has around 4,500 employees across Canada. If you tag on Health Canada and Justice Canada and other departments I believe it totals around 10,000 people that rely on that poverty and other issues. That First Nations live for them, to continue living, to pay their mortgages and have good-paying jobs. Another thing in education we have noticed is that they tried in the 50s and in the 60s to off-load education to the provinces. Because with the off-loading of the responsibilities there will be an off-loading of costs. Let the provinces run this. New programs with INAC often say that if you engage with the provinces, if you buy into these partnerships, you know what; "there is some extra cash for you", as long as you become them.

While Aboriginals do not agree on education policy across Canada, Whiteduck is very aware that for too long those involved in education have stood around and talked without being allowed to find lasting solutions. "Leadership at all levels, political and administrative should be involved. When I hear of First Nations communities where political and administrative leadership is changing every six months or every year, you have no stability and First Nations must start all over again." Despite disagreements over the BC Accord, Aboriginal groups are all ultimately sovereign to pursue the form of self-government that corresponds to their needs and desires.

Raymond Sioui (an education elder from Wendake who works in education as the Assistant General Manager of the First Nations Education Council) and I discussed government policies on sovereignty and assimilation. For him, the Conservatives and the Liberals are the same, except that the Conservatives are just moving faster with their agenda (interview, December 17, 2009).

We cannot get anything out of the government. I was listening to a video *éveil du pouvoir*, where the chiefs were saying in the 70s that you would get the government to agree to something, but no action would be taken. They were empty promises. They always need to

recall their rights and we have the impression that the government says yes, yes, yes, but it is all empty.

It is a government [Conservative and Liberal] which has as an objective to absorb First Nations into their dominant philosophy in order to end all First Nations claims, but they must give the impression to the public that they are doing the opposite. They give the impression that they are generous; it is not their overall objective.... They are very cynical. There was an MP from another party who said to me many years ago that there was a meeting with four members [MPs] of the Reform Party who were asked: What are you going to do with the Indian problem? They responded "Give us four to five years in power and there will be no more Indian Problem." We see that they are accelerating; it is a government that cannot say overtly that their objective is assimilation as they did before. They must say the opposite because of international conventions and laws, but they are still pursuing the same objective.

For Raymond Sioui, when the Premiers of Canada met to discuss Aboriginal education without the input of the interested party (Aboriginal groups), they sent a political message. "It is not to just discuss education, but most surely larger, higher issues that concern First Nations and the consequences they have for their governments. What are these higher issues? Surely they concern the land issues. How do you end this? The first means to do that is to have extinction treaties or you weaken the communities⁸³ so they are unable to demand their rights... assimilation..."

Sioui commented that the length of time it is taking to achieve "real control" over Aboriginal education is disconcerting. The federal and provincial governments seem to have a hidden agenda. Sioui feels that a strong education system is not in the interest of any Canadian government because a strong educated Aboriginal class, which can challenge authority, will be created. The delays in gaining real control over Aboriginal education are hurting our students. The existing power structures are being allowed to continue and, inevitably, there will be impacts on ownership of resources.

⁸³ By creating dysfunctional reserves, by funding schools at half the rate of provincial schools, by having the bands pay lower wages, so that the educated will not work on the reserves but in the cities, and by instituting rules and regulations that discourage participation in local government.

This imposed Western education will have multiple consequences. For many students, and not just Aboriginal ones, there is a feeling of alienation from one's view of self. Most often, they will not understand this feeling, but some will. They do not see themselves through the eyes of their culture, but through those of another culture, the Western culture (Gatto, 2003, 106-7). Often, they will feel different, as if they have no place. The norms and standards of others have been placed upon them, thereby forcing a desire for conformity. In the Western world, many students do not complete high school because of this feeling of alienation and inadequacy. Provincial education departments often do not ask how they can reduce or eliminate this feeling through fundamental changes. Instead, they put more of the same resources into schools to convince students that schooling, and the current vision of society is a just one (Cauchy, 2009). They are using a *Publius Tacitus* aphorism: "they created a desert and called it peace" (Farmer, 2004, 308).

WEST: CURRICULUM, FOOD FOR THE NEW BUFFALO



Buffalo hunt depicted by George Catlin

Figure 12

Chapter 6. Curriculum and the Purpose of School

For the last little while I have been trying to clarify with my feelings about [Aboriginal] education. I have been working in education with 26 or 27 years of experience. I see that we don't seem to be getting ahead in terms of First Nations specific education. We have been forced to deal with systems that have been imposed on us since Europeans first came into contact with us. Many of our people have been educated in the regular system and have come back and have tried to build what's there. It has not been a great success... There is no strong First Nations curriculum that our people are buying into... I was talking to my Chief, Gilbert Whiteduck about [curriculum] and why have we never done our own solid First Nations curriculum that we could offer right across Canada. I know we have different cultures, but we come from the same philosophical base. We need to start networking and have solidarity in what we want... I believe that process is just as important as product. It's important that the practitioners at the grassroots level should be involved. It shouldn't just be an external system superimposed. It must come from the practitioners.

Judy Côté, Educator with the First Nations Education Council
Kitzigan Zibi, Interview January 21, 2010

Often society shies away from the larger political issues about changes in education: the why and for whom (Mills, Dracklé & Edgar, 2004, 3). Modern schools are extremely significant to the social and cultural moulding of the young. Mass schooling is relatively recent, especially for those on the margins of industrialization. Children are often removed from their homes and local communities for long periods to become proficient in specific knowledge and disciplines that “have currency and ideological grounding in wider spheres.” Schools serve to indoctrinate skills, subjectivities, and disciplines that are the foundations of modern nation-states (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 1). The curriculum plays an important role also in Aboriginal education. With the vast majority of Aboriginals students using educational materials developed in a Western system, it is imperative to explore curriculum issues.

For instance Mead was concerned about how various societies maintain social cohesion and continuity by passing on core values and knowledge from one generation to the next (1961). Traditionally in Aboriginal communities, learning was not compartmentalized away from “real life.” It was viewed as part of life. Education happened in the

community, not away from the community (Gatto, 2003). Aboriginals “have stated the belief that education is a lifelong process that must be shared in a holistic manner given the spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual dimensions of human development” (Battiste & McLean, 2005) or as according to elder Danny Musqua: “we were put on this earth to learn; learning is what makes us human beings” (Tunison, 2007, 6).

Foucault (1977) addressed the idea of training, which I compare to that of schooling. One may be well schooled but not well educated and vice versa (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 2). Foucault initially dealt with training in the military sense, but school shares many of the same ideals. Schools have a hierarchy, from students to the principal with various levels in-between. The students are further categorized into subgroups, with some attaining higher or lower status according to the situational habitus.⁸⁴ In addition to this pyramid power structure, the school also redistributes power to individuals in a permanent and continuous field, thereby determining their levels of agency (p 127). Often, the key factor is not what students know but how well they follow the course material. They must follow the curriculum as teachers do in a predetermined manner, much as a factory operates. Learning outside the official channels might be “encouraged” but is not useful to schooling and may in fact hamper the school’s overall effectiveness. As a teacher, I remember a number of students who were very quick in completing the assigned material. They needed more stimulation, which I did not always have time to provide, and this lack of stimulation left them frustrated, the subliminal message being to slow down, to take your time, to do as you are told, and not to take initiative. Some other students likewise felt frustrated because they realized that once again they were falling “behind.”

Testing is also used to categorize students. School uses the power of the test to elicit appropriate responses from children. Testing is a prime example of behaviourism in our schools (Romiszowski, 1993, 166). Students must pass or else they will get bad grades, not enter the right schools, and not find good jobs (Miller, 2008, 43). Conformity is thus

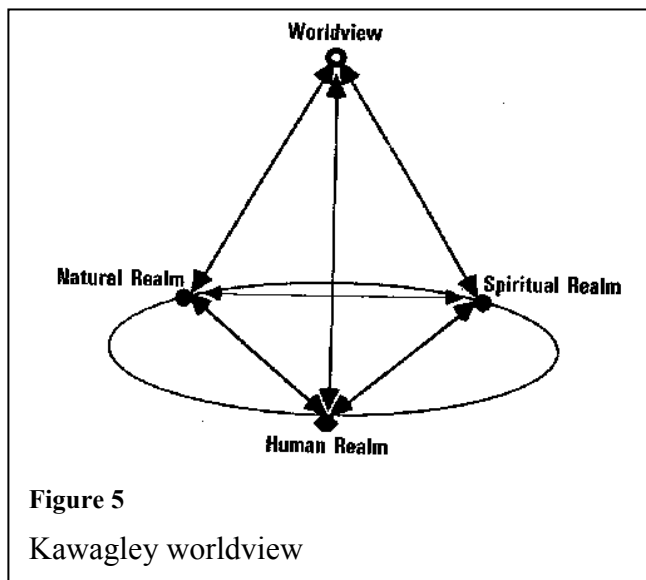
⁸⁴ Existing and created conditions of social existence generate the “structure of society” or habitus (Bourdieu, 1979, 191).

imposed on those students who are still resisting. How many times are tests used to this end? “If you want a good mark, you need to listen so you can pass the test” (as remembered by the researcher from his teachers).

A school’s effectiveness is determined by the amount of control and power it wields. You will often see students receive extra marks for “appropriate participation,” timeliness, and being quiet during subjects that have no bearing on actual knowledge. Teachers want quiet students because a quiet class is an easier class.⁸⁵ In school the subject material is changed every 34 minutes. Students thus avoid thinking too deeply during class, preferring to do short, nominal tasks.

Twelve years of schooling produce people who need positive affirmation from authorities, office staff who can sit for eight hours a day and not complain about boredom, acceptance of authority and understanding of your place in a hierarchy, people with short attention spans, and workers who cannot sustain profound reflection and are better suited to the power structure as cogs in a wheel.⁸⁶ For Durkheim, this outcome was called social conformity (Bourdieu, 1979, 549).

Kawagley writes that the Western educational system has inculcated a “mechanistic and linear worldview” into Indigenous education using Indigenous cultures as a front. Indigenous cultures tended to be oriented toward a “typically cyclic



⁸⁵ Imagine having 25-31 students in a class, many with learning and behavioural problems.

⁸⁶ Western education systems are very age-oriented, with formal education being reserved for various age groups especially the youngest ones. If holism is the basis for education, everyone has a right and a need for spirituality, education, and learning, however old one may be. The CCL has recognized this need in the three learning models for the First Nations, the Métis and the Inuit (2007).

worldview” (Kawagley, 1995, 16). Kawagley feels that most Indigenous worldviews seek “harmony and integration with all life, including the spiritual, natural and human domains” (p 2). These three areas permeate traditional worldviews and all aspects of Indigenous lives. Traditionally, education has been built around mythology, history, observation of natural phenomena, animal and plant life, procurement of food, and use of natural resources to make tools and implements, all of this being underscored by thoughtful stories and examples. “This view of the world and approach to education was brought into jeopardy with the onslaught of Western social systems and institutionalized forms of cultural transmission” (1995, 2).

Aboriginal education has varying degrees of symbolic violence that demonstrate the real and perceived power of the Canadian state. Bourdieu and Passeron write that the *Action Pédagogique* always contains symbolic violence (1983, 18-21). I disagree with Bourdieu and Passeron on this point, for there can be no symbolic violence when the students are from the dominant culture and that dominant culture is simply being transmitted to the students. This is normal education. Too often modern theories of education see children as an oppressed minority in need of liberation, while adults are seen as an oppressive majority (Arendt, 1972, 244). Western society has come to question overt authority, and this questioning has penetrated the schools. For Hannah Arendt, this change signifies that adults refuse to accept responsibility for the world that students must eventually inherit (1972, 244). Parents have washed their hands of all duty to their children (245), and these parents at the same time wish to be maintained by the state at a child-like level (235).

The idea of symbolic violence can be applied to minorities who are being inculcated with the dominant culture. It may be broken down into multiple levels. The lowest level is when students are being taught a culture that is not their own. This violence is symbolic because it demonstrates to the students that their culture and ways of Aboriginal learning have no value. It conveys inferiority. There are times when it does not exist because students and especially parents (who are ultimately the ones responsible for their children) may have requested such an education. They wish to be integrated; thus, there is no symbolic violence, if none is perceived. Perception is very important. It may

nonetheless be argued that some parents seek their children's integration into the dominant non-Aboriginal society and that this desire constitutes symbolic violence. Such parents may no longer know the value of their own traditions.

For example, if I give a gift to a poor man, such as an education system, is that gesture symbolic violence? Yes, if one perceives the gift as being given to show power and domination. No, if both parties fully accept the offer with no subliminal thought of superiority or belittling. Violence is a strong word and should be used with restraint.

At another level, Western education is a symbol; it is a point of entry into a world of "success." By accepting that point of entry, we symbolically accept the worldview of a foreign entity. By promoting integration via Aboriginal education into the Western industrial model, Aboriginals have tacitly accepted that the Western worldview is correct. Education becomes a symbol of the dominance of Western over Aboriginal knowledge and understanding. It essentially becomes another means of assimilation.

But what, then, is the point of Aboriginal education? Hundreds of reports describe socio-economic Aboriginal conditions and the lack of success in "closing the gap." Often the solution to these symptoms is to ask for more money. And so we give more money and feed the Aboriginal Industry (Widdowson & Howard, 2008). But just what is precluding Aboriginal success in education and the Western world? Does the education industry want what we want?

Gilbert Whiteduck (interview January 15, 2010) feels that the socio-economic indicators of the Western system do not correspond to Aboriginal values. "This very competitive nature of business, of dog eat dog, is one which is very difficult for First Nations to adapt to...the dishonesty and approach that is found in business for the most part, is not one that First Nations adapt to easily. It is just a different mentality... there have been people emerging and you know what occurs is those that emerge for that and get into business are potentially viewed as being less First Nations, because you have now bought into the

mainstream competitive nature. Here you are guided ... by the almighty dollar and how you achieve that almighty dollar is virtually irrelevant as long as you achieve it.”

Whiteduck continues by telling us of the nakedness of wealth accumulation. “Our teachings tell us that it’s all literally an empire of dirt [for we all eventually die and it goes back to the creator]. And really it’s our connection to the earth, our connection to our families that should take precedence. So you end up having a very challenging and mixed society... [where] individuals are unsure of how to proceed.”

Whiteduck offers an interesting vision of education; “if you are a good human being, a full human being and you connect with other people and races...maintaining your own identity and connection” is the essence of a good education (Interview with G. Whiteduck, January 15, 2010). Arendt put forward a similar vision. The aim is not monetary or material success. A successful education, according to Polybius, was simply to “make you understand that you are worthy of your ancestors” (Arendt, 1972, 249).

Goulet points out that the Dene Tha consider learning to be based on personal experience. The Dene are convinced that “individuals including ethnographers who have not directly experienced the reality of revelation or instruction through dreams and visions do not and cannot understand a crucial dimension of the Dene knowledge system” (1998, xxix). To teach spiritual phenomena with explicit instruction “displays a lack of faith in that person’s ability to learn directly from personal experience, both in and out of ritual contexts (xxx). The Dene Tha prefer primarily to learn by personal experience, secondly by watching someone “who knows how to do things,” and lastly by listening to narratives and stories (xxx). Learning must occur through observation rather than instruction, thus making the knowledge personal (Goulet, 1998, 27-29). These types of learning challenge Western practices of teaching through the abstract.

Katz and McCluskey (2003) write that several critical practices could make Aboriginals and their learning environments more effective. Such practices include: “1) use storytelling or critical incidents to encourage students to express their opinions, reflect on

their learning, evaluate alternatives, and justify their choices; 2) are experiential; 3) involve a high degree of student participation, and integrate purposeful listening, reading, speaking, and problem solving; 4) relate to [the students'] daily lives and experiences; 5) employ cooperative learning; 6) build on student strengths; and 7) utilize teaching strategies of demonstration, modeling, practice, and feedback.”

A formalized education system has many elements. A crucial and often the most important one is the educational program or curriculum. This element defines the course objectives, which are often expressed in terms of educational outcomes and normally include the assessment philosophy. These outcomes and assessments are often grouped into various sections, each specializing in a specific area. Curricula may be arranged sequentially or even in a mode of constant change (Whitson, 2007; Briggs, 1983). A curriculum should take into account the students' current and future needs.

The definition differs between the average person and the experts. The word “curriculum” comes from the Latin *to run a course*. In the current layperson's sense, it means a *course of studies* (Bobbitt, 1918). Teachers may say “curriculum” when they mean the curriculum guide. Parents may say “curriculum” when they mean the course content (McVittie & Ralph, 2007).

The definitions offered [concerning curriculum] run a spectrum. At one end, curriculum is seen merely as a course of study; at the other end, curriculum is more broadly defined as everything that occurs under the auspices of the school...In our view, curriculum is an explicitly and implicitly intentional set of interactions designed to facilitate learning and development and to ~~impose~~ [create] meaning ~~on~~ [from] experience.

Miller and Seller, 1990, p 3

This definition, while containing many useful elements, is still very much based on Western knowledge and worldview. I question if one can impose meaning on experience; for is not meaning created from past and present experiences, the two are intertwined. Meaning is more often than not derived from experience in an organic manner. It is the creation of meaning from experience.

Grundy (1987) defines curriculum differently. She feels that curriculum is “often written and spoken about in an idealistic sense as if there is a perfect “ideal” (eidos) of a curriculum of which all individual curricula are more or less imperfect imitations. Thus, providing definitions of curriculum occupies the initial chapter” of many books on the subject. Curriculum is not a concept; it is a “cultural construction” (Grundy, 1987, 5). This cultural construction is at the basis of the Western ideal of curriculum, but it is not the basis of Aboriginal idealized education, if such an idealized education can exist at all.⁸⁷ For now, this Aboriginal curriculum ideal is a developing one.

How do Aboriginals learn and how can this mode of learning be translated into a modern educational system? Briggs points out that observation plays a large role in traditional Inuit learning, followed by a complementary action of reconsidering how to use the object or persons while searching for new possibilities (Briggs, 1983). Goulet also points out that Dene learners must “proceed in life primarily by watching others perform completely whatever it is they do.” Participation is the means to true learning (2007, 152). Generally, the Dene divide learning into three parts: personal experience; observing people who are experts; and informally hearing mythical, historical, and personal narratives (153).

For instance, the Inuit curriculum should uphold the ideal of change, for according to Briggs the Inuit hold reality as being in a state of perpetual change (1983). Although Inuit consider the world to be in a state of perpetual change, they believe it possible to understand and use that change. This view of the world is not limited to people. It extends to objects as well. There is a need to uncover the qualities and possible utility that may be seen as multiple and in constant flux (Briggs, 1983). Curriculum in a pan-Aboriginal sense includes all learning that takes place within the larger community and

⁸⁷ Education as a cultural construct provides truth only to those who are willing to accept that truth. There can be no absolute truth, but only experience-tested truths that have stood the test of time (Poirier, 2004, 60). The Western world is very concerned with accumulation of written specialized knowledge while Aboriginal cultures traditionally tend to accept that experience (accumulated/metaphysical or not) is the way to validate their worldview.

leads to acquisition of knowledge that changes thought or behaviour, thus allowing for greater understanding of both the physical and the metaphysical.

Annahatak writes about her work in Inuit curriculum development. The challenge is to “develop programs and instructional materials in Inuktitut that will support the learning, and initiatives of students to learn, from both cultures – maintaining an authentic root as well as adapting some of the modern ways” (1994, 17).

Some writers have definitions that align better with Aboriginal knowledge. For John Dewey, “curriculum is a continuous reconstruction, moving from the child’s present experience out into that represented by the organized bodies of truth that we call studies...the various studies...are themselves experience - they are that of a race” (1902, 11-2). In the same vein, Caswell writes that “curriculum is composed of all the experiences children have under the guidance of teachers...thus, curriculum considered as a field of study represents no strictly limited body of content, but rather a process or procedure” (Caswell & Campbell, 1935, 66-70).

There have been many Aboriginal critics of the Western education system. For instance, Kawagley felt that modern public schooling has not sought to accommodate differences in worldviews, but rather to impose a supreme culture. The curricula, policies, textbooks, language of instruction, and even administration are fundamentally in conflict with the traditional Aboriginal worldview (1995). This conflict has a confusing effect on Aboriginal students, creating crises of identity that lead to alienation, making it hard for students to create meaning in the conditions of their lives. New metaphors of Western culture collide with traditional symbols, principles, and beliefs (1995).

How does one translate the traditional learning of the Dene, Inuit, or any other Aboriginal group into the modern educational system? Western system and schools are very industrial in nature, and as such are very efficient in passing large amounts of information on to students. Sciences and maths are taught in a way that might not allow traditional methods. But how much do we remember of what we learned in grades 2, 3,

or any other grade? Much of what we diligently tried to learn has already been forgotten. Even university courses are forgotten soon after the final exam. Perhaps the Western industrial school system should teach less but better, so that the material actually taught stays with the students for a longer term, leading to lifelong learning.

This is not the end of the debate. It is the beginning of a very complex study. For example, what are the contents of the curriculum guide? What is the meaning of the intended curriculum (official curriculum) or the received curriculum (the actual curriculum received by the students)? Does it include the hidden curriculum, those things that we did not intend to teach, but that students learn because they attend a particular school? Part of the hidden curriculum is the promotion of certain topics above others, with some topics not addressed at all (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2006, 23; McVittie & Ralph, 2007).

George Posner writes: “I know that schools I went to taught me a number of powerful lessons through their hidden curriculum...It wasn’t until I had experiences after and outside of school that I realized both the impact of these unofficial lessons and their limited validity.” Often researchers, policy makers, parents, educators, and almost all of society focus solely on the official curriculum. By focusing debate on the official curriculum, criticism of the hidden curriculum may be avoided (Posner, 2004, 123-4). This avoidance of debate is key too much of the Aboriginal criticism of the Western inspired education system. Some professionals in educational institutions say that some Aboriginals at provincial and state schools receive an excellent education [with the official curriculum] although in many cases the official and especially the hidden curricula do not adequately acknowledge Indigenous knowledge and the Aboriginal worldview. Most often, these people are the same ones who have managed to get through the system without many problems and have succeeded in the dominant society.

What about the null curriculum, those subjects not addressed at all and assigned a value, not of zero, but of absence, as if they did not exist at all? Does curriculum mean only teaching during class time, or does it include “extra-curricular” activities (McVittie &

Ralph, 2007)? The curriculum serves to create hegemony by the content embodied in the objectives. There is equally a de-legitimization of the null curriculum. When the legitimized content is drawn from the dominant society, the Aboriginal culture of students and parents is de-legitimized (Posner, 2004, 124). Western null curriculum in an Aboriginal context should acknowledge the influences that the Western null curriculum has on students' minds and learning.

The mass media are a much more efficient and persuasive than tradition when it comes to transmitting knowledge. This is as true for Aboriginal peoples as it is for people in the dominant society. They too are influenced by this means of knowledge transmission, and often in profound ways. The difference is that its content is conceived, constructed, and broadcast by people of the dominant society and not by Aboriginals (even though the content is created by a small elite who present a biased vision of dominant societal ideals).

Aboriginal peoples for many years had little or no access to the design or broadcasting of media platforms or content. With Canadian youth watching on average 12.9 hours of television per week (Statistics Canada, 2009), how can schools and Aboriginal traditional knowledge compete? The images and values youth get from television are not those of the communities, but of the dominant society. The mass media offer lessons about the lifestyle and "needs" that every student and family should have. Television significantly influences the daily lives of youth through the time it takes in their lives. This is time not spent with elders in discussion, on the land, doing sports and activities, with friends or even family. According to Gunther, Miller, and Liebhart, the media may exert a strong assimilation effect on Native peoples, even for core social values (2009).

In traditional Aboriginal life, the imperative to live and survive makes it necessary for the members of a community to help each other out (Brèda, Chaplier & Servais, 2008). If an individual is unwilling or unable to integrate this community obligation, he or she will be less able to function and survive. In this, modern and traditional societies resemble each other, but with differences. Although a traditional society will stress the importance of

resource sharing (Lacasse, 2008), even this generosity can reach a tipping point and one must eventually demonstrate the ability to fend for oneself. In the dominant society, and even within families, the ideal of sharing has given way to anonymous government support (welfare).

Both systems have limits. They attempt to teach individuals the tools for survival in their respective economic systems (*habitus*). Is the economic system in a Northern Aboriginal community the same as one in an Aboriginal community near a larger city or for an individual in an urban setting? Obviously the answer is no, so why should the education systems be the same?

School serves not only to train our youth, but also to inculcate into them the values of a larger social construct (Grande, 2001, 21). They must learn to be relatively comfortable with their employment. School certifies that a person with a diploma has a certain body of skills for a certain occupation (Gatto, 2003, 222). Traditional Aboriginal education does not require a certification system. One has learned the material or one has not.

Schools have played a role in controlling new immigrant groups and Aboriginals, by incorporating them culturally into the nation, “primarily to the end of capitalist labour control.” Mass compulsory schooling has its true “origins and functions...in the economic and cultural individualism of the West....Mass schooling developed hand in hand with the hegemony of the nation-state as a political form. The nation state has utilized systematic education to “ceremonially induct” students in the twin identities of the modern state citizen: national and individual” (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 15-6).

Schooling provides access not only to economic capital but also to cultural capital. Bourdieu devised the latter concept, which is closely related to the former. Cultural capital is amassed through official certification to embody and enact signs of social standing. Those in society with more cultural capital have greater currency and legitimacy than those with less. According to Bourdieu and Passeron, cultural capital can be converted into economic capital and vice versa (1983).

The Western education system fails to provide Aboriginals with the appropriate cultural capital. Anne Douglas has criticized the system's contradictions at the Inuujaq school of Arctic Bay (1998). She writes that: "School has failed more than ever in its mission to prepare the youth in their future lives." Values and knowledge that elders judge to be essential for younger generations are simply not taught in the schools. "Other Inuit have the feeling that even if the youth are able to read and function in English, they have a poor knowledge of their history, traditions and culture. The land is less known, not frequented, and less used." The social relationships, the conception of life, the types of knowledge, and the final objectives of school do not meet the needs of the Inuit people and often run counter to their worldview. Aboriginals are not the only ones to make this criticism (Laugrand, 2008). Several psychologists have argued that curricula should respect the "psychological" rather than the "logical" structure of knowledge, i.e., the way people learn, rather than the way knowledge is organized in disciplines. The approach should be bottom-up (Ausubel, 1964; Gagne, 1970).

The educational setting (institutions) is key to implementation of curriculum guides. Thus, the content of curriculum guides, the way in which we teach / assess / manage behaviour, the activities the school sponsors, the hidden parts of the curriculum, and so on can all be considered part of the curriculum.

Designing a curriculum raises several questions (McVittie & Ralph, 2007):

- What are the actual curriculum guides?
- Why are some kinds of knowledge and understanding favoured over others?
- How are transmission, connection, understanding, teaching and assessment methods used in the life learning process?
- Who does the teaching of the prescribed curriculum? According to Palmer (1998) researchers do not pay sufficient attention to the who in education.

An Aboriginal educator, Lightning, writes the learning process should be total. It is a process of internalization and actualization. It is something that is felt. It demonstrates to

your teacher that you have learned something. “I hear and feel you at the same time” (Lightning, 1992).

6.1 Secularism and the Transmission of Indigenous Knowledge

With the advent of the Renaissance, the Western world was offered another way of looking at the world, one that would not always be through the prism of God. The Reformation brought about a questioning of the temporal powers and their power over religious and spiritual life in Europe. Science today is often taken at face value in the way it explains the foundations of life. It has, in the West, become a new creed in the place of religion. This is ironic that the two once seemed to be irreparable foes, but now share many of the protelizing characteristics.

In many regions of the world, secularism has not always been able to dominate. This is especially true with Islam, which has seen a revival or renewal. While many in the West consider Islamic fundamentalism to be a regression, its proponents see it as the true will of God. Interestingly, secularists and Western Christians often combine forces to fight Islam, both literally and figuratively (Sharlet, 2009). The two are continuing what can be defined as a new type of colonialism. Not one of territories, but one of ideas. To be a person of intelligence and civilized, you must believe in the same ideas as does the West. Yet, even in the West, this alliance does not stop secularists from categorizing Christians as being regressive and somehow deficient.

Today, secularists see institutionalized religion as another way of keeping the populace docile and maintaining the status quo (class inequality, patriarchy, etc.). Traditional Aboriginal philosophers on the other hand see the religious experience as a means to understand the “Great Mystery.” As such, it is essential to life (Forbes, 2001, 120). Western secular theorists have never proven their critique of religion; they have merely proven their dissatisfaction with the current reality (Jacquard, 1996). How many people have withdrawn from the Western world to live separately, to create a new basis for living that is completely different from the one experienced by others in the Western

world? Secularists, through their criticisms of society (analysis of class structure, gender relations, economics, religion, etc.) have simply shown that their society does not fulfill their needs as human beings and are looking for something.

In *The Stillborn God*, Mark Lilla argues that religion began to become separated from politics in the seventeenth century, when Hobbes (Epicureanism⁸⁸) argued that faith should be viewed as a human need rather than as a divine gift (2007, 74-5). Hobbes is best known for his portrayal of human life in the state of nature, which he conceived as a universal competition for power in which fear of violent death is the dominating force (80). Lilla maintains that Hobbes was a true genius for understanding that human beings hold an innate religiosity based on fear (78-9). Hobbes was “the first thinker to suggest that religious conflict and political conflict are essentially the same conflict, that they grow up together because they share identical roots in human nature” (Lilla, 2007, 80).

Hobbes, an early Enlightenment thinker, never imagined that either fear or religion could be expunged from the human experience. Humans would continue to be fearful, but now they would fear an all-powerful sovereign. Religion would be practised under the auspices of the state. “The sovereign would have a total monopoly over ecclesiastical matters, including prophecy, miracles, and the interpretation of scripture. He would declare that the only requirement for salvation was complete obedience to himself” (Lilla, 2007, 86).

For Lilla, the modern age has brought a new mindset. European thinkers speak of this age in a “quasi-eschatological language, describing it as a rip in time that opened an unprecedented and irreversible epoch in human experience, with a unique logic, language, and mindset” (2007, 305). “Those of us who have accepted the heritage of the Great separation [between man and nature] must do so soberly. Time and again, we must remind ourselves that we are living an experiment, that we are the exceptions. We have

⁸⁸ A philosophy based on human nature and the relation to the cosmos. The human mind has great fears and ignorance and must invent gods to cope with that fear. In the seventeenth –century, this idea was used as a political means to dismantle Christian theological-political unity (Lilla, 2007, 74-5).

little reason to expect other civilizations to follow our unusual path, which was opened up by a unique theological-political crisis within Christendom” (Lilla, 2007, 308).

Western secularism has profoundly influenced IK. It must share considerable blame for the erosion of spiritual powers in all traditions. For Deloria, it has become a parody of social interaction, lacking any aspect of civility. If a society believes in nothing except what can be touched and felt (materialism), it has pre-empted the role of higher spiritual forces in life (Deloria, 2006, xviii). Even in Aboriginal circles, Deloria points out that we are doing a “walk-through” of the ceremonies, going through the motions. In our hearts, we do not believe in Manitou or the Great Spirit (p xvii). How many actually believe?

It is not known what the average Aboriginal believes vis-à-vis the Great Spirit, religion, and spirituality. Is Aboriginal society today pervaded by secularity? In ages past, shamans were able to perform acts that would be called miracles in the Western tradition. Many performed such acts until the early twentieth century. The acts were seen not only by Aboriginals, but also by “biased” persons, such as clergy, traders, and settlers, who were inclined to deny the reality of Aboriginal religious experiences (Deloria, 2006, xxi). Such experiences were regularly reported by “reputable” persons.

Today, little usable data can be found on the religious beliefs of Aboriginals in urban areas, rural areas, and reserves. If we consider Aboriginals who work in education, create curricula, and work as teachers, many could be described as holding some traditions, but more as integrationists or even assimilationists. The true traditionalists are often not to be found within the administrative structures of education and, as such, the curriculum taught to Aboriginal children today most likely contains a hidden assimilationist agenda.

The curriculum of today’s band council schools is far better than the one used in federal schools in the 1970s, 1980s, or even the 1990s. If today’s curriculum reflects the value matrix of Aboriginals and truly speaks to their needs, why do so many Aboriginal youth never finish high school, let alone go on to post-secondary studies? The reason is perhaps

this lack of traditional values in teaching materials. The curriculum must reflect the true spiritual beliefs of Aboriginals.

Lydia Yellowbird wrote that the first step in educational integration leads to a final outcome of termination and assimilation. She feels that education is akin to brainwashing. Aboriginal children are forced to forget and forsake “their true identity, that of being” Aboriginal. “Yes, education can be good if you recognize that it is a brainwashing process and if you replace the materialistic competitive and discriminatory values with the values our forefathers held sacred. In doing so you can finally use the system to the people’s advantage...It would be hard to do...since the Indian student is brainwashed after grade one which is psychological genocide, another phase of the integration program” (Yellowbird, 1972, 94).

For Battiste and Henderson, the current curriculum used in Canada teaches Eurocentric, secular thought (2000, 87). The world is viewed as a place where human beings do not interact and where they can be interfered with and changed. The Western curriculum thus ignores the inner self and focuses exclusively on the environment as an object. Other scholars believe that a curriculum is very important to society because “it is in and through education that a culture and polity, not only tries to perpetuate but enacts the kinds of thinking it welcomes and discards and/or discredits the kind it fears” (Elizabeth Minnich, 1990 taken from Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 87).

In the Western world, there is a need to isolate various components of the universe into individualized areas. The curricula teach students to view things objectively. They thus have a scientific moral high ground that allows them to manipulate the objects of the world without much consideration for the consequences. Humans have no reciprocal responsibilities to other beings. In Western philosophy, objectivity is the difference between civilized and uncivilized, public and private, reason and emotions, intelligent and unintelligent. To know something, we must know it from a distance. The object must remain uncontaminated by our beliefs (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 93). Teachers need

to understand that the idea of objectivity has given humans unprecedented power over their environment.

Minnich has written that Western education programs are built on four errors: faulty generalizations, ‘circular’⁸⁹ (lateral) reasoning, mystified concepts, and partial knowledge (1990, 49). Faulty generalizations occur when people apply various laws and understanding to unrelated areas of life. It is the belief that one standard, ideal, or norm is universally applicable. Lateral reasoning is the application of smaller specific findings/studies to different and often unrelated areas. The term ‘lateral’ is more appropriate than ‘circular’ because the latter term has holistic connotations for Aboriginals and, as such, might imply thinking in a circular manner when the thinking is actually linear/lateral. Another common error, mystified concepts, is one where the familiar is accepted as a universal truth.

To illustrate, some Aboriginals, like Vine Deloria (1992) challenge the theory that ancestral Amerindians came from Asia via the Bering Strait. This theory helps governments of the Americas explain why Aboriginals have few or little rights to traditional lands, it casts doubt on the idea of Indigenous nations, and it implies that everyone in the Americas is a migrant. For Deloria, this theory⁹⁰ is simply the “best guess.” Similarly, for Minnich too much partial knowledge has led to extensive specialization in the Western world (1990, 151), thus preventing the emergence of a comprehensive holistic view.

Foucault likewise relates the use and acceptance of ideas to the legitimacy of their authors. Whatever the value of a particular idea that challenges the prevailing orthodoxy,

⁸⁹ I disagree with Minnich on the choice of words. The word ‘lateral’ seems to me more appropriate.

⁹⁰ A 2003 Public Broadcasting Service/National Geographic documentary *The Journey of Man* presents the work of Spencer Wells, a geneticist who has shown that human beings from around the world migrated out of Africa. He is shown presenting his work to Phil Bluenose and members of a Navajo tribe near Canyon de Chelly. Wells states that mutations on male chromosomes sampled around the world confirm that everyone is related to the San peoples of southern Africa and that humans reached North America 15,000 years ago. It is difficult to say that Aboriginals were created and placed here by the creator. Instead of being offended, the Navajo people of Canyon de Chelly expressed surprise and after discussion accepted the scientific explanation. They were not overtly vexed by the news (Widdowson & Howard, 2008, 213).

its author will often be dismissed and ignored as being biased and sectarian or serving special interests (1984, 101). Perhaps the Navajo did travel through three worlds to arrive in this one, the fourth; is there any certainty that this account is false? If there is, why not treat such an account as we treat any other religion?

According to Battiste and Henderson, we need to balance the false premise of objectivity [secularism] with a view that humans are not the masters of the universe, but rather partners in a sustainable ecology (2000, 94). Some Western scientists also question the idea of objectivity, because all research is partial if it refuses to acknowledge the underlying point of view of its authors (Bourdieu, 1990, 183-4).

Since the late 1960s, Aboriginals have been rediscovering their Native traditions and reviving Native religious practises. The Western world on the other hand has been tearing down religious monoliths and placing hedonism in its place. It is thus increasingly difficult for non-Natives to accept any measure of religion in their lives (Deloria, 1973). In Quebec today, the Catholic Church has tried to end the continual erosion of faith. Cardinal Marc Ouellet, primate of the Catholic Church, wrote in late 2007 an open letter to all Catholics asking for forgiveness for past sins of the church in an attempt to change public opinion. Unfortunately, this effort was not well received by the Quebec media and population. The Church was heavily criticized for the perceived inadequacies of its apology (Cardinal Ouellet, 2007).

Many Western philosophers perceive a conflict in the Western world and the way reality is perceived. There still exists the Christian myth of the “Final Redemption,” the idea that redemption is not part of this world, but out of this life. It does not really matter what the solutions are, be they scientific, biological, or philosophical because the reward will be not here, but in heaven. Many Native religions have no such incentive; we are in the here and now (Cook-Lynn, 2007, 95).

The Western world has become so caught up in the ideals of secularism that it cannot fathom other cultures that do not share them. In the 1970s, a leading anthropologist

visited the Hopi and in a meeting wished to explain the latest archaeological findings about the origins of the Hopi people. In attendance was a Hopi man who was a successful entrepreneur, world traveler, and also a snake priest. He rose to object, saying that this explanation was all very well, but almost every Hopi knew the real truth. There was a migration through three previous worlds into this one, aided along the way by the Spider Grandmother (Page, 2003, 12). Evidently, the Western scientific mind has great difficulty conceiving that others may hold very different views about history or the present.

It is difficult to comment upon secularism and the transmission of Indigenous knowledge, but Deloria (2006) as we have already seen addressed this issue vaguely. Many Indians participate in Aboriginal ceremonies but how many actually believe? If one does not believe, what is the effect on the honouring of Mother Nature? Can you honour a spirit, if you do not believe in its existence? If the certified teachers are secular in belief, how do they go about transmitting traditional Aboriginal beliefs? They may be able to teach traditional activities, but can activities be reduced to a simple set of motions? What is it to be Indian? Is an Indian a belief, an act, or both?

Aboriginals are not the only nations in history to be confronted by this challenge. As already discussed earlier, in and around 200 A.D., the Rabbi Judah Hanasi viewed with mounting alarm the growing popularity of the *Mishna* (Talmud) and the Hellenic philosophical tradition. He felt that teachers of the *Mishna* (inspired by Greek learning) would develop a philosophy of ethics based on reason, rather than on the Torah, and in essence would create a morality based on science instead of on God's commandments. Man would thus eventually reject both ethics and morality, because they would be man-made rather than God-inspired. For science cannot make value judgements (Dimont, 1962, 166-9). Dimont feels that Hanasi was "intuitively divining" how science would dominate twentieth-century man.

In the Western world, education specialists are questioning the overall purpose of school. The internationally renowned French pedagogue and author, Philippe Meirieu, has taught at all educational levels. His reflections have inspired reform movements in several

French-speaking countries, including the attempted reform of the Quebec model (réforme pédagogique). For Meirieu, the Western world is at a critical juncture. “For the first time, our democracies must agree on the objectives of an education system. In a dictatorship, the values come from above, they are essentialist. In a democracy, they are worked out among men and often within conflict” (Cauchy, 2009).

The West needs to develop an education system that allows the “profile of the 21st century’s honest man” to come forward. This task will be much more difficult than in the past. “All the antiquated forms of education, which confused education and standardization, instruction and catechism, have gradually disappeared. We now want an education which is liberating, emancipating. Today, there are societal debates in relation to sexual morals, family morals, the conception of man, of relationships and work. It is much more difficult to create a school which becomes the subject of a collective adhesion.”

We ask the school to teach the core knowledge, at times replacing parents who are having difficulties to fight against violence, to teach civility, citizenship, sensitivity, ecology, about the environment and intercultural aspects. We also ask that all [who leave this system] be able to find employment in an increasingly difficult job market...It is necessary to agree on what a young person must absolutely learn and know when they are finished with [compulsory] schooling, on what are the absolute fundamentals so all that becomes integrated within the student and allows the student to be able to learn throughout his life.

Philippe Meirieu, translated from French 2009

Not all students are the same, however. Each student is different. There can thus be no absolute fundamentals because those fundamentals will differ by economic position, desires, needs, culture and national make-up. Should Aboriginals be required, like other Canadians, to accept Western knowledge? If so, how is this different from residential school? There is admittedly some need to have some understanding of other cultures that exist within a nation-state. What Canadians learn about Aboriginal peoples should nonetheless be on Aboriginal terms and vice versa.

One cannot teach truth by means of deception. They say in Cree *kkway eakihtek kkwayah anima eakihtek*: what really counts is the effort, i.e., being as truthful as possible, remaining in truth as much as possible. The elders usually end many of their talks about teaching of humility, centeredness, remaining on the path, and maintaining oneself as a searcher for the truth by saying, “It will take you far,” or literally “Far, it will take you.” There can be no separation between the physical and the spiritual. One must keep going back and forth between the two, and there should be no distinction between the two. The heart and the mind must be one (Lightning, 1992).

Cultural teachers in First Nations communities ... place a great deal of emphasis on spirituality—not to be confused with forms of organized religion! These teachers stress that each individual human has been designed by the Creator, and each of us has a specific purpose to fulfill on earth.

John W. Friesen (1997, 27-8)

Aboriginal students are not the only ones who feel a split between Aboriginal and Western cultures. Teachers themselves face unrealistic requests and are torn between the contradictory messages conveyed by the mass media and society.

“We say to the young people: “Consume, buy, they are stuck to the screen and then exert the least possible of their critical spirit, which is the opposite of what one seeks to create in education...The school has a terrible time fighting against that. The professor does not fight on an equal footing. He will speak about effort, work and attention. In a society centered on supply and demand, on what the merchants call the impulse of purchase, where the children, an advertising target, teachers as part of the system are asked to say to the children: “Be wary, wait, consider and take time to think”...It should be necessary that all citizens be conscious of the processes which are instrumentalizing our youth, creating a market share based on instinct.”

Philippe Meirieu in Cauchy 2009 p A1

Schools face many challenges, not just in what to teach, but also in their size. The large number of students has made schools anonymous. This anonymity has affected the student’s attachment to the institution and the community. At the same time large educational facilities provide economies of scale and allow greater specialization and

concentration of resources. In these large schools, we have not been able to democratize success. Many students do not even leave school with a diploma and drop out in their final three years. Many more are just waiting for their time in school to be over. It is much like older people who are waiting for their retirement or even their departure from prison. Meirieu states that “these people who have left the school system without succeeding feel either as culprits of their failure or victims of a system” (Cauchy, 2009).

“There are the students in difficulty who would rather finish their examination in an hour and half than in 60 minutes, and those who would rather give a blank white copy after five minutes. For these dropouts, one does not necessarily need more school, but rather another type of school,” says Meirieu, astonished by the lack of imagination that the education system has shown to date.

Beyond technical formulas, Meirieu believes that success in education lies in reconciling pleasure and thought. “School is a place where one learns and where one includes/understands. Those pupils who have failed [at least for the majority who fail] want neither to learn nor to understand. When a child discovers that there is pleasure in thought and this is discovered while playing checkers, through math, by sending emails to his grandmother, by reading or by electronic do-it-yourself hobbies, it will work. We cannot live in a society with two separated groups, those who think in pain and others who have pleasure without ever thinking” (Cauchy, 2009).

Shields, an educator from England, levels some harsh criticisms at current systems of education in the English-speaking world (2003). Shields lays out seven areas that need work in the English educational system. I have adapted these areas to an Aboriginal situation:

1. Most schools as presently organized do not take into account a changed and changing society. These schools often fail to meet the needs of all members of their students’ body. Many schools have failed to respond to the rapid changes in the rest of society and hence are unable to create academic or social successes for their students;

2. There is a systemic need for change. The standards of schooling must change if schools are to be excellent, inclusive, respectful, and caring institutions in communities of difference;
3. For change to occur, school leaders must play key roles. In Aboriginal communities, this leadership must include parents, teachers, administrators, community elders, and students. There is a need for transformative cross-cultural leadership as the key to successful educational leadership;
4. Objectives must be better understood. Which criteria will help us identify and assess our progress in theoretical [of curriculum] and practical⁹¹ terms;
5. The primary reason for the existence of schools (educational institutions) is to facilitate life-long learning of all members of the community;
6. Traditional Aboriginal educational theory must be brought to bear on educational practice;
7. Excellence and exemplary educational practice must inform the development of educational theory.

Theory must not remain at the university level or, in the case of Aboriginal education, in the hands of experts from the provincial department of education. Nor must excellent practice remain at an individual tribe level. It should be made available to all stakeholders⁹² in Aboriginal education.

6.2 Teacher Reliability

In the 1960s, American educational administrators attempted to reduce the influence of teachers on the curriculum and what students were learning. Until then, curricula had been very flexible and allowed teachers the chance to explore the great classics of Western literature. It was felt that for every great teacher many were not of the right philosophical understanding when teaching America's children (Gatto, 2003, 193-4).

⁹¹ Student success in the larger context of community successes.

⁹² Again stakeholders include Aboriginal parents, elders, students, administrators, community members, and Aboriginal-born experts and teachers. It is open to debate whether the federal government, provincial governments, think tanks, lobby groups, or teachers with no long-term interests in Aboriginal education should be considered on the same level as the previous stakeholders.

Gatto (2003) comments on the desire of American educational administrators to diminish the teacher's negative influence on intended outcomes. Western schools have been using these very prescriptive education methods for over 50 years. Aboriginal communities have also been forced to use prescriptive curricula because they generally follow provincial curricula. When it comes to teaching Aboriginal curricula with non-Aboriginal teachers, Aboriginal education authorities have not been at the forefront in vigorously controlling teaching styles and methods. Must non-Aboriginal teachers, be forced to use prescriptive Aboriginal curricula so as to preclude unwanted beliefs and biases that might harm the outcome desired by Aboriginal Education Authorities? Should Aboriginals set about certifying Aboriginal teachers with their own programs, thus creating their own educational system?

Friesen writes that there are "radical differences between the way Aboriginal people traditionally taught their young and the way contemporary schools" are teaching the young (2002). Aboriginal children learned on the job, as did (before mass industrial schooling of the 19th century) children of the Western world. The West used the apprentice system whereby a master taught the student with a number of other youths of various ages. They lived with the master until skilled and old enough to assume a certain level of independence in society and to engage in their trade. For many families in the Western world, the advent of the industrial school was something to be avoided (Gatto, 2003).

In Hungary in the 1940s-1950s, Zoltan Kodaly developed a new program for music education with the intended goal of boosting musical literacy among all students regardless of background. This in large part was accomplished for much of Hungary, but the change-over to the new system was very difficult. Kodaly felt that a terrible conductor for a large symphony would only last a year or two before being replaced, but a terrible teacher could last for thirty years or more, thereby destroying the love of learning among thousands of children (Choksy, 1999).

Kodaly developed the teacher as a primary source for ensuring program success. When properly trained to a level that eliminated the unfit, these teachers would act like an army, singing the virtues of music and thereby raising the level of music capacity in the general population. Numerous students at the Liszt Music Academy in Budapest were unable to pass the exams; many stayed for ten or more years studying in a program that should have taken four years to become a certified music teacher (Choksy, 1999). Must we Aboriginals likewise impose a strenuous certification process that reflects a pan-Aboriginal philosophy, thereby creating the critical mass of teachers who will ensure Aboriginal learning a place not only in Canada, but also in the minds and hearts of Aboriginals? Paulo Freire felt that oppressors [White people's] work with the oppressed [Indigenous people], no matter how well intentioned in their desire for transformation, arises out of a history of cultural invasion (1993, 42) and must be viewed with caution by both the oppressor who must be transformed, and the oppressed who must still resist residual behavioural patterns.

Appropriation of voice has been dominating discussions of Aboriginal and non-Native interactions in academic circles for over 30 years. Many critical academics acknowledge that social characteristics, such as ethnicity, class, and gender, influence the meaning and truth of what one says (Alcoff, 1991). It is important for Aboriginals to speak for and about Aboriginals, thus allowing Aboriginals to decide how they are to be viewed (Haig-Brown, 1992, 175-90).

6.3 Aboriginal Agency in School

The following is an interview with Guy Niquay, Principal of Simon-Pineshish-Ottawa School in the Aboriginal community of Manawan, conducted on November 20, 2009. Manawan is one of three communities belonging to the Atikamekw Nation in Quebec. This interview is important because Guy Niquay speaks to who controls Aboriginal education, agency of Aboriginals in their education system, and means available to Aboriginals to take control of their education system.

Guy Niquay: It has been 9 years since I have been at the service of the youth. I make decisions for their best and not for the teachers. If you don't like it you can go elsewhere. There is resistance to new ideas. In our schools there are teachers who do not want to join in our plans for success. What I tell those people is to get a position in a different place. I don't want to waste my time trying to fight with you when all I want is the success of our students. I shouldn't need to convince the teachers. You are paid for that.

Ouellette: *It must be hard.*

Niquay: People from outside, do you give them the right to decide for the community? ...No it's just like that. If you want to work for us do as we ask you. There are some who have been there for years and who are still resisting.

I have had such bad experiences in life that I don't want my students to go where I have been. I want to save them from the same troubles. I was away from the community for 12 years because there was no school. Now they have choices.

Ouellette: *It reminds me of a traditional type of teaching. You have experienced life, a modern life and you are now passing on your knowledge to your students. "This was my path, be careful of this and try to do that." It seems to be a very traditional model of knowledge transmission.*

Niquay: When I speak, I must be a model in education. Parents will come see me and talk about the image they have of a teacher. The kids might have seen a teacher drinking, drinking responsibly but still drinking. I must tell the teacher to be careful because your image is not good. It is not a pleasant experience. I do that because I am the principal, but we cannot change the world. I had a teacher who I offered a helping hand, but he didn't want to take it because he had lost his daughter. I tried to help but he doesn't want help... eventually he went to the band council, saying I wanted to fire him. I said: "I have tried to help, but he didn't want any help." Is that trying to fire someone without cause? I want him to be able to teach our kids.

Ouellette: *What is the type of curriculum in your school?*

Niquay: We use the same curriculum as the MELS [Department of Education]. We chose the same material to teach inline with the reform. There are youth who are obliged to leave the community to continue their schooling. I must adjust in consequence to their program, because they leave Manawan [band school] and

go to Joliette [provincial school]. They don't see the same things at the same level. I must think of the youth.

At Manawan we have two paths the children can follow for their education. The first is the bilingual path where the students start learning Atikamekw in Grade 1. In Grade 3 we add French in a small amount around 10% and we add a larger and larger portion of French to the program until in secondary 5 (Grade 11) the student has around 10% Atikamekw and 90% French. We use the same education material except in the bilingual program, where the first year takes 1½ years to complete. Those in Grade 6 are doing the material of Grade 5. It takes 12 years to complete the bilingual program instead of the usual 11. The French path has French taught as the primary language in Grade 1 and is completed in 11 years.

Ouellette: *How does INAC pay for the extra year?*

Niquay: They pay for all students who attend our school from age 4 till 21. That helps us. We use that. It is more flexible and it gives us an extra four years. It is like that in all [First Nation] communities.

Ouellette: *Are there many youth doing the bilingual program?*

Niquay: Yes, it has been seven years since we started teaching French in Grade 1. I would have thought that we would have had more French classes, but no. In Grade 1, I have 1 French class and 2 Atikamekw classes, in Grade 2, I have 1 French class and 2 Atikamekw, we have 3 classes for each level; with all our Grade levels in my school we have 26 classes. Grade 3 has 4 classes with 3 of those being Atikamekw.

Ouellette: *If you could change one thing in your school what would it be?*

Niquay: If I could change the school, if I could change something, I would like to have more personnel who are qualified for their positions. There are only 58% of teachers from kindergarten to Grade 6 who have the required [professional] training. I want to change that. There are some who are in professional training programs... They don't have time during the school year [for their professional training]; it is mainly done during the summer. It is three weeks a year. They are all pursuing a bachelors level degree.

Guy Niquay speaks about his power to be an agent of positive change. Many leaders in Aboriginal education share his feelings about the power of entrenched groups. Such leaders must often take too much time and effort to convince teachers, students, community members, and even parents that the chosen curriculum and educational

objectives are the best ones for their students. In many small communities, personal and professional problems may result if they are too overbearing. There is a need for balance.

Some interest groups form and re-form momentary coalitions in a process of appropriating schools for their own ends. Students thus become the voiceless objects of any educational reform (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 1).

