MAKING CONNECTIONS WITH SECWEPEMC FAMILY THROUGH STORYTELLING: A JOURNEY IN TRANSFORMATIVE REBUILDING

by

Meeka Noelle Morgan
B.A., Simon Fraser University, 2001

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

MASTER OF ARTS

In the
Department
of
Sociology/Anthropology

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY
Fall 2005

Approval

Name: **Meeka Noelle Morgan**

Degree: **Master of Arts**

Title of Thesis: **Making Connections with Secwepemc Family through Storytelling: A Journey in Transformative Rebuilding**

Examining Committee:

Chair: **Dr. Dara Culhane**

Dr. Marianne Ignace
Senior Supervisor
Associate Professor of Anthropology and First Nations Studies
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Arlene McLaren
Member
Professor of Sociology
Simon Fraser University

Dr. Sophie McCall
External Examiner
Assistant Professor of English
Simon Fraser University

Date Approved: 30 November 2005

SIMON FRASER UNIVERSITY library

STATEMENT OF ETHICS APPROVAL

The author, whose name appears on the title page of this work, has obtained, for the research described in this work, either:

(a) Human research ethics approval from the Simon Fraser University Office of Research Ethics,

or

(b) Advance approval of the animal care protocol from the University Animal Care Committee of Simon Fraser University;

or has conducted the research

(c) as a co-investigator, in a research project approved in advance,

or

(d) as a member of a course approved in advance for minimal risk human research, by the Office of Research Ethics.

A copy of the approval letter has been filed at the Theses Office of the University Library at the time of submission of this thesis or project.

The original application for approval and letter of approval are filed with the relevant offices. Inquiries may be directed to those authorities.

Simon Fraser University Library
Burnaby, BC, Canada

Abstract

Based on qualitative research in the author's own First Nations community in the Interior of British Columbia, this thesis investigates how the Secwepemc of St'uxtews maintained their sense of family during the 1950's and 1960's in the face of the onslaught of Indian Residential Schooling. Community members told their memories of family life before, during, and after Residential School, and reflected on those impacts. Organized as poetic narratives, these stories provide substantive information about Secwepemc collective experiences rarely discussed among family and community members. A further component of this work is the transformative rebuilding of social relationships through storytelling, and the positive impact of qualitative research on the revitalization of storytelling in a First Nations community. The performance text of the stories can be used to create mutual understanding between the participants of an interview, as well as among diverse audiences within and beyond the First Nations community.

Keywords: Family Life, First Nations, Indian Residential School, Poetic Narratives, Performance Text, Secwepemc (Shuswap), Storytelling, Transformative Rebuilding, Qualitative Research.

Dedication

This work was inspired by my children: Kiva, my first child, and Angele, who came during the course of this research. My love for them and desire to have a trusting, honest,open and secure relationship with them, as well as creating an environment that they can thrive physically, spiritually, emotionally and mentally, guided me during this journey.

This journey was also inspired by my parents: Felix Morgan and Anne Morgan, both residential school survivors. Their love, support and belief in me has been a driving force in my life, and their stories and my realization and consciousness of their stories planted this journey for me many years ago, and eventually grew into this research.

The strength of my grandparents while my parents were taken away from them and sent to residential school is what gave my parents the strength they needed to survive the experience and become incredible individuals in their own lives. This in turn contributed to the determination and strength I needed to start this journey and this work is dedicated to them: Chief Bert and Lillian Mack, and Felix and Emily Morgan.

The strength I was raised with grew when I met Rob ("R.T.P") Hall, my fiance and loving father of our children. His love for music and creativity, as well as his courage, contributed greatly to this research.

My five "little" sisters awakened in me a responsibility to strive for my ideals so that they would also.

My teachers throughout my life, in all disciplines, convinced me to keep my heart and mind open to endless possibilities.

To the late Dr. Ellen Gee, secondary supervisor to this research, teacher, and friend, who

spent many hours listening and contributing to the beginning inspirations of this research. You are in the heart of this research.

To the late Gabriel Palmer, Secwepemc brother, friend, and kind, gentle soul, who always had an embrace, warm smile and genuine concern for the well being of myself and my family. You are remembered with love.

To the late Dillon Aspen, who taught me patience and love through entering the world of my child, and staying there for awhile. Dillon, I light your candles with memories of love and friendship, and know that you would appreciate the creativity of this work. You definitely followed the 'beat of your own drum'.

Especially, this work is dedicated to the survivors who contributed to this research, who shared their stories and hearts with me for a short time, yet that time lingers on in my heart. I hold a deep honor and respect for each and every one of you.

To the St'uxtews community, for their unending support and belief in this work, Kukstemc for seeing it through until the end (of this beginning)! As well as to Aboriginal survivors and their families everywhere.

To the Ancestors, may this journey bring us closer to the value of storytelling once again, in so many ways, through so many mediums.

Acknowledgements

I would like to recognize the following people for their inspiration, guidance, and support in many ways throughout the course of this research:

My parents and grandparents;

My senior supervisor, Dr. Marianne Ignace, who allowed me to express myself creatively and supported my ideas, as well as offering much guidance when needed, yet allowing me to do my own work.

My fiance R.T.P Hall, who gave me unending support, feedback, courage, creativity, and most importantly, a kick in the ass when I needed it most.

My sisters for caring for my children, viewing and commenting on some of my work and being at my beck and call when I needed them;

My stepchildren, Kane and Jenna Hall, as well as their mother, Shannon Moffet, who have supported my work through their love and caring for my children, as well as dealing with my constant student life.

My adopted daughter, Kiyah Bennee, for sharing her love and time with my children, as well as being another sister for them to learn from.

To my friends and relatives: Nadine Tegart, Danielle Chenier, Jeff Thompson, Phillip Morgan, Steve LaTrans, Shawna Mackenzie, J.R. Adam, Jamila Halabi, Nasser, Roget, Gabrielle Mueller, Vlohdya Chernekoff, who gave me support throughout my higher learning through friendship, concern, engaged conversation, and of course, help with childcare!

To Jay Hamburger, of Theatre in the Raw, who developed my confidence through performance and belief in my written and spoken words, as well as giving me the opportunity to perform stories about relevant social issues on stage to diverse audiences as a way of bringing consciousness to the public in engaging and creative ways.

To Gordon Partridge, a patient, amusing and inspiring teacher. Thank you for doing more than just 'teaching', and for 'teaching' my son to tell me every day: "just get it done Mom!" It worked!

To anyone that I engaged in conversation with about the issue and the research, Kukstemc for your comments. Each one of you gave me insight to this work, and many times, bumped me out of my writer's block.

Table of Contents

Approval ii
Abstract iii
Dedication iv
Acknowledgements vi
Table of Contents viii

"Puzzled" Song by Meeka Morgan and Rob Hall x

Opening Prayer xi

1 Introduction 1
Taking the Roll into the Void 1
Research Focus: The Transformation 2
Significance of the Research 4

2 Review of Literature 8
"Kw'séltkten" and "Kw'seltkten7úw'i" - "Relatives" and "Real Relatives":
Traditional Secwepemc Family Organization 8
Agents of Colonization : A Tragic Canadian Legacy 10
Planting the Seeds of Assimilation:
History of Indian Residential Schools in Secwepemc Territory 12
"The Dark Cloud Over My Life":
Impacts of Indian Residential School on the Secwepemc People 14
Rolling into the Gap: Reconnecting 17
My "Mixed-Up Lot": Exploring My Situated Knowledge 18

3 Discussion on Research Methodology 28
Reflecting the Spirit 28
The Interpretive Turn 30
Invoking the Felt Life 31
A Sample Group Becomes a Group of Storytellers 35
Transforming the Encouraged Betrayal 39
Process rather than Representation 42

4 Creative Analytic Practice:
Poetic Representations of Interviews with Commentary 44
#1 47
Commentary on #1 54
#2 58
Commentary on #2 64
#3 67
Commentary on #3 80

#4 83
Commentary on #4 90
#5 93
Commentary on #5 101
#6 104
Commentary on #6 113
#7 116
Commentary on #7 125
#8 128
Commentary on #8 135
#9 137
Commentary on #9 142

5 Discussion on Analysis 144
"Togetherness, Protection, Love and Affection":
On Secwepemc Family before Residential School 144
Going From "Encouragement to Total Shock" 145
"It was like Coming Home to Strangers" 148
"You Grow or You Don't Survive" 149
#10: On Collapsing Time and Space 151
Notes on Collapsing Time and Space 154

6 Conclusions 158
Connecting the "Will to Know with the Will to Become" 158
Transforming the Pain into Structural Change 159
Transformative Rebuilding 166
Implications of the Research 168

Appendices 172
Interview Questions 173
Map of Secwepemc nation 177

Reference List 178

Puzzled

by

Meeka N. Morgan
Music by Rob Hall

I've been picking up the pieces of the puzzle of my people
I'm getting caught in strands along the way
I'm pieces of that puzzle people try to force together
We are merely the race that's gone astray

Some people want to make that puzzle a piece of their perception
My peoples' words are slowly cast away
I am aware of these perceptions people try to force upon me
I don't allow these views to drift me away

But I can place those puzzle pieces together
All by myself
If I'm strong enough then hopefully I can reach through someone else
To listen to those hearts and minds
That have been left so far behind
We can all strive to stay alive
Together

Too many people want the puzzle to stop growing
Its walls expand beyond us every day
In the age of information is this quality we're getting
Who tells our stories and defines our own ways

Is money the only reason we want equality for the nation
What exactly is equality anyway
We have to ask ourselves if we are asking the right questions
What views guide us in what we say

So I've been putting this puzzle together
All by myself
I'd rather learn this way than listen to someone else
I've been listening to my heart and mind
Now I don't feel so far behind
We can all strive to stay alive
Together

Together

We know, Grandfather, that you gave us sacred power,

But it seems like we didn't know its purpose.

So now we've learned as we sat together:

The name of the power is Love -

Invincible, irresistible, overwhelming power.

The power you gave us we are going to use.

We'll dry the tears of those who cry

And heal the hurts of them that are hurting

Yes, Grandmother,

We'll give you our hands,

And our hearts and our minds and our bodies.

We dedicate our lives to affirmation.

We will not wait or hesitate.

And as we walk on this sacred earth,

We will learn to celebrate

The ways of peace, and harmony, and tranquility

That come

From diminishing that negative, evil power within us

And in the world around us.

Thank you, Grandfather, for this prayer.

- ***Opening Prayer for Youth Forum, "A Voice for the Future, Hopedale, Labrador, February 1993***

Our home, family, and lives are not separated from 'the field', where we conduct research. Instead, our work pushes us to consciously consider, incorporate, and write about our lives, and the lives of relatives, elders, and friends... It also provides a way to transmit that knowledge to younger generations and those who were deprived of all but pieces of that puzzle, not as academic knowledge, but to make sense of their Secwepemc past. -
The Secwepemc:
Traditional Resource Use and Rights to Land
Ignace and Ignace 2004:5

1 INTRODUCTION

Taking the Roll into the Void

What was my original purpose of this study, anyway? I thought I knew at the beginning. It felt pretty clear to me, then. Now I'm not so sure. Wait. I remember. It all started when I had my first child. I thought about how I have now created my own family, and the choices about how I was to raise this child of mine flooded my heart with endless possibilities. It brought me back to thinking about the family I was raised with, and the transformations that we have gone through in order to grow into our own families. Then that tense pang of anxiety came when I thought about my parents' families.

I have always felt that pang, usually accompanied by a lump in my throat, and my feet start rubbing together. Oh, and my hands get sweaty. This is usually the point that I stop writing and try to let the feeling pass. Maybe hope it was the extra strong coffee, or go suck some tobacco and think. What is it that I think about? A void, mostly. A large gap. A black space. A crevice. And I'm always rolling right off of it, and I can't stop myself,

either. It's like an unseen force that is driving me over the edge, and I'm rolling and rolling, but I don't seem to be trying to stop myself. I am afraid of rolling right off, but somehow, I have just accepted that I'm rolling right over the edge, into who knows where, and as soon as I am at the edge, I wake up.

Imagery is how I deal with my internal passions, the things I live for and the things that I am supposed to do. Imagery swims in my mind waves and treads water. I dream of it, it enters my thoughts throughout each day. A picture I do not understand keeps me on the edge of an epiphany for sometimes years. A strange image I have never seen before but KNOW, somehow. I don't try to explain it, I just ponder on it, recall details of the image, somehow piece it together.

I have accepted that this imagery is a reflection of my instinct. Instinct, through imagery, is placed in my mind and manifests in my body reactions. If I stay in tune with it, I find that I get to where I am supposed to be, faster. I understand, later. Now I realize this imagery has reflected the journey of my research experience. It guided me in this direction. I blindly stumbled along, tired, zigzagging back and forth between confidence and inspiration to doubt and uncertainty. A force that I did not understand, but had faith in anyway, rolled me in into this void, and instead of clawing for the surface, I tried to allow my position to one of an efficient roll, a smooth roll. My arms tucked around me, my body straight, I took the roll into the void, and as soon as I did, I woke up.

Research Focus: The Transformation

This research has focused on some of the people of the St'uxtews (Bonaparte)

First Nations community, one of the seventeen communities in the Secwepemc (Shuswap) Nation, who were born between the years of 1945-1955. The initial focus of my research was to explore how the Secwepemc sense of family had developed and survived on the St'uxtews reserve community, especially with the enforced enrollment of children into Indian Residential Schools. This would consist of memories and experiences, influences and values, while also exploring the physical living arrangements of their families. I divided my research questions into four areas: early experiences and life at home, changes and what it was like, transitions and adaptations, and lastly, the subject's reflections of impacts. Each area had several different questions exploring these in detail (See Appendix A for Interview Questions).

In the process of doing the research, through listening to the storytellers, the original purpose of the research was transformed. I felt a deep sense of loss while carrying out this research because I realized that the history of my own community and family had never been validated, or allowed to 'come out', even to our own people. That feeling of loss had always followed me throughout my life, especially when I thought about the people of my parents' generation.

Being a member and resident of the St'uxtews community for over 20 years, I had never truly felt like our history had been validated. I had felt it to be trivialized many times through teachers, friends, and most of all, from my own people, from my own family. Knowing this, I did not think that I could get the information that I needed to piece together my identity any other way other than what I knew. And what I have experienced very well during the last 24 years has been education in institutionalized

settings. Maybe I was afraid to get the information any other way. Or I just didn't know how. Or maybe the time never came... I could think of so many reasons!

I wanted to know how my people constructed their sense of family, and the consequences of these constructions. I also wanted to understand why it was that I wanted to do this research. Although I stated that I understood in the beginning, I now realize that I did not. But I do now. I realize that without these stories, I feel that very crevice in my entire being, in who I am and who I am to become. I do not think I am alone in these feelings.

My hope is that with this research, I can transform my relationship to this generation of people in my community, and rebuild it in a way that I can collapse this time and space into something that I can understand. If I do not, I am afraid that void is going to swallow me up. So in the process, I have also transformed and rebuilt my self, as well. "Understanding ourselves is part of the process of understanding others" (Ellis and Berger 2002:868). This experience in itself is largely a part of the purpose of this study.

Significance of the Research

In the beginning of the process of this research, I had hoped to find out that despite harsh changes in family and community lives, individuals were finding positive and healthy ways to adapt to those changes, by building new or reestablishing former support systems in different ways. I also wanted to encourage more research into the generational effects of residential school and how to address them. As well, I wanted to

encourage people to build relationships with those they share a history with, as a process of transformative rebuilding. At the time, I also anticipated that the research would bring additional views to researcher/researched issues, as well as aboriginal identity and academia, while also supplementing the scarcity of information on contemporary studies of Secwepemc families.

I found out that the significance of this research lies in the heart of my relationship to my people, and their relationship to me. There are many positive ways that these people have found to adapt to the changes to their family life, but one of the most important ways was done through telling their stories - to a person from their community, to someone from outside their community, to someone from a different generation - anyone who was willing to mindfully listen to them. In the context of this research, for these people to have a youth from their community bring their stories out into the open, was an experience that affirmed to them how much they are truly survivors, while reminding them of the importance of telling their stories to the next generation. Not only for the sake of an explanation of what they went through, but so that the next generation can make sense of their past, what has made them into who they are, how they feel, and what they do next.

It was through this process that I came to understand myself as a Secwepemc. Before this research, I have always consciously tried to feel and be close to the people of my community, but I sensed the distance. It was as if this distance was something that I could never reach, which grew over the years. I felt that it made them sad to look at me, and this stirred in me a feeling of confusion, and loss. Coyote, being the good trickster

that he is, made us laugh for so long at ourselves, to comfort our pain, that we forgot how important it was to be serious when we were ready to tell and to listen, to our stories. This laughter was getting more difficult to come out of me. I wanted to KNOW, yet I realized that 'right moment' that I was waiting for may never show itself unless I was ready and willing to create a way to bring that moment to life.

This research forced me to have this relationship with my parents' generation, it created this time for them to tell their stories to me. Now the significance of this research is to show them, through this research journey: I hear you, I see you, I am getting to KNOW me through you. And through this they recognize themselves in each other. This transforming relationship has created a more open space for us (and hopefully them) to walk together on. As I have heard it stated before, I walk beside them, not behind them. There is much more for us to bring to one another, but as musician/poet Leonard Cohen has stated: "There is a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in". That crack of an opening, I believe, is the real significance of this research.

The analysis chapter of this study will be done using creative analytic practice ethnography by converting the interviews into poetic representations of performance text, where the meanings of lived experience are shown. A commentary after each representation is included to place each piece into the context of the research questions. The discussion chapter will present the common threads and shared experiences of the stories that the participants shared with me. Throughout the research, I also include autoethnographical narrative as an insight into the personal transformations that I went through during the process of research. The concluding chapter will discuss the future of

my relationship to this information as well as to the people within and outside my community.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

"Kw'séltkten" and "Kw'seltkten7úw'i" : "Relatives" and "Real Relatives" - Traditional Secwepemc Family Organization

The Canadian portion of the Plateau culture area is essentially the 'interior' of British Columbia, and is very environmentally diverse, ranging from semi-desert area to sub-boreal forests that provide a large range of resources, the most common resource by far being salmon. Secwepemcul'ecw, my homeland, is made up of around 180,000 square kilometers in south central British Columbia (Dawson 1892; Teit 909; Palmer 1975a; M. Ignace 1992:203) and the Fraser and Thompson rivers traverse this homeland. Many of the Secwepemc {meaning "spread out people" (Ignace and Ignace, 2004:6) communities were and still are along the valleys of these rivers and their main tributaries (Ignace 1998:203). There are seven Secwepemc divisions, each consisting of several communities which make up the 17 remaining First Nations that are defined by the Canadian Indian Act that continue into the 21st Century. For a map of the Secwepemc (Shuswap - the anglicized word for Secwepemc) territory, as well as the Secwepemc bands, see "Map of Secwepemc Territory" (Appendix B).

In the past, the bands were "loosely knit networks of extended families and households centered around the habitual use and occupation of camping grounds, winter village sites, and hunting, fishing, and gathering grounds" (Ignace, 1998:210). Before the establishment of reserves for the Secwepemc, there was a flexibility to membership in one band or another (Teit, 1909:457 in Ignace, 1998:210). The extended household

usually consisted of a senior male and his wives, their children and grandchildren, nieces and nephews, and sometimes the wife's relatives, who all harvested, fished, hunted, and processed foods together with the intentions of sharing it. There was a continuous cycle of reciprocal obligation between households and their members' consanguine and affinal ties in the same village and other villages, and the blood relatives of a person's household were called her "kw'seltkten7úw'i", "real relatives", and all other consanguines were called "kw'séltkten", "family, relatives". The latter included any person that could be traced through genealogical ties (Ignace 1998:211).

Food gathering was completely interconnected to the system of kinship, spirituality, and land sustainability for Plateau peoples. The annual subsistence cycle "brought together large numbers of Secwepemc from different villages, facilitating social and political gatherings" (Ignace and Ignace 2004:9). Harvesting foods was the time to renew ties to one another and to establish new friends, prospective spouses, and of course, to trade. Supportive ties were formed through these marriages and alliances, which created many economic and political social advantages for the people interconnected (Ackerman 1994:290).

Plateau peoples were linked through "intermarriage, co-utilization of sites, co-residence in villages, trading, and many other activities" (Anastasio 1972:150), so utilizing one another's resources kept families, communities, and nations connected to one another since access to resources was provided by kinship, descent and affinal relations, as well as residence and socialization" (Ignace 2000:37). Each place had its own group of people, which reduced the economic pressure of each village, since

families could not survive on only one area of resources (Ackerman 1994:289). These kinship and descent ties fostered the principle of mutual access to resources that are common to all aboriginal peoples of the Plateau (Ignace 2000:38).

The Secwepemc culture was immersed in a life connected closely to the natural world, the importance of grandparents' presence and teachings, and the view that children were full members of the household and capable of contributing to it. Most Secwepemc people lived in an extended family, where much responsibility came at a young age, especially those coming from large families - chores, childcare, harvesting annual foods- yet most describe it as a time of freedom in their lives. The role of the extended family and community in the socialization, and thus education, of children was integral to the traditional education system of Secwepemc people (Jack 1985:9).

Agents of Colonization: A Tragic Canadian Legacy

> The schools were, with the agents and instruments of economic and political marginalization, part of the contagion of colonization.
>
> -Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, v.1:376
>
> The tragic legacy of residential education began in the late nineteenth century with a three-part vision of education in the service of assimilation. It included, first, a justification for removing children from their communities and disrupting Aboriginal -families; second, a precise pedagogy for re-socializing children in the school; and third, schemes for integrating graduates into the non-Aboriginal world.
>
> - Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, 1996, Volume 1:337.

It is only in the context of colonialism that Indian Residential Schools can be understood. Economic and political subjugation by colonizers during the age of imperialism took place not only in the Americas but also other countries as well, and the

common elements found in colonized countries are:

> a displacement of aboriginal people by European expansion; isolation and containment of aboriginal people; forced assimilation of aboriginal societies; increasing political and economic domination of aboriginal affairs by the colonizers; and the development of a racist ideology portraying aboriginal people as backward, uncivilized, and childlike (Perley 1993:120).

A joint venture of the federal government and various religious denominations, the main goal of Indian Residential Schools was to "remove children from the cultural environment of their families so as to prevent transmission of aboriginal cultural knowledge, values, and beliefs" (Hudson and Ignace 2004:352). It was believed that only Aboriginal children would be able to go through the transformation from the "natural condition to that of civilization" (RCAP v.1:338), and if their potential was to be realized, it had to be outside of their family. Their parents were only viewed as evil impediments to this transition, as was their family, community, and surroundings (RCAP V.1:339).

The colonizing powers of the church and state maintained the principles of colonialism in the education system by structuring it to meet the needs of the colonizers (Perley 1993:123). The late George Manuel, one of the Secwepemc peoples' most powerful leaders, stated: "The whole structure of the church and the government as they relate to Indian people are almost identical. The greatest gift the Dominion of Canada made to the church was the control over education. The residential schools were the laboratory and the production line of the colonial system" (Grant 1996:99). N. Roaslyn Ing describes the efforts of the church to be a "great experiment of carrying out a

program of cultural replacement and assimilation" (Grant 1996:99).

This transformation required much more than a shift in play and activities, it required a shift in the whole Aboriginal worldview. The world had to be seen and understood as strictly a European place with only European values and beliefs. When the children crossed the threshold over to school, they also crossed over to a 'new' Canadian, Christian, non-Aboriginal world. They were taken from their hunting and gathering lifestyles into a ritualized, rapid, industrial routine where even recreation was 're-creation'[1]. This was the gap that was planted physically, culturally and spiritually, between parents and their children. Once this was accomplished, a separation of the children from their communities would be complete and assured (RCAP V.1:341).

Planting the Seeds of Assimilation: History of Indian Residential School in Secwepemc Territory

The impact of residential schools is one of the most important issues facing Canadian Aboriginal peoples today. The Kamloops Indian Residential School[2] ceased operation in the 1970's, and was one of the largest Indian Residential Schools in Canada. It was and still is situated on the Kamloops Indian Reserve in the southern Secwepemc territory. Some Secwepemc children also attended the St. Louis' Mission School at Williams Lake[3].

Missionization in the Interior began in the late 1850's, and by 1866-67, the

---

[1] The only games and activities that were allowed were the ones regulated with strict rules that prompted obedience and discipline, so that it would help along the process to civilization (RCAP V. 1:340-41).

[2] Shirley Sterling's book, *My Name is Seepeetza* (1992) is a story based on experiences in the Kamloops Indian Residential School.

[3] For a more detailed account of the history of the Williams Lake Residential School, see Elizabeth Furniss' book, *Victims of Benevolence: The Dark Legacy of the Williams Lake Residential School* (1994).

Oblates of Mary Immaculate, a French Catholic Order, was established in Kamloops. Within two decades the whole Secwepemc population was baptized Roman Catholic. Once missionaries passed through the Secwepemc territory, and BC entered into confederation in 1871, the idea of setting up an Industrial School was planted[4].