Over time, in various communities, all stakeholders have built up entrenched power. No parent wants to hear that they need to do things better or that they are not acting in the best interests of their children. Teachers likewise do not want to be told what methods they must use in order to comply with the school's educational aims. Many stakeholders will prevent any major changes in Aboriginal schools. Without widespread support, a program may be very difficult to implement. Niquay has implemented a bilingual education program, but several years on some teachers still do not believe in its objectives. In many Aboriginal communities where independence of the individual is seen as being very important, how do you reconcile this individualism with modern hierarchical decision making, accountability, and management systems?

Chapter 7. Curriculum and Aboriginal Curriculum Models

It is primordial in any curriculum to choose the objectives that students should attain. It is important to consider who decides which objectives matter the most. The way these objectives are taught may also range from linear to circular approaches. Much of the earlier material in this chapter comes from Western sources, but various Indigenous models of education may be considered when creating an Aboriginal curriculum, if taken from credible sources.

7.1 Curriculum Objectives

The purpose and content of education may be described with various terms, and many definitions can be used interchangeably. 'Purpose' (intended or desired result), 'goal,'

and “objectives” are often considered to be synonyms. “Education” and “training” are unfortunately used interchangeably. “Training” implies making use of what one has learned in a predictable way (Posner, 2004, 70). Just consider the training of a construction worker. “Education” implies a less predictable outcome (Posner, 2004, 70). An educational degree, for example, can lead to work in a variety of fields outside education: administration, journalism, business, and even anthropology.

A well developed curriculum has an overarching principal objective or outcome (Posner & Rudnitsky, 1978, 17), which is largely determined by one’s society. The principal objective “describe[s] expected life outcomes based on a value schema that is either consciously or unconsciously chosen” (Posner, 2004, 73). To implement a principal objective, Aboriginal education authorities must consciously decide on pan-Aboriginal values. This decision cannot be unconscious, due to the influence of colonialism, its lasting effects, and the need to decolonize and to recreate communal values. For Tunisia, success within the Western worldview is “1) the achievement of a particular level of social status, 2) the achievement of an objective/goal, and 3) the opposite of failure” (2007, 9). Many Westerners wish to see students complete Grade 12 at a young age; thereafter, success is defined as the wage one earns. Is this the type of success that Aboriginals are looking for?

The principal objective(s), must be first translated into secondary objectives. The latter are the outcomes of school-based learning over a number of years and across a large variety of areas. All in all, they define the characteristics of a well-educated and presumably successful person (Posner, 2004, 71-8).

Posner provides a list of educational goals [secondary objectives] (p 76).

1. Facility in using the English language
2. Familiarity with another language
3. Proficiency in solving problems and thinking critically
4. Sense of self-respect and insight into own uniqueness, including interests and capabilities
5. Habits conducive to good health, physical fitness and personal safety

6. Capacity for creative expression and aesthetic judgement
7. Self-discipline
8. Appreciation of own cultural heritage balanced with respect for cultural diversity
9. Ability to fulfill obligations of a citizen of a democracy
10. Concern for protecting public health, property and safety
11. Ability to make informed decisions concerning the environment
12. Ability to assume responsibility for own learning and interest in continuing learning
13. Awareness of career options and training opportunities

Not all of these points concord with the pan-Aboriginal worldview. But many are compatible. I would add that students need an understanding of self, balanced within a sense of holistic community. Aboriginals must not just adapt objectives, but also create true objectives that represent their holistic worldview.

Finally, there are tertiary objectives specific to a particular course, discipline, or unit of study. They may vary from the objectives of a single lesson to those of an entire course. In concordance with holistic education, objectives must form a unified whole and not be separated into isolated groups. As in nature, multiple layers enter into the specific, thus creating a web of intricate complexity (Cajete, 2000, 218, 101-105). Each objective has its substance or content. The elements make up the desired outcomes (objectives) and lead to the educational results.

An Aboriginal education program often has holistic objectives. Their philosophical basis in the Aboriginal Nisga'a Nation is *Ts'im gan wilaak'il's wil luu sisgihl gandidil* meaning "within the pursuit of knowledge, therein one will find the true meaning of life." Education is seen as a total way of life (McKay & McKay, 1987, 64).

The child is a total being...the child's basic life components: physical, mental, social, emotional and spiritual. The life components must be considered concomitantly, for when they interact with such environmental factors such as socioeconomic status, the social structure of the child's community, the educational history of the parents, [family support for education], the fluctuating effect of the child's interactions with the teacher, and so on, the whole child, that is all facets and phases of the child's life. It is this perception of the whole child that is needed if one is to unlock and unravel the learning difficulties of children. The Nisga'a believe that any program of working with people must be based on

sound philosophy. It is in the quest for knowledge that one will find wisdom and this realization will open up the world of life, the world of living. This is the Nisga'a philosophy of education as a total way of life.

McKay & McKay, 1987, p 64

Not all share these fine objectives, and there can exist consciously or unconsciously more primal ones. John Taylor Gatto, a former New York City Teacher of the Year, wrote about the objectives of the American education system (Gatto, 2003b). According to Gatto, these objectives were alluded to by James Bryant Conant, president of Harvard, in his book *The Child, the Parent and the State* (1959). Modern schools result from a “revolution” engineered between 1905 and 1930, and Conant directs the reader to further reading of Alexander Inglis’ 1918 book *Principles of Secondary Education*.

Inglis, a Harvard University professor, breaks down the purpose of modern secondary schooling into six basic functions: 1) the *adjustive or adaptive function*. Schools are to establish fixed habits of reaction to authority by establishing “fixed standards and ideals”; 2) the *integrating function*. Students conform to the group, thus making the group overall more manageable with a “unity in thought, habits, ideals and standard, requisite for social cohesion and social solidarity; 3) the *differentiating function*. Once their social role has been determined, the children are sorted by role and trained for the needs of modern industrial and social life, A liberal education cannot “be provided for all individuals”; 4) the *propaedeutic function*. A small group of children will receive a better, more liberal education, thereby allowing them to assume management positions. Governments will thus have a more obedient population, and corporations a standardized labour force; 5) the *selective function*. Darwin’s theory of natural selection is applied to what is called “the favoured races” (p 94). Schools will label (unconsciously) the unfit with poor grades, remedial placement, and other punishments so that their peers will accept them as inferior, thus barring them from reproduction with better meriting children; and 6) the *diagnostic and directive function*. Through the use of tests and grading, students are diagnosed and directed to their proper social roles. There is a logging of qualitative and quantitative evidence for each student (Inglis, 1918, 375-84).

Do Aboriginal communities want such objectives for their own children? Most will say no, but many will still strive for them because they want their children to function in a wage-earning Western society with a certain standard of living and social standing. Aboriginal educators will have to walk a fine line to transform the Western curriculum and philosophy that Aboriginal children learn. They need to respect IK and embrace the paradox of subjective and objective knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2000, 94).

7.2 Curriculum Structures

Battiste and Henderson write that Western philosophy and education present a supposedly objective worldview that analyzes objects from a distance, thereby giving humans a feeling of power over the universe. Many Indigenous peoples and scholars disagree with this philosophy, while not denying the legitimacy of all Western educational structures and techniques for use in Aboriginal classrooms (2000, 94-5). For Battiste and Henderson the primary questions are not the methods but rather: Where do the students live? How are they to be enriched by education? “The educational system and Indigenous teachers do not need to invent a new way of transmitting Indigenous knowledge and heritage. All they need to do is develop concepts that more faithfully reflect our traditional educational transmission processes... This requires creating and supporting training centers that are controlled by Indigenous elders and educators” (Battiste and Henderson, 2000, 95).

Objectives are not useful if no one understands how to attain them. A number of curriculum structures are available. On the one hand, some structures are discrete, unrelated to, or at least independent of, all other content (Posner, 2004, 129-33). An example would be a learning program (Sesame Street, or Drop-in program) whereby the students are not obliged to attend all sessions and possibly will miss some if not most of them. Every session must be a self-sufficient unit that allows the



Discrete or flat structure

student to enter at any point. The principal criticism is that a discrete structure does not allow development of in-depth knowledge.

At the other extreme is the linear structure: each new skill or concept requires mastery of the immediately previous concept or skill. This structure is inherent to a number of models, such as the *Mastery learning strategies* and the *Keller Plan* also known as the *Personalized Systems of Instruction*. Anglo-Saxon curricula are based on the belief “that the most effective way for students to learn is through a gentle development of concepts and the practice of those concepts extended over a considerable period of time.” This way

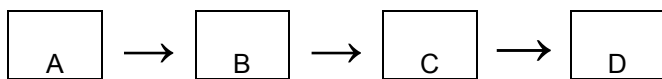


Figure 14
Linear structure
(Incremental development, continual practice and review)

is also called incremental development and continual practice and review (Posner, 2004, 131).

Another method combines elements of both. A structure is hierarchical when multiple unrelated concepts or skills are necessary for learning and mastering subsequent concepts or skills. Robert Gagné, a psychologist, developed an elementary science curriculum

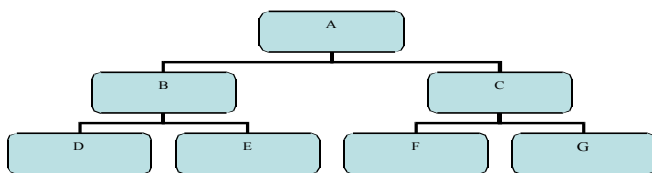


Figure 6
Hierarchical Structure

known as *Science: A Process Approach* in 1967. This curriculum was an elaborate hierarchical curriculum (Posner, 2004, 131). Various unrelated concepts lead to a smaller number of unrelated concepts

and finally to a macro-concept that needs mastery of all previous concepts or skills to obtain macro-understanding.

A very popular structure is the *spiral* by Jerome Bruner (1960). Bruner adapted Piaget’s ideas on cognitive development and argued that concepts are internalized or represented in different modes by children at different ages and therefore must be taught in different ways at different educational levels. One must use games, role play, and other active methods with young children. As the child’s physical and mental development progresses, concepts can be represented as images and eventually as abstract symbols. Bruner suggests teaching important concepts at the very beginning, in a form for which the child is ready, and then returning to the concepts repeatedly at higher and higher levels of sophistication and abstraction (Posner, 2004, 131-2). This model is not at odds with Aboriginal knowledge although adjustment will be needed in the physical representation (CCL, 2006a; CCL 2006b).

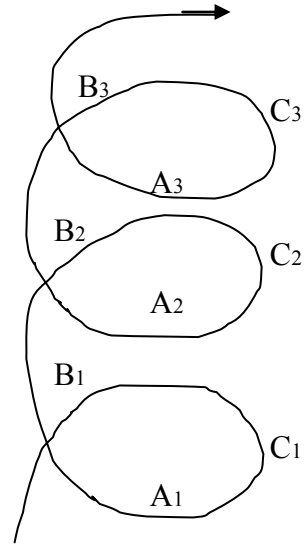


Figure 16
Spiral of Bruner

Thirty years ago, Schwartz and Ogilvy (1979) examined how disciplinary thinking had changed in the West. In every area they studied (philosophy, physics, religion, spirituality, mathematics, linguistics, arts, neuroscience, and psychology) there had been a basic shift in thinking, specifically in 1) ordering, 2) knowing and 3) causing. It was no longer possible to think of the world as an ordered clock — a giant machine put together and set in motion that will forever fulfil its function of timekeeping. One must now think of the universe as holographic and interconnected instead of as hierarchical (Schwartz and Ogilvy, 1979).

Knowing can no longer be thought about in a fixed and finite way. Information often depends in large part on individual and cultural interpretations. Schwartz and Ogilvy say that these new ways of knowing create “a process of knowledge that is more interpretive, inevitably ambiguous and partial. The process has rules, but they are rules for engagement rather than objectifying” (1979).

In the past, cause and effect were considered simply one-to-one processes, but “the movement in the new view is from the simple to the more complex, from simple agents to multiple sources, from unidirectional to mutual, from determinate or probabilistic outcomes to innovation and from control to influence” (Schwartz and Ogilvy, 1979).

7.3 Aboriginal Education *sui generis*, *mawitowinsiwin* (seeking life, for life’s sake)

Eber Hampton⁹³ proposed a model of Indian education called *Indian Education sui generis* and a Six Directions Structure that would allow Natives to self-determine their educational aspirations. *Indian Education sui generis* is “a thing of its own

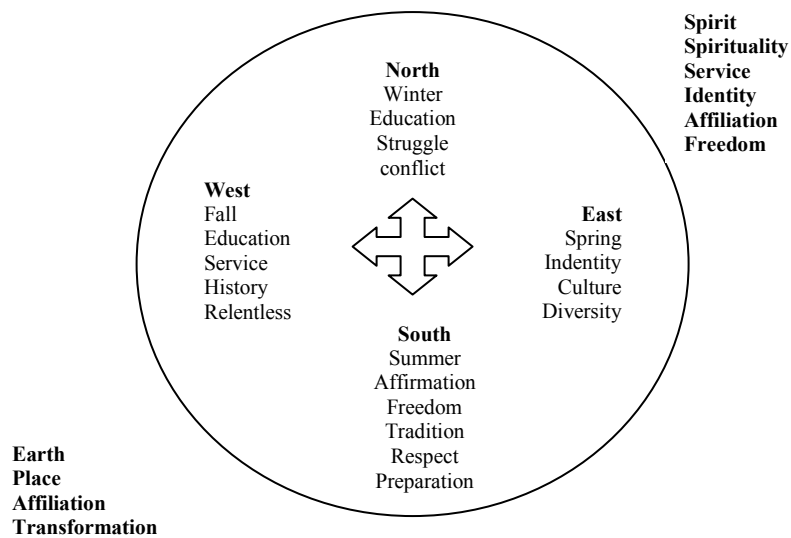
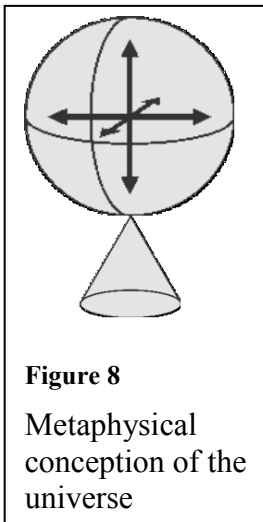


Figure 7
Six Directions Structure of Hampton

kind” (Hampton, 1993; National Advisory Council on Indian Education, 1979). For Hampton the “creation of Native education involves the [multiple] development of Native methods and Native structures for education as well as Native content and Native personnel.” Marie Battiste proposed another definition of Aboriginal education or *Indigenous Education* “*mawitowinsiwin*.” It is Cree for “seeking life” and for “life’s sake” (Battiste 2002; Cajete, 2000, 80, 15). This type of education is the realization that myths, rituals, visions, art, and learning of the art of relationships facilitate the wellness and wholeness of individuals, families, and communities. Both models are holistic. They

⁹³ A member of the Chickasaw Nation with an Ed.D. from Harvard University.

provide a non-secular or religious sense that is often absent from secular Western curricula (Battiste 2002).



The Six Directions Curriculum Structure by Hampton still has a number of holdovers from Western linear thought and understanding. For me, the approach should be holistic, three-dimensional, and intricate. The sphere on the right contains the four traditional directions plus the spiritual and the earth. It has been placed on a cone to show the need for balance among all elements that make up an Aboriginal educational philosophy.

Over the past 30 years, during a period of post-federal control, Aboriginals across Turtle Island have been developing curricula and standards that better reflect Native structures and methods. Unfortunately, these advances need to be better documented and evaluated.

Much of the current scientific literature on Native education focuses on the incapacities of Natives. Little is known about their specificity in learning, child development, knowledge, and language. More research is needed on positive aspects and less on past problems, whose importance must nonetheless be acknowledged. The status quo of forced provincial curricula will continue to marginalize Aboriginal peoples or leave them indifferent because large systems need centralization and uniformity. Such large-scale management is in conflict with the smaller, more personalized, and tribal management of First Nations (Battiste, 2005).

7.4 Canadian Council of Learning and the Aboriginal Knowledge Centre

In 2006, the Aboriginal Knowledge Centre (under the CCL) based in Alberta and Saskatchewan brought together Aboriginals (First Nation, Métis and Inuit) from a number of different groups involved in Aboriginal education. These groups developed a number of lifelong learning models that they felt best represented each of their specific realities. These models are still being discussed among First Nations, Métis and Inuit

learning professionals, community practitioners, researchers, and analysts. For more information, visit the website www.ccl-cca.ca. The information and images shown below come from the CCL website, was a product of consultation with a multitude of stakeholders, and represent an excellent effort to develop a theoretical foundation for Aboriginal education.

7.4.1 Inuit Holistic Lifelong Learning Model



Figure 9
Inuit Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

The Inuit Holistic Lifelong Learning Model depicts the linkage between Inuit lifelong learning and community well-being, and can be used as a framework for measuring success in lifelong learning.

The Inuit Holistic Lifelong Learning Model uses a stylistic graphic of an Inuit blanket toss (a game often played at Inuit celebrations) and a circular path (the “Journey of Lifelong Learning”) to

portray the Inuk’s learning journey and its connection to community well-being.

Lifelong learning for Inuit is grounded in traditional “Inuit Values and Beliefs,” as articulated in Inuit *Qaujimagatuqangi*⁹⁴ (IQ). To illustrate the strength of IQ, the model depicts 38 family and community members, including ancestors, “holding up” a learning blanket, with each figure representing an IQ value and belief. The inclusion of ancestors

⁹⁴ Indigenous knowledge.

represents the sacred Inuit tradition of “naming” – a practice which fosters Inuk identity, kinship relations, and the transmission of intergenerational knowledge.

Within the learning blanket are the “Sources and Domains of Knowledge” – culture, people, and *sila* (life force or essential energy) – as well as their sub-domains (languages, traditions, family, community, Elders, land, and the environment).

The Inuk’s lifelong learning journey is ongoing and he/she progresses through each life stage – infant, child, youth, young adult, adult, and elder – and is presented with a range of learning opportunities.

During each learning journey where he or she can experience learning in both informal settings, such as in the home or on the land, or in formal settings, such as in the classroom or in the community. The Inuk is also exposed to both Indigenous and Western knowledge and learning practices, as depicted by the two colours of stitching along the rim of the blanket.

The Inuk emerges from each learning opportunity with a deeper awareness of Inuit culture, people and *sila*. In turn, the Inuk contributes his or her newly acquired skills and knowledge to the community, thereby contributing to the determinants of “Community Well-being” (identified as physical well-being, economic well-being, social well-being and environmental well-being), and returns to the learning path to continue the lifelong journey.

Taken from the Aboriginal Knowledge Centre
Canadian Council of Learning (2006c)

7.4.2 Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

The Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model represents the link between Métis lifelong learning and community well-being, and can be used as a framework for measuring success in lifelong learning.

The Métis understand learning in the context of the “Sacred Act of Living a Good Life,” a perspective that incorporates learning experienced in the physical world and acquired by “doing,” and a distinct form of knowledge—sacred laws governing relationships within the community and the world at large—that comes from the Creator. To symbolize these forms of knowledge and their dynamic processes, the Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model uses a stylistic graphic of a living tree.

The Métis learner, like the tree, is a complex, living entity that needs certain conditions for optimum growth. As conditions change throughout the natural cycle, so will the regenerative capacity of the tree. The health of the tree, or the Métis learner, impacts the future health of the root system and the “forest” of learners.

Métis people view lifelong learning as part of a regenerative, living system—the “Natural Order” that governs the passage of seasons and encompasses a community (or forest) of learners. Within this organic system, relationships are interconnected, and balance and harmony are maintained.

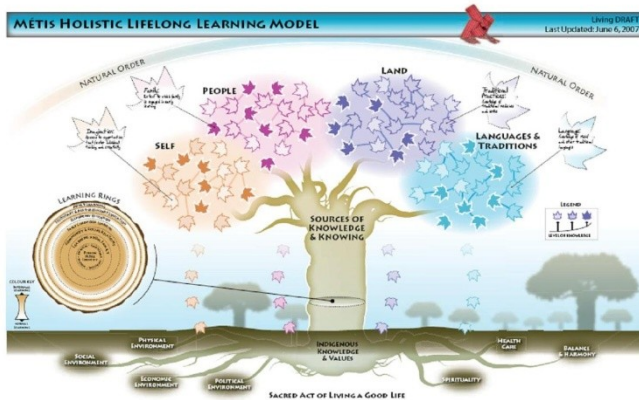


Figure 20
Métis Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

The tree’s roots represent the individual’s health and well-being (social, physical, economic, spiritual, etc.) and provide the conditions that nurture lifelong learning. The root base of the tree

represents the indigenous knowledge and values that

provide stability for the Métis learner.

A cross-sectional view of the trunk’s “Learning Rings” depicts how learning occurs holistically across the individual’s life cycle. At the trunk’s core are the spiritual, emotional, physical and mental dimensions of the Métis self and identity. Intergenerational knowledge and values are transmitted through the processes that first influence the individual’s development—learning from family, and learning from community and social relations (represented by the two rings surrounding the core). The four outer rings illustrate the stages of lifelong learning, from early childhood through to adulthood; they depict the dynamic interplay of informal and formal learning that occurs at different rates and stages, as represented by the extent of growth across each ring.

Extending from the trunk are the branches—“Sources of Knowledge and Knowing” such as self, people, land and language and traditions. The clusters of leaves on each branch represent the domains of knowledge. The intensity of their colour indicates the extent of individual understanding in any knowledge domain. The leaves of knowledge eventually

fall to the ground, signifying how knowledge transmission enriches the foundations of learning and produces more knowledge (more vibrant leaves).

Taken from the Aboriginal Knowledge Centre
Canadian Council of Learning (2006b)

The tree holds special meaning in many religions around the world. For instance, in the Christian religion, it is “the tree of life” of Genesis. In the Hindu tradition, tree symbolism appears in the 135th hymn of the 10th book of the Rigveda, and in the 15th chapter of the Bhagavadgita. The Cree have a tree embodying the four cardinal points of the compass, which represent also the fourfold nature of a central world tree, a symbolic *axis mundi* connecting the planes of the mother earth and the sky with that of the terrestrial world. In ancient Egypt, the Gods (Isis and Osiris) were said to have emerged from the acacia tree of Saosis, which the Egyptians considered the *tree of life*, referring to it as the “tree in which life and death are enclosed.” Cajete further sees the tree of life as “a metaphor for life, healing, vision and transformation.” Within the tree trunk, a circle represents the “earth, wind, fire and water and all the physical, mental, spiritual and emotional aspects of human nature” (2000, 285).

7.4.3 First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

The First Nations Holistic Lifelong Learning Model represents the link between First Nations lifelong learning and community well-being, and can be used as a framework for measuring success in lifelong learning. For First Nations people, the purpose of learning is

to honour and protect the earth and ensure the long-term sustainability of life. To illustrate the organic and self regenerative nature of First Nations learning, the Holistic

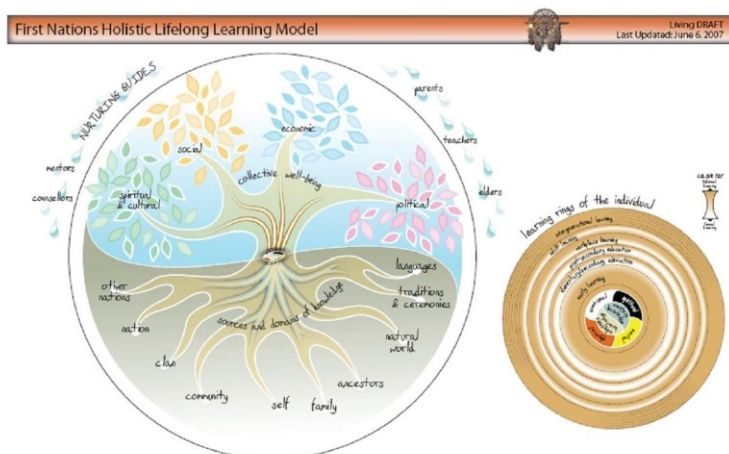


Figure 10
First Nation Holistic Lifelong Learning Model

Lifelong Learning Model uses a stylistic graphic of a living tree. The tree depicts the cycles of learning for an individual and identifies the influences that affect individual learning and collective well-being.

The First Nations learner dwells in a world of continual re-formation, where interactive cycles, rather than disconnected events, occur. In this world, nothing is simply a cause or an effect, but the expression of the interconnectedness of life. These relationships are circular, rather than linear, holistic, and cumulative rather than compartmentalized. The mode of learning for First Nations people reflects and honours this understanding.

Lifelong learning for First Nations peoples is grounded in experiences that embrace both indigenous and Western knowledge traditions, as depicted in the tree's root system, "Sources and Domains of Knowledge". Just as the tree draws nourishment through its roots, the First Nations person learns from and through the natural world, language, traditions and ceremonies, and the world of people (self, family, ancestors, clan, community, nation and other nations). Any uneven root growth can de-stabilize the learning system. The root system also depicts the intertwining presence of indigenous and Western knowledge, which forms the tree trunk's core, where learning develops.

A cross-sectional view of the trunk reveals the "Learning Rings of the Individual". At the ring's core are the four dimensions of personal development—spiritual, emotional, physical, and mental—through which learning is experienced holistically. The tree's rings portray how learning is a lifelong process that begins at birth and progresses through childhood, youth and adulthood.

Learning opportunities are available in all stages of First Nations life. They can occur in both informal and formal settings such as in the home, on the land, or in the school. The stages of learning begin with the early childhood phase and progress through elementary, secondary and post-secondary education, to adult skills training and employment. Intergenerational knowledge is transmitted to the individual from the sources within the roots.

The First Nations learner experiences the various relationships within indigenous and Western knowledge traditions through their emotional, mental, spiritual and physical dimensions. The tree's extended branches, which represent the individual's harmony and well-being, depict the development of these experiences. The individual's well-being

supports the cultural, social, political and economic “Collective Well-Being,” represented by the four clusters of leaves.

Just as leaves provide nourishment to the roots and support the tree’s foundation, the community’s collective well-being rejuvenates the individual’s learning cycle. Learning guides—mentors, counsellors, parents, teachers, and Elders—provide additional support and opportunities for individuals to learn throughout their lifespan.

Taken from the Aboriginal Knowledge Centre
Canadian Council of Learning (2006a)

Dr. Battiste is particularly opposed to “Eurocentric” curricula and philosophers who dismiss Indigenous⁹⁵ knowledge on the assumption that almost all socio-political cultural life not sharing the Occidental worldview is of little use, not easily classifiable or difficult to understand, and not containing equally valid truths. “They find it to be unsystematic and incapable of meeting the productivity [and industrial efficiencies] of the modern world” (Battiste, 2002).

Many education programs are very good at training students to function mainly in a Western culture. But such programs do not allow Aboriginal students to understand their own culture critically and constructively. Only after profoundly understanding their own epistemology can Aboriginal students then understand the relationships between Western and Aboriginal cultures and build upon these understandings to create positive relationships of nation(s) building. Positive outcomes are closely tied to a culturally relevant curriculum, learning programs, and support mechanisms that fully reflect Aboriginal values, traditions, and languages (Schissel & Wotherspoon, 2003, 107-8).

Much of the literature on Aboriginal education favours a holistic approach and the sacredness of Indigenous knowledge (Battiste & Henderson, 2000; Cajete, 2000, 64, 261; Deloria, 1992, 64). For many Aboriginal authors, this unique worldview contains a metaphysical perspective (Friesen & Friesen, 2002, 45; Medicine, 1987; Couture, 1991).

⁹⁵ The term *Indigenous* according to Battiste is used to encompass both the international scope of the literature and the national context of Aboriginal peoples as defined in the Constitution of Canada.

Although we cannot characterize all Aboriginal peoples as being alike, many do share similar elements (Friesen, 2000; interview with Judy Côté, January 21, 2009).

According to Battiste, Indigenous people construct teaching around the sacredness of certain places with an empowered sacred ambiance that can and does empower human consciousness and spirituality (2000; Cajete, 2000, 67). Henry Lickers says, “The First Nations people view themselves not as custodians, stewards or having dominion over the Earth, but as an integrated part in the family of the Earth. The Earth is my mother and the animals, plants and minerals are my brothers and sisters⁹⁶” (CCL, 2007).

Mi’kmaw communities view the treatment of the earth in a way much different from that of Western philosophy. The latter often treats the earth as an inanimate object to be manipulated. Aboriginals, in contrast, see the earth as a being and all objects as having spirit (Battiste and Henderson, 2000, 21-51).

Aboriginal education is based on the realization that myths, rituals, visions, art, and learning of relationships will facilitate the wellness and wholeness of individuals, families, and communities (Cajete, 2000, 101). This model is holistic and inherently religious (Battiste 2002). If education is about perpetuating traditions and knowledge of a culture, people, and nations, and those people, culture, and nations have a specific worldview *sui generis*, should not the education system and consequently the curriculum reflect this worldview?

Spirituality or religious practice in Indigenous education cannot be foreign as is the case in public secular education in the West. Louis Sunchild, an elder, argues that prayer is needed in daily life because we find it difficult to remain humble. Prayer is ultimately the thing we have to keep going back to. It keeps us in line with the ethos in a humble way. If

⁹⁶ Many question the dominance of man over the rest of creation. This questioning even comes from those within the Western scientific tradition. Lévi-Strauss wrote “if man possesses principal rights as a living being, it should entail immediately that these rights that are recognized in humanity as a species must meet their natural limits vis-à-vis the rights of other species. The rights of man terminate at the precise moment their use places in peril the existence of other species. The right to life and to free development of a living species can never be denied, for the simple reason that the extinction of any species creates an irreparable void in the world hierarchy [and equality] of creation (translated from Lévi-Strauss, 1976, 334).

one needs prayer in daily life, does one need prayer in education? Can we create division within our daily lives and how we live? In the secular West, this question is never asked lest we offend, but if we are consequent with ourselves as living beings (as a part of creation), prayer should play a role in the learning of our children (Lightning, 1992).

Aboriginals do present many similar features and beliefs but are at the same time individuals. Traditional Aboriginals are individuals in the matrix of life. They respect the differences of others, preferring communal consensus and agreement while existing as individuals.

The few Native educators currently available have developed Native content generally by grafting onto provincial curriculum guides. Some have developed whole programs for use in band schools. Most of the programs have underlying assimilationist goals, lack the necessary resources, and consequently produce high failure rates. Even with Aboriginal-directed education and post-Indian control of education, most of the structures, methods, content, faculty, and curriculum are based on Western epistemology that does not reflect a truly self-determined Aboriginal education (Hampton, 1993).

Vine Deloria (2001) writes that “whites” scorned the knowledge of American Indians, saying that their knowledge was “gross, savage superstition and insisting their own view of the world, a complex mixture of folklore, religious doctrine and Greek natural sciences was the highest intellectual achievement of our species.” Deloria does see growing respect among certain people for the religious traditions of Aboriginals because he feels these traditions have vanished or become swamped in reactionary fundamentalism. He feels we must move past Aboriginal “science” or Aboriginal “religion” to Aboriginal metaphysics (2001).

For Deloria, Aboriginal metaphysics is the “realisation that the world and all its possible experiences, constituted a social reality, a fabric of life in which everything had the possibility of intimate knowing relationships because everything was related. This world

is a unified whole” (2001). While laying out Aboriginal understanding of metaphysics, Deloria criticizes the Western world’s lack of metaphysics and confidence in science.

7.5 Hybrid System: Two Types of Education

Alfred Manitoyes identifies two types of education: *Mooneyowinih kah kinahmakit*, or white man’s teaching or schooling, and Anishinabaywin, or Saulteaux teachings. For this Saulteaux elder, the ideal person “minds’ all things, is thoughtful and discerning, and can balance both types of education (Akan, 1992).

For Alfred Manitoyes, formal Western education and its context of culture do not necessarily conflict with Aboriginal education. For Manitoyes, neither assimilation nor acculturation, as advocated by non-traditionalists, is acceptable or possible in Native education, specifically in Saulteaux education. Education is a borrowed cultural product “*pakosiewaywin*” that youth must embrace and accept (Akan, 1992).

Yet it is very difficult for Aboriginal educators not to enter into some conflict with Western education and its surrounding philosophy. So much of Aboriginal psyche and image has been based on an us-versus-them attitude. There are literally hundreds of studies about Aboriginal education on Turtle Island, and much is about what is not working. Anne-Pascale Targé found that the Inuit in Arviat, Nunavut are attempting to develop harmonious learning of both Western and Inuit knowledge, including better use of oral knowledge from Inuit elders (2005, 96).

For the anthropologist Paul Nadasdy, the institutions that Aboriginals have created to interact with the Canadian state not only affect legal definitions and frameworks, but also the language. Aboriginals must translate bureaucratise into concepts understandable to Aboriginals and vice –versa, i.e., they must translate their worldview into concepts that the Canadian state can use (Nadasdy, 2003, 2). Education has been the field the most affected by translation and bureaucratization. In general, Aboriginals have accepted this

framework for education of their youth. Any modifications have often been merely cosmetic.

In 2002, the Minister's National Working Group on Education (MNWGE), commissioned by the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Canada (INAC), made several recommendations for curricula and jurisdiction. The most important one was to develop and implement quality, holistic education and a comprehensive First Nations education system (MNWGE, 2002).

The recommendations are:

1. That First Nations develop and approve language instruction and curricula;
2. that culturally relevant curricula for all subject areas be developed and approved by First Nations;
3. That curricula and resources be designed to address the identified weaknesses in mathematics, sciences and literacy;
4. That there be a development of culturally appropriate pedagogical methodologies and evaluation; and
5. That First Nations working with INAC and the provinces and territories create appropriate mechanisms for the accountability to First Nations, the development of a quality education system for First Nation students in provincial and territorial schools and the inclusion of culturally relevant curricula and pedagogy.

While interesting, these recommendations are not advancing much farther past the initial stage, possibly due to lack of understanding and fear by INAC officials of the overall costs. Much of the development also seems to be happening in regionally isolated pockets. Chiefs, educators, and parents wish to see progress in the educational outcomes of their children. The current Minister of INAC has publicly called for implementation of a more encompassing educational system, including curricula, in band schools across Canada. With the recent signing of an education agreement between First Nations in British Columbia, the federal government, and the B.C. government, the desire clearly exists (INAC, 2006), but questions remain as to who will really control and fund the new system.

North: Curriculum Evaluation

Chapter 8. Curriculum Evaluation Models

There has been little research on curriculum evaluation in Aboriginal education even though Turtle Island has seen the development of multiple curricula in various types of schools by provincial and Aboriginal Education Authorities. Many have been developed within the past 20 years and still more are being developed. Unfortunately, few Aboriginal researchers have evaluated the curricula in current use (personal communication Eber Hampton, January 24, 2007). Several models for curriculum evaluation are available to the specialist, but unfortunately they are not Aboriginal in origin. We will examine four models used in Western education systems, and then propose an Aboriginal one for use in evaluation of pan-Aboriginal curricula.

Non-Aboriginal researchers have come up with useful theories and evaluation techniques. Many elements can be reused in an Aboriginal model. Should an Aboriginal researcher reject all work done within a Western paradigm? Should not existing information be used to help nourish and create a truly Aboriginal model?

This section will not evaluate student outcomes for different curricula, but instead define Aboriginal education objectives and evaluate the curricula accordingly. This analysis in itself will be an important step forward. It will pave the way for direct and indirect criticism of Western-based curricula that often inadvertently serve a neo-colonial purpose (Pewewardy, 2005, p 151).

8.1 Tyler's Objectives-Centred (Behaviourist) Rationale

One of the earliest published models was by Ralph Tyler in the 1949 book *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*. The Tyler model is also known as the *Tyler Rationale*. This model has seven stages:

1. Beginning with the behavioural objectives, one needs to specify the objectives in terms of learning content and expected student behaviour, e.g., “demonstrate

- familiarity with dependable sources of information on questions relating to nutrition.”
2. Identify the situations that enable the student to show or express the behaviour embodied in the objective and that evoke or encourage this behaviour. For instance, if you wish to assess oral language use, identify situations that will need oral language.
 3. Select, modify, or construct suitable evaluation instruments and verify the instruments for objectivity, reliability, and validity.
 4. Use the instruments to obtain summarized or appraised results.
 5. Compare the results from several instruments before and after given periods in order to estimate the amount of change.
 6. Analyze the results in order to determine strengths and weaknesses of the curriculum and to identify possible explanations for the patterns of strengths and weaknesses.
 7. Use the results to modify the curriculum as needed.

Taken from Glatthorn, 1987, p 273

Objectives are identified via three sources:

- a) The learner;
- b) The society; and
- c) The subject matter.

The learner’s needs and interests should be identified through interviews, observations, tests, and questionnaires. Study of the community and society at large is a second source and may be determined by a community survey. The final source is the subjects to be taught and the specific skill sets needed for the subjects. The three types of objectives are then combined and the most important ones highlighted. The curriculum developer’s philosophy must be written out so that his or her influences are clear (Tyler, 1950, 27).

The objectives must be stated clearly and concisely because the true goal is to bring about “significant changes in the student’s patterns of behaviour” (1950, 28). All objectives are dualistic in nature and have behavioural and content components.

The Tyler rationale can be used very easily by Aboriginal education authorities. The curricula now in use often have not followed the Tyler rationale for all three sources... First source: minor consideration is often given to the specific needs of Aboriginal students. Second source: the philosophy of Canadian society is clearly used to develop educational objectives. Third source: Western subject matter is often used with little consideration for Aboriginal epistemology. Tyler has clearly shown how education may be used to modify children's behaviour. Given that Aboriginal curricula have objectives that were developed for the average Canadian child, will the behaviour of Aboriginal students become more like that of the average Canadian child? Is this integration or assimilation?

8.2 Stufflebeam's Context-Input-Process-Product Model

This model produces evaluative data in four stages. *Context evaluation* is continuous assessment of needs and problems in context in order to help decision makers (originally business men and women) to determine goals and objectives. *Input evaluation* is assessment of alternative means to reach those goals and objectives. *Process evaluation* is the monitoring of processes both to ensure actual implementation of the means and to make necessary modifications. *Product evaluation* is comparison of actual and intended outcomes, thereby leading to a series of recycling decisions (Stufflebeam, 1971).

Each of the four stages has six steps:

1. The kinds of decisions are identified;
2. The kinds of data needed to make those decisions are identified;
3. Those data are collected;
4. The criteria for determining quality are established;
5. The data are analyzed on the basis of those criteria;
6. The needed information is provided to decision makers

Taken from Glatthorn, 1987, p 273-274.

This model has a number of attractive features. It is systematic and rational, with detailed guidelines that make for easy use by administrators. It provides information for decision making about the aims of the program, the development of the program, and the process of curriculum implementation (Stufflebeam, 1971). Unfortunately, there are several drawbacks, notably huge human and financial resources are required for data collection and evaluation. There is an additional drawback: the complexity of the process may preclude involvement by non-specialists. In Aboriginal communities this would most certainly be a drawback.

8.3 Scriven's Goal-Free Model

Not all researchers agree that objectives or goals are key to the evaluation process. Scriven in 1972 wrote that after having been involved in several evaluation processes he felt the side effects seemed more important than the original objectives. He questioned the seemingly arbitrary distinction between intended and unintended effects (Scriven, 1972, 1-4; Posner, 2004, 250).

When conducting a goal-free evaluation, the evaluator must remain unbiased. He or she creates a profile of needs for the target group. Then by using qualitative methods, the evaluator assesses the actual effects of the program. If a program responds to one of the identified needs, it is deemed to be useful (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2006, 304).

Importantly, Scriven's work directs the researchers' attention to unintended effects. For Scriven, goal-free evaluation cannot be used in isolation. It must complement other evaluation techniques, thus creating a more complete understanding (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2006, 305). Complete objectivity is, of course, impossible to obtain. The program objectives must instead be defined according to the group's values. By being goal-free, the researcher is able to explore both intended and unintended effects, thereby getting a broader picture.

Scriven argues that evaluation is part of decision making, but that no evaluation is complete until judgement has been passed. He further argues that the best person to pass judgement is the evaluator (1967). In Aboriginal communities, final judgement will obviously be up to the Aboriginals themselves and not to the specialists.

8.4 Stake's Responsive Model

The responsive model assumes that stakeholder concerns and needs should be paramount (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2006, 305). It orients evaluation more directly to program activities than to program intents, the aim being to respond to the stakeholders' need for information. Quantitative and qualitative data provide a yardstick for program successes and failures (Stake, 1975).

Who are the stakeholders in Aboriginal education? Most obviously, they are Aboriginals, students, teachers, parents, communities, Aboriginal cultures, and their worldview. Other stakeholders are the federal and provincial governments, local school boards, local dominant society communities, corporations, taxpayers, and so on. How much of a role they should play is open to debate within Aboriginal communities and between different levels of government.

8.5 Aboriginal Evaluation Model

The *Stake responsive model* gives the stakeholder a major role. This idea is primordial in Aboriginal philosophy. The stakeholders include students, parents, communities, families, tribes, nations, language, the environment, beliefs, spirits, traditions, elders, ancestors, and the land. A sense of control over destiny is important in any education system, and Aboriginals are no different.

Canadian Aboriginals are, however, in a minority situation and continue to underperform in many Western-based education systems, thus making the needs of stakeholders in Aboriginal education paramount. This need to control our lives reflects the need to

decolonize our systems (Hall, 2003, 238-49). The list of stakeholders should nonetheless give the federal or provincial governments only a supporting role (treaty obligations). The reason is obvious: a history of mistrust, mismanagement, and forced assimilation (RCAP, 1996) and a sense that any interference cannot help but undermine Aboriginal education and create a forced assimilation model. There still exists a deep mistrust of Eurocentric education (Tunison, 2007, 6).

The *Stake model* is not the only one of interest. The *Tyler model* has several strong points, such as creation of evaluation instruments that are objective (to a certain point), reliable, and verifiable and use of these instruments to obtain summarized and appraised results. The results then will allow a better appraisal of curriculum strengths and weaknesses in relation to the objectives defined by the three sources, with special focus on important stakeholders such as the ones enumerated above. With these results, stakeholders and administrative bodies may consider making changes to the curriculum that best reflect the Aboriginal worldview and the educational objectives.

The *Stufflebeam model* lays out a detailed evaluation process. Only two parts of it are relevant, notably *Context evaluation* and *Input evaluation*. Finally *Scriven's goal-free model* focuses on the hidden curriculum and the unintended effects that curriculum forms and objectives may have on the education of Aboriginals and the eventual survival and transmission of their culture.

Aboriginals encompass a diverse range of nations. They come from multiple backgrounds with multiple beliefs, needs, cosmologies, and understandings. It is difficult to develop a model that will satisfy all of them. But some elements do reoccur across many different Aboriginal communities and individuals (personal communication with Judy Côté, January 21, 2010). These elements can be called pan-Aboriginalism. The Canadian Council of Learning has developed pan-Aboriginal models of learning for First Nations, Inuit, and Métis (CCL, 2006). Their models are based upon the tree of life, but also include the circle represented by the tree trunk. For the Inuit, this model is not appropriate, a circle being a better choice. For instance, a traditional igloo is circular in

form and can be said to represent the universe and a mother's womb (Therrien, 1987; Saladin d'Anglure, 1986).

Ujarak got to know Saittuq (Shaman) during the times he spent in that man's home community of Mittimatalik (Pond Inlet). Saittuq became an invalid and could no longer hunt. Through spiritual effort, he acquired *qaumaniq*,⁹⁷ clairvoyance and progressively became a shaman. When he sang in his *iglu*,⁹⁸ his power was so strong as to carry him off, seemingly into the cosmos. The ceiling of the *iglu* was like the heavens of the night sky. The floor of the *iglu*, the *natiq*, was like the pack ice on the sea. The platform where he slept, the *igliq*, was like the land. The entrance, the *katak*, was like the moon. The ice windowpane of the *iglu*, the *igalaq*, was like the sun. The side ladders of the *iglu*, the *aki*, where meat and food were kept, were like the hunting grounds of the sea. By using his shaman's powers, Saittuq could see far and wide wherever game animals were to be found. The *iglu* became for him a smaller-scale version of the world – a microcosm.

Interviewing Inuit Elders Volume 4, Cosmology and Shamanism, p 179

Bernard Saladin d'Anglure, Editor

Nunavut Artic College

Time and space are two keys to understanding Aboriginal thought. Time is seen often in a cyclical manner with recurring patterns. On a macro-level, the 4-directional circle represents Aboriginal knowledge. To this are added two additional directions: the Great Spirit above and Mother Earth below. There is thus created a sphere or meta-physical representation of the universe. This model is not yet widely accepted in the Western world and still questioned (Widdowson & Howard, 2006, 194).

8.6 Types of Curricula in Aboriginal Education

Using the work of scholars involved in Aboriginal education, I have developed five principal groups for classification of curricula used by Aboriginal schools. Each curriculum is different and may have elements that place it in one group while other elements place it in another. Though already mentioned in Section 1.1.4, the groups are:

1. Aboriginal education based on Indigenous knowledge curricula;

⁹⁷ The light of an angakkuq (shaman); the capacity of an angakkuq to see what is hidden.

⁹⁸ Snowhouse or dwelling

2. Culturally grafted curricula with an Aboriginal worldview;
3. Hybrid curricula;
4. Culturally grafted curricula with a Western worldview; and
5. Western curricula.

1) Aboriginal Education Based on Indigenous Knowledge Curricula

Aboriginal Education Based on Indigenous Knowledge Curricula is based on traditional pan-Aboriginal knowledge and understanding in a natural setting. The definition of Aboriginal curriculum does not contain any elements of the Western construct, but is *sui generis*⁹⁹ (Hampton, 1993) or *mawitowinsiwini* (Battiste 2002). Indigenous understanding of curricula implies the right to agency, a right that is common to all beings (Ignatieff, 2001). Relationships are important to many Indigenous worldviews (Deloria, 1991; 2006). This traditional understanding of the world is a cyclical whole, whereby all things (including human, animals, elements,¹⁰⁰ and even future generations) have an inherent positive right to interact with and be responsible for each other and themselves¹⁰¹ (Cajete, 2000, 168).

In an Aboriginal sense, a curriculum includes all planned and unplanned learning that takes place within the larger community. This community encompasses relationships not only between individuals but also between all created things. Aboriginal learning is the change in thought or behaviour that modifies a person's capacities to understand not only the physical but also the metaphysical. The learning process should be and is total. It is a

⁹⁹ Eber Hampton (1993) proposed a model of Aboriginal education called *Indian Education sui generis* that would allow Natives to self-determine their education. Aboriginal Education *sui generis* is Aboriginal education as "a thing of its own kind." For Hampton the "creation of Native education involves the [multiple] development of Native methods and native structures for education as well as Native content and Native personnel."

¹⁰⁰ The community may be considered a type of living organism that grows and metamorphoses continually. It may be sick or healthy, but it must include all beings that come into contact with it, including past and future generations.

¹⁰¹ Native peoples view the world as complex, inter-connected in non-linear relationships (heterarchic), dynamic, unknowable (indeterminate), changing/moving in several simultaneous cycles (mutual causality), growing as a whole (morphogenesis), and consisting of many perspectives (Nichols, 1991; for an example of this dynamic interaction see Maye, Hsieh, Sugihara, and Brembs, 2007).

process of internalization and actualization within oneself in a total way. It is something that is felt. It is saying to your teacher once having reached the state of realization that you have learned something. “I hear and feel you at the same time” (Lightning, 1992).

2) Culturally Grafted Curricula with an Aboriginal Worldview

Culturally Grafted Curricula with an Aboriginal Worldview largely contains elements of Indigenous knowledge and traditions, i.e., all major elements are Aboriginal in origin and design. This type is cyclical in conception. Some Western content has been grafted onto the curriculum.

3) Hybrid Curricula

Hybrid curricula equally represent and contain equal elements of both the Western worldview and the Aboriginal worldview, with neither being predominant.

4) Culturally Grafted Curricula with a Western Worldview

Culturally Grafted Curricula with a Western Worldview is based on Western tradition. This type is linear in conception and contains major elements of Western culture. Some Aboriginal content has been grafted onto the curriculum. Other cultures are acknowledged to a certain degree.

5) Western Curricula

Western Curricula have stated and un-stated goals (hidden curriculum) to induct groups into the Western worldview with the final goal of ensuring political and economic integration. For a minority or ethnic group, this approach involves inculcating into them a different cosmology and worldview (Western) so that they may enjoy economic success.

Assimilation, often called *cultural assimilation*, can be an organic or mechanical process of integration whereby members of an ethno-cultural community (such as immigrants or ethnic minorities) are “absorbed” into another community both physically and spiritually. This community is often larger and controls much of the economic, media, and political apparatus of the nation-state. The absorbed group thus loses its characteristics, such as language, customs, culture, ethnicity, and self-identity. Assimilation may be organic/spontaneous, as is usually the case with immigrants, or forced, as is often the case with ethnic minorities in particular nation-states. It is often a combination of both. Aboriginals often consider themselves to be in a position of neo-colonialism, with the majority of Canadians deciding the internal processes and dynamics of Aboriginal communities (Hall, 2003, 514-5).

8.7 Types of Curricula in Aboriginal Education Conception

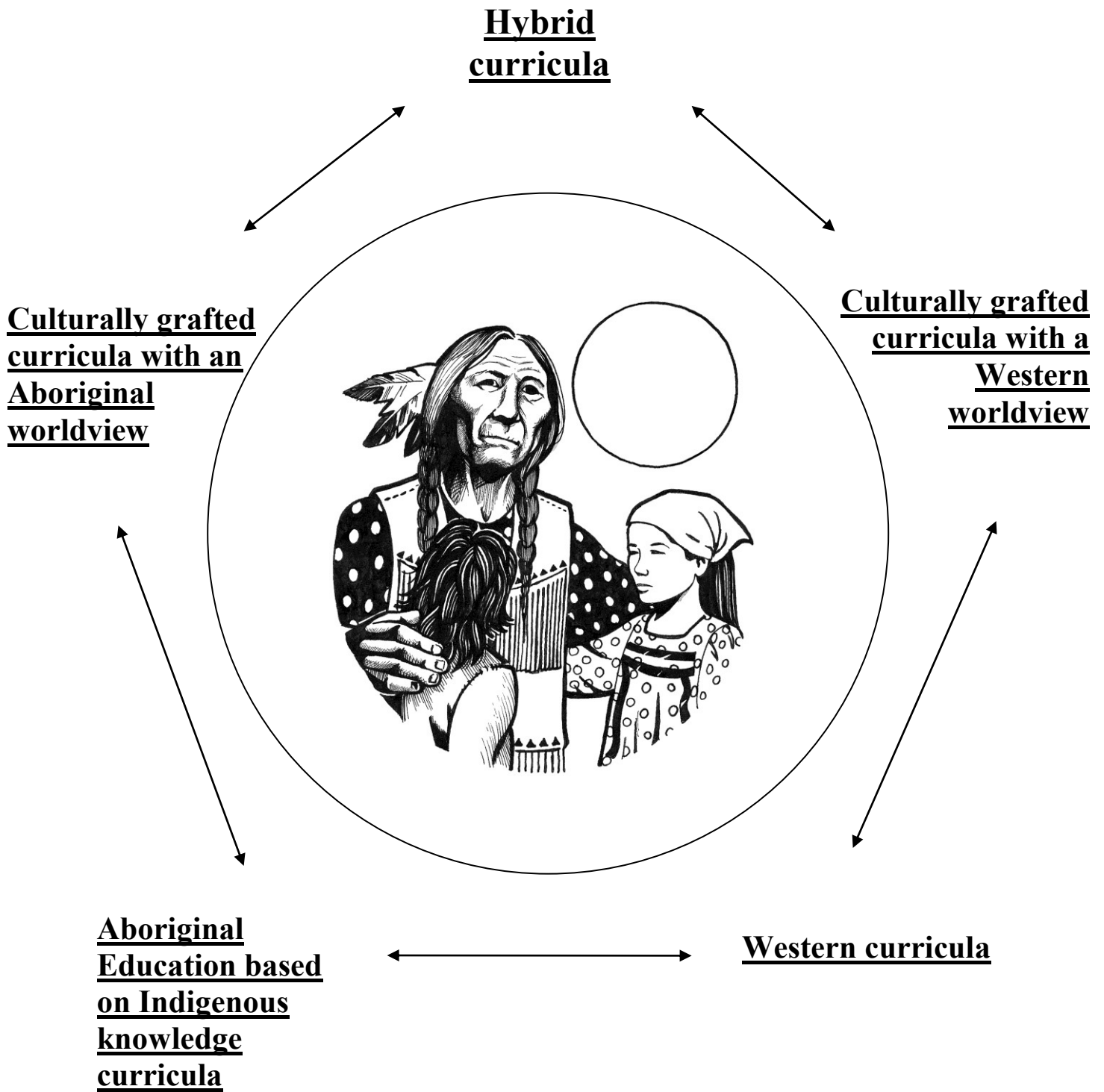


Figure 22
Aboriginal Curriculum Evaluation Model

Aboriginal Curriculum Questionnaire Results

An Aboriginal Curriculum Questionnaire was sent to over 630 Indian reserves across Canada. The questions are listed in Appendix V. Included with the questionnaire was a letter requesting curriculum guides and any information about the types of curriculum Aboriginal schools are using. Only two communities provided curriculum guides: Kitzigan Zibi and Pelican Rapids. I received only fifteen completed questionnaires and one response letter out of 631.