The federal government, by the Acts of 1868 and 1869, stated that the only way to educate the 'Indian' to an agrarian lifestyle, and eventually into an assimilated 'superior' European one, was through the schools. The Roman Catholic Oblate order realized that working with the children in isolation from their families was most effective and so it was deemed necessary in the eyes of the missionaries and the government (Haig-Brown 1987:29). The Canadian government worked with missionaries during the 1920's to enforce residential school onto aboriginal children so that they could be isolated from being socialized by their own native communities and families (Haig-Brown 1987:36)

With the Indian Act of 1876, a report was commissioned by the government that resulted in the opening of several schools, including the Kamloops Indian Residential School. By 1920, the amendments to the Indian Act included compulsory school attendance of Indian children to the industrial or boarding schools. Until 1946, the possibility for a change in this attitude was virtually non-existent. During this year, a complete revamping of the Indian Act was being discussed, yet, when the 'new' Indian Act came out it was not much different than the previous one (Miller 1978:149), although it did end many residential schools, since it allowed for Aboriginal peoples to attend the public school system (Haig-Brown 1987:32).

---

[4] For a more detailed account of the history of Indian Residential Schools in Canada, see J.R. Miller's book, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (1996).

"The Dark Cloud Over My Life": Impacts of Indian Residential Schools on Secwepemc Peoples

Erving Goffman described the history of the tactics of "total institutions":

> the total institution is a social hybrid, part residential community, part formal organization; therein lies its special sociological interest. There are other reasons for being interested in these establishments, too. In our society, they are the forcing houses for changing persons; each is a natural experiment of what can be done to the self (Goffman 1961:12).

Although his focus was not on Indian Residential Schools, Goffman studied institutions such as asylums, private boarding schools, monasteries, prisons, concentrations camps and the like, with the intention of what they were meant to accomplish, and their means of accomplishing it (Chrisjohn and Young 1994:47). The Law Commission of Canada described the Residential School Institutions as "total institutions", the distinguishing feature of the residential school experience being that it was intended to undermine First Nations peoples' culture and spirituality to accelerate their assimilation into Canadian society (Corrado and Cohen 2003:6).

Education was viewed as a significant tool for isolating cultural influences to the children. For Secwepemc children between 1930 and the 1970's, enforced attendance at residential school had harsh consequences for the passing on of skills, traditional ecological knowledge, and the spiritual connections to these practices (Ignace and Ignace 2004:32-33). Before leaving home and arriving to the schools, children felt full of confidence, having responsibility and skills, yet when they arrived a sense of helplessness took over ("Charlie" in Haig-Brown 1987:49). In total institutions:

> role dispossession occurs...the privilege of having visitors or of visiting away

> from the establishment is completely withheld at first, ensuring a deep initial break with past roles and an appreciation of role dispossession... Although some roles can be re-established by the inmate if and when he returns to the world, it is plain that other losses are irrevocable and may be painfully experienced as such. It may not be possible to make up, at a later phase of the life cycle, the time not now spent in educational or job advancement, in courting, or in rearing one's children...Total institutions are also incompatible with another crucial element of our society, the family (Goffman 1961:14-15).

In terms of family socialization, Indian Residential Schools for the Secwepemc people took away the roles that children were taught to carry out within their families and community - they were no longer allowed to be a big brother, elder sister, or able to care for cousins and sibling, or any others younger than themselves. A deep sense of powerlessness was established by having their position pulled out from under them. The psychological and spiritual disorientation that occurred to these children made it so that when they returned home to their communities, it was difficult to assume positions as mothers, fathers, and community members (Corrado and Cohen 2003:7).

As soon as one entered the schools, "family ties were broken, language use was forbidden, and life experiences discounted" (Haig-Brown 1987:52), as it was believed that for aboriginal children to be educated effectively, there had to be a disruption in the parenting process by separating them from their families (Milloy 1999:23). Four major emotionally devastating features of residential schools are "the initial separation from parents and family; prolonged isolation from parents, family, and people; the period of adjustment to institutional rules; and the constant fault-finding and racial slurs addressed to them by staff" (Chrisjohn and Young 1994:47).

The initial separation from parents and family is an experience that is branded

onto the minds of aboriginal people when they recall their first experience of arriving at the schools. In "Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School" (2000), Ron Ignace explains his first experience:

> I was in a state of shock or in awe about the school when I was first brought there. Then when my relatives decided it was time for them to leave and the priest or brothers come and grabbed me by the hand and started leading me down the hall, it dawned on me that something was happening. I gave out a type of scream that I had never ever given out in my life. I learned that there is a name for that scream. It's called a primal scream. That is a cry that a person gives, a cry of distress from the center of the soul. I was watching a movie and apparently slaves gave that kind of cry too when they were captured and put into slavery. After that I heard that cry a few times when I happened to be in the hallway and other children were being dropped off at the residential school (in Jack (ed.) 2000:21).

Great distress and confusion was felt during the initial introduction of the children to the schools, especially since most children did not know they were going until the moment they were dropped off or picked up. One survivor remembered:

> ...out of the blue there comes this car, drove up to my mother and father's place. And my mother was dressing up my sister and I... and my mother told us that we were going to be riding in that car... and that we were going to go to school. We didn't know what a school was. I thought maybe we'd go there and come right back. And that was the most terrifying part of my whole life (Haig-Brown 1987:49).

This painful process of cultural invasion, and the removal of the children, was extremely difficult for the parents, since they knew that going to the schools meant that their children's "family identity was obscured, their language became useless and even despised, and their personal identification was a number written in purple ink on their wrists and on the small cupboard in which their few belongings were stored" (Haig-Brown 1987:48). The basic right of deciding how their children were to be educated was

effectively taken away from them through government legislation that legalized the apprehension of aboriginal children so that they could be placed into the schools (Grant 1996).

By gaining control of the children, the government controlled the parents. Aboriginal children's trust towards their parents was broken when they were left or taken to the schools because they could not understand why their parents would leave them at such places. The parents of the first generation of residential school students' had sent their children in hopes that they would learn to read, write and learn arithmetic, but the generations after generally did not give this encouragement since that had not been the case for them (Grant 1996:78). The gap between child and family was furthered to the point where the children had no skills for interacting in family situations, as George Manuel pointed out: "It was the kids coming back from residential school who brought the generation gap with them" (Grant 1996:79). The Assembly of First Nations detailed the "social pathologies" that were produced by this system:

> The survivors of the Indian residential school system have, in may cases, continued to have their lives shaped by the experiences in these school. Persons who attend these schools continue to struggle with their identity after years of being taught to hate themselves and their culture. The residential school led to a disruption in the transference of parenting skills from one generation to the next. Without these skills, many survivors had had difficulty in raising their own children. In residential schools, they learned that adults often exert power and control through abuse. The lessons learned in childhood are often repeated in adulthood with the result that many survivors of the residential school system often inflict abuse on their own children. These children in turn use the same tools on their children (RCAP V.1:379).

Rolling into the Gap: Reconnecting

This 'gap' that is so often mentioned is what stands between the various

generations' ability to understand and communicate with one another. The impact is often thought of as only affecting one generation to the next, but I have come to believe that it affects much more than one generation. For myself, to not have an understanding and connection to my own family's stories and past, results in the sense of loss I feel in relation to the history of my family and community.

In terms of the impact of Indian Residential Schools, much attention is placed on the physical abuses that survivors went through, which is a very significant part of breaking down the code of silence. Yet I believe that the impact on the ability for multigenerations to communicate and grow with each other is often downplayed or out rightly ignored. It seems it is not viewed as an 'important' issue affecting First Nations peoples today. Yet for our generations to build this communication with each other has the potential to bring us 'within' (rather than 'back to') the deep connection we once had with one another, through binding us once again to our culture, our language, our history, and ultimately, our families and communities.

I believe that one of the responsibilities of my generation is to find creative, positive, and unique ways to reconnect to these generations of people, first by listening to them in order to connect them to the present. By connecting them to my present, I also connect them to their past. This recognition of what Canada is and has been can create the environment needed for Canadians and the original inhabitants of this land to live and grow together in harmonious ways (RCAP V.1:382).

My "Mixed-Up Lot": Exploring My Situated Knowledge

"So many of us are a mixed-up lot, a chorus of intermingling voices and histories,

and I write to tell you of that mixing, of the sounds of that chorus".

-Greg Sarris, Keeping Slug Woman Alive (1993:12)

Indigenous research, like indigenous identity, "can be many things at the same time...inherently political and shaped by multiple ethical and political positions" (Nelson et al. in Denzin and Lincoln 1998:6). Mixed ancestry has been described as being a cultural fact in itself because of the power dynamics between the groups that have mixed and the prejudices during the time all contribute to what parts we identify with as a person of mixed ancestry[5] (Spickard 1989). In terms of the cultural identities that I identify with, like Kirin Narayan in her article, "How Native is a "Native" Anthropologist?", I feel that I am a *partial* insider. There are many times I feel the participants and I are brought closer together, yet there are also just as many times I feel we are pushed further away. So in this way, my cultural identity is always going through constant transformation because of the "continuous 'play' of history, culture, and power", rather than being fixed into an "essentialised past" (Hall 1989b:70).

As long as I can remember, I have always felt that way. The first eight years of my life were spent on Nu-Chah-Nulth territory, on the southern west coast of Vancouver Island. My grandfather is the hereditary chief of the Toquaht band, and my early

[5] Like Narayan, in terms of having a "multiplex identity" (1997:25), should I also say that my mother's mother is a French English woman who has status as an aboriginal woman, and deeply vehemenently considers herself Nu-Chah-Nulth, being a Chief's wife for over 60 years, so spending ¾ of her life with the Nu-Chah-Nulth People? This thought did not even cross my mind until recently, since I completely accepted who she identified with. She does not even like me to speak of this. Also, that my father's mother is of Scottish heritage, from the MacDonald Clan. That my last name, Morgan, has Welsh ties? That my mother's father's mother is also said to be part Spanish? But I have always strongly identified with my Secwepemc/Nu-Chah-Nulth heritage. At the same time, "two halves cannot adequately account for the complexity of an identity in which multiple countries, regions, religions, and classes may come together" (Narayan 1997:26).

memories are of going to potlatches, and knowing and feeling like I was a part of a very important family. This feeling of belongingness deflected the early experiences of racism that I had at the elementary school. So even as an elementary student, I felt that my history and place in society was very different from not only other non-native people, but also from other native peoples as well.

The rest of my life has been spent in Secwepemc territory, where I lived apart from the main reserve of the St'uxtews, and this has always made me feel very distinct, also. My family has had a land base on the reserve away from the main village at St'uxtews for many generations, and so when we moved from Nu-Chah-Nulth territory, we had a house built on this land base. I was bussed into public school to Ashcroft, and although I had many aboriginal friends, the friends that I was in close contact with on a daily basis were predominately non-native.

The public school system was where I really felt the politics of difference. As a student of Secwepemc heritage, I felt totally invisible. In social studies class, we learned the generalized terms for aboriginal peoples, and not much contemporary history. I couldn't figure out that the Secwepemc were part of the 'Interior Salish', and all I remember thinking is, "but I'm not 'Salish', I'm Shuswap. Where is Shuswap?" That feeling in itself made that void in me deeper, and for a moment, time and space collapsed around me as I did not see myself as a part of the history of this country. At the same time, I knew that my parents had been taken to residential school, and I could not understand why that issue was never brought up. I could connect with what poet Adrienne Rich stated in "Invisibility in Academe": "When someone with the authority of

a teacher, say, describes the world and you are not in it, there is a moment of psychic disequilibrium, as if you looked into a mirror and saw nothing" (Rosaldo 1989:ix).

I started to convince myself that, of course, everybody did know, they just didn't talk about it, it must have been dealt with long ago, right? I actually thought that if Aboriginal people didn't complain about it too much, it must not have been that traumatic. After all, I was born, and things were a little dysfunctional in my family, but here we were, surviving. I knew my mother and father went to residential school, but they rarely spoke of it, so I didn't think it was much of an issue for them, either.

But the more I thought about it, the more that void grew inside of me, and questions started to gnaw on my stomach. I thought I could talk to my closest friends about it. To my amazement and disappointment, I immediately noticed that when I mentioned the issue of Residential School with regards to my parents, I would get this cold, emotionless stare, a look away, a look down, and then a slight acknowledgement and the subject would be changed. I started to disappear... to become invisible... That black crevice was starting to swallow me up!

I immediately felt shame for even mentioning the subject, and with that, a sadness. That moment made me feel very lonely, as I did not feel a part of my friends' history, and I did not know that part of my own. Even now, as I type the word 'history', it does not feel like it is the right word. Stuart Hall writes:

> history changes your conception of yourself. Thus, another critical thing about identity is that it is partly the relationship between you and the Other. Only when there is an Other can you know who you are. To discover the fact is to discover and unlock the whole enormous history of nationalism and of racism. Racism is a structure of discourse and representation that tried to expel the Other symbolically

- blot it out, put it over there in the Third World, at the margin" (Hall 1989:16).

So I started to trivialize it also. I wondered about how it was going to be living my whole life under this smokescreen. Wow, I thought. So this is how it is.

So this is how it is. So this is how it is. So this is how it is. I had to say it quite a few times to myself to think about what that meant. Until one day…

" I was in Social Studies class in Grade 10, in the early 1990's. I was listening on the periphery when the teacher happened to mention the issue of residential school in class, which was a first for any class I had ever attended. It came up in 'Current Events', a time set aside during class to discuss issues of the day. He had brought in a newspaper clipping of a story on the first of many law suits brought against the government of Canada or the Roman Catholic Church.

At first I didn't realize that what he was talking about was the issue of residential school, I was still in my own little world. It all hit me pretty quick, especially when he asked if we knew anyone who went to residential school. I answered kind of half-heartedly, because I still felt in a daze about the fact that we were talking about this in class, among all of these people. I mumbled, "yes, both of my parents went to residential school", and there was an amazingly clear feeling that passed through me at that moment, when all of my classmates in the room fixed their gaze on me, waiting for me to explain, and intent on hearing what else I had to say. They had all looked at me like they believed me for once, or as if they wanted to hear more, instead of changing the subject.

"I can interview my parents". After I stated this in front of the teacher and the whole class, I immediately wondered why I was creating more work for myself, was it

really that important? Too late. The teacher was surprised and impressed at this sudden expression of interest, jumped at the chance to keep me involved in any task at hand, and I found myself with my first interview assignment.

As I rode the school bus home to Hat Creek Valley, about a good hour and a half drive complete with stops, I thought about what I had gotten myself into. Ok... easy... talk to parents about experience of residential school. Can't be too hard, I mean they are my parents, they should be honored to know that I find them interesting enough to be interviewed! I realize that this was not the most ethical of viewpoints, but hey, I was in Grade 10. Yet I had this sinking feeling in the pit of my stomach. I mean, all of a sudden, I'm just going to start talking about an issue that is so sensitive that it has never been talked about before in our household and with intentions to summarize it for my whole class?

Then I started to think about why this was never talked about if everybody already knew? I mean, it seemed like everybody knew because no one wanted to talk about it. My parents didn't even talk about it at home, ever! They acted as if it had never happened, or that they wanted to pretend it never happened, because nobody cared anyway. Yet I always knew that this was a fact, that both of my parents went to residential school, it was something that was there without them having to explain to me, it was like it was ingrained into me. I don't even remember ever asking if this was so or remember who told me that this was so. Yet I knew not to talk about it. Yes, I thought about all of this. And then I said, oh well, what the heck, let's get on with it.

I believe that this was the first time that I thought of my parents as children, not

just as my parents. What kinds of circumstances did they go through to have survived until now? I started to see the possibility of a deeper understanding between my parents and me. Which in turn, I thought would lead to a more genuine understanding between my teacher, my classmates, and me. I didn't want to miss this opportunity, and if it meant more work for me, well, bring it on.

So who did I hit first? Mumsies, of course. My mother is from the Nu-Chah-Nulth-Nation on the southern west coast of Vancouver Island. She went to school at the Alberni Indian Residential School in Port Alberni, BC. She responded well to my request, of course at the time she was attending the SCES-SFU campus in Kamloops, working towards her degree in Anthropology, Linguistics, and First Nations Studies, which she did, in fact, attain. So she had been doing some work on her experience and was accustomed to talking about it as an interview participant. She wanted to encourage me because my request showed to her that I was interested in the very issues that she was working on in her classes.

I was excited! I was on a roll and I had completed my first interview with relative ease. Then the dreaded moment came when I realized I would have to interview my father, as well. My father is from the Secwepemc Nation, and went to the Williams Lake Mission Residential School for almost 10 years. Every once in awhile I would hear a little tidbit of information pertaining to his stay at the school, but it was always stated in such a way that I knew not to ask questions. I have never felt free to ask questions about my father's life, especially his childhood. But the good feeling I left with on account of the pleasant experience of interviewing my mom lingered on, and I thought, why dilly-

dally? I'll just hop on over to the kitchen table and ask Dad straight out if I can interview him. So I did just that. Actually, I asked if I could interview him, and I didn't say about what. He reluctantly agreed, and then came my first question: What is the first word or thought that you have when you think about residential school?

The look that he gave me was one of total bewilderment that I would even ask about such a subject, and replied with only a "whoa... hey Meeka, cool it now...". I remember the feeling that those words and that expression filled me with. Immediately, I felt completely aware that I really didn't know anything about my parent at all, and that I had absolutely no right to ask these questions. At that moment I felt like shrinking and crawling underneath the fridge. It felt like my face had grown two sizes and the silence seemed so loud and long. I could feel the tension build and misunderstanding build along with it. I sensed that I had committed something very wrong, and now I wondered what the heck I was doing here in the first place!?!

Who the hell was I to think that I had a right to enter into this realm with my father, in those circumstances, and for what purpose? I realize I didn't truly understand the purpose of my actions until later. Now I like to think I was prepping myself for what was really to come, 14 years later. Who would have guessed that 14 years later I would be placing myself in the same situation, and feeling the same way? This time though, I am more aware of why I am asking these questions, and who I am to begin with to these people I am studying.

Who am I to these people I am studying? To one, I am a daughter, to others I am a child they have watched grow to a woman, now with children of her own. I am a child

of the public school system, raised with parents who both attended residential school. I am a member of the Morgan family, one of the largest families on the reserve, and from Hat Creek, a reserve farthest from the main village. I am Nu-Chah-Nulth, I am my mother's child, a hereditary chief's granddaughter. I am a university educated aboriginal woman with children from a non-aboriginal man. I am a Stuct'ews community member of the Secwepemc nation with a personal interest in the transformative rebuilding of relationships between family and members in our community. I am a nomad, a performer, a dancer, a singer, a budding musician, a writer...

I am either someone who is willing to listen to others tell their story, or just some naïve kid who is trying to get nosy. I am also someone who wants to remind others of what they have done to survive this long, or someone who doesn't understand what the heck she is getting herself into. I am someone who is doing her research for the benefit of her people or for the benefit of herself. Sometimes I am a variety of these things all at once. Either way, at the end, I always feel like I have transformed the relationship into something different, something deeper, so that it doesn't feel like an end anymore, but a beginning of sorts.

The beginnings of understanding is a joyous, inspiring feeling. It makes you wonder what took so long to listen, and to truly hear and appreciate. The teller of the story feels something like I did that day in social studies class, when I finally felt like someone believed me, and truly wanted to listen to what I had to say because it explained a part of me that previously wasn't 'supposed' to be explained. The story teller is giving

something of themselves, which is completely theirs to give. The more the story is prodded, or expected, the less it is given. The teller chooses how far to let the listener in and gives the listener an opportunity to see them how they want to be seen at that particular moment in time.

Those silences, the sometimes painful, pauses, is where we make a choice to either turn and run, or to take it further, to connect on the teller's level. It is when we choose to sit through the pain, the unease of the unspoken moments, that we confront our fears and grow within each other. The silence comes to mean something else. Our relationships become more than what they seem. The story and the listener evolve, and as images come together, a new picture is created that guides the relationship from that moment on. This is the importance of letting silence be. I now understand more the reflexive pauses that are used in traditional aboriginal discourse. Those silent pauses are bringing the listener within the communicative moment they are sharing.

Let Silence Be

when we don't talk when we are together
are we thinking the same
are we thinking we can't talk because our thoughts are so talkative without giving
our bodies an opportunity
moving our lips doesn't prove a thing
our silence says a lot
more than i've heard in years...
what does the silence do with itself
does it take messages and murmurs of our minds
have lengthy discussions
strategize about its next move
let silence be
let it be heard
i give you those silences as i give you my words
- Meeka Morgan, August 2003

3 DISCUSSION ON RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Reflecting the Spirit

> Aboriginal research is an opportunity for us to create innovation and change for our people. If we develop an approach to research which is unique and reflects our values and beliefs, we will be reflecting the spirit of our ancestors, the spirit of our people who are alive today, and the spirit of our people who are yet to be born.
> Carolyn Kenny,
> A Sense of Place: Aboriginal Research as Ritual Practice. In
> Voice of the Drum: Indigenous Education and Culture (2000:148)

"The choice of research practices depends upon the questions that are asked, and the questions depend on their context" (Nelson 1992:2).

I took a qualitative approach to do this research because I knew it would be an interactive process completely tied to my personal history. I wanted to utilize methodologies that allow for self-reflection and introspection. Toma uses the term "subjective qualitative research" to describe research that is "inherently personal", where "researchers cannot and should not hide their attachment to the topic and persons they study" (Toma 2000:2-7). Toma also sees it as having the potential to educate the reader, reach the people it is closest to, while also having the potential to engage a broader audience (Toma 2000:8).

This is what I view this research as having the potential to do: to bring mutual understanding on many levels between the participants and their stories, to educate the multigeneration's connected to the participants about their stories, and to also reach out to

a wider audience that does not necessarily share their direct history or culture, but would benefit from the mutual understanding and connectedness the stories bring to them. Like Greg Sarris, I also ask the question: "Is there a way that people can read across cultures so that intercultural communication is opened rather than closed, so that people see more than just what things seem to be?" (Sarris 1993:3).

In situating my research methodology and underlying theoretical concepts in social science discourse, I have taken an interpretive approach. In viewing the data as narratives to be interpreted, and taking into consideration the complexity of the relationships of the participants, the research process becomes a dialogue, rather than a one-way centered approach, since it does not privilege any method or theory as a claim to authoritative knowledge. Doing this opens up the possibility of alternative representations of research (Richardson 2002:882). These alternative representations engage readers in their own reflexive analyses of their own interpretations, as well as the researcher's interpretations of the participant's stories. Gregory Ulmer's (1989) "mystory" has been described as "writing that juxtaposes personal narrative, popular culture, and scholarly discourses...They honor a journey of discovery, a process of meaning construction, not only about the subject, but about the self" (Richardson 2002:879).

Doing this research, I knew at the onset that I could not just simply 'write about' my community members as 'Others'. By self-consciously examining this relationship, I resist this in a way similar to that described by Michelle Fine:

When we opt, instead, to engage in social struggles *with* those who have been

> exploited and subjugated, we work the hyphen, revealing far more about ourselves, and far more about the structures of Othering. Eroding the fixed of categories, we and they enter and play with the blurred boundaries that proliferate. By *working the hyphen*, I mean to suggest that researchers probe how we are in relation with the contexts we study and with our informants, understanding that we are all multiple in those relations. I mean to invite researchers to see how these "relations between" get us "better" data, limit what we feel free to say, expand our minds and constrict our mouths, engage us in intimacy and seduce us into complicity, make us quick to interpret and hesitant to write. (Fine 1998:135).

The process that I have focused on is not aimed at creating a fixed understanding of the "other" or "self", but at creating continued communication and expanded, on-going understanding on how groups can "inform and be informed by the other" (Sarris 1993:7) Each story becomes not only for the participant and for myself, but for each reader.

The Interpretive Turn

Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan (1987), describe the interpretive turn as being: "not simply a new methodology, but rather a challenge to the very idea that inquiry into the social world and the value of the understanding that results is to be determined by methodology" (Rabinow and Sullivan 1987:20). I also wanted to make this research accessible to the reader through a focus on voices, emotions, and the life experiences that shape the meanings that the people give to themselves and their experiences. This is what Norman K. Denzin calls "interpretive interactionism", and it is "an approach that involves minimal theory, seeks to show or perform rather than tell, and is based on a belief that less is more. Writers must be openly present in their texts and must make their values clear" (Denzin 2001:1).

Denzin's central theme to interpretive interactionism is that our everyday life is

made up of interpretation and judgment about our own experience and of others, and many times these are incorrect. The argument of his book, *Interpretive Interactionism* (Denzin 2001:3), is that "we must grasp, understand, and interpret correctly the perspectives and experiences of those persons who are served by applied programs if we are to create solid and effective programs" (Denzin 2001:3). For the purpose of this understanding, I have changed this central idea to suit this research: we must grasp, understand, and interpret correctly the perspectives and experiences of those persons from our family and community if we are to create solid and effective families and communities.

Now that I have historically and locally situated myself, I have seen my own shifting identities that have their own history and have shaped this public 'trouble' within my own private 'trouble'. The autobiographical nature of standpoint epistemology is central to this research, as I feel that through the discovery of this suppressed knowledge of these issues in my community, I am making an attempt to bring the value of this knowledge back home to my community, and also my 'self' as well. Like Patricia Hill Collins, with this work I wanted to "transcend the visual" and "invoke a form of dialogical textuality that is empathetic and allows one group to enter into (and feel) the experiences of another" so that "groups can come to better understand other group's standpoints, without relinquishing the uniqueness of its own standpoint or suppressing other groups' partial perspectives" (Collins 1990:236).

Invoking the Felt Life

I have used narrative as a way to "invoke the felt life" (Denzin 2001:9) and to

understand other people's worlds from the inside out, to understand and portray people as I understand myself (Harrington 1997:xxv). It is important for me through this research, to build an emotional relationship between myself, the life experiences told to me by my community members, and the reader. This research is part critical, intimate public ethnography that values writing that moves a public to meaningful judgment and meaningful action (Charity 1995:50), with the intent of civic transformation (Christians et al. 1993:14), while "attempting to strengthen the political community's capacity to understand itself, converse well, and make choices" (Rosen 1994:381).

I am assuming the role of researcher/autoethnographer with an emphasis on performer-centered form of storytelling (Degh 1995:8), and through this form of writing, the personal, biographical and public come together. The concept of performance text (Conquergood 1998 Turner 1986) turns field notes and interviews into texts that are performed, and the meanings of lived experience are shown in these performances (Collins 1990:210). Performance ethnography "creates and enacts moral texts, texts that move from the personal to the political, the local to the historical and the cultural" (Denzin 2001:14). I am endeavoring to create "a minimalist performative social science that is also about stories, performances, and storytelling" (Denzin 2001:15), so that in effect, it creates a place "where people gather to listen, to experience, to better understand the world and their place in it" (Jenkins 1999:19).

Performance texts do not claim authoritative knowledge of 'facts', because the meanings of facts are always represented differently in the telling, as they are remembered and connected to other events (Denzin 2001:16). The memory evokes

reflexive stories where researchers, audiences, and performers share in experience, emotion, and action through the writer and/or performer's senses, and this allows the readers to relive the experience for themselves (Denzin 2001:16). Performative narrative texts allow for more than one voice to speak at one time, and is "evocative, reflexive and multicoated; it crisscrosses genres and is always partial and incomplete. But in performative writing things happen; it is writing that is consequential, and it is about a world that is already being performed" (Pollock 1998:80-95). Remembered events become a form of dialogue, poems, or stories, and personal narrative is made real in the act of performance by mediating experience (Denzin 2001:19). Powerful moments occur when the text has a spirit that creates that open space of understanding that the audience is invited to become a part of (Denzin 1997:94).

The biography and the self of the researcher is what interpretive research starts and ends with, but I see it as 'starts and begins with'. The consequences of taking this position is that you have to come to the realization that "only you can write your experiences. No one can write them for you. No one else can write them better than you can. What you write is important" (Denzin 2001:32). I found out immediately that this was not going to be the easy route through this research. Autoethnographic writing has been found to be

> extremely difficult...confronting things about yourself that are less than flattering ...honest autoethnography exploration generates a lot of fears and doubts - and emotional pain. Just when you think you can't stand the pain anymore, well, that's when the real work has only begun (Ellis and Bochner 2000:738).

Most of the time I found myself hesitant to write because of the truth that I had to speak to myself. It is one thing to think something through, and quite another to write it

out for all, and especially for yourself, to see. Through this research I realized that I had an opportunity to learn about how the issues identified in this study relate to the personal troubles of my individual life, and I wanted to find a way to convey this to a diverse audience, since "all people can learn to center in another experience, validate it, and judge it by its own standards without need or comparison or need to adopt that framework as their own" (Brown 1989:922).

These approaches are produced through a class of ethnography called "creative analytic practice ethnography" that is "a method of inquiry, a way of finding out about yourself and your topic" (Richardson 2000:923). Interview transcripts and field notes have been converted into poetry as "a way of communicating instances when we feel truth has shown its face" (Richardson 1998:451). What poetry can do is retell experiences in a way that others can experience and feel them, and through this they hold the possibility of doing for social research what conventional social research cannot (Richardson 2002:887).

What I would like to advocate through this research is mutual understanding, rather than advocating that 'I know because I have researched these particular issues'. Through this I am inviting the readers to enter into their own conversations, through feeling with me as a researcher, or as a character in the poems, into another realm of existence (Ellis and Berger 2002:869). "As long as you can handle the vulnerability it entails...our own emotionality, physicality, spirituality - these realms seem to bring with them a great deal more vulnerability than we're accustomed to in traditional social science" (Ellis and Berger 2002:869).

A Sample Group Becomes a Group of Storytellers

The sample group for this research consisted of 4 women and 5 men, all of whom I know personally, some of whom are close relatives through various kinship ties dating back to a few generations. All but one participant are from the St'uxtews community, and reside within the reserve boundaries of the community. The one participant that is not St'uxtews is Northern Secwepemc, but considers members of the St'uxtews community her close 'family'.

I decided to delimit this research by choosing only participants that were born between the years of 1945-1955. Initially, I approached the people who I knew to be from this age group and waited until they asked me about what I was doing with my time these days. I explained to them the research that I was doing, and if they seemed interested, I would ask them if they would consider doing an interview with me. I wanted to be extremely conscious of how I presented what I wanted to do, as I did not want to seem like a 'researcher in Indian's clothing'. If I asked too soon, I felt this way. If I asked too late, it seemed I was just asking out of obligation. I found that I had to ask at the right moments, and I did not always interpret the 'right moment' to really be the 'right moment'.

Once I asked, the answer rarely came right away. Some became excited at the opportunity and agreed right away, but to set a date for them to do an interview was taking it into another realm entirely. Others looked away quickly and mumbled an answer that sounded like 'yes', but really ended up meaning, politely, 'I'll say yes now, so that you'll go away, but really I'm not ready.' Usually if I asked twice and didn't get a

firm answer, I pushed it no further. I needed to have a good relationship with my community members after this research, so I tried hard to not be a 'pushy academic with my own agenda'. I offered them the chance to offer up their stories as well.

Getting the participants to agree to do an interview was the first big step. Some would agree and think about it, then realize they were unsure. At this point, to make them feel less suspicious, I offered them the interview questions to look over. I usually did this as a last resort, since I wanted to hear their answers to the questions without them having a preconceived notion of what they were going to say to me during the interview. Yet I wanted to show them that I wasn't trying to hide anything so that I could 'trick' them into doing something that they did not feel comfortable doing. I often thought to myself: how can I get through this without becoming a monster?

I found that it certainly is one thing for people to say that they will do something, and quite another when they think through what they have agreed to do. Some potential participants agreed to do the interview, but when I tried to set a date for them to meet with me, I was greeted with uncertainty about when they would have the time. If I set two meetings, and if they were cancelled or the potential participant just did not show up, I decided not to pursue it any further. I waited for them to call me, and many times I did not receive their calls. I decided to work with the people who were really sure that they wanted to do an interview, and who showed an interest in my work.

Once the participants and I had set a date and time to do the interview, I asked them to choose where they would feel most comfortable talking to me. In all instances it was their home that they wished to carry out the interview, separate from but among their

immediate and extended family. Each time I started an interview, I was always offered something to drink, or to eat. I always felt welcomed into their homes, but I sensed various degrees of anticipation from the participant's husband or wife, if they had one. Sometimes I was taken by the feeling that they were honored that I was taking the time to listen to their partner's story. Other times I sensed a feeling of protectiveness, through a look that seemed to say: "you are not here to hurt, I hope".

Before the start of the formal interview, I usually talked informally with the participant, about things they felt were connected to me. I waited for a silence, or a pause, to take us to the next level of talking about the research and eventually the issue of informed consent. This part always made me feel uncomfortable, as if I was reminding them that I was not just there to listen to them, but to also 'take' from them. To most, it seemed like a rude awakening to the fact that although their people were finding ways through education to open them up, it was the small details that could shut them right down.

Having to sit with them and read thoroughly through the consent form really gave me a feeling of being a traitor, I was swooped back into being just the 'researcher', and not the relative, or friend that I felt to these people. It seemed that the consent form itself, as well as giving them the choice of anonymity made them feel that they had something to hide, or that there was a possibility that the data could be used against them. The whole issue of the consent form was the only point during the interviews that made me feel as if my intentions were false. We both breathed sighs of relief when it was signed and put away. Then I would have to find a way to bring us back to the level of relative

and/or friend without offending them.

In the end, I did not use any names in the analysis. This was to ensure the storytellers' anonymity and confidentiality. In the process of converting the transcriptions of the interviews to the poetic narratives, I edited material that would have provided major clues to the participants' identities. I wanted each participant to experience the similarities and differences of each of their stories without the preconceived notions they had of the people who were telling the stories. I thought that this could be a way to:

> open the intermingling of the multiple voices within and between people and the texts they encounter [to enable] people to see and hear the ways various voices intersect and overlap, the ways they have been repressed or held down because of certain social and political circumstances, and the ways they can be talked about and explored (Sarris 1993:5).

Being familiar with the politics of the reservation, I knew that most people were raised thinking they 'know' the way certain people are, through how their parents felt about these people and families. Throughout my own life, I have consciously tried to neutralize this teaching through not holding onto to these preconceived ideas about what makes people who they are, and getting to know them myself, in my own way, so that I am able to make my own conclusions. I consciously tried not to judge people.

After each interview was transcribed, I gave a hard copy to each of the participants, and gave them information on how they could reach me if there was something they wanted to add to our conversation or modify. Many participants felt that receiving a hard copy of their words was something that they would treasure, even something that they could be remembered by, or show to their grandchildren. For

myself, the experience of transcribing interviews was something that I will never forget.

Each time I transcribed an interview, as I typed out each sentence they presented to me, I felt that I listening much closer than I was at the interview, or than I ever had in my whole life. Listening to each phrase, each word, sometimes repeatedly if I could not quite hear what they were saying, I sensed the emotional force of each of their voices, and I came to know them differently than I thought I knew them. I felt a connection that I do not think I would have felt if I had not done the interviews. This is also when I realized that their silences were just as important as their words.

This is the beauty of utilizing education and research as a way to connect to my community members and family. If I were to have tried to ask these questions outside of this realm, I do not know if I would have been strong enough to sit through those silences, those painful pauses. It is easier to come up with personal reasons of discomfort as an excuse not to confront our fears, but the research gave me more reasons to be strong, to push and challenge myself to carry on with the questions I had.

Transforming the Encouraged Betrayal

The aim of education, for all human communities, is to explain to individuals who their people are, how they relate to others, and to the physical world around them. It creates an understanding of the collective they belong to, the rules and purpose of existence. The purpose of education can mainly be said to develop "properly socialized adults who will share the collectivity's values, provide for its needs and defend its existence" (Miller 1996:15).

Education for aboriginal peoples has had a more complex history of the

understanding it has created for them, in terms of who they are and how they relate to the collective of 'Canadian' society. The educational aims for aboriginal people were forcibly changed and enforced through the colonizing powers of the church and state. The concept of education for aboriginal peoples has come to represent the history of colonization since it can be "perceived and felt as representing government, church, institutions which are not grounded in Native values...the academie and all it represents, are embedded with the values and beliefs of the people who created them" (Kenny 2000:139-40).

Although it is encouraged in aboriginal communities, education, in the institutionalized sense, is viewed as being a significant way to 'get ahead' in the modern, or 'white' world, but at the same time, can be perceived as a betrayal. Especially those who must leave their community to attain higher education. Oftentimes afterward, they are seen as outsiders among their own people once they return with hopes of sharing their new knowledge with their community (Kenny 2000:140).

Why this feeling of betrayal? Because by viewing the educational process as a way of 'getting ahead' confirms once again, to aboriginal people, that their knowledge is not the way to 'get ahead'. It is a way to be 'behind'. At the back. At the rear. After. Following. Last. This made me think about how education, namely, aboriginal research, could be perceived as a way to 'get ahead' in the aboriginal world, but even the phrase 'get ahead' does not seem to suit what I am trying to describe, so I will use the phrase 'be within'. If academic knowledge and education could find more ways to 'be within' the aboriginal world, then would going into higher education seem as much as a betrayal?

This feeling of betrayal is something that I have feared, especially since the people who have told their stories to me are from my own community, and one of them is my father. I wanted this research to be received in a way that the information would create mutual understanding not only between members of my community, and the academy, but also to audiences outside my community as well. At the same time, I did not want to be perceived in my community as a researcher who was just going to come to them to 'represent' their stories in ways that they could not understand or relate to. I wanted the power of their stories to remain with the people, for them to feel in control of their spaces and their lives by seeing their own words more than mine (Kenny 2000:147), while also recognizing their lives in my words.

I felt that it was vital to this research to be able to present their stories meaningfully so that I could create a "mindfulness" (Kabat-Zinn 1994: xv) in whomever was to take in this research in the future. Kabat-Zinn (1994) defined mindfulness as the concept of

> paying attention in a particular way; on purpose, in the present moment, nonjudgmentally... This kind of attention nurtures greater awareness, clarity, and acceptance of present moment reality. It wakes us up to the fact that our lives unfold only in moments. If we are not fully present for many of those moments, we may not only miss what is most valuable in our lives but also fail to realize the richness and the depth of our possibilities for growth and transformation...There is nothing cold, analytical or unfeeling about it...mindfulness practice is gentle, appreciative, and nurturing. Another way to think of it would be 'heartfulness' (Kabat-Zinn 1994:4-7).

This concept shares the same values as storytelling in Aboriginal culture. Storytelling is empowering because of the way that it has the potential to open "channels to deep reservoirs of creativity, intelligence, imagination, clarity, determination, choice,

and wisdom within us" (Kabat-Zinn 1994:9). These are the very things that storytelling in Aboriginal culture hopes to create in its listeners. Stories, like research, also ask: Have I grown through this experience? Has it helped me on my path, have I learned from my experience so that I can keep on learning?

Since asking multiple questions can be viewed as disrespectful in Aboriginal culture, I tried to ask questions in ways so that the participants could recount particular experiences, and I tried to keep my remarks to a minimum (Brayboy 2000:6). But even with this culturally sensitive method in mind, I still had to tell myself to shut up many times while transcribing the interviews. It certainly made me reevaluate my own listening abilities. Doing research with aboriginal values in mind provided me the opportunity to develop approaches that are creative and unique, reflecting the values, beliefs, and spirit of my ancestors, the ones alive, and the ones to be born yet. It guided me away from carrying out another form of colonization onto my own people (Kenny 2000:148).

Process rather than Representation

The limitations of this research is that it cannot be said to represent Secwepemc peoples' views as a whole, not only because of its small sample size. Rather, it is really about the process of research, and how it can be utilized to 'close the gap', or to transform our relationships so that we are able to bring deeper understanding to one another. It is not a comprehensive survey. These presentations should not be seen as representing a 'typical' Secwepemc speaker or storyteller. In many ways each of their voices are unique. I wanted to focus on people from my own community so that I would

be able to stay close and work with those people I consider to be my own people, a large part of whom I culturally identify with.

It has always been important for me to use this education for the benefit of my people, especially given the enormous amount of support they have given me during my pursuit of higher learning. I made a promise to them that I would conduct research that I felt would benefit their understanding of themselves. I also made a promise to myself that I would carry out research that I felt would teach me more about who I was as well. So although these are viewed as 'limitations', I perceive them to be much more than just a 'restriction' of what the research can accomplish.

4 CREATIVE ANALYTIC PRACTICE:

Poetic Representations of Interviews with Commentary

"Don't rhyme the words too closely
When you tell our story
Leave time and space for us to install
Our bit of truth..."
Sheila Erickson (1969:40)

i saw those
tears
not running down
your face
yet
there they were
i saw your tear streaked
child face
sittin'
over there
your
sad eyes
left behind
on those
big steps
you never
forget

where did that child
go
where did that smile
hide
where did those crow's feet
land
when you were locked
inside

where did you go with all that

fear
did it crouch
in little pieces
here
and
there

still

in everything you do
you may tell your partner
but you'll
never tell
your kids
is that where some of it
is hid?

-Meeka Morgan
August 2004

The following poetic representations and commentaries of each interviewee go through the four phases of their life experience: early experiences and life at home; changes and what it was like; transitions and adaptations, and reflections. It created a flow that was similar to what I envisioned storytelling to be like for this generation of people from my community. As I read each one through, I could hear their voices and could visualize them telling me the story this way. In each piece, I tried to find particular phrases that they used consistently, so that I could capture each individual's unique voice.

Each of the poetic works is also almost completely written using their words verbatim. I fought the urge numerous times to try to 'make' their choice of words 'sound better' because I felt this to be a reflection of me trying to 'represent' them 'better' than they could themselves. I felt this would have been a sign of disrespect towards them, as I

wanted to recognize and appreciate their own unique voice and choice of words. I wanted to place the emphasis on dialogue rather than capturing the 'last word', or trying to establish the truth (Gergen 1999:58). Through this, the data gathering and analysis process became "less a conduit of information from informants to researchers that represents how things are, and more a sea swell of meaning making in which researchers connect their own experiences to those of others and provide stories that open up conversations about how we live and cope" (Ellis and Berger 2002:853).

I chose not to impose any grammatical structure on each of the works, because I felt that it was a way that each piece could be read without an imposed 'right' structure. I wanted people to read them as it spoke to them. One of the phrases used most often, which I chose to capitalize in each poetic presentation is 'you know'. I noticed that when these people said this phrase, they seemed to mean to use it in a nonchalant way, but it is anything but that. Each time they said 'you know' it seemed to be used in the context of talking about something that is unspoken, but 'known', or something that 'shouldn't' be talked about, but 'known'. I also felt that this phrase was speaking to me in a way, because oftentimes it was used in context to direct experiences that I have had, or had knowledge of. It seemed to really stand out in the transcriptions of the interviews, and it was something that I could not ignore.

Maybe this phrase stood out to me because I didn't KNOW. The focus of this research is about things that I have felt that I did not KNOW about, even though it was maybe felt that I should have KNOWN, but it wasn't known how I would ever come around to knowing. Most of the participants in this study have not told their children

about these experiences, and because of this, many of their children do not ask. It is as if the two generations are in a stand still of communication. It is my hope that this presentation of stories acts as a catalyst for change in this attitude:

> I don't know why I won't tell my kids about it. Like, I see the way I brought them up. I keep looking at them every day and I keep seeing the effect that I have on them and they don't understand why. It's really clear, I see it and it's hard and I do have feelings, but I won't show it. I do have a lot of feelings but I have a hard time crying. I feel embarrassed because when we cried at the residential school we were told "why are you crying", like who cares, you keep it in, because nobody cares here (Anonymous in Jack 2000:66).

#1

we lived in logging camps
a sort of board cabin
together
a small little shack
christ as big as this living room here

i can remember them guys going out hunting
horseback
not a lot of frill that's what you had
i remember one time eating some jelly
at loon lake i thought
i got it made now
basic necessities if you will

years old
security
YOU KNOW
mom and dad were always there
isolated
way out
in the logging camps
that was the whole for me
just my family
the only thing I ever knew

my younger brother and my older brother

we were close then
cause that's all we had was each other
we stayed that way through life
even right today
security and support
whenever you need it

quite frightening
there is this BIG GOD DARN building there
BIG
a BIG HUGE entrance
today it's just a normal one
back then it was HUGE

i got left there
had that uneasy feeling that they were gonna leave
i was six at the time

i don't know how anyone could make it easier!
you're just a little kid
i guess the only thing that was easier about it was there was 30 or 40 kids in the same PREDICAMENT
i guess misery loves company
when somebody cried everybody cried
you wanted somebody to cry with you

my brother he was older
so i never got to see him
all the time i was there
he was separate from me
even then

i can recall one kid
he used to wet himself all the time
they used to beat on him all the time
they used to beat on him ALL THE TIME

i can't recall anybody ever really explaining it to me
find out when you had to go to school
back then there were consequences if you didn't send your kids
YOU KNOW

when they left and never came back
YOU KNEW

i knew i was stuck there
i think in all the time there i saw them three times

i learned to steal/survive at six years old
i can remember going down to the apple orchard
three apples or even four was a big haul for me
shirts filled up
three or four was all i could carry
you knew it was bad but what could you do?

after awhile i got to think about it
i got away from there
in some ways it never was the same
residential school mentality
it was hard to get away from
but i knew how to pray
i knew every damn prayer there was at seven years old
a lot of people our age
we memorize it more than anything else
today i don't know
i don't attend church

when you first come back
the first couple years
they don't know how to look after you
they treated you good the first week
then it was fend for yourself
in some respects you're closer to the kids at school
because you have a little family there

a constant presence
always felt
even with all the misery
they were still devout catholics
ingrained in their system
their thoughts
that train of thought
YOU KNOW

one of the changes i noticed
nobody talked the shuswap language in my household
nobody ever spoke
they all spoke english
when you don't know your language it's hard to connect to what the old people are

saying

the only role model you had back then
was staggering around
drunk and stuff like that
women getting beat up
regardless which part of the reserve you lived
all were subject to the alcohol
young men back then
staggering around home with a case of beer
that was the role model you looked up to
everybody thought that was funny
when it came your turn
you went that way

i recall one incident
a women on the reserve
frozen to death
no clothes stark naked
raped and thrown
no charges ever brought
it was part of the system that we learnt
learn to serve the white people
crawl to the white people
a good indian was a dead indian

i could recall one picture
i only seen a picture like that in a sears catalogue
or some darn thing
the priests dining room had a bowl of fruit there
grapes bananas everything else you could think of
the line would stop when we walked by
it was years years after
before i had a taste

when we came back there were more of us
first eight then twelve
they never knew how to be parents
what to look after
what to do when somebody's hurting
when my brother was crying i went over there and i helped him
a chain reaction would start
being close to your brothers and sisters meant
SURVIVAL

COMFORT

our counseling was when we'd hang around together
we'd talk about something
during a lifetime was the healing process
no one hour session or anything
your family and friends would help you
we laugh
we felt sad

you have got to be very careful what we're doing here
talking
some that are new to it will start crying
YOU KNOW
some cannot believe stuff like this happened

we learnt something like a coyote
you could drop a coyote off anywhere
in town
way out in the back country rural area
they'll live
and that's just what we did
is that
we lived
YOU KNOW

these Indian kids today
yourself included probably
you could go anywhere
you get in that survival mode
indian people are good at that

the leaders from that residential school
a moments notice drop in
block anything
so much animosity against the government and churches
they didn't think nothing of it
now they look after their own interests
back then i mean what did we have?

if some of this stuff isn't recorded
like you're doing now
they're just going to quit
talking

only 20% of us living on the reserve now
too many bad memories to come back to
might as well start their own bad memories off the reserve
YOU KNOW
might as well die somewhere else other than the reserve
YOU KNOW

once in awhile
i go to a church for a funeral or a wedding
more funerals than weddings
this priest standing up there
you often wonder what the hell's he doing standing up there
hard
i mean
mean

indian people are so educated in this day and age
the stamp they put out on indian people is just
a bunch of garbage
it's just for them politicians
you want to hang onto your values you better come see us
see how we've done it

my boy
my daughter
doesn't know anything about it
maybe that's a good thing
I DON'T KNOW
YOU KNOW
better
THEY KNOW
nothing about it
if they're interested they'll get a hold of me one of these times
i don't impose that interest on them

i learned to be a talker, strong, opinionated
i'm still proud of being Indian
we can't jump back and forth like the newer generation
HARD
LIFE
being kicked around by those damn priests
having to take crap from white people
cause that's all you were
go dig a ditch for Jackson over there

when you're back gets weaker your mind gets stronger

it taught me to be i guess
honest with myself rather than not
YOU KNOW
a lot of people try to be like that
YOU KNOW
if you do you get caught up in it
a lot of my people got caught up in it over the years

stability i value about my family
my family has more now than i ever did as a kid
than i ever could dream of
we're ourselves
we want to be indian
i don't have to be anybody else
to be able to do what i want

everybody was a ditch digger then
today we have choices
that's the stability we have
there's so many doors open
it's comforting to know your children
finally have stability
finally have that
choice

i'd like to read something like this
when my grandson's come to me
i'll give them this i've done

i'd never tell the real bad stuff
while they were chasing cows one time
i was telling that to my dad
about what happened to me one time
we were sitting at the house
he looked at me
hurt on his face
after that I never did talk to him
about residential school
never did
never
never did
what can they do

what the hell can they do?

i remember when i was a kid
saturday sunday tripping over beer bottles
my kids i never wanted to put them through that
i quit
i quit
it was the best thing i ever done
now my kids today can go out and do their thing

you could never get the full gist of it
maybe somewhere down the road
YOU KNOW
sitting there with a recorder and a pen
might not be the way to go
so yeah
i mean
i don't mind

our kids are getting educated
it's good to know that all those beatings and everything else
never went to waste

Commentary on #1:

The same sense of movement that was characteristic of Secwepemc families and households seems to be carried out in this participant's family while having to adapt to a completely different economic system, deeply imbedded in a colonialist framework. His family camped out at an isolated logging camp while his parent(s) worked. Although they were moving around, one of the strongest feelings described was a deep sense of security, even though there was "not a lot of frill". It was the fact that "mom and dad were always there".