This response rate may indicate a general fatigue among Aboriginal educators with the amount of surveys and questionnaires that they are requested to fill out. Incredibly enough, one of the returned questionnaires was for another organization (in BC) and was accidentally sent to me. I can only imagine the amount of paperwork when you become confused about which questionnaire goes where and in what envelope. Another possible reason for the low response rate is that the questions were concerned generally about the Aboriginal philosophical content of the curriculum. There would be no reason to reply if the curriculum had no such content. Finally perhaps, the questionnaire may have been too long or complicated; even though two different sample responders had checked it out before it was sent. Finally, band schools must fill out and send back a large number of INAC reports on spending of allocated funds. Inevitably, there will be some fatigue.

Questionnaires were received from the Hesquiaht First Nation, Takla Lake First Nation, Opaskwayak Cree Nation, Walpole Island First Nation, Fort Providence, Michigeeng First Nation, Sucker Creek First Nation, Ta'an Kwach'an Council, Cold Lake First Nation, Duncan's First Nation, Seton Lake Band-Shalath, Wabigoonlaki Ojibwe Nation, Aundeck Omni Kaning, Keewaywin, and the community of Fort Laird.

A letter was also received explaining why one Aboriginal education authority (Kyah Wiget Education Society, BC) would not or could not respond. In general, the questionnaire was felt to be irrelevant at that time. "We are a northern British Columbia school. The elementary school uses the BC curriculum; teachers supplement with

aboriginal content. There is a language teacher who teaches Wet'suwet'en language and culture" (letter November 29, 2009). According to the BC provincial government website, incredibly enough the Wet'suwet'en language is not part of the approved BC curriculum programs (Section 4.4.8.5). The school has a provincially licensed daycare that receives funding for a federally compliant Headstart program. There is also an adult centre to help increase graduation rates. The letter finished with: "No specific curriculum has been developed; [though] the First Nations Steering Committee encourages this development and supports it with monies."

This letter indicates the types of curriculum being used in many Aboriginal schools. According to an interview with Guy Niquay (November 20, 2009), because education authorities must ensure transferability between the province and band schools, a general Aboriginal curriculum cannot easily be developed for all subjects. The community of Manawan has decided to let parents enrol their children in a 12-year program with bilingual/Aboriginal language education, instead of the usual 11-year program (specific to the province of Quebec). It still follows the provincial guidelines.

The Aboriginal education authorities were asked the question: "In your opinion what grades and subjects in your school(s) have an Aboriginal-based curriculum?" As can be seen, most authorities have schools from K-6, with a limited number offering high school. Although fifteen authorities responded, there is no consistent response across grade levels.

Number of Schools with an Aboriginal-Based Curriculum

1. In your opinion what grades and subjects in your school(s) have an Aboriginal-based curriculum?

(mark more than one)

	Math	Language Arts	Aboriginal Language	Social Studies	Native Studies	Physics	Biology	Chemistry	Sciences	Physical Education	Other
Kindergarten	3	5	7	3	6	0	0	0	1	2	3
Grade 1	1	2	11	2	4	0	0	0	1	1	3
Grade 2	1	2	11	2	4	0	0	0	1	1	3
Grade 3	1	2	11	2	4	0	0	0	1	1	3
Grade 4	0	0	11	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 5	0	0	11	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 6	0	0	11	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 7	0	0	10	1	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 8	0	0	7	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 9	0	0	7	1	1	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 10	0	0	4	2	3	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 11	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	1	2
Grade 12	0	0	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2

Aboriginal content varies from one authority to another. Some schools only offer a morning breakfast club with some Aboriginal culture (Duncan's First Nation, indicated in the section "other"). A number of schools only provide Aboriginal education at the kindergarten level. The reasons are twofold: one school has not received permission from the band council to implement Aboriginal curriculum throughout all elementary grades; there are not enough students in the higher grades. Generally, the schools provide Aboriginal language instruction, followed by Native Studies.

Unfortunately, we do not have any pedagogical material to forward to you. Our school follows the provincial curriculum and the homeroom teachers attempt to fulfill the learning outcomes as outlined by the province. All of the classroom teachers who are non-native informally integrate culture as much as possible into their lesson plans. Our school has a Mi'kmaq language teacher and she takes care of the native teaching materials. She does not follow a specific curriculum. She teaches the students language, native art and drumming.

Barbara Smith, John J. Sark Memorial School in Lennox Island PEI, 2009

One Manitoba school replied that they use only the Manitoba curriculum because there is “no Aboriginal curriculum in Manitoba.” Section 4.4.10 on Manitoba shows that at least six curricula have been made available to Aboriginal schools. Do these curricula adequately meet the needs of the Aboriginal community? At the school in question, fewer than 10% of the teachers are Aboriginal.

The most developed curricula were reported from the Fort Providence Schools and the Hesquiaht First Nations. The Hesquiaht taught Aboriginal language, social studies, and native studies from K- 7. Fort Providence had the greatest variety of subjects. Its curriculum is shown below.

Fort Providence Community Aboriginal-Based Curriculum

	Math	Language Arts	Aboriginal Language	Social Studies	Native Studies	Physics	Biology	Chemistry	Sciences	Physical Education	Other
Kindergarten	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Grade 1	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Grade 2	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Grade 3	1	1	1	1	1	0	0	0	1	1	1
Grade 4	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 5	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 6	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 7	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 8	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 9	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 10	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 11	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1	0
Grade 12	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0

Percentage of Aboriginal teachers in the schools (from all fifteen schools)

35. To the best of your knowledge, what is the percentage of teachers who are Aboriginals in your school(s)?

a)	3	0-10%
b)	1	11% - 20%
c)	1	21% - 30%
d)	3	31% - 40%
e)	2	41% - 50%
f)	0	51% - 60%
g)	1	61% - 70%
h)	0	71% - 80%
i)	2	81% - 90%
j)	2	91% - 100%
k)	1	no answer

The schools seem to vary considerably in the ethnicity of their teachers. Eight have less than 40% Aboriginal teachers, while three have over 80% (should be four schools, but one single-teacher school had an Aboriginal teacher at the kindergarten level). One school refused to answer because “we want good teachers not tokens.” Teacher training seems to be a means for many Aboriginals to gain access to a wide variety of jobs (Judy Côté, interview January 21, 2010). Côté mentioned that not all teachers undergoing teacher training really want to become teachers. Teacher training is a stepping-stone to greater things. The three high-ranking communities have obviously done something to attract Aboriginals into the teaching profession. There is no correlation between the type of program (Western or Aboriginal) and the percentage of Aboriginal teachers.

Types of Curriculum

Since the 1970s, many Aboriginal-based curricula have been developed. Success in decolonizing Aboriginal schools must be questioned in light of the responses to the following question.

16. In your opinion on a scale of 1 to 5 is the curriculum used by your school(s)? (see pages 2 to 3 for definitions).

	# of schools	Type of curriculum
1.	5	Assimilation Curriculum (provincial)
2.	7	Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western worldview
3.	4	Hybrid curriculum
4.	2	Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal worldview
5.	1	Traditional Aboriginal Education based on Indigenous knowledge curriculum
6.	1	refused to answer

The term ‘assimilation curriculum’ was changed to ‘Western curriculum’ after consultation with schools that felt the wording to be too negative. Only a very courageous principal would write that the curriculum serves assimilationist goals. Still five schools replied that they use an assimilation curriculum. Most of the curricula are either Western-based or Aboriginal-grafted. Very few have a true Aboriginal program.

Your questions are very biased and do not reflect the objectives of schooling that our children need. We want to get away from racism and stereotyping. We instil our culture for our children and pride in our heritage. The main objective of school is education, reduction of linear/biased thinking and preparation for higher education/workforce.

Duncan’s First Nation

The above authority has no specific Aboriginal-based curriculum. This is as it should be. Each community and people should have the ability and right to decide what type of education they and their children should receive.

Curriculum Reflecting Community Objectives

34. On a scale of 1 to 5, does your curriculum reflect the objectives of your community?

	# of schools	Type of curriculum
1.	4	Very much
2.	3	Much
3.	6	Somewhat
4.	3	Not much
5.	0	Not at all

This question indicates the agency that these Aboriginal communities feel they have over their educational programs. Nine communities replied *somewhat* or *not much*, a sign of dissatisfaction with the curriculum available in their schools. One authority indicated that its curriculum reflected community objectives only in the area of Aboriginal education. It did not say what the response would have been for the other areas.

Perhaps, as Gilbert Whiteduck suggested (interview January 15, 2010), we spend too much time talking. We need to put our words into action. Unfortunately, action often means filling out funding requests. Or calling for more study. At Université Laval, the new Aboriginal coordinator spent her first five months not working to increase Aboriginal enrolment, but filling out funding requests and restudying the problem (meeting March 30, 2010). Funding is certainly necessary, but there is often waste and inertia. The need is not for an expensive consultant, but for a coordinator who can get people together to develop an appropriate Aboriginal curriculum. Agency exists only in theory. Active participation is necessary to give it meaning and motion.

To conclude, here are a few revealing comments on the questionnaire.

As a First Nations Teacher I try to give the students the best of both worlds. They will have to live in and survive in the non-Aboriginal world, but I don't want them to lose their identity

Hesquiaht First Nation

I am an Aboriginal administrator who is attentive to the needs of my community and try to pay attention to the competing paradigms that exist in First Nation Schools. Acknowledging that we all leave our footprint on the land we occupy so our stories are changing to reflect two voices-what is privileged in the stories we tell.

Fort Providence

I would like to comment on our (my) education or learning that I received from my father, mother, grandparents, uncles, aunts and from my friends. I learned my language Ojibwes from my extended family members. No one spoke English and each word had/has a meaning tied/envisioned into each thing in Nature. All things were respected by my family. All rites were done for each activity. Hunting and killing animals-rites were done by my father for those that gave up their lives for us. Language was learned not in isolation, but as a living education/learning tool. Reflection was done as learning (storytelling).

Johnson Meekis, Keewaywin

Many of these comments show how much educators care about the education of their children. Language, land, relationships, jobs, and higher education are seen as being necessary. There is still debate about curricula and racial stereotyping. Some, like William Wuttunee (1971), advocate integration. Others consider Aboriginal knowledge to be more imperative. Generally, the two worldviews collide in education, and these schools are attempting to ensure a place for Aboriginal culture while giving students a chance to prepare themselves for a Western-dominated world.

Curriculum Evaluations

The primary sources are the provincial and territorial departments of education. Also a few curricula have been obtained from different Aboriginal education organizations and tribal councils across Canada and the United States. In addition, a letter was sent to each of the 631 individual reserves across Canada, requesting material with a short questionnaire on the types of curriculum they use. A very small number (nineteen) responded and almost none had a specific curriculum that they were able to share. Only whole samples of complete curricula from each region were to be evaluated.

There was no specific curriculum because most schools followed a provincial curriculum. They have developed home-made material, where Aboriginal content is grafted onto the regular provincial curriculum...Children need to be able to transfer between the schools of the province and the Manawan schools...They are not able to do that if they don't see the same material...We don't have the human resources to develop general school programs that can be used by our school and ensure they are compatible with the provincial system.

Guy Niquay, Principal of the Manawan School
Interview, November 20, 2009

Most of the curricula came from government and Aboriginal websites. This material was often very difficult to find, if not impossible. I cannot imagine a parent or a community member being able to find any within the labyrinth of these websites. One of the most important aspects for student success in education is parental involvement. If parents cannot even consult these documents, they become nothing more than passive bystanders. They lose their agency.

Generally, the following chapters (9-12) have been divided by region: West, Central, East, and North. When an Aboriginal group or nation developed the curriculum independently, it was still placed in the appropriate region. The Western provinces have also communally developed a number of curriculum guides that cross provincial boundaries. They were placed in the West chapter.

Each curriculum is outlined. It is also briefly analyzed according to the Philosophical Evaluation Framework. There are three extended evaluations on some of the most complete curricula that seem to have the most Aboriginal philosophical characteristics:

- a) Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs (Section 10.2.1);
- b) Dene Kede Curriculum (Section 14.4.2); and
- c) Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12 (Section 14.4.3).

Requests were sent to all Aboriginal reserves across Canada (631 letters), explaining the research and the need for curriculum material to evaluate. Unfortunately only 2 reserves responded with actual material. I would like to thank the Kitzigan Zibi and Pelican Rapids First Nations for their help. Many First Nations apparently refused because of fears for protection of copyright. Public institutions too, such as the Winnipeg School Board (responsible for Aboriginal survival schools), likewise refused for copyright reasons.

Chapter 9. Curriculum Evaluations, West

9.1 Saskatchewan

9.1.1 Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
6 Night Sky Unit	5.95	6.00	5.77	5.93
7 Teacher's Guide	6.24	6.43	6.31	6.29

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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This Aboriginal science curriculum guide supplements Western science programs at the high school level. It was designed principally by Aboriginals with teaching experience in elementary or high school. Elders were also consulted. The guide is meant to be flexible, and its units can be adjusted to fit local sensibilities and local Indigenous knowledge. Even though Mother Earth is mentioned a few times, the guide seems to have a very secular understanding of nature and does not develop the concept of Indigenous knowledge.

This document contains a wonderful assessment guide that can help one assess Aboriginal children while remaining culturally sensitive. For instance, it mentions that elders, though often highly involved with the curriculum in various communities, might not be comfortable in assessing the students. This reticence reflects the role that some elders see they have, versus the role that they see teachers as having.

The unit *Night Sky* (astronomy), created by the La Loche Community School for grades 8 to 11, sets forth the purpose, principal objectives, and secondary objectives:

PURPOSE: This unit is designed to enrich students' understanding and appreciation of Aboriginal science and Western science in the area often called astronomy, and to encourage students to continue their studies in school science in the future. The unit offers experiences for students to practice thinking in two worlds -- the world of Aboriginal

culture and the world of Western culture; thereby helping students feel more comfortable using ideas they may not believe themselves, but ideas they nevertheless can certainly understand and use to converse with others.

GOALS:

1. To develop confidence in interviewing elders, working independently, understanding Western science, and expressing personal ideas and beliefs.
2. To gain knowledge of both Aboriginal and Western science concepts about the night sky.
3. To appreciate the wealth of knowledge held by elders of different cultures.
4. To become familiar with technologies such as calendars, Internet, lenses, and telescopes.
5. To appreciate that the circle of life extends beyond the earth.
6. To answer students' common curiosities about the night sky.
7. To develop a habit of keeping up to date on current discoveries in the universe.
8. To get students to interact with their environment and their community.
9. To introduce students to career possibilities related to science and engineering.

The goals are followed by objectives. These objectives (nineteen) correspond to what should be taught in the classroom as actual knowledge, and the teacher is shown how to attain them by creating lesson plans. The curriculum walks a fine line between Western knowledge and Indigenous knowledge and the needs of various stakeholders, such as teachers, parents, children, and communities. Many parents want their children to be able to function in Western society and be successful while keeping a strong Aboriginal identification (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972).

http://www.usask.ca/education/ccstu/main_menu.html

9.1.2 Saskatchewan Native Studies 10-20-30 (Grades 10, 11, 12)

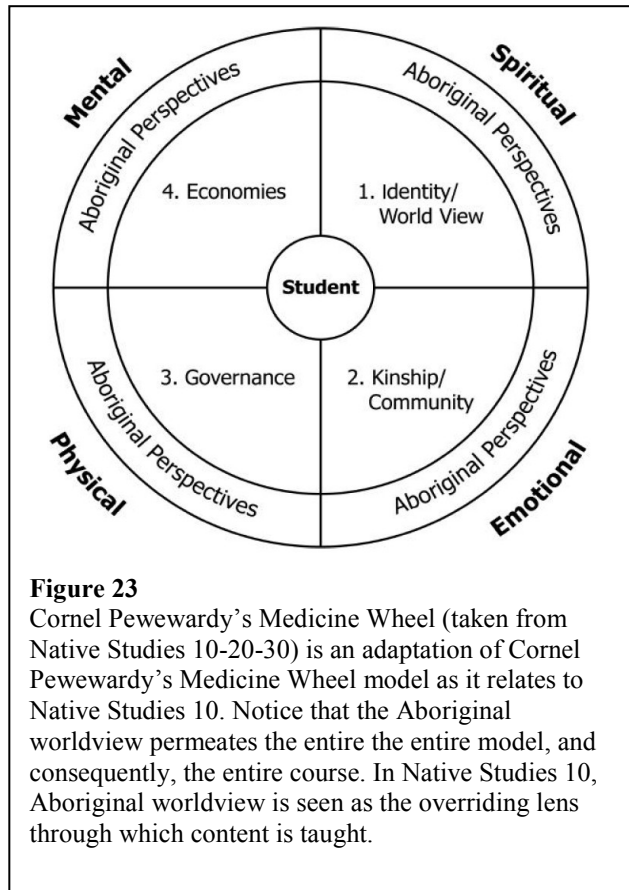
Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
5	6.38	7.57	6.69	6.68

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Saskatchewan Native Studies curriculum generally follows the Common Curriculum Framework for Cultural Programs. It is Aboriginally based with many Western components. A major weakness is a lack of metaphysical teachings. Non-Aboriginal teachers are not obliged to delve very deeply into the spiritual and metaphysical philosophy of Aboriginals. In a curriculum that supposedly represents the Aboriginal holistic worldview, allowing such a disconnect is inconceivable. An extremely interesting section covers the suggested types of evaluation. The evaluations have been developed to comply with Aboriginal philosophy (Saskatchewan Education, 2002).



In keeping with the nurturing philosophy of Native Studies 10, the assessment and evaluation of Native Studies students takes the developmental approach. Instead of telling students what they are not capable of, the developmental approach shows them how to get there. The sample rubrics, beginning on page 61 of this curriculum guide, illustrate developmental assessment. Development assessments can improve cognitive ability and enhance self-esteem.

Taken from Native Studies 10-20-30
 Saskatchewan Education, 2002

9.2 Western Canada Protocol — The Common Curriculum Framework

The Western Canada Protocol is a collaborative effort to develop curriculum frameworks for use in the Western provinces and for all subject areas. It is not limited to Aboriginals and is intended for the general population of the West. This process started in early 2000; in later years, Northern education authorities have joined. Northern education authorities are attracted to this process because each province takes the lead in developing a specific subject curriculum. Most curricula in the territories are based on those of Alberta and British Columbia. By joining in the process, they have become affected by provincial curriculum developments.

The process has run into some roadblocks because it covers such a large land area with so many jurisdictions and differing provincial policies. Each subject can end up with disparate philosophical aims. A prime example is the difference between social studies and mathematics. Social studies present a far more pluralistic worldview than does mathematics, which only offers a wholly linear and Western understanding of numbers. Out of the large number of curricula, I have chosen the ones that concern Aboriginal education authorities and show the variety of philosophies in the Western Canada Protocol.

9.2.1 Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
1	6.86	7.00	6.62	6.84

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 2000, Aboriginal groups represented by elders in Western Canada (Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta, British Columbia, the Yukon, and the Northwest Territories)

wrote a guide for curriculum development of Aboriginal languages and culture programs. *The Common Curriculum Framework* “sets us on a path of hope where the Aboriginal languages, once stilled, can now flourish. This document marks a turning point in the life and identity of Aboriginal peoples: it affirms that revitalizing our languages will brighten the hearts of our Elders, ignite the imaginations of our children, and help a new generation find its way to a full, responsible and healthful life once more” (Governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, and Saskatchewan, 2000, iii)

[The Framework] is intended to be a support document for schools or regions within the Western provinces and the territories wishing to develop curricula, learning resources or strategies dealing with Aboriginal languages. It is a framework that reflects the universal values and beliefs inherent in Aboriginal cultures. The outcomes provided are to be interpreted and specified by local developers based on the strength of their language, the availability of cultural resources and the expressed language goals of their community.

Taken from *The Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs: Kindergarten to Grade 12*.

Western Canadian Protocol for Collaboration in Basic Education, 2000, P 1

Over 65 elders and Aboriginal educators took part in developing the guide. Many were working in an official capacity in Aboriginal education. The framework outlines a variety of specific and general objectives for use by Aboriginal communities that are developing a local curriculum or wish to evaluate a curriculum already in use in two specific areas: language teaching (for both elementary and high schools) and cultural studies.

For elders and educators, language is key to maintaining culture. If language is taught as a purely “mechanical skill (such as phonics, grammar, vocabulary and spelling),” then language retention among Aboriginal youth will be low. If language is taught in conjunction with culture, it is felt that there will be a greater number of positive outcomes/objectives.

The framework sets forth three “laws of relationships: Laws of Sacred Life (including respect for oneself), Laws of Nature and Laws of Mutual Support... grounded in the belief that there is a sacred power greater than us, and in the following related principles:

- All parts of creation are interconnected and manifest in the spirit of the Creator.
- Humankind must live in respectful relationship with all that has been created.
- Spiritual forces are gifts intended to aid survival rather than threaten it.”

The framework has two simple yet very important aims and a number of general objectives. The objectives are supposed to correspond to various levels of linguistic and cultural vitality. While one community may have completely retained its language, another community may have lost it or be very close to losing. This is understandable because the curriculum guide covers different language retention situations. The principal goal is to preserve and strengthen Aboriginal languages and cultures, thus enabling students to gain a sense of agency in their lives and communities.

Language and Culture Program Aim		
<p>Language and culture programs developed from the <i>Framework</i> will have the aim of providing students with Aboriginal perspectives and skills (including language) that will help them to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • find balance within themselves to live peacefully and respectfully with themselves, one another and the land • play a role in revitalizing Aboriginal languages and cultures. 		
Program Goals		
<p>Cultural</p> <p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • participate in the practices and use of the products of their Aboriginal culture • understand the perspectives and underlying knowledge of their Aboriginal culture • willingly reflect on their 	<p>First Language</p> <p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use the Aboriginal language to interact with others in order to build relationships • learn from the words of their people • research and record cultural knowledge 	<p>Second Language</p> <p>Students will demonstrate the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • use language in community and school situations requiring interaction, production or interpretation of language • use strategies for learning a language

relationships with themselves, one another and the natural world.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • create and express effective Aboriginal text • explore their changing language. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • communicate with degrees of precision, coherency and fluency • use language to give and get information, socialize and celebrate, interpret and produce talk, and research culture.
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Taken from page 13 of *The Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture*

The guide writes about the importance of community support for a school-based language and cultural program, children’s success, and language maintenance and revitalization. Community stakeholders, such as parents, language teachers, and elders, have the most responsibility in ensuring community and school support.

The framework has been developed for six development levels/phases (grades).

Level 1: Kindergarten (or Early Childhood Services) to Grade 1

Level 2: Grade 2 and Grade 3

The cultural values and perspectives of the students’ extended families and their traditional territory are explored and experienced in greater depth.

Level 3: Grades 4 to 6

Level 4: Grade 7 and Grade 8

Levels 5 and 6: Grades 9 to 12

a) Cultural Objectives

The Framework outlines a number of objectives for cultural learning. Each objective has three theme areas: Cultural Understandings, Cultural Skills, and Personal Development.

1. Laws of Sacred Life—Respectful Relationship with Oneself

1.1 Gift of Physical Self

- Cultural Understandings
- Cultural Skills
- Personal Development

1.2 Gifts that Enable Learning

- 1.3 Gift of Talent
- 2. **Laws of Nature** —Respectful Relationships with Nature
 - 2.1 Sustenance
 - 2.2 Sense of Place
 - 2.3 Harmony
- 3. **Laws of Mutual Support**—Respectful Relationships with One Another
 - 3.1 Identity
 - 3.2 Leadership

For instance, in Level 2 (Grades 2-3), the Laws of Sacred Life, with the variables of Gift of Physical Self: Cultural Understandings, give the following desired outcomes:

People in our families practise cultural ways of caring for their physical selves.

Concepts and Related Content: healthy choices; self-respect; land foods; cleanliness; grooming; fitness; appropriate clothing; family practices

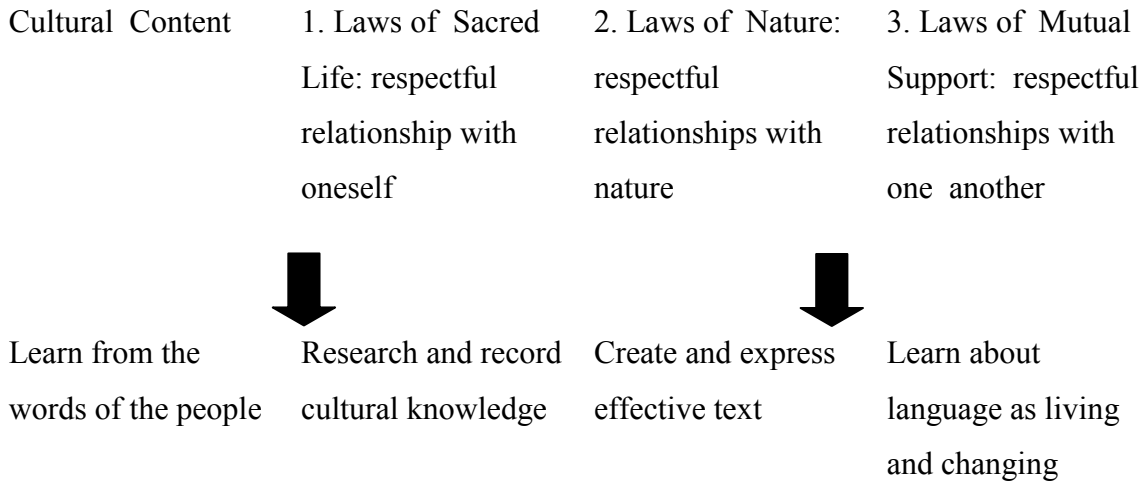
Students will demonstrate understanding of:

- caring for one’s body as a form of self-respect
- land/cultural foods that are healthy food choices
- cleanliness and grooming as a way to show respect to ourselves/others
- increasing responsibilities and opportunities associated with increasing physical growth and development
- cultural activities and recreation that promote fitness
- health value of outdoor activities
- cultural clothing appropriate for seasons and weather
- family practices that mark birth and death.

b) Aboriginal Language as a First Language

The outcomes and objectives must be drawn from cultural learning experiences. An Aboriginal holistic philosophy would also have cultural experience being influenced by language. The following table is from the curriculum itself. Unfortunately, the diagram is fairly difficult to understand. The three laws influence the four sections on the bottom row equally and are not confined to their respective columns.

First Language Outcomes

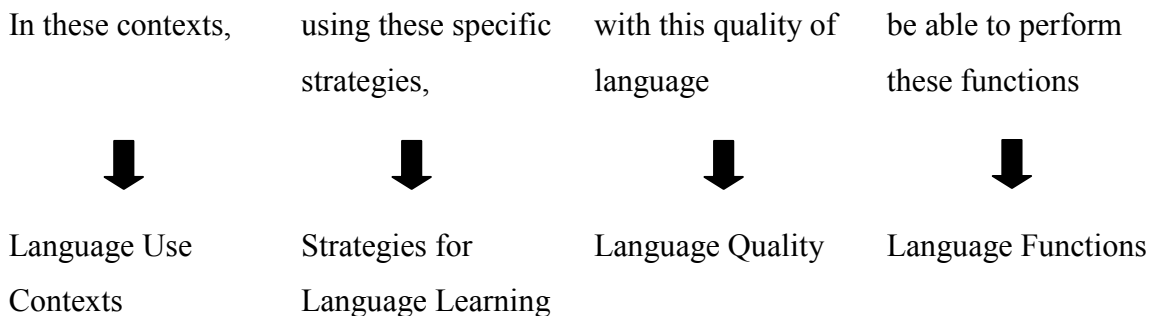


c) Aboriginal Language as a Second Language

The main goal here is to communicate proficiently in an Aboriginal language as a second language. One must be able to use it in a variety of contexts. The criteria have been widely used for second language development, but the objectives/outcomes have incorporated values held by Aboriginals towards language. It was once again pointed out to me, by teacher Catherine Cantin (personal communication, February 23, 2010), that this diagram was not clear

Second Language Outcomes

At a particular level of proficiency, students will:



As an example: At a particular level of proficiency, students will be able to perform these tasks:

- Giving and getting information
- Socializing and celebrating
- Interpreting discourse
- Researching
- Producing discourse.

As an example, in Level 5 (Gr. 9–10) the Strategies for Language Learning give the following desired outcomes:

Students will demonstrate a willingness to apply the following strategies in their language learning:

- deciding in advance what to listen for
- distinguishing relevant information from irrelevant information when trying to get the gist of a speech or difficult conversation
- using grammatical knowledge to correct errors or to improve their language
- using reference materials and speakers to help in clarifying a message
- seeking opportunities to use or hear the language
- voluntarily initiating or ending a conversation
- making personal notes when hearing useful language

The framework, being a guide, offers advice on a number of points. One interesting piece of advice is that the teaching of an Aboriginal language in other subjects may actually jeopardize its preservation. If much needed resources are monopolized in subjects such as math and social studies, any real concentrated attempt at language preservation will be extremely difficult.

This position does not preclude combining use of English and an Aboriginal language in a classroom setting. These partial immersion programs should have Aboriginal culture as a basis in all subjects, and not just in subjects such as culture or language arts.

d) Assessing Student Progress

Progress should be measured by assessing personal development outcomes and not cultural understandings or skills. The framework is against using empirical and normative testing, which is “inconsistent with the holistic nature of Aboriginal culture and language programs.”

The Framework gives suggestions on how to develop assessment tools.

- base student assessment on individual progress according to the continuum of learning provided in the outcomes sections of the *Framework*, particularly in the area of personal development
- involve the Elders in developing authentic means of assessing student progress
- tie student progress in language ability to their use of language in social and cultural activity
- develop descriptive tools, such as rubrics, to provide “pictures” of how student integration of culture and language use might look at the different levels
- assess student progress continuously, rather than only as the summation of a unit of study
- involve students in the assessment of their own learning
- share the results of assessments in a holistic manner, rather than as a mark or letter grade alone
- use the data from student assessments to continuously evaluate and enhance the program.

Analysis

The *Aboriginal Philosophical Questions Framework* led me to make the following observations. It is Aboriginal in vision with grafted Western elements. Aboriginal tradition and knowledge, if the curriculum is followed properly, play an important role. Spirituality is likewise very important. It is mentioned over 113 times, and very strong Aboriginal values are present throughout. Without being stated overtly, it is assumed that knowledgeable Aboriginal teachers and specialists should be involved. To what extent is this assumption realistic, given the often high turnover rate among teachers in Aboriginal communities? The curriculum could also provide lesson plans with specific examples for the teacher’s use, the aim here being not to dictate everything that should be taught, but to offer a starting point for what might be feasible in the classroom with elders. While local knowledge should be favoured, it may be useful to show examples of what is being done elsewhere.

The land plays an important role in the curriculum, but what about urban Aboriginal youth who may have no contact with the land? This important issue is not addressed, at least not overtly, with the result that the curriculum may perpetuate an unfounded characterization of Aboriginal peoples. The idea of the land certainly matters politically, but we need to know how it plays out with urban youth. We may be forcing an unrealistic ideal on them. They may feel inadequate because they cannot access a specific land area. Ironically, in the 1960s Aboriginals felt inadequate because they could not conform to the urban Western ideal.

Place and relationships are given an extremely important role. The curriculum is generally cyclical in design. There is one major problem: the lack of diagrams makes the curriculum difficult to follow. I have not created such diagrams here so that the reader may understand how others experience this problem.

Elders play a major role from curriculum design to teaching. According to James Carpenter, a Mushkegowek Cree elder, elders are waiting for the youth to come to them for knowledge, not just traditional knowledge, but simply knowledge. Elders are humble and will not force knowledge upon those who do not request it, but will wait for the youth to come. Curriculum-makers have gone to elders for knowledge to strengthen non-traditional concepts and institutional forms. (Carpenter, 1999, 227). Parents are offered an opportunity to be involved throughout the curriculum in the teaching of their children. Students are also very involved, and not just as passive receivers. The community is even more involved than are parents and elders, although this is less true for the greater community. This is one of the most difficult aspects, and the process may become almost entirely philosophical. Nonetheless, the lack of specific directives does give the teacher much leeway to adapt the curriculum to specific situations.

In general, the subject matter is treated holistically. Unfortunately, the curriculum only deals with language and culture. It would be more in keeping with a holistic Aboriginal philosophy, which its authors clearly espouse, if more subjects were dealt with. One major weakness of such language and culture curricula is the lack of carryover into other

subjects. As we shall see later, (in Section 4.4.3.2) math and science cannot easily be made compliant with Indigenous knowledge. Students probably have trouble grasping how Aboriginal culture can apply elsewhere in their lives. The resulting break in understanding runs counter to the holistic philosophy of these Aboriginal scholars. They are telling students that Aboriginal culture is important only in certain situations and does not apply everywhere.

Can such language and culture programs halt the decline in use and understanding of Aboriginal language and culture? How useful are they in the long term? Perhaps this effort is a losing battle that can never be won; perhaps we are attempting to recreate a past that can never be truly re-created as it once was. Perhaps we need to create a new future.

Aboriginals are attracted to the idea of the authentic Aboriginal. According to Linda Sioui, Aboriginal scholar and Wendat George Sioui felt that the Wendat should not use a “dead” language; they should instead use another Aboriginal language like Innu, which could be learned faster with a greater chance of success (Personal communication, Linda Sioui, December 3, 2009). The idea seems wrong emotionally, but intellectually it is attractive, if only because of the saving in resources and efforts.

Language and culture programs are a long-term project. They are nonetheless valuable to the psyche and well-being of Aboriginals. They are important in re-creating Aboriginal cultures, although this project would have greater success if a large-scale and holistic curriculum were created not only for reserve communities, but also for communities and students in urban situations—and not just survival schools, but also regular schools as well. It is also necessary to include Métis students, who too often are ignored. They too would see the value of such an education (CCL, 2006b). By ignoring the plurality of Aboriginal groups, we may be forcing a Western paradigm onto Aboriginal philosophy. Either you are 100% Aboriginal or you are non-Aboriginal.

We have a litany of what we have viewed as the one item that will save our languages. This one item is quickly replaced by another. For instance, some of us said, “Let’s get our

languages into written form” and we did and still our Native American languages kept on dying. Then we said, “Let’s develop culturally relevant materials” and we did, and still our languages kept on dying. Then we said, “Let’s use language masters to teach our languages” and we did and still our languages kept on dying. Let’s put our language speakers on CD-ROM. Finally someone will say let’s flash freeze our remaining speakers.

Richard E. Littlebear from Cantoni, 1996, p. xii

9.2.2 Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
2	1.43	6.43	6.15	3.37

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The *Aboriginal Languages and Culture Common Curriculum Framework* provided me with an idea of what the Common Curriculum would be for K-9 Mathematics. I was fairly surprised that the curriculum was so assimilative in nature. Aboriginals are only mentioned on half a page ($\frac{1}{2}$ page out of 172), and the mention takes a reductionist view of their educational needs.

Aboriginal students often have a whole-world view of the environment in which they live and learn best in a holistic way. This means that students look for connections in learning and learn best when mathematics is contextualized and not taught as discrete components.

Learning takes place through active participation. Traditionally, little emphasis was placed upon the written word. Oral communication along with practical applications and experiences are important to student learning and understanding. It is also vital that teachers understand and respond to non-verbal cues so that student learning and mathematical understanding are optimized.

A variety of teaching and assessment strategies is required to build upon the diverse knowledge, cultures, communication styles, skills, attitudes, experiences and learning styles of students. The strategies used must go beyond the incidental inclusion of topics and objects unique to a culture or region, and strive to achieve higher levels of multicultural education.

Aboriginal Perspectives, page 3

The Common Curriculum Framework for K-9 Mathematics, 2006.

Aboriginals are not looking for a multicultural education. In fact, many wish to take pride in their culture and Indigenous knowledge while learning about Western culture and philosophy. The curriculum simply mentions some of the educational issues faced by Aboriginals, but offers no means to go about addressing the issues in a concise and reductionist manner. Will most teachers even look at this half-page before going on to the curriculum's principal and specific objectives?

The curriculum in no way meets the needs of Aboriginal students, as outlined in the *Aboriginal Perspectives* section. The material is not related to practical and applicable experiences. It is very cerebral with little understanding of the realities of Aboriginal peoples and their worldview.

The curriculum shows the divergence between Western science and Indigenous knowledge about the whole (total view) and the specific (individual parts). It states that "patterns exist in all strands and it is important that connections are made among strands. Working with patterns enables students to make connections within and beyond mathematics." There is no mention that students need to have a general understanding and respect for the specificity of an element. Western science often attempts to force patterns of being onto unrelated areas, thereby creating unforeseen consequences.

The curriculum uses a very linear model, and students are treated as linear learners. Simple facts give way to more complex facts as the grade levels progress. Yet students vary in their abilities: some may learn certain areas of mathematics more quickly and others more slowly. At the same time, the curriculum is so prescriptive as to leave no leeway for Aboriginal teachers to develop useful material for their students while still respecting the curriculum guide.

The curriculum has no overall vision, i.e., how mathematics can work with science, language arts, culture, social studies, and so on. It has been created in isolation with little connection to actual life experience and the larger community.

The curriculum does not call for the involvement of parents, community members, the land, place and, especially, elders. These stakeholders are simply ignored. It was most likely written by a specific group of mathematic professionals who would have difficulty in understanding the relevance of the Aboriginal worldview and its usefulness in the classroom.

9.2.3 Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Social Studies

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
3	4.95	7.57	5.54	5.59

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Social Studies Common Curriculum Framework was developed in 2002 as a “collaborative process intended to reflect the diversity of voices in Canada. This collaboration is unprecedented in the inclusion of Aboriginal and francophone representatives as full and equal partners throughout the process... Consultations on the document have taken place in English, French, and Aboriginal languages” (Governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories, Nunavut Territory and Saskatchewan, 2002, 1). The consultants for the document were not elders, but Aboriginal education specialists. The vision is that students must be “reflective of the diverse cultural perspectives, including Aboriginal and francophone that contribute to Canada’s evolving realities. The framework will ultimately contribute to a Canadian spirit—a spirit that will be fundamental in creating a sense of belonging for each one of our students as he or she engages in active and responsible citizenship locally, nationally, and globally” (2002, 3). The social studies curriculum tries to walk a fine line between a Canadian sense of citizenship (the dominant Anglo-Saxon worldview) and the worldview of Aboriginals and other minorities.

The framework allows Distinctive Learning Outcomes for Aboriginal students in “educational settings that include locally-controlled First Nations schools, Aboriginal-controlled schools in off-reserve or urban settings, or where the school or school division/district has agreed that the Distinctive Learning Outcomes be taught” (2002, 17).

The social studies curriculum has a multifaceted role to “appreciate and respect diverse Canadian cultural perspectives, including Aboriginal and francophone, and understand how these perspectives have shaped Canada’s political and cultural realities” and at the same time “value the diversity, respect the dignity, and support the equality of all human beings” (2002, 7).

The curriculum has managed to incorporate many Aboriginal values. For instance the stated values of social studies are:

- Positive values and attitudes with respect to others are grounded in respect for the value and dignity of all human beings. This is reflected in a concern for quality of life and a willingness to understand and respect diversity in individuals, groups, cultures, communities, and societies. Appreciating human diversity implies a critical consideration of one’s own and others’ perspectives. Such a consideration involves acknowledging the limitations of personal perspectives in understanding the world.
- Positive values and attitudes about learning involve curiosity and interest with respect to social studies questions and a sense of wonder regarding the human and natural environments.
- An appreciation of the dependence of human beings upon nature, and respect for the natural environment are also important values in social studies learning. An attitude of stewardship for the land implies a willingness to adapt one’s

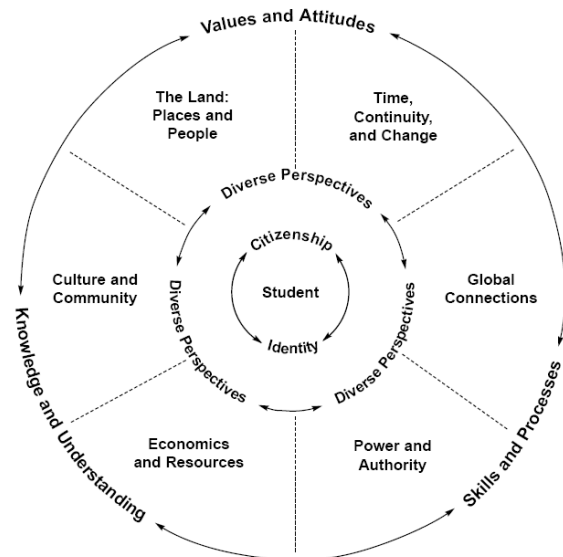


Figure 24
General Learning Outcomes Western Social Studies

lifestyle in order to contribute to the well-being of the environment. An awareness of the impact of human societies and activities on the environment enables students to make decisions that reflect concern for present and future quality of life.

The General Learning Outcomes [Objectives] are referred to by the following headings:

- Culture and Community
- The Land: Places and People
- Time, Continuity, and Change
- Global Connections
- Power and Authority
- Economics and Resources

We will review only a few of the curriculum's overall objectives. Under the objective of Culture and Community, "students will explore the influences of culture and community on individuals and societies."

Culture and community play an important role in the development of citizenship and identity... including shared values, beliefs, traditions, and language. Students will explore the concepts, symbols, and expressions of their own and others' cultural, linguistic, and social communities. They will enhance their understanding of diverse perspectives through an exploration of the ways in which people live together in cultures, groups, communities, and societies... Learning outcomes will include concepts such as human interaction, interdependence, and cultural diversity.

Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies, 2002, p 20

Under the objective of The Land: Places and People, "students will explore the dynamic relationships of people with the land, places, and environments."

People exist in dynamic relationships with the land. An exploration of people's relationships with places and environments enables students to understand human dependence and human impact upon the natural environment. Students will explore diverse ways in which spatial and physical characteristics of the

environment affect human life, cultures, and societies. They will consider how connections to the land influence their identities and define their roles and responsibilities as citizens, locally, nationally, and globally. Learning outcomes will focus on geographic understanding and skills, and will include concepts such as the relationship between people and the land, sustainability, and stewardship.

Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies, 2002, p 20

Under the objective of Time, Continuity, and Change, “students will explore how people, relationships, events, and ideas of the past shape the present and influence the future.”

The past shapes who we are... Students will develop historical consciousness through a consideration of people, relationships, events, ideas, stories, and historical interpretations. They will reflect upon diverse perspectives, parallel accounts, oral and social histories, and personal narratives through historical inquiry... Learning outcomes will focus on historical thinking, and will include concepts such as progress, decline, continuity, causality, and change.

Common Curriculum Framework for Social Studies, 2002, p 20

The *Social Studies Curriculum Framework* has a number of strong points, such as the latitude given to teachers to adapt the curriculum to their locality. Its design also embraces many Aboriginal ideas, such as the medicine wheel and the non-linear interconnection of many objectives. Also the general objectives of Culture, Community, Land, Places, People, Time, Continuity, Change, Global Connections, Power, Authority, Economics and Resources have all been addressed in some way, as has decolonization of education in many respects.

There are a number of weak points, however: lack of materials on the Indigenous worldview, including definitions; lack of resource materials for the teacher and information on where to obtain them; and no mention of religion or spirituality (How can the study of the human condition ignore such an important element?). Finally, there is the place of elders, parents, children, and community in the curriculum. Oral history is

mentioned, but not elders. Any true understanding of Indigenous culture must tap into the knowledge held by elders.

The curriculum is recommended for Aboriginal communities as a hybrid curriculum that could be further adapted to local conditions.

9.2.4 Common Curriculum Framework K-12, English Language Arts

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
4	1.76	6.43	4.31	3.20

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The *English Language Arts Common Curriculum Framework* was developed in 1998 to provide clear learning outcomes and standards and to prepare students for present and future language requirements. The “ability to use language effectively enhances students’ opportunities to experience personal satisfaction and to become responsible, contributing citizens and lifelong learners” (Governments of Alberta, British Columbia, Manitoba, Yukon Territory, Northwest Territories and Saskatchewan, 1998, vii).

This curriculum is very Western in outlook, understanding, and design. It is not even known whether any Aboriginal people were consulted during its preparation. Aboriginals are mentioned only once, on page 98 in the Grade 12 objectives, as seen below:

Connect Self, Texts, and Culture

Experience texts from a variety of genres and cultural traditions; examine and analyze various interpretations of texts to revise or extend understanding:

- experience genres [such as **Aboriginal literature, oral and written histories and songs, dramatic monologues, international films**] from a variety of historical and cultural traditions;

- examine various interpretations of texts to revise or extend understanding
- experience texts [such as debates, oral and written historical accounts, editorials] from a variety of perspectives, disciplines, and cultural traditions; analyze various interpretations of texts to revise or confirm understanding of ideas and information.

English Language Arts Common Curriculum Framework, 1998, 27

Of greater interest is the use of cyclical and linear concepts of learning. The first diagram describes the general objectives using a cyclical design, but it later takes a very Western linear approach. Further into the curriculum guide, elements from a cyclical model are added, followed by even more later on. Yet the outlook remains very Western, thus making the curriculum unsuitable, perhaps, for many Aboriginal communities and students.

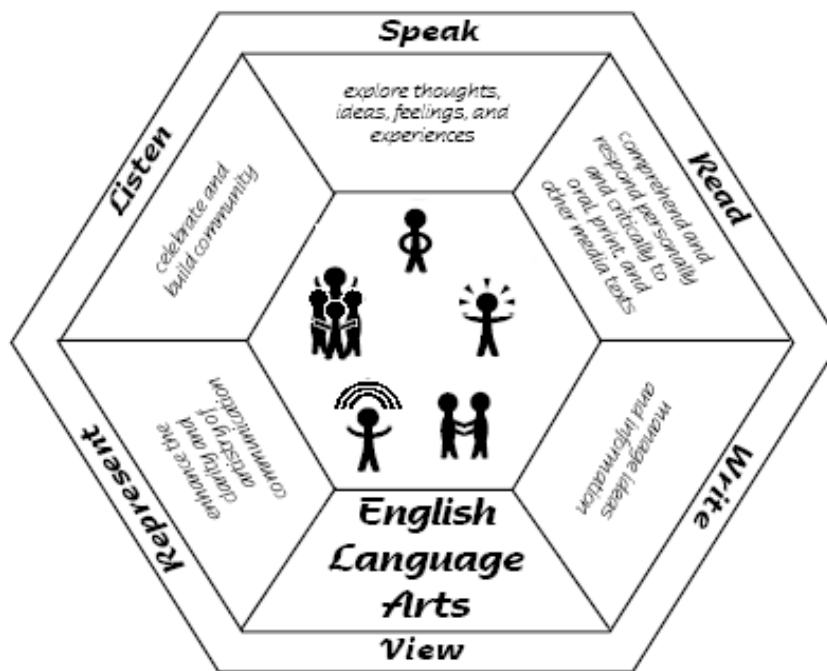


Figure 11
Organizational Framework

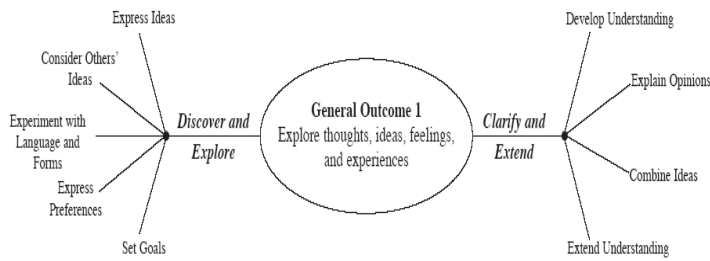


Figure 12
General Outcomes 1 for K-12

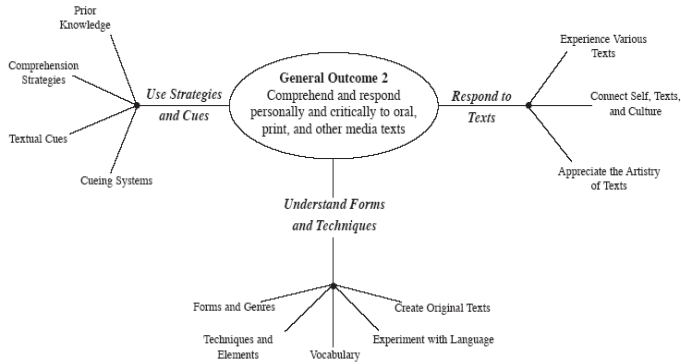


Figure 13
General Outcome 2 for K-12

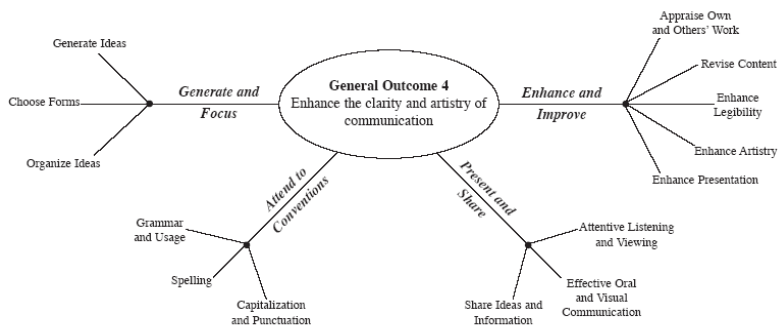


Figure 28
General Outcome 4 for K-12

9.3 Carrier Sekani Tribal Council – Dakelh Curriculum Development

In British Columbia, the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council (CSTC) represents seven First Nations communities on a territory the size of Ireland. The First Nations making up the CSTC are the Burns Lake Band (Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation), the Nak'azdli Band, the Nadleh Whut'en, the Saik'uz First Nation, the Stellat'en First Nation, the Takla Lake First Nation, the Tl'azt'en Nation, and the Wet'suwet'en First Nation. There are two language groups within the CSTC: the Carrier and the Sekani. They refer to themselves as the Yinka Whet'enne (People of the land) or the Daklh (people who travel upon water) (Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, 2007). In 2005, the CSTC wrote a proposal to have the provincial government create an Aboriginal school within the city limits of Prince George. This proposal has so far been rejected due to budget considerations.

9.3.1 Our Way of Doing Things

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
8	7.29	6.71	6.23	6.96

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations have been pushing ahead with curriculum development and have developed two documents for use by their own community schools and by other schools of the Daklh people. The documents are a framework for a First Nations Studies Program at the high school level called *Our Way of Doing Things* (2004) and a lesson plan for the Carrier and Sekani culture at multiple grade levels (Grades 8 to 12).

The guiding principles are general in nature and stress involvement by elders and students, as well as the importance of cultural teaching and learning. Learning is not an

end in itself but a “journey of gaining knowledge rather than knowledge itself”
(Nak’azdli First Nation and Tl’azt’en Nation, 2004, 2).

Guiding Principles

- Cultural teaching & cultural learning is characterized as a dynamic process of "coming to knowing"
- Cultural teaching & cultural learning requires meaningful connections between the students and the community
- Elders and other Knowledge holders are required in various aspects of cultural teaching
- Cultural learning requires adequate time-frame to follow the proper stages of acquiring and mastering cultural skills
- First Nation students require opportunities for self-creation and self-expression as they develop and define their cultural identity
- "Formative Assessment" principles make the students accountable and responsible for their learning and their progress

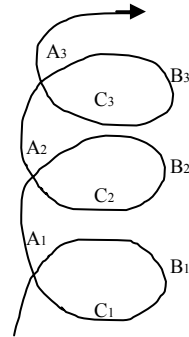
Hoonli neh'gun'ah'u'tsuh'ten Our Way of Doing Things, 2004, page 3

The curriculum then presents the subjects that matter for Carrier and Sekani culture. Each successive grade has the same ones with an increasing level of complexity. Each subject unit has cultural objectives that are broken down into three elements: cultural understandings; cultural skills; and personal development.

Subject Units

1. Hoowhatsuhunr: Survival
subsistence actives; subsistence technology
2. Bahlats: Governance
Clan system; regalia; songs; governance; bahlats
3. Keyoh: Where we make our living
cultural geography; land use; mapping project; colonial history; resource management; environmental health
4. Ne n'a dune: Our relations
traditional family relationships; cultural history; community history project; issues of heritage & cultural identity; community health
5. Hqqnli nez nah'ka'e: Things we sew
Hide work; beading; jewellery; Kist'ai (baskets); bone tools; fashion

There is unfortunately a lack of evaluation tools that may be used. Assessment is to be done by the students, but there is very little indication as to how. There is also a lack of spiritual awareness in the curriculum. Spirituality is mentioned at the beginning, but not much throughout. It is almost assumed that the elders and knowledgeable community members who will be teaching the curriculum will naturally include traditional Carrier and Sekani spirituality in the ceremonies and learning that the students will experience.



Spiral of Bruner

The curriculum does not state directly whether a linear or cyclical approach is to be taken. Since the curriculum is written with the same subject units recurring throughout all grade levels, but with greater complexity, the approach seems to be the Bruner Spiral model of education.

9.3.2 The Carrier of Long Ago and the Prince George School District

The Prince George School District is in the heart of the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council territories. In 1992, this district developed under the guidance of Laurel Bond and Sandra Russell the first curriculum guide for the Carrier and Sekani cultures. It takes the form of lesson plans that the teachers may use and elaborate on. Unfortunately, it is not very precise in its objectives. Although it may be used for consultation and as a resource for potential lesson plans, it has largely been superseded by the *Our Way of Doing Things* curriculum. It can be found on the CSTC website under the education section (Bond & Russell, 1992).

www.cstc.bc.ca/cstc/85/education

9.4 Alberta

9.4.1 Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30 (grades 10, 11, 12)

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
10	5.00	6.29	5.31	5.32

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Alberta Aboriginal Studies 10, 20, and 30 was supposedly developed in accordance with the *Western Common Curriculum Framework*. Unfortunately, this curriculum, though supposedly offering the Indigenous worldview, is more Western in construct than Aboriginal. There is much pedagogical material on the history and conditions of Aboriginal peoples, but the approach is almost completely Western. Aboriginals may have developed the curriculum, but they most certainly did not include elders, knowledgeable members of Indigenous communities, parents, and even students. Only lip service is paid to the idea of involvement by elders and by other respected members of Indigenous communities. The favoured teaching style also seems to be very classroom/lecture-oriented. The latest research on Aboriginal learning styles appears to have been ignored.

The Alberta general curriculum guide for parents offers a cyclical overview of the way the general education program has been designed for all subjects. Unfortunately, *Aboriginal Studies* is not even mentioned in the optional courses, let alone the compulsory ones. The design seems to be very linear, moving from subjects of less complexity to subjects of related greater complexity.

Each grade level has four themes: (Grade 10) Origin and Settlement Patterns, Aboriginal Worldviews, Political and Economic Organization, Aboriginal Symbolism and Expression; (Grade 11) The Métis: Conflict and Cultural Change, Treaties and Cultural

Change, Legislation, Policies and Cultural Change, Schooling and Cultural Change; and (Grade 12) Aboriginal Rights and Self-government, Aboriginal Land Claims, Aboriginal Peoples in Canadian Society, Aboriginal World Issues (Alberta Learning, 2002, 2-3).

Also almost completely missing is any spiritual aspect. If a curriculum is supposed to present an Indigenous holistic worldview, how can it do so without addressing the metaphysical? Non-Aboriginals will assume that Aboriginal culture is secular in nature, and Aboriginal students will not see themselves reflected in the curriculum and their education. The *Common Curriculum Framework*, which involved elders and other knowledgeable members of Aboriginal communities in its development, held Indigenous spiritual beliefs in far higher regard. Were the authors of this curriculum afraid that such beliefs would make them look “not serious”?

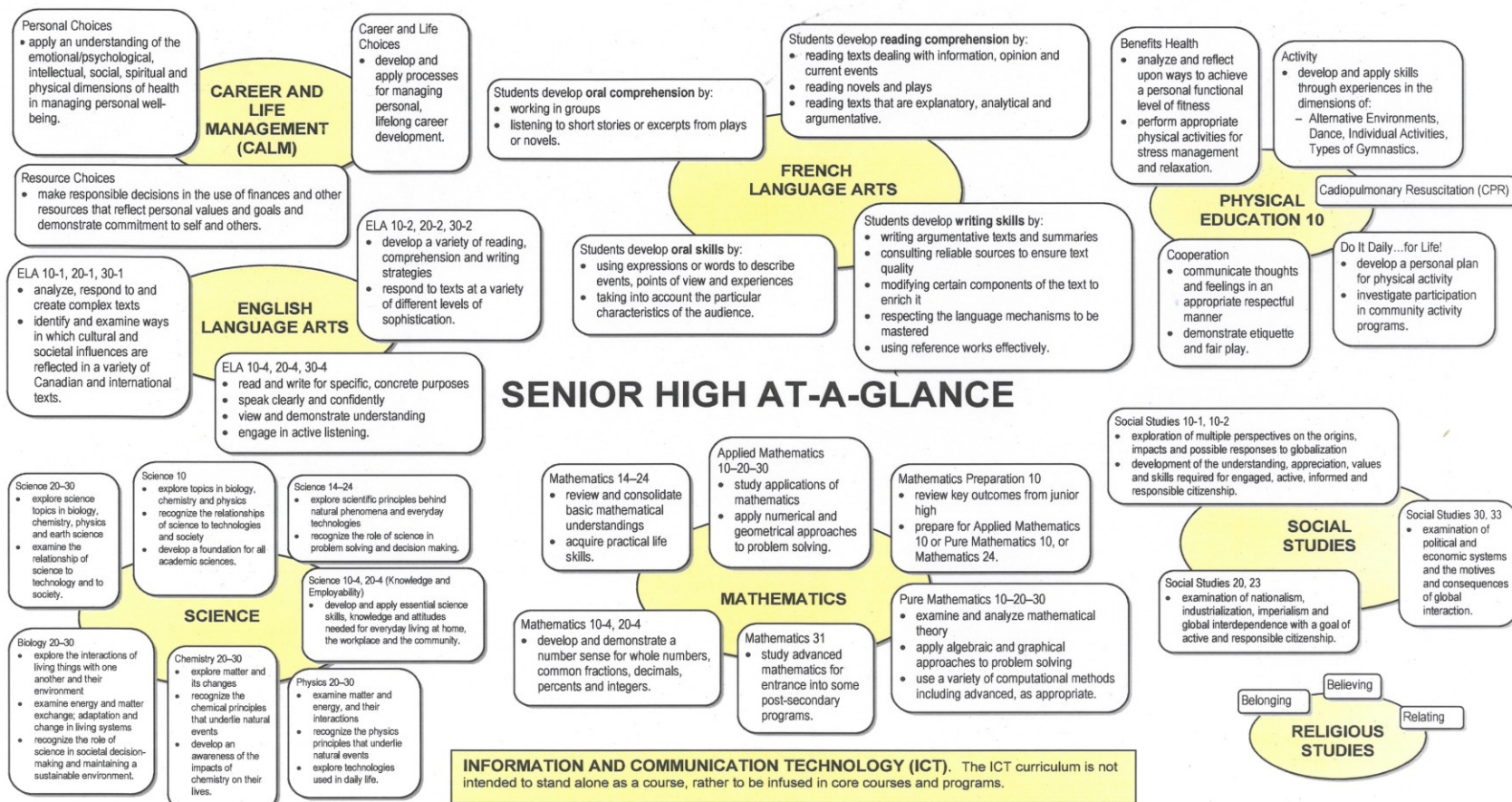


Figure 14

Alberta High School Vision

See <http://education.alberta.ca/media/446124/SrHighfrBro.pdf> for a more detailed version

9.4.2 9 year Cree Language Program (Grades 4-12)

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
11	5.71	7.14	6.23	6.10

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Alberta has developed a Cree curriculum whose objectives and major components can be found in several documents. The most important ones are the *Cree Benchmarks Grades 6, 9, 12 Nine-year Language and Culture Program* and the *Cree Language and Culture Nine-year Program Classroom Assessment Materials*. The curriculum is intended for non-speakers of Cree, starts in Grade 3, and ends in Grade 12, thus making for a nine-year program. It was designed by Aboriginal educators. The introduction mentions multiple groups (stakeholders) who should be involved in implementing the curriculum, such as parents, elders, community members if possible, and students. According to the extensive assessment guide, the curriculum should be seen holistically, although this specific point was very difficult to locate.

There are four general desired outcomes at the end of three separate, three-year cycles. Assessment occurs in Grades 6, 9, and 12 in the following areas:

General Outcomes for grade 6:

- Students will use and apply Cree in various situations and for different purposes at home, in school and in the community.
- Students will be effective, competent and comfortable as Cree speakers. (*Okiskinamawâkanak ka/ta nihtâ nehiyawewak.*)
- Students will live (*wa*)*wetina(hk)* (peacefully) with *Kikâwînow Askîy* (Mother Earth), others and themselves, guided by *Omâmawi Ohtâwîmâw* (the Creator).
- Students will use strategies to maximize learning and communication.

Cree Benchmarks Grades 6, 9, 12 Nine-year Language and Culture Program, 2008, page 3

The assessment section is particularly well done, with multiple resources, lesson plans, and activities that the teacher may use. Much of the assessment is done by the individual students under the teacher’s guidance with an elder’s involvement. The curriculum specifically mentions parents as being very important for the assessment, in their continued understanding of their children’s progress, and as being important for the program’s overall success.

One assessment section requires that students talk about their families, but the students have the option of presenting an imaginary family to the class instead (p 12-13). The suggested example is the Royal Family. Are students ashamed of their families (poverty, drugs, etc...)? Is the Royal Proclamation and the connections/relationships between the crown and Aboriginals so important historically that it must be mentioned in some way? More information may be found on the website:

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/aborlang.aspx>.

9.4.3 Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to Grade 12

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
12	6.43	5.86	5.31	6.09

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The rationale behind the Cree (Nehiyawewin) curriculum in language and culture is given by the elders who took part in the curriculum development.

Elders tell us that English is a “borrowed” language (*eh awikawiyahk*), while Cree (*Nehiyawewin ekîmiy’kôwisiyahk*) is a gift of *Mâmawi Ohtâwîmâw* (the Creator). Elders are the keepers of the language and, consequently, of the beliefs and culture. Indeed, language and culture are inextricably woven.

Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12, 2005, p 6

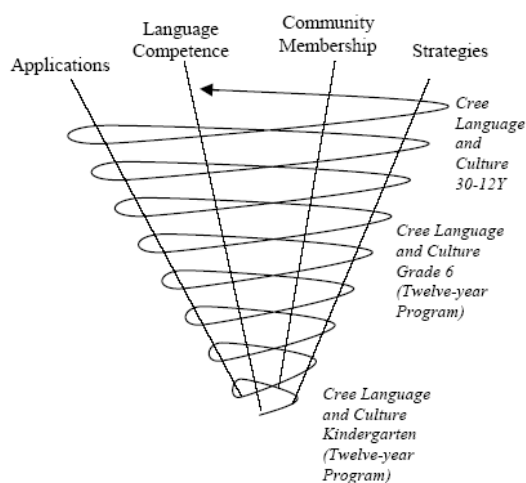


Figure 30

Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, p 8

contexts, and so on.

Within the spiral are *General Outcomes* (as seen below). The General Outcomes have four sections or outcomes called Applications, Language Competence, Strategies, and Community membership. For example, the *Applications* show how Cree is to be used by the students in their daily community life.

The model is a spiral progression because language learning and cultural teachings are integrative, and not merely cumulative.

“Each new element that is added must be integrated into the whole of what has gone before.” It is felt that this model best represents the students’ progress in acquiring language and culture skills, being both vertical and horizontal. The vertical represents increased proficiency and the horizontal a broader range of applications and experience with more text forms,

General Outcomes

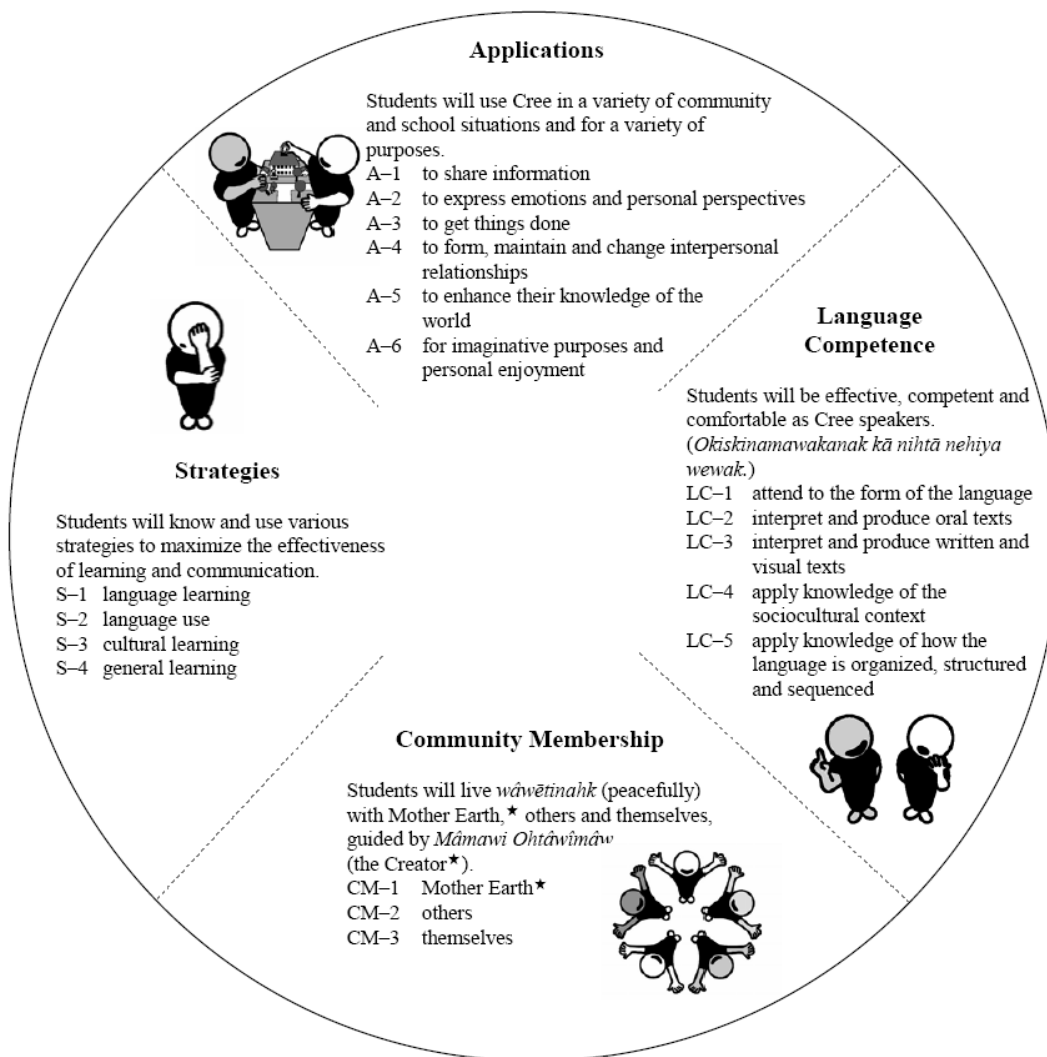


Figure 31

General Outcomes - Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, page 9



Applications

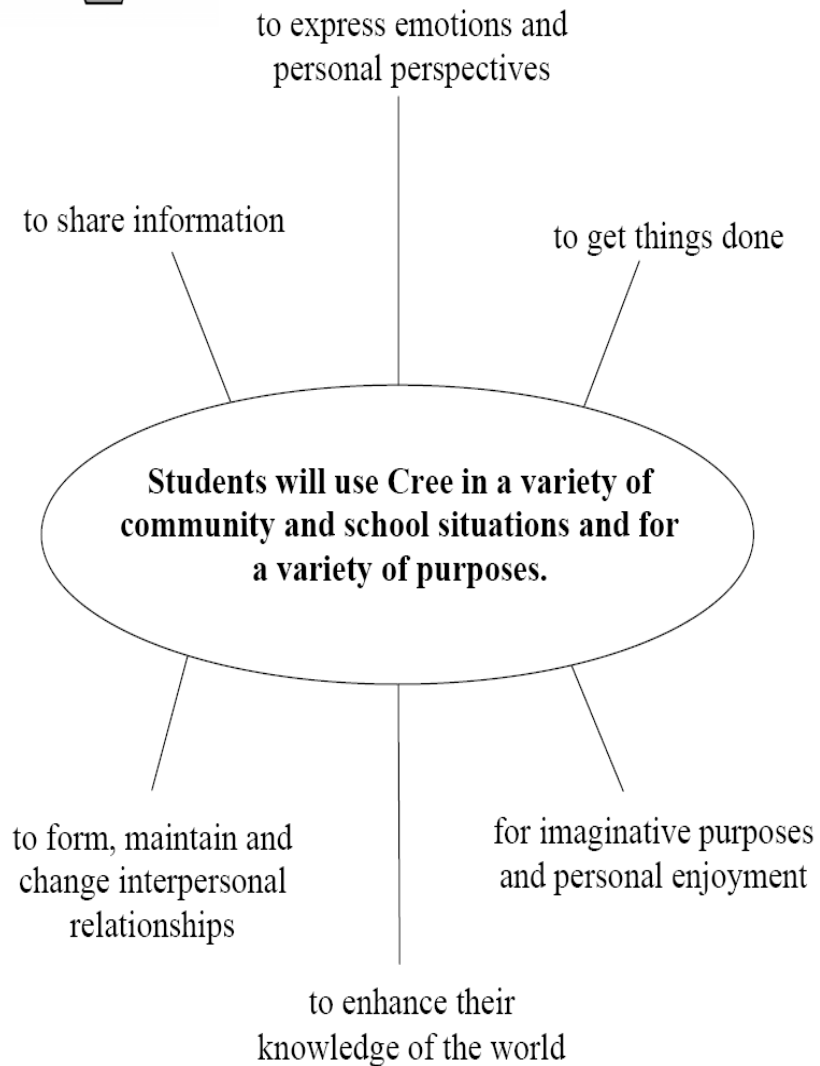


Figure 315

Application - Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, page 12

Several elements are missing, such as sample lesson plans, resource material, and an assessment guide. It would also be interesting to have some indication of time allotment. Such a guideline might reduce the teachers' freedom to teach according to local needs, but a simple non-binding indication could at times be very useful.

The curriculum is based on the Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework for Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs (Alberta Education, 2005).

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/aborlang.aspx>

9.4.4 Cree Language and Culture 6 Year Program 10-20-30

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
13	6.43	5.86	5.00	6.03

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The curriculum is almost exactly the same as the *Cree Language and Culture 12 year Program* from K-12. The principal difference is that it is a continuation of Cree language and culture learning from Grades 7 to 9. It starts in Grade 10 and finishes in Grade 12. It uses the same spiral progression that flows into the general outcomes and fleshes out each outcome's specifics (Alberta Education, 2007).

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/aborlang.aspx>

9.4.5 Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ECS-9

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
14	5.48	4.57	4.08	5.02

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In the 1960s, most Aboriginal children in Alberta were attending schools established in Indigenous communities. There was little concern about their ability to retain their Indigenous languages. By the late 1980s, many students were clearly losing these language skills, due to a policy of integration. The Blackfoot language (one of the two major Indigenous languages of Alberta) was in danger. In 1990, the Alberta government published a short curriculum guide whose purpose was to allow “the Native person to maintain his or her native language... a language completely of this hemisphere” (Alberta Education, 1990, A1).

Blackfoot children need to see the reality of the Blackfoot people and culture as part of their formal education. They need to learn respect for the Blackfoot language and culture. The students will feel proud to speak the language because it has been elevated to its rightful status by becoming part of their school learning experience. By learning their own language, students will receive the power to view the world from a different perspective.

Blackfoot Language and Culture Program (ECS–Grade 9), 1990, page A1

The *Blackfoot Language and Culture curriculum* is only 10 pages long, but clearly spells out what the Blackfoot people are looking for. By the end of Grade 9 the students will have developed basic communication skills, cultural sensitivity and enhanced personal development, originality and creativity in the Blackfoot language, additional concepts and generalizations about language, and a desire to extend or improve their proficiency in the Blackfoot language through further language study.

The program is divided into two different components with a linguistic component and a cultural component. The linguistic component contains numerous tasks that the students should be able to do at the end of their studies:

B. Stating and Finding Out Attitudes

1. Agreeing and disagreeing
2. Denying
3. Accepting, declining, offering and inviting
4. Offering to do something
5. Stating/asking whether one knows or doesn't know
6. Stating/asking whether one remembers or has forgotten....
24. Stating/asking about wants and desires
25. Apologizing and forgiving
26. Stating/asking about approval and disapproval
27. Stating regret
28. Stating indifference

Blackfoot Language and Culture Program (ECS–Grade 9), 1990, page C1

The cultural content presents Blackfoot culture as it is found in four contexts:

- the traditional culture, before the arrival of the Europeans
- legends
- the student's daily routines, including life at home, in the community and at the school
- contemporary Native cultural events and lifestyles.

Blackfoot Language and Culture Program (ECS–Grade 9), 1990, page C3

The program is very flexible in the way it should be delivered to students. It mentions the importance of consulting with elders and those who have greater knowledge of Indigenous Blackfoot culture. It offers suggestions about various topics, such as spirituality, contemporary cultural practices, songs, legends, societies, property of knowledge, and daily routines.

<http://education.alberta.ca/teachers/com/aborlang.aspx>

9.4.6 Blackfoot Language and Culture Program 10-20-30 (10-12)

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
15	5.81	6.14	5.23	5.76

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Language mirrors the culture of those who speak it. Language is not just a component of the culture; it is the channel through which all parts of a culture are expressed. The Blackfoot people believed that the Creator gave them the Blackfoot language. Therefore, the Blackfoot language was to be treated and used with the utmost respect. The Blackfoot language has been the foundation of the culture and society for past and present generations, and it should remain so for all future generations.

The Blackfoot people aim at achieving excellence in the education of each member of the tribe - a total learning experience that embraces spiritual, mental, physical and cultural aspects. Since education is a vehicle for transmitting knowledge and the underlying values of a culture, education for Blackfoot children should stress the Blackfoot language, culture and values.

Blackfoot Language and Culture Program 10-20-30, 1993, p 1

The Blackfoot Language and Culture curriculum for Grades 10-12 builds on what has been covered for Grades ESC-9. A reading and writing component has been added to strengthen oral language learning, thereby strengthening the viability of the Blackfoot language outside the classroom.

There are general expectations for student proficiency by graduation: 1) Listening and Speaking Skills and Attitudes, 2) Reading and Writing Skills and Attitudes, 3) Linguistic Code, 4) Learning Strategies, 5) Experience Using the Language and 6) Cultural Attitudes. Here is an example of expectations for Listening and Speaking:

Blackfoot 10 (Grade 10) Listening and Speaking

Students will:

- 1.1 be able to comprehend and speak in language experiences where:
 - the topic is familiar and interesting to them;
 - actions and language are predictable, repetitive or structured;
 - body and verbal language are informal;
 - the audience is sympathetic, and speakers use simple sentences, clearly and at normal speed;
 - the Blackfoot cultural content is related to the Blackfoot 10 program.
- 1.2 be able to communicate in language experiences by:
 - comprehending and speaking intelligible words, phrases, expressions and simple sentences appropriate to the social and cultural context;
 - paying more attention to meaning than to accuracy of form;
 - displaying poise and animation;
 - using appropriate body language.
- 1.3 be able to comprehend and speak in different situations to achieve the following communicative purposes:
 - asking questions and giving simple answers: who, what, when, where, why;
 - understanding and providing descriptions;
 - understanding and giving commands;
 - understanding and expressing simple feelings and attitudes.
- 1.4 understand and produce simple oral text on familiar topics in the form of narratives, legends and myths, short stories, anecdotes, prayers, songs and poetry.
- 1.5 be able to tolerate some ambiguity or uncertainty, in their own minds and in the minds of others, while taking part in language experiences appropriate for Blackfoot 10.
- 1.6 take risks in attempting to communicate with others.
- 1.7 take risks in attempting to understand others.
- 1.8 demonstrate awareness of and respect for the courtesies of interaction in language experiences appropriate to Blackfoot 10.

Blackfoot Language and Culture Program 10-20-30, 1993, p 6-7

9.5 British Columbia

9.5.1 Planning Guide & Framework for Development of Aboriginal Learning Resources

The Ministry of Education in conjunction with the First Nations Education Steering Committee designed a *Planning Guide & Framework for the Development of Aboriginal Learning Resources* to give large Aboriginal populations an opportunity to develop educational resources for use within the authorized BC curriculum (British Columbia, Ministry of Education Skills, and Training Field Services and Aboriginal Education Team, 1998).

The guide gives an overview of this process. It offers advice on what has already been done and provides tips on organization, research, interviewing of elders, writing, and production. Planning grids are included and may help the individual and/or committee decide what to include from both historical and cultural perspectives (1998, 36).

9.5.2 Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
19	5.52	7.71	6.08	6.07

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch of the British Columbia Ministry of Education released in 2006 *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10*, a guide to integration of authentic Aboriginal content into the British Columbia K-10 curriculum. This Aboriginal-led project has a number of goals, such as promoting understanding of Aboriginal peoples, allowing greater discussion of Aboriginal issues,

and providing a sense of place to Aboriginal students in the public school system. While there are several Aboriginal Nations in BC, “the *Shared Learnings* are intended to highlight issues, concerns, and realities that are common to most or all” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, Aboriginal Education Enhancements Branch, 2006).

The guide’s purpose is to integrate Aboriginal knowledge and understanding into all the different subject areas that make up the BC general curriculum. *Shared Learnings* presents what is believed to be the most common philosophical traits of a pan-Aboriginal worldview.

They are:

- **Aboriginal peoples’ relationship with the natural world:** Aboriginal cultures incorporate a distinctive sense of peoples’ relationship with the natural world—a relationship characterized by a sense of connectedness, respect, and stewardship.
- **Aboriginal influence:** The wisdom and knowledge embedded within Aboriginal cultures continue to influence the world.
- **The endurance of Aboriginal traditions:** Aboriginal languages and traditions are living expressions of dynamic cultures.
- **Aboriginal languages and communications:** Aboriginal peoples’ spoken/written languages, communication protocols, and other forms of communication reflect distinctive world-views.
- **Aboriginal artistic traditions:** Aboriginal artistic traditions are vital expressions of Aboriginal cultures.
- **Aboriginal social, economic, and political systems:** The sophistication of traditional Aboriginal social, economic, and political systems continues to be a source of strength and direction for Aboriginal people.
- **The evolution of human rights and freedoms, with reference to Aboriginal people:** Aboriginal people are continuing to define and affirm their individual and collective rights and freedoms.

Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10, 2006, p 6

For *Shared Learnings* it is very important to use elders and /or knowledgeable community members when teaching Indigenous knowledge. If the instructors do not know of any, they can simply get in touch with the local Aboriginal Education coordinator for assistance. It is also very important to encourage student involvement.

The following diagram outlines the different subjects addressed in *Shared Learnings*. Unfortunately, no overall diagram outlines the content of these subjects, thus making it difficult to grasp what the designers had initially conceived.

<i>K-3</i>	<i>4-7</i>	<i>8-10</i>
Dance	Dance	Dance
Drama	Drama	Drama
English Language Arts	English Language Arts	English Language Arts
Health and Career Education	Health and Career Education	Health and Career Education (8-9)
Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics
Music	Music	Music
Physical Education	Physical Education	Physical Education
Science	Science	Science
Social Studies	Social Studies	Social Studies
Visual Arts	Visual Arts	Visual Arts
	Second Language Studies (5-7)	Second Language Studies
		Business Education
		Home Economics
		Information Technology
		Planning 10
		Technology Education

Sample instructional strategies in teaching Oral Language in the subject of Language Arts, Grades K-3.

Provide opportunities for students to hear Aboriginal stories about environment, traditions and history by inviting Aboriginal Elders or storytellers to present Aboriginal stories. Have students learn the stories and tell them to younger students.

Have pairs of students take turns sharing stories. Ask the listening students to notice their own behaviour while their partners are telling the stories, and to share their observations with the whole group. Review the listening behaviours and ask students to determine which are helpful to the speaker and to the listener.

Ask students to suggest reasons why listening during formal occasions are an especially important skill for people in traditional Aboriginal societies (e.g., there was no written system; information could mean life or death; listening was a holistic experience). In discussing their responses, explain the concept of oral tradition, emphasizing the importance of the listener's role as witness and keeper of history.

Have students identify oral forms of communication (e.g., storytelling, audiotapes, radio programs, television news) and written forms of communication (e.g., paper and pencil, books, magazines, newspapers, computer printouts). After a class discussion on the difference between the two forms, have them draw a picture and example of each.

Introduce students to the speaker symbols that many BC Aboriginal societies use (e.g., feather, talking stick). Discuss the protocols associated with their use, giving local examples (e.g., only the person holding the object talks, Elders speak first, there are no time restrictions). For the next week, have students use these items when speaking during class.

Reading and Viewing

Provide opportunities for students to read illustrated age-appropriate (see Appendix H) Aboriginal stories about environment, traditions, and history. Have students learn the story and tell it to younger students. Have students read the stories to younger students.

Show a video of an Aboriginal story. Discuss with students the story events, the narrative sequence, and the characters. Have students represent story events in a variety of ways (e.g., paper bag puppet, modeling clay, models, painting or colouring a picture, retelling the story, role playing the story).

Collect a variety of Aboriginal stories. Divide the class into groups of three. Give one story to each group and choose a student to read it to the rest of the group. Ask students to discuss among themselves the themes, features and order of events from their particular story. Ask them to decide how they can tell the story to the class as a whole group (e.g., role play, with each student relating one event). Remind the rest of the class of respectful listening behaviour.

Read a story listed in the suggested resources in Appendix H, or a story by a local Aboriginal author or other prominent Canadian Aboriginal author. Discuss the author and his or her life and work. Have students work in groups to create an Author of the Month corner with a display of books and other works, photographs, information about where the author lives, and information about the Aboriginal group or Nation the author is from.

Read one of the stories in the suggested resources with the class. Have students work in groups to write a letter to one of the main characters in the story or make a literary map of the story.

Taken from *Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10*, 2006, p 18-9

The objectives are very difficult to find. There is a multitude of activities, lesson plans, and education ideas about what the teacher can do in class. It seems that simply doing an activity is the desired goal, “if you interview an elder then you have obtained the objective.” Teachers are certainly looking for activities to do in class, but such activities also need long-term reflection. The limited time for Indigenous knowledge combined with Western knowledge should be as meaningful as possible. This being said, the *Shared Learnings* activities are generally interesting, diverse, and excellent if used with more systemic Aboriginal philosophy.

There is a lack of metaphysical and spiritual aspects. How can you have a holistic vision of the world when this important feature is so ignored? Combined with this lack of the spiritual is the linear conception of the teaching. Perhaps the linear approach reflects a need to force-fit *Shared Learning* into the Western BC curriculum. There is no dialogue here, only submission.

9.5.3 English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
20	6.76	7.29	7.23	6.96

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The *English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008* was developed by the First Nations Education Steering Committee in conjunction with the BC Ministry of Education. This Aboriginal-developed curriculum corresponds to the prescribed provincial curriculum for English Grade 12, but is Aboriginal in nature, outlook, and understanding. Several Aboriginal principles of learning have been used to develop the curriculum. They are:

- Learning ultimately supports the well-being of the self, the family, the community, the land, the spirits, and the ancestors.
- Learning is holistic, reflexive, reflective, experiential, and relational (focussed on connectedness, on reciprocal relationships, and a sense of place).
- Learning involves recognizing the consequences of one's actions.
- Learning involves generational roles and responsibilities.
- Learning recognizes the role of indigenous knowledge.
- Learning is embedded in memory, history, and story.
- Learning involves patience and time.
- Learning requires exploration of one's identity.
- Learning involves recognizing that some knowledge is sacred and only shared with permission and/or in certain situations.

English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008, p 11

There is a major difference between *Grade 12 English* and *Grade 12 First Peoples English*. In Aboriginal English, oral traditions and texts play a far more significant role. One might question the relevance of continuing to maintain oral tradition when, in the Western world, it is almost forgotten and exists only in fragments. For the curriculum's authors, maintenance of the "oral tradition is considered critical in virtually all First Peoples cultures" and should allow students to "fully appreciate the significance of a living oral tradition."

Curriculum organizers

A curriculum organizer consists of a set of Prescribed Learning Outcomes that share a common focus. The Prescribed Learning Outcomes for English 12 First Peoples are grouped under the following curriculum organizers and suborganizers.¹⁰²

<i>oral language</i>	<i>reading and viewing</i>	<i>writing and representing</i>
Purposes	Purposes	Purposes
Strategies	Strategies	Strategies
Thinking	Thinking	Thinking
Features	Features	Features
<p>Example of Oral Language</p> <p>Purposes – providing opportunities for students to learn about the function, significance, and validity of the oral tradition in First Peoples cultures experience authentic First Peoples texts develop their capacity to interact effectively with peers and adults present material orally listen attentively, respectfully, critically, and with purpose</p> <p>Strategies – increasing students’ awareness of, engagement in, and development of the processes, skills, and techniques they can use to be more successful in their oral interactions and presentations</p> <p>Thinking – extending students’ capacity to use oral language to make connections, develop ideas, consider multiple perspectives, increase vocabulary, and use metacognition to assess their strengths and set goals to scaffold improvement</p> <p>Features – increasing students’ knowledge of and appreciation for the forms of oral expression and the expectations of various audiences, as well as their capacity to control syntax, diction, and other aspects of oral communication.</p> <p style="text-align: right;"><i>English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008, p 13-4</i></p>		

Time allocations (*English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008, p 14-5*)

<i>Local texts</i>	<i>Examinable texts</i>	<i>Class-selected texts</i>
15 -25 h	• 25 - 30 h	50-55- h

¹⁰² Note that these organizers and sub-organizers are provided for the purpose of identifying Prescribed Learning Outcomes; the intention is not to suggest a linear means of course delivery (2009).

<p>primarily oral and visual texts, but including written as well drawn from and/or through local First Nations community(ies), Inuit and Métis organizations, organizations such as Friendship Centres, etc.</p>	<p>novels, biographies, poetry, plays, films, and short prose (see Prescribed Learning Outcome B1 and the List of Examinable Texts – available at www.bced.gov.bc.ca/exams/specs/)</p>	<p>chosen by individual students, groups, the whole class, and/ or the teacher</p>
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This curriculum contains Prescribed Learning Outcomes that are “clearly stated and expressed in measurable and observable terms... set[ting] out the required attitudes, skills, and knowledge - what students are expected to know...schools have the responsibility to ensure that all Prescribed Learning Outcomes in this curriculum are addressed; however, schools have flexibility in determining how delivery of the curriculum can best take place” (First Nations Education Steering Committee & the British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2008, p 27).

<p>Oral Language Prescribed Outcomes</p> <p>It is expected that students will:</p>	
<p><i>Purposes</i></p>	<p>A1 explain the function, significance, and validity of the oral tradition</p> <p>A2 interact and collaborate in pairs, small groups, and large groups to achieve common goals achieve consensus support the learning of self and others explore ideas, information, emotions, and experiences deepen discussion gain insight into others’ perspectives comprehend a variety of texts reflect and make meaning respond personally, critically, and creatively create a variety of texts</p> <p>A3 express ideas, information, and understandings in a variety of situations and forms to explore and respond recall and describe narrate and explain support and extend argue, persuade, and critique engage and entertain</p> <p>A4 listen to comprehend a wide range of authentic First Peoples oral texts reflecting a variety of purposes, messages, and contexts, including texts relating to life lessons individual and community responsibilities and</p>

	obligations rites of passage family histories creation stories formal speeches.
Strategies	<p>A5 select, adapt, and apply a range of strategies to interact and collaborate with others in pairs, small groups, and large groups, including initiating and sharing responsibilities listening actively contributing ideas and supporting the ideas of others seeking out diverse perspectives reaching consensus or agreeing to differ</p> <p>A6 select, adapt, and apply a range of strategies to prepare formal and informal oral communications, including interpreting a task and setting a purpose generating ideas considering multiple perspectives synthesizing relevant knowledge and experiences planning, memorizing, and rehearsing presentations</p> <p>A7 select, adapt, and apply a range of strategies to express ideas, information, and understandings in formal and informal oral communications, including vocal techniques style and tone non-verbal techniques, visual aids, organizational and memory aids, monitoring methods,</p> <p>A8 use listening strategies to understand, recall, and analyse a variety of texts, including extending understanding by accessing prior knowledge making plausible predictions, synthesizing main points, generating critical questions, clarifying and confirming meaning.</p>
Thinking	<p>A9 speak and listen to make personal responses to texts, by relating reactions and emotions to understanding of the text generating thoughtful questions making inferences explaining opinions using reasons and evidence suggesting contextual influences and relationships</p> <p>A10 speak and listen to interpret, analyse, and evaluate ideas, information, and understandings from a variety of texts by examining and comparing ideas and concepts among texts critiquing the speaker/author's logic, quality of evidence, and coherence, describing and critiquing perspectives, identifying and challenging bias, contradictions, and distortions, explaining the importance and impact of social, political, and historical contexts</p> <p>A11 speak and listen to synthesize and extend thinking, by personalizing ideas, information, and understandings, explaining relationships among ideas, information, and understandings, applying new ideas, information, and understandings, transforming existing ideas, information, and understandings, contextualizing ideas, information, and understandings</p>

	A12 use meta-cognitive strategies to reflect on and assess their speaking and listening by referring to criteria, making connections to First Peoples principles of learning, setting goals for improvement, creating a plan for achieving goals, evaluating progress and setting new goals.
<i>Features</i>	A13 recognize and apply the structures and features of oral language to convey and derive meaning, including, context, text structures, syntax, diction, usage conventions, rhetorical devices, vocal techniques and nonverbal techniques. Taken from the First Nations Education Steering Committee & the British Columbia Ministry of Education. <i>English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package</i> , 2008, p 28.

There is also an excellent section on classroom assessment with several suggested ways to go about assessing the work of students, such as observation, student self-assessments and peer assessments, quizzes and tests (written, oral, practical), samples of student work, projects and presentations, oral and written reports, journals and learning logs, performance reviews and portfolio assessments. The FNESC website provides educational resources that can help the teacher better meet the curriculum’s objectives. The website is at www.fnesc.ca/efp12.

The curriculum would have been rated even higher if it had covered all grade levels, if the idea of spirituality had been considered more during the detailed Prescribed Learning Outcomes, if the idea of the greater community had been dealt with, and if the curriculum had touched on other subjects than English. It needs to be part of a more detailed and more comprehensive curriculum. Nonetheless, the education program has been very well developed and has far more positive than negative aspects.

9.5.4 BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
21	5.29	6.86	6.00	5.74

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The *BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package* has been designed to introduce authentic Aboriginal content into the senior secondary curriculum. It is the second edition of a course created in 2000. The first edition was the product of extensive consultations between Aboriginal educators, community members, and elders. The premise is to provide an “opportunity for BC students to acquire knowledge and understanding of the traditions, history, and present realities of BC Aboriginal peoples, as well as a chance to consider future challenges and opportunities” (British Columbia Ministry of Education, 2006, 3).

Just as *Shared Learnings* presents what are believed to be the most common philosophical traits of a pan-Aboriginal worldview, *First Nations Studies* provides a comparative look at cultures, values, beliefs, traditions, history, languages, and land.

- Aboriginal peoples have complex, dynamic, evolving cultures that have adapted to changing world events and environments.
- Aboriginal peoples’ values and beliefs are diverse, durable, and relevant.
- To understand Aboriginal issues, it is necessary to understand and appreciate that all contemporary events have their roots in both oral and written history.
- Language and land are the foundation of Aboriginal identity and culture.
- Aboriginal views of knowledge and learning may differ from those of other societies.
- The resilience and durability of Aboriginal cultures serve as a basis upon which Aboriginal peoples can build a brighter future.
- Aboriginal culture and history have an integral place in the evolution of BC and Canadian society.
- Aboriginal peoples play a key role in the determination of future prosperity for BC, Canada, and the world.

Aboriginal peoples’ long-established ways of life include

- a sense of individual responsibility to family, community, and nation

- recognition of the importance of a continual pursuit of spiritual, emotional, physical, and intellectual balance
- a respect for the relatedness of all things in the natural world.

This worldview sees the natural world as complete systems that are interrelated parts of a larger whole. The BC First Nations Studies 12 course is intended to document, recognize, and express this holistic perspective. It also provides an opportunity for students to examine the past, analyse the present, and consider possibilities for the future.

BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package, 2006, 4

The philosophy differs from the *Shared Learnings* philosophy in the previous section. Many of these points have been regrouped in *Shared Learnings* under larger heading with much the same focus. Even within the same education department, different Aboriginals may have differing visions about what a pan-Aboriginal philosophy might be and how it might be organized.

In *Shared Learnings*, the curriculum organizers are Purposes, Strategies, Thinking, and Features. In *First Nations Studies*, the organizers are far less philosophical and more down-to-earth. *Shared Learnings*, however, addresses Language Arts. The following diagram presents the five areas of importance to be treated in the *BC First Nation Studies 12* course. An example of Land and Relationships is given further on.

BC First Nations Studies 12				
Skills and Processes	Land and Relationships	Contact, Colonialism, and Resistance	Cultural Expressions	Leadership and Self- Determination

Prescribed Learning Outcomes of Land and Relationships

Once again, the curriculum guide takes a linear approach despite a supposedly holistic [cyclical] design. For example, with land and relationships the organizers are broken

down into prescribed learning outcomes. All learning outcomes complete the stem, “It is expected that students will....”

B1 describe the location of the traditional territories of British Columbia First Nations

B2 analyse the relationship of First Nations peoples with the natural world

B3 explain the significance of traditional education with respect to land and relationships

B4 analyse the exchanges of ideas, practices, and materials involving First Nations pre-contact and post-contact

BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package, 2006, 18

The following diagram further breaks down the prescribed learning outcomes and indicates how the indicators can be used to recognize [assess] whether the student has achieved some success.

Prescribed Learning Outcomes	Suggested Achievement Indicators
<p><i>It is expected that students will:</i></p>	<p><i>The following set of indicators may be used to assess student achievement for each corresponding prescribed learning outcome.</i></p> <p><i>Students who have fully met the prescribed learning outcome are able to:</i></p>
<p>B1 describe the location of the traditional territories of British Columbia First Nations</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> recognize the cultural and linguistic diversity that exists among First Nations within BC <input type="checkbox"/> recognize the existence of varying interpretations regarding the locations of traditional territories (e.g., overlapping boundaries) <input type="checkbox"/> name a major First Nations group within each region of BC (i.e., northern interior, coast, northeast, southern interior) <input type="checkbox"/> locate on a map of BC the main territory of several BC First Nations <input type="checkbox"/> identify the First Nation on whose traditional territory their school is located

BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package, 2006, 31

Alternative Delivery Policy and Assessment

The *First Nations Studies* curriculum recognizes that different students may need differing kinds of education delivery. The curriculum allows for these differences and states that the BC Ministry of Education “recognizes the family as the primary educator in the development of children’s attitudes, standards, and values, but the policy still

requires that all Prescribed Learning Outcomes be addressed and assessed in the agreed-upon alternative manner of delivery” (p 9). Congruent with this idea is assessment. The *First Nations Studies* curriculum provides a number of steps for systematic and fair assessment of the students’ learning. Unfortunately, there are few examples of how the assessment corresponds to an Indigenous philosophy. There are no concrete examples of evaluations the teacher may use to demonstrate Indigenous philosophy.

Criterion-referenced assessment and evaluation may involve these steps:	
Step 1	Identify the Prescribed Learning Outcomes and Suggested Achievement Indicators (as articulated in this IRP) that will be used as the basis for assessment.
Step 2	Establish criteria. When appropriate, involve students in establishing criteria.
Step 3	Plan learning activities that will help students gain the knowledge, skills, and attitudes outlined in the criteria.
Step 4	Prior to the learning activity, inform students of the criteria against which their work will be evaluated.
Step 5	Provide examples of the desired levels of performance.
Step 6	Conduct the learning activities.
Step 7	Use appropriate assessment instruments (e.g., rating scale, checklist, scoring guide) and methods (e.g., observation, collection, self-assessment) based on the particular assignment and student.
Step 8	Review the assessment data and evaluate each student’s level of performance or quality of work in relation to criteria.
Step 9	Where appropriate, provide feedback and/or a letter grade to indicate how well the criteria are met.
Step 10	Communicate the results of the assessment and evaluation to students and parents/guardians.

BC First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package, 2006, 26

To give this curriculum some of the principal characteristics of Aboriginal philosophy, several sections need to be adjusted. There is a lack of spirituality, little mentioning of elders, and no involvement of parents or other community members in education delivery and follow-up. While the guide claims to have been created in a cyclical manner, the design seems to be far more linear. There are resources for appropriate teaching materials

and creation of lesson plans at:

www.bced.gov.bc.ca/irp_resources/lr/resource/gradcoll.htm.

9.6 Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
22	4.19	6.43	5.46	4.89

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The goal of the Cradleboard Teaching Project is to raise self-identity and self-esteem in present and future generations of Indian children by putting Native American educators into the driver's seat of delivering accurate and enriching teaching materials into the hands of teachers in all American schools. The Cradleboard Teaching Project provides an Aboriginally developed and enhanced interactive multi-media Native studies curriculum for use in elementary through high school level.

Letter to Teachers of the Cradleboard Curriculum, 2006
Nihewan Foundation for American Indian education. www.cradleboard.org

The Cradleboard Core Curriculum (CCC) is a project that internationally renowned Cree singer Buffy Sainte-Marie created in the 1990s and is based in California. It offers a limited number of lesson plans and defines itself as a core [Aboriginal] curriculum. Unfortunately, it does not easily define either its objectives or its expected outcomes. This curriculum has found a place on the Internet and in various American and Canadian schools. The Mohawk (according to the Internet) have earmarked funding to develop a supplementary curriculum on the Mohawk culture and language.

Three principal subjects are available at the elementary level among the following:

1. Geography Online (available to Electronic Powwow subscribers only);
2. Social Studies Online (available to the public on their website);
3. Science (available to Electronic Powwow subscribers as a PDF file by request);
4. History Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use); and
5. Music Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use).

Three principal subjects are available at the middle school level among the following:

1. Geography Online (available to Electronic Powwow subscribers only);
2. Social Studies Online (available to the public on their website);
3. Science (*Through Native American Eyes* CD-ROM - available at the Cradleboard Store);
4. History Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use); and
5. Music Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use).

Two principal subjects are available at the high school level among the following:

1. Geography Online (available to Electronic Powwow subscribers only);
2. Social Studies Online (available to the public on their website);
3. Science (*Through Native American Eyes* CD-ROM – in development);
4. History Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use);
5. Music Online (waiting for funding to be re-created for Internet use); and
6. Online units are supplemented with appropriate maps, videos, charts, and tests.

In social studies, the elementary-level lesson plans contain some interesting information about Sitting Bull, Chief Joseph, Native American forms of government, decision making and taking care of one's people, tribal governments of the Tewa Pueblo, tribal governments of the Iroquois Confederacy of Nations, and the four great ideas of the Iroquois Confederacy. This listing represents all the available information provided by the CCC. The amount of information seems to be meagre in relation to the visual support (photos) and other sources that can be found in many books and even on the Internet. As well, the lesson plans do not provide the teachers with much in terms of development, activities, or assessment of learning (testing) (Nihewan Foundation for American Indian Education, 2003).

The elementary level should provide for a comprehensive vision of pan-Indian culture and its relationship to the dominant society. Unfortunately, the themes of elders, community, creation, and tribal structures are not addressed in this social studies curriculum.

The CCC does not in any sense provide a holistic ideal for an all-encompassing Aboriginal curriculum. It is principally designed to be grafted onto current Western curricula offered by states and provinces, notably by complying with the national standards in education (USA). According to this dissertation's definition (Section 3.1, page 200), "curriculum is an explicitly and implicitly intentional set of interactions designed to facilitate learning and development and to [create] meaning [from] experience." The CCC does provide some educational material, but it does not do so either explicitly or implicitly, and does not intentionally create interactions to facilitate learning. This goal could be better met with a more Aboriginal educational experience. The middle school level suffers from the same types of problems. The information is also less varied and more deficient. Supplementary teaching materials exist, but are short on information, there being only 5 pages with much of the space taken up by photos. At this level, students should have access not only to photos but also to texts in order to develop their reading and writing skills. Much information is presented from a socio-critical angle, but with nothing on presenting this material while using Aboriginal culture (actions) or concepts on Native social interactions and values.

At the high school level, the amount of literature presented is in line with the amount given to the students in Grades 1 to 9. The maps showing the expansion of the colonial governments are not used holistically. They only show the United States of America without the whole of Turtle Island (<http://www.cradleboard.org/curriculum/index2.html>). The creation story about Turtle Island should be included as well, to create a better framework for discussion of theories about the origin of Aboriginals and other Nations. The importance of context should not be ignored. If students are to understand today's reality, they need to know about past realities from multiple vantage points.

The problem is that nothing ever exists in isolation; everything is interconnected according to Aboriginal teaching (Fenelon & LeBeau, 2006, 35). The curriculum presents information piecemeal without presenting the overall objectives and does little to explain the material and information that is to be given students and in what order. Are there aspects of science that should be covered? Are there elements of history, religion, and sports that would fit in well at certain points? The curriculum needs not just incomplete

parts, but also a whole in a cyclical manner that creates a matrix of understanding and provides the basis for a worldview.

These very important questions are left unanswered by the CCC. As such, the curriculum must be seen as a Western-based one with culturally grafted material that could fit into the education program of any state or province. It is far better than pure assimilation curriculum, but the presentation style creates a mindset in Aboriginal children that is not natural, but more mechanical and, as such, fits very well into Western pedagogy. The educators should further develop the curriculum while using research by Battiste, Hampton, and Fenelon and LeBeau to create a holistic curriculum that is not just a social critique, but also a reflection of local and pan-Aboriginal worldviews. Final recommendation: the curriculum should be seen as a teaching resource to build on previously developed Aboriginal curriculum guides that have well defined objectives.

Chapter 10. Curriculum Evaluations, Central

10.1 Manitoba

10.1.1 Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula: A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers, and Administrators, 2003

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
23	6.67	7.71	5.85	6.71

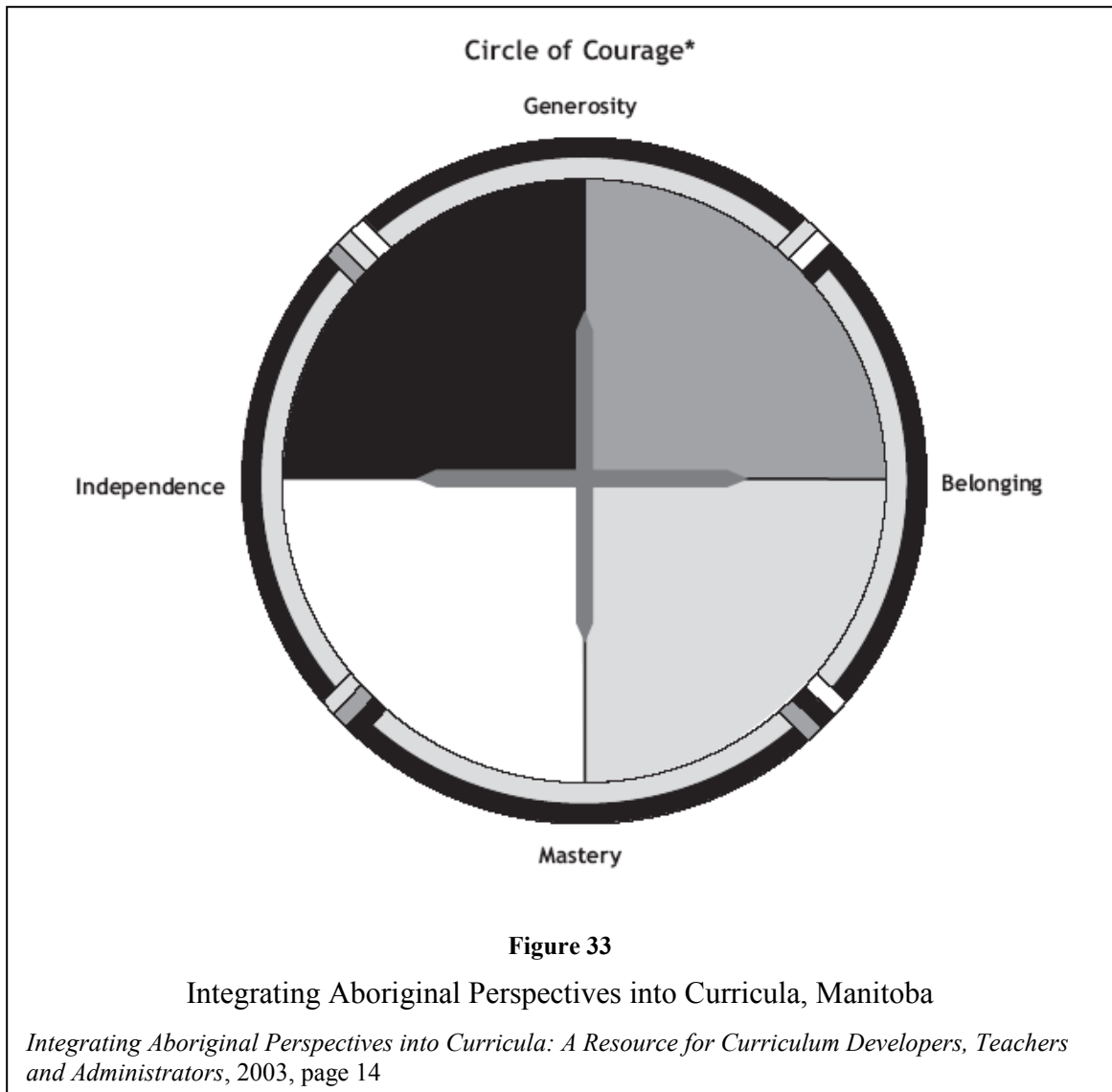
Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The goal is to allow more systematic teaching and use of Indigenous perspectives within the various subjects making up the Manitoba general curriculum. The curriculum is intended not only for Aboriginal students, but also for non-Aboriginal ones. It has some broad goals to improve Aboriginal self-identity and to help Aboriginals better internalize knowledge and skills needed for greater participation in their communities. For non-Aboriginals, the broad goals are to allow them to “develop an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures, traditional values, contemporary lifestyles, and traditional knowledge of Aboriginal peoples [as well as allowing them] to develop an informed opinion on matters relating to Aboriginal peoples” (Manitoba, Minister of Education and Youth, 2003, 2).