In terms of the transition from home to school, the most intense memory recalled is of his first initial visit. Mainly this was the time that he found out he was now going to

school. This participant did not know that he was going to go to school, but when he arrived he had "an uneasy feeling that they (parents) were gonna leave". His understanding of the situation was that he was abandoned by his parents to a place that was completely foreign and uninviting, for an undisclosed amount of time. The only thing that made him feel better was the fact that there were others who were facing the same predicament along with him. There was a sense of oneness, or togetherness that gave each person strength while they were all in there: "when somebody cried everybody cried, you wanted somebody to cry with you". With brothers and sisters forcibly separated and segregated, it was close to impossible for them to comfort one another at this very traumatic period of transition. So not only was the role of mother and father taken away at this crucial time, but also the role of brother and sister.

Learning to steal was equated with survival while at the school at an extremely young age, in this case, at six years old. This created a feeling of wrongness, although it was done in the name of getting basic needs met. This feeling was carried on into the later years in life, as for this participant, "in some ways it never was the same". In this instance, it was felt that all of the forced traumatic change was exchanged for religious dogma. This didn't result in him becoming religious at all; in terms of particular prayers, they "memorize it more than anything else".

When the participant arrived at home, the role of mother and father had altered so much that it seemed they didn't know how to look after their children anymore: "they don't know how to look after you...they treated you good the first week... then it was fend for yourself". He felt that his created 'family' at school was closer than his real

'family' at home, because at least at school he was feeling and receiving some emotional support. This person felt betrayed by their parents since they had become devotedly religious towards the very institution that took them away from their care, as well as their language.

Once alcohol became legally available to aboriginal peoples, the role models for his generation completely changed, as well as the respect practiced towards women. As a young man, "staggering around home with a case of beer" became the norm, as well as "women getting beat up". When a young man became of age, that is what they expected of themselves: "when it came your turn, you went that way". This expectation seems to be borne out of being taught that their people were not worthy to be well taken care of or respected. It was believed that the system taught them to "serve", "crawl", to be "good Indian" or a "dead Indian".

The way that this person dealt with the pain of these experiences was by staying close with their family members, "hanging around together", during a lifetime. He did not seem to value the process of counseling, which he described as a "one hour session". His counseling was done with his family and friends, sharing their moments of laughter and sadness together. He also expressed caution in doing research like this, since he believed that not all people would be ready for this type of sharing.

The transitions this person had to go through seemed to strengthen his ability to adapt, which is explained in the imagery and spirit of the coyote. This ability to adapt is also seen as a beneficial tool carried over to his children, that "survival mode". Another tool that was perceived as coming from the residential school was the ability for his

generation to act quickly when it came to fighting for aboriginal rights, since there was so much animosity against the government and the churches already. There was nothing for them to lose, since so much had been taken from them.

This person expressed to me that telling this generation's stories is an important way to create more openness, to start the process of storytelling again, to create better memories on the reserve. Without this happening, it fosters people's feelings of not wanting to be on the reserve because it is those painful memories that drive them away. He believes that education is a way to change the perception people have of Indian people, to bring awareness to the fact that although their cultural identity was taken away, others can learn from the incredible strength that aboriginal peoples have had in keeping their culture going regardless of what has been away from it. In terms of transmitting knowledge of his experience to his children, this participant does not believe in "imposing that interest on them". It is seen as more appropriate for his children to come to him with that interest. It is interesting to note that this person did not feel comfortable telling his story to his own parent as well, even as an adult. He viewed it as causing to much pain for his parent to deal with, because after all, they were also powerless over the situation. But during the interview, this participant noted that he would like to show his grandchildren this story one day. It was now being viewed as something they were proud to tell.

Overall, the experiences this person went through taught him to be honest with himself, and in the long run, to be proud to be an aboriginal person, no matter what. He recognized the social status aboriginal peoples were given in the economy: "go dig a

ditch for Jackson over there", yet it brought strength in the mind for him: "when your back gets weaker your mind gets stronger". In terms of his own children, he believes that there is stability, which comes from the new generation having choices that were not available to them before, and this brings him comfort. He also views quitting alcohol to be a major factor that prevented his children from going through similar experiences, it allowed them to use their full potential. The participant mentioned numerous times that I could never get the full "gist" of the story, especially through my research persona: "sitting there with a recorder and a pen might not be the way to go". Yet it reminded him of the fact that the next generation was getting educated: "it's good to know that all those beatings and everything else never went to waste".

#2

i believe 1952
i was down in Agassiz with my mother and stepfather
picking hops in a big encampment
at that time

the season was over
we came back to bonaparte
the white man named mr. brown
said we had to go to school
otherwise
there would be a charge put upon my parents
taken to jail

that was one of the first memories that i had
september 1953

YOU KNOW
i felt
at that time
i didn't understand
they took me down to ashcroft

get on that train
at that time
go to kamloops

we went for a big lunch
a favorite place
silver grill it was called
i didn't understand what was going on

the priest was very nice
with my parents especially
saying hi how are you all this sort of thing

then all the sudden
he grabs my hand
my mom and them went back to the taxi
at that time
my mother
she was crying
i didn't understand why she was crying
when they were leaving she was really waving at me
i was waving back to her
wondering where she was going
at that time
they were going back to stuc'tews
i was to stay at that residential school

YOU KNOW
totally unreal
that's your name now is 147 so if we ever talk to you
you will be called by your number
YOU KNOW
so 147
you're wondering what's really happening

before this there was hardly anyone on this reserve introduced to alcohol then
the turning point was when the kids had to go to school
not being a part of the family anymore
the parents
i'm really sure that they hurted in a lot of ways
at that time

they were hurting because their children were no longer with them
so other than being by themselves

other than to have to go through the sorrow and what not
they started turning towards alcohol
that's the way i tend to believe
it still bothers and affects me today
and
my children

coming back in the summertime we were
more or less
raised by our aunts and uncles and whatever else
at that time
our parents spent a lot of time in these public premises
we were really fortunate and lucky
we had a lot of relatives we could turn to
when i had to wait in certain places for my parents to be there
sometimes they weren't

i was really fortunate and lucky
i was raised with different families on this reserve
i always tend to thank them old timers
being able to be there for me

i seen them dry fish dry meat i seen them can
i seen them speak the language
YOU KNOW
i watch a lot of them old timers
just being around them
i felt i was family with each and every one of them
all of them treated you with respect

you couldn't go by a place in bonaparte here
without being welcomed into their house
coffee tea or something to eat
YOU KNOW
those kinds of ways
sometimes they probably even feel insulted if you didn't go in there and have something
a lot of wisdoms they had at them times
just telling stories
listening to them sing songs and whatnot
some of them songs i've learned myself
they really helped me in my way

YOU KNOW
these feelings that i had about the residential school

i had to be strong about myself and who i was
who i am
i am secwepemc, i'll always be no matter what
YOU KNOW
i come home
i rely on a lot of them things that them old timers taught me
i think that's the only way to make myself strong

ROUGH
TIME
raising us
HARD
TIME
pick raspberries strawberries apples tomatoes
anything to be able to provide us with food clothing
we were really fortunate and lucky
only five of us

a lot of times we walked on that highway
just to get a job
from deadman's creek all the way over to savona
hot like this
YOU KNOW
a hundred degrees
i was just a little kid

twenty thirty below zero
i watched my dad and my uncle go up the mountain on horseback
that evening that old man was coming down the hill with a moose
everybody pitched in
it was good in those times
a lot of them old people got together and cooked
it was like a picnic to them

i always think about just being together

mom and dad were going to get me something for my birthday
in this old 52' Pontiac or some darn thing
i jumped in the trunk
i knew something was gonna happen
they kicked me in the ass and told me i couldn't go
i knew something was gonna happen
i told my uncle i don't want to stay with you
i want to stay here tonight

right in the house here
six a.m. a knock on the door
i told him i already know
i knew something was gonna happen

turn off the tape for a sec
yeah

after that
me and my sisters were tending to go in different directions
i went to the states at 13
to help myself
i was already an adult i was working for myself
i had just myself

sometimes when i came back
i went to the middle of the reserve
not knowing where to go
i stood right there in the middle
some of them would see me
take me under their wing
feed me keep me warm
that continued till i got a bearing on myself

when i went to the other school
so far away
like 10,000 miles away
at that time
elvis presley was still in style
the big wave and all that gunk on his hair
we used to wear that
suddenly we were GI Joe's

i learned how to fight there
no BS
every day
not because i wanted to
because i had to
i'm still the same way
lot of times all you get is an ass kickin' but that's the way i am

i couldn't look after my sisters in the way that i wanted to
sometimes when i seen them they were crying
they never did share with me what was the matter

that's probably a story in itself

right wrong
then all the sudden
there's a hell
it seemed to me like the native people were always goin' to hell
heathens, we didn't have a GOD
a creator, but we didn't have a GOD
so if you don't have a GOD
you're gonna go to hell
they didn't even know anything about US

all it is is church
once twice three times a day even
we spent a lot of times on our knees

three of my four families i was drinking
it's come out in my children
i couldn't really nurture them in the proper way
i feel that i'm to blame a lot
now i quit drinking
their attitudes have changed
my oldest did an essay about me being in residential school
how it affects her
it's really good to be able to see these things
if i had that paper i would show you
that one

the time before this last family
everything was for my myself
family should mean togetherness

i think of my strengths
it bears down to being able to share
share with other people so that they'll know
friends or family
people that have never experienced these kinds of things
how lucky they are today
that they never have to experience something like this
hopefully
i'd never wish that on anybody

somebody's gotta listen to me when i say something

at least i could communicate with those people from up there
i can go up there and i can still kelmucstin
they can understand me
even today i have a lot of fun when i go up there
we still have some good laughs

compensation
how is that gonna benefit me?
i'll tell you
i am gonna be happy for a little while here with me and my family
while we're still here
it's not gonna change nothing
but it makes my girls happy if i can take them somewhere
where it's nice
do something with them while i'm still here
other than
look at all my friends that have gone there
and have gone to the spirit world already
if these people wait any longer they all are gonna to be in the spirit world
all there is gonna be is talk
comprende?

Commentary on #2:

This participant also lived in a semi-nomadic lifestyle as a child, living in encampments, his family picking the seasonal rounds, this time to support a totally different economy, not to just support themselves and their kin. During the wintertime they would return to the community to live, and he remembers many people hunting together, preparing food together, "just being together". One of his first memories is of being taken to school by the Indian agent, and he remembers knowing the repercussions for his parents if he did not attend. He also remembers the feeling of confusion from not knowing why he was experiencing all the new things: the train, going for a big lunch at a restaurant in town, watching the priests be extremely courteous to his parents. It made it a traumatic moment when the time came for his parents to leave because he had to watch

his mother cry, yet he still did not understand why she was crying, or where she was going.

What really stood out in this participant's memory was his feeling of the experience being "totally unreal", especially with the giving of a number to represent who they were to be from then on. He still remembers his number to this day. He described his transformation as going from elvis presley to GI Joe, which is interesting because his next comment was that the school is where he learned to fight, not because he wanted to, but because he had to. He believes that attitude is still carried with him today. One of the things that really affected him was not being able to care for his sisters the way he wanted to, and in turn they also did not ever share with him what happened to them during their time at the school. The way that he thought about himself changed tremendously during his time at the school. "All of the sudden there's a hell" and to him, it seemed like that was where all the native people were going because they were taught that they were all heathens since they didn't have a God. This was a major source of confusion because he felt that they did not know anything about the Secwepemc people to begin with.

In terms of alcohol use on the reserve, this participant perceived that the turning point was when the children had to go to school. Alcohol was used as a way to deal with the sorrow of no longer having their children with them, and he believed this was transferred onto him and his children. When he was a child, if it wasn't for extended family on the reserve, he wouldn't have been properly cared for. In three out of four families, he abused alcohol, and he believes that it has came out in his children. He also

feels responsible for this because he did not feel he had the ability to nurture them properly. In his most recent family, he quit alcohol, and he noticed a remarkable change in their attitudes. His daughter wrote about his experience of residential school in a high school class, and how she felt she was affected by it. He felt it was good to be able to perceive these things that she felt.

Being raised with so many different families gave him the opportunity to learn the traditional ways of the elders at the time, and gave him a chance to relearn his language. He believed that during this time he had the opportunity to listen to their stories, songs, and wisdoms, and because of this, developed strength in himself about who he was and who he is. He also felt that being able to share his stories with friends and family was a way to bring awareness to others, especially others that have not experienced the kinds of things he has went through, so that they could recognize how fortunate they are to not have to experience them. It was such a painful experience that he would not wish it onto anybody, and there is no vengefulness in the way he states this. In some ways, he still feels that he can communicate better with the people he went to school with, since they were from an area that retained their language more than the people from his own community. He still maintains those ties to the people from those reserves close to where he went to school.

This interview ended with remarks about how compensation will benefit him and his family by helping him monetarily, to enjoy his time with his family, although he knows this will not change what happened to him as a result of being sent to the school. What he views is most important to him is that it may make his children happy to do

something with him while he is still here. It may take his mind off of all of his friends that are already in the spirit world, who did not have a chance to tell their stories like he has done.

#3

i seemed like i was always happy
there was a lot of people around
YOU KNOW
raised by all extended family
there was a lot of different good
experiences
meal preparations were always fun

just a secure feeling
i guess

grandma grandpa aunts uncles cousins
all the time
you never had to be told to respect your elders
you just did
you watched all the other family members
on how they treated their elders
it was out of respect
YOU KNOW

ah
valuable

even at the age of four
i was helping carry water
cause I wanted to

i remember one time
we had a house
right over there
january
in a horse drawn sleigh we were
all bundled up in blankets
down to bonaparte for church
they heated rocks to keep our feet warm in the sleigh

we went by the root cellar
i could smell the apples

down to grandma's we had something to eat then
we all climbed into the sleigh again
that was really awesome
happy
YOU KNOW
everyone greeting each other as we went along

the oldest siblings were always at residential school though
the family being split
me being right in the middle
i was the last one to go to residential school
you knew you had older brothers and sisters
but they weren't there

i don't ever remember the whole entire family living together
as a family group yeah
we had a lot of animals around
YOU KNOW
we were learning a lot

learn about fishing through grandma and grandpa
medicines from grandma
i really
miss
i wish
i knew
i wish
i was old enough
all the medicines that she taught
YOU KNOW

mom was always there
teaching us how to sew
working with buckskin
making moccasins
cut out patterns
YOU KNOW
she would show me how to put them together

sometimes we go just walk up that way
or walk up that way

YOU KNOW
root digging
i don't even remember what the roots were for now
YOU KNOW
anything like that

when people came by they would always bring food
they would all gather at grandma's
help the person that needed help
help the woman's family
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN
the expectant mother
everybody had chores but I don't remember my chore
(laugh)
other than carrying water
(both laugh)
wasn't really a serious thing
(laugh)
i guess

grandma had this great big crock
she used to store meat
buried in the ground
lard poured on top
to protect it
she had to cut the lard about that deep
to get to the meat

i can't remember the weed
we'd use it as like
spinach
grandma used to love that
we used to have to cook it for her
she'd always be happy
she'd say
never enough
(laugh)
we never picked enough for her

with such a big family
you were never alone
as a child that was good
even if you had to walk from grandma's to our house
it didn't matter what was out there

i was told that we were going to go visit our older brothers and sisters
that we barely knew
i see this person dressed in black
they're walking to (wards) me
they're making a lot of noise
(now i know it's the rosaries that was making the noise)
hanging onto
hanging onto mom
i was brought into the recreation room
i was left there
dad said that they would be right back
after that they were gone

i sat in that rec room that first day
in the dark
till it got dark
i didn't know what i was supposed to be doing
where i was supposed to be
or
anything
i just sat there
i couldn't understand what these people were trying to tell me

that's why i believe i was fluent in shuswap
i know some of the abuses was because of me
speaking my language
tongue lashing
i still remember that paddle
black
rubber
the thickness of a tire
they tell you to stick out your tongue
oh
you couldn't eat or nothing

i think that's why i'm deaf today
i'd always get slapped in the ear
that was another one from speaking the language
so
totally changed
YOU KNOW
from encouragement
to

total shock

i remember seeing my brother for the first time
after being there for awhile
in the dining room
i stood up
i hollered at him
i was waving
i was so happy to see him
the nun came over
took my food
threw it on the floor
told me to clean up the mess

BAD GIRL YOU DON'T TALK TO THE BOYS
i was trying to explain that he was my brother
they couldn't understand me

i'd try to run away several different times
if i could get across that bridge i'd be safe

(silence
cry)

every time they'd come look for me
they had my little sister come
that's how they'd get me back
through my little sister

jumping to look out the window
see if I could see that bridge out there
hear the rosaries
lay down

(silence)

picked up sleeping
two nuns and father
clothes
off
father was smoking a cigarette
i remember my dad how he would hold his cigarettes
you don't know how to smoke

screaming

carried back to bed
i couldn't walk
i couldn't eat
too sick
i hardly even remember going to class
it seems like i was always in trouble

(laugh
cry)

i couldn't understand what they wanted me to do
i didn't even know what a shower was

they poured stuff over us
kerosene or something
powder in our hair
kill all the bugs

kneeling in front of the nuns desk for three hours
i tried to talk to my brother in our language
the rubber mat
i don't know how to explain it
it was
bristles?
bristles you had to kneel on that
as soon as you started to lean on one side
they'd whack you with a ruler
when you tried to move
those things that they did to you
i had holes in my knees
i was there a lot

one night
i snuck down into the kitchen
i stole some hard bread and an apple
i hid under the stairs to eat
trying to get my way back to the dorm
that nun coming down the hallway
i couldn't even breathe
or anything

but i remember i didn't get caught that time

(both laugh)
got my apple and bread

line ups for everything
that was total change
i had to mop the floors when i got in trouble
everyone else
going to breakfast
i was so hungry they wouldn't let me go eat
then that nun came over and told me i had to go
remop that whole hallway
such a huge hallway
i was only five years old
YOU KNOW

one of the punishments i got
i'll never forget to this day
i had to wash the nuns
underwear
i don't know what it was made out of
wool or something
like knickers almost
they come down about like that
i had to wash them by hand

ah

i didn't like that at all

isn't that something
it took me one year to take that away
totally
flashbacks
YOU KNOW
i hear someone say a prayer in our language
i can understand what they are saying
i still can't say it

yeah

it was funny
how they prepared the mush for breakfast
the night before
lumps of dried stuff in there when you got it

some of the stuff i never ate before in my life
watermelon
that was my favorite
it was taken from the garden there
the older boys worked in the garden
YOU KNOW

my family isn't the same
i can't even speak to them
YOU KNOW

i could speak for both sides
i noticed the change
in me and the younger family
dad had to bring the older ones back to the school
we were left home
alone
i'm six
he's five
maybe
four
watch the younger
one
two
told not to let anybody see that we were
alone
getting up
making fire
they used to make coffee for themselves
we 'd just keep to ourselves
YOU KNOW
(laugh)

seeing how we were adults we could drink coffee
YOU KNOW
we were watching the kids

not knowing the older siblings
not knowing them
they're not close at all

you couldn't even imagine

relationships impossible

they wouldn't understand what went on
how come i got the scars i do
i couldn't explain
YOU KNOW
i will never be this decent person again because
back then
i lost it

i think that's why i'm alone now
YOU KNOW
i just don't know how to have a
relationship

so the effects in our children
probably
our grandchildren
it's sure hard to break that
YOU KNOW

it affected everybody all the way around
YOU KNOW
the whole happiness that we had when i was little
wasn't there anymore
when we came back
the school just took it away
YOU KNOW

i wish that we could have it all back
the happiness
of living

if i stayed another week at residential school i would have been dead from starvation
my sister found me
my feet were frozen
i didn't have any shoes
they finally had to

literally

take
me
home
cause no one could handle me
right?

fear
of not knowing what's happening
next
that catholic issue pushing and pushing
trying to run away
hiding under a bed in the corner so that they wouldn't pick me
pick someone else
not being able to go to sleep
i had to find myself in order to get better
my family
nobody said a word
if they knew they just kept quiet
later on in years I found out
when all the kids went to residential school
dad would take them to a certain restaurant
go up to scheidam flats
spend the day before we went

that happened to me!
what are we doing?
YOU KNOW
then we were gone

the only way that
(silence)
i thought well
i'm here
i guess they meant for me to go to school
how come they didn't come back for me?
i had to accept the fact
my mom taught me to braid my long hair
then all of the sudden it was
cut off
took your whole identity
away
it took me 45 years to find myself
again
that's crazy but it's true

my normal life is totally different than everybody else's normal life
having my relationships
alcohol around
abusiveness

YOU KNOW
because that was all i knew
i just got so tired of that
i'm not going to live like that anymore
so to me
i don't ever
i will never
have another person in my life
the person that i would choose
wouldn't understand how i'd lived
all i've gone through
i really don't want to go through it all over again
and again
and again
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
accept the fact that i am alone
that's how i see it
my hearing is gone i've been
hit smacked
too many times

certain thoughts i think of
YOU KNOW
it just makes me want to cry

my granddaughter she tells me
she wants to graduate from university
then come take care of me

getting my identity back again
i ran away for seven years
i didn't get in touch with family cause
family wasn't that great
anyway
YOU KNOW
they weren't there for you when you needed them
then i realized that my family did love me
care for me
stuff like that
YOU KNOW
i was always searching searching
finally one year i went to that pow wow
standing there i had this urge that i had to pray
what am i looking for?

eyes closed
those
drummers and singers
YOU KNOW
it felt like that i was all alone
then it just hit me like a slap in the head

i was looking for myself

everything just started to fall into place
YOU KNOW
i actually found myself in the middle of that crowd
with the help of prayers
i was able to move on rather than
keep searching
so finally it was the end of that search

how many times i've gone to dances
to bars
to wherever it took me
YOU KNOW
looking for this something i couldn't find
YOU KNOW

mom taught me to be a caregiver
and i will still do that now
my niece
i gave her some medicine she told me
i gave her exactly what she needed she didn't even know it
when she was afraid she'd hold medicine in her hand
pray for her fear to go away
she's going to university but yet
she wants to learn
see

our family reunion invitations said
remembering our past imagining our future
well that's the way i feel
YOU KNOW

sometimes we don't even need to speak
we just hug each other and
WE KNOW
everything is gonna be OK

YOU KNOW

the language?
the knowledge of our elders?
what grandma used for medicines?
how did she take care of that meat?
how did it work?
i was too little

it wasn't just
(silence)
identity taken away
YOU KNOW
everything gone
right
two different kinds of culture shock
residential school to white society
OK?
we couldn't fit in
we never did
YOU KNOW

i was doing a little journal
while a flashback would happen i would write it down
i would read to her
how come i am the way i am
why your dad is like he is
i was trying to help her break
break away things
YOU KNOW
YOU KNOW
teach her what actually went on
so she could move on

one time i was listening to music on the radio
a country and western song
all of the sudden i was using the tune that was playing
at the same time
i was singing that prayer
i didn't even realize it
holy smokes
i could just hear the voice come out of me

i'm glad some of it is being recorded rather than

just forgotten
when i'm gone it'll be gone

now when you're gone
they'll be something to remember you with

(both laugh)

Commentary on #3:

When asked about her most vivid memory before she attended school, this participant stated that she was always happy because there was a secure feeling from being around extended family members and doing daily activities together, such as meal preparations. "You were never alone", so she felt very safe. She remembers the honor that elders were given, and as a young child, she learned from all the other family members to respect the elders. She also learned as a small child to help out any way she was able to. At four years old she was carrying water, not because she was told to, but because she wanted to.

Her early life was filled with beautiful memories of horse drawn sleighs in the wintertime, remembering the smells of the packed root cellar, always having an abundance of food, people visiting and greeting each other constantly, learning how to fish and preserve meat, and gathering roots and medicines with her grandmother. She was too young to retain the knowledge about all of the medicines that her grandmother gathered with her, which is one thing she really wishes she could recall. Her mother taught her to work with buckskin, and to sew clothing. When describing how families assisted one another, she explained that people were always bringing food to their home, or various people from the community would gather to help whomever needed help at the

time, especially expectant mothers' families.

When it came time for her to attend residential school, she was told that she was going to go visit her brothers and sisters, whom she knew were attending the school. At this time she had never known her whole family to ever have lived together in the same household, as there was always a sibling attending residential school. Her first memory of the school was seeing someone dressed in black coming towards her making lots of noise. She hung onto her mother and was brought to the recreation room where she was left for the whole day. Her dad told her that they would be right back, but they did not come back. Major confusion took over because of this expectation on her part, and at this moment she lost all understanding of what it was that she was supposed to be doing or where she was supposed to be; all she could do was just sit there. She also believes that at this time she was fluent in her language because she could not understand what the nuns were trying to tell her after this. Her vivid memories of the tongue lashings, as well as the hard slaps on the ear were both punishments for speaking the language at the school. She viewed the transformation as going from "encouragement to total shock".

Although this participant was only at the school for a short time, it had a major impact on her relationship with her siblings. She expressed that her family was never the same, and that now she has a very difficult time communicating with them because she did not get a chance to get to know her older siblings at all growing up since they were always at school. She was abused physically for various reasons, but especially for trying to talk to her brother and for running away. For this participant, to be thrown into such a foreign world, where she could not understand what they wanted her to do, was the one

of the most traumatic experiences for her because not understanding and not complying always led to harsh physical punishment. Yet this did not stop her from stealing to get her basic need of food met.