Aboriginal perspectives are based on the distinct world view of the Aboriginal cultures. This world view has humans living in a universe made by the Creator and needing to live in harmony with nature, one another, and with oneself. Each Aboriginal culture expresses this same world view in a different way with different practises, stories and cultural products.

Introduction, page 1



The curriculum has been divided up into several themes that are felt to be representative of the Aboriginal worldview. The themes are to be addressed if possible at some point while teaching the various subjects. They are the Land, Generosity, Oral Tradition, Spirituality, Medicine Wheel, Powwows, and Elders.

The Culture and Worldview section presents a number of cyclical models to help the teacher better understand Aboriginal philosophy. Elders were very instrumental in developing the curriculum, as seen through the use of the circle as a philosophical basis.

The Learning Outcomes section presents what is expected after the students have finished each period of learning. This list is not exhaustive and may be lengthened to suit local conditions. For instance, in mathematics, Grade K-4, the students will:

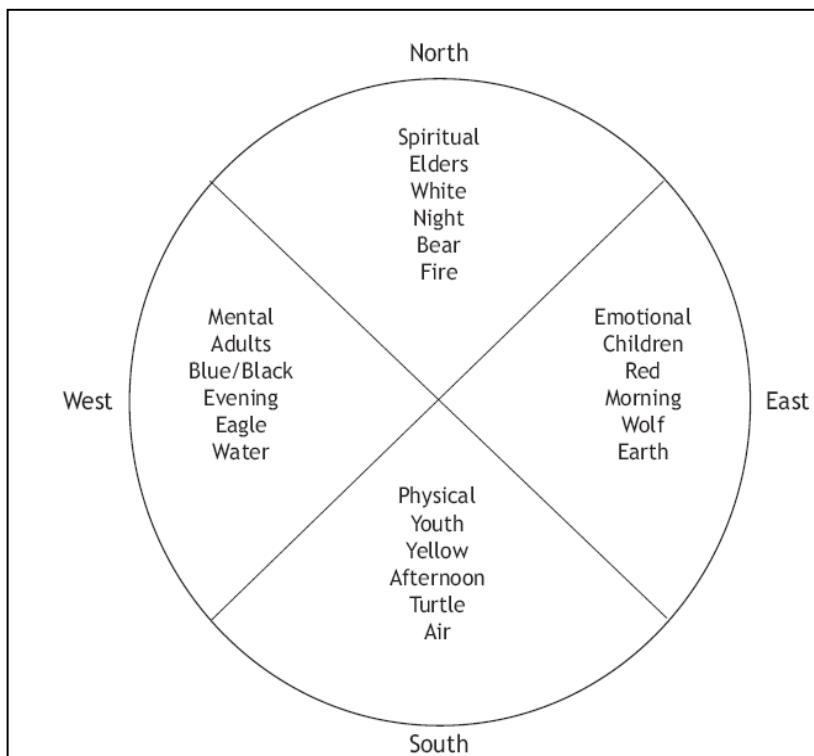


Figure 34
Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula,
Manitoba

*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula:
A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers and Administrators,*
2003, page 10

- Identify patterns in Aboriginal artwork
- Create geometric designs and containers without any tools using natural materials
- Demonstrate awareness of Aboriginal peoples' traditional techniques for measurement and estimation
- Appreciate the concept of "0" which was independently discovered by the Indigenous peoples of Central America
- Explain how Aboriginal peoples used trade and barter,
- Describe how Aboriginal peoples were traditionally able to measure time using a variety of means
- Demonstrate awareness that Aboriginal peoples traditionally marked time by events, rather than sequential numbers
- Recognize the pattern in the syllabic system of a local Aboriginal language
- Recite the numbers of 1 to 5 in a local Aboriginal language.

*Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curricula:
A Resource for Curriculum Developers, Teachers and Administrators, 2003, page 22-3*

The end of the document has several lesson plans as well as a resource section with information for teachers and other educators to create their own lesson plans.

10.1.2 Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Cultures: Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
24	7.95	7.57	4.92	7.27

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 2007, Manitoba published a language and cultural curriculum with a view to preserving, revitalizing, and maintaining Aboriginal languages and cultures. It uses the words of elders, parents, community members, and youth as an integral part of its foundation, thereby making the curriculum one of Aboriginal conception and design. For

instance, the traditional Aboriginal perspective is seen as being the wisdom of the elders. “Elders have been, are, and will continue to be the keepers of knowledge, and it is their guidance that Aboriginal people seek as they strive for balance in their relationships with the Creator, the natural world, other people, and themselves” (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007, ix).

We need Elders to confirm the accuracy of words... An Elder is one who leads the way (mentor). You follow Elders because they are leaders. We need to categorize Elders as those who are old or those who lead the way... the keepers of the fire, they light/lead the way. They have leadership qualities, they have vision, they carry the history... Most importantly, Elders confirm and validate the language. They share their knowledge in a humble way.

William Dumas, Cree, Thompson

This does not preclude other groups. “The voices of youth are an integral part of cultural and language learning. The youth of today are the future keepers of knowledge. Their input is important in the development of resources that will help educators to empower children and youth to learn and to use Aboriginal languages” (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2007, xii).

Youth need to be educated so they can help their people in the future... when younger, I wanted to know what Aboriginal people were saying when they spoke in their language... they would laugh, cry... I feel blinded, without glasses, not knowing the Aboriginal language. This project will give my eyes back... will give youngsters sight... to be able to learn their language in school.

Shane Catcheway, Ojibwe, Skownan

We need language and culture to be whole... to connect us to the world, animals. I want my children to learn about their Aboriginal culture and language... something I didn't have. I have the spirit of the drum and dance inside me. I want to learn more about Mother Earth... It makes me happy.

Audrey Cook, Ojibway, Bloodvein

The curriculum declares that:

- Language is a gift from the Creator.
- Aboriginal languages are oral languages that are continually evolving.
- Aboriginal languages are increasingly being learned and taught through reading and writing, whereas in the past, they were passed on predominantly through oral tradition.
- Aboriginal languages encompass and reflect a way of life.
- Aboriginal languages and cultures are an important part of Canada’s heritage.
- Elders are the *keepers of knowledge*, and it is their guidance that Aboriginal people seek as they strive for balance in their relationships with the Creator, the natural world, other people, and themselves.
- Language and culture are inseparable.
- Language will be taught using Aboriginal cultural content and perspectives.
- All Aboriginal languages can be learned.
- All learners can be successful learners of an Aboriginal language and culture, although they will learn in a variety of ways and acquire competence at varied rates.
- Literacy is an important aspect of Aboriginal language learning.

*Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Language and Cultures:
Manitoba Curriculum Framework of Outcomes, page 9*

Four General Learning Outcomes or objectives are the foundations of the curriculum and Aboriginal worldview.

GLO 1: Language Competence

Students will use the Aboriginal language effectively and competently in listening, viewing, speaking, reading, representing, and writing.

GLO 2: Language Learning Strategies

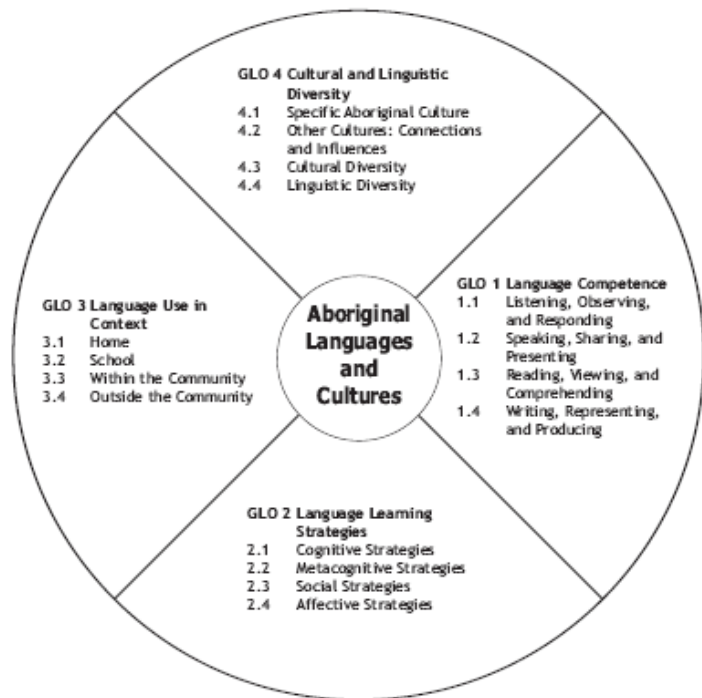
Students will develop and use strategies to enhance the effectiveness of learning and communication.

GLO 3: Language Use in Context

Students will use the Aboriginal language in a variety of situations and for a variety of purposes at home, at school, and within and outside the community.

GLO 4: Cultural and Linguistic Diversity

Students will explore and value cultural and linguistic diversity and gain intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes to be respectful and contributing members of society.



This curriculum is examined in an appendix to find the degree of correlation between various subjects in the Manitoba curriculum and the intended learning outcomes, with reference to the following subjects: social studies, physical education and health, science, education for a sustainable future, mathematics, and English language arts.

The curriculum ought to have mentioned the need for greater community involvement in children's education and how such involvement can benefit the community in the long run.

10.1.3 Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
25	3.67	3.29	4.62	3.78

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 1995, Manitoba developed a *Native Studies (K to 4)* curriculum to integrate Aboriginal elements into Manitoba's social studies curriculum. It presents some elements of Indigenous philosophy that are worth using to augment knowledge of Manitoba's Aboriginal peoples.

The aim of presenting Aboriginal perspectives through integrating Native Studies into curricula is to have all students develop an understanding and respect for the histories, cultures and contemporary lifestyles of Aboriginal people and to assist them to develop informed opinions on matters relating to Aboriginal people.

Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book, 1995, page 3

The resource book has lesson plans, time allotments for teaching of various Native subjects, multifaceted assessment, and other resources. The curriculum nonetheless is very Western in construct. For instance, the assessment section offers quantitative methods based principally on Western concepts of hierarchy. The methods are:

- Assessment Stations
- Individual Assessments
- Group Assessments
- Contracts
- Self- and Peer-Assessments
- Portfolios

In Western education systems, where large amounts of personnel and students interact with a constant inflow and outflow of people, quantitative assessment ensures a certain amount of personal responsibility. But we see a different approach with Aboriginals who live on the land. They do not need to take the natural environment into account because they intuitively know what will happen. Through apprenticeship and learning, they gain profound knowledge of their environment (Cajete, 2000, p 154). The same approach should characterize Aboriginal assessment of students. The teacher intuitively knows whether the students understand what they have learned.

Although Aboriginal people were involved in developing the curriculum, none were elders, parents, students, or community members. Another shortcoming: no mention of Indigenous spirituality in any meaningful manner, nor of land or place. The design is linear, and a cyclical understanding appears only in a few lesson plans. Unfortunately, even the Western linear construct is poorly done. The objectives or intended outcomes are also very difficult to understand; it is thus complicated to know exactly what to teach. They are laid out in a manner that makes it tricky to locate the actual objectives. The teacher cannot easily modify them to adapt them to a specific classroom.

10.1.4 Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8): A Teacher's Resource Book Framework

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
26	4.62	4.86	5.15	4.77

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Native Studies curriculum for middle years (Grades 5 to 8) was published in 1997. While the purposes and principal goals are the same as with the curriculum from *Native Studies the Early Years*, it is not an integration curriculum, but rather an independent course of study (Manitoba, Minister of Education and Training, 1997).

The following chart shows the various topics and subtopics covered in each grade. Each topic is provided with a background explaining the general desired outcomes, the major concepts, and the content for each grade level. Unfortunately, no chart shows how all the various topics and desired outcomes relate to each other. I created the following chart to show how the curriculum works and thus aid analysis.

Grade 5	Grade 6	Grade 7	Grade 8
Aboriginal Life in Canada Today	Original Peoples	Living in Harmony with the Earth	Foundation of Aboriginal Ideas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Linguistic and Cultural Groups ➤ Plains People ➤ Changes to the Environment ➤ Guardians of Resources ➤ History, Culture, and Traditions of Ontario's First People ➤ Aboriginal People of Québec ➤ Aboriginal People of Atlantic Canada 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Connected to the Land ➤ Aboriginal Technology, Health, and Lifestyles ➤ British Influence ➤ Treaties with the First Peoples in the West ➤ New Century 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ All Things Necessary for Life ➤ Values of Stewardship ➤ Interlocking Cycles ➤ Natural Cycles of Life ➤ Environmental Stewardship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Passage of Time ➤ Accomplishments of Aboriginal People in Central and South America ➤ Comparisons Between Europe and North America ➤ Challenges of Self-Determination ➤ Enriching the World

The curriculum should be seen in a linear manner. There is little mention of Aboriginal philosophy and no reference to principles, such as the cyclical idea of time, holism, spirituality, or any of the major beliefs that might be expected in more recent Aboriginally developed curricula. While Aboriginal people did take part in developing this curriculum, none were elders, parents, students, or community members, much as with *Native Studies the Early Years*. The curriculum framework also talks of using “traditional approaches to education” but the framework seems unclear as to how such approaches are to be taught by teachers who may have little or no experience with Aboriginals.

10.1.5 Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4): A Teacher’s Resource Book

Framework

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
27	4.67	5.00	5.31	4.86

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Native Studies curriculum for senior years (Grades S1-S4) was published in 1998 and continues the program *Native Studies for Middle Years* (Manitoba, Minister of Education and Training, 1998). The following chart shows the various topics and subtopics covered in each grade. Each topic is provided with a background to explain the general desired outcomes, the major concepts, and the content for each grade.

Unfortunately, once again no chart shows how all the various topics and desired outcomes relate to each other. I created the following chart to show how the curriculum works and to aid analysis.

Senior 1	Senior 2
Aboriginal Identity	Environmental Harmony
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Who Are Aboriginal People? ➤ Aboriginal Unity ➤ Aboriginal Government ➤ Economic Activities ➤ Worldwide Interaction ➤ Projecting Into the Future ➤ Aboriginal Stereotypes (Enhancement Unit) ➤ Aboriginal Women (Enhancement Unit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conservation of Resources ➤ Food Production ➤ Northern Development ➤ Human Resources ➤ Atlantic Aboriginals ➤ Movement to Urban Areas ➤ Impact of Southern Culture and Economy ➤ Indigenous People in Central America ➤ Aboriginal People and Education (Enhancement Unit) ➤ Adapting to a Changing World

Senior 3	Senior 4
Aboriginal Contributions	World Issues
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Origins of a People ➤ Founding of the Métis ➤ Early Relationships ➤ Aboriginal Rights ➤ Aboriginal Economics (Enhancement Unit) ➤ Adapting to Change ➤ Historical Perspectives ➤ External Relations ➤ Aboriginal Self-Government (Enhancement Unit) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Current Controversies ➤ Geopolitical Links ➤ Quality of Life ➤ Different Options ➤ Aboriginal Spirituality

Once again, Manitoba Native Studies should be seen in a linear manner. In Grade Senior 4, spirituality is finally mentioned and a whole section is dedicated to this topic. Spirituality is of course the final topic for the entire program as well as being the final one for the 12 years of study, if the student has followed Native Studies throughout his or her schooling. As the final topic, however, it may never be reached by the teacher in the course of a school year. The curriculum framework again talks of using “traditional approaches to education” but the framework seems unclear as to how such approaches are to be taught by teachers who may have little or no experience with Aboriginals.

10.1.6 Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
28	6.24	7.43	6.77	6.58

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 2008, a more recent version of Native Studies was drafted, but only for Grade 12 by educators from the Manitoba public school system (assumed to be Aboriginals) and an elder (Manitoba Education, Citizenship and Youth, 2008). *Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation* modernized much of the older guiding principles used in Native Studies. Unfortunately, this work was not done for all grade levels. In theory, this new program:

- Nourishes the spirit of learning.
- Builds bridges of understanding and respect between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians.
- Promotes personal and social responsibility.
- Is holistic.
- Honours diverse ways of knowing.
- Is inclusive of the perspectives of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples.
- Connects the learner to family and to local, national and global communities.
- Contributes to a good life.

*Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies:
A Foundation for Implementation, overview section*

The curriculum provides a holistic (multidisciplinary) approach while exploring and developing skills in arts, English language arts, geography, history, social studies, and law. Its specific goals or objectives are to:

- Enhance their understanding and appreciation of the cultures and traditions, as well as the contemporary realities and aspirations of First Nations, Métis and Inuit cultures in Manitoba, Canada and the world.

- Develop a knowledge of the history of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in order to better understand the present.
- Develop a sense of comfort and confidence in their interactions with First Nations, Métis and Inuit people.
- Develop an understanding that First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples and cultures are an integral part of Canadian society.
- Recognize the ongoing role of First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in shaping Canadian history and identity.

The curriculum development team also decided to include specific time allocations, indicating how much time should be spent on the various topics. They divided the course into 5 different “clusters.”

I	Image and Identity	10%
II	Relations with Government	40%
III	Social Justice Issues	30%
IV	Indigenous Peoples and the World	5%
V	Celebrations of Learning	15%

Here is an example of “cluster 1” with the topic (learning experience) 1.1 Ghost of History and its objectives.

Cluster 1: Image and Identity
Suggested Time Allotment for Cluster 1: 10%
Learning Experience 1.1: The Ghosts of History
<p>Targeted Enduring Understandings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understanding of and respect for First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples begin with knowledge of their pasts. - Current issues are really unresolved historical issues. - First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples want to be recognized for their contributions to Canadian society and to share in its successes.

Each cluster and learning experience includes some questions to be considered by the students and teachers. There are ideas on how to teach the learning experience and

resources for use in attaining the objectives. Also included are various adapted assessments for use with each of the resources. The curriculum should have allowed for more interactions with parents and community members and more emphasis on spirituality. The clusters and learning experiences are difficult to follow because no overall grid explains how each cluster or learning experience interacts with the others. It would be interesting to know what the qualifications of those teaching the curriculum should be. Should they be Aboriginals or people from the dominant society with specific training? The curriculum provides much information that will make teaching easier if the teacher has a good background in the subject area.

10.1.7 Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
29	0.00	0.00	0.00	no evaluation

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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I would like to thank the Sapotaweyak Cree Nation for supplying some of their course material. The Sapotaweyak Cree Nation is located at Pelican Rapids in Manitoba. They (through a high school teacher Mr. A.R. Leask) provided four course outlines on Cree 9, Outdoor Ed 9, History 11, and Native Studies 10 as well as a school calendar.

The course outlines give the student information on expectations, attendance, marking, assignments, exams, and activities. During the school year, several school activities have the theme of Aboriginal culture, including Louis Riel day, elders' days, parents' day, Aboriginal day, elders' week, and multiple outdoor education events.

The course material was not quantitatively evaluated because of its incomplete nature. The classroom may provide a very rich learning experience, but this aspect is not

reflected in the curriculum. Native Studies 10 follows the Manitoba curriculum, and the course outline shows a very rigorous academic program with 37 chapters to be covered during the school year. History 11 also follows the provincial curriculum, but presents more on the Aboriginal view of history. Cree 9 and 10, also follow the provincial curriculum. The outdoor education curriculum is fully adapted to the reality of the Aboriginal community. Throughout the school year, multiple outdoor activities reflect Cree culture.

Below are the partial results of a survey administered by the Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School, indicating which subjects have an Aboriginal-based curriculum. Interestingly, Math has an Aboriginal basis, but unfortunately no more information was available.

1. In your opinion what Grades and subjects in your school(s) have an Aboriginal-based curriculum?
(mark more than one)

	Math	Language Arts	Aboriginal Language	Social Studies	Native Studies	Physics	Biology	Chemistry	Sciences	Physical Education
Kindergarten	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 1	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 2	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 3	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 4	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 5	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 6	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 7	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 8	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 9	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 10	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 11	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Grade 12	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

10.2 Ontario

10.2.1 Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Curriculum Expectations

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
30	2.10	4.86	3.08	2.84

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Curriculum Expectations is a collection of resources designed to help Ontario educators bring Aboriginal perspectives into the classroom (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009a). It is based on the revised Ontario curriculum of 2007; the series includes resources for educators at the elementary and secondary levels. It is published as a general curriculum for Grades 1 to 8 and as a specific curriculum for business, economics, English, geography, guidance, history, law, and politics. These resources may be found on the ministry website at

www.edu.gov.on.ca or more specifically at
<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/toolkit.html>

For Aboriginal students, the revised curriculum will help foster a strong sense of identity and a positive self-image. For all Ontario students and educators, the new expectations add a rich new dimension to Ontario's curriculum, and strengthen opportunities to explore, appreciate, understand, and value the contributions of Ontario's Aboriginal communities to the social and cultural fabric of our province.

The Grade 1 curriculum supplement deals with two subjects: language and social studies. For Grade 1, the word 'Aboriginal' is mentioned eight times, including the title page and the page bottoms for identification. This word could be replaced with 'Norwegian,' and one would not know the difference.

The Grade 2 supplement presents much of the same generic inter-changeability of world cultures. There is an effort to add some words relating to Aboriginal culture, such as Aboriginal Solidarity Day, Festival of Lights, First Nation powwows, and toys from various cultures. Unfortunately, I have never heard of the term Aboriginal Solidarity Day or the Festival of Lights¹⁰³, and I question how students will gain a better understanding of Aboriginal culture by touching toys from Zimbabwe, Russia, China, or any other world culture.

The Grade 3 supplement suggests exploring Aboriginal settlements in Canada around 1800. The social studies curriculum presents no true Aboriginal perspective, but simply a rehashing of previous material found in earlier education curricula from across Canada. Aboriginals may once again be presented as only important to Canadian history during the time of first contacts. The language section has only one reference to Aboriginal culture with a suggested use of traditional stories. No information is given about how this information should be presented with the use of elders, oral history, etc...

The Aboriginal perspective for Grade 4 identifies and describes various communities in each physical region of Ontario (e.g., tourists, manufacturing, and agricultural communities in the St. Lawrence Lowlands; First Nation communities in the Hudson Bay Lowlands; forestry and mining communities in the Canadian Shield region) and what they produce principally. Aboriginals are not mentioned in the language perspectives section.

The Grade 5 supplement is about world civilizations. For instance, the student should “compare how two or more early civilizations were governed (e.g., pharaohs in Egypt; early democracy in Greece; emperors in China; republican government in Rome; nobles, priests, and military in Aztec society; chiefdoms in the Indus Valley; city states on the Swahili Coast; clan mothers and chiefs in Iroquois Confederacy).” The treatment reserved for Aboriginals seems very superficial. The Aboriginal perspective curriculum

¹⁰³ I believe they are referring to the Hindu Festival of Lights from India.

does not even require the study of Aboriginal culture. The comparison of civilizations places the Aboriginals last. This curriculum seems very Eurocentric.

The Grade 6 supplement reviews the contacts between European and Aboriginal cultures. This document is much better than the previous five but still has been designed by a non-Aboriginal. For instance, the students should “examine various theories about the origins of First Nation and Inuit peoples in North America (e.g., that they crossed the Bering land bridge, had always been indigenous to North America, travelled by water from South America).” Where are the references to creation stories and spirituality (Deloria & Wildcat, 2001, 60; Kawagley, 1995, 11; Sioui, 1999)? Some Aboriginal scholars (Vine Deloria) challenge this kind of one-sided look at Aboriginal origins as being politically motivated.

In the language section, the students may “create a travelogue illustrating the journey of an early Canadian explorer, including contacts with First Nations peoples.” This standpoint is extremely racist because the voiceless Aboriginal is again viewed by a biased Western explorer travelling among the savages who will inform the students (both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal) what the Aboriginals were like. The language section does suggest using Aboriginal literature, but offers no suggestions.

The Grade 7 supplement looks at the history of New France and the contribution of Aboriginals. Once again, the language section has little about Aboriginals. The Grade 8 supplement covers the history of Aboriginals in the 1800s in more depth, as well as early Western Canadian history. The language section again has little from an Aboriginal perspective.

Business Studies covers grades 9-10-11-12. Some interesting sections are of great interest to Aboriginals, such as Grade 12 issues of ethics and social responsibility where the student must “evaluate the impact of major ethical issues (e.g., bribery, harassment, polluting the environment, theft in the workplace, Aboriginal land claims versus interests of resource companies) and dilemmas (e.g., for the individual, the workplace, and the

local and global community) on management strategies and decision making.” Other sections are derisory, such as Grade 9 and 10 *Invention and Innovation* where the students must “describe a variety of Canadian inventions (e.g., the snowmobile, basketball, kerosene) and innovations (e.g., IMAX), including Aboriginal inventions and innovations (e.g., goggles, snowshoes, kayaks).”

Economics covers grades 11 and 12. In the only activity about Aboriginals for Grade 12, the students must “analyse the economic and social/cultural impact of resource development on traditional lands of First Nation peoples (e.g., logging or commercial fishing in British Columbia; pipeline construction or mining in the North; gaming in Ontario).” The Grade 11 supplement is equally meagre.

The English section has a few elements about Aboriginals, such as various suggestions to compare Aboriginal and Greek myths. Nonetheless, many Aboriginals still believe strongly in their “myths,” whereas few people if any still believe in Greek myths. Aboriginal myths are more comparable to the stories of other major religions. Once again, if one changed the word ‘Aboriginal’ to ‘Norwegian,’ the difference would be scarcely noticeable.

The Geography section seems to be better suited to an Aboriginal perspective. For Grade 12, in the section *Human-Environment Interactions Developing and Practising Skills*, students must “assess the role of geotechnologies in addressing environmental issues affecting indigenous peoples (e.g., construction of hydroelectric dams, resource management, construction of oil/gas pipelines, decline of traditional food sources, rainforest development, land claims). ”

The History, Law, and Politics sections likewise seem to lend themselves to an Aboriginal perspective. There is an attempt to include an Aboriginal view in many of the discussions on world affairs or human rights. Yet, overall, *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher’s Toolkit* is very Western in outlook and effect. Guidance is minimal. If the

teacher has little knowledge of Aboriginals, the chances for getting off-track and doing harm are great.

10.2.2 Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher’s Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
31	3.95	5.86	5.46	4.64

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Aboriginal Perspectives also has another series called *Teaching Strategies* (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2009b). While published under the same title, the two series should be considered separately. Although they do at times cover the same subjects, these subjects are often treated completely different, thus making it difficult to combine the two approaches. Nor is the quality the same. *Aboriginal Teaching Strategies* is practical and still meets the objectives of the Ontario curriculum.

Aboriginal Teaching Strategies is intended to fit into the Ontario curriculum while presenting an Aboriginal perspective. The following graph shows the grades, subjects, and specific lesson plan topics.

Grade 1	Social Studies	Respect
Grade 3	Social Studies	What Settlers Learned from Aboriginal People – Technology
Grade 5	Language	Talking Circle
Grade 5	Language	Aboriginal Heroes
Grade 6	Social Studies	Achievements of Aboriginal Heroes
Grade 8	History	Red River Rebellion

Grade 11	English	Media Portrayal of Aboriginal Peoples
Grade 11	Canadian & World Studies Law	Aboriginal Rights in Canada
Grade 12	Business Studies	Cultural Influences on Leadership Style

Aboriginal Teaching Strategies has far more Aboriginal elements than does the series from which it proceeds. It uses elders and spirituality, considers the entirety of a subject, suggests resources, and proposes community connections. It does not have material for every subject and grade level, but its authors are developing more material.

It was very difficult to obtain almost all of the above information from the Ontario education ministry website. Initially, it seemed that no material was available; only after much perseverance was the relevant information found.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/elemStrategies.html>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/secStrategies.html>

10.2.3 Curriculum Guidelines Primary, Junior, Intermediate & Senior Divisions, Native Languages

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
32	5.19	6.00	6.69	5.65

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 1987, Ontario published one of Canada’s first Aboriginal language curriculum guides. The guide had been developed by the Ministry of Education, INAC, several Aboriginal organizations, and education and language professionals with extensive experience in Aboriginal education. The curriculum was used extensively in summer training sessions for Native language teachers, as well as for principals so that they might fit Native language learning into the Ontario general curriculum (personal communication with Barbara Burnaby, 2009). The stated rationale was the Aboriginal *Indian Control of Indian Education*. The curriculum states, “languages reflect and express the culture, spirit, and philosophy of the people who speak them” (Ontario Ministry of Education & Nelson, 1987, 39)

The curriculum deals with several issues that the authors felt to be crucial and offers advice about differing degrees of student capability, selection of teachers according to local sensibilities, use of cooperative education, gender equality, and responsibilities of the principal, the teachers, and the community.

The curriculum is organized into six themes reflecting the experiences and environments of the students. The themes are family, community, nature, communication, time, and recreation. The following two diagrams show the themes of family and community.

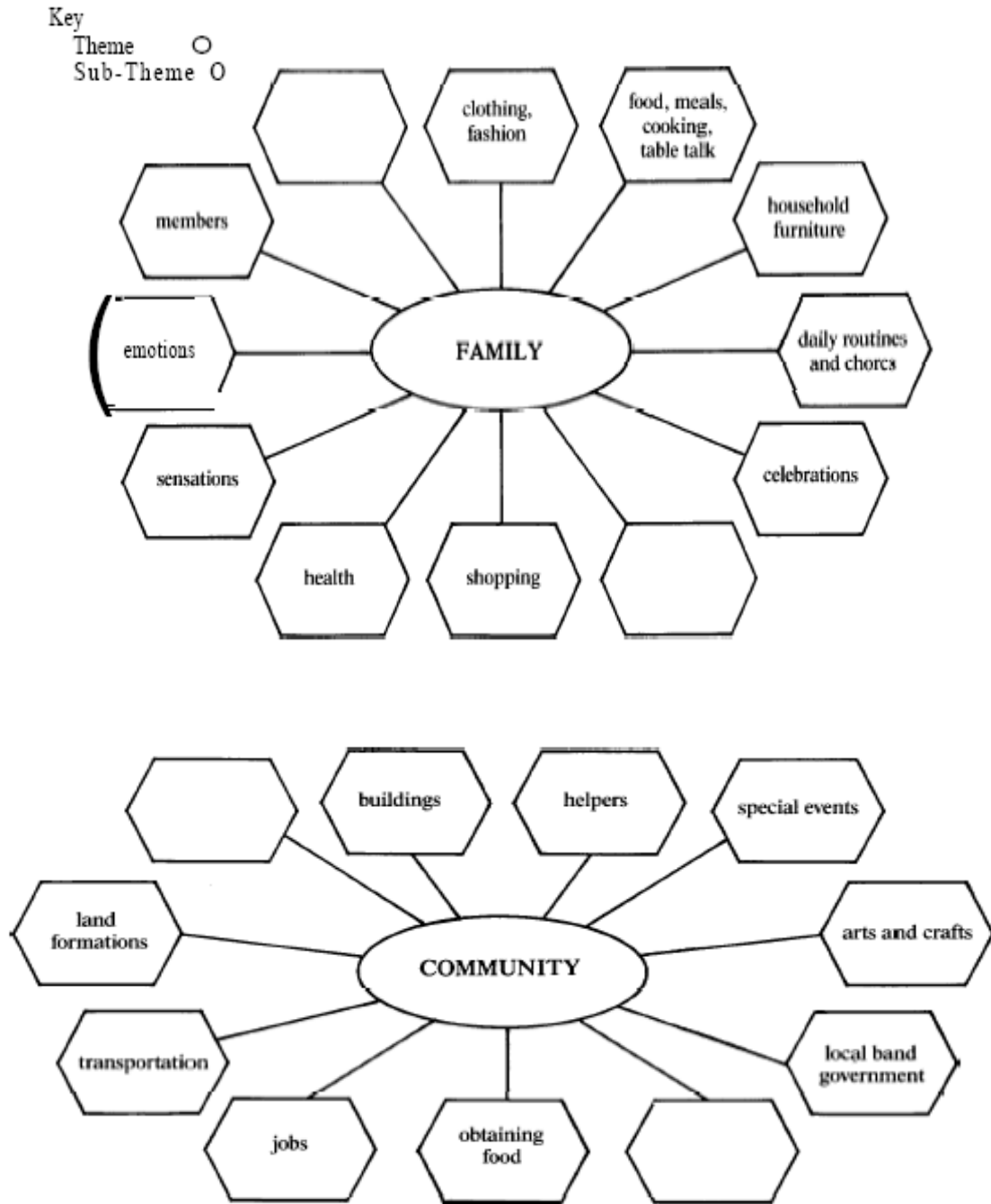


Figure 35
 Ontario Language Community Framework

Although the language program primarily aims to teach language, this aim cannot be separated from that of culture, for they are not “two separate processes. Cultural

awareness and understanding, like language learning, are cumulative. The cultural content of the NSL [Native Second Language] program should be derived from and form a part of the language teaching, and should be incorporated into units of study” (1987, 48).

The curriculum also offers a time allocation based on the four components of language study: listening, reading, speaking, and writing. This time allocation is available for all the grade levels. There are also sample lesson plans with suggested resources. The end of the document provides an assessment section that offers the teacher multiple approaches to continuous student evaluation. This section has an evaluation grid with detailed criteria to help the teacher in assessing the students. Though there is no mention as to how this section corresponds to Aboriginal learning.

An interesting section provides a checklist for lesson planning. The teacher should take a hard look at each lesson while asking the following questions:

- Do the objectives of the lesson fit within the rationale of the unit as a whole?
- Is the proportion of practice in each of the four language skills suitable to the age and language experience of the students?
- Will the students learn and practise new and review material in contexts that are meaningful to them?
- Are the activities organized so that each student will be actively engaged most of the time?
- Are the activities designed so that each student can work at something that is challenging but not too difficult?
- Are group activities planned so that students can have opportunities to interact with each other for their mutual benefit?
- Are the activities sufficiently varied to keep the students interested?
- Is each learning activity approached from a variety of angles so that students can learn and practise in various contexts?
- Is a review of previously taught material incorporated in the lesson?
- Is there provision in this lesson for informal assessment of student progress?
- Have the choice and development of the materials in the lesson made the best use of available resources?

- Will all the elements of the lesson combine to create an experience for the students that bolsters their confidence in what they know, stimulates their interest in learning more, and increases their respect for the Native language and culture?

*Curriculum Guideline Primary,
Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions, Native Languages, 1987, 62-3*

Finally, there is a section on assessment of locally developed Aboriginal language programs. Included are questions for periodical evaluation to ensure that the program meets the needs of students and the local community.

10.2.4 The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8: Native Languages

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
33	4.95	6.71	6.00	5.51

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Native language program for Grades 1 to 8 has been designed to provide a dynamic and challenging curriculum. It has been developed to provide: (a) a general understanding of the nature and function of language...; (b) a foundation of language knowledge and skills in the Native language under study that will enable students to communicate in the Native language; and (c) an understanding and appreciation of the Native language as an expression of a distinctive culture. The ultimate goal of the Native language program is to inspire Native students with pride in their ancestral language and to motivate them to use it to communicate in their daily lives – to use it, in other words, as a living language that is part of a living culture.

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, Native Languages, 2001, p 4

This document supersedes *Curriculum Guideline Primary, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions, Native Languages* of 1987, upon which it is founded. All Native language programs in Grades 1 to 8 will have to comply with the curriculum expectations outlined in this document. There have been some minor changes, such as having the students develop their language skills in all three (instead of four) areas of language use – oral communication, reading, and writing.

The curriculum was written to prepare elementary students for more senior levels of Native language learning, with students entering at the secondary 3 level. The document has two parts: curriculum expectations and achievement levels. The first part describes the knowledge and skills that students should develop and demonstrate in their class for work, tests, and various other activities assessed at that grade level. The achievement levels are to be used in assessing students' progress in attaining the expectations.

Two sets of expectations are listed for each grade.

1. The overall expectations describe in general terms the knowledge and skills that students should achieve in all strands, or broad curriculum areas, by the end of each grade. These expectations are to be modified only slightly to indicate a higher level of difficulty.
2. The specific expectations describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail. Consequently, a sequential grade progression is more obvious with the specific expectations. There is a further division into three interconnected strands:
 - a) oral communication, including listening and speaking;
 - b) reading; and
 - c) writing.

During the early grades (1-3), oral skills are emphasized while at later levels “all ~~four~~ [three] will be developed” with increased time spent on reading and writing in grades 4-8. The curriculum does give a time allotment for the three language skills.

Special attention is given to Aboriginal oral tradition. “Teachers should plan learning experiences that will allow students to listen to and retell traditional Native stories, legends, and histories, and to sing traditional songs... [also] Native language programs should aim to develop language skills in contexts that students will see as useful and relevant. The programs should be designed so that elements from the other curriculum areas are integrated into the language program” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2001, 8). Students will thus be better able to interconnect ideas, people, the environment, and life “outside the school.”

The document is one of the only ones in Canada to present the responsibilities and roles of students, parents, teachers, the community, and principals.

Students have responsibilities with respect to their learning, which increase as they advance through elementary and secondary school. Students who are willing to make the effort required and who are able to apply themselves will soon learn that there is a direct

relationship between achievement and hard work, and will be motivated to work as a result. There will be some students, however, who will find it more difficult to take responsibility for their learning because of special challenges they face. For these students, the attention, patience, and encouragement of Native-language teachers can be extremely important factors for success. However, regardless of their circumstances, learning to take responsibility for their progress and achievement is an important part of education for all students.

Role of the Student, page 10

As noted earlier, there are achievement levels. This section provides an evaluation chart that allows teachers, if desired, to evaluate the progress of their students.

Achievement Chart – Native Languages, Grades 1–8

Knowledge/Skills	Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
Communication	The student communicates:			
	– with limited accuracy and clarity in structured situations	– with some accuracy and clarity in structured situations	– with considerable accuracy and clarity in both structured and informal situations	– with a high degree of accuracy and clarity in both structured and informal situations
	– using few of the required basic forms and structures, and little of the required vocabulary	– using some of the required basic forms, structures, and vocabulary	– using most of the required basic forms, structures, and vocabulary	– using all or almost all of the required basic forms, structures, and vocabulary

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, Native Languages, 2001, p 14

Grade 1: Oral Communication, Reading, and Writing

Overall Expectations

By the end of Grade 1, students will:

- demonstrate basic communication skills;
- talk about familiar topics using simple words;
- use both verbal and non-verbal cues to understand spoken language;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of vocabulary and language structures appropriate for this grade;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the reading process;
- demonstrate a basic understanding of the writing system used in the program;
- demonstrate an appreciation and understanding of aspects of the Native culture under study.⁴

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8, Native Languages, 2001, p 19

Several elements are missing from this curriculum: holism, greater elder involvement, appropriate assessment, role of relationships/place, the land, spirituality, an overall diagram for easier understanding, more resource material, and example lesson plans and how they meet the expectations (objectives) of the guide. The curriculum could also be made easier to revise and enlarge, in line with community needs. Finally, it could be made easier to read and comprehend.

10.2.5 Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10: Native Languages

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
34	3.05	6.29	4.62	4.01

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The *Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Language* was published in 1999 before *Native Languages Curriculum 1-8*. It replaces sections in *The Common Curriculum: Policies and Outcomes, Grades 1–9, 1995* that relate to Native languages, and the parts of the curriculum guideline entitled *Native Languages, Part A: Policy and Program considerations, Primary, Junior, Intermediate, and Senior Divisions, 1987* that relate to Grade 10.

This program does not intend to create bilingual speakers but rather offer an opportunity to develop “a functional command of a Native language, which can be expanded through further study or through contact with other speakers of the language” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999a, 3).

The following diagram shows the levels of proficiency that students may have when entering the Native language program.

Courses in Native Languages, Levels 1–3

Level	Course Name	Course Type	Course Code	Credit Value	Prerequisites
1	Native Languages (NL1)	Open	LNAAO–LNOAO	1	
2	Native Languages (NL2)	Open	LNABO–LNOBO	1	At least four years of study of a Native language in elementary school, successful completion of NL1, or demonstrated proficiency
3	Native Languages (NL3)	Open	LNACO–LNOCO	1	Successful completion of NL2 or demonstrated proficiency

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Languages, 1999a, p 5

The program uses the same concepts—general expectations, specific expectations, and achievement levels— as for grades 1-8. There are differences because the grades are divided into three levels of beginning proficiency (starting levels). The achievement chart can still be used to evaluate students, but provides no indication as to other possible evaluations.

Many previous criticisms still apply. Areas of deficiency include holism, elder involvement, appropriate assessment, role of relationships/place, the land, spirituality, overall diagram for easier understanding, resource material, and example lesson plans and how they meet the expectations (objectives) of the guide. The curriculum could also be made easier to revise and enlarge, in line with community needs. It could furthermore be made easier to read and comprehend. Finally, it could give more emphasis to Aboriginal culture, the responsibilities of students, parents, communities, teachers, and principals, and the time allocations for each general expectation.

10.2.6 Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12: Native Languages

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
35	3.05	6.29	4.62	4.01

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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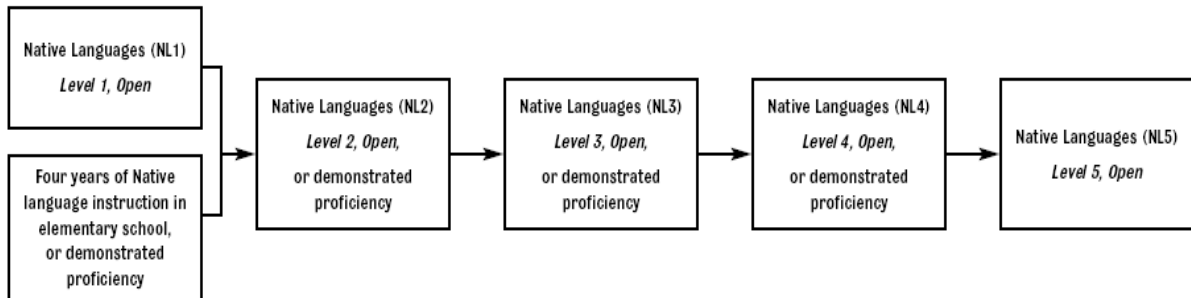
This curriculum is designed for use in conjunction with *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 to 12: Program Planning and Assessment, 2000*, which contains information on all disciplines in the curriculum. Any Native language course that is developed by a community must adhere to the objectives outlined in this curriculum. The *Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12: Native Languages* continues the previous *Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10: Native Languages* with no difference in design. This curriculum is better and explains how the Native language levels work during the final 5 years of schooling and how the students progress from one level to the next (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000a).

Students may begin to take one or more of the languages in any high school grade. For this reason, progress is indicated by levels rather than by grades. Five levels are available in the Native language program from Grades 9 through 12. The courses are Native languages, levels 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 (NL1, NL2, NL3, NL4, and NL5).

- NL1 is offered to students with little or no background in a Native language.
- NL2 is offered to students who have studied a Native language for at least four years in elementary school, or who have successfully completed NL1 or a test indicating proficiency at the NL1 level.
- NL3 is offered to students who have successfully completed NL2 or a proficiency test.
- NL4 is offered to students who have successfully completed NL3 or a proficiency test.

- NL5 is offered to students who have successfully completed NL4 or a proficiency test.

Prerequisite Chart for Native Languages



The Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Languages, page 4

“This document contains the curriculum expectations for NL4 and NL5. In NL4 and NL5, emphasis is placed on developing students’ ability to communicate in increasingly complex ways and on integrating Native philosophy, spirituality, and values with the study of language” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000a, 3). Of course there is no specific mention of how the teacher is to go about teaching these concepts. There is a general assumption that the teachers will actually include some of this content.

The program uses the same concepts—general expectations, specific expectations, and achievement levels—for grades 1-8 and grades 9-10. The achievement chart can still be used to evaluate students, but provides no indication as to other possible types of evaluation. Many of the same criticisms apply and will not be repeated here.

10.2.7 Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12: Native Languages Delaware

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
36	2.57	5.00	3.08	3.16

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Delaware curriculum is intended for teachers. It is not intended as a textbook for use in class. It explains the make-up and structure of the Delaware language, but none of the material may be readily used in the classroom, either as a lesson plan or as a means of evaluation. The onus is clearly on the individual teacher (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2003).

Greater foundational use could have been made of the Delaware culture. The same ideas as previously mentioned could have been developed to make the work of the teachers much easier, and to allow longer-term development.

10.2.8 Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12: Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
37	2.57	5.00	3.08	3.16

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Ojibwe and Cree language curriculum is intended for teachers. Once again, as with the Delaware curriculum, it is not a textbook for use in class. It explains the make-up and

structure of the Delaware language, but none of the material may be readily used in the classroom either as a lesson plan or as a means of evaluation. The onus is clearly on the individual teacher (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2002).

Greater foundational use could have been made of the Ojibwe and Cree cultures. This curriculum suffers from the shortcomings listed in the preceding section.

10.2.9 Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10: Native Studies

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
38	5.57	6.86	5.15	5.75

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In 1999, Ontario updated its education program for Native studies at the grades 9-12 levels. This program now enables both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students to gain greater understanding of Indigenous peoples. The students should have first, at the elementary level, compared Canada’s different cultures by examining “lifestyles from different geographic settings, and study[ing] the accomplishments of important people in Canada” (Ontario Ministry of Education, 1999b, 3). The Grade 7 and 8 history and geography program lays emphasis “on the partnerships and alliances between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in Canada before 1867, as well as the experiences of Aboriginal peoples within the Canadian nation during the final decades of the nineteenth century.” In the introduction they write that “Native Studies is integrative.... when students examine the terms of a treaty negotiated by an Aboriginal nation with the Crown, they are combining both Native studies and history. When they use the works of Aboriginal writers to study the theme of renewal, they are combining Native studies and English. Similarly, when they use multimedia resources to create art forms about contemporary Aboriginal issues, they are combining Native studies with art” (1999b, 3).

The curriculum mentions that Native studies can be combined with subjects from other disciplines to create an interdisciplinary course. “The policies and procedures regarding the development of interdisciplinary courses are outlined in the interdisciplinary studies curriculum policy document” (1999b, 3).

The curriculum is divided into two grade levels. The first one, Grade 9, explores Aboriginal cultures and is entitled *Expressing Aboriginal Cultures*. The Grade 10 course looks at contemporary Aboriginal history in *Aboriginal Peoples in Canada*. These courses are open. They may be entered at any point, thus making the curriculum a discrete or flat model program.

Expressing Aboriginal Cultures, Grade 9, Open

This course examines Aboriginal cultures in Canada through an exploration of art forms - painting, sculpture, storytelling, dance, and music - created by Aboriginal artists. Students will learn to identify Aboriginal art forms and describe relationships between the art forms and Aboriginal traditions, philosophy, and culture. Students will also create their own art forms to express their understanding of Aboriginal identity, relationships, and sovereignty.

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies, page 7

Aboriginal Peoples in Canada, Grade 10, Open

This course emphasizes historical and contemporary issues that affect the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian governments. Students will examine legal, political, social, and economic issues; key aspects of the Indian Act and its revisions that have an impact on the daily lives of Aboriginal persons; the different types of relationships that Aboriginal peoples have established with other nations throughout history; and the methodology of historical inquiry.

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies, page 12

Each level has overall expectations and specific expectations. The expectations for Native studies are organized into four distinct but related strands: Identity, Relationships, Sovereignty, and Challenges. The course entitled Aboriginal Peoples in Canada has an additional strand: Methods of Historical Inquiry.

Two sets of expectations are listed for each *strand*, or broad curriculum area, of each course. The *specific expectations* describe the expected knowledge and skills in greater detail.

Strand: Relationships

Overall Expectations

By the end of this course, students will:

- demonstrate understanding of the relationships among Aboriginal peoples, their environments, and art forms;
- identify how specific Aboriginal art forms reflect aspects of the society that produced them;
- produce art forms that demonstrate Aboriginal relationships

The Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies, page 9

Many of the criticisms are the same as with the previous Native language curricula. Nonetheless, there are mentions of the land and relationships/place. There are also time allocations for teaching and assessment. An achievement chart tracks progress and identifies four categories of knowledge and skills: knowledge/understanding, thinking/inquiry, communication, and application. These categories encompass all of the curriculum expectations. More detailed information on achievement levels, assessment, evaluation, and reporting policy is provided in *The Ontario Curriculum, Grades 9 and 10: Program Planning and Assessment, 1999*.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/nativestudies910curr.pdf>

10.2.10 Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12: Native Studies

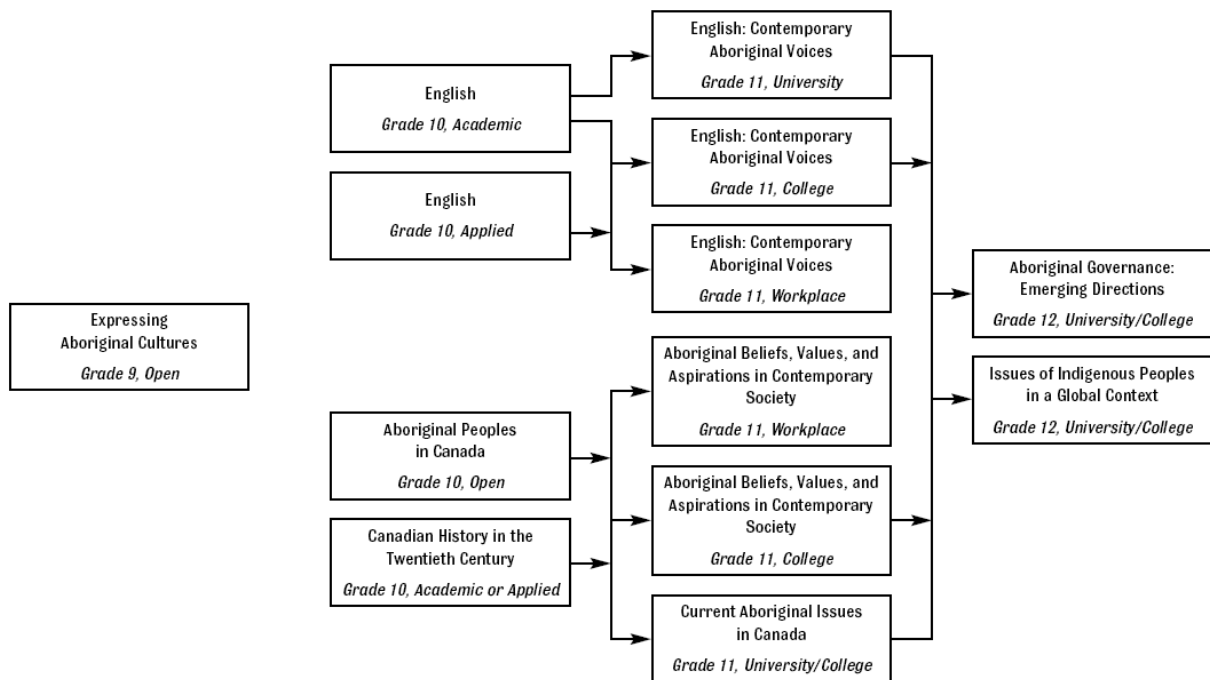
Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
39	6.19	7.00	5.85	6.28

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Eight individual Native studies courses are available in grades 11 and 12: six in Grade 11, and two in Grade 12. These courses prepare the student for university, college, or the workplace. Students in the Grade 11 courses focus on how various Aboriginal peoples define themselves and their communities, and on their visions of the future. In the Grade 12 courses, students examine political, social, economic, and cultural issues relevant to Aboriginal peoples both in Canada and in the rest of the world. The objectives are once again broken down into overall expectations, specific expectations, and strands (Ontario Ministry of Education, 2000b).



The teaching approach should reach beyond the usual sources and include Aboriginal community-based resources, Aboriginal elders, and electronic media. The curriculum emphasizes the land, place, relationships, time allocation for each course, student assessment, holism, elder involvement, nature, and spirituality. It speaks very often of Aboriginal culture, and is easy to comprehend and read. A readily available achievement chart identifies four categories of knowledge and skills: knowledge/understanding, thinking/inquiry, communication, and application. These categories encompass all of the curriculum objectives.