In terms of the changes when she returned from school, she explained how she was left to be in charge of her toddler siblings when she was only six years old. She was like a miniature adult, making fire and drinking coffee when her parents were gone. In regards to relationships, she feels that she is incapable of having one, and does not think that she could ever be with someone who could attempt to understand what she has went through in her life. She does not even consider herself to be a decent person because the experiences at the school took that away from her. She has seen the effects in her children and realizes that they will probably be passed on to her grandchildren.

One major effect these experiences had on her is that it created a "fear of not knowing what's happening next". This feeling started with not having anyone explain to her what was happening; where she was going, or anything. When she arrived there, her beautiful braids were cut, which to her, symbolized her identity being severed. She stated that it took her 45 years to find herself again, and in order to do this, she had to leave her family for a long time to realize that they did love and care for her. She explained in detail the moment she found herself while attending a pow-wow. Hearing the drums, she had the urge to pray, and asked what it was that she was looking for. Hearing the heartbeat of the drums, it came to her that she was looking for herself. After this realization, the puzzle started to piece together, and she was able to move on. She was also able to move further once she quit alcohol and was in a healthy state to be able to

communicate with her grandchildren about her history so that they had knowledge of it and could "move on".

Her early teachings of caregiving from her mother, was something that she carried on with the next generation. She now gives spiritual guidance through the gift of medicine to her relatives, and acknowledges the younger generation's yearning to learn the Secwepemc ways as well as to attain a university education. She also described to me how she had found ways to connect song to her prayers, and has found that it is a powerful way to "hear the voice come out" of her. At the end of the interview, she was glad that her story was being recorded and that there would now be something to remember her by when she was gone.

#4

in the winter time it got really cold
on this side of the community hall
sleeping on the floor
in a very small boarded house
i guess something like a 10 by 20
square building
the old time wooden heaters
like a round barrel
you put wood in from the top

i was staying with my grandparents
at mclean's lake
there was a little log cabin beside the lake
it was nothing to see moose every day up there
and deer
then we moved into a big ranch house
there was a lot of indians working on that ranch house for a while

i didn't understand family
i understood my grandparents
my mom

my brothers and sisters

we stayed in a root cellar
then we moved into a house
my younger sister was being born
at four years old i had to watch her while
my parents were out in the field

i played with other (indian) kids at the ranch
i remember playing hide and seek
cars
in the water ditches
picking apples

in those times
the value of generosity and sharing was much stronger
amongst our own family and relatives
out to friends
when people came to visit they were
inviting
welcomed
my grandmother would offer them tea and something to eat
without asking

my grandfather would take the horse
brush it down
take it to the barn
prepare the horse and harness
like it was done without question
without anybody asking or waiting
for somebody to ask

i had a real sense of close family ties
of bonding
my parents were out doing the work
i was brought up and raised with my grandparents

when we're with our own people
and i say like
indian people
there's a note of family
relatives
friends

when we interacted with white people
there was
racism
discrimination
prejudice

back in those days you were
not permitted to go into a restaurant
that's how bad it was
you couldn't go in and sit down
and order
anybody else could but
indians weren't allowed

only two restaurants come to mind
the silver grill
and another restaurant beside it
were the only ones where you could go in and order
and not be told to leave

my grandfather
i followed him around wherever whether
it was work
hunting
or fishing
my grandmother
clothed me
taught me the language
in my early life
my teachers

the big front doors
going up the first flight of stairs
my mom said i had to go to school now
she was bringing me here to learn my ABC's
she was telling me not to run away
she would come and see me every once in a while

my mom didn't come back in
a nun came in
she took me down the hall
there was this guy cutting hair
all your hair was shaved off
i can only remember crying all the time

during the day during the night

i was an emotional wreck
i couldn't
i just didn't
understand
crying myself to sleep

trays would come by the isle
while you were lining up
all kinds of good food
would pass the line
every kid would look at what was going by them
down to the room the brothers and sisters gathered
to eat

if you couldn't eat all your food
you yelled who wants it!
ME! ME! ME!
you had the choice to trade for the food
or make friends

we used to make forts out of tumbleweeds
cowboys and indians
stuff like that

after supper
we would run through those fields
pick whatever we could get stash them
in our shirt
make cache pits
for later

i lost that sense of family bond
i wasn't with my grandparents or my parents
it's still with me today
it's difficult for me to be affectionate
to hug
kiss
and touch
it's a barrier that i don't seem to let myself
get into
even with my own brother and sister

when you came back?
my parents drank a lot
mom auntie died
siroccos
other one drowned while she was intoxicated

my grandparents?
in my younger years
i had never known grandpa to drink
but coming out of indian school
he used to drink
he always cried about the kids

the food changed
from wild game and fish and whatever vegetable was picked
hunting and fishing
if you were caught doing either
charged and slammed in jail
you could do it if you didn't get caught
that whole suppression still happens today
it is kind of still
instilled

that's the lesson i learned
not to get caught
i still had to provide for my family
jobs were hard to come by

not being about to see my parents
i began to develop an anger over that
towards
well
my mom
for not coming in to see me
she would bring gifts when she did
candies
clothing
but the brothers took whatever mom gave me
put it away
never gave it back

there was no one there during the crying times
nobody around

to give me safety
love and
hugs
ensure that i was safe
i was always fighting
all those tribes fighting against one another
always trying to defend yourself
some boys would recognize me and call me relative

in my second year there
i don't know what happened to this kid
something pushed him over the edge
he was hanging in the barn
in plain view
in that hay loft up there

my cousin did the same thing i did
he was dropped off there
he just cried all the time
i did my best to comfort him
talk to him
he just wouldn't hear it
he just wouldn't accept where he was
how he got there
he just wouldn't accept anything i would say

togetherness
protection
love
and
affection
those are the values i was brought up by

the indian school just reinforced that to me
confirmed
made them pretty strong

the other thing that came out really was
you had to be a fighter
i became a liar
a cheater
out of that system
defense mechanisms to survive

to get better treatment i became an altar boy
when you became an altar boy you could
leave church early
you got food earlier
you could pick what you want
you got dressed better
if you were caught in a fight
the other kid got strapped
untouchable
you weren't to fool around with altar boys
you had to learn the latin language

i call it the
dark cloud
over
my life
i tell myself
i don't want my children
to go through that kind of system
i really regret losing (?) my language now
language gives you strong cultural grounding
self identity
confidence
esteem

my strengths?
(laughs)
knowing who you are
self knowledge of your boundaries
in strengths and weaknesses
that give you either the motivation
or a defense
to take action for what we want in life

there are some things that i won't tell you
talking about it
HARD
i won't even tell my kids about that time
in my life
i was away for 28 years
and i was asked to come back

i forgot this place eh
my uncle asked me to come home

then I fought the system for a long time

fighting wasn't a family value
that was an acquired
imposed
value
i wanted to make things better
and come to the defense of the people that were
discriminated
prejudiced
racism
towards my parents and grandparents

one of the things I recognize now
a sense of justice
social justice
economic justice
we had a hard history
and a lot of that has to be corrected
recognized
exposed
for the atrocities our people suffered
having our people that live today
and tomorrow
see the benefits of seeing justice done
to our people
for our people

i think that's enough

Commentary on #4:

This participant remembers camping at various work places, staying with his grandparents, his mom, brothers, and sisters. Even at four years old he remembers the responsibility of having to watch his newborn sister while his parents were "out in the field". Some of his most vivid memories are of playing with other aboriginal children, seeing the value of generosity, sharing, and respect, and having "a real sense of close family ties, of bonding". The four main values he was brought up with was

"togetherness, protection, love and affection". His grandfather taught him to hunt and fish, and his grandmother clothed him and taught him the language. Even as a young child, he sensed the categories when with his own people, these being: family, relatives, and friends. With non-aboriginal people he only remembered feeling various degrees of racism, discrimination, and prejudice. As a young child, he knew that aboriginal people were prohibited from going into any restaurant, as there was only a couple restaurants in town that would serve aboriginal people at that time.

When he arrived at the school he found out that he had to stay at the school. His mother explained to him that she was bringing him there to learn his ABC's, that he was not to run away, and that she would come to visit him once in awhile. Once she left, his head was shaved, and after that all he remembers is crying all the time. He described himself as being an "emotional wreck" because he couldn't understand what was going on and has named this time of his life "the dark cloud over my life". At the school he also had to witness some horrific events, one of them being a suicide of a young man. He also saw other children going through the trauma that he went through, and tried to help his relatives through this by comforting them, but some of them just would not accept anything he would do to help them.

He remembers feeling tortured by seeing all the good food that was sent down to the nuns and the priest to eat. It is interesting to note that when the children were eating, they still resource shared and created kinship ties in their own ways. If a child had left over food, which was a hot commodity, they yelled, "who wants it!" Everyone would yell, "me! Me!" The person giving the food had a choice to either trade the food for

something with someone, or make friends. They also made cache pits for food that they collected while running through the fields. One of the ways that he learned to be treated better was through becoming an altar boy. Altar boys were able to leave church early, had their first pick of food, and if they were caught in a fight, the other person would be punished. They were considered "untouchable".

This participant felt that he lost that sense of family bond by being sent to the school, which he believes affects his own family today. He finds it very difficult to show any kind of affection. He feels a barrier that keeps him from being able to express love, even towards his own siblings. In school he developed an anger over not being able to see his parents, especially towards his mother. He was angry that she did not come to visit him more often, and when she did, everything that she brought for him would be taken away by the priests and never given back. He feels there was no one around to give him a sense of safety, love; "no one there during the crying times". With all the tribes fighting amongst one another, he felt that he always had to defend himself. A saving grace was when other boys would recognize him and call him relative -this would give him a small source of the feeling of protection.

When he came back from the school, alcohol had taken hold of his family, his parents, his aunts, and his grandfather: "I had never known grandpa to drink, but coming out of Indian school, he used to drink... he always cried about the kids". The food that they ate also changed dramatically, there was less fish and game because if they were caught hunting or fishing they would be charged and sent to jail. The lesson he learned from this was only not to get caught because he still had to provide for his family since

jobs for aboriginal people were scarce. He believes that this kind of control of resources is still ingrained into people today although the laws have changed.

The residential school reinforced to him the values that he was brought up with, and gave him a wellspring of strength. He laughed (or scoffed) when I asked him about the strengths the experience gave him, and replied that it gave him knowledge of who he was, of his boundaries, and motivation to get what he wanted in life. The imposed value of fighting that came from the school gave him the will to defend his people, and the discrimination, prejudice, and racism that plagued his grandparents, parents and himself. The negative effect it had on him was that it taught him to be a fighter, liar, and a cheater, which he believed came from the defense mechanisms he had to use in order to survive there.

This participant made it very clear that there were some things that he would never tell me about. He would never even tell his children about this time in his life. It is interesting that he seems to blame himself and regrets "losing" his language, although in reality, it was taken away. He believes that language is the key to a strong cultural grounding, to self identity, confidence, and self esteem. At the ending of the interview, he recognized a sense of social and economic justice that is being brought through recognizing and exposing the atrocities that aboriginal peoples have suffered and this benefits the people that are still living today and the ones who are to come.

#5

out in the chilcotin the roads
back then were really windy
switchbacks

our home was four square walls
no partitions
we had to pack water
use coal oil lamps
only the wealthy ones had gasoline lamps
we had to wash clothes by hand scrub board and a tub
heat lots of water
we had a cook stove in the center
everybody had a root cellar
winter time was tough
three feet of snow 30-40 below we would have to
pack water
the tap was quite a ways
the whole family would have to go
everyone would have to pack two buckets
when we bathed we used the same water
mom always had a pitcher that she would rinse us off with
that was the nice part

i learned not to play around with food cause
one day it'll play around with you
a few times in my life i've starved
just the way things happened
that was on my mind
i know what they mean by that

back then everybody had gardens
always lots of dried meat dried salmon potatoes carrots turnips onions
whatever we could preserve
it would last all winter long
my grandmother grew corn
she had vines growing up the side of the house

in the summertime everybody went and stayed in the meadows
we put up hay for horses
back then every family had about a good 20-30 head of horses
and cattle
we used to watch them in the evening and the afternoon
we used to take the horses to water and sit and watch as they played

we done buckskin work like
moccasins vests jackets
haying time everybody had a part in it
if it was a larger family they put their hay up fast

they finish before everybody
they'd come down and set up camp and help

you hardly would see any fresh fruit back then
saskatoons well
we'd pick
sometimes we'd can it outside
with the fire
sometimes they'd squeeze the juice
mix it
put it out in the sun on top of the dried salmon
they'd have a tent canvas
i can remember them making soap
they'd have that on top too in little squares
your grandma never did that?

we lighted coal oil bacon mixed with deer and moose grease
we used just enough
to get ready for bed
it gets pretty smoky

st. joseph's mission in williams Lake
williams lake indian band
it was on their land

we were in the back of this truck
there was a bunch of kids and they were really crying
it was a really dusty ride gravel road then
no pavement about 75 miles
ever been on the old road
going
down?
it used to feel nice
to go on pavement

getting ready i was trying to ask where we were going
nobody would say just that
mom went and bought us some new clothes
getting all dressed up i didn't understand it
where was I going?
why are those kids crying?
it was rare to see a white guy and when
i seen that guy
he scared me

in the back of the truck there was no cover or anything
just open
crying we had all our clothes in boxes
nobody owned suitcases then
tied up with baling twine and our names on it
well somebody wrote my name on it
i don't know who did

when we got to the mission they took away all our clothes
even the one mom bought us
they start lining us up to cut our hair
straight bangs
and then down
poring this white stuff in our hair
our hair used to be just white
some of them would really shake their heads
they would really be laughing
i got scared to move hey
i had that gut feeling
it was poison

they gave us a number and told us we had to put it on our uniform
and that they were always gonna be using
that
the school
the building
there was this
imaginary line
boys on one side
girls on the other

all I remember is praying a lot
soon as you rang the bell in the morning you had to
get down on your knees
and pray
make our beds line up to the playroom go to your locker
pray
dining room say grace
after meals say grace
chore ring bells go to locker
pray before you left there
go to school
pray before class

pray after class
lunchtime dining room
pray before meal after the meal
same old pattern again
after supper say the rosary
pray before you went upstairs
pray before you went to bed

so yeah

christmas and easter
high mass
that goes on forever
i don't know how many altars they set up
go through the stations of the cross 12 of them
all in latin
we had to sing it back and forth
(she
sings
We
laugh)

like we were even damned before we even started
at home it seemed like
i learned more there in such a short period of time than i did at the
mission because
all we did was prayers our fathers holy mary's
we couldn't drink water before we went to church or
we had to ask forgiveness
they used words like that

on the weekends we had to polish our shoes
friday nights we had a john wayne movie
(silence
then
laugh)
if we were punished for whatever we were doing that's what was taken away
no john wayne
(we
laugh
more)
sunday was the day for praying

my brother froze to death when he ran away from the mission

he would have been about 16
they found him out in the meadows
i was seven
or eight

back then people only drank on the weekends i don't know why
that was but
weekends was the time to drink
from Friday to Saturday then they'd
quit because of church

horses slowly started disappearing
replaced with cars
fences went up
before
everything was just open
that was how they moved water
there wasn't no hoses and all that

people seemed to be saying more
'i' and 'my'
helping one another that disappeared
no preserving
no gardens anymore
hunting? my mom got caught
she got
sent away to prison for year somewhere in burnaby
that's how we ended up back at the mission

when you brought meat in
everyone who needed got a piece if you go there and you help
sometimes you're just left with the hide
it wasn't like
here's a roast
here's a steak

mom sewed a lot of hides
i think she even made one for the
prime minister
trudeau

people don't care anymore
seems like it
they seem to enjoy walking on the edge

mothers don't seem to be raising their children
it's the grandmothers
hardly see any families doing things with families
anymore
people are going to church less
and less
it's just the real old ladies and the toddlers

loneliness
tough one
you know that you're gonna be gone for a long time
all you think about is just that you want your home
listening to the other kids' stories about what they done
during the summer
where they went
what they done
it was harder when some of them didn't come back

i was riding to the store near the other school
i stopped in there
i lied
to the teacher told them my mom wanted my little brother and i to go to school here so we could be home here to look after her he asked where we went to school i told him he said he would send for the file they told me when school started so i went home and told mom she didn't say anything
i think that's how i might have saved my younger brother
they were surprised that i didn't know how to write a sentence
i was thirteen

the first time I ever saw a priest
the nuns
what do you call it?
blinders?
i don't know what it was
they seemed
evil

it seems like they done their job
it was like once we got out of residential school we couldn't seem to be around
one another

like i was saying in the beginning it almost seemed like
we were fucked up
before

we even started
there's a part in there
when they talk about confession in church
you confess your sins
they talk about these black marks on your soul

some things can't be wiped away

yeah

even the suicides that have happened
in the old days
that was unheard of
the older people were really getting scared
today it almost seems like
a normal thing

strengths you mean what i got from it?
probably cleanliness being on time

one thing i got worried about was
i remember when we first got there they
were talking about if you weren't baptized
if you die
like death was so rare i didn't even know what death was

that's where i learnt it

i didn't know if i was baptized
i went asking somebody well
what does this mean when you die?
in the classroom all the desks would be facing towards the black board
the picture above
these people burning in hell

you prayed so much
you don't even want to even think about it any more

but now that i know
the priests had me fooled for awhile that they were
really holy and all that
now that i think about it
they walked this tight line
it had very little to do with sacredness or

anything like that

i thought if i worked really hard
i would climb the ladder
get a nice job
like some of the native girls that worked there
they get nice clothes
but now i see it wasn't like that
at all
it was all
bullshit

the catholics told me i was born with
sin
they called it original
sin
we say that when we are
born
we're as smart as the day we are born
we're closer to the creator because
we're pure

Commentary on #5:

The first memory this participant had of her early years with her family was having shared responsibilities, a deep respect for food, and of people being very self sufficient in providing themselves with food through fishing, hunting, gardening, and preserving. In the summertime they camped in the meadows where they put up hay, and she recollects that during that time everyone had about 20-30 head of horses and cattle. At haying time, when the larger families were done before everyone else, they would then go set up camp to help the other families finish theirs. Her family also did a lot of buckskin work.

Her first vivid memory of school was being loaded onto the back of a truck. No one in her family explained where she was going, and she did not understand why she

had new clothes bought for her, or why all the children were crying. At this time for her it was rare to see a white person, and when she saw the white man that was to take her and the other children to school, it really scared her. It frightened her even more to arrive at such a foreign place, and to then have lye poured on the children's heads and their hair cut. It seemed to her that the nuns thought it was humorous to watch all of this happen to these children, and this bothered her. The nuns, with their blinders on, seemed "evil" to her. What also stands out in her mind is when she was given a number, and the harsh segregation of boys from girls. Her days after that just seemed to be full of praying; at the time of the interview she still remembered some of the songs in latin.

One of the most intense feelings that she had carried with her was that she felt they were all damned before they even arrived at school. There was so much that was forbidden and so much to ask forgiveness for. When they talked about confessing their sins, the words "black marks on your soul" never did get wiped away from her memory, or from her spirit. The fear they instilled into her at such a young age still marks her spirit today. As an example, in the interview she explained how she did not know if she was baptized. She was so worried that she was not because she remembered when she first arrived there they were talking about what would happen if you were not baptized and you died. At the time she did not even understand what death was, the school was where she learnt it. In the classroom she found her answer: all the desks were facing towards the blackboard, and up above was a picture of people burning in hell. But her most traumatic experience by far was her brother freezing to death while attempting to run away from the school, at the time she was seven or eight years old. She remembered

one way the children coped with loneliness at the school was by telling each other stories. Stories about their homes, what they did in the summertime, and the places they went.

The changes she noticed when she returned from school the first and subsequent times was the widespread alcohol use, that horses started to be replaced by cars, and that fences went up where before everything was wide open. She also noticed that people were starting to use the words "I" and "my" more often, which seemed to coincide with the spirit of reciprocity disappearing. The gardening and preserving declined rapidly, and when her mother was caught hunting she was sent away to prison in Burnaby for a year. That is one of the main reasons they were sent to the residential school. Once her mother was released and able to care for her again, she took it upon herself to approach the day school nearby. She lied and told them that her mother wanted her and her little brother to go to school there so that they could help take care of her. The teacher there sent for the file from the residential school and from then on they attended the day school. To this day she believes that is how she "saved" her little brother. Once she arrived at the day school, they were surprised that at thirteen she did not even know how to write a sentence.

In terms of present day families, she thinks that "people don't care anymore". She notices that it seems like the grandmothers are raising the children instead of the parents, and it is rare to see families doing things with other families. She also observed that the church seems to be losing its grasp on the people, although the ones attending are now the very elderly ladies and toddlers. She also mentioned suicide, that she remembers when the first ones started happening, and that the elders were really afraid, but now it

just seems like "a normal thing".

The only strengths this participant mentioned that she gained from these experiences was cleanliness and being on time. All in all, she believes that the government and the church succeeded in what they set out to do, because when she got out of the school, her family could not seem to be around one another anymore. She feels she was fooled into thinking that if she worked really hard she would "climb the ladder", but now realizes that it would have taken much more than her hard work to accomplish that during that time. She concluded the interview with her understanding of the differing views of when one is born: to the Catholics, one is born with original sin, but to her people, when one is born, one is considered pure, because one is closer to the creator.

#6

in the winter i remember
getting my first pair of shoes
i remember
love
being ok to play
responsibilities
being good to each other
grandma let us be down at the river
drying and tanning
haying and fencing
growing Christmas trees gardens fruit trees
there was always a lot of food
community harvesting
deer moose fish wild potatoes wild onions pigweed berries fruit deer meat bones marrow
bitterroot
ha'gua
i don't even remember there being stores
happy times
people helping people

school at KIB in 1954
going up the steps
there were people dressed in black
reaching for me
i hung onto
my mom
i was pulled away
crying
my older sister slept with me
we never had beds at home

so many new things
having and making a bed with sheets
having shoes
wearing tunics
scrub floors

home it was one
school it was individual

first Christmas home
mom had no front teeth
later we learned dad did it
people were loud
falling down
not being who they were
i thought they were sick
fighting
total
chaos
we felt like we weren't
even there
the fear of my father set in

dad before was
jovial
happy go lucky
a hard worker
never raised his voice
mom was happy

when we came back all the rules changed
it was like coming home to strangers

where there was no more brothers and sisters at home
we started getting foster kids
too much alcohol
turned it into kids looking after kids
they forgot what their responsibilities were
we even picked up the slack in
haying
treeing
work
finally our aunt came

in our tree house
we had food water bathroom bucket
guys from the rez knew which parents were drunk
come up and gang rape women
then it was blame the victim

no protection from mom and dad

when my older sister came into womanhood
she got a huge ceremony
i was only told not to get pregnant

when i went from home to school
seeing my mother turn away from me
i just couldn't figure it out
why she would send me there
the day it happened was the day
you found out
my mother never went again
to drop us off
she only came to pick us up

i kept thinking
the bad dream would be over
after the first week I realized
no one was coming to get me

there was no easy
my sister said
hang on
don't be afraid
don't talk to nobody
don't say nothing

just
don't
say
nothing
when it was time to eat
she would just go shake her head
more or less
i don't remember talking
i remember doing lots of crying

on the cattle truck
we got
hauled
to school
rain or shine

with her not being there
you kind of
YOU KNOW
a couple miles down the road
you kind of accept
that you're going to school now
that first day she had two of us
tugging at her
pleading with her
her turning her back
walking away
that was
YOU KNOW
the trust was not there
no more
right there
YOU KNEW
that whatever she said or did
after that
you couldn't trust her

i remember thinking that
my mom was going to
come back
and
get me
i'd go home
i'd wake up again

i'd be in my own bed

by the end of the first week
you've gotten either
strapped or
someone from school decided
they want
what you have
yeah
by then you're getting into the routine

i remember thinking
i'm gonna be a good girl
i'm not gonna let
whatever
happen again
whatever I did wrong
i'll feed the chickens
if you just come and get me
i'll do these things

when i got home
i didn't do the damn
chickens
i didn't
water them
i didn't
i was just angry
that's pretty well how
i stayed

i ran away from home
at 16

when i was pregnant
with all the pain and hurt
my kids were never gonna end up the way that i
ended up
i was gonna be there for them
well that was all talk

my mother in law she said to me
on no uncertain terms
that

THAT
was not to be a part of what her grandchildren were gonna
be raised with
she was really angry with me
in a way i was scared of her
too
because
YOU KNOW
she had an authoritative way
with her

with my second one
i took a look at things around me
made some promises that i knew that i could keep
little ones like
today i'm not going to drink
i'm going to keep my house clean today

they had to be daily
i couldn't see long distance
i couldn't see past today

i left home with a vengeance
everything that happened to me as a little girl
YOU WERE NOT THERE FOR ME
YOU DID NOT TAKE ME BACK HOME
YOU LET ALL THIS HAPPEN
TO ME

oh

the anger everything
came out
fisticuffs
when i got through
i walked out
i got out on that highway
that was it

she said
DON'T YOU THINK YOU GONNA LIVE ANY
HAPPY DAYS

YOU KNOW

i thought
fuck you
there was never no
mother daughter
whatever you wanna call it

i started to learn what love was about
my husband would tell me that but
i didn't understand what that was
then
starting to understand the feeling
of being
a mother
my second one
the things i promised my first one
i did with my second one
i started tending to them
not being so that
i was afraid of it

but alcohol took the best of me
everything that should have never happened
that's when i took a look at what i was doing
with my life
my brother talked to my child
told him
life was still there
i remember just
holding onto my kid
like holding him and telling him
how much i loved him
i said
i know alcohol
got the best of me
i'll start with that
he said
he'd start with telling me how
he's feeling
so

that's where it started

i carried that hurt and just thought i was ok
i wasn't

there's a better life out there
than this
what can i do to make it better?
i started asking those questions

we made some different promises
that we would
understand
listen
communicate
with each other
that's when we come
full circle
my grandchildren
they know the family talking circle
running home to their house
they'll turn around and say
love you
i do the same thing

the old lady from a couple houses up was the one that said
you get down there and you talk to your mother she did the best she could when she had you kids
yeah yeah
tomorrow
NO TODAY
i'll take you down if i have to
on her deathbed she said
you come to laugh at me now?
no i just wanted to let you know
i love you
YOU'RE JUST SAYING THAT CAUSE I'M GONNA BE DEAD
i said even if you're dead
i'll see you tomorrow
the next day i went down there
she said to me
well
i didn't die
i said
that's good
we went from there

her life story was damn near
identical

to mine
i was able to say
mom
i do
forgive you

if anything i could change
that
would be something
my kids
to know their grandmother
my family

survivors
there's not that many left
some of them are still going through hard times
thank god somebody was there for me

i had to let some of that stuff go
or i would stay in my misery
we got to know a lot of people from all over
the reserves
became a big part
of each other's
family
our kids don't get that opportunity that much
YOU KNOW
to be able to know people from different
reserves

being
a mother
there's no school for that
being
a grandmother
we get a chance again
we take that hurt and use that
as part of a teaching tool
and just
stop
that
cycle

Commentary on #6:

What this contributor remembered about the values during her early childhood was love, being allowed to play, having responsibilities, and treating each other with respect. Her family provided for themselves by drying and tanning hides, haying and fencing, growing Christmas trees, gardening, and growing fruit trees. One vivid memory from her childhood before school age was the community harvesting that went on and that there was always a lot of food. At this time, she did not even know of grocery stores. The spirit of reciprocity brought many happy times.