Many of the criticisms are the same as those we have seen with the previous Native language curricula.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/curriculum/secondary/nativestudies1112curr.pdf>

10.3 Nishnawbe Aski Nation

In Ontario, the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), through the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre, has developed many teaching materials (www.occc.ca). The Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre is a non-profit organization that was established in 1975 under Grand Council Treaty #9. It is now known as the Nishnawbe Aski Nation



(NAN) and is funded through Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (INAC) Cultural Education Centres Program. The centre is managed by a board of directors who represent each tribal council area of the NAN territory. The tribal councils are:

1. Independent First Nations: Flying Post, Mishkeegogamang, Mocrebec Council of the Cree Nation, Sandy Lake, Weenusk
2. Independent First Nations Alliance: Muskrat Dam, Pikangikum, Lac Seul
3. Keewaytinook Okimakanak: MacDowell Lake, Poplar Hill, Deer Lake, North Spirit Lake, Keewaywin, Fort Severn

4. Matawa First Nations: Hornepayne, Constance Lake, Ginoogaming, Long Lake #58, Aroland, Marten Falls, Eabametoong, Neskantaga, Webequie, Nibinamik
5. Mushkegowuk Council: Moose Cree, Fort Albany, Kashechewan, Attawapiskat, Chapleau Cree, Taykwa Tagamou, Missanabie Cree
6. Shibogama First Nation Council: Wunnumin Lake, Wapekeka, Wawakapewin, Kingfisher, Kasabonika
7. Wabun Tribal Council: Wahgoshig, Beaverhouse, Matachewan, Mattagami, Chapleau Ojibwe, Brunswick House
8. Windigo First Nations Council: Bearskin Lake, Sachigo Lake, Cat Lake, Koocheching, North Caribou Lake, Slate Falls, Whitewater Lake

The educational material deals primarily with grades 1 to 6, with some material for intermediate levels. Much of it is about language education. Other material deals with culture, literature, legends, sports and recreation, history, geography, music, and health and welfare at the elementary school level. Unfortunately, none of the communities has a general curriculum guide that describes the objectives of the education to be taught. Many of the nations have a general statement of the importance of education, but few actually have an education program detailing the why and how.

The Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre has created a vision statement of their mandate. The two First Nations developed both the vision and the mandate collectively.

Vision

To fulfill its role within the Nishnawbe Aski Nation (NAN), the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre seeks to:

1. Maintain and strengthen the cultural identity of Aboriginal people in the NAN territory.
2. Develop positive images for Aboriginal people in the NAN communities.
3. Make society aware of the importance of Aboriginal culture as well as develop a better understanding and appreciation of the NAN heritage.

Mandate

1. To encourage and be supportive of the NAN communities in their efforts towards self-determination.

2. To promote and encourage the establishment of library and information services in the communities of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.
3. To develop culturally relevant educational and language materials in the fields of history, spirituality, music, art, photography, and literature.
4. To work with Aboriginal communities and schools on educational and cultural matters.
5. To support and maintain the use of the Aboriginal languages of the Nishnawbe Aski Nation.
6. To promote and assist in cultural events and activities that will help instil and maintain the customs, knowledge, skills, values, and arts of the NAN people.
7. To work and keep in close harmony with other organizations whose aims and objectives are similar to that of the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre.
8. To involve our elders and youth on meeting the objectives of the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre.

In the area of education, the Ojibway and Cree Cultural Centre has developed the following objectives:

1. To provide assistance to the NAN schools, upon request, in the planning and development of school programs, curriculum, and professional development.
2. To provide cross-cultural awareness in mainstream education programs and institutions through presentations, workshops, and conferences.

NAN has created a large catalogue of educational materials for the classroom.

Unfortunately, it has not developed any specific general curriculum material. Often, such regional organizations (FNEC, FNESC, FSIN etc...) exist in a state of limbo, being neither truly a school board nor a political organization. Unfortunately none of them has taken the lead in developing a general Aboriginal curriculum in all subjects. Many have developed curriculum supplements or specific programs, but none has had the time, mandate, or resources for such a large-scale program. The provinces will not develop such material because they primarily serve the general population. If Aboriginals want a general curriculum, they themselves must create the education system they want.

<http://www.occc.ca>

Chapter 11. Curriculum Evaluations, East

11.1 Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
40	1.76	5.86	4.46	3.12

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The education departments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island have produced a general framework for social studies entitled the *Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum* (Governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island, exact date unknown +/- 1998). Its purpose is threefold: 1) to serve as a framework in developing social studies guides in each jurisdiction; 2) to provide a framework that educators and other specialists may consult when making decisions about “learning experiences, instructional techniques and assessment strategies”; 3) to inform both educators and members of the general public about the philosophy and scope of social studies. This curriculum, while having been developed in Canada, is based on material primarily from the National Council for the Social Studies in *Curriculum Standards for Social Studies: Expectation for Excellence* (Bulletin 89, Washington, NCSS, 1994) in the United States (Governments of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, Newfoundland and Labrador, and Prince Edward Island, exact date unknown +/- 1998).

The curriculum incredibly never mentions the words Aboriginal, Indian, or Natives once. There are references to a multicultural Canada. The word Canada is mentioned multiple times. Canada is essentially presented as the only reference structure for society and the world. In addition, how can a curriculum about social relationships and society make no

mention or even consideration of religions and their effect upon society? This curriculum treats subjects in isolation and is very much in line with Western science.

It would have been interesting to have greater foundational use of Aboriginal and Indigenous cultures. Again, the criticisms in the preceding section apply here. The assessment section is nonetheless appropriate and well done, thus enabling teachers and students to develop the best approach to assessment. The approach to various topics shows elements of circular thinking.

11.2 Nova Scotia

11.2.1 Mi'kmaq 10

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
42	unavailable/no evaluation			

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Mi'kmaq 10 curriculum was developed fifteen years ago, with its latest revision being around ten years ago (Personal communication from Candy Palmater (Mi'kmaq), Director of the Mi'kmaq Liaison Office in the Ministry of Education, April 1, 2010). Unfortunately, the Mi'kmaq 10 curriculum cannot be evaluated at present because it is being rewritten at St. –Francis Xavier University under the direction of Dr. Orr, Dean of Education. A number of Mi'kmaq educators and elders are involved in this major revision. One of the main reasons is that the older version combines the Maliseet and Mi'kmaq cultures in a single document. It is felt that this did not serve the best interests of the Maliseet and Mi'kmaq communities. The newer version will be ready in the fall of 2010 and will deal only with Mi'kmaq culture. The textbook is also being revised because various materials need to be brought into line with copyright law. The textbook

is by Robert M. Leavitt (1997) and is entitled: *Maliseet & Micmac: First Nations of the Maritimes* (personal communication, Darrell DesRoches, Aboriginal/Diversity Specialist, P.E.I Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, December 9, 2009). Copyright issues make the distribution of the original version difficult. Thanks go to Candy Palmater at the Mi’kmaq Liaison Office for the above information.

11.2.2 Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
43	5.57	5.29	4.31	5.26

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi’kmaq of Nova Scotia was developed in 2007 under the guidance of Dr. Donald M. Julien and the Confederacy of Mainland Mi’kmaq. The title “Kekina’muek” is a Mi’kmaw word for “study” or “learn.” This 10-chapter curriculum is to be used as a supplement in the classroom to teach Mi’kmaq culture and history. Each chapter covers different topics, such as:

1. *The Story Begins* details archaeology and geology as it relates to ancient sites used by the Mi’kmaq.
2. *Meet the Mi’kmaq of Yesterday and Today* explains the hierarchy of Mi’kmaw leadership at the time of European contact and in modern times as well as traditional lands and customs;
3. *From Legends to Modern Media* explains the importance of language, Mi’kmaw language, oral tradition, the written word, the decline of the Mi’kmaw language, Mi’kmaw language today, and Mi’kmaw media;
4. *The Evolution of Mi’kmaw Education* explains traditional Mi’kmaw education, the role of elders in Mi’kmaw education, the European influence on Mi’kmaw education, the Mi’kmaw educator, the role of the federal government, residential schools as a

detrimental experience, integrated education, Mi'kmaw education in the 21st century, and community colleges and customized training;

5. *The Challenge of Identity* explains who is Mi'kmaq, North American citizens, the Jay Treaty, external control of Indian status, Indians become Canadian citizens, the Indian registry, creation of "Indian Bands," the *White Paper* policy, constitutional protection, Bill C-31, and status;
6. *Mi'kmaw Spirituality and Organized Religion* explains traditional Mi'kmaw beliefs, sacred symbols, and the introduction of Christianity;
7. Entertainment and Recreation;
8. *A Oneness with Nature* explains traditional knowledge and the use of natural resources, the fight for natural resources, land occupation;
9. *Governing a Nation* provides an overview of the traditional Mi'kmaw system of government and the challenges faced by Native peoples today; and
10. *Freedom, Dependence and Nation Building* is concerned with tracking the ever-changing relationship between Mi'kmaq and Canadian governments.

The curriculum is essentially sample lesson plans that the students may use directly in class. At the end of each chapter, it offers the teacher resource material that may be used to supplement the lesson plan material according to the grade level. The chapters are easy to follow and consistently written. Unfortunately, the curriculum was not developed enough. It would have been excellent with more development by grade level, evaluation suggestions, and defined primary and secondary objectives. More use of elders in the classroom could also be suggested. If a teacher has little experience with Aboriginals, he or she would benefit from a list of Aboriginal elders to contact. Such a service could be made available through the local cultural centre.

11.3 Prince Edward Island

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
45	unavailable/no evaluation, see Mi'kmaq 10			

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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In the 1990s, at a Western Prince Edward Island rural high school where most of the province's Aboriginal students attended, the principal noticed problems in the supports available to Aboriginal students. He felt the best manner to proceed would be to raise the students' awareness of Mi'kmaq culture. The students deserved a better portrayal of Aboriginal cultures than the one currently provided in school textbooks. "The more students could learn about the past, treaty rights, etc, the better equipped they would be to understand the present circumstances and a brighter future" (Clark, 2007).

A curriculum guide *Native Studies 801* was developed from Nova Scotia's *Mi'kmaq 10*. It was initially a pilot project. Although *Native Studies 801* uses a Nova Scotia curriculum, there are units directly related to PEI's Aboriginal situation (Clark, 2007). Eventually, in conjunction with Aboriginal groups from Eastern PEI, another local pilot program was started. The curriculum has recently been renamed *Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada* and is to be updated in 2010. In 2006-2007, it was taught in an urban high school by the province's only self-identified Mi'kmaq educator. Unfortunately, due to movement of personnel, the teacher has moved to another position in the Ministry of Education (personal communication with Darrel DesRoches, December 9, 2009).

The course positively reflects many aspects of Mi'kmaq culture, history, language, folklore, government, and spirituality, both locally and regionally. It emphasizes using elders and Aboriginal community members to assist instruction. English is the principal language of instruction although some Mi'kmaq language has been incorporated into

specific units. The students are both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. It is hoped that “the inclusion of Aboriginal content and perspective will lead to increased understanding and acceptance within the entire school community” of Aboriginal peoples (Clark, 2007).

It was impossible to obtain a hard copy because DesRoches felt it to be almost exactly the same as Nova Scotia’s *Mi’kmaq 10*. It is also not presently used in any school. It was decided not to evaluate it quantitatively because it so closely resembles *Mi’kmaq 10*, which is unavailable.

11.4 New Brunswick - Native Studies 120

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
41	4.86	6.00	4.46	5.01

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Native Studies 120 was developed in 1994 by Ann Sherman (Sherman, 1994). This curriculum was very difficult to obtain from the Ministry of Education; it is available from the Ministry website only if actively requested. Due to the age of the materials and the difficulty in obtaining them, it is doubtful whether any of them are actually used in New Brunswick's schools.

The curriculum guide is divided into the following seven sections:

1. Language and Culture;
2. Religion and Spirituality;
3. Ancient Times;
4. Arts and Crafts;
5. The Land;
6. Colonial Relations; and
7. Contemporary Issues.

	Attitudes toward Land and Environment	Maliseet & Micmac Society	Expressions of Spirituality	Cultural Change and Development
Section 1				
Section 2				
Section 3				
Section 4				
Section 5				
Section 6				
Section 7				

	Mind (Intellectual)	Heart (Emotional)	Spirit (Spiritual)	Body (Physical)
Section 1				
Section 2				
Section 3				
Section 4				
Section 5				
Section 6				
Section 7				

These seven sections are subdivided into key concepts, questions and activities, and sample lesson plans. Throughout the document, there are ideas for teaching strategies and

techniques, such as guest speakers, field trips, simulations, role playing, debates, panel discussions, performances, reading, map making, timelines, diagram illustrations, oral presentations, essays, primary source documents and artefacts, whole class and small group discussion, selected readings, glossary of useful terms, videos and selected teacher readings on Native education.

The objective is to “promote understanding of Micmac and Maliseet perspectives on life in the Maritime provinces – past, present and future.” The sections are not to be taught in sequence, except that the first two are a prerequisite to understanding the other five. To gain some depth in student learning, teachers are advised to choose four sections for teaching in greater detail.

They should try “a variety of teaching approaches...[and] also try a number of different approaches to assessment.” According to the curriculum, children are independent beings who should be “responsible for determining their own assignments and marking criteria.”

The above chart may be used as an evaluation model (p 8). Unfortunately, there is no explanation of how to assess mind, heart, spirit, and body. Obviously, the approach is a four-directional one, but without further explanation, it could be very difficult to understand how it is all connected.

There should be more explicit information about the design of the curriculum (cyclical or linear). Also, the suggested teaching resource materials are too vague. There is a sample lesson plan, but the suggested resource materials are too unclear and far too difficult to obtain. For instance, if a lesson plan mentions that teaching resources for a specific Mi’kmaq custom may be found on page 48 in the resources section, but does not give the original reference (book title and page number), the teacher is placed in a tricky position. If the teacher has little knowledge of Aboriginals and needs to teach the course, additional educational materials would be appreciated in order to teach it adequately.

11.5 Newfoundland

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
44	unavailable/no evaluation			

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Newfoundland has taken no specific measures to develop an Aboriginal curriculum or a general curriculum guide inspired from Aboriginal models. When requested for information by the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC), the Newfoundland Department of Education produced a document that outlined some of the best practices implemented in Newfoundland and Labrador for Aboriginal peoples and education.

In 2005, the Department of Education developed an arts and cultural program called *Cultural Connections*. One component consisted of “identifying and recognizing Aboriginal people who have made significant contribution to enhancing the cultural mosaic of Newfoundland and Labrador” (Government of Newfoundland and Labrador Department of Education, 2007, 1). After consultation with “stakeholders,” it was decided to produce posters for intermediate classrooms depicting Aboriginals and showing their positive cultural and historical contributions to Newfoundland and Labrador. This is the extent of the Aboriginal presence in Newfoundland classrooms. Newfoundland uses the *Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum*, which does not mention Aboriginals even once.

Chapter 12. Curriculum Evaluations, North

12.1 Yukon

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
48	unavailable/no evaluation see British Columbia and Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework			

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Yukon is a full partner in the Western and Northern Canadian Protocol (WNCP), (Section 4.4.3). The British Columbia academic program is thus the foundation of the Yukon curriculum. This curriculum is reported to be adapted to local needs and conditions. There are over 700 school-based personnel in 14 schools. They are supported by 26 curriculum and special needs consultants.

Approximately, 25 per cent of the Yukon student population is of First Nations ancestry (Government of Yukon, 2010a; 2010b).

In August of 2006, the Ministry of Education of the Government of Yukon created the First Nations Programs and Partnerships Unit (FNPPU) in order to: 1) build productive relationships with First Nations; 2) improve the results of First Nation students in the K-12 system; 3) work toward increased levels of cultural inclusion in Yukon schools; 4) provide direct and indirect support to Yukon First Nations, schools, and the Department of Education.

The FNPPU has been working to develop Aboriginal curriculum. Currently, there is under development: 1) a Yukon First Nation-focused Social Studies unit for Grade 4, which will focus on the tradition of potlatches, the geography and languages of the 14 Yukon First Nations, and the meaning of traditional lands; 2) three new titles in the

Yukon First Nation-focused Early Reader NorthWind Books series (to be made available shortly); 4) an adaptation of the British Columbia First Nation Studies 12 course; a video featuring Yukon First Nation Elders for elementary school; and 5) an engagement protocol that will outline best practices on how to get First Nations involved in school activities.

<http://www.education.gov.yk.ca/>

12.1 Nunavut

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
47	unavailable/no evaluation see Northwest Territories and Inuit Qaujimagatuqangit (IQ)			

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Territory of Nunavut is in a unique situation in Canada. Aboriginals make up most of the population, and Inuit control many of the institutions. This situation nonetheless seems to have had little effect on the development of a general Aboriginal curriculum covering all subjects in Nunavut. Nunavut still uses an amalgamation of various self-developed curricula, as well as curricula developed by various other governments (such as the Northwest Territories, Alberta, and Manitoba). For instance, *Inuuqatigiit* (Section 4.4.7.3) is a curriculum developed in 1996 by the Northwest Territories. Currently, Nunavut uses it as the foundational curriculum for all teaching (Government of Nunavut, 2006). Nunavut Education is in the process of developing various curricula in different subjects that will better reflect local knowledge.

At the higher grade levels (grades 10-12) the academic program is based on the Alberta curriculum, except for mathematics (which is based on learning outcomes from Manitoba). For lower grades, the curriculum for almost all subjects is based on the one

from the Northwest Territories, except for mathematics (which uses the Western Canada Protocol Framework curriculum, Section 4.4.3.2). For more information, the document *Nunavut Approved Teaching Resources of 2006-2007* should be consulted (Government of Nunavut, 2006).

The Department of Education is very committed to the use of elders in translating core Inuit Qaujimagatunqangit (IQ) values and beliefs into working models for school improvement. To this end, elders have been hired as cultural advisors in the Curriculum and School Services section of the Department of Education. They have four of the thirteen available positions. Several committees also meet to discuss and advise on curriculum development. The Elders' Advisory Committee is a steering committee of about 20 Elders that meets twice annually. There are also foundational advisory groups for each of the four curriculum strands, with additional working groups in each curriculum strand for the various levels (grades). These groups each meet 3-4 times annually (McGregor, 2007).

An entirely Inuit curriculum covering all subjects has not been developed even though Nunavut and the Inuit have technically had control over their own lives for over 10 years. Curriculum creation has been piecemeal. Often various models in larger curriculum subjects better reflect an Aboriginal perspective. This is true in subjects such as Nunavusiutit, Nunavut Studies, Environmental Science (grades 7-9); Uqausiliriniq, Communication and Literacy (grades 10-12); and Iqqaqqaukkaringniq, Innovation and Technology (grades 11 and 12). The interrelationships would be much clearer if a diagram explained how the various subjects and curricula from Alberta, Manitoba, the NWT, and Western Canada interrelate. Also questionable are the unity of the curriculum and its relevance to the needs of Nunavut students.

It was very difficult to obtain information from the curriculum section of Nunavut. In fact I was never able to talk with the personnel or communicate with them by e-mail. Thus, the information here (which comes from their website) should be treated with some

caution. Nunavut teachers certainly have better information about the academic program they must follow.

12.2 Alaska, The Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
9	4.81	6.71	5.23	5.27

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource comes from Alaska and was developed in 1999 by Dr. Dolly Garza. It attempts to bring “Alaska Native science and ecological understanding into the elementary classroom to: 1. Increase the self-esteem of Native students who traditionally perform low in science, and 2. Introduce students to this type and value of knowledge.” The emphasis is on the elementary classroom because that is where “children often establish lifelong beliefs and values” (Garza, 1999, 1).

This hybrid curriculum describes Alaskan Tlingit culture with reference to the lunar and tidal cycles. Western and Aboriginal perspectives are presented equally. For instance, the Alaska Department of Education 1996 science curriculum is used as the basis for the *Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource*. Garza (page 3) writes that the Tlingit curriculum has several objectives, including:

A.4: Understand observable natural events such as tides ...and moon phases....

A.15: Use science to understand and describe the local environment.

B.1: Use scientific processes-observation, measure, interpret, infer, communicate, and predict.

C.4: Understand that some personal and societal beliefs accept nonscientific methods for validating knowledge.

D.1: Apply scientific knowledge and skills to understand issues and everyday events.

Garza (p 4) also writes that the Tlingit science curriculum meets US *National Science Standards*, which are not mandatory but simply provide guidance to schools and teachers as they develop K–12 school curricula. The standards are:

- For content standard A, which focuses on scientific inquiry (asking and answering questions), observation is combined with what students already know to help explain what they see.
- For content standard B, which addresses the position and motion of objects relative to other objects, the tide’s motion can be tracked and measured over time.
- For content standard D (objects in the sky and changes in earth and sky), students will learn to identify sequences of change in both moon and tide and look for patterns in these changes.
- Under content standard G, students will understand, by looking at Alaska Natives’ views of the moon and tides, that science and technology have been practiced by people for a long time.

Tlingit moon and tide teaching resource: elementary level, 1999, p 4.

The curriculum has many activities and easy-to-follow lesson plans. Elders are very much involved in the teaching of material. It is not known whether elders and other knowledgeable community members were involved in building the curriculum and standards. There was little involvement, however, from parents, the community, and the larger community. More involvement from the larger community would have been useful in presenting a more holistic vision. There is also a lack of spirituality and the metaphysical, and their connection to science.

12.3 Northwest Territories Education

12.3.1 Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
16	3.71	4.86	4.54	4.11

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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This document is the overall guide for the education program of the Northwest Territories. It brings together the different subjects and indicates what should be used in each subject. The Northwest Territories offers “schooling for [its] children which provides a secure, nurturing environment that reflects the culture of the community in which the school is located, and promotes the participation of educational staff, students, families and the community in making decisions about learning. Schools in the NWT work to promote the balanced growth of students, recognizing and responding appropriately to student diversity, including differences in learning styles and preferences. We teach students how to learn” (Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, 2006, 3). Schooling has five goals: spiritual; physical; intellectual; emotional; and social.

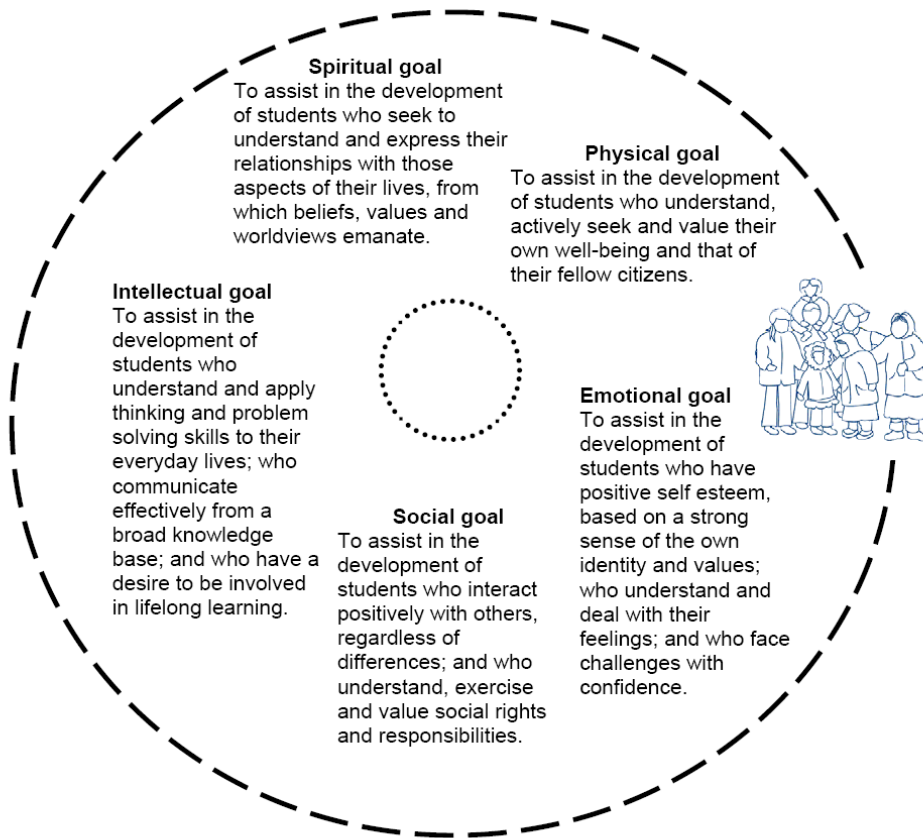


Figure 36

NWT Framework

(Our Students, Our Future, An Educational Framework, 1991)

Children may follow three program types according to their needs, their community, and their family situations. The types are: 1) a regular program determined by the learning

outcomes articulated in the NWT curricula; 2) a modified program that retains the learning outcomes articulated in NWT curricula, typically at a level other than the assigned grade level. Based on student strengths, needs, and interests, a collaborative process is used to determine and document/record necessary program changes; and 3) an individual education program that is a comprehensive written education plan with goals and objectives, determined through a collaborative process, and driven by the student's strengths, needs, and interests. It may or may not include outcomes articulated in NWT curricula.

The NWT has eleven official languages: Inuktitut, Inuinnaqtun, Inuvialuktun, North Slavey, South Slavey, Dogrib (Tlicho), Chipewyan, Gwich'in, Cree, English, and French. Even in the NWT, many Aboriginal languages are struggling for survival and renewal while others "are striving to be maintained; all have a desire to be strengthened" (p 10). For the Department of Education "each community has its own cultural needs and priorities, and each must determine the programs and services that will respond to these priorities... All NWT curricula written from the Northwest Territories' perspective, reflecting the health and vitality of many cultures in a rapidly changing environment. They incorporate traditional knowledge, use northern geographic examples, and are supported by culturally appropriate learning materials. They provide an opportunity for northern students to understand and experience each other's perspectives" (Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, 2006, 10).

Much of the content in current use is from the provincial Alberta curriculum. Many curriculum guides follow the Western Canada Curriculum Frameworks in Mathematics, Social Studies, Language Arts and Science, and so on. Besides the Dene and Inuuqatigiit cultural curricula, counselling for students follows the resource *The Honouring the Spirit of Our Children: A Framework for School Counselling Programs in the NWT* (2004), which represents a more Indigenous worldview.

Little time is given to learning of Indigenous knowledge and culture in the NWT. Such learning currently stands at 7% and comes under the section Local Discretion. If the

NWT decided to introduce an Indigenous and Western science program, understanding and recognition of Indigenous knowledge would increase. The same would hold true for all subjects. Because much of the curriculum comes from multiple sources, it is very difficult to gain an overall understanding of desired outcomes and objectives. There is thus a lack of consistency in wording across subject areas. Is this lack of time for Indigenous culture and this inability to define Indigenous knowledge in different subjects hindering the teaching of this material? Aboriginal knowledge may be seen as marginal by civil servants in the Department of Education (Widdowson & Howard, 2009, 231-48). They talk of spirituality as the general objective, but how does this aim translate into math or science?

The NWT has two Aboriginal cultural programs: *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit*. They incorporate use of Indigenous languages and cultures in the schools, and apparently “provide a framework through which all NWT curricula are taught. Through *Dene Kede* and *Inuuqatigiit* we can sensitize ourselves, each other, and the world outside to Aboriginal cultures, knowledge, values and beliefs” (p 10). Language instruction is also a major part of the curriculum and is interwoven with culture and heritage. A curriculum template for Aboriginal languages is currently being developed.

12.3.2 Dene Kede Curriculum- Teachers Resource Manual

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
17	7.67	6.86	5.38	7.05

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Dene Kede encompasses the language, culture, and ways in which five Dene nations view the world. The teaching themes are drumming, fire, water, rivers, caribou, fish, and earth medicine. They are used to reinforce and teach four central concepts: the Spiritual World,

the Land, the Self, and the People. The purpose is not simply to enhance Dene culture and language, but also to help students develop respect for themselves, other people, the spirit world, and the land. The Dene Kede curriculum is to be taught via a philosophical framework. Originally produced with a lone Dene Kede teacher in mind, it was found to be more successful with many different partners. Definitions are provided of ‘curriculum’ and ‘educational program.’ For the Dene, this document presents the overall guiding

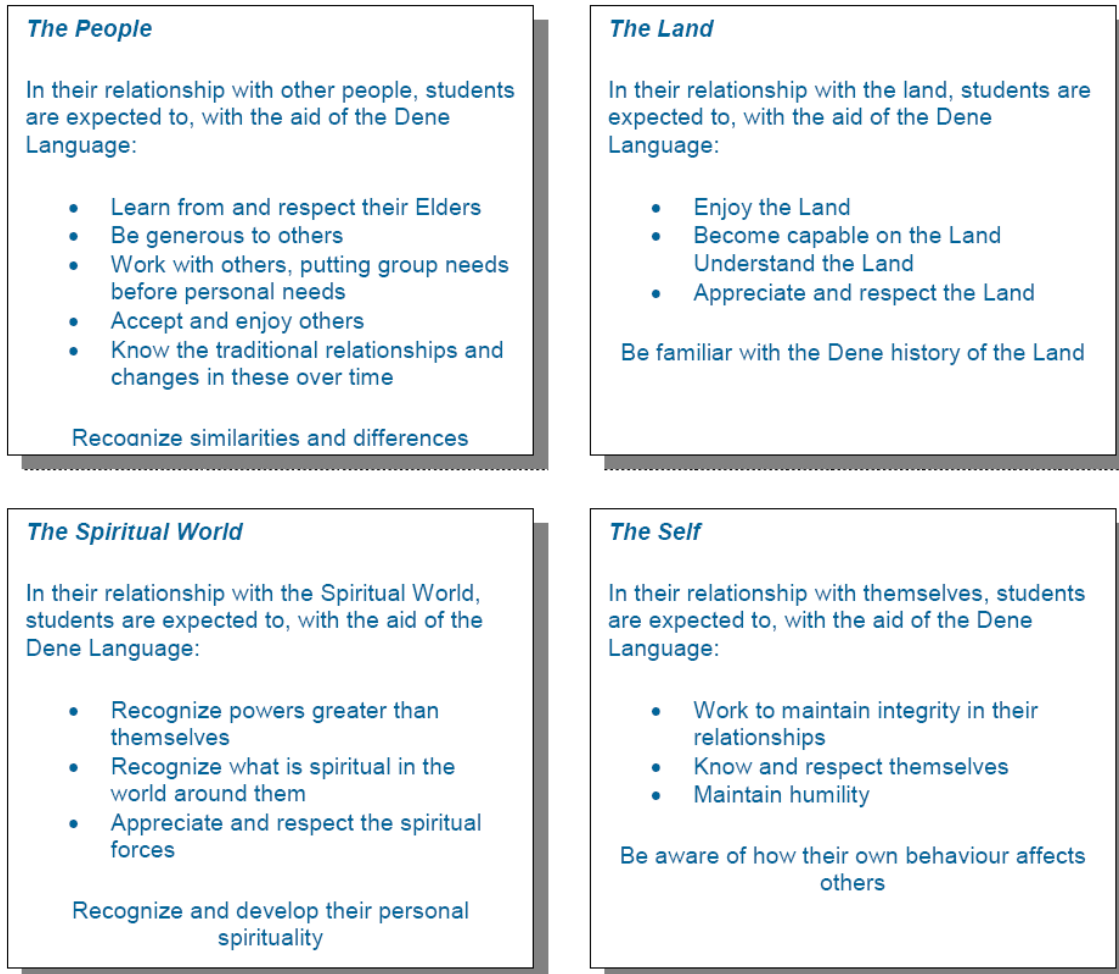


Figure 37

Dene Kede General Expectations, *Dene Kede Teacher's Resource Manual*
Northwest Territories Education, Culture and Employment, page 8

educational philosophy for Dene Kede across the NWT. In each individual school and community, the curriculum is adapted and changed to meet local needs and realities. This localized curriculum is the educational program for the Dene.

The overall goals and general expectations are to allow developing students to become Dene. This aim is accomplished through four areas of the Dene way of life. “In order to survive and to live life to its fullest, Dene students must develop respectful relationships with the Land, the Spiritual World, other people and themselves. These relationships are best developed with the aid of the Dene Elders and their voice which is the Dene Language” (p 8). “The expectations outlined in these terms are what make this curriculum uniquely Dene. When these relationships become the focus of education within a classroom, the classroom takes on a Dene perspective or world view. This is what is meant by Dene culture in this curriculum.” Dene language skills are acquired by students who use them for their first or second language.

Units

Elders and educators have chosen over forty thematic units to represent the Dene worldview and its characteristics. Each unit is grouped into four categories: spirituality, the land and the sky, animals, and people.

Spirituality

Spiritual Power, Drum, Living Force, Fire, One Who Circled the Earth, Prayer

The Land and the Sky

Geography and Land Use, Earth Medicine, Water and Rivers, Sun, Trees, Moon and Stars, Northern Lights, Camping, Plants

Animals

Bear, Muskrat, Fish, Beaver, Rabbit, Fox, Birds, Raven, Moose, Caribou, Shrews and Mice, Muskox, Dog, Spider, Wolf and Trapping.

People

Family, Birth and Death, Clothing, Grandparents, Men and Women, Arrival of the Non-Dene, Parents, Friends, Traditional Games, The Child, Elders, Play Learning Aids, Tribes, Leaders and Eating and Food.

Fish Unit

For instance, the fish unit objectives are:

Spiritual: these expectations help students in understanding or connecting with the spiritual understandings that the Dene have with respect to fish;

Land: these expectations help students develop the skills and knowledge that the Dene have with respect to the physical aspects of fish and fishing;

Other People: these expectations help students understand how the Dene relate to each

other, as determined by activities associated with fish or fishing;

Self: these expectations help students reflect on the significance of the spirituality, knowledge and skills of the Dene with respect to fish and fishing, and become more self-aware as Dene.

Dene Kede Teacher's Resource Manual, p 7

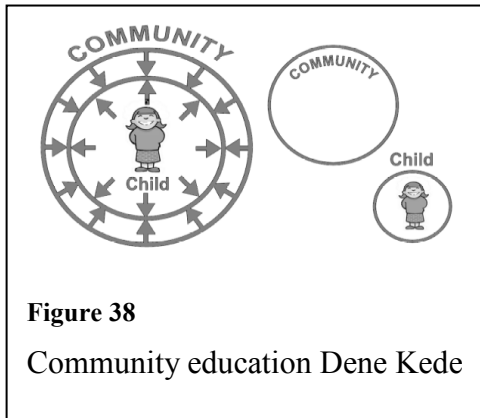


Figure 38

Community education Dene Kede

The curriculum is based on community education.

For too long, students and the community were isolated from each other. Dene Kede gives responsibility back to each individual community for the education of its children. It was developed under guidance by elders and local community members. The children should see themselves and their values reflected in the curriculum.

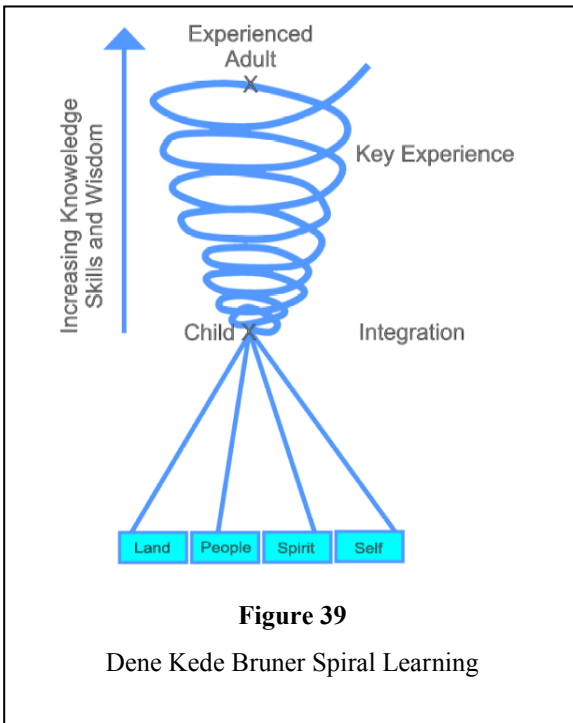


Figure 39

Dene Kede Bruner Spiral Learning

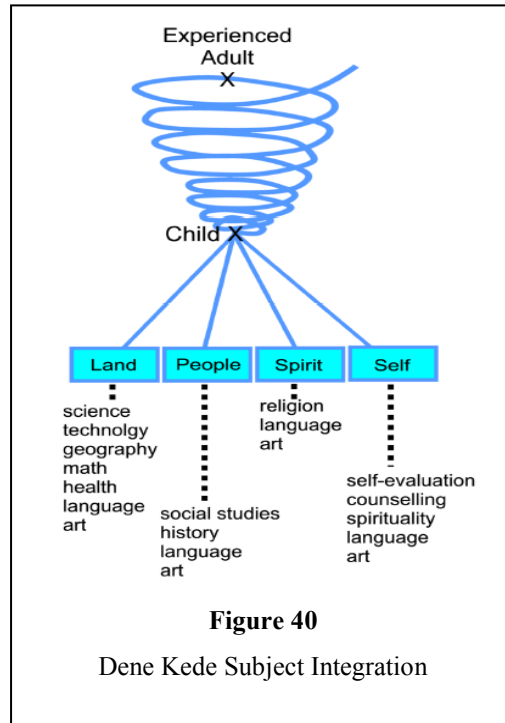


Figure 40

Dene Kede Subject Integration

The Dene Kede curriculum is taught according to a traditional “spiral” model. Traditionally, children would be repeatedly exposed to similar experiences over a given period. At each repetition, they would learn at a more complex or advanced level. “Children learned by: 1) being observant while experiencing; 2) making an individual decision as to when to try to do something on their own; and 3) taking responsibility for what to learn and when” (p 21). Through experiences such as hunting or trapping, they would advance through repetition to more complex levels until full proficiency had been attained.

The Dene Kede curriculum does not separate subjects from each other, be they math, science, religion, language arts, and so on. In Western curriculum guides, students learn these subjects separately and often fail to recognize their value or relationship to the “real world.” With the “Dene Kede program, skills and knowledge learned in these subject areas are tied to the Key Experiences”¹⁰⁴ and all are integrated with the curriculum (p 24).

Analysis

Several criticisms should be made. The thematic units available on the Internet are as yet incomplete. When 30% of the material is missing, it is very difficult for teachers to pursue all the objectives systematically. There are also few clear directives for student assessment. Some indication is provided as to how the students may keep journals, self-assess, and have one-on-one and group sharing to discuss learning, but there are no systematic assessment techniques. This deficiency raises problems for other subjects, such as math, language arts, and science. These subjects have a long established tradition of assessment that might not easily lend itself to group sharing.

¹⁰⁴ Key experiences are culturally authentic, realistic, or natural to the Dene. They are whole experiences rather than parts of an experience, as well as being primarily hands-on or activity-oriented. Usually such activities are experienced over and over in the course of a lifetime, thus leading to steadily higher skill levels.

This leads to another criticism. While the curriculum does have objectives for each thematic unit, there are no grade-specific or level-specific objectives. The result may be a logistical nightmare for teachers. Many schools have a high yearly turnover of teaching staff, and if the teachers cannot adequately determine what the students should already know and what they should learn in the future, their task will become even more difficult.

How can the Dene Kede curriculum influence the subject areas that make up the rest of the NWT curriculum? Will these other subjects be taught according to the principles of the Dene? It is very difficult to comply with the desires of a local community if the curriculum for these subjects has not been written down. The teacher may not be Dene and may stay in the community only for a short while. It is unrealistic to expect such teachers to have a full understanding of Dene knowledge.

George Blondin, a Slavey/Dogrib elder, spoke of his fears in 1999. “The school system teaches them too, that White people is the right way. The school should do their best to find a new system in which education will save the culture. The culture is useful, it should be combined with modern times” (Blondin, 1999, 408).

As for the *Aboriginal Philosophical Questions Framework*, the following observations may be made. It is Aboriginal in vision with grafted Western elements. Dene tradition and knowledge, if the curriculum is properly followed, play an important role.

Spirituality too is given an important role. It is mentioned over 22 times, and very strong Aboriginal values seem to prevail throughout the document. The curriculum is not overt about who should teach, but knowledgeable Aboriginal teachers and specialists would most likely be involved. The high turnover of teaching staff may make this material difficult to teach, especially when it comes to transferring Dene Kede knowledge to subjects like math and science.

The land is given an important role. Unlike the Western language and culture curriculum (Section 4.4.3.1), this curriculum does not have to concern itself with urban youth issues. It is thus specific to a place and a people.

Place and relationships are given extremely important roles. The curriculum is generally cyclical in design. Elders play a major role from the design stage to classroom teaching. Parents are also able to get involved at all stages. Students are treated not as passive receptors but as active players in the learning environment. Even more involved is the community, which takes part in implementing this program. Community members are involved in the 40 thematic units as subjects that require intensive study.

The desired learning outcomes are Aboriginal in nature. The lack of specific directives also gives the teacher ample leeway to adapt the curriculum to a specific situation. In general, the subject matter is treated holistically; unfortunately, the curriculum does not deal with other subjects either adequately or explicitly. Teachers may thus have difficulty in convincing other teachers to work as a team to teach all of the material as an interrelated whole.

It may also be difficult to teach this curriculum in subjects such as math (Goulet, 1998, 27). If Indigenous knowledge is defined as something that must be useful (Kalland, 2000, 325), abstract sciences such as physics and math may become difficult to integrate into the curriculum. To a youth, actual usefulness may be years away from happening. For instance, Grade 10 physics (Alberta) teaches heat loss and retention of various materials. Such knowledge becomes useful only later when, as a homeowner, you need to take it seriously into consideration. Modern schooling has modified the concept of Indigenous knowledge and its application and expression.

Mathematics is difficult to understand by observation. It must be explained and often very explicitly. There is thus always a need to transmit abstract knowledge, sometimes without observation or consideration of usefulness.

http://www.ece.gov.nt.ca/Divisions/kindergarten_g12/indexK12.htm

12.3.3 Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12

Individual Results (consult Appendix VII for Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results and Section 1.1.4.1 for an explanation of the grading scale)

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
18	8.00	6.57	5.23	7.16

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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Inuuqatigiit was developed in 1996 and focuses on enhancing and enriching Inuit culture, heritage, and language. Students learn about Inuit history, traditions, knowledge, values, and beliefs.

The foundation for *Inuuqatigiit* comes from the Inuit philosophy. The name of the curriculum, *Inuuqatigiit* means Inuit to Inuit, people to people, living together, or family to family. It implies togetherness and family unity between peoples. This is the foundation of the curriculum: a unity of Inuit philosophy for the benefit of the children, teachers, schools and communities.

Inuuqatigiit, 1996, page 3

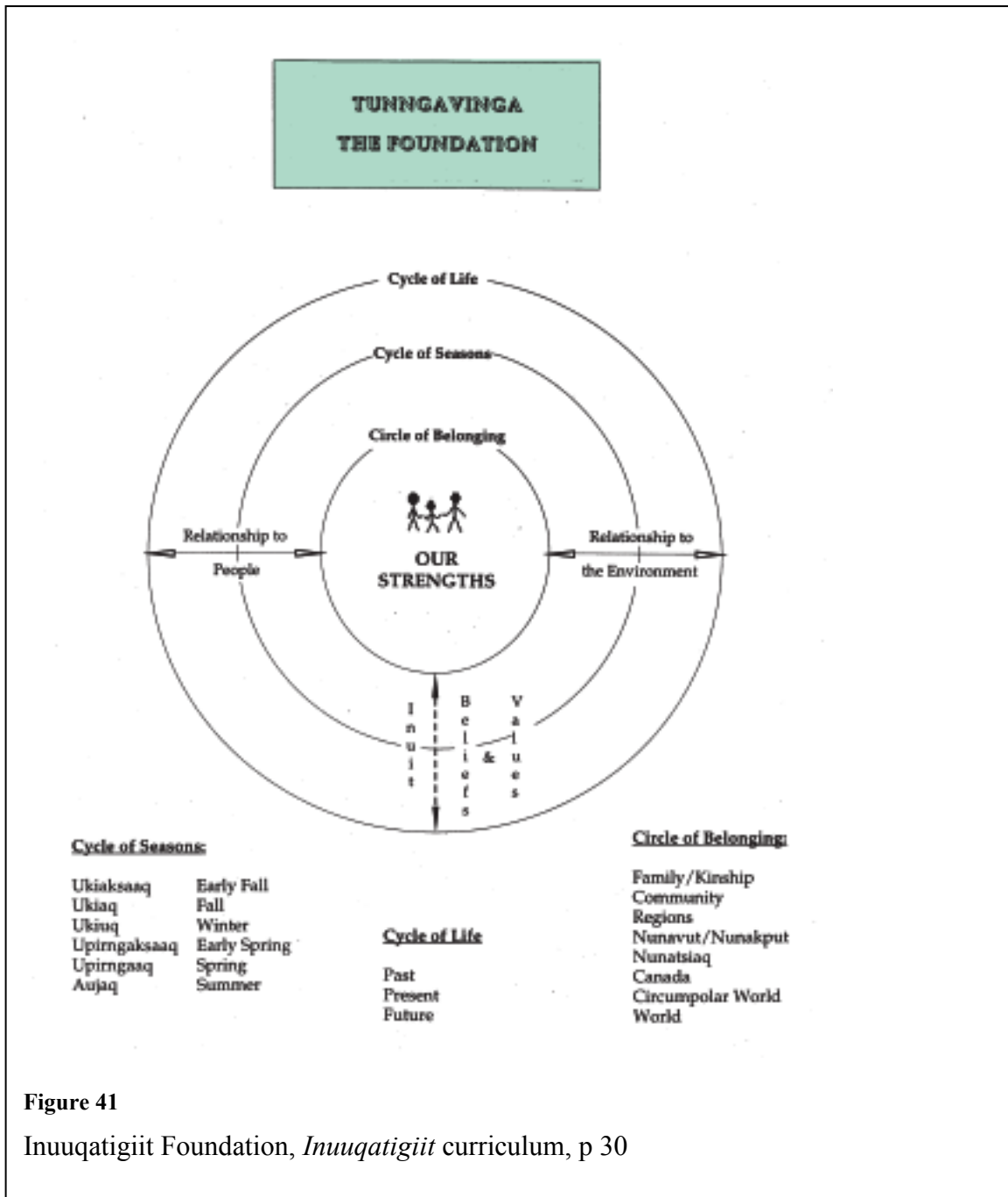
According to *Inuuqatigiit*, the elders were the ones who gave all the necessary information, with many reflections and stories being interwoven with facts. Their knowledge gives *Inuuqatigiit* its true Inuit essence.

The objectives are to:

- Maintain, strengthen, recall and enhance Inuit language and culture in the community and the school
- Enhance unity between Inuit groups
- Create a link between the past and the present
- Encourage the practice of Inuit values and beliefs
- Encourage pride in Inuit identity to enhance personal identity

By attaining some of the above objectives and by encouraging students to work as a team *Inuuqatigiit* will:

- Ensure that a team approach occurs between parents, school and the community;



- Promote traditional and survival skills;
- Promote respect for animals, land, water, sky, people and each other.

Inuuqatigiit, 1996, page 5

Inuuqatigiit is very much based on collaborative effort among elders, parents, children, and communities. Groups are seen as being important to the learning and survival of Inuit

culture. This vision is an extension of the holistic worldview that appears throughout the curriculum.

The curriculum has been divided into several equally important topics. The topics are not isolated but maintain an idea of place and relationship. For the authors of *Inuuqatigiit*, three important principles govern the lives of Inuit peoples and make up the philosophical foundation of this curriculum: The Circle of Belonging, the Cycle of Seasons, and the Cycle of Life. These principles represent the strengths of the Inuit. On them is built the principle of relationships or, as Vine Deloria calls it, place. Relationships are subdivided into those that reach out to people and those that reach out to the environment.

**RELATIONSHIP
TO THE
ENVIRONMENT**



Figure 42
Inuuqatigiit – Relationship to the environment
Inuuqatigiit curriculum, p 90

**RELATIONSHIP
TO PEOPLE**



Figure 43
Inuuqatigiit – Relationship to people,
Inuuqatigiit curriculum, p 36

Land

CYCLE OF LIFE

CYCLE OF SEASONS

CIRCLE OF BELONGING

Grades 7 - 9

Objectives

Students will:

- learn the names of landmarks or landforms around their area and why they have those names;
- understand why the land is important to the Inuit.

Knowledge and Traditions

- Pointers made of rock or wood were left for others to indicate which direction they went.
- The Inuit learned to live completely off the land; they found everything they needed to live on the land.
- Every type of land has a name and history.
- Inuksuit (plural for inuksuk), cache marks, tent areas and rock shelters are important indications there was good game, maybe a festival gathering spot, or an area to which families would travel.

Key Experiences/Activities

- Find out from Elders and hunters about other landmarks that give clues to people for direction, dangers and animal habitat.
- Find out from the community about dangers that can occur on the land.
- Travel by ski-doo, boat or truck and observe a variety of terrain and landmarks further from the community.
- Have the students use a map to identify local landmarks and landforms.
- Have the students go on a short trip. During this trip, have the students write in their journal how the land makes them feel, what they see and what they know. Have them imagine what their emotions would be if they had to survive on the land with just what they have at that moment.
- Have each student choose a landmark or landform and find out the name and why they have that name. Remind them that there is always history and stories behind each one.

Grades 10 - 12

Objectives

Students will:

- develop a habit of telling someone where they will be hunting;
- learn the uses and dangers of the land;
- learn the traditional ways of respecting the land;
- learn to “read” the land, for direction and for signs of animals;
- learn what can harm the land.

Knowledge and Traditions

- Inuit learned to read the land, the sky, and the sea for guidance and direction
- The Inuit learned to live completely off the land; for food, shelter, tools, implements and clothing.
- Inuksuit indicated danger, direction, or migratory routes of animals.
- A small marker was placed near a lake to indicate where there was good fishing.
- Inuit could find which direction to go in even when there was fog or a blizzard by using the skills and knowledge that they learned from others.

Key Experiences/Activities

- Since inuksuit (plural for inuksuk) were made for certain reasons, find out from hunters why inuksuit are placed in your area, also talk about the changing image of inuksuit across the North today.
- Find out from hunters about dangers that can occur when travelling on the land.
- Learn from hunters every necessity that should be taken before going on a trip.
- While on a hunting trip, record, observe or note indications of animals in different terrains.
- Plan a route for a longer trip. This trip can provide an opportunity for students to lead, with guidance. During this trip, combine the traditional and modern way of finding direction. If the opportunity arises, look for signs of a good fishing lake, if there are no signs, perhaps your guide can show the students the traditional way of placing a marker next to a lake with fish.

The example above is taken from the *Relationship to the environment* section. The subject is the land, and the curriculum lists the objectives for grades 7-9 and 10-12. Also included are various ideas for teaching the material in a culturally appropriate way.

Evaluation of learning by the Inuit appears in the section *Traditional Learning and Evaluation*. Traditionally, children would learn initially through observation and then by doing small tasks related to what they had observed. Evaluation was instantaneous, and correction allowed the child to complete the tasks properly. In schools today, a collaborative approach should be used to determine whether modern evaluation techniques meet Inuit cultural standards and how to adapt them or even how to create new evaluation techniques for use in Inuit culture.

Analysis

Several criticisms and observations should be made. The curriculum is Aboriginal in vision with very little grafted Western elements. Inuit tradition and knowledge, when the curriculum is properly followed, are given important roles. Spirituality is also given an important role. It is mentioned multiple times, and very strong Aboriginal values seem to prevail throughout the document. Although the curriculum is not overt about who should teach, this task would most likely fall to knowledgeable Inuit teachers and specialists.

The land is given an important role. Unlike the Western language and culture curriculum (Section 4.4.3.1), this curriculum does not have to concern itself with urban youth issues because it is very specific to the Inuit territory and people. Pauloosie Angmarlik (Pangnirtung), an Inuit elder, has concerns about the teaching of land as a concept at school. Too often, concepts are only taught when the weather is good; students must go out “even if it is not good [weather] so they will learn skills that they need when bad weather hits” (Angmarlik, 1999, 284).

Place and relationships are given extremely important roles. The curriculum is cyclical in design. Elders are given a major role from the design stage to classroom teaching. Parents are also given an opportunity to take part at all stages. Students are not passive receptors, but rather active participants in the learning process. Even more involved is the greater community, although this aspect received the lowest score for this framework.

The desired learning outcomes are Inuit in nature. The lack of specific directives also gives the teacher ample leeway to adapt the curriculum to a specific situation. In general, the subject matter is treated holistically; unfortunately, this curriculum does not deal with other subjects either adequately or explicitly. Teachers may have difficulty in convincing other teachers to work as a team to teach all subject material as an interconnected whole.

This curriculum should be updated with new evaluation techniques that have been developed since 1996 and better represent Inuit culture. Also, adding a resource section would give teachers a better idea of the materials they could use to attain the objectives of *Inuuqatigiit*. After more than 15 years of use in the Northwest Territories,¹⁰⁵ this curriculum could be improved with lesson plans that many teachers have developed for better attainment of its key objectives. Finally, there is no specific time allotment. How much time should be spent on each topic before moving on? Such information might once again reduce the freedom of teachers, but a simple non-binding indication may at times be very useful.