The day that she was dropped off at the Kamloops Indian Residential School was the day that she found out she was going there. Her first memory of being sent to the school was going up the steps of the K.I. R.S. The people dressed in black reached out for her and all she could do was hang on to her mother. She was pulled away crying. For her to see her mother turn away from her and leave her at the school was something that she could not understand as a child. The moment her mother turned her back and walked away was the moment that the trust between them disappeared. After that instant, she felt that whatever her mother said or did after that, she would never be able to trust her again. For a long time during her stay at the school, she would tell herself that whatever she did wrong, she would right. That she would do whatever her mother wanted her to do just so that she would come and pick her up and take her back home. Of course, this never happened. Her mother was never able to come and take her home, so when she did arrive home, she made sure to refuse to do any of the things she promised. As a teenager, she stayed angry and at 16 years old, "left home with a vengence".

There were so many new things for her to get accustomed to at the school, such as: having a bed and having to make the bed with sheets, having shoes, wearing tunics, and scrubbing floors. An interesting comment she made about the difference between home and school: "home it was one, school it was individual". During her first time home for Christmas, she noticed that her mother had no front teeth. She later learned that it was a result of abuse from her father. She noticed that people were loud, falling down, and "not being who they were". As a child, she thought they were sick, but as an adult she realized they were abusing alcohol. There was fighting, and "total chaos". There was so little attention paid to them that she felt like "we weren't even there". This was the period of time that she started to become afraid of her father, who before they left to the residential school, was jovial, hardworking, and had never raised his voice. When they came home from school, "it was like coming home to strangers".

Because there were no children at home for her parents to look after, they started to accumulate foster children. But because of the alcohol abuse, it just turned into "kids looking after kids". When they came home from school, it was normal for the children to pick up the slack in whatever her parents were doing to support themselves at the time, such as haying and treeing. There was also evidence of the growing disrespect shown towards women. She recalls having a tree house that the girls hid for protection when it was a regular occurrence for guys from the reserves to come up and gang rape women. With her parents drunk, these people knew there would be no protection from her mother and father. In the tree house they had stashed food, water, and a bathroom bucket. The "blame the victim" mentality was prevalent. The change in attitude towards entering into

womanhood was also noticeable, as she explained that when her sister came into womanhood, she had a ceremony, but when it was her turn, all she was told was not get pregnant.

When she did become pregnant she thought that she was ready to make the changes needed for her to have a healthy family life. She found that this was not the case. She found the strength to make daily changes, like staying off of alcohol, and keeping her house clean, with her second child. She discovered love through being a mother, and not being afraid to care for her children. Another source of strength that she found was in her mother in law, who stood up for the rights of her grandchildren to have a healthy life, and who also offered her unconditional support during her healing transition.

Her communication with her children really started after she agreed to quit alcohol. Her children started telling her how they were feeling, and that is where she recognized the start of her healing journey. She also recognized that she was wrong in thinking that it was O.K. to carry all of the hurt from her past into the present. She started asking herself how she could make her life better, and she also started making some different promises to herself and her family. These included understanding and communicating with one another. Her family started what she now calls the "family talking circle".

One benefit that she mentioned that was a result of the residential school experience was that it gave her the opportunity to get to know aboriginal people from all over the place. She developed kinship ties with these people and their families, and she

believes that the generations after her do not get that same opportunity unless they seek it out. Another major aspect of this person's healing journey was when she finally forgave her mother. This only happened when her mother shared her own story of her life with her. She became conscious of all the things that made her mother who she was, including all of the hurt and pain that was similar to her own. She was finally able to forgive and love her mother. Her one regret was that she did not do this sooner, so that her children would have been able to know their grandmother. She makes up for this regret through her transformation of becoming a grandmother herself, and by recognizing that she can use her pain as a teaching tool to "stop that cycle".

#7

it all just seems so far away
YOU KNOW
i can barely remember my grandma
YOU KNOW
i hardly knew my mom
or
my dad

in the summertime
we'd go down to the coast
pick strawberries
hops
beans
things like that
we lived in army tents
harvest time
the fruit people that come
they'd all get together
party together
that's really hard to watch
listen to them fight

it must have been really hard

on my mom
(nervous
laugh)
she was pretty young
when she died
there was quite a collection
of kids

grandma was so used to life
without power
plumbing
she chose
not to
she had everybody's respect
i cannot remember her ever
being harsh

i remember when my brother was born
my brother came along and he said
we have a new brother!
what?
we have a new brother?
so i'm thinking of
father mcloud and all this stuff
i didn't have a clue
til i got home next summer
that was pretty strange
(both
laugh)

yeah

i didn't have a clue

my mom was really
a gentle woman
she didn't command
respect
it was just there
soft spoken
carried a big stick
i feel like i really lost out

from five and a half i went to school

we were away from any sort of family
i know i missed
i just missed out
i missed out on picking up any
parenting skills
i missed out on having my mom and dad
just telling me
they loved me

it seemed like when we were
home
in the summertime
it was special
in a way
but they had nothing to offer us
YOU KNOW
not being able to provide for us
it must have been an awful thing

back in those times
we were just
thin as rails
we didn't know any different
YOU KNOW
it's hard to think of that

when my mom died
i was 15
my dad just
fell apart
he just started drinking
hard
just abandoned everybody
the family just was brought up by the older siblings
YOU KNOW
whoever was available took some of the kids
home
i didn't want to do that so
i left
with a grade seven education
that's all i had
to this point

i just learned how to survive

when i left kamloops i was a
straight A student
within a year
i was totally lost
i just gave up
i guess it was too hard to be around
any white people
even the kids
wow
they were cruel
YOU KNOW
you gotta worry about making sure
you're warm
you got food
so i got a job building
homes
they take to this indian kid
YOU KNOW
there weren't that many around there
YOU KNOW
so even though
i missed out so much
i still had a damn amazing
life
i've done so many things
other people just dream about
journeying

my brother took me under his wing
looked out for me
so nobody messed with me
he just searched me out
all the time
to make sure i was ok

at school
they called it the block
it was just a circle
an area that we could walk
YOU KNOW
walk around the block
man
we wore that ground out

walking around there so many times
talking
when he bounced around the country
i just followed him around
because it was the same feeling

one of the brothers at the kamloops school
i always had great respect for
his name was brother murphy
he used to read to us at night
classic stories
i couldn't understand how he could do it
keep so many of us
all in check
YOU KNOW
he was always a disciplined man

it's really weird to think
that i don't even hardly know
mom and dad
YOU KNOW
it's like it's
ok
that i don't know them
that sucks
man

my dad had this old ford
we lived on a dirt road
school at that time was on a dirt road
we recognized that car that was coming
just by the squeak

so it's time to go home in june
it's hot
i'm up on the fourth story
the windows are open cause
it's hot
i could hear this car coming
i knew it was my mom and dad
pretty soon i hear my brothers and sisters
running out to the car
i could hear them all happy
YOU KNOW

just laughing
just having a wonderful time
i was about 15 feet from the window
i didn't go look
I
(silence)
HATE
(silence)
THAT
(silence)

I would have got in trouble
the disciplinarians
YOU KNOW
that's sick

to me
the building was just huge
four stories
everyone seemed so big
tall
the brothers and fathers
all of them
cause of the robes
real spooky
i can remember trying to imagine
what they were thinking
YOU KNOW
i was scared because i couldn't tell
what they were thinking

a whole different world

i can remember being scooted off very fast
my brothers were trying to draw my attention
So i wouldn't think about my mom and dad
leaving
i can remember turning around
seeing my mom crying
all of the sudden it became very important
to be strong
to be tough
for her
so

i really worked hard on not doing that
whenever she dropped us off
one thing that always
popped
into my mind
is how hard it must have been for them to drop us off
as much as it hurt us

just to think what it's like

i was glad none of my younger siblings
were gonna have to go there
i can remember thinking
eventually
it's gonna be my turn to go
YOU KNOW
it came
my mom got to the eighth grade
my dad got to the sixth grade
my sister was one of the first groups that graduated
in 1959

i was just in shock
it took time to watch all the people
YOU KNOW
i watched the kids
saw a lot of them break down
just wanting to go home so bad
screaming
crying
never got them anywhere
YOU KNOW
so the less i did of that stuff
i was better off
i thought
just an incredible thing
to be left off there
like you did something
wrong
YOU KNOW
i couldn't figure out why mom or dad
didn't want us
YOU KNOW
you just feel so

worthless
you feel like you don't have any reason to be
anywhere
YOU KNOW

the kids who had no one
when you reached out
they grabbed you
they wanted it bad
someone that knows the ropes
a lifesaver

horrible
to parade you around
if they got angry with you
they'd make you wear pee sheets
around you
or put it on your head
whatever
YOU KNOW
just to embarrass you
i still think anybody's
strength
that you can gain from anything
is a good thing
i've known that since i was about six
YOU KNOW

my brother just told me all the time
you know the difference between right and wrong
just choose the right
you'll make it
YOU KNOW
without that
i wouldn't have made it
i can think about the residential school
forcing this discipline
eventually in my life anyway
when i stay focused
be disciplined
i wouldn't have been able to do it
without their teaching
even though it's a guilt driven thing
just the more i learned

the better off i was

i don't know for real sure
if i ever have been happy
i joke around a lot with my family
it's just all a smokescreen
YOU KNOW

i tried to nurture my kids
because i didn't have enough for me
i tried to do everything with them
i tried to provide those kids with whatever could help them get an education
to keep them interested
YOU KNOW
my daughter could challenge the system
she wanted to prove to herself that she could do anything she wants
i tried to get her to slow down
be a kid for a while
YOU KNOW
that's one thing that i know
i missed out on
is being a kid
YOU KNOW
i never got to be
a kid

my son
he used to always want to go to work
i said
just enjoy your time off of school
we used to go fishing a lot
crabbing all the time
i tried to keep it together like that
YOU KNOW

i still feel like i was stumbling around
i didn't know what to do
i didn't know how
didn't know what to be to be a parent
YOU KNOW
there's still a hole there

that could be interesting

i've grown through my kids
because of all the time that i spent with them
trying to be supportive to get an education
try to imagine what a family life is like
(laughs)
i still feel like i'm stuck in the zone
a survival zone
i don't know what to do to change that
i don't know
even if i want to
i have no idea
i still feel as lost as i did when i went out there
i'm still disgusted with that place
the catholic community
all the way around

Commentary on #7:

When asked about his first vivid memories of family life before residential school, this participant told me that he was taken so young that he did not remember anything at all about life before school. He could barely remember his grandma and he hardly knew his mother and father. What he did remember was traveling around in the summertime and staying in camps with the "fruit people". There his family would stay in army tents and have employment harvesting strawberries, hops, beans, and the like. He remembers how difficult it was to watch all the people party together, and to have to listen to them fight.

Since his elder siblings had already been going to the residential school, he knew that it was going to be his turn soon. He knew that his mother had completed grade eight, and that his father had reached the sixth grade. Yet when his day came to stay at the school, he was kept in the dark about what was going on. His brothers tried to draw his

attention so that he would not see his mother and father leaving. The moment he saw his mother crying was the moment that he decided to be strong because he saw how much it hurt her. He reflected on that for a long time afterward, even when he had his own children. Watching all the children break down, he quickly realized how doing that did not get them anywhere, so he just decided that he was better off placing his energy into being strong.

Being left there without an explanation made him feel like he did something wrong because he could not figure out why his parents did not want him. This made him feel worthless, "like you don't have any reason to be anywhere". He found it very disturbing that he did not really know his own parents, since he was away from "any sort of family" since he was five years old. He still now feels a deep sense of loss because of this lack of love from his parents, and also from not receiving a sense of what it meant to be a parent. What bothers him even more is that it seems acceptable and normal to society that he does not know his parents because of residential school.

When he came home in the summertime he felt the little time his family had was special, but his parents had nothing to offer him and his siblings as they were not able to adequately provide for them. His mother passed away when he was quite young, which after this his father succumbed to alcoholism and abandoned the family, leaving the younger children to be brought up by the older siblings. It was during grade seven that he made the attempt to go to public school, but the racism was too intense, alongside the fact that he was a young teenager, alone, trying to keep his basic needs met.

When he described "the block" that he and his brother used to walk around at the

residential school, it is reminiscent of prison. He was fortunate to have had this brother who took an interest in his well-being whom he received much guidance from, but he also believed that the residential school gave him the benefit of discipline: focus, even though the discipline was guilt driven. It is interesting that the person he named as being an example of a disciplined man was a brother of the residential school, not of blood, whom he remember used to read them classic stories. He respected this brother's ability to keep all the boys in his age group in check, yet this discipline also drove him to hate because it was motivated by fear.

When he had his own family, he tried to nurture his children, to give them more of what he did not have, and to provide them with whatever they needed to keep them interested in education. Yet he felt that in terms of his parenting, he was always "stumbling around" and did not know what to do to be a parent. This seemed to result in his children becoming overachievers in school and work, something he tried to steer them against doing. He wanted to teach them to be children while they were children since he did not get to do this himself. Through his children he feels he's grown because of all the time he has spent with them, yet he still feels "stuck in the zone, a survival zone", and powerless to change this. Instead of 'knowing' and having experience of what family life is like, he feels he has to "try to imagine what a family life is like" because he does not feel that he has ever had it himself. He still carries this feeling of loss with him today: yet he also believes, as he has since he was six years old, that any strength that one can gain from anything is a positive thing.

#8

there was always a lot of people living there
with us
my mom and dad
were foster parents
i don't know how they ended up getting them
but they all stayed there
mom and dad
never drank when we were home

christmas time
my dad used to load up the sleigh
with hay
drive all the way down
pick them up
then take us all to the church
for mass

on sundays
the priest used to come over
say mass at our house
then all the rest of the people that lived around there
we'd bring stuff and have a big potluck
right after we'd have mass
we'd play horseshoes
and
baseball

in the summer we used to go to
big momma's
we used to have to weed the garden
fish
and
can
we used to all go
the family
we'd all go down the river
down six mile
my mom and them used to have their own
fish racks
dried salmon
mom did a lot of tanning

in the fall time
we had a lot of chickens
mom used to cut the heads off
clean them
share them
when they got a deer
they'd share it with everything

we had a big garden
just before christmas we used to have to load up
potatoes carrots onions cabbage
in a sack
my dad used to haul them down
our place was like a stop off for everybody
who used to travel through
the people that came
they were the ones to eat before us
even when we used to go picking sxus'em
together
it was always with
them
mom and dad were real kind
if they had it
they gave it

coming back from the residential school
when we first came home
we didn't know what was the matter
at the time we never knew why they were
the way they were
til we got older
we realized that they all started to drink
how disappointed we were
we thought they were all sick
or something
we never knew the difference
when we were younger
we never knew the difference
from drunk or whatever

everybody got off there
went to the bathroom
stopped to have something to eat
st'wan or dried meat

mom used to peel carrots to give
to everybody
when we got home
nobody even knew or
came out to come be happy that
we're coming back from school
we thought nobody was home
we got inside
we thought they were all sick

everybody would wait for one another
to go to town
we start getting left behind all the time
i got sent to big momma's
she had a lot of fruit trees
we used to have to go help her put her canning away
first

it even got so that on sundays
sometimes people were drunk
on funerals
too
it was nó longer that respect for the priest
anymore
it wasn't there
anymore

they never talked to us
in indian
we told them we got strapped
when we used to say things
in indian
residential school
so they never ever
hardly ever
talked to us
except for big momma

none of us liked it
we were never together again
it was just like
somebody died
in our family
we were all

separated

first the cattle truck
then the train
i don't think anybody
said anything
till we wanted to know
why
we got new clothes
maybe because it hurted them
just as much as it
hurted us
if one of our cousins was on there
they'd look after us

my auntie was a grade higher
she used to tell us that we have to listen
to what the nun tells us to do
or else
we'll get strapped
some of our relatives couldn't even speak
english
lot of them were raised with their
grandmothers
we used to try to help them
say their
abc's
's
hail mary's

i became sort of like
a bully
i wanted to be the best
all the time
you had to
defend
and
fight
for yourself
for everything that you had

i would jump in there
just to save my sister or friend from
getting hurt

older
i realized right from wrong
i like to still say
that i'm the boss
(both
laugh)
i like to be heard
YOU KNOW
i'm not scared to say anything
to anybody
cause i'm not scared of
anybody
anymore
i used to be
not
anymore

friends that i went to school with
turned out to be alcoholics
i joined right in with them
i thought they were my friends
a lot of them has passed on
now

i realized drinking wasn't what i wanted
in life
i wanted more

i always thought that i had a bigger problem than somebody else
until you sit down
you hear their problems
their's are bigger than yours
by the time it gets to you
you don't even want to say
your problem
i put them behind
just closed the door
said
i'm never gonna reopen it
again

to me
our family means

a home
a wholeness
when we were growin'
we were always doing things
together
doing everything
we never got left out of anything
mom and dad
always did things
together
with us
all of us

daddy used to take us out to the mountains
leave us out there for
how many days
we never knew why we were out there
till my sister went to sundance
then i started remembering things

we had only the horses
and saddle blankets
i don't even remember eating
but there was sxu'sem berries
he'd never let us go if we were
on our time

a year had gone by and
i'd had kids
i 'd always tell my kids
if you don't listen
i'm gonna send you to the
residential school
never ever explaining to them
why
they never ever
asked
right to this day
they don't ask me

you can always tell a person that went to
residential school
the way they are
if you're somewhere and they

ring a bell
everybody just
stops
dead
turns around
then
it probably comes back
did you ever notice that?

we went to that christian school
we were cooking there
all the sudden this guy come along
rings a bell
i could just see people
just

stop

he says
why did you do that?

don't
ever
ring
that
goddamn
bell
again

other ways you can tell?
when they're trying to talk Indian
and
they don't know all the words
(both
laugh)

a lot of us try to go back to it
i never
i can hear words
i can sort of vaguely remember
what they are
i would never
i got strapped too many
times

Commentary on #8:

This participant remembers her family home always being filled with numerous people, since her parents cared for foster children. As children, her and her siblings did not get left out of any activity as her parents always did things together with them. There was no alcohol use in her home before she was sent to school. It was a regular event for the priest to come each Sunday, deliver mass at their home, and after they would have a community meal, then play games together. The summertime consisted of camping at various resource gathering areas, canning and drying salmon, and tanning hides. In the fall they would prepare for slaughter the chickens they raised and would give them out to others in the community, and when a deer was shot, all the meat was shared with different families. Just before Christmas all of the stored vegetables from the garden were hauled down to the community and given out. This is one of the most vivid memories of her family life before school, the value of reciprocity between families: "if they had it, they gave it".

Her first memory of going to school was being transported on the cattle truck and then later on the train. No one told her she was going to the residential school, she just remembers wondering why she had new clothes. Now she believes that her parents did not tell her what was going on because it was just as painful for them as it was for her. Once she arrived at the school, she felt that her family was "never together again, it was just like somebody died in our family and we were all separated". Her aunt was in a higher grade then her and she guided her through to prevent her from being strapped. She believes that the school made her into a "bully", as she always had to defend herself

for everything that she had. She would always come to the aid of her siblings or friends to prevent them from getting hurt by anyone.

When she arrived back from residential school for the first time, she did not understand what was happening with her parents. As she got older she realized they had all started to drink alcohol, but as a child who was never exposed to alcohol, she thought her whole family was sick. Before she left for school her home was a stopping place for people traveling by, and so when she arrived home, she was confused as to why nobody "came out to come be happy that we're coming back from school". She assumed no one was home. Then she started to notice the alcoholic tendencies, such as "everybody would wait for one another to go to town". She and the other children started to get left behind too often, so she went to stay at her grandmother's, who needed help during the summertime anyway. She also noticed that people were starting to drink on Sundays, and were drunk during funerals, too. The respect for the sacredness of the religion and the priest disappeared.

She believes that the strengths that she took from her experience of the residential school was the ability to confront her fears. She used to be afraid, but going through and surviving the residential school experience, she has taken back her power. Many of her friends she met in school became alcoholics, and she "joined right in with them". Quitting alcohol was another way that she took back her power because she realized that she wanted more in life. The main catalyst for change in this was when she sat down with others and listened to their stories. Acknowledging another's pain made her realize that there is always much worse, so she was better off not placing so much energy into

thinking about her problems, which did not seem so big after she heard the stories of others.

Family, in her heart, is about "a home, a wholeness". She tries to create the same feeling of togetherness in her family and extended family now. This participant has never spoken to her children about these experiences, and they have never asked. An interesting comment that she made about this was that she used to tell them that if they did not behave she would send them to the residential school as a punishment. Nowadays, she notices right away the characteristics of a person who went to a residential school. For example, when a bell sounds she notices that these people "stop dead" and turn around, as it seems to bring them back in time to the residential school. She also mentioned that another way she can tell is when she hears the person "trying to talk Indian and they don't know all the words". As a closing remark, she knows that a lot of these people try to go back to their language, but she feels she could never do that, because she was strapped too many times.

#9

we played with other children
everybody in the household had a job
kind of
more or less
given to them
dad was working
mother was working
raising numerous kids
in the meantime

my dad my uncle
had understandings that people
have really no interest

into listening to
i guess
at that age
or
whatever age
of growing up
eh

i remember
ah
i wanted to go home
generally i worked
milking cows
looking after livestock
obviously
at the residential school
they damn near starved you
at home you always had
deer meat potatoes vegetables dried salmon dried meat bannock
everything was there

when you came back
they were your mother father uncle aunt
you knew them
but you didn't
know them
as good as
hopefully
you should
know them

the ones that didn't go to indian school
don't hang around indians much
(laugh)

if you've been around indian people
and you go to indian school
you're constantly around your own people it's
ah
cool
feeling
when you go to any other school after that
you don't feel it

you feel different
you look at other ones differently
i can't really say how
you look at them
not the experience
i guess
not the survival of the residential school

culture
language
spiritual
physical
to have all of those things just kind of
taken away
taken away from us
really inconsiderate
no consideration for us
just like anything else
anywhere else
we tried to help the younger ones
adjust to the circumstances
surroundings
that happened
my brothers and sisters told me the
true facts
you're not going home
you're up here to go to school
you're going to learn to read
you're going to learn to write

but i didn't really care
YOU KNOW WHAT I MEAN?
if you don't know how to write
you don't really care
when you learn how to write
you realize that it's essential
about the moment in time
YOU KNOW

parents didn't talk about it
maybe through their embarrassment
or maybe through their
hurtful process
it's very hard for them

too

i don't really remember

maybe I don't WANT to

surviving ordeals
atrocities that we all go through
we survive
you don't want to put your family in any sort of
disposition as that
or your grandchildren
or anybody else's kids
to go through that
education process

you grow or you don't
survive
you broaden your range
or you don't
survive
just be strong
as a warrior
in that way
hey
and you survive
you survive

what makes you think
that i have
the same values
that i had then?

i guess the genocidal process
the assimilation process
is obviously in place
we are still here today
and will be here
for a long time
to be able to survive the indian residential school
you learn a lot from that
the number one thing is
you don't have to
go through that

again

in some cases you are put through that again

the only way
they're going to rid themselves
of the abuse
is to understand
the spiritual path
of yesterday

i remember having sweats
even when i was five years old
now i have to go to church
unreal
if you've never been
to church

sometime you kind of wonder
who really cares
about the atrocities that happened
not only to myself
but to numerous other people
who attended
any residential school
deep stories
to hang onto

something must have came out of it
that was beneficial
of course

we were unbeaten in sports
we were unbeaten
hockey track field baseball soccer
only thing we weren't taught in was
basketball
cause nobody
likes to play that

so when you're
i guess
brought back in time
it makes you wanna

cry

Commentary on #9:

What this contributor remembers most about his childhood is playing with other children, and that everyone had a responsibility that was given to them. There were many teachings that his father and uncle gave to him, but growing up, he felt he was not really interested in learning about them at the time. His first memory about having to go to school was that he wanted to go home. His brothers and sisters tried to help him adjust to the circumstances by telling him the cold, hard facts: that he was not going home, he was there to go to school, to learn to read and write. But he did not really care about any explanation: "if you don't know how to write, you don't really care". It was only when he finally learned to read and write that he learned it was essential.

He believes that his parents did not talk about him having to go to the school because of their pain and embarrassment, and because the whole situation was extremely hard for them also. At the school he had the responsibility of looking after livestock. At home he had all the food he wanted and more, but at the school he experienced near starvation. When he came back from the school, all of his relatives were still his relatives, but he did not know them as well as he felt he should have. His experience of going to school with all aboriginal people, and to constantly be around his own people was a really "cool feeling". Going to other schools after that, he felt that he looked at other people differently, since they did not have the experience of the residential school carried within them. One thing he notices about the aboriginal people who did not go to residential school is that they do not "hang around Indians much".

It is still hard for him to live with the knowledge that having his culture forcibly taken away from him, his language and spirituality, and to have the physical aspect of himself neglected and abused was an acceptable form of education in this society. What the experience did give him was a survival mechanism: "you grow or you don't survive, you broaden your range or you don't survive". He would never want to place anyone's children in the same educational process. He believes the assimilation process is still in place today, since we are still here, and will be for a long time. His survival from the residential school made him realize that he will never have to go through that again, yet "in some cases you are put through that again".

The only way he believes that aboriginal peoples can heal from their pain of this experience is by going back to the spiritual path of their ancestors. He recalls having sweats when before he was sent to the school, then all of the sudden he had to go to church. In his child world, it all seemed very unreal. Now, in his later years, in his reflection of the whole experience, he wonders if anyone really cares about the atrocities that happened to himself and all of the other aboriginal peoples. He believes there are many, many "deep stories" that they hang onto. The one benefit that he wanted to mention was that they were unbeaten when it came to sports. They had a competitive edge that was unlike any other. Yet even thinking about the positive aspects, being brought back in time makes him want to cry.

5 DISCUSSION ON ANALYSIS

"Togetherness, Protection, Love and Affection: On Secwepemc Families before Residential School

Secwepemc families and households were known to revolve around occupying and using various camping grounds, winter village sites, and harvesting sites for hunting, fishing, and gathering (Ignace 1998). This same sense of movement seems to be carried out while having to adapt to a completely different economic system, deeply embedded into a colonialist framework. Almost all of the participants recalled moving around with their families, mainly during the summer time, setting up camp wherever their parents were working or harvesting foods.

Families traveled around to various harvesting grounds, and they also traveled around doing casual labour, such as going on the fruit trail, and picking the seasonal round of the non-traditional economy, such as hops, beans, and the like. During the wintertime, many families would come back to the St'uxtews community to reside, hunt and prepare food together. This communal food gathering and reciprocity within and outside the community kept their basic needs more than adequately met.

What many of the participants recall about their families before school is the feeling of security they had from being around other children, extended family and community members, and especially, their parents. Having all of these people around gave a strong feeling of safety to their childhood. The most significant values that these participants were raised with were: having shared responsibilities at an early age;

honoring the elders; giving assistance without having to be asked; generosity; sharing; having a high respect for each person regardless of age; being a caregiver for any younger siblings and relatives; teaching children through involving them in all the daily activities; being respectful of food; to be as self-sufficient as possible; to be together; to love one another; and especially, to play together. This spirit of reciprocity brought many happy memories for the participants, as the richness was in how they shared their lives with one another.

Going from "Encouragement to Total Shock"

The most intense memory that all of the participants recounted was when they first arrived at the school, which was usually when they found out they were going to be residing there from that moment on. What made this realization more difficult for them was that they had not been told by their parents what was actually happening. Some knew that their siblings went to the school, and realized that it would one day be their turn.

There was a number of events that led up to the children being sent to school, such as being taken to the city to one of the few restaurants that served Aboriginal people at the time, going for a big picnic near where the schools were located, the parents explaining that the child was going to be "visiting" his or her siblings, or receiving new clothing. Being left at the school without an explanation resulted in many of the participants believing that they had done something wrong to make their parents not want them anymore, which gave them a feeling of worthlessness: "like you don't have any

reason to be anywhere". This lack of explanation caused much confusion to go on in the minds and hearts of these participants. In many cases it created a feeling of being at a standstill, since they were always expecting their parents to return for them. One participant called it the "fear of not knowing what's happening next".

They spent much of their time during the following year wondering what it was they did wrong to be punished by being kept from their family. This initial misunderstanding was the wedge that started the gap between the generations, as the children felt they were being abandoned by their parents, for a reason that was kept secret from them. As a result, many developed anger towards their parents.

For these children to watch as their parents turned and left them at the school was the moment that they lost trust in their parents' ability to provide them with a sense of protection. As children, they could not understand why their parents would leave them at the schools. Some of the participants had siblings and relatives that would guide them through this new reality, by explaining to them that they were not going home, that they were there to learn to read and write, and that if they kept quiet and watched closely they would learn faster and not get punished. Yet to many, these explanations did not make any difference: "if you don't know how to write, you don't really care".

One of the only things that made the participants feel better about the circumstances was that there were many other children that were going through the same predicament along with them. This gave them a sense of togetherness, or oneness that was likened to the feeling of when they were at home with their families. One participant explained it as: "when somebody cried, everybody cried, you wanted somebody to cry

with you". Sharing their pain with one another was a way of surviving the ordeal. The experience of being constantly around all of their own people gave them a strong sense of Aboriginality even though they were sent to the schools in order to undermine this identity in themselves.

The experience of the segregation of the sexes for the participants affected their ability to communicate and to express love towards their siblings. Many of them felt that there was a barrier that kept them from being able to express love towards one another that was carried on into their later years and into their own families that they created. Many still find it difficult to show any kind of affection to others, but especially towards their siblings. Although the roles of mother, father, sister and brother were taken away from the participants at the schools, many of them created their own 'family' at the schools as a way to counteract this role dispossession. They saw this as a positive aspect of the schools, as it gave them a chance to become close to Aboriginal peoples all over the province, and as adults, their families were able to connect and get to know one another.

It was also mentioned various times that the schools were where the participants learned how to fight, to defend themselves. There were so many different people from tribes all over B.C., and they often feuded with one another. Yet this imposed value of fighting seemed to give them the will and the motivation to defend their people later on in life against the discrimination and racism that they faced during life at school and outside of school. But the schools are where they also learned how to steal and cheat the system they were forced to be a part of.

"It was like coming home to strangers"

Once the participants arrived back at home from the schools for the first time, the most common change they noticed was in their parents. It seemed the parents had altered so much that they did not even know how to look after their children anymore. Many parents and extended family members had also succumbed to alcoholism by this time as a way to deal with the grief associated with having their children taken away from them.

It is important to understand that the alcoholism that plagued most Aboriginal families did not only emerge from the changing liquor laws, which allowed aboriginal peoples to consume alcohol. It is obvious from these accounts, that it emerged out of the intense grief and sorrow of having their children taken away from them for the majority of the year, for many years. Before the children had attended school, there was no recollection of alcohol being a part of their lives, in fact, most did not even know what alcohol was. Even as they returned they did not understand what was happening to their parents, because they did not understand the effects of alcohol.

Children were taken from a home filled with security and love and returned to their homes being filled with "total chaos". In one participant's words, "it was like coming home to strangers". Another explained that when he and his siblings came home, they knew all their relatives, but he knew it was not as well as he should have known them. The alcohol abuse that these children witnessed changed the role models that they had for themselves. For men, being drunk and abusing women was viewed as "the norm", so when young men came of age, that is what they expected of themselves. Women were taught that they were to blame for any abuse that they endured. Another

thing that had noticeably changed was the respect shown towards women. Because there was no protection provided from the parents, women were open targets for sexual abuse, assault and domestic violence. These expectations seemed to emerge from Aboriginal people being taught that they were not worthy to be well taken care of or respected.

When the children came home, much responsibility that was previously shared between all members of the family became the responsibilities of the children, such as being the sole caregivers for themselves and any smaller children that were living with them, or finishing off the work of the seasonal employment. Many families found it difficult to adequately provide for their children as they were able to before they were sent to the schools. It seemed there was not as much of the spirit of reciprocity guiding the families of the community, although families still managed to help people that had no extended family around for support.

"You Grow or You Don't Survive"

One of the most often mentioned strengths that came out of these experiences was the ability for the participants to adapt to many situations, "like a coyote". One participant even recalled a sense of developing resource sharing kinship ties in the residential school dining room as he witnessed children trading their leftover food for gifts, or connections of friendship. This ability to adapt is viewed as a result of being in a state of survival for a long period of time.

The ability to confront fears was also mentioned often when discussing strengths the participants have developed through the experience of being sent to the residential school. Just for them to survive the experience gave them the strength to take their power

back in their later years. For many of the participants, taking their power back also meant quitting alcohol. Through doing this they saw their children having a chance to utilize their full potential and stop the cycle of dysfunction that being taken away from their families and communities started in the first place.

It is very difficult for these survivors to live with the knowledge that this blatant disregard for human life and spirit was accepted by Canadian society. Yet not one of them felt vengeful; instead they felt that through their stories coming out into the open, they were ensuring that those kinds of atrocities would never happen again. A majority of the participants felt that starting the process of storytelling again in our communities has the potential to change the perception the general public has of Aboriginal peoples, as well as educate them on the strength Aboriginal peoples have had to have to maintain their cultural identity in the face of adversity.

Yet most participants were hesitant to share their stories with their own children, unless their children out rightly asked about their experience. Many of the participants felt that they could not talk to their own parents about their painful experience of residential school, because they knew their parents could not have done anything about it at the time, and they felt that by mentioning it, it would have hurt them more. So they wait for their children to ask them questions.

An interesting conclusion that many of the participants came to while doing this interview is that the whole experience of Indian Residential School, which was created to break down Aboriginal peoples' identity, actually strengthened this identity within themselves, at later stages of their lives. There is a sense of justice in just making it

through the experience and onward to where they are today, and especially through seeing the next generation recognize and bring awareness to the issues that affect them as Aboriginal people. With their families now, they strive for that wholeness that they once felt with their own families as children.

#10: On Collapsing Time and Space

transcribing your interview
i attended an orchestra of nails
scratching on blackboards
all those awkward
silences
painful
pauses
the silence said more
than your words
for once

we each spoke a foreign language
my questions
YOU KNOW
BAD WRONG STOP STUPID
WHY ARE YOU DOING THIS?
WHO ARE YOU?
when it comes to me asking you
questions
we push apart
much like
the same sides of a magnet
i am sorry
for forcing us
into this realm
in fact
this is all feeling very surreal
what was i doing here?
i could just run out and

stop

all of this
that i am trying to do
WHAT THE HECK WAS I TRYING TO DO?
i thought i knew but now
i'm through

we two are robots
i ask you answer
in one or two words
yes or no
RESIST
i keep taking a chance
i am going numb
my voice is caught
everything around me becomes
large
pulsating
animated
time and space
collapsing
i just don't want to be in my shoes
at that moment
but i was there in the now
that was the moment
so i might as well be there
after all
we are there

i forced you to listen
to my questions
dumb
as they may have
sounded
but
dumb
doesn't make a sound
does it
you made a choice
i made a choice

who was i trying to fool?
i knew what i was getting myself into
now that i was into it
what was i going to do?

i chose to sit still
look normal
it was all i could do
at that moment
i became something other than
your daughter
for a bit

then we soften
i tell myself
to open up my heart
to what you are trying to say
instead of feeling so
out of place
i am in place
have faith
anyway

or maybe i just want to get it over with
either way
i stay
i try harder
chisel
open
resistance
anger
sadness
hairs standing up

YOU KNOW
THESE ARE NOT THE RIGHT QUESTIONS
we push further away
but i give you more time
your tone brings light
you speak more

i feel closer to you
at this moment
as you are sharing something
that i have requested
is this what our
relation
ship
could have been like?

is this why you are on the defense
my questions
they attack our previous
they forge
a new one

oh

and Dad

i just wanted to let you know
i was wearing your sweater
when i wrote this

Notes On Collapsing Time and Space

When I recorded my father's interview, it seemed like I was ignoring some silent code of ethics between father and daughter. I mean, here I was asking my father questions, as if he were some research subject! This felt very strange, but at the same time I wanted to find out what it would do to our relationship, which is why I pressed on. Talking to my father has never been an easy thing for me, and asking him questions just seemed like a confirmation of how clueless I really was. Throughout my life, I have sat and listened to my father tell me stories about his life, but never ones that I had wanted to ask about. So to record an instance of me asking him questions was like creating some sort of weird memorabilia of our strained relationship when it comes to asking him questions. So why did it seem like such a surprise to me that he did not have much to say once I started asking? There were many "awkward silences, painful pauses". Yet in this silence I heard much more. I realized that I had to tune my ear into a different kind of

listening. I listened more with my heart, which I had to consciously open to stop myself from running for cover.

For quite a time into the interview, I felt I was speaking a foreign language. All of the doubts I had of myself and the research were all coming into my head at once. I could feel this mantra playing over and over in my head: "BAD WRONG STOP STUPID". I started to question why I was doing this, who I thought I was to have the right to ask these questions, and most of all, I felt ashamed. I felt ashamed that I had forced my father into this position that he obviously did not want to be in. I was saddened that I was causing him obvious pain. I felt like I forced him into what I wanted our relationship to be like, but it sure was not happening the way I imagined it to be.

When I was transcribing our interview, it was painful to have to listen and transcribe how robotic we sounded towards one another. I asked, he would answer, in one or two words, if that. There was so much resistance, I likened it to the feeling of the same sides of a magnet trying to push together. There is an invisible barrier, and no matter how hard you try to force the two together, they will never join. If you do manage to force them together, the first moment they do not have applied pressure, they will immediately push apart.

The way Barre Toelken described how he felt asking the storyteller's questions reminded me of how my father felt about me in this context: "by seeing the story in terms of any categories, [he] had been taught to recognize, [he] had missed the point" (Toelken 1981:73). Yet my instinct told me to press on, to take that chance. I thought about what my partner said about fear: "it is O.K. to be scared, Meeka, acknowledge the feeling,

look at it, and put it aside so that you can do what you have to do". While the time passed during my father's comments, and most slowly, through the silence, I felt physically numb; my voice started to feel caught in my throat, as everything unspoken was collapsing around me. This shift started to make the situation seem very surreal, our environment became large and animated to me, my head felt like it was three times its size. It was at that moment that I consciously tried harder to be *in* the moment rather than be *in my head* in the moment. I thought, well, I created this, I might as well make the best of it.

I believe it was our shift in position that caused these feelings to take over. I was for once, in the only way I knew how, forcing my father to have this relationship with me, to answer the questions I had, regardless of how he or I felt about them. I made a choice to do it like that. I chose to make him see that I was something other than his daughter for those moments. As I reminded myself of this, I listened mindfully to what he was trying to say to me. As I did this, our tones softened, and I told myself that I have a right to be *here* in the moment, "instead of feeling so out of place". I just had faith in what I was doing anyway. Then I started thinking maybe I was just trying to think that so that I could get it over with. See, there I went, back into my head again…

I felt all of the anger, sadness, resistance, and ghosts that my father carried with him while I was doing the interview. Then I heard another mantra going through my head: "YOU KNOW THESE ARE NOT THE RIGHT QUESTIONS". I interpreted this as a sign to give him more time to respond instead of trying to fill up the silence with more words only to counter the feeling of discomfort. My instinct spoke well to me, as

he started to speak more. While he spoke, with a softer tone, I started to feel closer to my Dad. I started to wonder if this is what our relationship could have been like if I just would have faced my fear earlier. But everything in its time, right? It is interesting that through doing this research, through my institutionalized education, I felt like I developed more of an idea of what our father - daughter relationship could be like. Is this why he was so on the defense? My questions attacked our previous relationship, and out of that, forged a new one.

Through this research experience, I wanted the participants, but especially my Dad, to know that I do care about all that they has been through, that I do want to hear and know their stories. That I do not want to hurt them, I just do not know how to ask the questions in the most ideal way. In a way, I did this research in my father's name. When he opens his heart to what I want to know, I feel the potential of who I can become, who we can become together, and of how this will have an effect on how my own children relate to who I am and our history as Aboriginal peoples. So let me tell you this now, Dad, that I love you and want to know about who you are, the things that have made you into who you are, so that we can experience the potential of what our relationship can be. Kukstemc, Dad, for making me see. Kukstemc, to all of you who allowed me to listen to your stories, for giving me the courage to see, to feel, most importantly, to be.

6 CONCLUSIONS

Connecting the "Will to Know with the Will to Become"

I have been fortunate enough to have been able to have found teachers during my journey of the academy that gave me spiritual and intellectual guidance, that connected "the will to know with the will to become" (hooks 1994). It was vital for me to do this research not only to share information, but to also treat it in a sacred manner, to share in the intellectual and spiritual growth of the people that have told their stories to me, as well as the people the information will be shared with. Like engaged pedagogy, I wanted to present these stories in a manner that promoted well-being, valued expression, and empowered people through being actively committed to the process of self-actualization.

I entered this research with the intention, like Paulo Freire's teachings, to create a feeling of openness that fostered a feeling of community where there is shared commitment and a common good. Traditionally, building and sustaining community was and still is very close to the heart of aboriginal peoples, especially now since our community structures have really taken a colonial beating through forced assimilation, being stripped of our land base, and being isolated from the beliefs that once held the core of our identity (Graveline 1998:162).

I thought that it was important to allow a style of communication that would recreate the situations for people who had not lived through it, so that the listener could go through a form of cultural transmission that was once so valued in aboriginal society.

I wanted the stories to be presented with their emotional force, rather than just "abstract brute fact" (Rosaldo 1989:2). Storytelling has been described as being "the oldest form of building historical consciousness in community" (Russell 1985:156), as well as a powerful healing and teaching tool:

> healing through stories is but one important aspect of synthesizing our relationship with ourselves and with the entire universe...stories arouse heightened mindfulness, a sense of wonder and mystery, and a reverence for life. As the story unfolds, a rapport develops between the storyteller and the listeners (Buffalo 1990:120).

Transforming the Pain into Structural Change

I wanted to present the research in a way that recognized the value of each individual's voice (hooks 1994). My aim was to present their stories in a language that expressed the personal struggles of each, so that they (as well as myself) could experience the freedom of acknowledging their past, in effect, to "move forward by moving inward" (Denzin 1996:146) . Creative storytelling is a way to document and reflect on emotions, and can be a method of releasing feelings while "transforming personal pain into structural change" (Graveline 1998:158). Like Rosaldo, I wanted to reach the reader in a way that would allow them to "consider the subject's position within a field of social relations in order to grasp [their] emotional experience" (Rosaldo 1989:2)

In the telling of this collective story, I am hoping to emotionally connect people together whether they are in touch with each other or not, in hopes of overcoming any isolation or alienation that may be felt; to link separate individuals into a shared consciousness so that societal transformation can begin (Richardson 1995:214). In this

way, I have presented their experiences and learnings in the form of a poetic story, where they made connections between personal experiences and the cultural, and structural realities that have framed their lives. It has been described as a form of 'personal activism':

> On paper we can confront the enemy who is not embodied in one human being. We can question our thinking, we can address someone who is simply too powerful to confront in person. This is the power of writing, taking action with the voice and hand, moving thought into physical being, taking it further than one's mind will allow and giving it away to other people (Charnley 1990:16).

For me, this sense of relationship initially occurred at the moment I asked people from my community to share with me their stories. It went into another level when they agreed, and yet another when I arrived where they felt most comfortable to have me listen to them. But we entered another realm entirely when the actual communication started. I have felt that this was the unlocking of the first door to a deeper sense of relationship between these people of my community and me. When I finished each interview, I felt as if we had connected with one another in a very powerful way, and our relationship was built on something stronger than before. I also did not feel like such a child in their eyes, because I felt that they were no longer trying to protect me from their pain. *They* were also seeing *me* through different eyes.

Of course, I am leaving something out here in this description of the interview experience. My Father's interview. This is one of the places where I stop writing. When I think about my father's relationship to my research, I think about Kirin Narayan's telling of the holyman's story that was told to her during her fieldwork:

> Suppose you and I are walking on the road, said Swamiji... You've gone to University. I haven't studied anything. We're walking. Some child has shit on the road. We both step in it. 'That's shit!' I say. I scrape my foot; it's gone. But educated people have doubts about everything. You say, 'What's this?!' and you rub your foot against the other...Then you reach down to feel what it could be...Something sticky! You lift some up and sniff it. Then you say 'Oh! This is *shit*... See how many places it touched in the meantime...Educated people always doubt everything. They lie awake at night thinking, 'what was that? Why did it happen? What is the meaning and the cause of it? Uneducated people pass judgment and walk on. They get a good night's sleep (Narayan 1998:33).

I would have to say he's pretty accurate about the 'lie awake at night' part. I had my fair share of that in just even contemplating interviewing my father:

"Babe, I'm scared"

My partner and I stood outside in the sun while I took a break from my work. He was by now used to hearing this phrase from me, and proceeded to carry out what would start our usual brainstorm.

"Of what?"

"My Dad's interview".

"What are you scared of, Meeka?"

"Of hurting him".

There. It was out. How long had I been thinking those words, almost afraid to even think it.

"You have to put this in there, YOU KNOW that Meeka. All of this that you have been feeling about your Dad's interview. That you wanted to interview him first and you ended up interviewing him last, that you waited until his was the last one to transcribe, then when I thought you would do his poetic representation first, you left it until the very last one. Then, once you finally did it, it seemed like something was definitely missing

from it".

Yeah, yeah, O.K., I know. Geez, I thought, does he have to be so darn perceptive? He sure remembers more than I thought he did. A part of me said, 'how dare he say this stuff out loud? Doesn't he think I know this?'. But he kept his gaze through me, and with that shine from the sun, I couldn't help my frown grow into one of those grins that are forced out of you, a childlike, uncontrollable one. I started to laugh as I felt one of those bonds to my past let go. Anxiously, nervously, like a sort of cry laugh.

"What are you trying to protect him from, Meeka? Why can't you look at it as allowing him to see instead of hurting him? Let him see, Meeka."

"O.K., O.K., I KNOW, I KNOW".

It took me ages to be able to interview my father, one of the first people I was excited to interview. Before I started interviewing, he was one of the main reasons I wanted to do this research. I wanted to find out more about my parents, how their experiences made them and made me, in effect. Most of all, I wanted to do research on something that I wouldn't get bored of, or that wouldn't take me away from my family, since in my 'real' life, my family life consumes much of my time and energy. Luckily my partner understands this and accepts this about our life together.

It is even difficult to write about my communicative relationship with my father, since I know that in my writing it, we somehow bring ourselves to another level of understanding and I am somewhat anxious of that. In every aspect of our relationship it has been like that - that feeling of anxiety when communicating with my father. I know that if I do not disclose this, then I am not being truthful to this study or to myself when I

try to explain the research experience.

When I started the research, I was excited about the possibility of opening up new relationships with people that I interviewed, but really I meant my father. I thought that he would be really willing to do the interview, and that the interview would open up a new environment for us to communicate. But that anxious feeling stayed, and lingered, and festered, and grew. I don't know how to explain what I was afraid of, or what stopped me from talking more openly about it to my father. I thought we could work together on the research, that he could give me glimpses of understanding into what I was doing. Part of my ideal saw us working together, me running things by him, asking him questions... Ahh, the idealist, who the heck was I trying to kid?

Why did this not happen? Every time I sensed a good time to talk with him, I clammed up, and my mind filled up with doubt about what I was doing. I started to think about what he would think about my thoughts, and then what I would think about my thoughts once he knew about my thoughts, and so on and so on, until I would just decide not to mention it at all, and to once again, sit in awkward silence, because he didn't know what the heck was going on in my head either.

So I decided to wait, and wait, and wait for that perfect moment, which never seemed to come. So I did what came naturally, I waited until the last minute and forced myself to do it. This was the painful way, and I do not recommend it to anyone. I have so named it the 'prolonged fear and anxiety method' of interviewing. It's funny that I created exactly what I feared to happen. By the time I decided to interview my father, he seemed to do it out of obligation, not willingness, and I too, seemed to do it out of

obligation. Our willingness to each other was wasted on missed opportunities. By the time of the interview, we both just wanted to get it over with. This is the exact opposite of what I had ideally visioned for our interview experience!