This curriculum clearly is a break from the Western-based curriculum that was available in the NWT before 1996. Much of the material still used in the NWT was and is adapted from the Alberta curriculum. The Inuit, in their efforts to decolonize, have not had to explore this issue to the same degree as have other Aboriginal communities and nations farther south. Their experience with school has often been recent. This recentness has allowed the Inuit and even the Dene Kede (Section 4.4.7.2) to develop their curriculum

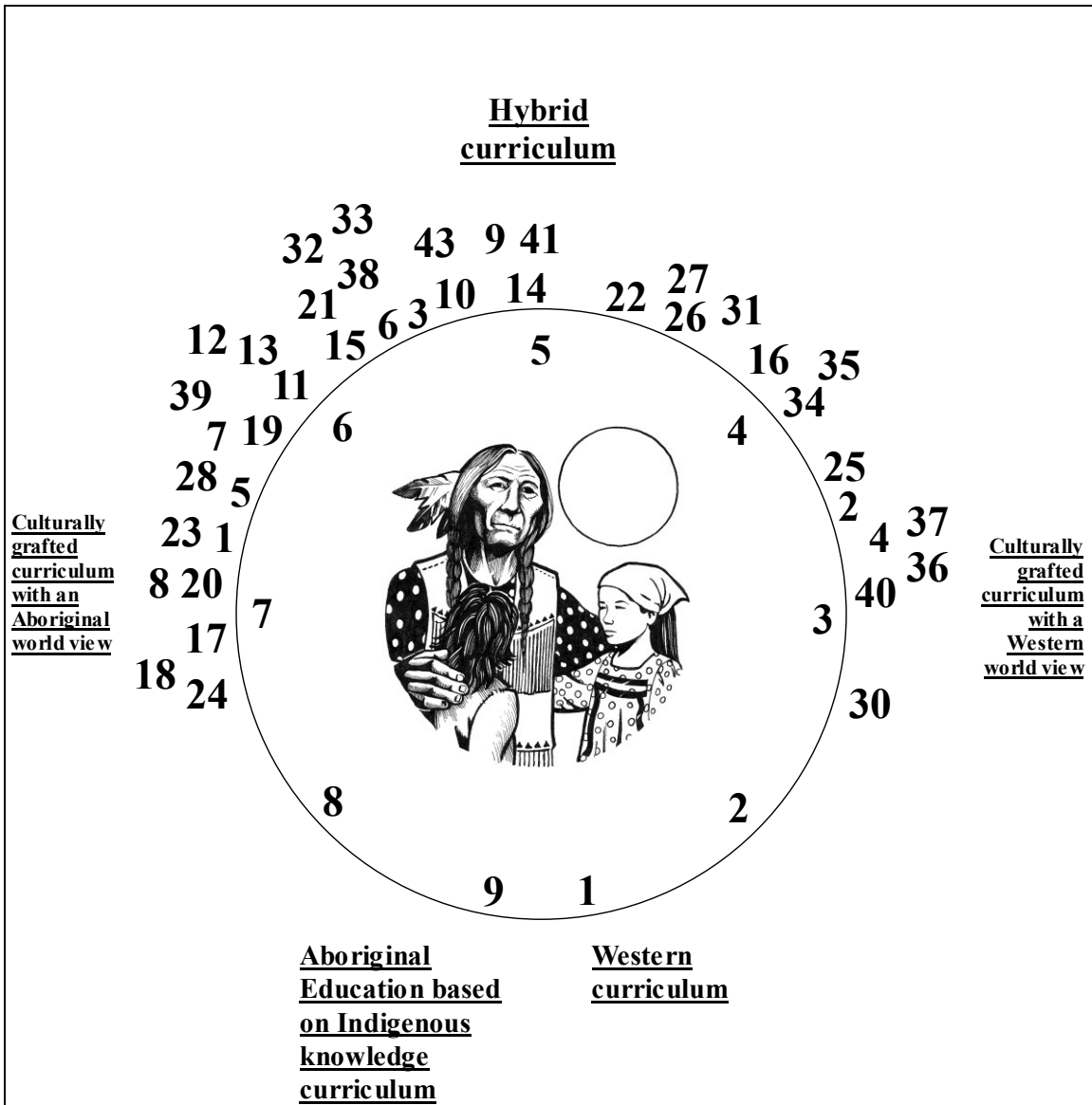
¹⁰⁵ This curriculum also serves as the basis for Inuit instruction at the elementary and high school levels in Nunavut. In the NWT this curriculum has served a small Inuit population only since 1999, when most Inuit were assigned to the new territory of Nunavut. It is still used in the Beaufort-Delta Education Council school district by the Inuit (Gladys Norwegian, Aboriginal Language & Culture counsellor, personal communication, June 15, 2010).

with more emphasis on Aboriginal philosophy. The Western Common Language and Culture curriculum has far different clientele with greatly differing objectives.

The Inuit have also been spared many debates caused by a diverse student body. Their curriculum is very local and respects the needs that they have determined for themselves. But will this curriculum allow the Inuit the agency they need to manage their own lives? If it does not enable students to succeed in government and business and obtain positions of power, it will have simply confirmed the colonization by non-Aboriginal administrators that now prevails in the NWT.

Interestingly, both this curriculum and the Western-based curriculum wish to inculcate a self-defined national ideal. The nation state has generally utilized systematic education to “ceremonially induct” students in the twin identities of the modern state citizen: national and individual” (Levinson & Holland, 1996, 15-6). It is the ideal of the collective and the individual. While the Inuit approach is different, there is still a national and collective ideal that the student must pursue in order to pass through the system and attain higher levels of education and eventually employment.

12.5 Curriculum Evaluation. General Results



This diagram presents the placement of each individual curriculum according to the five models shown above. For instance, curriculum 14 is close to the hybrid curriculum model and thus has almost equal numbers of elements from the Western and Aboriginal worldviews. Curriculum 20 has a pan-Aboriginal worldview with Western-grafted educational material. More information about specific scores may be found in Appendix VII.

1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs
2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics
3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9
4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12
5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10
6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy
7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide
8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development
9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource
10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30
11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)
12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12
13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y
14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9
15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30
16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007
17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum
18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatiguit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12
19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10
20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008
21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006

22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum
23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource
24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture
25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation
30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum
31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies
32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987
33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages
34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages
35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages
36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware
37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree
38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies
39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies
40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum
41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120
43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia

**HEAVENS: THE
SPIRIT, A
CONCLUSION**

This dissertation has been written with several goals in mind: determine the philosophy of Aboriginal education; review the history of Aboriginal education; determine the objectives for Aboriginal curricula; develop various Aboriginal curriculum evaluation frameworks; and verify whether existing Aboriginal education curricula fulfill an Indigenous philosophical and holistic worldview.

To evaluate Aboriginal education and curricula, I defined five subgoals:

1. to determine the pan-Aboriginal philosophy of Indigenous knowledge;
2. to review the history of Aboriginal education;
3. to determine the objectives of a pan-Aboriginal education;
4. to construct multiple frameworks to assess Aboriginal-based curricula; and
5. to analyze over 48 Aboriginal-based curricula that are currently used in Canada by Aboriginal education authorities.

Pan-Aboriginal Philosophy

Many groups, communities, and people might prefer a more local Indigenous philosophy to a pan-Aboriginal one, but essentialism holds great staying power among many Aboriginals inside and outside Western-dominated power structures, especially among Aboriginals in urban and rural areas. This is especially true among youth in urban centers who often have had more contact with different Aboriginal groups and their specific cultures. While there are many characteristics in pan-Indigenous knowledge, the ones that I felt important to this research have been iterated here. Others may add or remove from this list as they deem necessary.

Indigenous Knowledge Characteristics in Aboriginal Education

1. Traditional knowledge is important in Indigenous philosophy
2. There is a holistic worldview in which life is not divided into separate subjects, but treated as a whole. The spiritual and the metaphysical have important roles to play.

3. The land holds special meaning in Aboriginal philosophy. This idea though may be difficult to convey to urban Aboriginals, who might not have the same contact with a specific land base. They would more likely accept this idea if one used the word 'nature.'
4. Place and relationships are very important to a holistic understanding of the universe
5. Aboriginal philosophy is cyclical in nature
6. There is a favouring of the whole over the breaking apart of the whole into smaller components, without adequate consideration of the entire vision.
7. Elder-transmitted traditional knowledge is important.
8. Parents, students, and the community are interconnected and important in ensuring knowledge transmission. If one of these pillars is missing, the ability of a society to transmit its knowledge becomes compromised.
9. Human beings are not separate from nature; there is no divide between the two. A modern development has been the assigning of a representative and symbolic name to this idea of 'Mother Nature.' While this idea is not traditional in many circles, young Aboriginals have made it a positive philosophical trait of pan-Aboriginals.

History of Aboriginal Education

The history of Aboriginal education since the 1860s has been one of colonization. There have been several periods: 1) initial implementation of a colonial education system; 2) solidification of this structured power system and general Aboriginal acceptance of it as being dominant and right; 3) the colonizers' self-questioning of this system (1945-1970s); and 4) the period since the assumption of Indian control over education (1970s -), which should be called the period of Aboriginal administration of education. This system has evolved very gradually. Even today, while many Aboriginals may say they control their education systems, in reality they have just been given administrative control. None of these periods show specific breakages from the past, but are instead dynamic movements

which flow into the next period. These movements are often gradual, making it difficult for those living the changes to accurately see the transformations taking place.

Throughout its history, Aboriginal education has had few real catalysers. These catalysers have existed. The First Métis War of 1870 brought about the signing of major treaties that included education clauses. This period was interesting in that Aboriginals were better able to obtain concessions because of their military might. The Second Métis War of 1885 led to a crushing military and moral defeat of Aboriginal forces, thus enforcing the reserve system and creating a divided colonized people with little agency to challenge the federal government and resist imposition of the Indian residential schools (Ouellette, 2009a). This defeat saw the waning of the military might of Aboriginals and the imposition of more restrictive treaties until the eventual rejection of treaties as a partnership, but an imposition of the superior Canadian state.

Often WWII is cited as a moment when returning veterans started to open previously closed doors to their emancipation as Indians and Métis. While veterans were certainly very important, many could not take an active role in fighting back because of mental health problems, lack of education, and the indoctrination they had received in the military. Most Aboriginals at the end of the war did not occupy positions of authority but were simple soldiers, who were conditioned to obey. It would have been very difficult for many to challenge the system openly (Adams, 1999). What WWII did provide were role models, role models of the warrior type. There is a respect for Aboriginal veteran that is often shown by the place given to them in grand entrances before ceremonies, powwows or meetings.

It was perhaps less the veterans that caused changes within the overt colonial system, but the conscience of the administrators of the colonial system that changed. With the declarations on human rights (1947) and the sense that blatant racism was no longer acceptable administrators set about making changes to how they operated the system. Howard Adams used the term a “prison of grass” to describe this new structure. The welfare state was applied to all Canadians, and included in this were Aboriginals. The

welfare state allowed a certain amount of comfort to Aboriginals, but because Aboriginal were so disadvantaged this structure did not allow them to break out of prison of grass without assimilating into the main stream dominant culture. The welfare state did allow a certain number of Aboriginals the chance to attain higher education where they were better able to understand the structural and colonial violence that was affecting their communities.

The children of the veterans and the next generation of the 1970s were perhaps the most influential in the evolution of Aboriginal education. The *White Paper*, the *Red Paper*, the *Indian Control of Education Paper*, and the federal government's acceptance of this policy in response to enormous social pressure and protest created the conditions that are still affecting Aboriginal education today. How positive has this 1970s dynamic been? While Aboriginal on the surface seem to have control if we dig not very deeply we find that this control is a façade in many cases. At the University of Manitoba while there are many programs which are supposedly Aboriginal in content, often this Aboriginal content is mere sheen. This is not to say that people working in these programs are not doing excellent and honourable work, but that simply there work could be much easier if proper financial and structural supports were offered.

In a related example Philpott discussed the difficulties faced by the Innu people in Labrador and the unresponsive colonial education system. "The school environment also surfaced as a deterrent to attendance, often being seen in the community as "foreign," devoid of culturally relevant curriculum, and having little to no relevance in their lives" (Philpott, 2006, 373). In a previous report, Philpott had pointed out "a mismatch between the cultural paradigms of the school and community" (Philpott, Nesbit, Cahill, & Jeffery, 2004, 14). This mismatch between the education systems objectives and the needs of Aboriginal has yet to be adequately addressed by educators and politicians.

At the University of Manitoba multiple programmes have been put in place to help Aboriginal succeed in post-secondary education by Aboriginal educators. Still there seems to be no massive participation of the general Aboriginal population at the

University. They make up a far lower portion of the University population as compared to their relative weight in Winnipeg.

Aboriginal Education Objectives and Assessment Frameworks

Perhaps the most important work of this research was the development of multiple frameworks to assess Aboriginal-based curricula. This is a major step in helping to develop curricula that better reflect Aboriginal philosophies and worldviews. Too frequently, Aboriginal educators are unsatisfied with the types of education available to their students. Many have indicated that the curricula in use are still very assimilative in nature, even 40 years after the beginning of Indian Control of Education.

There were three assessment tools created in the course of this research: 1) the *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework*; 2) the *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework*; and 3) the *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework*.

The *Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework* provides questions that may be used to evaluate curricula in use by Aboriginal education authorities. The questions were developed from the material I judged to be most representative of pan-Aboriginal philosophy. They facilitated the placement of curricula in the circle of learning and determined their agency as Western curricula, culturally grafted curricula with a Western worldview, Hybrid curricula, culturally grafted curricula with an Aboriginal worldview and, finally, Aboriginal-education-based-on-Indigenous-knowledge curricula (developed from Hampton, 1993; Battiste 2002; Cajete, 2000, 64; CCL, 2006).

After having assessed their philosophy, it was important to assess their effectiveness by using the *Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework*. An effective curriculum has seven characteristics: Explicit; Coherent; Dynamic; Practical; Comprehensive; Coherent Organization; and Manageable (Carr and Harris, 2001).

Finally, the *Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework* can be used to evaluate the processes (structure) in a curriculum and to help determine whether it is written to ensure attainment of its stated objectives.

Assessment of Curricula

Over 48 curricula were assessed for this dissertation. In general, the evaluated curricula concerned only Aboriginal language or culture and native studies. Often, these curricula stated that a specific Aboriginal philosophy should be applied to all other subjects, without ever explaining how one should go about doing so. What specific course objectives in sciences, math, language arts, and physical education should be favoured? Who should decide those objectives? A multitude of other questions may also be asked that require answers.

It would have been easy to score the curricula from best to worst. But there is a philosophical problem with this type of approach. Communities and schools should not be criticized for their choices. If an Aboriginal education authority decides to use a Western-oriented educational program, this choice should be accepted. Such a curriculum, however, should not be imposed on parents without allowing their voices to be heard. There needs to be more participatory analyses (consultations) in communities that will allow them to choose the types of curricula that best suit their needs. This independence in the choice of curriculum and a sense of agency is central to Aboriginal philosophy. Individual nations must be allowed to make their own decisions. Thus, this dissertation does not use a best-to-worst grading system. It simply presents each of the curricula in use.

We want education to provide the setting in which our children can develop the fundamental attitudes and values which have an honoured place in Indian tradition and culture. The values which we want to pass on to our children, values which make our people a great race, are not written in any book. They are found in our history, in our legends and in the culture. We believe that if an Indian child is fully aware of the important Indian values he will have reason to be proud of our race and of himself as an Indian.

Parents are reflectively seen as the “best judges of the kind of school programs which can contribute to these goals without causing damage to the child.” This right to be involved in the education of one’s children is based on two principles of Canadian society: parental responsibility and local control of education (National Indian Brotherhood, 1972). What damage is the National Indian Brotherhood talking about? Is it the imposition of education systems, and hence curricula, that are alien and unwanted, thus causing damage to the psyche of Aboriginal children, families, and communities?

Agency is very important in decolonization. If a community actively undertakes to decide the type of education it wants, the resulting choice cannot easily be criticized. Many Aboriginal communities and education authorities desire a Western-based curriculum, a hybrid one, or even a very traditional Aboriginal one. There must be no imposition of one that all must accept, but only a right to informed choice. When a community chooses or develops a curriculum, it should be able to understand the inherent values, philosophy, characteristics, and effectiveness of the curriculum they have chosen and why it fits their needs.

Most of the assessed curricula were native studies, followed by language, language and culture, and general curricula. The reason that there were not other curricula is because I was unable to easily locate this material. The following tables shows the curricula grouped into their specific type.

Curriculum subjects grouped by type. figure 44

Curriculum type	ID #	Name
Native Studies	5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10
Native Studies	8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and TI'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development
Native Studies	10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30
Native Studies	21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006
Native Studies	25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
Native Studies	26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
Native Studies	27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework
Native Studies	28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation
Native Studies	38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies
Native Studies	39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies
Native Studies	41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120
Native Studies	42	Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq 10
Native Studies	43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia
Native Studies	45	Prince Edward Island- Native Studies 801: Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada,
Aboriginal Curriculum	17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum
Aboriginal Curriculum	18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12
Language and Culture	1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs
Language and Culture	12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12
Language and Culture	13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y
Language and Culture	14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9
Language and Culture	15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30
Language and Culture	24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture
Aboriginal Languages	11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)
Aboriginal Languages	32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987
Aboriginal Languages	33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages
Aboriginal Languages	34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages
Aboriginal Languages	35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages
Aboriginal Languages	36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware
Aboriginal Languages	37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree

General Curriculum	16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007
General Curriculum	19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10
General Curriculum	22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum
General Curriculum	23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource
General Curriculum	30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum
General Curriculum	31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies
Science	6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy
Science	7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide
Science	9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource
Social Studies	3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9
Social Studies	40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum
Mathematics	2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics
English Language Arts	4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12
English LA (Aboriginal)	20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008

Curriculum according to subjects. figure 45

Curriculum type	Native Studies	Aboriginal Curriculum	Language and Culture	Aboriginal Languages	Mathematics
Number	14	2	6	7	1
Curriculum type	Language Arts	English Native Language Arts	Science	General Curriculum	Social Studies
Number	1	1	3	6	2

It is difficult to characterize a curriculum. Does social studies have Western foundations? Does native studies have an Aboriginal philosophy? Such assertions would be completely false. But an interesting aspect strikes those who look closely at the research: the importance of jurisdiction. In general, curricula from Ontario and Manitoba can be said to have Western foundations with culturally grafted Aboriginal elements added. This is true for all curricula from Ontario regardless of their date of production. Even curricula produced in 2009, such as *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum* (2009) and *Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching*

Strategies (2009), differ little from those developed in 1999, such as *Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages*. There was one exception: *Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987* (1987), which obtained an overall score of 5.65. It was one of the first Aboriginal specific curricula developed in the country. Nonetheless, later Ontario curricula have bucked the trend in the rest of the country.

There are several possible reasons why the curricula of Ontario generally have a Western foundation. Perhaps Ontario's Aboriginal population is too much smaller than its white and immigrant populations, or perhaps this orientation was deliberately chosen by those working in Aboriginal education. Another possible reason; are Aboriginal more assimilated and forgotten in Ontario than in other jurisdictions of Canada? Perhaps the post-1999 material was developed under one person's guidance, thereby setting an example to be emulated. There has been consistency in the Ontario curricula since 1999. Curricula were produced in 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, and 2003, with seven being on Native languages and Native studies. There was a substantial break, however, between the first Aboriginal curricula in Ontario (1987) and the next generation that came in 1999. Certainly, this period saw changes in personnel and human resources, thus creating a break in the continuity of education development.

The other province that stands apart from the rest of the country is Manitoba, which has consistently produced curricula with a Western foundation. There is a difference, however, between the curricula produced in the 1990s and those produced in the 2000s. The 1990s curricula always had a Western foundation, while newer material from the 2000s has consistently had an Aboriginal foundation. Manitoba now has curricula with the highest level of Aboriginal content in the country (see results for curricula #24 and #28) and has diverged in this respect from Ontario.

The provinces from Ontario to Newfoundland (the east) seem to have few Aboriginal foundational curricula. The ones they do produce often have Western foundations. Quebec, Nova Scotia, and Newfoundland have no active Aboriginal curricula. Prince Edward Island has no teacher available to teach the material it has developed. In fairness,

Nova Scotia is in the final stages of redeveloping their *Mi'kmaq 10* Curriculum for the end of 2010 (Personal communication from Candy Palmater (Mi'kmaq), Director of the Mi'kmaq Liaison Office in the Ministry of Education, April 1, 2010). The *Mi'kmaq 10* curriculum is being overhauled at St. –Francis Xavier University under the oversight of Dr. Orr, Dean of Education. A number of Mi'kmaq educators and elders are involved in this major overhaul and it would be interesting to look at the results and see what final direction they have decided to take.

Quebec is a special case. It is the largest province without any specific Aboriginal curriculum with or without an Aboriginal foundation. In 2006, I was involved in reviewing for the First Nations Education Council and Quebec's Department of Education the new religious course (éthique et culture religieuse, ECR) to be taught in all Quebec schools. The course is non-confessional and presents many of the world's religions. I was asked to review the parts that mentioned Aboriginal spirituality. This was a very minor part of the course and all my suggestions were eventually rejected by the Department of Education. The situation in the eastern provinces highlights these forgotten people who do not seem to have the political clout to make governments offer them services adapted to their needs. One major exception in Quebec is the Bay James Cree who with their territorial control over the hydro power of Quebec have been given money and resources to adapt the curriculum of Quebec to their needs. This adaptation has limits due to the personnel used in the schools; many being training in Quebec universities without any Aboriginal awareness for their future jobs. It seems that the material developed is frequently used only in language classes by local Cree teachers. I was unable to obtain any comprehensive material from the Cree school board. As a public institution paid by tax dollars if they had a specific curriculum it should be public knowledge for parents and community members to consult.

The development of real Aboriginal-controlled education and not just Aboriginal-administered education is a long way away. The east/west difference is a prime example. For a number of reasons, the eastern provinces do not need to respond to the demands of Aboriginals. There are not enough of them, while in the west and north the Aboriginal

school-going population is often quite large. These provinces and territories are responding to the minimal demands and needs of this *sui generis* population. To date, however, no major science, social studies, physics, chemistry, physical education, English, or mathematics curriculum has a foundational Aboriginal philosophy.

Where are the general curricula? The North has mandated that the *Dene Kede* and the *Inuuqatigiit* curricula be used in all subjects as a base. But there is no specific direction for the teaching of these subjects. For example, elementary math might be changed from counting, adding, and subtracting cars or oranges to adding and subtracting moccasins. Would this change suddenly make the curriculum Aboriginal? In most cases, floating lessons are available to be added on to the regular non-Aboriginal curriculum.

I have a criticism of these floating lesson plans. Are they used because they are the only material available or because the stakeholders involved in education have actively chosen such material to be their curriculum foundation? Annahatak, an education counsellor in Nunavut, writes that often the official curriculum leaves out Aboriginal culture. It is inserted into the curriculum with “floating lessons.” The lessons are not connected to any real cultural basis, but are more “surface learning” (1994, 17). This was written in 1994, but it still holds true in many communities today. For instance, a non-Aboriginal teacher cannot be expected to teach science classes with an Aboriginal philosophy while using a provincial non-Aboriginal curriculum. What training has that teacher had for such an undertaking? Often the teacher has more pressing problems about class management and the need to ensure basic requirements are met by students.

Ontario has developed a number of curriculum lesson plans (that are very difficult to find on the Internet), which may be inserted into any number of subjects by grade level.

Unfortunately, it is unknown who developed the material and to what ends. The material is surface learning and offers no real understanding of Aboriginal philosophy.

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/elemStrategies.html>

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/aboriginal/secStrategies.html>

A major area for future development will be that of general curricula. Judy Côté (Anishanabe from Kitzigan Zibi, interview, January 21, 2010) and other educators see this area as the next step. There must be a curriculum that is pan-Aboriginal in nature but may be adapted to specific local customs and circumstances and covers all subjects. The curriculum must offer an Aboriginal perspective and not just “surface learning.” Such a goal will encounter major challenges: 1) funding; 2) dedicated personnel; 3) convergence; 4) time; and 5) who will take the lead. Is the BC First Nations Education Steering Committee (FNESC) ready to take on this project? It has signed an agreement, which is still being negotiated, for funding from the federal and provincial governments. Once the funding is settled, this committee will have some clout because it represents many communities. At present, each small community can apply for INAC funding to develop curriculum materials. The materials are not often shared after development and usually concern small portions of the general curriculum.

It is possible that society and government are not ready for a general curriculum based wholly on an Indigenous philosophy? Native studies, language, and culture have enough available material to create subject matter that is rigorous and in-depth without needing to rely on external Western-based material. When one begins looking at science or mathematics, it becomes very difficult to adapt these subjects to an Aboriginal philosophy. For instance Gone has pointed out his great difficulty in adapting the field of psychology to Aboriginal realities (2004, 124-42). The same must be true in other subjects as well.

There is another problem. As the curriculum developers move on or retire, their programs may be forgotten. Raymond Ringuette (retired dean of the faculty of music, Université Laval) developed an Aboriginal music curriculum for use by the Québec Cree School Board in the late 1970s. That curriculum invariably ended up in a filing cabinet, where it was soon forgotten (personal communication, September 12, 2007).

As the Honourable Justice Murray Sinclair, chair of the Indian Residential School Truth and Reconciliation Commission on the *CBC's National* news program (June 15, 2010)

said, “We are not going to change the world within our lifetime. It has taken us many generations to get to this point and it will take many more generations to get to the point where things will be in balance. We need to be sure that we start that process properly.”

Any change will be a gradual process, an evolution from a colonial system to a system controlled by Aboriginals with agency. Will this evolution solve all the problems Aboriginals face? No, but at least Aboriginals will no longer be seen as children who cannot manage their own affairs. They will assume their rightful place as human beings.

Choosing a Curriculum to Emulate

An Aboriginal education authority has decided to change its curriculum. It should conduct focus group sessions with participatory analysis and consultations with those stakeholders who will be affected. It will be necessary to determine the community’s beliefs, values, needs, and constraints, such as funding, government, subject matter, and expertise. For example, one community lives near a major city, is generally urban, and speaks the local dominant language. While its members would like their children to have a traditional education, this option is not feasible because of their location and work needs. They live too close to the city to be able to hunt, most parents have salaried work, and they are secular in outlook. Thus, they have decided that a curriculum with a Western outlook will better serve the needs of their children and community. They still wish to preserve connections to traditional Aboriginal knowledge, but understand that their children must function within the nearby dominant society. For all these reasons, they would like to develop a native studies program at the high school level that is secular in nature and presents their local history.

The education authority uses Appendix VII and looks for a curriculum in native studies with a number between 4 and 5 in the philosophy section. Within that range are Curriculum #10 Alberta *Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30*, #27 Manitoba *Native Studies S1-S4*, and #41 New Brunswick *Native Studies 120*. They then consult question #5. Do spirituality and the metaphysical play an important role or is the curriculum secular?

They then see that Alberta Aboriginal Studies and New Brunswick Native Studies both received the lowest scores, indicating that they are the most secular programs.

The characteristics results (Section 4, Appendix VII) should then be consulted. By comparing the above three curricula, we can rank them for the excellence of their characteristics. Alberta has the highest score (6.29), followed by New Brunswick (5.86) and, finally, Manitoba (5.00) in terms of being explicit, coherent, dynamic, practical, comprehensive, coherently organized, and manageable.

The final assessment (Section 6, Appendix VII) concerns the curriculum’s ability to attain its objectives. Alberta scores 5.31, New Brunswick 4.46, and Manitoba 5.31. The General Results (Section 7, Appendix VII) show that Alberta scores overall 6.03, New Brunswick 5.01, and Manitoba 4.86. Alberta has the curriculum that best corresponds to that community’s needs. The curriculum is a secular one, attaining the highest evaluation for desired characteristics and objective attainment. The fictitious community may then adapt this curriculum to suit its specific requirements.

Let us try another example. A rural community wants a general curriculum that is Aboriginal in philosophy, is non-secular, and has grafted Western material. The curriculum should score between 6 and 7.5 (Section 2, appendix VII). The only one that matches these values is #23 Manitoba- *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum*. It also scores 7 for spirituality.

Individual results of the Manitoba- *Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum*

ID #	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
23	6.67	7.71	5.85	6.71

Average Results

5.05	6.25	5.30	5.34
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The rural community may then take this curriculum and adapt it to local requirements. It should also consult curricula from Ontario to see why they do not match its specific needs.

Limitations of the Research

This research suffers from several limitations:

1. Emphasis on a pan-Aboriginal philosophy;
2. Essentialism; and
3. Use of quantitative assessment frameworks.

Academic research usually does not favour either pan-Aboriginal philosophy or essentialism. Generally, researchers go into small communities in search of “authentic” knowledge. They prefer very localized knowledge and reject pan-Aboriginal philosophy. This research attempts to reflect the Aboriginal holistic worldview in order to give agency to that fourth world.

At the same time, essentialism is seen as going against a broader social movement: humanism. Many Western social scientists see it as a terrible under-theorization of identity, its complexities, and contradictions. They reject the idea that membership in a specific group can be reduced to an inventory of characteristics, criticizing such an effort at best as being inaccurate and at worst discriminatory.

Critics of essentialism promote a discourse of democracy, power, social justice, and historical memory (McLaren & Giroux, 1997, 17). This criticism, however, fails to recognize the need for decolonization. For many Aboriginal scholars, it serves as a continuing colonization of Aboriginal identity and Aboriginals by the Western Canadian politic.

This conflict between, on the one hand, pan-Aboriginalism and essentialism and, on the other, specific Aboriginalism and humanism will be resolved only by what will occur on

the ground in the minds of Aboriginal communities and individuals.¹⁰⁶ Aboriginals in their daily lives will decide the future development of their culture and knowledge. Few of them will maintain a pure Indigenous knowledge that has been passed down by their kinfolk and ancestors without change. Most likely, there will be an amalgamation of various traditions.

Pan-Aboriginalism and essentialism continue a long tradition of knowledge transfer between communities, with modern examples including the ghost dance and the sun dance. There is strength in smaller groups coming together in common cause. The BC education agreement (2006) illustrates this ideal.

Another limitation of this research is the use of a quantitative approach to curriculum assessment. This approach is new and may be questioned as to its restrictions and actual applicability. As already stated, a quantitative system was used to make referencing easier for time-pressed educators. It is not the be-all and end-all. The numbering of scores from 1 to 9 is not perfect and may seem difficult to understand. It is a new system that needs to be validated over the long-term. A numbering system of 1 to 5 could have been used, but it might not have provided sufficient differentiation between the curricula.

Some final criticisms related to the questionnaire are; 1) should a question relating to community well-being be included? Does the curriculum promote community well-being, what is the effect of the curriculum on community well-being? This type of question would be very difficult to answer, because each community would need to be interviewed to determine how curriculum design informs their well-being. A question like this would be much along the line of Gross Domestic Happiness¹⁰⁷; 2) how can curriculum be designed to complement to maintain, strengthen and develop a relationship with the land as a home place? And 3) there are some who take umbrage at the use of grading scale to evaluate the curricula. There is a simple reason behind this model; too often many

¹⁰⁶ On April 6, 2010 a large-scale survey was undertaken by Environics polling on the attitudes and socio-economic conditions of urban Aboriginals.

¹⁰⁷ The term "gross national happiness" was first started in 1972 by Bhutan. The phrase was used to bring greater alignment between the economy and Buddhist spiritual values.

workers in Aboriginal education do not have the time to review adequately the material produced by academics reducing the likeliness of theory entering practise (personal experience). I do not believe in working to produce material for the filing cabinet, but to create material which will hopefully have a profound and lasting positive effect on education. Clearly, there is a need for systematic evaluation of curricula currently in use by Aboriginal education authorities. Too often, these authorities work in isolation with little mutual understanding of the education programs available to students in the classroom.

Annahatak writes that Aboriginal schools have no effective means to evaluate the teaching of traditional knowledge and modern knowledge. There is little understanding of the dual impacts on students (1994, 16). Effective evaluation would certainly help revive student initiative in learning and living. For instance, youth would traditionally visit elders to watch and learn by observation, but now they wait for the elders to come and tell them what to do. This has had unfortunate consequences, notably loss of culture, loss of traditional knowledge, and loss of traditional social covenants (Annahatak, 1994, 17).

Traditionally, Indigenous Knowledge (IK) was taught outside school. With the advent of schooling, which takes up much of our children's lives, there is little time or energy to teach IK outside school. IK must be adapted to the school system. This adaptation holds many risks of success and failure. Can pure traditional Indigenous knowledge be taught in school? How can something wholly traditional be passed on via a non-traditional transmission system?

The manner of learning has changed. Traditionally, elders would teach the young, but school requires certification, which elders often lack. They are no longer the primary agents of education, but now simply supporters. Traditionally, they would also wait for the youth to come to them in order to obtain information. With students in classes all day long, and with children conditioned to have information come to them, there is a disconnection in the ways information is now transmitted. Elders often feel slighted because youth should come to see them, and youth say elders must adapt and approach

them to give the information that is useful for their lives (Targé, 2005, 91-96). How much traditional knowledge and worldview is lost through this generational disconnect?

If Indigenous communities on Turtle Island can create and use purely Aboriginal education based on Indigenous knowledge, they will have true control over the educational systems that are supposed to serve them. De Canck coins the term “a school for and by Aboriginals” (De Canck, 2008, 48). Indigenous models of education allow a certain amount of orientation to the world “around us, particularly the people around us, so that we know who we are and have confidence when we do things” (Deloria, 1990). Most certainly, Aboriginals, Indians, First Nations, Métis, non-status, or Inuit peoples can be empowered by the idea that traditions give a sense of power and place.

To decolonize education is to retrench and retrieve our traditions in the classroom in our communities. We need to shore up the cultural and spiritual teachings of our peoples in urban centers where they have moved. Whenever possible we need to teach others about who we are as indigenous peoples, to share in all schools our stories of who we are in the lesson plans teachers follow, that our stories are told respectfully and responsibly...A decolonized Dené school would follow our traditions and values, our elders would be in the classrooms, the classrooms would be equally indoor and outdoor, out on the land and in the community.

Noeline Villebrun, Dené National Chief

Indigenous Education and Empowerment, 2006, p 18.

The Royal Commission wrote, “despite the painful experiences Aboriginal people carry with them from formal education systems, they still see education as the hope for the future as they are determined to see education fulfill its promise” (CRPA, 1996b, 434).

This research has addressed a need raised by the federal government of Canada and, more importantly, by Aboriginal Canadians for quality education. Multiple debates are going on about what type of education we want for our children. Should it be integrationist or Indigenous? Who should control the Aboriginal education system, the federal government, the provincial governments, or Aboriginal organizations (but which one and at what level)? Education is a battleground for larger political projects, both by the dominant society and by the dominated society. This long-term debate is about power,

society's structures, survival, money, decolonization, and continued colonization. Eventually, we must stop the "talk, talk, talk" (Gilbert Whiteduck, January 15, 2010) and actually take action. As Aboriginals, we must not wait for others to do so. I hope this research has contributed constructively to this ongoing debate.

The white policy makers of Indian education have been training primarily to reinforce the deculturalization of Indigenous peoples and ultimately to disconnect us from the power of the holistic mind...it is important to understand the systematic miseducation of a tribal-centered philosophy and thought-an externally imposed European education based in pedagogical fear tactics. The overall schooling production becomes a manufactured monocultural reality... [It] is at the base of the [oldest and] newest forms of inequality.

Cornel Pewewardy

For Indigenous Eyes Only: A Decolonization Handbook, 2005, p 156

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APPENDIX I: Sections of the Indian Act Concerning Education (1985)

114. (1) The Governor in Council may authorize the Minister, in accordance with this Act, to enter into agreements on behalf of Her Majesty for the education in accordance with this Act of Indian children, with

- (a) the government of a province;
- (b) the Commissioner of Yukon;
- (c) the Commissioner of the Northwest Territories;
- (c.1) the Commissioner of Nunavut;
- (d) a public or separate school board; and
- (e) a religious or charitable organization.

Schools

(2) The Minister may, in accordance with this Act, establish, operate and maintain schools for Indian children.

R.S., 1985, c. I-5, s. 114; 1993, c. 28, s. 78; 2002, c. 7, s. 184.

Regulations

115. The Minister may

- (a) provide for and make regulations with respect to standards for buildings, equipment, teaching, education, inspection and discipline in connection with schools;
- (b) provide for the transportation of children to and from school;
- (c) enter into agreements with religious organizations for the support and maintenance of children who are being educated in schools operated by those organizations; and
- (d) apply the whole or any part of moneys that would otherwise be payable to or on behalf of a child who is attending a residential school to the maintenance of that child at that school.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 115.

Attendance

116. (1) Subject to section 117, every Indian child who has attained the age of seven years shall attend school.

Idem

(2) The Minister may

- (a) require an Indian who has attained the age of six years to attend school;
- (b) require an Indian who becomes sixteen years of age during the school term to continue to attend school until the end of that term; and
- (c) require an Indian who becomes sixteen years of age to attend school for such further period as the Minister considers advisable, but no Indian shall be required to attend school after he becomes eighteen years of age.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 116.

When attendance not required

117. An Indian child is not required to attend school if the child

- (a) is, by reason of sickness or other unavoidable cause that is reported promptly to the principal, unable to attend school;
- (b) is, with the permission in writing of the superintendent, absent from school for a period not exceeding six weeks in each term for the purpose of assisting in husbandry or urgent and necessary household duties;
- (c) is under efficient instruction at home or elsewhere, within one year after the written approval by the Minister of such instruction; or

(d) is unable to attend school because there is insufficient accommodation in the school that the child is entitled or directed to attend.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 117.

School to be attended

118. Every Indian child who is required to attend school shall attend such school as the Minister may designate, but no child whose parent is a Protestant shall be assigned to a school conducted under Roman Catholic auspices and no child whose parent is a Roman Catholic shall be assigned to a school conducted under Protestant auspices, except by written direction of the parent.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 118.

Truant officers

119. (1) The Minister may appoint persons, to be called truant officers, to enforce the attendance of Indian children at school, and for that purpose a truant officer has the powers of a peace officer.

Powers

(2) Without restricting the generality of subsection (1), a truant officer may, subject to subsection (2.1),

- (a) enter any place where he believes, on reasonable grounds, that there are Indian children who are between the ages of seven and sixteen years, or who are required by the Minister to attend school;
- (b) investigate any case of truancy; and
- (c) serve written notice on the parent, guardian or other person having the care or legal custody of a child to cause the child to attend school regularly thereafter.

Warrant required to enter dwelling-house

(2.1) Where any place referred to in paragraph (2)(a) is a dwelling-house, a truant officer may not enter that dwelling-house without the consent of the occupant except under the authority of a warrant issued under subsection (2.2).

Authority to issue warrant

(2.2) Where on *ex parte* application a justice of the peace is satisfied by information on oath

- (a) that the conditions for entry described in paragraph (2)(a) exist in relation to a dwelling-house,
- (b) that entry to the dwelling-house is necessary for any purpose relating to the administration or enforcement of this Act, and
- (c) that entry to the dwelling-house has been refused or that there are reasonable grounds for believing that entry thereto will be refused,

the justice of the peace may issue a warrant under his hand authorizing the truant officer named therein to enter that dwelling-house subject to such conditions as may be specified in the warrant.

Use of force

(2.3) In executing a warrant issued under subsection (2.2), the truant officer named therein shall not use force unless he is accompanied by a peace officer and the use of force has been specifically authorized in the warrant.

Notice to attend school

(3) Where a notice has been served in accordance with paragraph (2)(c) with respect to a child who is required by this Act to attend school and the child does not within three days after the service of notice attend school and continue to attend school regularly thereafter, the person on whom the notice was served is guilty of an offence and liable on summary conviction to a fine not exceeding five dollars or to imprisonment for a term not exceeding ten days or to both.

Further notices

(4) Where a person has been served with a notice in accordance with paragraph (2)(c), it is not necessary within a period of twelve months thereafter to serve that person with any other notice in respect of further non-compliance with this Act, and whenever that person within the period of twelve months fails to cause the child with respect to whom the notice was served or any other child of whom he has charge or control to attend school and continue in regular attendance as required by this Act, that person is guilty of an offence and liable to the punishment imposed by subsection (3) as if he had been served with the notice.

Tardiness

(5) A child who is habitually late for school shall be deemed to be absent from school.

Take into custody

(6) A truant officer may take into custody a child whom he believes on reasonable grounds to be absent from school contrary to this Act and may convey the child to school, using as much force as the circumstances require.

R.S., 1985, c. I-5, s. 119; R.S., 1985, c. 32 (1st Supp.), s. 21.

Denomination of teacher

120. (1) Where the majority of the members of a band belong to one religious denomination, the school established on the reserve that has been set apart for the use and benefit of that band shall be taught by a teacher of that denomination.

Idem

(2) Where the majority of the members of a band are not members of the same religious denomination and the band by a majority vote of those electors of the band who were present at a meeting called for the purpose requests that day schools on the reserve should be taught by a teacher belonging to a particular religious denomination, the school on that reserve shall be taught by a teacher of that denomination.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 121.

Minority religious denominations

121. A Protestant or Roman Catholic minority of any band may, with the approval of and under regulations to be made by the Minister, have a separate day school or day school classroom established on the reserve unless, in the opinion of the Governor in Council, the number of children of school age does not so warrant.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 122.

Definitions

122. In sections 114 to 121,

“child” «*enfant*» “child” means an Indian who has attained the age of six years but has not attained the age of sixteen years, and a person who is required by the Minister to attend school;

“school” «*école*» “school” includes a day school, technical school, high school and residential school;

“truant officer” «*agent de surveillance*»

“truant officer” includes

- (a) a member of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police,
- (b) a special constable appointed for police duty on a reserve, and
- (c) a school teacher and a chief of the band, when authorized by the superintendent.

R.S., c. I-6, s. 123.

APPENDIX II: OFFICIAL INDIAN RESIDENTIAL SCHOOL APOLOGY AND RESPONSE

House of Commons Debates, Hansard Wednesday, June 11, 2008, Volume 142, Number 110, 2nd Session, 39th Parliament.

Right Hon. Stephen Harper (Prime Minister, CPC):

Mr. Speaker, before I begin officially, let me just take a moment to acknowledge the role of certain colleagues here in the House of Commons in today's events. Although the responsibility for the apology is ultimately mine alone, there are several of my colleagues who do deserve the credit.

First of all, for their hard work and professionalism, I want to thank both the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development and his predecessor, now the Minister of Industry. Both of these gentlemen have been strong and passionate advocates not just of today's action, but also of the historic Indian residential schools settlement that our government has signed. Second, I would be remiss if I did not acknowledge my former colleague from Cariboo--Chilcotin, Philip Mayfield, who for a very long time was a determined voice in our caucus for meaningful action on this sad episode of our history. Last, but certainly not least, I do want to thank my colleague, the leader of the New Democratic Party. For the past year and a half, he has spoken to me with regularity and great conviction on the need for this apology. His advice, given across party lines and in confidence, has been persuasive and has been greatly appreciated.

[*Translation*] I stand before you today to offer an apology to former students of Indian residential schools. The treatment of children in these schools is a sad chapter in our history. For more than a century, Indian residential schools separated over 150,000 aboriginal children from their families and communities.

[*English*] In the 1870s, the federal government, partly in order to meet its obligations to educate aboriginal children, began to play a role in the development and administration of these schools. Two primary objectives of the residential school system were to remove and isolate children from the influence of their homes, families, traditions and cultures, and to assimilate them into the dominant culture. These objectives were based on the assumption that aboriginal cultures and spiritual beliefs were inferior and unequal. Indeed, some sought, as was infamously said, "to kill the Indian in the child".

[*Translation*] Today, we recognize that this policy of assimilation was wrong, has caused great harm, and has no place in our country. One hundred and thirty-two federally-supported schools were located in every province and territory, except Newfoundland, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island.

[*English*] Most schools were operated as joint ventures with Anglican, Catholic, Presbyterian and United churches. The Government of Canada built an educational system in which very young children were often forcibly removed from their homes and often taken far from their communities. Many were inadequately fed, clothed and housed. All were deprived of the care and nurturing of their parents, grandparents and communities. First nations, Inuit and Métis languages and cultural practices were

prohibited in these schools. Tragically, some of these children died while attending residential schools, and others never returned home.

[*Translation*] The government now recognizes that the consequences of the Indian residential schools policy were profoundly negative and that this policy has had a lasting and damaging impact on aboriginal culture, heritage and language. While some former students have spoken positively about their experiences at residential schools, these stories are far overshadowed by tragic accounts of the emotional, physical and sexual abuse and neglect of helpless children, and their separation from powerless families and communities. The legacy of Indian residential schools has contributed to social problems that continue to exist in many communities today.

[*English*] It has taken extraordinary courage for the thousands of survivors who have come forward to speak publicly about the abuse they suffered. It is a testament to their resilience as individuals and to the strengths of their cultures. Regrettably, many former students are not with us today and died never having received a full apology from the Government of Canada.

[*Translation*] The government recognizes that the absence of an apology has been an impediment to healing and reconciliation. Therefore, on behalf of the Government of Canada and all Canadians, I stand before you, in this chamber so central to our life as a country, to apologize to aboriginal peoples for Canada's role in the Indian residential schools system.

[*English*] To the approximately 80,000 living former students and all family members and communities, the Government of Canada now recognizes that it was wrong to forcibly remove children from their homes, and we apologize for having done this. We now recognize that it was wrong to separate children from rich and vibrant cultures and traditions, that it created a void in many lives and communities, and we apologize for having done this. We now recognize that in separating children from their families, we undermined the ability of many to adequately parent their own children and sowed the seeds for generations to follow, and we apologize for having done this. We now recognize that far too often these institutions gave rise to abuse or neglect and were inadequately controlled, and we apologize for failing to protect you. Not only did you suffer these abuses as children, but as you became parents, you were powerless to protect your own children from suffering the same experience, and for this we are sorry.

[*Translation*] The burden of this experience has been on your shoulders for far too long. The burden is properly ours as a government, and as a country. There is no place in Canada for the attitudes that inspired the Indian residential schools system to ever again prevail.

[*English*] You have been working on recovering from this experience for a long time, and in a very real sense we are now joining you on this journey. The Government of Canada sincerely apologizes and asks the forgiveness of the aboriginal peoples of this country for failing them so profoundly.

[*Translation*] We are sorry.

[*English*] Nimitataynan. Niminchinowesamin. Mamiattugut.

In moving toward healing, reconciliation and resolution of the sad legacy of Indian residential schools, the implementation of the Indian residential schools settlement agreement began on September 19, 2007. Years of work by survivors, communities and aboriginal organizations culminated in an agreement that gives us a new beginning and an

opportunity to move forward together in partnership. A cornerstone of the settlement agreement is the Indian residential schools truth and reconciliation commission. This commission represents a unique opportunity to educate all Canadians on the Indian residential schools system. It will be a positive step in forging a new relationship between aboriginal peoples and other Canadians, a relationship based on the knowledge of our shared history, a respect for each other and a desire to move forward with a renewed understanding that strong families, strong communities and vibrant cultures and traditions will contribute to a stronger Canada for all of us.

God bless all of you. God bless our land.

Response of Chief Phil Fontaine

Chief Phil Fontaine (National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations):

Prime Minister, Chief Justice, members of the House, elders, survivors, Canadians: for our parents, our grandparents, great grandparents, indeed for all of the generations which have preceded us, this day testifies to nothing less than the achievement of the impossible.

This morning our elders held a condolence ceremony for those who never heard an apology, never received compensation, yet courageously fought assimilation so that we could witness this day.

Together we remember and honour them for it was they who suffered the most as they witnessed generation after generation of their children taken from their families' love and guidance. For the generations that will follow us, we bear witness today in this House that our survival as first nations peoples in this land is affirmed forever.

Therefore, the significance of this day is not just about what has been but, equally important, what is to come. Never again will this House consider us the Indian problem just for being who we are.

We heard the Government of Canada take full responsibility for this dreadful chapter in our shared history. We heard the Prime Minister declare that this will never happen again. Finally, we heard Canada say it is sorry.

Brave survivors, through the telling of their painful stories, have stripped white supremacy of its authority and legitimacy. The irresistibility of speaking truth to power is real.

Today is not the result of a political game. Instead, it is something that shows the righteousness and importance of our struggle. We know we have many difficult issues to handle. There are many fights still to be fought.

What happened today signifies a new dawn in the relationship between us and the rest of Canada. We are and always have been an indispensable part of the Canadian identity.

Our peoples, our history, and our present being are the essence of Canada. The attempts to erase our identities hurt us deeply, but it also hurt all Canadians and impoverished the character of this nation.

We must not falter in our duty now. Emboldened by this spectacle of history, it is possible to end our racial nightmare together. The memories of residential schools

sometimes cut like merciless knives at our souls. This day will help us to put that pain behind us.

But it signifies something even more important: a respectful and, therefore, liberating relationship between us and the rest of Canada.

Together we can achieve the greatness our country deserves. The apology today is founded upon, more than anything else, the recognition that we all own our own lives and destinies, the only true foundation for a society where peoples can flourish.

We must now capture a new spirit and vision to meet the challenges of the future.

As a great statesman once said, we are all part of one “garment of destiny”. The differences between us are not blood or colour and “the ties that bind us are deeper than those that separate us”. The “common road of hope” will bring us to reconciliation more than any words, laws or legal claims ever could.

We still have to struggle, but now we are in this together.

I reach out to all Canadians today in this spirit of reconciliation.

Meegwetch.

APPENDIX III: RESEARCH LETTER TO SCHOOLS

Date:

School/Education Director:

I am conducting research towards a PhD in anthropology (final year), at the University Laval in Quebec City with the Aboriginal Interuniversity Research and Studies Center (CIERA) and I need your help. The research concerns the education curriculum guides (educational programs) used by Aboriginal education authorities. The title of the research is *Current Curricula Best Practise Developments in Aboriginal Education as Seen through the Lens of the Indigenous World View*. **I am looking to obtain from you or your school(s) any possible pedagogical material (CURRICULUM and GUIDES) which are used by your school(s). I understand that you have multiple requests for both information and your time, but my research will be more complete with the greater amount of information I have. I would also appreciate you completing the attached survey. I recommend that a teacher or school principal with sufficient knowledge of the school(s) complete the questionnaire.**

As a Cree originally from Saskatchewan, I believe this research will contribute significantly to the domain of Aboriginal education, the general Canadian education system and will positively influence the manner in which education is viewed by both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. Aboriginal peoples have been demanding control over their educational systems for many years now. We must address the questions of choosing what types of standards should be set in Aboriginal curricula that could better address our needs and best correspond to our world-view.

I will be proceeding in two steps: The first step will establish the general objectives of a pan-Aboriginal education through the exploration of the historical and philosophical currents which have affected the transmission of knowledge among Aboriginal people. The second step will explore in more detail the curricula of Aboriginal education and evaluate if the current curricula accurately reflects a Pan-Aboriginals metaphysical (holistic) world-view. **I will be producing a Pan-Aboriginal guide that will compare different curricula currently in use by Aboriginal schools or provincial schools serving Aboriginals.**

Thank-you very much from any help you may offer in giving me information and program materials. If you do decide to answer you may either contact me for more information or just send your pedagogical guides to my address below. I have enclosed an envelope for your convenience. You may make copies of the **enclosed questionnaire** for each of your schools or combine your responses on single questionnaire. An electronic version of this questionnaire may be requested from my e-mail address. **Thank-you very much for your effort and time. It is very much appreciated.**

Robert-Falcon Ouellette
CIERA
9550 George-Émile-Lapalme
Québec, PQ
G2B 5E1
418-842-4485
ouelletterf@aol.com
www.ciera.ca

APPENDIX IV: CONSENT FORM

Current Curricula Best Practise Developments in Aboriginal Education as Seen Through the Lens of the Indigenous World View

This a University of Laval Doctoral research project of Robert-Falcon Ouellette under the direction of Frederic Laugrand Dept of Anthropology

Purpose of the Research:

I am conducting research for a PhD in anthropology at the Université Laval in Quebec City. The research is concerned with education curriculum guides (educational programs) used by Aboriginal education authorities (Band/Métis schools). My principal question is what are the objectives in current Aboriginal education curricula and how do they compare to an Aboriginal world-view

Description of the Research:

I will proceed in two steps: The first step will establish the general objectives of a pan-Aboriginal education through the exploration of the historical and philosophical currents which have affected the transmission of knowledge among Aboriginal people. Then I will study the curricula of Aboriginal education currently in use. I should then be in a position to explore the dichotomy between the western educational systems, and the very different basis of Indigenous Knowledge of the world. I will retain the following points to analyse these differences: the place of secularism, spirituality and religion in both world views, the notion of time, place, and power, funding, jurisdiction, economics, politics, dominant cultural influences, pan-Indianism, family, community, traditions, integrationism, and traditionalism.

The second step will explore in more detail the curricula of Aboriginal education and evaluate if the current curricula accurately reflects a Pan-Aboriginals metaphysical (holistic) world-view. This evaluation will occur through the use of multiple evaluation instruments that will allow for a comparison between multiple curricula currently in use by education authorities serving Aboriginals at the elementary and secondary school levels. I hope to produce a Pan Canadian guide that compares different curricula currently in use by Aboriginal schools.

Potential Benefits:

This research should contribute significantly to the domain of Aboriginal education, the general Canadian education system and to positively influence the manner in which education is viewed by both Aboriginals and non-Aboriginals. This original research hopes to provide insightful and rigorous information to Native governance policy planners that will offer a basis of reflection about future curriculum developments that Aboriginal education might take.