This feeling of resistance was not new to me. I had experienced the same feeling several years back, when I had gone through a very traumatic incident, and I had to tell my dad. I just couldn't, and for two or three months, I didn't. I would go to the house with the intentions of telling him, and then I would get there, and I would just clam up, and sit there for hours on end, listening to him fill the silence with words, while my words drowned in my mind waves. When I finally did tell him, it was in the same way, I waited until the dire moment, where if I waited any longer, I would suffer worse consequences. I told him, and it wasn't so bad, what was bad was that I had waited so long to do it.

What was it that kept me from talking to him? It was a feeling of shame, that I wouldn't be seen as good enough in his eyes, that talking to him would somehow put me down a notch in his eyes. I was so afraid of how he would think of me after. It all boils down to my truth being affected by what other people think of it. What I am missing though is that if I speak my truth, I am safe with it. It is when I start distorting my reality with others' expectations that my truth becomes something for me to fear. Others' expectations = Fearfulness.

It seems that I've gone off the subject here, but in fact this is one of my main subjects - reasons why I decided to do this research in the first place. It is hard for me to write honestly about this because I am at this moment thinking about what others will think, or feel about me, be it family or community. So I decided that for this research, I

will not be fearful about what others expect of the study, I will just be aware and pay attention to these feelings.

Did I choose this study so that I could develop a deeper relationship with my parents' past? Not only that, it seems so many issues have unfolded in doing this topic, especially in terms of how I relate to my reality. In choosing the topic, I somehow force myself to discuss with my dad things that he wouldn't have talked to me about before. And in doing that it forces me to view how I relate to others, and most of all, how I relate to him.

In a sense, it comes around to feeling the fear that was developed through my father being forced to live out others' expectations of where and what an aboriginal person should be during his lifetime, but especially during the 50's and 60's. During this time it was that an aboriginal person should be distant from her family, so that they could be assimilated into the larger society. Now, in 2005, I am not physically distant from my family, but I am distant in the sense that I do not understand or relate to the in-between time of what made my parents who they are. Or what made my community who they are. Not what they are on paper, but how their reality shaped their being.

Because of this misunderstanding , I do feel distant from my father, and my community. There are many ways that I am close to him and to them, but in terms of relating to each other, I feel like a world away. I felt that these interviews in particular opened some doors for all of us. We unlocked some things that we were both afraid of and it freed us up a little.

Although I felt 'stupid', after the interview, and thought I had somehow failed, I

realize now I feel more open because a truth has been shown, and there is a sense of freedom in that. I do not feel fearful about my dad's reactions to the questions I have. I only have the fear of how he will react to this narrative now. But somehow, it's not as bad as the initial fear of bringing the topic up in the first place. Will my fear become less if I just keep asking?

Now I find myself asking whether or not I am bringing my father too much into the scope of this study? Why my focus on him? What is it that this research is trying to teach me about my relationship to my father? Why is it that I stop writing when I get to this part? Some part of me feels I am going into dangerous territory, emancipating as it may be. I felt that every participant in this study could accurately describe their interview experience in those terms: dangerous and emancipating.

Transformative Rebuilding

In order for aboriginal peoples to achieve the goal of having their stories told from their perspective, they must

> begin to share their stories with one another and share their experiences and achievements, successes and failures, and whatever else, with one another...our communication methods, and our ways of speaking and telling were undermined...Native media plays a role in rediscovering or re-inventing those things ('Morrisseau' in Castellano et al 2000:81).

In performing the text, the experience of knowledge is brought to the audience of research in a way that it doesn't separate it from the experience of life lived, as it tells and shows how it happened, thus privileging the experience so that the audience can participate and feel as well (Paget 1995:239-40). It requires "a narrative, drama, action,

and a point of view" (Paget 1995:241). These texts are written in a way that they have these aspects to them, so they have the potential to relate to an audience through the medium of theatre, music, or straight readings of the text. In textualizing the oral experience, I wanted to "reflect oral tendencies to engage the larger world in which the spoken word lives so that it is seen for what it might or might not be beyond the page" (Sarris 1993:46).

I have endeavored in this study to get a sense of why this generation will not tell their children their stories; why my father will not tell me. I want our understanding of each other's experience to show that they do not have to hold it within themselves anymore, because someone cares here. I care here. By feeling that they are protecting others, especially the younger generation, from their pain, they actually prolong it by locking it away in themselves.

When they feel that they are able to tell their stories, they feel a bond to their past let go, and whoever shares in that experience may be able to feel that also. Just about every person who told their story to me felt that initial pain of just letting that bond go. When they concluded the interview, many of them realized that for the first time, they had been able to recount the events that shaped their lives, and had become conscious of how much they had been through to get to where they are now.

I felt honoured to be a part of this awakening in themselves. It awakened me also to a more non-judgmental state about the people in my community, as it brought them closer to my heart, regardless of what family they were from, or whether or not they were 'related' to me. It is reminiscent of the point that the storyteller, Mabel, in Greg Sarris'

book, "Keeping Slug Woman Alive" (1993) made:

> Remember that when you hear and tell my stories there is more to me and you that *is* the story {emphasis in original). You don't know everything about me and I don't know everything about you. Our knowing is limited. Let our words show us as much so we can learn together about one another. Let us tell stories that help us in this. Let us keep learning (Sarris 1993:46).

Implications of the Research

I believe that through this research I have found a way to merge my aboriginal/academic identity, not just as a way to 'get ahead' in the séme7 (Secwepemc word for 'white person') world, but as a way to 'be within' both worlds. To merge both teachings into something we can use to benefit and heal from the past, instead of choosing one or the other, the teachings can be viewed as a process of decolonization. Like a coyote, I have learned to adapt to the environment I have been placed into. Now it is up to me to use those teachings for the greater, and common good.

Through this I have found a way back, yet forward, to those same values that were once cherished to our people: the value of telling our stories to the younger generation, the value of mindfulness, and the value of sharing - our experiences, our joy, our pain, whatever it may be. The impact of Indian Residential Schools on Aboriginal family stretches across multiple generations, and it is unfortunate that I was not able to interview the parents of the participants. However, almost all of them were already deceased at the time of the interviews. Yet I hope that the research methodology that I have employed in this thesis will be used by others to encourage the telling of stories across multiple generations. In this way, it has the potential to address issues of

communication in aboriginal communities between generations.

Aboriginal youth today are paying the price of cultural genocide, and the effects of over a century of colonialist public policies. The 'black void' imagery that I used to describe the feeling I have in relation to my peoples past is much like how it is described in the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples: "it is as though an earthquake has ruptured their world from one end to another, opening a deep rift that separates them from their past, their history, and their culture. They have seen parents and peers fall into this chasm, into patterns of despair, listlessness and self-destruction. They fear for themselves and their future as they stand at the edge" (RCAP v.4 1996:149).

To begin the healing process, aboriginal peoples believe that there must first be a cleansing process. The process of this research for me has been a part of the cleansing process. By empowering myself and others through this research, I recognize that we each are valuable members of our community. By making others feel strong about who they are, I feel stronger about who I am. According to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples' Report, Aboriginal youth view community development as not only being about infrastructure, but about *people* and building a stronger community. In terms of community, for today's aboriginal youth it takes on a broader sense of the meaning, more than just a physical space, but as a reference to "any group of people who share ways of being together" (RCAP, v.4 1996:148).

They feel excluded from the dominant society, and alienated from the stereotypical view of what it means to be aboriginal. This creates a feeling of emptiness that emerges from being stuck in between two cultures, and not feeling at home in either

one. If they are given the opportunity to learn about their people's stories, it validates their history and gives them value as individuals so that they can become proud of the contributions their people have made to society rather than be ashamed of who they are. They can create a new meaning of what it means to be an aboriginal person: "educate us to be a guide, a friend, a companion to our parents, our people, and to all Canadians" (RCAP v.4 1996:155-56). For our culture to carry on, "it must reinvent itself in continuously new ways and forms... for the seeking and finding of self-expression among Secwepemc youth" (Ignace and Ignace 2003:27).

The family is at the heart of personal and community healing, and is viewed as a vital part of transforming reality, of strengthening culture and restoring dignity to aboriginal peoples (RCAP v.3 1996). Restoring this vitality to individuals, families, and community mobilizes the energy needed to be able to take positive constructive action in dealing with the issues aboriginal peoples face during the journey to the vision for a brighter future. Aboriginal culture in the twenty-first century has the responsibility to create new expressions that provide "unique ways of integrating aboriginal self-reflection and expression of culture" (Ignace and Ignace 2003:4) into our lives.

One thing I have learned for sure through this research is that even though I cannot understand *everything* that the participants, and especially my father, have told me in response to my questions, I must continue to ask questions and to talk to them regardless. At the same time I must learn to recognize the limitations and accept their difference for what it represents - the indication that I just need to 'let silence be', in order to grow with them to bring me to their level of understanding. Yet will I ever reach

that level? It will be a continuous process of teaching and learning. Like these people I have interviewed, there are things that I will not talk about in this research. Yet I feel that by starting this, I become closer to opening up about my reality, so that I have the strength to transform it, to rebuild it.

APPENDICES

Appendix A
Interview Questions

Early Experiences and Life at Home:

What are your most vivid memories of your family life as a young child, growing up in Bonaparte (or wherever you were residing)?

Do you have any photos of your family around that time that best represent your family life that you would be willing to share with me? Tell me what is in the photos.

Do you remember what kind of values you were taught as a child around this time, before you went to school?

Who all lived in your household, and what did each of them do?

Who were your major teachers/influences in those days? Do you have any photos that represent this?

How did your family support themselves? Which family members held jobs? Did different families help one another out?

Who hunted, fished, and gathered? What kind of foods did you eat?

Changes, and what it was like:

Where did you go to school? If you went to residential school, what do you remember about first being sent there?

Did you get to see your siblings? How many times a year did you get to return home and for how long? How did your duties differ than what it was like at home? How did care giving change in residential school? Compare how you were fed at home to the foods you ate at residential school.

When a family member at home passed away, were you informed of it and did you have a chance to go to the funeral?

What are your thoughts and feelings on what your family was like when you returned from the residential school, the first time and subsequent times after?

If you did not go to residential school, did you have siblings that had to go? What were the reasons for you not going to residential school? If you did have siblings or close relatives that went, what were the differences between them and yourself that you noticed?

In regards to the changing laws around liquor, do you think it had an impact on how people lived?

During the period that social services could apprehend aboriginal children, were there any children that were taken by welfare that you remember? How did people deal with this if there was a possibility of this happening?

How do you think off-reserve labour impacted life during these times?

Any other factors that changed family life that you would like to mention?

Transitions and Adaptations

Tell me about your thoughts and feelings when you think about the transition from home to school. What made it easier? Or more difficult?

Did you help others make the transition from home to school? Such as younger siblings, or relatives, or even other children?

How did your caregivers explain what was to happen (having to go to residential school)?

Who explained it to you the most?

How did you explain it to yourself at the time? How did you explain it to yourself throughout the years?

If you did not go to residential school, did you notice impacts on family for the people that you knew that did?

~~Reflections by Research Participants~~

What do you think are the most important aspects of family, and how did you discover, or create them? How has the experience of residential school affected how you conceive of family now? If you did not go, what experiences affected how you conceive of family now?

How have you grown as a person since these experiences that caused these variations or continuities in your views of family?

Tell me about your strengths that you discovered or developed through these experiences.

What do you most value about your family now?

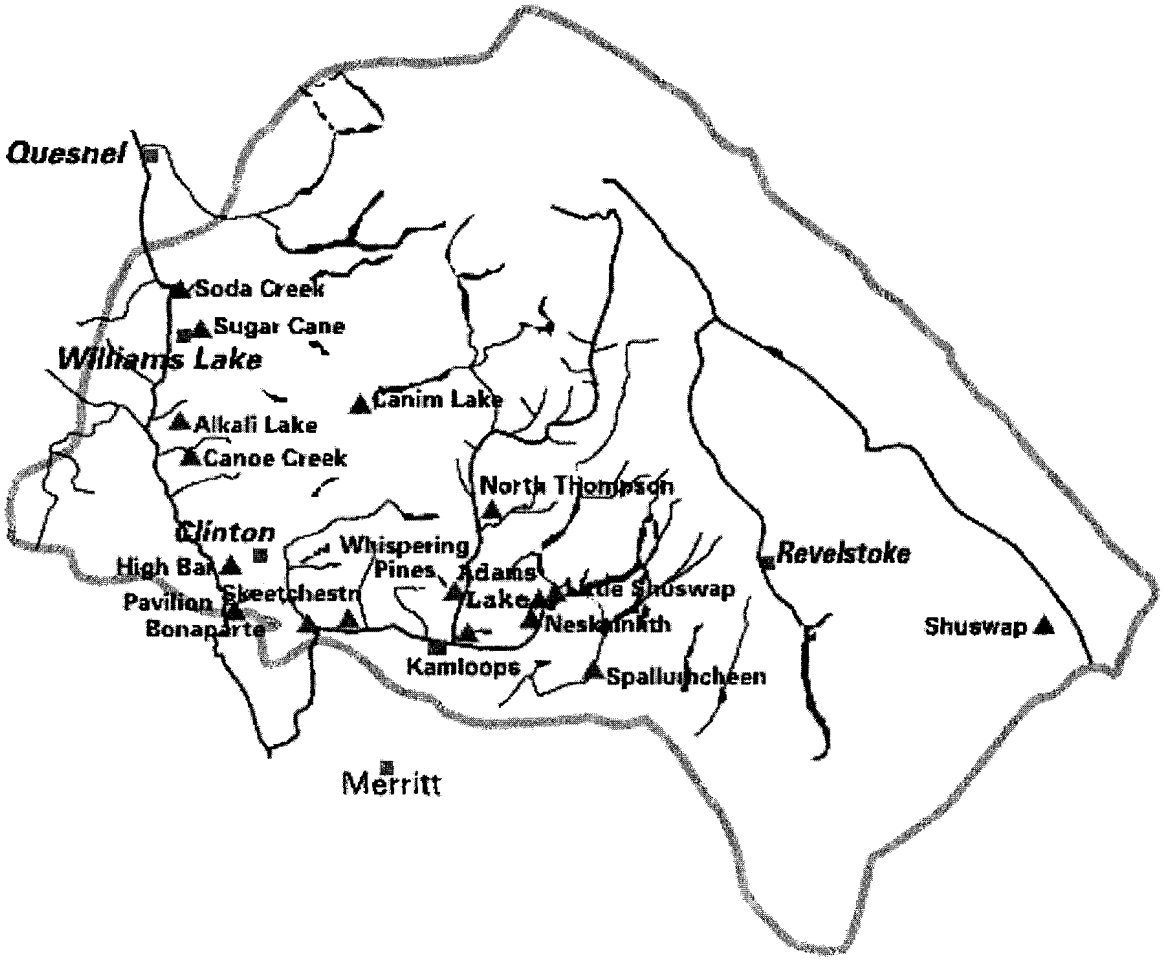
What kind of obstacles are preventing you (if any) from coming back to the values you were raised with before school?

Is there anything that you may not have thought about before, that occurred to you during this interview? Is there anything that you would like to ask me?

If there are any other ways that you would feel more comfortable telling your story, through any other creative expression (writing, etc.), please let me know, as I would be honoured to utilize it in this research.

Are there any other photographs that you would like to share with me that you think would be pertinent to this research?

Appendix B
Map of Secwepemc Nation



Source: Secwepemc Nation Tribal Council Website.

http://www.shuswapnation.org

Reference List

Ackerman, Lillian A. (1994) Nonunilinear Descent Groups in the Plateau Culture Area. *American Ethnologist*, 21 (2): 286-309. American Anthropological Association.

Anastasio, Angelo (1972) The Southern Plateau: An Ecological Analysis of Intergroup Relations. *Northwest Anthropological Research Notes*. 6(2), Fall.

Brayboy, Bryan McKinley and Deyhle, Donna (2000) Insider-Outsider: Researchers in American Indian Communities. *Theory Into Practice*, 39 (3).

Brown, E.B. (1989) African American Women's Quilting: A Framework for Conceptualizing and Teaching African American Women's History. *Signs*, 14, 921-929.

Buffalo, Yvonna Rita Dion (1990) Seeds of Thought, Arrows of Change: Native Storytelling as Metaphor. In Toni Laidlaw and Cheryl Malmo and Associates (Ed*), Healing Voices: Feminist Approaches to Therapy with Women,* San Fransico: Jossey-Bass.

Castellano, Marlene Brant, Davis, Lynne, and Lahache, Louise (2000*) Aboriginal Education: Fulfilling the Promise.* UBC Press, Vancouver, Toronto.

Charity, Arthur (1995*) Doing Public Journalism.* New York: Guilford.

Chrisjohn, Roland D. and Young, Sherri L. (1994) *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada.* A Report to the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples.

Christians, Clifford G. and John P. Ferre, and Mark P. Fickler (1993) *Good News: Social Ethics and the Press.* New York: Oxford University Press.

Collins, Patricia H. (1990) *Black Feminist Thought: Knowledge, Consciousness, and the Politics of Empowerment.* New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall.

Conquergood, D. (1998) Beyond the Text: Toward Performative Cultural Politics. In Sheron J Dailey (Ed.), *The Future of Performance Studies: Visions and Revisions* (p. 25-36). Annandale, VA: National Communication Association.

Corrado, Raymond R. and Cohen, Irwin M. (2003) *Mental Health Profiles for a Sample of British Columbia's Aboriginal Survivors of the Canadian Residential School System.* Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

Degh, Linda (1995) *Narratives in Society: A Performer-Centered Study of Narration.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press.

Denzin, Norman K. (1996) The Epistemological Crisis in the Human Disciplines: Letting the Old Do the Work of the New. In Richard Jessor, Anne Colby, and Richard A. Schweder (Ed.), *Ethnography and Human Development: Context and Meaning in Social Inquiry.* . The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London.

Denzin, Norman K. (1997*) Interpretive Ethnography: Ethnographic Practices for the 21st Century.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Denzin, Norman K. and Lincoln, Yvonna S. (editors) (1998) *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Denzin, Norman K. (2001*) Interpretive Interactionism (second edition)* Applied Social Research Methods Series. Volume 16. Sage Publications Thousand Oaks, London, New Dehli.

Ellis, Carolyn and Arthur P. Bochner (2000) Autoethnography, Personal Narrative, Reflexivity: Researcher as Subject. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research. 2d ed.,* Pp. 733-68. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications

Ellis, Carolyn and Berger, Leigh (2002) Their Story/My Story/Our Story: Including the Researcher's Experience in Interview Research. In Jaber F. Gubrium and James A. Holstein (Ed.), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method.* Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Erickson, Sheila (1969*) I AM AN INDIAN.* Toronto: J.M. Dent and Sons in Notice this is an Indian Reserve. Toronto: Griffin House, 1972.

Fine, Michelle (1998) Working the Hyphens: Reinventing Self and Other in Qualitative Research. In Denzin, N. & Lincoln, Y. (Ed.), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Furniss, Elizabeth (1994) *Victims of Benevolence: Discipline and Death at the Willliams Lake Indian Residential School, 1891-1920.* Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press.

Gergen, Kenneth J. (1999) *An Invitation to Social Construction.* Sage Publications, London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi.

Goffman, Erving (1961) *Asylums: Essays on the Social Situation of Mental Patients and Other Inmates.* Garden City, New York: Anchor Books.

Grant, Agnes (1996) *No End of Grief: Indian Residential Schools in Canada.* Pemmican Publications Inc., Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.

Graveline, Fyre Jean (1998) *Circleworks: Transforming Eurocentric Consciousness.* Fernwood Publishing, Halifax.

Haig-Brown, Celia (1987) *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School.* Tillicum Library, Secwepemc Cultural Education Society.

Hall, Stuart (1989) Ethnicity, Identity, and Difference. *Radical America*, 3, pg. 9-22.

Hall, Stuart (1989b) Cultural Identity and Cinematic Representation. *Framework*, 36:68-81.

Harrington, Walt (1997) A Writer's Essay: Seeking the Extraordinary in the Ordinary. In Walt Harrington (Ed.), *Intimate Journalism: The Art and Craft of Reporting Everyday Life*, (p. xvii-xlvi) Thousand Oaks, C.A., Sage Publications.

hooks, bell (1994) *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom. Routledge, New York.*

Hudson, Douglas and Furniss, Elizabeth (1995) The Plateau: A Regional Overview, In R. Bruce Morrison and C. Roderick Wilson (Ed.), *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience (2nd edition).* McClelland and Steward Inc: The Canadian Publishers.

Hudson, Douglas and Ignace, Marianne (2004) The Plateau: A Regional Overview. Chapter 20, Part VII. In R. Bruce Morrison and C. Roderick Wilson (Ed.), *Native Peoples: The Canadian Experience*, 3rd Edition, Don Mills: Oxford University Press.

Ignace, Marianne Boelscher (1998) The Shuswap. In: Deward E. Walker, (Ed.), *Handbook of North American Indians, Vol.12: Plateau.* Washington, D.C. Smithsonian Institution.

Ignace, Marianne (2000) *Anthropological Expert Witness Report. Regina v. Lebourdais at al. Regina v. Deneault et al.* for Rush Crane Guenther.

Ignace, Marianne and Ignace, Ron (2004) *The Secwepemc: Traditional Resource Use and Rights to Land.* Don Mills: Oxford University.

Jack, Agness (2000) *Behind Closed Doors: Stories from the Kamloops Indian Residential School.* Secwepemc Cultural Education Society, Kamloops, British Columbia.

Jack, Rita (1985) Legacy of the Residential School. *Secwepemc Cultural Education Society Arts Magazine.* 1:1.

Jenkins, J.E. (1999, May 2) Narrating the action while taking part in it. *New York Times* (May 2), p. 19.

Kabat-Zinn, Jon (1994) *Wherever You Go, There You Are: Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life.* Hyperion, New York

Kenny, Carolyn (2000) A Sense of Place: Aboriginal Research as Ritual Practice. In Roger Neil (Ed.), *Voice of the Drum: Indigenous Education and Culture.* Kingfisher Publications.

Manuel, George, and Michael Posluns (1974) *The Fourth World: An Indian Reality.* New York: The Free Press.

Miller, J.R. (1996) *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools.* Toronto, Ontario: University of Toronto.

Miller, Kahn-Tineta and George Larchs (1978) *The Historical Development of the Indian Act.* Ottawa: Treaties and Historical Research Branch, P.R.E. Group, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada.

Milloy, John S. (1999) *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System 1879 to 1986.* The University of Manitoba Press.

Narayan, Kirin (1997) How Native is a "Native" Anthropologist? In Louise Lamphere, Helena Ragone, & Patricia Zavella (Ed.), *Situated Lives: Gender and Culture in Everyday Life.* Routledge, New York.

Nelson, Cary and Paula A. Treichler, and Lawrence Grossberg (1992) Cultural Studies. In Lawrence Grossberg, Cary Nelson, and Paula A. Treichler (Ed.), *Cultural Studies*, p. 1-16. New York: Routledge.

Paget, Marianne A. (1995) Performing the Text. In John Van Maanen (Ed.), *Representation in Ethnography.* Sage Publications: Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Perley, David (1993) Aboriginal Education in Canada as Internal Colonialism. *Canadian Journal of Native Education.* 20.1, p. 118-28.

Pollock, Della (1998) Performing Writing. In Peggy Phelan and Jill Lane (Ed.), *The Ends of Performance*, p. 73-193.

Rabinow, Paul and William Sullivan (1987) The Interpretive Turn: A Second Look. In Paul Rabinow and William Sullivan (Ed.), *Interpretive Social Science: A Second Look* , p. 1-30. Berkeley: University of California Press.

Richardson, Laurel (1995) Narrative and Sociology. In John Van Maanen (Ed.), *Representation in Ethnography.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Richardson, Laurel (2000) Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In Norman K. Denzin and Yvonna S. Lincoln (Ed.), *Handbook of Qualitative Research. 2d ed.,* p. 923-48. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Richardson, Laurel (2002) Poetic Representations of Interviews in Gubrium, J. & Holstein, J. (Ed.), *Handbook of Interview Research: Context and Method.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Richardson, Miles (1998) Poetics in the Field and on the Page. *Qualitative Inquiry* 4: 451-62.

Rosen, Jay (1994) Making Things More Public: On the Political Responsibility of the Media Intellectual. *Critical Studies in Mass Communication*, 11: 362-388.

Russell, Michele (1985) Black-Eyed Blues Connection: Teaching Black Women. In Margo Culley and Catherine Portuges (Ed.), *Gendered Subjects.* Boston: Routledge and Kegan Paul.

Sarris, Greg (1993) *Keeping Slug Woman Alive: A Holistic Approach to Native American Texts.* Berkeley: University of California.

Sterling, Shirley (1992) *My Name is Seepeetza.* Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre.

Swandt, Thomas A. (1998) Constructivist, Interpretivist Approaches to Human Inquiry. In Denzin N. & Lincoln, Y. (Ed.), *The Landscape of Qualitative Research: Theories and Issues.* Sage Publications, Thousand Oaks, London, New Delhi.

Toma, Douglas J. (2000) How Getting Close To Your Subjects Makes Qualitative Data Better. *Theory Into Practice*, 39:3.

Turner, V.W. (1986) *The Anthropology of Performance.* New York: Performing Arts Journal Publications.

Ulmer, Gregory (1989) *Teletheory.* New York: Routledge.