The originality of my project is to present an analysis that combines a pan-Aboriginal knowledge world vision and the modern western world vision of science. I feel that there exists a cultural mismatch between the values and philosophy of western science and the values and philosophy held by many Aboriginal peoples and communities, making the issue of increasing Aboriginal participation in education and the Western industrial politic a difficult one. These cultural differences as explained by Niel Haggan states that native peoples see people, landscape, and living resources as a spiritual whole. In contrast, the Western science approach seeks greater understanding through breaking apart the whole and analyzing it in its smallest parts. Haggan also states that there exists a need to try to bring the two approaches to together to enhance possible understanding. We are thus faced with two radically different ways of relating to the world.

Confidentiality:

Confidentiality will be respected and no information that discloses the identity of the subject will be released or published without consent unless required by law. This legal obligation includes a number of circumstances, such as suspected child abuse and infectious disease, expression of suicidal ideas where research documents are ordered to be produced by a court of law and where researchers are obliged to report to the appropriate authorities. Any material will remain secured with the researcher who will not share any results without the express consent of the subjects.

Participation:

Participation in research is voluntary. If you choose to participate in this study you can withdraw at any time

Sponsorship:

This research is not funded by any government in any way.

Research Procedure:

The Researcher will conduct one individual interview of maximum an hour with the subject. We will be reviewing the views of the subject concerning Aboriginal education and the use of Aboriginal curriculum in the classroom.

Destruction of Documentation at the end of research:

All research and information will be destroyed at the end of this research in December 2012.

Contact:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Robert-Falcon Ouellette
9550 George-Émile-Lapalme
Québec, PQ
G2B 5E1
418-842-4485
418-844-5000 extension 6576 (work)
robert-falcon.ouellette.1@ulaval.ca

This research has been approved by the University Laval ethics committee with reference number 2009-103/03-11-2009

If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact:

Bureau de l'Ombudsman de l'Université Laval:
Pavillon Alphonse-Desjardins
Bureau 3320
Université Laval, Renseignements - Secrétariat : (418) 656-3081
Québec (Québec) Télécopieur : (418) 656-3846
G1K 7P4 Courriel : info@ombudsman.ulaval.ca

CONSENT:

By signing this form, I agree that:

The study has been explained to me	O Yes O No
All my questions were answered	O Yes O No
Possible harm and possible benefits of this study have been explained to me	O Yes O No
I understand that I have the right not to participate and the right to stop at any time	O Yes O No
I understand that I may refuse to participate without consequence.	O Yes O No
I have a choice of not answering any specific questions	O Yes O No
I am free now, and in the future, to ask any questions about the study.	O Yes O No
I have been told that my personal information will be kept confidential.	O Yes O No
I understand that no information that would identify me will be released or printed without asking me first.	O Yes O No
Would I consent identification when traditional Aboriginal knowledge is given during the interview.	O Yes O No
I understand that I will receive a signed copy of this consent form.	O Yes O No
I understand that this interview will be conducted only once for maximum an hour.	O Yes O No
I consent to this interview being recorded for future reference?	O Yes O No

I hereby consent to participate.,

Signature:

Date:

Name of Participant:

Telephone number:

Name of person who obtained consent:

Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX V : ABORIGINAL PHILOSOPHY ASSESSMENT FRAMEWORK QUESTIONS

1. What is the purpose of the curriculum?
2. Who was the curriculum developed by?
3. Does Aboriginal tradition play an important role?
4. What role does Western philosophy play in the curriculum?
5. Does spirituality and the metaphysical play an important role or is the curriculum secular?
6. What values (moral-ethics-religious) does the curriculum prone?
7. Is the curriculum taught by Aboriginals?
8. Is the subject matter placed in an Aboriginal context?
9. Does the land play a role within the curriculum?
10. What is the role of place/relationships?
11. Is the curriculum conceived of in a cyclical or linear manner?
12. Are subjects treated holistically or in smaller components?
13. What is the place of elders?
14. What is the place of parents?
15. What is the place of the students?
16. What is the role of community?
17. What is the role of greater community?
18. Are the desired stated learning outcomes Aboriginal in nature?
19. Why have the stated learning outcomes been chosen?
20. Is the program proscriptive or allows the teacher autonomy to teach the material?
21. Is the curriculum global (holistic) or specific to a subject?

APPENDIX VI : ABORIGINAL CURRICULUM QUESTIONNAIRE

For the study
Current Curricula Best Practise Developments in Aboriginal Education as Seen through
the Lens of the Indigenous World View

Robert-Falcon Ouellette
Associated PhD Candidate with the
Aboriginal Interuniversity Research and Studies Center of Laval University
Centre interuniversitaire d'études et de recherches autochtones de l'Université Laval
(CIÉRA)

November 3rd, 2009

This questionnaire is an integral part of a doctoral research project at the University Laval. The goal is to better understand the curriculum developments that are currently occurring in Aboriginal education. You are encouraged to complete the questionnaire to the best of your knowledge. There are no wrong or right answers because each Nation decides the type of education system they need and want for their community. To answer you must check the appropriate O. . You may make copies of this questionnaire for each of your schools or combine the results on one questionnaire. An electronic version of this questionnaire may be requested from the e-mail address of the researcher. It is recommended that an education professional with a sufficient knowledge of the school complete the questionnaire.

Types of Curriculum Definitions

It has been determined that there exists a variety of curriculum in use in Aboriginal nations. They have been grouped into five principal groups. Each curriculum is different though and may have elements which place it in one grouping while other elements place it in another. These principal groupings are:

- 1. Traditional Aboriginal Education based on Indigenous knowledge curriculum;**
- 2. Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal world-view;**
- 3. Hybrid curriculum;**
- 4. Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western world-view; and**
- 5. Assimilation Curriculum.**

Traditional Aboriginal Education based on Indigenous knowledge curriculum

Traditional Aboriginal Education based on Indigenous knowledge curriculum is a curriculum based upon a traditional Aboriginal knowledge and understanding in a setting that is natural. Based on the work of Eber Hampton and Marie Battiste the definition of Aboriginal curriculum does not contain any elements of the western

construct but is *sui generis* or *mawitowinsiwin* (Cree for “seeking life” and for “life’s sake). The Indigenous understanding of curriculum contains rights affirming the capacity of all beings to agency¹⁰⁸. Relationship makes up an important part in many indigenous world-views (Deloria, 1991; 2006). This traditional aboriginal understanding of the world is one holistic whole whereby all things (including human, animals, elements,¹⁰⁹ and even future generations) have inherent positive rights of interaction and responsibility to each other and to themselves (Cajete, 2000).

Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal world-view

Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal world-view is a curriculum whose basis contains a majority of elements of Indigenous knowledge and tradition. All major elements and concepts are Aboriginal in origin and design. It is cyclical in conception. There is some effort to add Western content grafted into the curriculum.

Hybrid curriculum

Hybrid curriculum is a curriculum which is in between. It contains equal elements of both the Western world-view and the Aboriginal world-view. Neither predominates.

Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western world-view

Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western world-view is a curriculum whose basis is in the western tradition. It is linear in conception and contains major

¹⁰⁸ Agency is a philosophical concept of the capacity of an agent (human, animals, spiritual) to act in the universe.

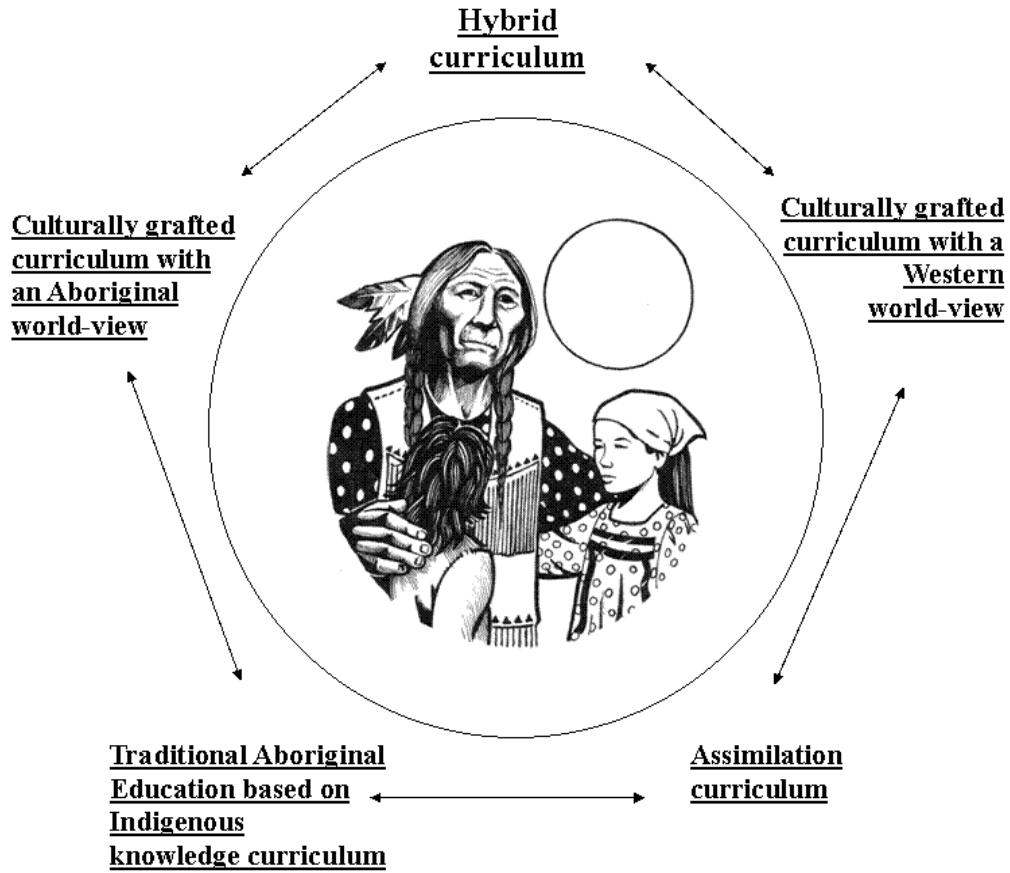
¹⁰⁹ The community in which we all live may be considered a type of living organism that grows and metamorphizes continually. This community as a living being may be sick or may be healthy, but it must include all being that come into contact with it, including past and future generations of beings.

elements of Western culture. There is some effort to add Aboriginal content grafted into the curriculum. There is also a small attempt to acknowledge other cultures.

Assimilation curriculum

Assimilation which is often called *Cultural assimilation* can be either an organic or mechanical processes of integration whereby members of an ethno-cultural community (such as immigrants or ethnic minorities) are “absorbed” into another community. This community is often larger, controls many of the economic, media and political apparatus of a nation-state. This absorption implies the loss of the characteristics of the absorbed group, such as language, customs, ethnicity and self-identity. Assimilation may be organic/spontaneous, which is usually the case with immigrants, or forced, as is often the case of the assimilation of ethnic minorities within particular nation-states. It is often a combination of the two. In North America, Aboriginals are often considered by themselves to be in a position of neo-colonialism with the majority of Canadians deciding the internal processes and dynamics of Aboriginal communities.

Curriculum Evaluation Model



Aboriginal Curriculum Questionnaire

Thank-you very much for your effort and time it is very appreciated.

Name of Aboriginal

Community _____

Number of school(s) under your Nations control (Aboriginal control) _____ Elementary _____ High School

Number of schools under Provincial control with Aboriginal students from your community _____ number of students _____

Number of students in your elementary school(s) _____

Number of students in your secondary school(s) _____

2. In your opinion what grades and subjects in your school(s) have an Aboriginal based curriculum? (mark more than one)

	Math	Language Arts	Aboriginal Language	Social Studies	Native Studies	Physics	Biology	Chemistry	Sciences	Physical Education	Other
Kindergarten	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 1	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 2	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 3	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 4	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 5	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 6	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 7	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 8	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 9	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 10	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 11	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Grade 12	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Comments:

3. Is the Aboriginal based curriculum material readily available to teachers?

a) <input type="radio"/> Always
b) <input type="radio"/> Often
c) <input type="radio"/> Somewhat
d) <input type="radio"/> Not often
e) <input type="radio"/> Not at all

f) Unknown

Comments:

4. Is the Aboriginal curriculum proscriptive (mandated) or more informal in application by the teacher?

a) Proscriptive

b) Both (50/50)

c) Informal

d) Unknown

Comments:

5. Does the Aboriginal curriculum specify grade-level objectives in a format and manner that are easy to use?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Somewhat

d) Not often

e) Not at all

f) Unknown

Comments:

6. Does the curriculum indicate clearly the objectives and suggest time allocations that reflect their importance?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Somewhat

d) Not often

e) Not at all

f) Unknown

Comments:

7. Is there recommended teaching/learning activities that seem likely to lead to the attainment of the relevant educational objectives?

a) Always

b) Often

c) Somewhat

d) Not often

e) Not at all

f) Unknown

Comments:

8. In your opinion, do the recommended teaching and learning activities reflect the best current knowledge about teaching and learning for Aboriginal students?

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| a) <input type="radio"/> Always |
| b) <input type="radio"/> Often |
| c) <input type="radio"/> Somewhat |
| d) <input type="radio"/> Not often |
| e) <input type="radio"/> Not at all |
| f) <input type="radio"/> Unknown |

Comments:

9. Does the Aboriginal curriculum guide suggest ways to evaluate students?

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| a) <input type="radio"/> Always |
| b) <input type="radio"/> Often |
| c) <input type="radio"/> Somewhat |
| d) <input type="radio"/> Not often |
| e) <input type="radio"/> Not at all |
| f) <input type="radio"/> Unknown |

Comments:

10. Are there recommended instructional materials and other resources?

- | |
|-------------------------------------|
| a) <input type="radio"/> Always |
| b) <input type="radio"/> Often |
| c) <input type="radio"/> Somewhat |
| d) <input type="radio"/> Not often |
| e) <input type="radio"/> Not at all |
| f) <input type="radio"/> Unknown |

Comments:

11. Does Aboriginal tradition/world-view (as defined by you) play an important role in your school(s) curriculum?

e)	<input type="radio"/>	Very much
f)	<input type="radio"/>	Much
g)	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat
h)	<input type="radio"/>	Not much
i)	<input type="radio"/>	Not at all
j)	<input type="radio"/>	Unknown

Comments:

12. Does Western philosophy/thought/world-view (as defined by you) play an important role in your school(s) curriculum?

a)	<input type="radio"/>	Very much
b)	<input type="radio"/>	Much
c)	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat
d)	<input type="radio"/>	Not much
e)	<input type="radio"/>	Not at all
f)	<input type="radio"/>	Unknown

Comments:

13. Does spirituality play an important role in your school(s) curriculum?

a)	<input type="radio"/>	Very much
b)	<input type="radio"/>	Much
c)	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat
d)	<input type="radio"/>	Not much
e)	<input type="radio"/>	Not at all
f)	<input type="radio"/>	Unknown

Comments:

14. In your opinion, is your school(s) curriculum secular (non-religious) in nature?

a)	<input type="radio"/>	Very much
b)	<input type="radio"/>	Much
c)	<input type="radio"/>	Somewhat
d)	<input type="radio"/>	Not much
e)	<input type="radio"/>	Not at all
f)	<input type="radio"/>	Unknown

Comments:

15. Do Western religious traditions (Protestantism, Catholicism, Evangelical, etc...) play a role in the curriculum?

- a) Very much
- b) Much
- c) Somewhat
- d) Not much
- e) Not at all
- f) Unknown

Comments:

16. Does the land and its ensuing ideas (such as traditional lands/philosophy) play a role in the Aboriginal curriculum?

- a) Very much
- b) Much
- c) Somewhat
- d) Not much
- e) Not at all
- f) Unknown

Comments:

17. In your opinion on a scale of 1 to 5 is the curriculum used by your school(s)? (see page 2 to 3 for definitions)

- 1. Assimilation Curriculum (provincial)
- 2. Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western world-view
- 3. Hybrid curriculum
- 4. Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal world-view
- 5. Traditional Aboriginal Education based on Indigenous knowledge curriculum

Comments:

18. If your school(s) uses an Aboriginal curriculum it was developed because: (pick more than one)

- a) Parents requested it.
- b) Aboriginal teachers requested it
- c) Teachers requested it
- d) Band council requested it
- e) School administration requested it
- f) Students requested it
- g) The general community requested it
- h) The provincial or federal governments requested it

- i) Other _____
- j) Other _____

Comments:

19. The curriculum was developed by:

- a) Aboriginal educators (teachers)
- b) Educators (teachers)
- c) Aboriginal consultants
- d) Consultants
- e) Provincial school department/Ministry
- f) Other _____
- g) Unknown

Comments:

20. On a scale of 1 to 5, does your school(s) curriculum encourage student learning in a group setting (such as cooperative learning) or is the learning more individual based?

- 1. Group
- 2. mostly in a group
- 3. Both (50/50)
- 4. Mostly as an individual
- 5. Individual

Comments:

21. Does technology play an important role in the Aboriginal curriculum?

- a) Very much
- b) Much
- c) Somewhat
- d) Not much
- e) Unknown

Comments:

22. What are some of the overall goals of the Aboriginal curriculum? (pick more than one)

- a) To prepare the students for the work place
- b) Certification
- c) Intellectual competencies: to use information, to solve problems, to exercise critical judgment, to use creativity
- d) Methodological competencies: to adopt effective work methods, to use ITC
- e) Personal and social competencies: to construct his/her identity, to cooperate with others
- f) Communication-related competency: to communicate appropriately
- g) Other _____
- h) Other _____
- i) Other _____

Comments:

23. In your opinion, on a scale of 1 to 5, is the curriculum linear or cyclical in nature?

- 1. Linear
- 2. Mainly linear
- 3. Hybrid
- 4. Mainly cyclical
- 5. Cyclical (medicine wheel)

Comments:

24. Do you use elements of the medicine wheel (such as the cycles of nature/seasons) when teaching the curriculum?

- a) Very much
- b) Much
- c) Somewhat
- d) Not much
- e) Not at all
- f) Not applicable to my Aboriginal culture

Comments:

25. Are individual subjects (math, language arts, science etc...) taught together as a holistic whole or on an individual standing, separately?

- a) Always individually
- b) More individually but sometimes together
- c) Both
- d) Almost always holistically but sometimes individually
- e) Always holistically, all together
- f) No opinion

Comments:

26. Is there an endurance exam or rite of passage when moving from one level to the next?

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| a) <input type="radio"/> | Yes |
| b) <input type="radio"/> | No |
| c) <input type="radio"/> | Unknown |
| d) <input type="radio"/> | If yes what type of rite of passage _____ |

Comments:

27. Are elders used in teaching and transmitting knowledge within your school(s)?

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| a) <input type="radio"/> | Very much |
| b) <input type="radio"/> | Much |
| c) <input type="radio"/> | Somewhat |
| d) <input type="radio"/> | Not much |
| e) <input type="radio"/> | Not at all |

Comments:

28. On a scale of 1 to 5, is the elders' participation informal or a proscribed (mandated) part of the curriculum?

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. <input type="radio"/> | Informal |
| 2. <input type="radio"/> | Mostly informal |
| 3. <input type="radio"/> | Both (50/50) |
| 4. <input type="radio"/> | Mostly proscribed |
| 5. <input type="radio"/> | Proscribed part of the curriculum |

Comments:

29. Are parents used in teaching and transmitting knowledge within your school(s)?

- | | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| a) <input type="radio"/> | Very much |
| b) <input type="radio"/> | Much |
| c) <input type="radio"/> | Somewhat |
| d) <input type="radio"/> | Not much |
| e) <input type="radio"/> | Not at all |

Comments:

30. On a scale of 1 to 5, is the parents' participation informal or a proscribed part of the curriculum?

- | | |
|--------------------------|-----------------|
| 1. <input type="radio"/> | Informal |
| 2. <input type="radio"/> | Mostly informal |

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 3. | <input type="radio"/> | Both (50/50) |
| 4. | <input type="radio"/> | Mostly proscribed |
| 5. | <input type="radio"/> | Proscribed part of the curriculum |

Comments:

31. Are the children themselves used in teaching and transmitting knowledge within your school(s)?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| a) | <input type="radio"/> | Very much |
| b) | <input type="radio"/> | Much |
| c) | <input type="radio"/> | Somewhat |
| d) | <input type="radio"/> | Not much |
| e) | <input type="radio"/> | Not at all |

Comments:

32. On a scale of 1 to 5, is the children's participation informal or a proscribed part of the curriculum?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 1. | <input type="radio"/> | Informal |
| 2. | <input type="radio"/> | Mostly informal |
| 3. | <input type="radio"/> | Both (50/50) |
| 4. | <input type="radio"/> | Mostly proscribed |
| 5. | <input type="radio"/> | Proscribed part of the curriculum |

Comments:

33. Is the community used in teaching and transmitting knowledge within your school(s)?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| a) | <input type="radio"/> | Very much |
| b) | <input type="radio"/> | Much |
| c) | <input type="radio"/> | Somewhat |
| d) | <input type="radio"/> | Not much |
| e) | <input type="radio"/> | Not at all |

Comments:

34. On a scale of 1 to 5, is the communities' participation informal or a proscribed part of the curriculum?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|----------|
| 1. | <input type="radio"/> | Informal |
|----|-----------------------|----------|

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|-----------------------------------|
| 2. | <input type="radio"/> | Mostly informal |
| 3. | <input type="radio"/> | Both (50/50) |
| 4. | <input type="radio"/> | Mostly proscribed |
| 5. | <input type="radio"/> | Proscribed part of the curriculum |

Comments:

35. On a scale of 1 to 5, does your curriculum reflect the objectives your community?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| 1. | <input type="radio"/> | Very much |
| 2. | <input type="radio"/> | Much |
| 3. | <input type="radio"/> | Somewhat |
| 4. | <input type="radio"/> | Not much |
| 5. | <input type="radio"/> | Not at all |

Comments

36. To the best of your knowledge, what is the percentage of teachers who are Aboriginals in your school(s)?

- | | | |
|----|-----------------------|------------|
| a) | <input type="radio"/> | 0-10% |
| b) | <input type="radio"/> | 11% - 20% |
| c) | <input type="radio"/> | 21% - 30% |
| d) | <input type="radio"/> | 31% - 40% |
| e) | <input type="radio"/> | 41% - 50% |
| f) | <input type="radio"/> | 51% - 60% |
| g) | <input type="radio"/> | 61% - 70% |
| h) | <input type="radio"/> | 71% - 80% |
| i) | <input type="radio"/> | 81% - 90% |
| j) | <input type="radio"/> | 91% - 100% |

Comments:

Additional Comments:

I would like to thank you for your time in completing this questionnaire. Is it possible to include some examples of the curriculum used by your school(s)?

APPENDIX VII: Curriculum Evaluation Comparison Results

1. Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment Framework Questions

QUESTIONS		Western curriculum 100/0 %	87/13 %	Culturally grafted curriculum with a Western world-view 75/25 %	62/38 %	Hybrid curriculum 50/50 %	38/62 %	Culturally grafted curriculum with an Aboriginal world-view 25/75 %	13/87 %	Aboriginal Education based on IK curriculum 0/100 %
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	What is the purpose of the curriculum?	100/0	87/13	75/25	62/38	50/50	38/62	25/75	13/87	0/100
2	Who was the curriculum developed by?	Entirely by people of the dominant society 100/0	Almost entirely by people of the dominant society 87/13	Mostly by people of the dominant society 75/25	Mostly somewhat by people of the dominant society 62/38	Hybrid development 50/50	Mostly somewhat by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 38/62	Mostly by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 25/75	Almost entirely by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 13/87	Entirely by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 0/100
3	Does Aboriginal tradition play an important role?	Not at all important 100/0	Not very important 87/13	Not important 75/25	Somewhat important 62/38	Important 50/50	Mostly somewhat important 38/62	Mostly important 25/75	Very important 13/87	Extremely important 0/100
4	What role does Western philosophy play in the curriculum?	Completely Western in nature 100/0	Almost completely Western in nature 87/13	Mostly Western elements 75/25	Many Western elements 62/38	Several Western elements 50/50	Some Western elements 38/62	Few Western elements 25/75	Very few Western elements 13/87	No Western elements 0/100
5	Does spirituality and the metaphysical play an important role or is the curriculum secular?	Completely secular 100/0	Almost completely secular 87/13	Mostly secular 75/25	Mostly somewhat secular 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	Mostly somewhat spiritual/metaphysical 38/62	Mostly spiritual/metaphysical 25/75	Almost completely spiritual/metaphysical 13/87	Completely spiritual/metaphysical 0/100

6	What values (moral-ethics-religious) does the curriculum prone?	Completely Western in nature 100/0	Almost completely Western in nature 87/13	Mostly Western elements 75/25	Many Western elements 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	Mostly somewhat Aboriginal 38/62	Mostly Aboriginal 25/75	Almost completely Aboriginal 13/87	Completely Aboriginal 0/100
7	Is the curriculum taught by Aboriginals?	Entirely by people of the dominant society 100/0	Almost entirely by people of the dominant society 87/13	Mostly by people of the dominant society 75/25	Mostly somewhat by people of the dominant society 62/38	Hybrid development 50/50	Mostly somewhat by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 38/62	Mostly by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 25/75	Almost entirely by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 13/87	Entirely by Aboriginal education professionals, elders, parents and community members 0/100
8	Is the subject matter placed in an Aboriginal context?	Completely Western in context 100/0	Almost completely having Western context 87/13	Mostly having Western context 75/25	Much Western context 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	Mostly somewhat having Aboriginal context 38/62	Mostly having Aboriginal context 25/75	Almost completely having Aboriginal context 13/87	Completely having Aboriginal context 0/100
9	Does the land play a role within the curriculum?	Land has no role 100/0	Not a very important role 87/13	Not an important role 75/25	Somewhat important role 62/38	Important role 50/50	Mostly somewhat an important role 38/62	Mostly an important role 25/75	Very important role 13/87	Traditional understanding of Land with the land occupying an essential role 0/100
10	What is the role of place/relationships?	Place and relationships have no role 100/0	Not a very important role 87/13	Not an important role 75/25	Somewhat important role 62/38	Important role 50/50	Mostly somewhat an important role 38/62	Mostly an important role 25/75	Very important role 13/87	Place and relationships occupy an essential role 0/100
11	Is the curriculum conceived of in a cyclical or linear manner?	Completely linear understanding 100/0	Almost completely linear 87/13	Mostly having an linear understanding 75/25	A good deal of linear understanding 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	A good deal of cyclical understanding 62/38	Mostly having a cyclical understanding 75/25	Almost completely having a cyclical understanding 87/13	Completely cyclical understanding 100/0

12	Are subjects treated holistically or in smaller components?	Always treated in smaller components 100/0	Almost always treated in smaller components 87/13	Mostly treated in smaller components 75/25	A good deal of treatment as smaller components 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	A good deal of holistic understanding 62/38	Mostly holistic 75/25	Almost completely holistic 87/13	Completely holistic 0/100
13	What is the place of elders?	No elder involvement 100/0	Barely having elder involvement 87/13	Rarely having elder involvement 75/25	Somewhat rarely having elder involvement 62/38	Somewhat having elder involvement 50/50	Mostly somewhat having elder involvement 62/38	Mostly having elder involvement 75/25	Almost completely having elder involvement 87/13	Completely having elder involvement 0/100
14	What is the place of parents?	No parental involvement 100/0	Barely having parental involvement 87/13	Rarely having parental involvement 75/25	Somewhat rarely having parental involvement 62/38	Somewhat having parental involvement 50/50	Mostly somewhat having parental involvement 62/38	Mostly having parental involvement 75/25	Almost completely having parental involvement 87/13	Parental involvement in all classroom activities 0/100
15	What is the place of the students?	Students have no agency in how their education is taught and in their evaluation 100/0	Barely having student agency 87/13	Rarely having student agency 75/25	Somewhat rarely having student agency 62/38	Somewhat having student agency 50/50	Mostly somewhat having student agency 62/38	Mostly having student agency 75/25	Almost completely having student agency 87/13	Students have agency in how their education is taught and in their evaluation 00/100
16	What is the role of community?	No community involvement 100/0	Barely having community involvement 87/13	Rarely having community involvement 75/25	Somewhat rarely having community involvement 62/38	Somewhat having community involvement 50/50	Mostly somewhat having community involvement 62/38	Mostly having community involvement 75/25	Almost completely having community involvement 87/13	The local community is involved in all classroom activities 0/100
17	What is the role of greater community?	No greater community involvement 100/0	Barely having greater community involvement 87/13	Rarely having greater community involvement 75/25	Somewhat rarely having greater community involvement 62/38	Somewhat having greater community involvement 50/50	Mostly somewhat having greater community involvement 62/38	Mostly having greater community involvement 75/25	Almost completely having greater community involvement 87/13	Greater community is involved in all classroom activities 0/100

18	Are the desired stated learning outcomes Aboriginal in nature?	Not at all Aboriginal in nature 100/0	Not very Aboriginal in nature 87/13	Not very much Aboriginal in nature 75/25	To some extent Aboriginal in nature 62/38	Somewhat Aboriginal in nature 50/50	Mostly somewhat Aboriginal in nature 38/62	Mostly Aboriginal in nature 25/75	Almost completely Aboriginal in nature 13/87	Completely Aboriginal in nature 0/100
19	Why have the stated learning outcomes been chosen?	To offer a completely Western education 100/0	Almost completely Western 87/13	Mostly Western 75/25	Mostly somewhat Western 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	Mostly somewhat Aboriginal 38/62	Mostly Aboriginal 25/75	Almost completely Aboriginal 13/87	To offer a completely Aboriginal education 0/100
20	Is the program proscriptive or allows the teacher autonomy to teach the material?	Completely proscriptive 100/0	Almost completely proscriptive 87/13	Mostly proscriptive 75/25	Mostly somewhat proscriptive 62/38	Hybrid 50/50	Mostly somewhat autonomous 38/62	Mostly autonomous 25/75	Almost completely autonomous 13/87	Completely autonomous 0/100
21	Is the curriculum global (holistic) or specific to a subject?	Specific to a single subject 100/0	Treats 2 subjects 87/13	Treats 3 subjects 75/25	Treats 4 subjects 62/38	Treats 5 subjects 50/50	Treats 6 subjects 62/38	Treats 7 subjects 75/25	Treats 8 subjects 87/13	Treats 9 or more subjects 0/100

2. Aboriginal Philosophy Assessment of Curriculum

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs	7	9	7	6	8	8	9	8	6	7	6	7	6	7	7	7	5	7	7	7	3	6,86
2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	1,43
3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9	6	2	3	5	1	7	1	8	7	7	7	7	2	2	5	2	5	6	7	7	7	4,95
4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	2	1	1	5	4	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	5	3	1,76
5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10	7	9	7	7	6	7	5	7	7	5	7	7	7	6	6	6	4	7	8	6	3	6,38
6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy	7	9	7	7	2	7	7	8	6	2	5	5	8	6	7	6	2	7	7	5	5	5,95
7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide	6	8	8	3	3	5	8	9	8	7	7	5	8	3	5	5	6	8	8	8	3	6,24
8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development	8	7	9	7	6	7	9	9	8	7	5	7	9	7	8	7	7	8	8	7	3	7,29
9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource	4	5	7	3	2	6	5	8	7	5	3	8	8	3	3	3	3	5	7	5	1	4,81
10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30	6	5	7	7	5	6	5	9	5	3	5	7	3	2	4	2	2	5	7	7	3	5,00
11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)	7	8	8	8	5	6	9	9	1	1	5	5	7	7	6	6	1	5	7	7	2	5,71

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12	7	9	8	7	8	8	9	8	7	7	7	7	5	1	5	6	5	5	7	7	2	6,43
13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y	7	9	8	7	8	8	9	8	7	7	7	7	5	1	5	6	5	5	7	7	2	6,43
14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9	7	7	8	6	3	7	9	5	9	3	2	7	6	2	4	5	1	7	7	8	2	5,48
15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30	7	7	6	6	4	7	9	7	5	6	5	7	5	5	3	6	3	7	7	8	2	5,81
16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007	5	3	3	3	7	3	2	3	1	1	6	5	2	6	4	2	1	3	3	7	8	3,71
17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum	8	9	8	8	7	7	9	9	9	7	7	8	7	6	7	8	7	8	9	7	6	7,67
18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12	8	9	8	9	7	9	9	9	9	9	8	8	8	7	8	7	6	8	9	8	5	8,00
19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10	5	7	7	5	1	5	5	7	7	6	2	3	8	2	7	5	1	8	8	9	8	5,52
20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008	8	8	7	7	7	8	7	9	7	7	7	5	8	7	7	7	2	7	8	8	1	6,76
21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006	8	8	7	6	2	5	7	7	8	4	5	5	6	3	3	6	1	7	7	5	1	5,29
22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum	3	6	6	3	3	3	5	6	5	5	3	4	3	2	2	2	2	6	7	3	9	4,19
23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource	3	6	8	3	7	7	2	7	7	7	8	8	8	7	7	7	5	8	8	9	8	6,67
24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture	8	9	8	8	8	8	9	8	8	7	7	8	8	8	8	8	7	8	9	7	8	7,95

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	3	5	7	3	3	3	2	7	4	4	1	4	6	2	2	1	1	3	3	7	6	3,67
26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	7	5	7	6	5	5	3	7	7	7	2	4	3	2	3	2	2	6	6	7	1	4,62
27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	7	5	7	6	6	6	3	7	7	7	2	4	3	2	3	2	1	6	6	7	1	4,67
28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation	8	7	6	8	5	7	6	7	8	7	3	7	7	2	7	4	4	7	8	7	6	6,24
29	Manitoba-Pelican Rapids, Sapotawayak Cree Nation, Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School	no evaluation																					
30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum	2	3	3	2	1	2	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	3	3	7	4	2,10
31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies	3	7	6	6	3	5	3	6	3	5	1	1	3	1	3	7	1	6	6	5	2	3,95
32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987	7	6	5	5	1	5	9	6	1	3	6	7	4	6	5	8	1	7	7	8	2	5,19
33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages	7	7	5	5	1	5	9	6	1	3	1	7	2	7	7	7	1	7	7	7	2	4,95
34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages	3	5	3	3	1	2	9	7	1	1	1	3	4	1	3	2	1	3	3	7	1	3,05
35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages	3	5	3	3	1	2	9	7	1	1	1	3	4	1	3	2	1	3	3	7	1	3,05
36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware	2	5	3	2	1	1	9	7	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	7	1	2,57

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	Total
37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree	2	5	3	2	1	1	9	7	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	3	3	7	1	2,57
38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies	7	5	5	7	6	6	7	8	6	8	3	7	6	1	5	3	1	6	7	8	5	5,57
39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies	7	6	7	7	8	7	7	7	8	7	4	4	7	1	5	6	5	7	7	7	6	6,19
40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum	1	1	1	3	1	1	1	1	1	5	4	3	1	1	4	3	1	1	1	1	1	1,76
41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120	6	5	6	7	5	6	4	7	4	3	4	6	3	1	7	3	1	6	5	7	6	4,86
42	Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq 10	unavailable/no evaluation																					
43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia	7	7	8	7	6	5	9	7	6	6	6	7	2	2	3	4	2	7	8	3	5	5,57
44	Newfoundland-Posters	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation																					
45	Prince Edward Island- Native Studies 801 Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada,	see Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq 10																					
46	Quebec	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation																					
47	Nunavut-Made in Nunavut Curriculum																						
48	Yukon	unavailable/no evaluation see British Columbia and Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework																					

3. Curriculum Characteristics Assessment Framework Questions

Characteristic	Description
Explicit	Expresses clear targets for learning drawn from identified standards
Coherent	Organizes content (concepts, skills and processes) to show increasingly rigorous expectations as students move to higher levels
Dynamic	Supports rich interactions among the standards, learner strengths, needs, effective instruction, and multidimensional assessment
Practical	Provides a clear, well organized, user friendly format
Comprehensive	Incorporates all subject areas that are part of a general curriculum
Coherent Organization	Uses consistent organizational approaches and language across subject areas throughout the document
Manageable	Represents not only what Aboriginal students can learn but also what any one student can be expected to learn.

Source: The Center for Curriculum renewal, 1998 taken from Carr and Harris 2001.

Characteristic	Not at all	Barely	Rarely	Some what rarely	Some what	Mostly some what	Mostly	Almost completely	Completely
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
Explicit									
Coherent									
Dynamic									
Practical									
Comprehensive									
Coherent									
Manageable									

The following are seven characteristics of a curriculum and assessment plan. Once information about objectives has been collected a general assessment should be conducted to determine whether the curriculum is fulfilling its obligations as a curriculum that has the potential to be effectively understood and implemented (Carr and Harris, 2001).

4. Curriculum Characteristics Assessment of Curriculum

	Curriculum	Explicit	Coherent	Dynamic	Practical	Comprehensive	Coherent Org	Manageable	Total
1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs	7	8	7	8	3	8	8	7,00
2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics	8	8	6	6	2	8	7	6,43
3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9	8	8	9	7	5	8	8	7,57
4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12	8	8	5	6	3	8	7	6,43
5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10	8	7	8	9	3	9	9	7,57
6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy	7	5	5	8	3	7	7	6,00
7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide	6	7	8	7	3	6	8	6,43
8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development	8	8	6	6	3	8	8	6,71
9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource	8	8	5	8	1	8	9	6,71
10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30	8	5	5	7	3	8	8	6,29
11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)	7	8	9	9	1	8	8	7,14
12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12	7	7	5	7	1	7	7	5,86
13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y	7	7	5	7	1	7	7	5,86

	Curriculum	Explicit	Coherent	Dynamic	Practical	Comprehensive	Coherent Org	Manageable	Total
14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9	6	1	3	6	1	8	7	4,57
15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30	8	8	5	6	1	8	7	6,14
16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007	3	2	7	5	9	3	5	4,86
17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum	6	8	6	7	5	8	8	6,86
18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12	6	7	6	7	4	8	8	6,57
19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10	5	8	7	9	9	8	8	7,71
20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008	9	8	8	7	3	8	8	7,29
21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006	8	8	6	7	3	8	8	6,86
22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum	5	6	5	6	9	7	7	6,43
23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource	8	8	6	7	8	8	9	7,71
24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture	8	8	6	7	8	8	8	7,57
25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	2	5	4	1	1	8	2	3,29
26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	4	5	5	4	1	8	7	4,86

	Curriculum	Explicit	Coherent	Dynamic	Practical	Comprehensive	Coherent Org	Manageable	Total
27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	4	6	5	4	1	8	7	5,00
28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation	8	8	8	6	6	8	8	7,43
29	Manitoba-Pelican Rapids, Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School	no evaluation							
30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum	6	7	3	4	5	5	4	4,86
31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies	7	4	6	8	2	7	7	5,86
32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987	6	5	6	7	2	8	8	6,00
33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages	8	8	6	7	2	8	8	6,71
34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages	8	8	6	6	1	8	7	6,29
35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages	8	8	6	6	1	8	7	6,29
36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware	7	5	2	5	1	8	7	5,00
37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree	7	5	2	5	1	8	7	5,00
38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies	7	8	6	7	5	8	7	6,86
39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies	8	8	6	7	5	8	7	7,00
40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum	7	6	5	7	6	7	3	5,86
41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120	8	1	8	5	6	7	7	6,00
42	Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq 10	unavailable/no evaluation							

	Curriculum	Explicit	Coherent	Dynamic	Practical	Comprehensive	Coherent Org	Manageable	Total
43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia	5	1	5	8	3	8	7	5,29
44	Newfoundland-Posters	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation							
45	Prince Edward Island- Native Studies 801 Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada,	see Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq 10							
46	Quebec	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation							
47	Nunavut-Made in Nunavut Curriculum								
48	Yukon	unavailable/no evaluation see British Columbia and Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework							

5. Objectives Attainment Assessment Framework Questions

Questions		Not at all	Barely	Rarely	Some what rarely	Some what	Mostly some what	Mostly	Almost completely	Completely
		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1	Are there written course guides for this field covering all Grade levels?									
2	Are those guides readily available to administrators, teachers, and parents? (internet, in-school etc...)									
3	Does the format of the guide facilitate revision and amplification?									
4	Do the guides clearly specify Grade-level objectives in a format and manner that facilitate use?									
5	Do the guides make appropriate distinctions between essential (savoir-faire) outcomes and enrichment outcomes and focus primarily on the essential outcomes?									
6	Do the guides clearly suggest time allocations on the relative importance of the essential outcomes and their importance?									

7	Do the guides recommend (but not mandate) teaching/learning activities that seem likely to lead to the attainment of the relevant objectives?									
8	Do the teaching and learning activities recommended reflect the best current knowledge about teaching and learning for Aboriginals and are they qualitatively excellent?									
9	Does the guide suggest appropriate evaluation processes and instruments?									
10	Do the guides recommend appropriate instructional materials and other resources?									
11	Is certification a goal of the curriculum?									
12	Is there a normative time frame that the learning must be completed?									
13	Is the curriculum part of a life long learning process as opposed to a specific physiological development period?									

6. Objectives Attainment Assessment of Curriculum

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs	9	8	8	8	8	5	6	8	4	4	8	4	6	6,62
2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics	7	8	7	9	8	5	8	7	7	8	2	2	2	6,15
3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9	7	8	7	8	8	5	6	8	6	2	3	2	2	5,54
4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12	9	8	7	7	7	3	5	1	1	1	3	2	2	4,31
5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10	1	8	8	7	8	6	9	9	8	9	5	4	5	6,69
6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy	1	9	8	2	7	1	8	8	1	8	6	9	7	5,77
7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide	1	9	7	5	7	7	8	8	9	9	5	4	3	6,31
8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development	5	9	2	7	6	6	8	7	3	9	8	4	7	6,23
9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource	1	5	7	3	4	2	9	6	1	8	7	8	7	5,23
10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30	4	7	7	8	7	3	8	6	1	9	3	3	3	5,31
11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)	7	7	8	7	5	5	9	7	9	3	5	3	6	6,23
12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12	9	7	6	7	7	1	4	7	1	1	5	7	7	5,31
13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y	5	7	6	7	7	1	4	7	1	1	5	7	7	5,00
14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9	7	5	5	1	3	1	5	5	1	1	3	8	8	4,08
15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30	4	5	5	9	8	8	1	7	1	1	3	8	8	5,23

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007	1	5	5	2	2	7	8	5	6	8	1	6	3	4,54
17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum	4	6	7	1	7	3	4	8	4	8	5	5	8	5,38
18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12	8	7	7	5	1	4	7	8	4	3	1	5	8	5,23
19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10	8	8	7	5	1	3	5	6	7	8	7	8	6	6,08
20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008	2	8	8	8	8	4	8	8	8	9	9	9	5	7,23
21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006	2	8	7	8	8	2	2	7	5	7	7	8	7	6,00
22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum	7	8	7	7	3	3	8	5	3	7	3	2	8	5,46
23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource	8	6	6	8	8	2	5	9	1	6	2	7	8	5,85
24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture	9	8	7	7	8	2	1	1	1	1	5	7	7	4,92
25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	9	8	2	2	2	5	8	3	3	3	3	8	4	4,62
26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	9	8	5	3	2	2	8	6	3	4	3	8	6	5,15
27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	9	8	5	3	2	2	8	7	3	4	3	8	7	5,31
28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation	1	8	7	6	7	8	8	8	8	9	3	8	7	6,77
29	Manitoba-Pelican Rapids, Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School	no evaluation													

	Curriculum	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	Total
30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum	7	4	3	4	1	1	4	1	1	1	3	7	3	3,08
31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies	4	4	7	7	7	1	9	7	3	9	3	7	3	5,46
32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987	9	4	4	6	7	8	7	6	8	7	7	7	7	6,69
33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages	7	4	5	6	9	8	4	6	5	1	8	8	7	6,00
34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages	3	4	6	6	7	1	3	3	5	1	8	7	6	4,62
35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages	3	4	6	6	7	1	3	3	5	1	8	7	6	4,62
36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware	9	4	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	7	5	3,08
37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree	9	4	5	1	1	1	2	2	1	1	1	7	5	3,08
38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies	2	4	7	7	8	5	7	7	5	3	6	3	3	5,15
39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies	2	4	7	8	8	5	7	7	5	3	9	5	6	5,85
40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum	8	2	6	6	7	1	1	2	7	3	3	9	3	4,46
41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120	1	1	5	6	7	5	7	6	7	6	1	1	5	4,46
42	Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq 10	unavailable/no evaluation													0,00
43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia	1	7	7	1	1	1	7	7	3	9	1	3	8	4,31
44	Newfoundland-Posters	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation													
45	Prince Edward Island- Native Studies 801 Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada	see Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq 10													
46	Quebec	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation													
47	Nunavut-Made in Nunavut Curriculum														
48	Yukon	unavailable/no evaluation see British Columbia and Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework													

7. General Results

	Curriculum	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
1	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Aboriginal Language and Culture Programs	6,86	7,00	6,62	6,84
2	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework K-9 Mathematics	1,43	6,43	6,15	3,37
3	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework Social Studies, K-9	4,95	7,57	5,54	5,59
4	Western Canada-Common Curriculum Framework English Language Arts, K-12	1,76	6,43	4,31	3,20
5	Saskatchewan-Native Studies 10	6,38	7,57	6,69	6,68
6	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science and Technology Units, The Night Sky/astronomy	5,95	6,00	5,77	5,93
7	Saskatchewan-Rekindling Traditions: Cross-Cultural Science & Technology Units, Teacher Guide	6,24	6,43	6,31	6,29
8	Carrier Sekani Tribal Council-Nak'azdli and Tl'azt'en First Nations-Dakelh Curriculum Development	7,29	6,71	6,23	6,96
9	Alaska-Tlingit Moon and Tide Teaching Resource	4,81	6,71	5,23	5,27
10	Alberta-Aboriginal Studies 10-20-30	5,00	6,29	5,31	5,32
11	Alberta-Cree 9 Year Language Program (grades 4-12)	5,71	7,14	6,23	6,10
12	Alberta-Cree Language and Culture Twelve-Year Program, Kindergarten to grade 12	6,43	5,86	5,31	6,09
13	Alberta-Cree Language & Culture 10-6Y, 20-6Y, 30-6Y	6,43	5,86	5,00	6,03
14	Alberta-Blackfoot Language and Culture Program ESC-9	5,48	4,57	4,08	5,02
15	Alberta-Blackfoot Language & Culture Program 10-20-30	5,81	6,14	5,23	5,76

	Curriculum	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
16	Northwest Territories-Elementary and Junior Secondary School Handbook 2006-2007	3,71	4,86	4,54	4,11
17	Northwest Territories-Dene Kede Thematic Curriculum	7,67	6,86	5,38	7,05
18	Northwest Territories-Inuuqatigiit: The Curriculum from the Inuit Perspective, Kindergarten-12	8,00	6,57	5,23	7,16
19	British Columbia-Shared Learnings: Integrating BC Aboriginal Content K-10	5,52	7,71	6,08	6,07
20	British Columbia-English 12 First Peoples Integrated Resource Package 2008	6,76	7,29	7,23	6,96
21	British Columbia-First Nations Studies 12 Integrated Resource Package 2006	5,29	6,86	6,00	5,74
22	Internet-Cradleboard Core Curriculum	4,19	6,43	5,46	4,89
23	Manitoba-Integrating Aboriginal Perspectives into Curriculum: A Resource	6,67	7,71	5,85	6,71
24	Manitoba-Kindergarten to Grade 12 Aboriginal Languages and Culture	7,95	7,57	4,92	7,27
25	Manitoba-Native Studies: Early Years (K-4) A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	3,67	3,29	4,62	3,78
26	Manitoba-Native Studies: Middle Years (Grades 5 to 8), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	4,62	4,86	5,15	4,77
27	Manitoba-Native Studies: Senior Years (S1-S4), A Teacher's Resource Book Framework	4,67	5,00	5,31	4,86
28	Manitoba-Grade 12 Current Topics in First Nations, Métis and Inuit Studies: A Foundation for Implementation	6,24	7,43	6,77	6,58
29	Manitoba-Pelican Rapids, Sapotaweyak Cree Nation, Neil Dennis Ketmatch Memorial School	0,00	0,00	0,00	no evaluation

	Curriculum	Philosophy	Characteristics	Objectives	Overall Total
30	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit Curriculum	2,10	4,86	3,08	2,84
31	Ontario-Aboriginal Perspectives: The Teacher's Toolkit, Aboriginal Teaching Strategies	3,95	5,86	5,46	4,64
32	Ontario-Native Languages Curriculum Framework 1987	5,19	6,00	6,69	5,65
33	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-8 Native Languages	4,95	6,71	6,00	5,51
34	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10 Native Languages	3,05	6,29	4,62	4,01
35	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12 Native Languages	3,05	6,29	4,62	4,01
36	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Delaware	2,57	5,00	3,08	3,16
37	Ontario Curriculum Grades 1-12, Native Languages Ojibwe and Cree	2,57	5,00	3,08	3,16
38	Ontario Curriculum Grades 9-10, Native Studies	5,57	6,86	5,15	5,75
39	Ontario Curriculum Grades 11-12, Native Studies	6,19	7,00	5,85	6,28
40	Atlantic Canada Social Studies Curriculum	1,76	5,86	4,46	3,12
41	New Brunswick- Native Studies 120	4,86	6,00	4,46	5,01
42	Nova Scotia-Mi'kmaq 10	unavailable/no evaluation			
43	Nova Scotia-Kekina'muek: Learning about the Mi'kmaq of Nova Scotia	5,57	5,29	4,31	5,26
44	Newfoundland-Posters	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation			
45	Prince Edward Island- Native Studies 801 Aboriginal Peoples of Atlantic Canada	see Nova Scotia Mi'kmaq 10			
46	Quebec	no provincially developed Aboriginal curriculum/no evaluation			
47	Nunavut-Made in Nunavut Curriculum	0,00	0,00	0,00	0,00
48	Yukon	unavailable/no evaluation see British Columbia and Western Canada Common Curriculum Framework			
	Average	5,05	6,25	5,30	5,34

**APPENDIX VIII: BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTRY-AUTHORIZED SECOND
LANGUAGES CURRICULA DEVELOPED VIA THE PROVINCIAL
LANGUAGES TEMPLATE PROCESS**

Halq'eméylem 5 to 12 and Introductory 11	<i>Halq'eméylem 5 to 12 IRP (2007)</i> Lalme' Iwesawtexw Seabird Island Community School, PO Box 930 # 5 Chowat Road, Agassiz, BC V0M 1A0 Tel: 604-796-3061
Heiltsuk 5 to 12 and Introductory Helitsuk 11	<i>Heiltsuk 5 to 12 IRP (2002)</i> Brenda Hunchitt Bella Bella Community School Society Tel: 250-957-2391 Fax: 250-957-2691
Hul'q'umi'num' 5 to 12 and Introductory Hul'q'umi'num' 11	<i>Hul'q'umi'num' 5 to 12 IRP (2006)</i> School Districts 68 and 79
Liqwala/Kwakwala 5 to 12 and Introductory Liqwala/Kwakwala 11	<i>Liqwala/Kwakwala 5 to 12 IRP (2008)</i> School District 72 (Campbell River) 425 Pine Street, Campbell River, BC V9W 3P2 Tel: 250-830-2330
Nsiylxcen 5 to 12 and Introductory Nsiylxcen 11	<i>Nsiylxcen 5 to 12 IRP (1999)</i> Osoyoos Indian Band; SD 53
Nte?kepmxcin 5 to 12 and Introductory 11	<i>Nte?kepmxcin 5 to 12 IRP (2008)</i> School District #58 (Nicola-Similkameen) Box 4100 Stn Main, Merritt, BC V1K 1B8 Tel: 250-378-5161
Nuu-chah-nulth 5 to 12 and Introductory Nuu- chah-nulth 11	<i>Nuu-chah-nulth 5 to 12 IRP (2009)</i> Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council; SD 70; SD 84
Okanagan Language 5 to 12 and Introductory Okanagan Language 11	<i>Okanagan Language 5 to 12 IRP (1999)</i> Osoyoos Indian Band or School District 53 (Okanagan Similkameen)
Secwepemctsin (Shuswap Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Secwepemctsin 11	<i>Secwepemctsin 5 to 12 IRP (1999)</i> First Nations Education Council School District #73 (Kamloops Thompson) Tel: 250-828-9870
Shashishalhem (Sechelt Language) 5 to 12 and Introductory Shashishalhem 11	<i>Shashishalem 5 to 12 IRP</i> Sechelt Nation Education Department or School District 46 (Sunshine Coast)
Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 5 to 12 and Introductory Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 11	<i>Sim'algaxhl Nisga'a 5 to 12 IRP (2001)</i> School District 92 (Nisga'a) District Principal of Student Services Tel: 250-633-2228, extension 28
Sm'algyax 5 to 12 and Introductory Sm'algyax 11	<i>Sm'algyax 5 to 12 IRP (2000)</i> Ts'msyeeen Sm'algyax Authority
Tsek'ene 5 to 12 and Introductory Tsek'ene 11	<i>Tsek'ene 5 to 12 IRP (2006)</i> Aatse Davie School Fort Ware, BC
Upper St'at'imcets 5 to 12 and Introductory Upper St'at'imcets 11	<i>Upper St'at'imcets 5 to 12 IRP (1998)</i> Upper St'at'imc Language Program P.O. Box 40, Lillooet, BC V0K 1V0